Hook, Line, and Sinker: Catching and Keeping Employers
Building and Maintaining Relationships with Employers

Target Audience: job developers, work experience coordinators, career counsellors, employment counsellors, and youth-serving agency staff

Length: four hours

Time Frame: two, two-hour sessions (e.g., 10 A.M. to 12 P.M. and 1 P.M. to 3 P.M.)

Group Size: up to 20 participants

Materials Needed:
- refreshments
- Career Circuit brochures
- business cards
- Community Workshop forms
- registration form
- planning checklist
- evaluation form
- stick-on labels for nametags
- agenda
- flip chart (with prepared topic headings)
- flip chart markers
- tape
- paper
- pens
- prepared bingo cards
- prepared handouts (HO) or overheads or slides
- facilitator's references (FR)
- participant portfolios or notebooks
- dollar store prizes.

Facilitator's Notes

Audience
This workshop is geared primarily to staff of youth-serving agencies who work directly with youth, particularly in the area of work experience placement. We encourage you to tailor it, highlighting those points that are most relevant and/or adding new content that speaks directly to your audiences.

Time Frame
If facilitating a 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. session, providing lunch on-site is a wonderful way to engage participants in networking.
Preparation
Ensure that you read Circuit Coach Section A3. Working with Employers, prior to facilitating this workshop. Preparing well ahead of time will save you a lot of added stress on the workshop day. Circuit Coach is available online through the Career Circuit web site at <http://www.thecircuit.org/coach/english/default.htm>.

Materials
Flip charts and handouts are used in this workshop. You can also use PowerPoint slides and/or overheads if you have access to an LCD or overhead projector. You may wish to reproduce some flip chart pages, slides, or overheads as handouts in order to provide participants with a variety of visual aids and resource materials they can take away with them.

Suggestions
Create a portfolio for each participant containing copies of print information as well as blank sheets of paper for notetaking. Alternatively, provide your participant with a three-ring folder so handouts can be kept in order. If you do so, you will want to have the handouts holepunched in advance.

Provide pens at each station for participants' use.

Create individual labels with the workshop title and the participant's name ahead of time, or have participants make their own at the beginning of the workshop.

Have appropriate music playing at various times during the workshop. Music can help create a warm, comfortable, and creative learning environment.

Circuit Coach Content and Tools Used During this Workshop

Section A1. Working with Community Stakeholders
Section A1.4. Keeping the Flame Burning and Getting the Job Done

Section A3. Working with Employers
Section A3. Introduction
Section A3.1. The Basics of Business
Section A3.2. Adding Value to Business
Section A3.3. Identifying Employers' Needs
Section A3.6. Coaching Youth and Their Supervisors on the Worksite
Section A3.7. Overcoming Negative Beliefs
Self Application Tool A3.3. Identifying Employers' Needs
Self Application Tool A3.5. Key Points to Make to Employers
Self Application Tool A3.6. Coaching Activity

D3. Work Search and Work Maintenance Strategies
Client Application Tool D3.5. Work Maintenance Strategies

Facilitator's Notes
If possible and appropriate, you may wish to ask workshop participants to review these sections of Circuit Coach before they come to the workshop. Refer them to the online version of Circuit Coach.

Alternatively, you may wish to photocopy these sections of Circuit Coach and have them as handouts in participants' portfolios so they are able to refer to them during the workshop.
Workshop Rationale

This past year, my role has changed. For the last two-and-a-half years, I have been responsible for the coordination of a career and employment assistance program for youth ages 15 to 24. About six months ago, during a meeting with our primary funding body, the provincial government, several suggestions were made about how we could "improve" the way we operated. The suggested changes involved all of the counsellors (essentially the whole staff) become responsible for building relationships with employers in the community. Two of the current career counsellors, myself included, were forced to examine comfort zones, move outside them, and to pursue the world of unknowns.

I have put together this particular workshop with these feelings in mind. I know what it is like to be new to the "schmoozing" world, and I believe that most youth service providers are in need of an opportunity to get together with their peers, discuss challenges and successes, and identify particular tools they can use when building long-lasting relationships with employers—the most important element of organizational sustainability.

