

Guide for Designing
Job Placement
Services for
Disadvantaged Youth

A MILLION YOUTH

neo

A MILLION OPPORTUNITIES

INTRODUCTION



About NEO

NEO is a pioneering initiative in which businesses, governments and civil society in Latin America and the Caribbean have joined forces with a US\$100 million investment to improve the employment opportunities for 1 million youth, half of them women, by 2022. In response to labor market needs, 500,000 youth from 12 countries will be part of NEO by 2017.

NEO is an initiative led by the IDB, through its Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) and its Labor Markets Unit (LMK), the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and partners: Arcos Dorados, Caterpillar Foundation, CEMEX, Fondation Forge, Microsoft, SESI and Walmart. The *Guide for Job Placement Services for Disadvantaged Youth*, part of the NEO initiative, was financed with resources from the MIF and Microsoft. The English version of this guide was made possible thanks to a contribution from Australian Aid.

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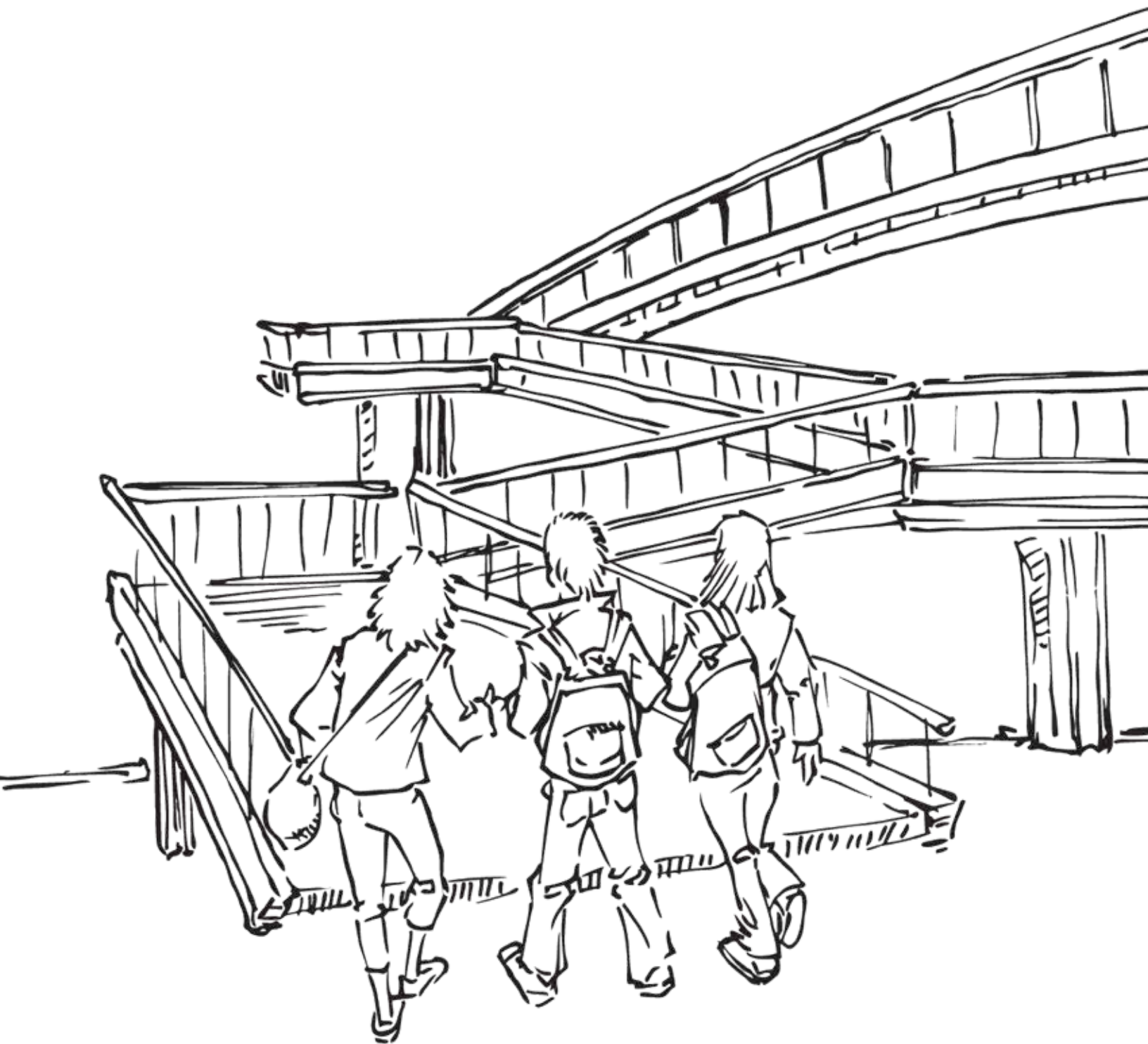
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FORWARD

This guide is the result of the experiences, successes, and challenges of the more than 50 organizations that participated in the **entra21** program. The International Youth Foundation (IYF), in partnership with the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF), implemented this regional program between 2001 and 2011, benefiting over 137,000 young people from low-income households.

Based on lessons learned from **entra21**, the NEO initiative was launched in 2012. One of its goals is to strengthen the technical capacity of entities that provide youth employability services. For this reason, the experiences and lessons have been compiled in a series of guides to provide guidelines, conceptual tools, and methodologies that can be adapted to any context. The intention is that this guide will be useful to organizations that are just beginning to design their services, as well as those that already have some experience and want to fine-tune their operations.

This guide is organized into three chapters. Chapter 1 looks at the resources needed by an organization that wants to offer job placement services: models and institutional frameworks, human and technological resources, and inputs for designing systems for monitoring and evaluating quality and results. Chapter 2 focuses on the training, advising, and mentoring processes necessary for young people to succeed in obtaining and keeping decent jobs. Chapter 3 contains guidelines and strategies for developing and strengthening relationships with employers. While there is no fool-proof model or formula for job placement, it is important to know about other strategies and tips to broaden the understanding of the topic and improve services. As such, within each chapter, sections titled “Other Voices” contain experiences and learning from partner organizations.

POINT OF DEPARTURE



What is the scope of this guide?

This publication summarizes the best practices and lessons learned during 10 years of implementing the *entra21* program. It is one of five guides created for NEO to transfer best practices to at least 200 NEO service providers with the goal of improving the quality of employability services for disadvantaged youth.

More information: www.youthneo.org

What is its objective?

The purpose of this guide is to provide information, guidance, and tools for designing and implementing job placement services so that disadvantaged youth have a better chance of obtaining and retaining jobs in the highly competitive world of work.

Who is it for?

This guide has been created for public and private institutions that offer employment training and/or job placement services and who want to learn how to design, manage, and provide job placement services in an effective and specialized manner. It also is targeted at donors, public sector agencies, and professionals interested in learning about job placement and promoting the inclusion of this type of service in the projects they fund or advise.

What do we mean by job placement?

Job placement is the set of strategies and activities that enable individuals to obtain decent jobs and continue along successful career paths, in line with young people's interests and abilities and the needs of employers.

Find Out



The *entra21* program was set up by the International Youth Foundation in 2001, in partnership with the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), with the objective of improving the employability of disadvantaged youth in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Its purpose was to develop effective training and job placement models and support youth-run micro-enterprises so as to facilitate their access to decent work. Over its 10 years, the *entra21* program has supported more than 137,000 disadvantaged young people in Latin America and the Caribbean with training and job placement services. Six months after they completed the program, 75% of the youth had a job or were studying.

More information: <http://www.iyfnet.org/initiatives/entra21>

The scope of the job placement services proposed in this guide is not limited to establishing a relationship between youth and employers (which tends to be the focus of traditional services) but also incorporates a series of preparatory and complementary services that seek to:

- Strengthen young peoples' employability skills, including the ability to continue to learn,
- Help youth remain active and productive throughout their lives by developing key competencies,
- Support and mentor young people so that they are able to identify their personal limitations, recognize and value their abilities and potential, and be aware of the demands and competencies required in the world of work.



More than services narrowly focused on job placement, this guide promotes an approach that encompasses an individual and a social dimension.

By taking these two dimensions—individual and social—into account, this guide takes into consideration the areas where youth need to grow and develop AND the social context in which they are operating in which issues of lack of access to information, attitudes about hiring youth and other factors can inhibit their ability to find formal work.

GLOSSARY

EMPLOYABILITY

"Employability" refers to competencies and qualifications that enhance an individual's capacity to make use of the education and training opportunities available in order to secure and retain decent work, to progress within the enterprise and between jobs, and to cope with changing technology and labor market conditions. (ILO, Geneva, 2005.)

"Competencies" cover the knowledge, professional skills and know-how applied and mastered in a specific context.

"Qualifications" mean a formal expression of the vocational or professional abilities of a worker which is recognized at international/national or sectoral levels.

What do we propose in this guide?

Given the challenges that disadvantaged youth face in securing formal work and the limited availability of job placement services for this population, this guide offers a comprehensive approach and tools that can be adapted to many different contexts and situations, such as:

Equipping organizations to provide job placement services,

Preparing young people so they can obtain decent jobs, and

Developing relationships with employers.

This approach is fundamental when one considers the fact that disadvantaged youth have not traditionally had access to the opportunities that lead to success in the job market and they are characterized by:

- Having little work experience
- Being stigmatized due to their age and/or socio-economic status
- Having limited networks, which for most people are fundamental in finding formal work.

Find out



Disadvantaged youth are those who live in poverty and who are affected by personal and/or social situations that limit their access to quality job opportunities. These young people may have additional risk factors, such as some kind of disability, living in rural areas, having dropped out of the formal education system, living in violent environments, involved in illegal or gang-related activities, and being victims of forced displacement, among others.



