



## What's in it for ME?

### Just how do you find the right job for you?

LOOKING FOR A JOB FOR THE FIRST TIME, or after a long break, is hard for anyone. When you don't have a lot of skills or experience, it can be even tougher. Your choices seem limited, the wages are low, and working brings new challenges to your daily life, like childcare and transportation. You might start to ask yourself, "Why bother? What's in it for me?"

There are actually plenty of reasons why you should make the effort to find an entry-level job that works for you. Of course, there's the paycheck! When you're starting out, your checks may not be huge, but it's more than what you make not working. Earning a paycheck also just *feels* good—you can take pride in using your own hard-earned money to meet your needs.

In addition to a paycheck, you will learn valuable skills and gain work experience that will benefit you when you are ready to look for a better job. *Every* job gives you the chance to learn and improve skills, such as:

- working and communicating with others
- following instructions and schedules
- taking pride in your work. Yes, taking pride in your work is a skill, too, a very important one. Regardless of the work you do, or the pay, take pride and do your very best every day—your boss will notice. This may lead to pay raises, promotions, or at least a great reference if you decide to look for other work.

By now you're probably wondering how to find the right job for you. Start by being realistic about your situation; consider the following:

- What hours can you work? If you need to work while your kids are in school, it doesn't make sense to apply for a night job. On the other hand, if you have a trusted babysitter for nights, that could work well. Be realistic, and tell employers

clearly when you are available to work.

- What are your transportation issues? If you don't have a dependable car, make sure you look for work along bus routes, or within walking distance, so you can be sure you can get to work.
- What kind of job or business are you interested in? This is important, too, as being in a place you like will make it easier to be successful. The possibilities are endless; think about all the places you pass by every day: stores, restaurants, offices, schools, construction sites—they all need workers. Nothing is off limits—almost every business has some kind of entry-level job that might be just right for you.

So how do you *get* the job? You have to ask! You do this by submitting an application, being ready for an interview, and trying again if you don't get the first job you apply for. Start by completing a Workforce Services generic application; a Workforce Services counselor can help you do this, even if you've never worked before. Make lots of copies and take them around to places you would like to work. Some places will ask you to complete their own application, but at least you will have your information handy.

Finally—what do you do when you start the job? First and foremost, have a positive, friendly attitude and get along with others. Ask questions and learn all you can; do your best every day. Follow your schedule and be on time. Talk to your supervisor right away about any trouble you have with your schedule or duties. And enjoy! Enjoy all the benefits of working: the new people you meet, feelings of pride in your work, setting a good example for your children, learning something new, and of course, getting a paycheck! Most of all, enjoy saying to yourself, "I DID IT!" ☺