With this workshop, I intend to build strong networking relationships between job developers in the community and to facilitate the flow of communication between parties that might normally be "competing" for employer favour. Much of this workshop is based on brainstorming and discussion, as I have witnessed first hand the value of uninhibited conversation. It is my hope that participants leave the workshop feeling understood, and also armed with a plethora of best practices that they might apply in their own relationship building. It is my main objective to foster the "abundance over scarcity" rule, a rule that seems commonplace in communities where there is competition for obtaining funding dollars.
## Workshop Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Set-up</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(30 min. before start)</strong></td>
<td>Place the Community Workshop Registration Form on the table for participant sign-in.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Materials Needed:</strong></td>
<td>Have the nametags, pens, paper, and participant portfolios or notebooks prepared with handout packages ready for pick up by the participants.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Community Workshop Registration Form</td>
<td>• Check equipment.</td>
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<td>• Community Workshop Planning Checklist</td>
<td>• Ensure coffee/refreshments are ready and waiting (as appropriate).</td>
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<td>• handouts/overheads</td>
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<td>• refreshments</td>
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<td>• nametags or labels</td>
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<td>• flip chart</td>
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<tr>
<th>Welcome and Introductions</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(5 min.)</strong></td>
<td>Welcome all participants to the workshop.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Materials Needed:</strong></td>
<td>Introduce yourself and briefly share a little background about yourself and how you became involved in presenting this workshop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• flip chart paper</td>
<td>• Acknowledge those who have made contributions to the workshop (e.g., host agency, in-kind donations, and helpers).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• markers</td>
<td>• Briefly reference the focus of the workshop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• prepared bingo sheet (sample attached)</td>
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<td>• dollar store items for prizes</td>
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<tr>
<th>Icebreaker: People Bingo</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(15 min.)</strong></td>
<td>Introduce the exercise and distribute a bingo card to each participant.</td>
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<td><strong>Materials Needed:</strong></td>
<td>Explain to participants that they need to get &quot;bingo&quot; by filling a horizontal, diagonal, or vertical line on their card.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• flip chart paper</td>
<td>Tell them they can fill in their card by finding someone in the room who matches the description or activity in the appropriate bingo square (e.g., someone who bikes). That person then signs off on that square. The first person with &quot;bingo&quot; gets a prize.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• markers</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• dollar store items for prizes</td>
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Facilitator's Note

Make up a bingo sheet with information in each square that may fit people in your group. Use a diversity of information regarding hobbies (e.g., biking), background experiences (e.g., moved in the last year), cultural references, etc. People then play bingo by meeting other people in the room, introducing themselves, and signing each square off when they find a match. According to the time available, choose an appropriate level to reach (i.e., total blackout, straight line). The winner receives a prize (e.g., dollar store item of significance like a small journal).
## Introductions

- Invite participants to introduce themselves. Give each an opportunity to speak about their role and why they are attending the workshop.
- Record their answers on flip chart paper and post it on the back wall.

### Facilitator’s Notes

Use your favourite icebreaker, or try the one suggested.

If you are asking participants their expectations, record expectations on a flip chart and then tape pages around the room to review at the end of the workshop to see if their expectations have been met.

## Objectives

### Objectives

- Review the following objectives for the session:

  1. To work more effectively with employers by better understanding employer needs
  2. To explore how we can help employers add value to their business
  3. To use Circuit Coach tools and strategies in building relationships with employers
  4. To share best practices
  5. To encourage the use of Circuit Coach as a resource to support your own learning, and to work more effectively with your clients in the area of career development

- Invite participants to comment on the objectives and add any that they think are particularly relevant to their situation.

### Facilitator’s Notes

Ahead of time, prepare a flip chart sheet with an outline of the workshop objectives.

If you are presenting the objectives on a flip chart, tape them up where they can be viewed by participants throughout the workshop.

It is always a good idea to check in with participants to see if the stated objectives fit with their own expectations. Refer to the expectations recorded on the flip chart and negotiate amendments as appropriate.
| Agenda and Logistics  
(5 min.) | Agenda and Logistics |
<table>
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<tr>
<td>Materials Needed:</td>
<td>Present and review the agenda on a flip chart.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• agenda on flip chart</td>
<td>• Outline any important norms such as punctuality and so forth.</td>
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<td>• Note any important logistical or housekeeping details.</td>
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**Facilitator's Note**
Ahead of time, prepare a flip chart sheet with an outline of the workshop agenda.

| Setting the Context  
(5 min.) | Setting the Context |
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide the following brief overview of Circuit Coach (no longer than five minutes):</td>
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<td>• Circuit Coach, developed by the Canadian Career Development Foundation, is a self-managed curriculum to support the professional development of career development practitioners.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Circuit Coach is also an excellent practical resource for career practitioners seeking dynamic tools, strategies, and interventions to address specific youth issues.</td>
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<td>• During this workshop, we are using Circuit Coach in its capacity as both a professional development support and practical resource to assist us and our clients to explore different learning options, and to help us to manage our own learning.</td>
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<td>• Note that Circuit Coach is available to all in a variety of formats (online at <a href="http://www.thecircuit.org/coach/english/default.htm">http://www.thecircuit.org/coach/english/default.htm</a>, disk, CD-ROM, and in print format as PDF files).</td>
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**Facilitator's Note**
Many of your participants may not be familiar with Circuit Coach. If possible, you may want to have a version of Circuit Coach available for participants to view at the end of the workshop. I have my laptop set up showing Circuit Coach, and I also have a print copy available for participants to view.
### Exercise: The Challenge of Building Relationships with Employers

(30 min.)