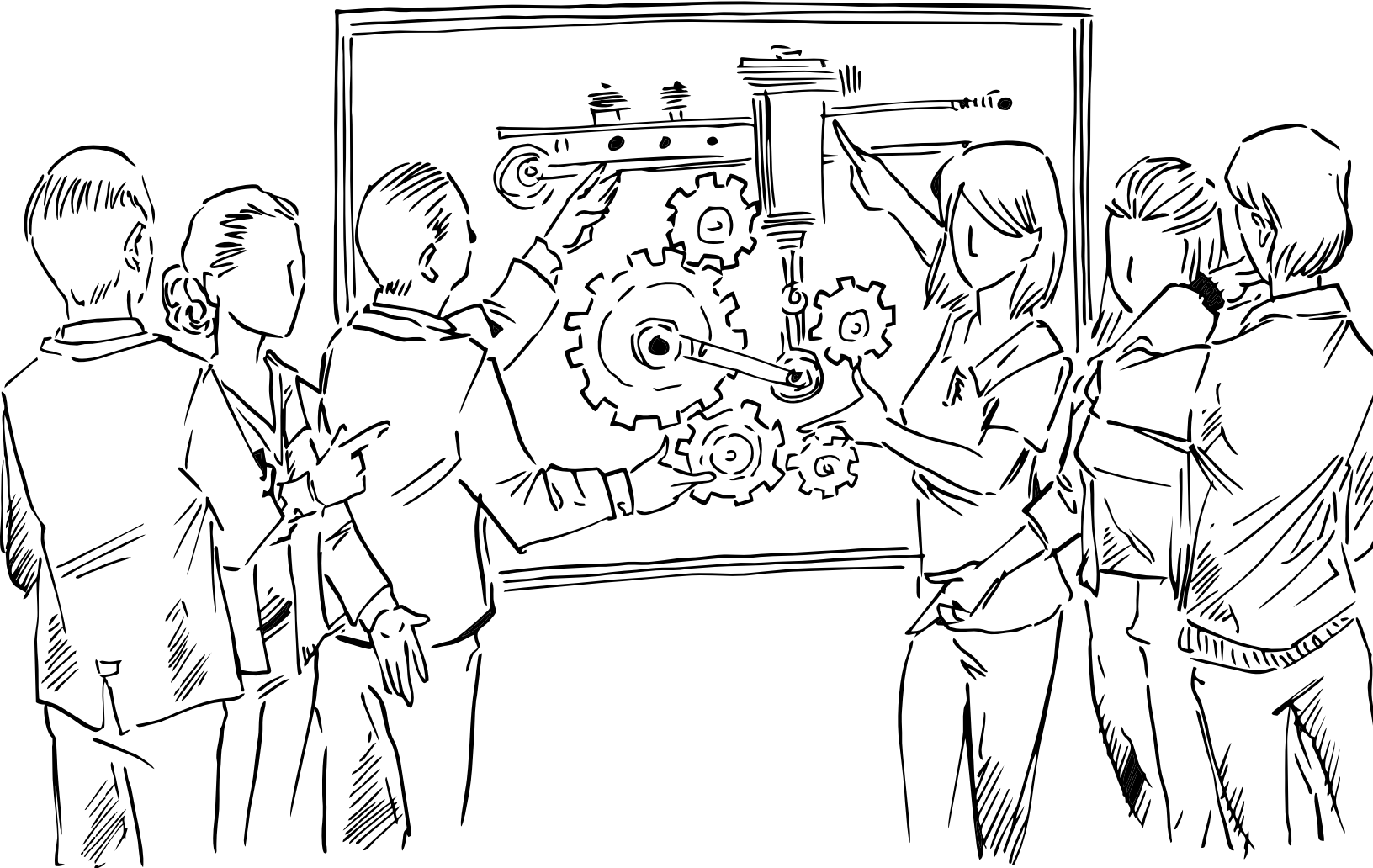
“We understand job placement to be a process that generates a range of capacities both in the system and in the stakeholders who participate in it, with the goal of people obtaining and retaining jobs in the world of work.” — *entra21* project coordinator

The system comprises various components that are mutually reinforcing and take into account the following resources:

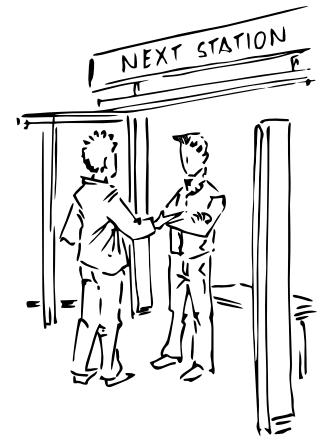
1. Quality standards for informing, guiding, and supporting individuals with their job search and career development,
2. Strategies for building the capacities of entities that link the supply of labor to employer demand,
3. Methodologies for detecting changes in the labor market and recognizing new, emerging, and transformational occupational sectors, and
4. Technology solutions for facilitating decision making about jobs and careers.

CHAPTER 1

Equipping Organizations to Provide Job Placement Services



Point of Departure



Prior to integrating job placement services as part of your program, an organization must be fully committed to working with disadvantaged youth and incorporating new methods and procedures into its operations. This means that an organization should:

- **Have a strong team with the right skills and access to a good information system to manage relationships with companies and other key clients.**
- **Develop a system for monitoring and evaluating the services.**
- **Define the institutional model through which the job placement services will be provided.** As indicated earlier, job placement services can be offered as stand-alone services or as a part of a youth employment training program. The parameters, guidelines, and tools presented in this guide can be used for either model.
- **Adapt a dual customer approach.** This approach considers the needs of employers and the needs, interests, and motivations of youth. It seeks to balance two sides of the equation: the supply needs, meaning how to prepare youth to be work ready while also balancing the demand side, that is the types of opportunities available for youth in tomorrow's labor market. This balance can be difficult and can require educating both sides of the equation—youth and employers.
- **Understand the labor market as an invaluable input for ensuring job placement services are successful.** Understanding and analyzing the labor market implies identifying labor market trends and needs and opportunities in the short and medium terms. This information should be analyzed by gender to understand where there may be barriers or opportunities to address so the young men and women have equal access to good, formal jobs.
For more information on how to perform a labor market assessment, please consult this NEO guide: <http://www.iyfn.net.org/library/connecting-employment-training-labor-market-demand-and-opportunities>
- **Ensure that youth are empowered during and as a result of the job placement process.** Ultimately the youth are responsible for looking for work and the objective of the job placement service is to provide youth with the contacts, confidence and competencies they need to find employment. All members of the job placement team should have a shared philosophy of youth empowerment regardless of gender, race and ethnicity.
- **Build networks with businesses and other key institutions.** In addition to building networks of companies that can help facilitate the placement of youth in internships and jobs, being able to refer youth to other types of services can be very useful. Youth may lack identification papers, health records or need other types of services to make their job search more successful.

Why are job placement services important?

Placement services are important because they address many of the problems that affect young people, especially those with social and economic disadvantages, from gaining access to job opportunities.

Some of the factors that affect disadvantaged young people in particular include:

- Lack of life objectives or career plans,
- Limited and/or hard to access information about job opportunities,
- Mismatch between what employers are looking for and young people have as far as skills and experience,
- Limited social networks,
- Little to no job search skills, and
- Discrimination in the labor market.

What attributes should job placement services have?

Like all services that seek to resolve a problem or address a need, job placement services must have certain characteristics that will render them more or less efficient and effective when targeting any worker, let alone, someone who is looking for his or her first formal job.

According to Jacqueline Mazza, a former labor market specialist with the IDB, the following are some of the attributes of a well-designed job placement service:

Speed: By reducing the time companies take to find good employees and the time youth spend looking for work, a job placement service provides a benefit to both clients.

Quality: The better the service is at matching the needs of the company with the qualifications and expectations of the youth, the greater the likelihood the youth will be productive and satisfied with their placement.

Reduced costs: In addition to reduced recruitment costs for companies, the wider society benefits from reduced social costs and unemployment insurance/benefits.

Job placement is successful if it:

- Increases the motivation of young people to work and aspire to work in decent jobs.
- Expands young people's knowledge about how the labor market works.
- Improves young people's understanding of their own interests and competencies and helps them establish work goals for the short and medium term.
- Equips young people with the skills needed to look and interview for work.
- Empowers young people to take control of managing and progressing in the working world and provides them with a good starting point for building a successful career.
- Contributes to reducing unemployment rates among disadvantaged youth and to improving their quality of life.
- Benefits employees because it helps reduce recruitment costs, staff turnover, and business productivity and growth.
- Enhances the image of the institutions offering job placement in the community and particularly among employers and young people.

How does one provide job placement services?

Historically, job placement services, mainly those offered by public entities, have been developed as stand-alone services, traditionally in municipal job centers, or have been provided through employment agencies or job centers which may be privately operated. Below please find four models through which it is possible to provide job placement services.

GLOSSARY

DECENT WORK

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), decent work involves "opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men." The ILO adds, "Decent work is central to people's well-being and it sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. In addition to providing income, work can pave the way for broader social and economic advancement, strengthening individuals, their families, and communities."

1. Job Placement within Vocational Training Programs

This model proposes understanding job placement services as more than a series of activities to support youth in identifying job openings. It requires an integrated approach with career guidance, training and mentoring and happens throughout the project or service cycle.

Before	During	After
<p>Design stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design of the program and technical courses to be offered is based on information gathered through market assessments. This is when the occupations and positions in highest demand and the most dynamic industries with greatest levels of employment available in the short- and medium-term are identified. <p>Selection stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During this stage, screening and guidance activities are provided to place young job seekers in courses that suit their initial skills and interests. 	<p>Training stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During this stage, the participants are provided with tools and information to enhance their life and job search skills, such as preparing resumes and interview techniques, among others. The young people are given advice and mentoring in preparation for and during their internships or work placements. <p>The young people enhance their resumes with information on certificates gained and internship experiences, thereby improving their chances of obtaining jobs.</p>	<p>Certification, career counseling services and job placement stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the training is completed, the young people continue to access job placement services and support. After they are employed, mentoring is provided for several months to help them adapt to their jobs and workplaces.

2. Stand-alone Job Placement Services

These services tend to focus strictly on job placement actions and are focused on linking job seekers with vacancies. Governments in particular tend to set up municipal or regional job centers or employment offices that people of employment age can access without necessarily being enrolled in more comprehensive training programs.

3. Outsourced Services

In this case, the entity that provides training has agreements or contracts with public or private employment agencies or a marketing firm, which is responsible for establishing relationships with employers.

4. Services Provided through Associations or Public or Private Networks

Another possible form of job placement is the creation of associations involving all those parties interested in employment: public providers, the private sector, unions, and community organizations, among others. In this case, the association requires establishing collaborative relationships where the resources and services complement one another.

What resources are needed to provide job placement services?

Organizations wishing to provide job placement services to disadvantaged youth must have the internal capacity to comply with minimum quality standards so they can fulfill their institutional objectives and meet the expectations of both young people and employers. The following are some of the resources needed to ensure minimum quality:

1. PHYSICAL RESOURCES

The following list reflects the minimum resources that are needed to adequately provide job placement services:

- A room with computers connected to the internet and adequate space for group activities,
- Office space for job placement officers,
- A database or information system,
- Office equipment: computers for staff, printer, landline phone, etc.,
- Cell phone, and
- Educational materials, such as sample resume formats, addresses of websites with videos showing interviews techniques etc.

2. HUMAN RESOURCES

How each institution is organized to provide job placement services will vary according to its circumstances and possibilities, the particular characteristics of the youth it serves and its goals, which in turn determine the work volume and personnel required. Nonetheless, an organizational structure that includes the main functions associated with job placement and the corresponding job profiles is recommended.

The following job descriptions are based largely on the format used by the Jóvenes con Futuro (Youth with a Future) program in Medellín, Colombia. In this case, job placement services are part of a vocational training program.



Other Voices

The Peruvian Network of Centers of Intermediation and Labor Information (CIL) is an example of an association that began incorporating training centers and institutions, such as technological institutions and occupational centers and then expanded to private employment agencies, other public institutions and non-governmental providers.

The system is more than a network of job placement providers. It functions as a network by using mechanisms for coordinating information, collaboration and regulation to guarantee quality standards. In addition, labor market data on both supply and demand can be analyzed among the centers and provided as feedback to local training institutions on how well they are meeting local demand and other social stakeholders interested in improving youth employment outcomes.

Job Placement Services Manager

This person is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness and quality of the placement services. Irrespective of the specific job title an organization chooses for this position, the person responsible for this function should ideally have the skills and abilities to:

- Ensure the organization has a solid strategy and sufficient resources to meet its job placement objectives,
- Manage other members of the job placement team,
- Identify primary and secondary sources of data on labor market trends and needs and ensure that these data are used intelligently in planning, delivering and evaluating job placement services,
- Manage partnerships and agreements with employers to address their human resource needs,
- Monitor and assess the quality and effectiveness of the services,
- Cultivate relationships with employers and contact with them,
- Manage young people's access to and placement in internships,
- Ensure the organization or program is updating any databases with information about job opportunities,
- Ensure the organization or program has a reliable system for collecting data on young people's and employers' satisfaction,
- Ensure there is a good system for referring youth to other services they may need such as social services, health care, child care, etc.,
- Evaluate the services offered so that key metrics are used to continuously improve effectiveness and efficiency.

Job Placement Officers

Individuals who perform this work are often referred to as job placement advisors or mentors. Regardless of their title, the people responsible for providing job placement services perform these types of duties:

- Making youth aware of what job placement entails and their role in finding work,
- Conducting assessments to help youth become aware of their personality traits and interests,
- Providing appropriate career guidance to help youth with the development and implementation of individual plans for finding a job based on a youth's personal goals and competencies, and

- Supporting the director or manager of the program in all matters related to marketing and building relationships with companies or organizations in the industries related to the training programs offered. This may include, for example, visiting potential employers to secure commitments to accept interns and/or interview youth for possible employment.

Find Out



Before hiring the personnel responsible for job placement, it is important to clearly define their roles. This will prevent hiring the wrong people and high staff turnover, which could in turn affect working relationships and productivity.

If the job placement service is part of an employment training or work readiness program, it is advisable to have the job placement staff fully oriented and ready to work by the time youth begin their training. As mentioned earlier, job placement support should be integrated throughout training.

It is very important that staff responsible for helping the youth find jobs know how to communicate well with youth, the trainers and with employers. To be successful they need to know how to relate to different “clients” and very particularly with youth and potential employers.

Although the time assigned to job placement depends on the number of young people being served, the personnel managing these services should ideally be available full-time and dedicated exclusively to this so as to adequately perform their duties.



Fundación Chile created a project to train job placement officers using a competency-based training model. This project sought to standardize the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to successfully fill this role. Fundación Chile developed the following manuals: 1) a description of the competencies needed to be a good job placement officer; 2) description of the course to develop the competencies needed to be an effective officer; 3) a training manual on how to train job placement officers; 4) a student manual to develop job placement competencies; 5) guidelines explaining the requirements for the certification of job placement officers; and 6) instruments for evaluating, auditing, and certifying job placement officers.

More information at <http://fch.cl/>



Common Characteristics of Job Placement Services Managers

Competencies, Attitudes and Skills:

- **Technical ability:** Capacity that lends credibility to the organization's services
- **Client-focused:** A commitment to understand and address the needs of youth and employers
- **Initiative:** Predisposed to take action, create opportunities, and improve results without the need for direction or instructions from someone else
- **Results-oriented:** Succeeds by setting goals and maintaining high performance
- **Planning and management:** Effective management of work and ability to effectively manage time, resources and multiple activities
- **Managing relationships within the organization:** Able to build effective relationships with instructors, administrators and others to ensure that the services provided to young people are adequate
- **Managing business relationships:** The ability to establish effective relationships with employers
- **Capacity to advise young people and employers**
- **Clear and persuasive communication skills**
- **Analysis and interpretation:** Able to interpret numbers and market trends
- **Interpersonal relationship skills:** This includes the ability to identify and relate well with key stakeholders
- **Effective meeting-facilitation skills**

Knowledge:

- **Types of recruitment**
- **Labor and social security laws (applicable in each country)**
- **Trends and characteristics of each target market where the youth have the greatest probability of being employed**
- **The types of entry-level requirements for sectors of greatest relevance by employers**
- **Government and private support programs to stimulate employment**
- **Basic sales techniques**
- **Good understanding of the abilities and characteristics of the youth served into the labor market (social, educational, cultural, economic, etc.)**
- **The content of training programs and particularly the competencies being developed**
- **How to prepare a resume and job interview techniques**
- **Use and management of databases**
- **Business recruitment and selection processes**
- **IT knowledge, including databases and other software**

Job Placement Facilitator

The following are the main responsibilities for someone in a facilitating, not management, role:

- Researching and analyzing market needs,
- Designing educational materials to help youth become more competent in securing employment; this can include career planning, job seeking, and socio-emotional competencies,
- Promoting the importance of career planning as youth come to the end of their training cycle,
- Collecting feedback about the job placement services being offered,

- Designing a manual with standards for job seekers and employers, which aims to manage expectations for all parties and secure commitments around the use of the job placement services,
- Supporting efforts to promote job placement services, and
- Providing information for the preparation of reports to donors, regulatory agencies, and the like.

Other potential members of a job placement team may include:

Administrative Assistant

This person can provide valuable support for a variety of tasks, such as managing databases, scheduling appointments with employers, requesting feedback on youth hired, and handling the logistics for training and other activities with youth.

Instructors

In many organizations, the training instructors are the ones who have contacts with potential employers, since they may have worked in the industry or sector in which youth are being trained and/or have contacts in the companies where youth may want to work.

Communications Manager

Promotional strategies and materials are essential to promote the services and establish links with employers. Materials such as brochures and videos should be used to publicize the qualities of the youth beneficiaries of the job placement services and communicate to youth and employers the value of the services being offered. Having a professional with expertise in this area will make it easier to reach out to and link with the different audiences such as youth, media and businesses.

Information System Assistant

A job placement service must have an information system for inputting and maintaining data on youth served, companies seeking talent and other resources that may facilitate youths' transition to employment. The person responsible for this must keep the system updated and generate timely reports.

Youth

Youth who have received services in the past, especially those who are performing well in their jobs, are great potential allies for the program or service as they can provide testimonial evidence of the value of the services provided and refer youth and companies to the organization.

3. TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The following list describes the tremendous potential of information and communications technology (ICT) when it comes to facilitating access to information and programs to support job placement, ranging from the content of a training program to making information available to young job seekers. One example is Microsoft's YouthSpark portal (www.youthsparklatam.com).

- Private Online Job Banks and Portals

The websites mentioned below are examples of the types of online resources to help match job seekers with openings because they have data on job seekers and vacancies and searchable fields that enable a company to

identify potential talent and youth to hone their job search. Sometimes these sites specialize in the job market of certain countries or regions, while others focus on certain types of occupations or even certain forms of work. They also provide resources for resume preparation, guidance on writing business plans, tips for interviews etc.

The following are some examples:

www.acciontrabajo.com

www.infoempleo.net

www.curriculumfacil.es

www.bumeran.com

www.empleo.com

www.teorienta.cl

www.computrabajo.com

www.modelocurriculum.net

www.opcionempleo.com

www.infojobs.net

www.aliadolaboral.com

www.tecoloco.com

- Public Sector Job Portals

These portals usually contain information about job openings and topics related to the labor market, such as tips for job interviews, how to prepare a resume, etc.

The portal of the National Employment Service in Mexico (SNE) provides information about employment options, guidance, training and advice about the labor market. It is one of the most advanced in the region and offers a broad range of services to both job seekers and employers. More information: www.empleo.gob.mx

Some more examples:

www.sepe.es

Spanish Public Employment Service. The section of work-related videos is recommended.

www.bcn.cat/treball

Barcelona Activa, Barcelona City Council – Spain. The tools in the section targeted at individuals is recommended.

www.renacemento.gob.sv/

National Employment Network of El Salvador.

<http://colombianostrabajando.sena.edu.co/>

National Employment Service of Colombia. The section providing guidance on resume preparation is recommended.

www.empleosperu.gob.pe/

One-stop employment promotion center of the Ministry of Labor and Promotion of Employment of Peru.

<http://www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=2>

The Labor Market Information System of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security of Jamaica. It is a one-stop data and information source for job search and placement.

- Email

Email facilitates contact between young people and potential employers and can also be used to send electronic newsletters with information about job openings, labor market trends, talent gaps in the labor market, etc.

If the organization uses email as a means of communicating with youth and employers, it should:

- Check the account regularly in order to respond in a timely manner to user inquiries and needs, and
- Make young people aware about the importance of checking email regularly and also of notifying contacts when they change their email address. It should also be emphasized with young people the importance of sounding professional, not only in their email communication but also with whatever name they use for their email address.

- Professional Networks

Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram has proven to be a very effective way of connecting youth with information about job vacancies, providing youth with the latest tools to enhance their job search, and placing youth in jobs. Online networks such as LinkedIn have become widely used by professionals around the world to communicate their availability for work or to advertise job opportunities (www.linkedin.com).

- Mobile Solutions

These are technologies with rapid adoption and high penetration at all social levels as they reach places and people who lack Internet access, landline phones, and even without electricity. These solutions can be combined with other technological media and aids. One example is Frontline SMS, which can be used for job placement through sending text messages to a large number of youth and employers while also creating records of the history of each contact. More information: www.frontlinesms.com.