**Materials Needed:**
- flip chart paper, marker, and tape for each group
- flip chart
- marker

**Introduce**
- State that building relationships with employers can sometimes prove to be quite a challenge; maintaining those relationships can prove to be even more daunting. Be prepared to give a personal example: "In my work as a job developer/program marketer, I . . . ."
- Relate a positive and a negative personal experience from your own work.
- Ask participants to break into pairs.
- Distribute flip chart paper and markers to each pair.
- Invite each pair to share one positive and one negative job development experience, including what did and did not work. Have them record their experiences on flip chart paper and post the sheets around the room.
- As the participants are in discussion, walk around the room and listen in to what is being said.
- When the groups are finished listing their findings on their flip chart paper, ask a few of the groups to present what they have recorded.

**Debrief**
- Tell the group, "Now that we have had a chance to talk to each other, and the results are posted, let's share some of our best practices; what works when you are working with employers, and how do you know when it is working?"
- Add that perhaps some of them would like to speak to some of the dilemmas posted here, and offer some suggestions.

### Facilitator's Note

When participants point out a best practice or make a suggestion, you may want to record it on your flip chart. If the best practice is already on the flip charts prepared by groups, you may want to underline it or highlight it in some way. These best practices can be recorded and distributed to participants after the workshop.

### Break

(10 min.)

**Refreshment Break**
**Energizer: Word Disassociation**

1. Draw the group into a circle.
2. Explain the principle of word association: the way in which one word tends to trigger thoughts of another word.
3. Then explain that the point of this game is for each person, individually, to think of a word that has no connections or associations at all with the previous word.
4. Place yourself in the circle and begin the activity, going around the circle.

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**Mini-Lecture and Group Discussion: Understanding Business Basics**

- Tell the group, "Now that we have shared some of our best and worst, we need to start looking at business and value."
- Ask the group, "What is the fundamental rule of business, no matter the industry?" (Answer: "Not to lose money.")
- Explain that:
  - Entrepreneurs start a business with a vision of where they want to go, and how they are going to get there, and of course, with the hope that they can make a little money along the way.
  - Our job, then, is to demonstrate how we can help them with attaining their goals, in fact showing them value. To show value, we have to show how our way fits with the costs and gains of being a business owner.
  - Many individuals, youth included, are unclear as to how money is actually made by a business, and this can sometimes result in conflict in the workplace. It is important, then, to know what is involved.

- Distribute HO #1—How Money is Made.

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**Facilitator's Note**

You can have this information on a handout or on an overhead.

- Introduce the handout by saying to the group, "There are four aspects that decide whether or not a business makes money. What are they?"

- Review the following aspects:
1. direct costs
2. indirect costs
3. gross sales
4. profit

- Profit is important to business owners, but so, too, is reduced cost.

Group Discussion

- Ask the group why this would be an issue for employers when we want them to hire youth.
- Answers will range from increases to indirect costs, to increased overhead such as training costs, etc., leading to less profit.
- Given that employers may see hiring youth as taking away from profit, our next topic—showing how hiring youth can add value to their business—is an important strategy for engaging employers.

Brainstorming Exercise: Adding Value to Business (10 min.)

Circuit Coach Content:
- Section A3.2., Adding Value to Business

Materials Needed:
- prepared flip chart listing four ways to add value
- flip chart
- marker

- Introduce the exercise by asking participants if, when contacting employers with a specific need in mind, they demonstrate how working with their organization can add value to the employer's business.
- Explain that first we need to know the four ways to add value to a business. Display a flip chart with the phrases:
  1. maintain customers
  2. acquire new customers
  3. decrease costs
  4. increase sales

Facilitator's Note

List these four ways of adding value to business on a flip chart.

- Suggest to the group that the population is aging, and so, too, is the workforce. We hear lots of talk lately about the anticipated shortage in labour as workers retire. Employers need to plan now to make sure they have a pool of young workers to train for the future. This is a real opportunity for marketing our youth clients and what they can bring to the work site.
- On this note, have the group brainstorm ideas about how young workers can add value to business.
• Record their answers on a flip chart.
• Their answers may include qualities like energy, motivation, openness to change, new ideas, risk-taking, computer/technological literacy, and so on.