- Extranets

These are the private networks of institutions and organizations used exclusively for their employees and sometimes for customers and suppliers. These networks can facilitate the promotion of job placement and insertion services with potential employers. More information at www.ning.com or www.wordpress.com.

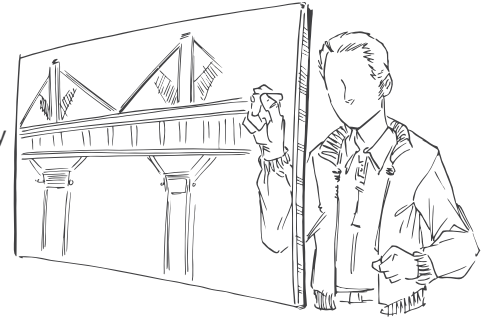


Microsoft offers a range of technological resources free-of-charge through its portal to help both nonprofit organizations and young people maximize their use of technology to achieve their objectives. Organizations can obtain software and training modules on topics of interest to them, including how to develop and manage social networks. For their part, young people can explore and get access to training, services and resources designed to support them in developing job skills.

More information: www.youthsparklatam.com

- Information and Communication Systems

These can be systems that are managed internally or through an information platform. These technological resources facilitate the organization and use of data, thereby facilitating appropriate and timely decision-making. Information systems generally contain a database of youth resumes, making it possible to respond in a timely fashion to employer requests.



Before adding a resume to the information system, make sure the resume is in the appropriate format and contains information the employers need. When the information has been properly organized, it is possible to apply filters and variables in order to generate lists and reports according to the information needed, for instance a list of youth by age, gender, education level, or technical skills etc. The information systems can be commercial databases or customized software, depending on the needs of the organization.

Job placement information systems can be used to:

- Track youth through time to generate data on percentage who found work, what type of work, how long they remained a given position, etc.,
- Manage relationships with employers and data about types and number of vacancies, areas of greatest demand, success in filling vacancies and in what time period, etc.,
- Support administrative processes related to the job placement services provided, such as personnel contracts and activity scheduling, etc.,
- Generate reports and inform the planning of training and other services based on data regarding skills needs, gaps and the success in equipping youth with the competencies in greater demand, and
- Support the tracking and evaluation of services.

Other Voices

Through its portal TeOrienta, Fundación Chile published information on more than 400 occupations and provided tools such as Portafolio Virtual (Virtual Portfolio), which young people could use to prepare and update their resumes, apply for jobs, and follow up on their applications. Fundación Chile also used IT to train employment coordinators, whose function is to help young people define their careers and use both traditional and digital tools to find jobs.

More information: <http://fch.cl/>

Find out



At the following address [http://innovum.cl/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/1.-](http://innovum.cl/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/1.-Cat%C3%A1logoempleabilidad.pdf)

[Cat%C3%A1logoempleabilidad.pdf](http://innovum.cl/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/1.-Cat%C3%A1logoempleabilidad.pdf) you can find out about the virtual portfolio created by Fundación Chile. This tool enables youth to document their work experience, attaching evidence of the knowledge, abilities, or competencies listed in their resumes. This portfolio is a good strategy for employers to more easily select candidates by finding concrete evidence of their capacities.



Comfenalco Antioquia in Colombia designed an information system to support the process for helping youth find employment. The platform contains the following modules:

- **Administration:** enables users to interact with the system
- **Companies:** for entering and processing information related to employers, including entering and following up on job openings
- **Job seekers:** for managing information about the youth participants, from their profiles to a description of the guidance they receive
- **Job openings:** information about current job vacancies and ones that have already been filled
- **Referrals:** for following up with the people referred to companies
- **Reports:** for preparing reports on the companies contacted, the young people participating in guidance sessions, referrals, referral status, and job openings filled

More information: www.camaramed.org.co



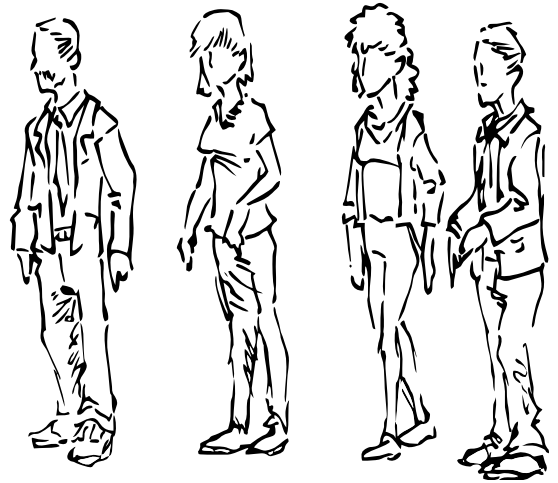
The Blusoft project in Brazil developed an information system with a twist: employers pay for the right to access the system, view characteristics of the youth candidates, select applicable candidates, and even to schedule interviews with individuals on their shortlist.

More information: www.entra21.com.br

4. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The following are the most important items to consider when implementing job placement services:

- Human Resources
- Coordinator
- Support personnel: assistants, promoters, counselors, communications professionals
- Infrastructure
- Physical space for serving youth
- Physical space for meetings and workshops
- Materials
- Tests
- Promotional material targeted at youth and employers
- Guides, manuals, videos, etc.
- Equipment
- Computers
- Audiovisual equipment
- Transportation for visits



What does the monitoring and evaluation system for job placement services consist of?

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are a series of standards, indicators, and means of verification that allow for tracking, updating and improving services offered both to young job seekers and employers with job openings.

What standards are applicable to the provision of placement services?

Below are two categories of indicators that can be applied to ensure the quality of the job placement services being provided.

Efficiency Indicators

This type of indicator helps to ensure basic standards related to the capacity of the organization or program to respond in a timely manner to the demand for services. The following are some examples:

- The amount of time between the end of the training process and the time a young person has his/her first interview and secures employment; this indicator applies when the services are part of broader training programs;
- For stand-alone job placement services, it can be the amount of time between the beginning of the job search and when the individual actually finds a job;
- The average number of searches managed by each officer in a month;
- The average number of young people interviewed who were eventually hired;
- The percentage of the number of young people who continued in their positions after their probationary period.

For more sample indicators please see Appendix 1.

Note:

- Unless a fairly sophisticated indicator is used, performance indicators do not show the impact of a particular service, just whether it has been delivered.
- One of the serious shortcomings of internal performance indicators is the lack of an external benchmark or standard from which to measure.
- Internal performance indicators must be matched or integrated within a larger evaluation system that attempts to look at longer-term impacts.
- Internal performance indicators alone cannot be relied on as the sole method for increasing efficiency and effectiveness. For this reason, a number of OECD countries enact performance indicators while simultaneously implementing wider management reforms and market-based mechanisms.

Jacqueline Mazza, IDB's Principal Labor Markets Specialist

**Other
Voices**

The following table summarizes the information collected by a project in Colombia* that serves as an example of indicator management that can be integrated as part of an organizational monitoring and evaluation plan.

Name of indicator	Measurement criteria	Frequency	Cut-off date	Information source
Companies identified	Number of companies in the database			Databases Chambers of commerce, trade associations, contacts, referrals to other companies, etc.
Companies contacted	Number of companies contacted by phone, email or other virtual method	Daily	NA	Database
Companies visited	Number of companies visited per week by counselor	Weekly	Every Friday	Follow-up spreadsheet
Registered job openings	Number of job openings identified by coordinator/ budgeted openings	Monthly	end of each month	Job openings database
Resumes sent	Number of resumes sent (3 x the target number of job openings per month)	Monthly	end of each month	Database of resumes sent
Career guidance	Number of graduates given guidance/number of people registered Number of individual guidance sessions/or hours offered Number of group training sessions offered	Monthly	end of each month	Database of people given guidance
Other activities	Number of companies and youth participating in job fairs	Monthly	end of each month	
Effectiveness of visits	Number of job openings per visit	Monthly	end of each month	Follow-up spreadsheet
Placement effectiveness	Number of people placed with active participation by the service/Number registered divided by 100	Monthly	end of each month	Placement database
Placement rate	Number of graduates hired/number of monthly job openings	Monthly	end of each month	Database of people given guidance

Effectivity indicators

These indicators measure whether the job placement services reach their goals and succeed in having a favorable impact on the employment situation of the young people.

The following are examples of indicators related to youth job placement and job quality:

- Percentage of youth in their positions 6 months after being hired;
- Comparison of the employment rates among youth at the start of services 6 months after placement;
- Comparison between the employment rates of youth participating in the program and those who have not participated. Since finding a counterfactual or comparison group can be difficult, it is wise to consult an expert evaluation specialist first;
- Percentage of youth employed in decent jobs;
- Percentage of youth satisfied with their jobs.

In order to measure these indicators, the organization needs to develop an evaluation plan and system. This should include the application of a validated instrument to collect data on all youth when they enroll in the program or service and another one when they finish or exit the program. In addition, to measure employment rates, quality of employment and retention, validated data collection instruments should be applied to all youth or a random sample six months after they participated in the program or service. It is also useful to interview a sample of employers to determine whether the youth were good employees and how the program or service might better prepare youth in the future.

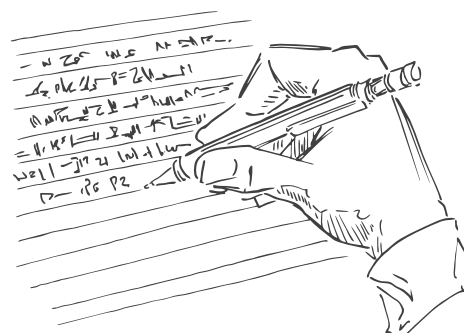
For more information, consult “Measuring Success of Youth Livelihood Interventions (World Bank)” at <http://www.iyfnet.org/library/measuring-success-youth-livelihood-interventions>



No	Checklist for the implementation of effective job placement services:	Yes	No
1	The services offered are part of the organization's mission and strategies		
2	The services are planned and budgeted for within annual or strategic work plans		
3	Human resources with the right skill set for the provision of this type of service are available		
4	The services offered are provided in a multidisciplinary fashion, involving the personnel involved in job search, training, internships, etc.		
5	The organization has methodologies for analyzing the labor market and identifying job openings		
6	The organization is fully informed about current labor laws		
7	Outreach and PR strategies have been defined for establishing and maintaining long-term relationships with employers		
8	Key stakeholders or individuals or entities interested in employment have been engaged with as much as possible: government, job agencies, trade associations etc.		
9	Strategies have been defined to empower youth to take responsibility for finding and retaining a job and building their life, education and career plans		
10	The organization has methodologies and tools for identifying the needs, interests, and skills of youth who apply for the services		
11	The services include information, guidance, training, and linking youth with employers		
12	Personalized assistance is offered both before and after the young people find jobs		
13	Information and communications technology (ICT) is used to improve the quality and efficiency of the service provision		
14	An information system is available to facilitate orderly and effective management of the information needed to match youth with employers		
15	There is a system in place for monitoring and evaluating service provision, with indicators for efficiency, effectiveness and employer satisfaction		

Which job placement services can be offered?

The focus of this guide, as indicated in the definition provided at the beginning, is not limited to establishing a relationship between the youth and employers (which tends to be the focus of traditional employment centers or job banks) but incorporates a series of preparatory and complementary services that seek to improve a young person's chances of getting a job. The following table provides a summary of the job placement services that can be offered by a single entity or offered in a complementary fashion as a result of partnerships with other entities.

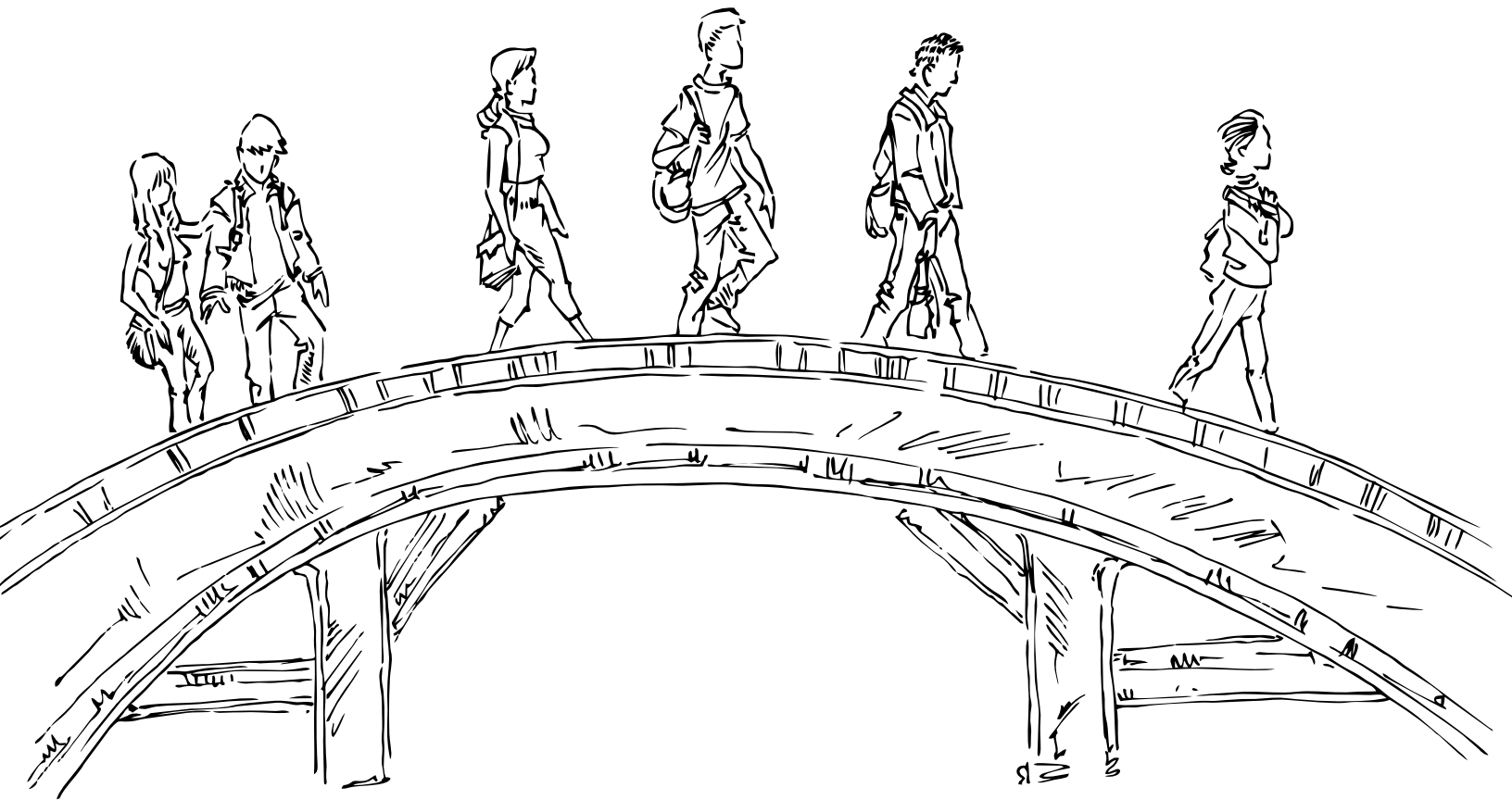


Category	Types of services	Tools
Career assessment, guidance and advice for developing an employment profile and strategy for the job search ¹	<p>Creation of a client's employment profile to determine what services he/she needs</p> <p>Guidance and advice for personal and career planning</p> <p>Resume preparation</p> <p>Preparation for selection processes</p> <p>Building of support networks for those leaving the program</p> <p>Establishment of job clubs</p>	<p>Aptitude tests or referring people to these tests</p> <p>Skills and competency tests</p> <p>Individual and/or group sessions</p> <p>Catalogs, videos</p> <p>Education and career plan</p>
Training	<p>Assessment of training needs and requirements</p> <p>Referring people to public and private training service providers</p> <p>Direct training in life skills, employability and technical skills</p>	<p>Short workshops</p> <p>Training programs provided by the entity itself or other in-person and/or virtual entities</p>
Information and intermediation	<p>Information about the world of work, market trends, occupations, career paths, salaries, rights, duties, and legislation</p> <p>Advice on how to have successful job interviews, how to interpret and respond to job ads, how to job search and how to build networks among those leaving the program</p> <p>Set up, maintain, and make available a database of job openings</p> <p>Subscribe to other databases</p> <p>Information about opportunities for studying, setting up businesses, and obtaining financing for studies or start-ups</p> <p>Placement into the labor market through direct links with employers</p> <p>Placement into the labor market through other intermediation system entities such as public or private employment agencies</p> <p>Organizing events such as job fairs</p>	<p>Own databases and other sources</p> <p>Information system: database of job openings and job seekers</p> <p>Role playing</p> <p>Promotional material for businesses</p> <p>Direct visits to employers</p> <p>Participation in events attended by employers</p> <p>Cooperation agreements, market research, satisfaction surveys</p>
Specialized services to employers	<p>Screening and selection of job seekers</p> <p>Promoters and links with training entities and employers</p> <p>Guidance on staff training</p>	<p>Applicant selection testing</p> <p>Interview techniques</p> <p>Information systems</p>
Information about the job market	<p>Supplying data and analysis of job market trends</p>	<p>Information system records</p> <p>Consultation with external sources</p>

¹ Career guidance services can be part of placement services and have therefore been included in the range of options. For more information on how to provide career guidance services, please consult <http://www.iyfnet.org/library/guide-providing-integrated-career-guidance-services-vulnerable-youth>.

CHAPTER 2

Preparing Young People so They Can Secure Decent Jobs



As mentioned in previous chapters, the institutions responsible for providing job placement services to disadvantaged young people should be aware that they are working with youth who may have different combinations of factors that make them more disadvantaged. The main objective of this chapter is to describe the types of services, including mentoring, that may be necessary to enable young people to discover their interests and abilities and acquire the personal and technical skills they need to join the world of work. To provide a full complement of services, it may not be necessary for the organization or program to provide guidance, training, and intermediation services but instead to partner with other entities to offer a comprehensive package that responds to the needs of the youth being served. Each entity can adapt the following service elements to fit the realities and characteristics of the youth it serves and do not necessarily have to follow this order:

- Career assessment and guidance;
- Development of life skills and particularly skills related to workforce readiness;
- Training in job search skills;
- Training in technical skills;
- Personalized assistance in setting up and preparing for interviews for internships or jobs;
- Mentoring and follow-up after the young person obtains a job to ensure she/he is adapting well to the workplace.

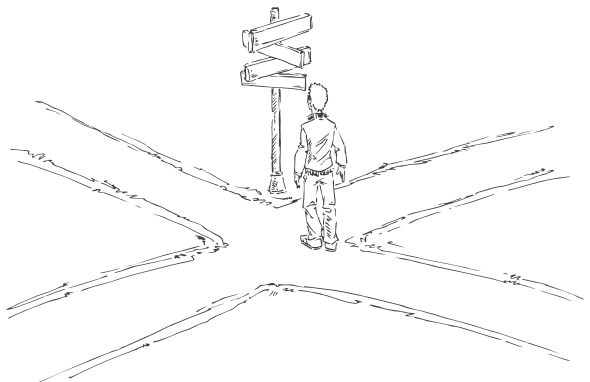
Career assessment and guidance phase

Why is career assessment and guidance for youth important?

Young people, especially those living in poverty, are often busy ensuring that they and their families get by. They tend to have little awareness about their personal interests and abilities and lack clarity about what they want to be and do in the future. In many cases these young people have unrealistic expectations and objectives and lack knowledge about the work-related needs and opportunities around them.

Because disadvantaged youth typically have not had the opportunity to explore their life and work aspirations and have limited role models of people working toward career goals, it may be important to include a phase to allow youth to assess and explore their attitudes and aspirations around work to enable the youth to respond to the following questions:

- **Who am I?**
This question enables the young person to identify his/her interests, motivations, strengths, and abilities.
- **Where do I want to go?**
Having defined their interests and their point of departure, the youth defines what they want to achieve in their life and work.
- **What do I lack?**
In other words, what is the gap between where the youth is today and where he/she hopes to be in one or more years?



- **What is the plan I am going to put in place to reach my career goals?**

Now is the time to sketch out a personal and career plan.

Some reasons to provide career assessment and guidance to young people

<p>So young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can make more informed decisions about career options that are realistic for them. • take responsibility for their own job search process. • are able to be more successful in navigating the world of work. • can have more realistic expectations of their first or second job and more likely to be satisfied in their job. 	<p>So employers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have access to qualified human resources who perform better and are more likely to stay on the job (e.g. less turnover).
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How to provide career assessment and guidance to young people

The activities and tools used in this phase are designed to help young people identify their motivations, interests, and skills so they are able to make career decisions and define a corresponding training plan.