Debrief

• Suggest to the group that the basics of business and adding value are excellent topics to explore with youth. It’s important for youth to know how they add value to a business so that they can better market themselves.

Group Discussion: Finding Out Employer Needs and Preparing Youth to Meet Them

(15 to 20 min.)

Circuit Coach Content:
• Section A3.3. Identifying Employers' Needs
• Self Application Tool A3.3. Employer Needs Analysis

Materials Needed:
• HO #2—Employer Needs Analysis

• Suggest to the group that when trying to build trusting, strong relationships with employers, the first thing we need to know is what the employer needs, and then we need to figure out how we can meet those needs.
• Ask the group what their role as practitioner/job developer/job coach is in understanding employers' needs and relaying the needs of the employer to youth.
• Ask how they go about this in their program.
• Suggest to the group that from their responses, it seems assessing employer needs (finding out what employers need in their workplace and whether your client fits the bill), is an essential part of their role.
• Distribute HO #2—Employer Needs Analysis.
• Tell them there are many questions we need to ask when we have the opportunity to speak with employers directly. The Employer Needs Analysis is a tool from Circuit Coach that outlines several questions you might ask employers. (Emphasize the importance of being aware of specific skills, roles, responsibilities, and expectations.)
• Ask the group to take a few minutes to look over the handout.
• Once they have done this, ask them for general impressions. Ask if they already do something like this when talking to employers, or if there are any questions they would add or omit.

Preparing Youth

• Say that many employers present a concern that youth are totally unprepared for the workplace, so we need to ensure that our youth are prepared and aware of what the employer expects of them. Ask, "So how do we prepare Youth?"
• Explain that we need to prepare youth so they make a positive first impression and then continue to meet employer expectations.
• Again suggest that we need to engage youth clients in identifying employer needs.
• Ask the group if the brainstorm exercise on how they can contribute to, and add value to, their employer's business would be something they might do with youth clients.

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<th>Summary Statements and Activities</th>
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<td>(5 min)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Review the agenda and what has been completed.</td>
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<td>• Ask the group for any feedback or comments on the morning session.</td>
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<td>• Have participants turn to their journal, notebook, or portfolio and make note of any key learnings.</td>
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<th>Morning Closing</th>
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<td>• Let participants know that the second (afternoon) session will further the topic of working with employers.</td>
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<td>• End the session with a challenge to participants to think about their past experiences and how the concepts discussed today might have enhanced their job development experience.</td>
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<th>Lunch</th>
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<td>Energizer (optional)</td>
<td>Energizer</td>
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<tr>
<td>(5 to 8 min.)</td>
<td>• Do a favourite energizer or icebreaker exercise.</td>
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**Facilitator’s Note**

After lunch people may have low energy. Doing an icebreaker or energizer activity that is fun and gets people out of their seats and moving around helps bring energy levels up and prepares people for the afternoon.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Review</th>
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| (5 min.) | • Invite participants to share some of their reflections on the morning session.  
| | • Revisit key elements of the morning session, namely:  
| | • the basics of business  
| | • adding value to business  
| | • identifying employer needs |

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<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
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| (5 min.) | • Review the following objectives for the afternoon session:  
| | 1. To discuss strategies to keep the fires burning (partnerships with employers)  
| | 2. To understand why employer relationships fail  
| | 3. To learn and apply some coaching strategies for addressing work site employer/client issues |

**Facilitator’s Notes**

Ahead of time, prepare a flip chart sheet with the afternoon sessions' objectives outlined.  
As in the earlier session, if presenting objectives on a flip chart, tape them up where they can be viewed by participants throughout the workshop.  
Again, check in with participants to see if the stated objectives fit with their own expectations. Negotiate any amendments to the objectives.
Brainstorming Exercise: Keeping Relationships Going

(15 min.)

Circuit Coach Content:
• Section A1.4., Keeping the Flame Burning and Getting the Job Done

Brainstorming Exercise: Keeping Relationships Going

• Introduce the topic by stating to the group that we all know relationships with employers are, essentially, partnerships.
• Recognizing this congruency, state that there are times when even good partnerships can go bad, and employment placements just don't work out.
• Ask the group to brainstorm some of the factors that could derail work experience situations and working relationships with employers.
• Record these factors on a flip chart.

Facilitator's Note
You may wish to remind the group of some of the negative experiences they had with employers and recorded in session one. What were some of the factors that led to those negative experiences? What you are looking for are some of the factors that are listed in Circuit Coach Section A1.4., Keeping the Flame Burning and Getting the Job Done, such as poor chemistry, entrenched attitudes, lack of time, lack of structure, no tangible payoff, mistrust, lack of clear objectives, and so on.