The following are some tools currently in use:

1. Tests or exams to identify basic reading and writing, math, and ICT skills, among other skills and competencies.
2. Psychological tests to identify personality traits that will help with developing a training and career plan.
3. Interviews to enable the young person to become aware of their interests and motivations.



Example 1

Fundación SES in Argentina designed an employment training project based on the idea that youth need to build a career plan before beginning the job search. One of the objectives of the program is to guide youth in choosing pathways that translate into training/career plans to improve their employability. They did this by having youth analyze their current situation and raising their awareness and understanding of the work and education opportunities available in their environment. The guidance took place during the pre-training stage, through interviews and participation in an orientation workshop that was followed by training in specific occupational areas which were aligned with youths' interests and labor market opportunities. To find out more about the central themes of this project, see Appendix 3.

Other Voices

Example 2

Fundación Chile developed a self-assessment test of 15 basic skills for the world of work. There are no right answers in the sense that its purpose was to help young people gain a better sense of their relative strengths and weaknesses. This assessment was designed to show youth where they scored themselves at low or average levels and thus where they need to target their efforts to be successful in their careers. The following are the 15 skills assessed in the test:

- Administrative
- Artistic creativity
- Literary creativity
- Spatial skills
- Use of language
- Manual dexterity
- Numerical skills
- Organization skills
- Helping others
- Scientific creativity
- Knowledge of people
- Reading
- Leadership
- Mechanical skills
- Sales

Example 3

The same project in Chile created a tool for identifying the current work interests of each young person and to find out where he/she is on the World of Work Map. The map consists of continents of work interests, countries of work interests, and cities of work interests, organized according to basic tasks that involve working with people, ideas, data, or things. The test motivates young people to reflect on which cities they feel attracted to and why. More information: <http://fch.cl/>

Developing life skills

What are life skills?

Life skills are the range of socio-emotional skills or competencies that enable an individual to successfully address the demands of daily life and the challenges posed by their environment. These personal and social skills are essential for the development of the young person's life and career plans, contributing to good performance at work and improving personal relationships.

Disadvantaged youth tend to have difficulties with their personal competencies, not just in terms of finding and retaining a job but also when it comes to successfully addressing the challenges of family and social life.

Developing and strengthening these personal and social skills helps young people know how to navigate daily life. A young person with these skills:

- Is more self-aware;
- Achieves independence and autonomy;
- Has his/her own ideas about what he/she wants in life;
- Is able to set priorities and prioritize needs;
- Knows what his/her own skills are and develops his/her potential;

- Develops the will to carry out his/her decisions;
- Achieves balance between the personal, work and social aspects of his/her life;
- Gains financial stability;
- Is constantly improving and achieving new objectives; and
- Has a positive attitude with regard to overcoming obstacles.

For more information on socio-emotional skill development, please consult “A Guide to Develop Socio-Emotional Competencies” published under NEO (2016). <http://www.iyfnet.org/library/guide-effective-incorporation-social-emotional-competencies-employability-programs>

Employers tend to prioritize a young person's life skills ahead of technical or job-related skills

The following are among the skills valued by employers which also facilitate permanence in the job market:

- Adaptability
- The ability to manage complex information and do so with a certain level of innovation
- The ability to manage time and work under pressure
- Communication skills: the ability to listen, give presentations, and write documents
- The ability to understand the organization and recognize the experience and knowledge of other people



Fundacion SES of Argentina believes a life plan should address the following dimensions:

Affective	An individual's need for affection and a sense of belonging. This is about giving and receiving love, having a partner, and building a family.
Professional	Career planning or work activities that an individual wishes to develop in the future. This involves objectives such as having an occupation or professional career, receiving training or perfecting skills, gaining employment, owning one's own business, etc.
Social	This relates to the way in which an individual relates to others. It is about social approval and building new friendships.
Spiritual	This consists of the way in which an individual projects their inner life, values, ideals, religious beliefs, and the way in which they practice those beliefs.
Material	These are the material and physical goods that an individual wants to have in the future. These goods may be one of the reasons why the individual works.
Physical	This is about what an individual wants to achieve in terms of their personal physical wellbeing, health, fitness.

Training in how to secure and retain a job

It is important that job placement services include the theoretical and practical resources necessary for finding a job. This training should include practical information on how to look for work but also the attitudes and behaviors that are required for planning and implementing a search and keeping a job once the youth is hired. Once they gain these competencies, young people are more confident and capable of making decisions and taking action to implement their life and career plans.

Training on how to conduct a job search typically includes:

Training in how to identify job opportunities

These skills enable the young person to identify, gain access to, and use all the means available around them to identify opportunities, such as classified ads in newspapers or online, personal references, social media, job agencies, etc. It is critical that youth are adept at using a computer and the internet as resources for identifying job opportunities and drawing up a plan for establishing key contacts.

See Appendix 4. Job search skills. Fundación SES of Argentina.

Training in job search and retention skills

These competencies relate to the knowledge and skills needed to adequately undertake the job search process and establish contacts with potential employers. The objective of the training is for the young people to learn about and analyze trends in the working world, the structure and operations of companies, as well as the types of contracts, paperwork, and legal aspects required to obtain a job. The process includes advice on preparing a resume, interview techniques, personal presentation, assertive communication, etc.



Following a review of national and international experiences such as Skills USA VICA and Professional Development Program of the United States, as well as consulting with key stakeholders from the business and training worlds, Fundación Chile developed a curriculum known as Preparado, which groups 8 areas with 27 competencies that have been validated by the business sector. This model seeks to strengthen people's competencies so they can obtain a job, keep it, and develop their careers. This methodology has been validated by more than 700 education and training establishments, over 3,500 trainers and in excess of 100,000 people in the transition from education to the world of work.

More information: www.preparado.cl



The model presented promotes training in the following areas and competencies

Area	Competency
Communication	Express yourself clearly, both orally and in writing Listen and read with comprehension Act assertively Negotiate and persuade
Initiative and entrepreneurship	Face new situations with flexibility Act creatively Translate ideas into action Maintain energy for achieving an objective
Teamwork	Design projects with achievable goals Identify and obtain resources Monitor and control the progress of a project
Plan and manage projects	Identify objectives and coordinate with others Collaborate and generate trust within a team Resolve problems as a team
Personal effectiveness	Self-awareness and control Manage your own career development Work with confidence and security
Learn to learn	Become interested and motivated to learn Observe your own learning process Apply new learning to a context
Problem solving	Collect, organize, and analyze information to solve a problem Apply different solutions to problems Resolve interpersonal problems
Use of IT (based on ICDL certification standards and teaching)	Apply basic PC user skills. Manage basic applications on a PC Use the internet Learn and transfer the use of IT to the workplace.

Training in technical skills phase

During this phase young people gain the theoretical knowledge and technical abilities necessary to perform work in a particular area.

Personalized assistance for obtaining internships phase

Internships were also an important path to employment. Data processed by IYF in phase one of entra21 revealed that 36% of the young people who were working after finishing the program, were doing so at the same company where they had held internships.

Internships can be used to hone the young person's technical and personal skills and support their subsequent insertion into the labor market. This experience enables youth to apply the knowledge gained during the training process and to adapt to the demands and requirements of employers, such as the ability to perform functions, and manage interpersonal relationships, work pressures, schedules, etc.

To manage the internship placement process, it is necessary for institutions that provide job placement services to enter into agreements with government organizations, NGOs, or private companies that can provide youth with a meaningful internship experience. These organizations must be able to assist, mentor, and follow up with the young people during their internship and have the requisite physical and human resources required. To ensure that internships are successful, it is important to consider the following:

- **Coordination between the different stakeholders:**
Internships result from a coordinated effort between the youth participants, the companies or organizations, and the job placement service providers.
- **Ongoing mentoring:**
This helps to increase the chances that youth and the receiving company or institution's expectations are aligned and that the young people are learning and putting their skills into practice, and that the employers are benefiting.
- **Orientation process:**
This facilitates the young person's entry into the culture and work flows of the receiving business or organization.
- **Assigning of responsibilities:**
Responsibilities for following up and supporting the young people should be assigned, both within the companies or organizations where they are doing their internships, and the institution offering the placement services.
- **Managing internships with job prospects:**
While not essential, the internships should ideally take place in companies or organizations that have the potential to offer jobs to the participating youth.
- **Formalizing commitments:**
Internships should be formalized through written agreements in which the duties and responsibilities of each party are specified.

Find out



According to the experience of Comfenalco in Colombia, one of the strategies for ensuring the incorporation of youth into work is contacting companies to obtain internships. This process provides access to information about job openings and allows an organization or project to get to know potential employers better. Furthermore, good performance by the students during their internships is a major advantage in terms of finding employment with those companies.⁴

More information: www.iyfnet.org/sites/default/files/entra21_EstudiosReflexiones_4.pdf

⁴ Fundación Empresarios por la Educación: Conéctate Colombia.

Mentoring and follow-up phase after the young person obtains a job

Mentoring can be very useful for everyone involved because it provides them with the opportunity to receive advice or feedback on situations that may arise on the job, or even during an internship. Offering this service, even after a youth has been hired, can be particularly helpful to youth who are working in a formal job for the first time. They may or may not have anyone in their family or circle of friends who has experience dealing with issues that typically arise when working in a formal job situation. It is recommended, wherever possible, to have mentoring available for youth during their first month on the job.

For the organization offering training and/or job placement services, this type of follow-up is an opportunity to receive the feedback on the effectiveness and relevance of your training and services. It also provides another way to maintain relationships with companies, which in turn ensures access to first-hand information about potential job openings.



The case of COSPAE of Panama, on internship management.⁵

Steps to follow for job placement and incorporation:

1. Develop databases with information about companies with potential to create month-long technical internship positions
2. Send letters to the companies to promote the program
3. Verify that the company has received the letter and, if they show interest, make contact and schedule a visit
4. At the meeting, provide general information about the program and leave-behind promotional material. Explain the objectives of the program, how it works, the roles it offers, the organizations that support it and the cooperation agreement that can be established with the company.

Other Voices

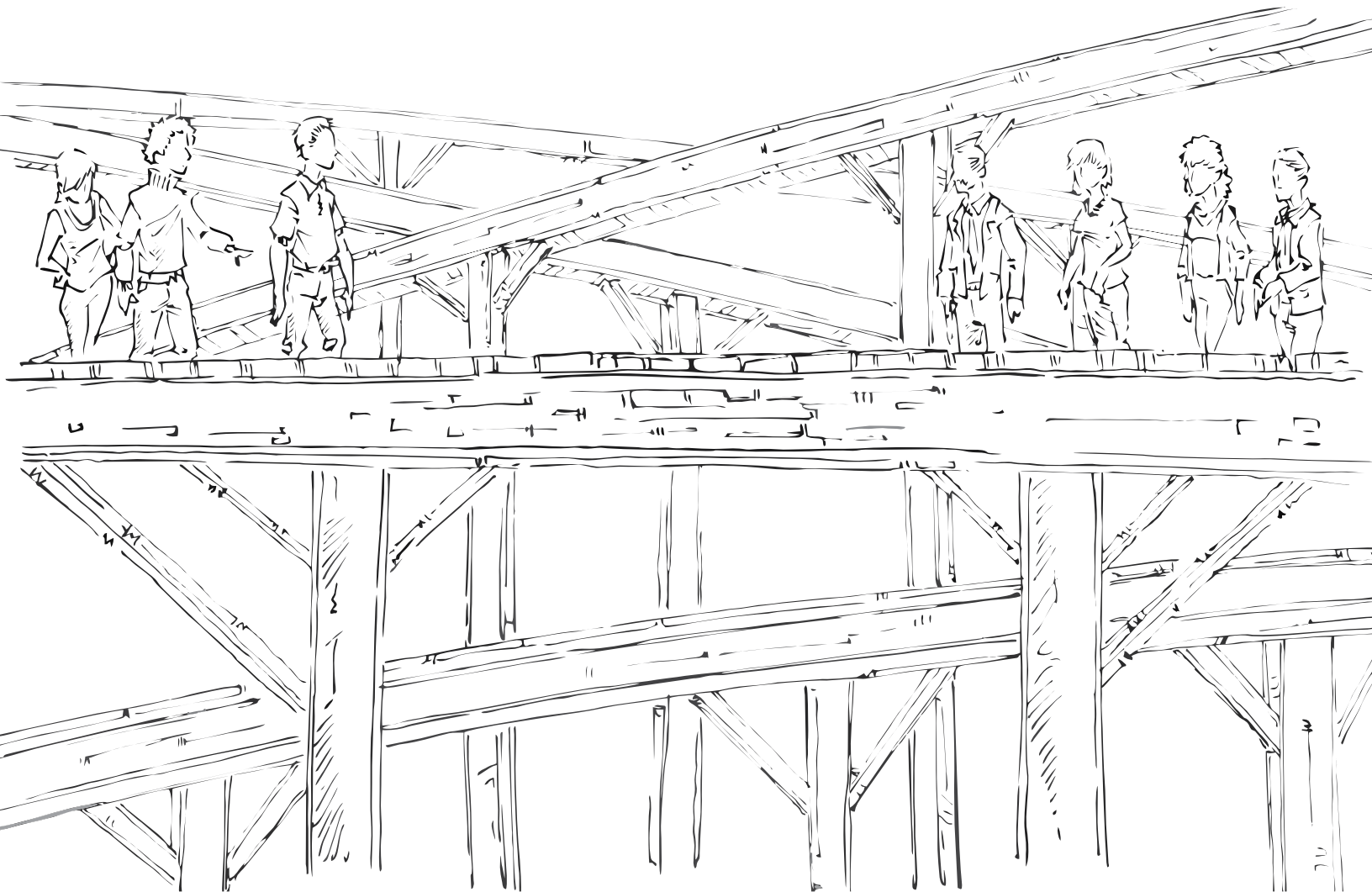
5. Together with the interested company, draw up a cooperative agreement that includes the responsibilities of the parties involved. Once this agreement is signed, the relationship between COSPAE (Private Sector Council for Educational Assistance) and the companies is formalized. (See Appendix 5. Cooperation Agreement)
6. The relationship between COSPAE and the companies begins with the application presented by the companies offering internship positions for the candidates.
7. COSPAE, as the organization responsible for developing the program, designs a letter template used to introduce the interns to the companies. This letter is attached to the young person's profile.
8. During the training process, COSPAE staff visit the companies to follow up with and support the participants. A follow-up sheet is used for this activity. The employment service coordinator completes this when visiting each young person at the company where he/she is doing their internship.
9. The employment services coordinator prepares a written report on each visit and activity, documenting the actions undertaken and the results obtained. This report is maintained in the file for each company.

⁵ Report of the *entra21* experience: "Programa bilingüe de certificación profesional en nuevas tecnologías de la información con énfasis en tele mercadeo y comercio electrónico (Bilingual professional certification program in new information technologies focused on telemarketing and electronic commerce)." Silma Pinilla Díaz, Panama, October 2005.



CHAPTER 3

Developing Relationships with Employers



“The key function of job placement services is to maintain a registry and information on current job openings and seek to match a specific opening with specific applicants. This task is not as simple as it sounds. Employer job needs change rapidly and to be effective, the service must get a wide enough number of listings, keep them extremely current, and be skilled at placing the right people in the right jobs in order to ensure that employers continue to use the service.”

Jacqueline Mazza
IDB's Principal Labor Markets Specialist

The approach proposed in this guide prioritizes establishing strong links with employers in order to bring them into closer contact with young job seekers. In addition to facilitating contact, this proximity will establish or strengthen relationships with employers and allow the job placement services to be adapted to meet the real needs of the labor market.

How do we establish successful relationships with employers?

1. FIND OUT THEIR NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS

The organization’s capacity to understand the needs of local employers and win their confidence is critical to identifying job openings, achieving a good match between job seekers and employers, and achieving high satisfaction with the job placement services offered. It is important to apply methodologies to identify opportunities and changes in the labor market regularly so as to focus your placement services on the most strategic industries and employers. <http://www.yfnet.org/library/connecting-employment-training-labor-market-demand-and-opportunities>

2. PUT INTO PRACTICE THE “DUAL CLIENT APPROACH”

The “dual client approach” recognizes that to achieve youth employment outcomes, it is as important to understand the young person as it is to know the needs and expectations of the employers. Therefore, job placement services should focus both on preparing young people to take advantage of job opportunities and also on designing services that respond to the preferences and needs of employers.

Institutions that offer job placement services are using the “dual client approach” when they provide services that benefit both youth and employers.

3. MAINTAIN QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS

Institutions that offer job placement services for disadvantaged youth should ensure that the employers with whom they are linked comply with current labor laws regarding minimum wage, working hours, social security, and other benefits.

To provide high-quality job placement services, merely placing a young person in any job is not enough; youth need access to decent jobs as defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

4. BUILD A WIN-WIN

As employers are always interested in maximizing value and profits, it is advisable and strategic to understand the potential benefits that establishing relationships with highly effective employment programs services may accrue to them such as:

- Increased retention of new hires,
- Higher productivity,
- Greater transparency in the labor market,
- Reduced probability of any claims of discrimination in hiring practices,
- Lower hiring costs, and
- Compliance with corporate social responsibility goals.

5. DEFINE STRATEGIES FOR CULTIVATING RELATIONSHIPS WITH EMPLOYERS

The following are some recommended strategies for building more and deeper relationships with employers, particularly businesses:

- Periodically send employers information about services provided, institutional newsletters, and documents with information of interest to them, such as new trends in hiring personnel, human resource training, etc.;
- Look for ways to have information about your program or service included in businesses' internal communications. This strategy is a good way of introducing and publicizing the available placement services and for linking with companies in order to better understand their needs;
- Offer follow-up and mentoring services to the young people after they have obtained a job. Mentoring offers benefits to employers, as it provides the young people with additional support to address any concerns, improves their workplace relationships, and keeps them informed about courses to strengthen their competencies and improve their performance;
- Set up mechanisms to evaluate employer satisfaction with the young people hired and the services provided by the institution; and
- Guarantee continuity in the provision of intermediation services. This strategy generates relationships of trust such that employers feel comfortable working with these institutions whenever they have job openings.

6. DEFINE STRATEGIES FOR FINANCING AND ENSURING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES

Because these services have value in the market and companies tend to invest significant resources in recruitment and selection processes, organizations could consider a business model in which employers pay for the placement services. If the profile of the youth makes a fee for service arrangement unrealistic, an organization could consider offering selection services to a wider array of clients (not just disadvantaged youth), so as to generate income that helps subsidize the support services to disadvantaged youth.

In Panama, an entra21 partner set up the Instituto de Competitividad Juvenil (ICJ) which was financed through a strategy in which employers could choose between different levels of sponsorship for ICJ operations, in return for which they received publicity benefits such as greater access to a talent pool.

The ICJ has undergone a process of trial and error to find a financing model that ensures the sustainability of its programs. Over time, it moved from a fundraising strategy based on sponsorship to a dual client approach, which has opened the doors to replicating and/or transferring its experience to other regions of Panama, creating other ICJs that it manages and funds. More recently, ICJ has made the opening of these new offices conditional on commitments by local companies to cover the operating costs for a minimum of three years. More information from: <http://www.iyfnet.org/library/entra21-notes-adapting-successful-model-meet-growing-demands>

The following are some do's and don'ts when it comes to establishing strategic relationships with employers:

Don't:

- Highlight the youth's level of disadvantage as the reason the company should take notice and give the youth a chance. Instead, focus on what the youth bring to the company in terms of skills, motivation and energy. It is therefore best to avoid phrases like:
"This job is the only opportunity these young people have to leave poverty behind."
"It is very important to these young people that your company hires them."

Do:

- Reinforce how essential it is for employers to have qualified human resources. It is important to focus on the benefits of hiring these young people rather than their disadvantaged situation and need for work.
- Use business language when speaking to employers, who value aspects such as productivity, competitiveness, customer service, sales, and profits.
- Introduce the value your institution adds, emphasizing its track record and experience, the high standard of its professionals, the quality of its services, the long-term mentoring, and knowledge of the business world, among other things.
- Emphasize the importance of this type of recruitment for achieving corporate goals.



The Instituto de Hospitalidade in Brazil trained low-income youth for work in the tourism sector and is a good example of how it achieved a win-win. It exceeded its employment targets by:

1. Being oriented to the needs of a specific business sector. This focus facilitated understanding of and ongoing alignment with the tourism labor market,
2. Generating a relationship that added value to the company. Businesses in the tourism industry found a program that trained students in the competencies they needed such as customer service and an openness to continuous learning,
3. Building confidence and legitimacy with the company,
4. Bringing together social and economic value,
5. Giving equal importance to working with companies and young people, and
6. Continuously adapting to the needs of the labor market.

IYF: Learning Series 1. Collaborating with the Private Sector: A case study of an *entra21* project in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. January 2006.

The following are some other strategies for building relationships with employers:

- **Establish partnerships with institutions that offer strategic opportunities and contacts**
Set up partnerships with professional and trade associations, chambers of commerce, Rotary Clubs, and entities that represent employers, which may have information about job openings and opportunities for young people.
- **Establish physical and online contact with employers**
These contacts can be made through visits, phone calls, and virtual communication. It is a good idea to design an employer outreach strategy and revisit it on an ongoing basis.
- **Organize and attend trade fairs and events that attract large numbers of employers**
Certain fairs and events specialize in the promotion of employment and/or the development of a more robust talent pipeline. Sponsoring a jobs fair or hosting a round table with businesses can expand a program's networks. Attending business association meetings can also increase one's knowledge of hiring trends and appreciation of which types of business are having trouble filling entry-level positions.
- **Identify and promote contact with government programs to promote youth employment**
These relationships can provide good opportunities to improve collaboration with public employment services, secure resources for training and placement services, promote internships, etc.
- **Publicizing and raising awareness about the job placement services**
This includes developing and disseminating promotional materials targeted at employers and key stakeholders with an interest in the employability of disadvantaged youth. The following are some strategies for promoting services: sending printed promotional material (brochures, posters, flyers, etc.), generating publicity through print media, TV, radio, and online with information of interest to the business sector.



The following are some of the topics that youth discussed when they participated in a project implemented in Colombia by Fundación Empresarios por la Educación (EXE)⁷:

- Self-awareness as a starting point for the job search (characteristics, skills, competencies, weaknesses, and interests)
- Personal aspirations as a life guide (a vision of the present and the future, planning goals for the medium and long term)
- Business protocol
- Projection of positive attitudes, business image, and social skills
- Etiquette, courtesy and effective techniques for interpersonal relations
- Non-verbal communication
- Personal image and communication
- Job search plan
- The principles of labor supply and demand—types of work for young people
- Labor laws, types of contracts, social security
- Career, occupation, and work—basic knowledge for starting a job, habits
- Decision-making, job search planning, sources of work
- Selection process
- The work environment, the selection process (importance, stakeholders, elements, and stages)
- Resources for going through the selection process (intellectual, educational, economic, financial, experience)
- Resume and professional profile (objective, classes, preparation)
- The interview (definition, objective, phases)
- Things to bear in mind during the interview (image, personal presentation, self-control, personal characteristics, social skills)

⁷ Fundación Empresarios por la Educación: Conéctate Colombia. Cooperación público - privada para la formación e inserción laboral de jóvenes. (Public-private cooperation for youth labor training and insertion). Bogota, July 2008.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Performance indicators for a case in the State of Connecticut

Outcome Measures

Activity Area Indicator

Placement/Employment

1. Percentage of applicants who were working
 - 1a. Percentage of applicants who received services and were working
2. Percentage of vacancies with at least one placement

Process Measures

Activity Area Indicator

Consumer Satisfaction

3. Percentage of clients satisfied with service
4. Wait time
 - 4a. Percentage of applicants who waited too long for unemployment insurance
 - 4b. Average number of minutes for longest wait
5. Percentage of non-monetary decisions made on time

Employment Services

6. Percentage of first payments made within 21 days
7. Percentage of applicants receiving employment or other services
8. Percentage of newly-registered applicants assessed
9. Percentage of applicants receiving a service within 30 days of assessment

Context Measures

Activity Area Indicator

Employment Services

10. Percentage of new, fully registered applicants

Referral and placement

11. Percentage of applicants receiving at least one referral

Job Bank

13. Proportion of individuals referred to individuals placed in jobs
14. Percentage of placements initiated from microfiche or kiosks
15. Average number of referrals per job opening
16. Percentage of continued claims processed by voice response
17. Percentage of calls transferred to staff that were unanswered on the third try

Appendix 2: Output indicators

The following are the performance indicators used by a Colombian agency that offers job placement services:⁸

Types of Indicators	Change or output to be measured	Indicators
Monitoring indicators: used to follow up and measure the quality of the services provided to young people	Service outputs in terms of information, guidance, and training for youth	Youth satisfaction with their training in life and vocational skills
	Service outputs in terms of young people's skills	Percentage of youth who had quality internships Percentage of young people who have improved their life and vocational skills Increased awareness of their strengths and areas for improvement— Participants are more motivated to work with greater effort/continue studying
	Service outputs in terms of immediate changes in the circumstances of young people	Greater aspirations for the future and what they can achieve (increased self-confidence) Percentage of young people placed in internships Percentage of young people who have found jobs
Evaluation indicators: used to measure changes after the youth receive services	Outcomes in terms of the circumstances of the young people	Percentage of the young people who are working 6 months after starting a job Comparison of the employment rates among youth at the start of services and 6 months after placement Comparison of the employment rates of youth participating in the intermediation program and those who have not participated (this indicator can be obtained through analyzing control groups, that is, groups of youth who have not been served by the institution)
	Outputs related to the quality of the work of the young people	Percentage of young people employed in decent jobs (with contracts, benefits, and the mandatory social security contributions). Percentage of youth who say they are satisfied with their jobs. Comparison of these rates with those for groups of young people who have not been served by the institution (control groups)
	Outputs related to employer satisfaction	Percentage of employers who say they are satisfied with the work of the young people they have hired Percentage of employers who positively recognize the organization as connecting youth with the world of work
	Outputs related to the increase in the human capital of the young people	Percentage of young people who continue their education during or after getting a job Percentage of young people who, after participating in the services, acquire certifications at higher educational level (such as university)

⁸ COMFENALCO Antioquia: "Plan de Calidad Servicio de Intermediación Laboral Jóvenes con Futuro." (Quality plan for job placement service, Jovenes con Futuro).

Appendix 3: Career assessment and guidance

Vocational-occupational assessment and guidance training format proposed by Fundación SES in Argentina.

Theme 1: Who are we? What do we want? Where are we going? The youth talk about their expectations and the group agrees ground rules.

Theme 2: How work used to be and how it is now, analyzed from the perspective of family history and the views of workers. This also addresses the concept of decent work.

Theme 3: The challenges of skills development and training, through the preparation of group and individual projects.

Theme 4: Difficulties and problem-solving for implementing a vocational training project.

Workshop 1: Introduction, expectations, and objectives

Workshop 2: Getting to know each other more

Workshop 3: What is work? Work in one's family history

Workshop 4: Opinions about work

Workshop 5: Experiences of work, visits by key speakers

Workshop 6: Identification of requirements, knowledge, skills, and problems from the workers' perspective

Workshop 7: Personal skills and competencies

Workshop 8: Life planning

Workshop 9: Projects and their viability

Workshop 10: Life plans, profiles

Workshop 11: Job search

Workshop 12: Job interviews

Appendix 4: Job search skills

Fundación SES of Argentina developed 12 workshops

- Workshop 1:** Introduction, expectations, and objectives
- Workshop 2:** Getting to know each other more
- Workshop 3:** What is work? Work in one's family history
- Workshop 4:** Opinions about work
- Workshop 5:** Experiences of work, visits by key speakers
- Workshop 6:** Identification of requirements, knowledge, skills, and problems from the workers' perspective
- Workshop 7:** Personal skills and competencies
- Workshop 8:** Life planning
- Workshop 9:** Projects and their viability
- Workshop 10:** Life plans, profiles
- Workshop 11:** Job search
- Workshop 12:** Job interviews

Appendix 5: Cooperative Agreement

Cooperative agreement prepared by the Private Sector Council for Educational Assistance (COSPAE) with employers.⁹

⁹ Report of the *entra21* experience: "Programa bilingüe de certificación profesional en nuevas tecnologías de la información con énfasis en telemercadeo y comercio electrónico (Bilingual professional certification program in new information technologies focused on telemarketing and electronic commerce)." Panama, October 2005. Silma Díaz Pinilla.

Cooperative Agreement

The Private Sector Council for Educational Assistance (COSPAE) and the company.....sign the following commitment to define the responsibilities of each party during a one-month internship under the following terms and conditions:

WHEREAS:

- Cospae is an institution established by business organizations as a way to unify and represent the country's private sector in its effort to improve the educational level of the population, productivity, and labor competence.
- Cospae develops technical training programs designed to meet the priority training needs of the business sector.
- To meet its objectives, Cospae developed the *entra21* program as a means of providing training in new information and communication technologies. For the training program to achieve its goal, the young people participating need to do a one-month internship at a company related to the learning they have acquired during the theoretical training.
- is a company with a strong sense of commitment and social responsibility, such that it is especially aware of the unemployment problems faced by our young people.
- ... recognizes the need for duly qualified human resources to respond to the growing development and competitiveness of its industry.
- Because it serves their needs, Cospae and... agree to draw up a cooperation plan in the area of training, specifically concerning internships for individuals participating in the *entra21* program.

THE PARTIES AGREE:

FIRST: The following are the objectives of this cooperative agreement:

General: The promotion of a cooperation plan between the private company and the non-governmental organization, which enables companies to improve their competitiveness and productivity and at the same time provides training to human resources in the skills and qualities needed in the job market.

Specific: To contribute to improving the quality of training of the *entra21* participants, providing them with internships in which they can apply the knowledge they have acquired.

SECOND: The undersigned will have the following responsibilities:

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES

Responsibilities of CoSPAE:

1. Present candidates to the company that will provide the training to enable it to choose an intern.
2. Provide the company with a copy of both the training program and the participant profile.
3. Work with the Ministry of Labor and Labor Development to channel the documentation that releases the companies from any labor commitments to participants of the **entra21** program during the period of their internship.
4. Contract an accident insurance policy to cover the participants during their internship at the company.
5. Follow up with the young people during their internship through a visiting plan to ensure this stage progresses normally.
6. Prepare technical follow-up reports during the internship and provide a copy to the company.
7. Apply the appropriate recognition or sanctions to the participants of the **entra21** program in accordance with their performance and behavior at the company.

Responsibilities of the company:

1. Facilitate internships that make it possible for the participants to apply what they have learned during the period of theoretical training.
2. Appoint a person within the company as a supervisor who will be responsible for following up and assisting the young people during the internship.
3. Inform the participants about internal administrative and work regulations at the beginning of the internship.
4. Inform the program participants of their functions, tasks, and responsibilities in the company during the internship.
5. Keep a record of the attendance and punctuality of the young people participating and provide a copy of this to CoSPAE.
6. Inform CoSPAE about their progress and/or any situation related to the performance and/or behavior of the participant.
7. Allow CoSPAE personnel to follow up with the young people during the internship in accordance with a visiting plan.



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