Role Play: Addressing Work Placement Issues

(20 to 25 minutes)

Circuit Coach Content:
• Section A3.6., Coaching Youth and Their Supervisors on the Worksit
• Self Application Tool A3.6. Coaching Activity

Materials Needed:
• Prepared flip chart with "things to consider" outlined
• three copies of the role play from FR #1—Coaching Activity
• flip chart paper
• markers

Role Play: Addressing Work Placement Issues

• Ask the group how many of them are responsible for monitoring work placements and/or doing follow-up.
• Ask if this role calls for work site coaching and/or work site mediations.
• Mention that in this role, it is very important that we deal with employer issues quickly and effectively to ensure ongoing trust in the process. It is essential that we complete regular follow-ups and check-ins, and let employers know how we are going to deal with sensitive situations.
• Let the group know that you are going to explore some strategies for coaching youth and employers on the work site. These strategies are meant to help assist with dealing with job placement issues and to help maintain good partnerships with employers.
• Tell them that the strategy being presented is called triadic counselling.
• Explain that this is an effective coaching technique to use when dealing with employer and clients at the same time.
• Tell them triadic counselling allows:
  • open communications between client, employer and worker
  • employers and clients to express their feelings and
- concerns in a safe environment
  - a problem-solving approach to work experience issues
  - closure to a situation
  - modelling for the client on how to deal constructively with situations or people, rather than just running from them

- Suggest to the group that there are some important things to consider when using this strategy:
  - Practitioners need to know their own limitations.
  - Everyone involved needs to agree to meet (sometimes it is too intimidating for a client to have the employer there, and sometimes the employer is uncomfortable to meet with the client; this is when meeting one on one may be necessary).
  - It is best if this three-way coaching can be done in a neutral environment (e.g., all three in café over a cup of coffee).

**Facilitator’s Note**

These considerations can be outlined on a prepared flip chart. Once you go over them, you may wish to keep them posted somewhere so the group can see them.

- Let the group know that you are going to present a role play demonstrating how triadic counselling/coaching might look on a work placement.
- Introduce the role play scenario from FR #1—Coaching Activity.
- Present the role play.

**Facilitator’s Notes**

Prior to the workshop, select two willing volunteers who will perform the role play with you. Have three copies of the role play printed out so you and the volunteers can go over it prior to the workshop.

You should adapt the role play to suit your target group, or you may wish to invite a job development worker to help develop a role play based on an actual experience they may have had. Use whatever strategies you want to bring the work placement issues and coaching strategies to life!

**Debrief**

- Ask the group to list some of the strategies and skills the worker used during the meeting. List group responses on a flip chart (e.g., setting time limits, stating the goal of the meeting, getting a commitment from both parties, active
listening, paraphrasing, clarifying, etc.).
- Ask the group for any general comments or impressions.
- Acknowledge that sometimes more involvement on the part of the youth worker is required during a triadic counselling session, and, of course, in some situations the outcome is not always so positive, but it is vital to bring closure to these situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Break</th>
<th>Refreshment Break</th>
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<tr>
<th>Exercise: Coaching Activity</th>
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**Materials Needed:**
- paper
- pen

- Ask the participants to break into groups of three.
- Explain that in the following exercise, they will get a chance to apply some coaching skills.
- Ask them to develop a scenario in which a miscommunication has taken place between a youth client/employee and an employer.
- In this scenario the youth worker uses triadic counselling to resolve the issue.
- Ask them to write a script that describes the way the counselling/coaching session might go, and what they would do to help the employee and employer resolve the situation.
- Suggest to them that they probably have lots of experiences they could draw from, and encourage them to use something from their own work.
- Once the script is written, ask them to go through it and identify what skills they were using, and to explain the rationale for some of the things they said.

**Facilitator's Note**

Give the group lots of time to do this. Because the last exercise was also long, you may want to suggest that the group get a refreshment while they are working on their scripts. You may also want to have appropriate music playing to help create a relaxed environment.

**Debrief**

- Ask the group if there are any small groups that would like to volunteer to take us through their script as a role play.
- Once a small group has done their script, ask the rest of the group what skills and/or techniques they saw being employed.
- Time and size of group permitting, encourage as many
groups as possible to go through their script and get feedback from the group.

**Exercise: Your Learning**

* (5 min.)*

- Review what was accomplished in this session.
- Ask the group for any summary statements.
- Encourage participants to take ownership of their learning.
- Ask them, now that they have seen and used parts of Circuit Coach, how the program will assist them in their work as job placement workers.
- Invite participants to turn to their journal, portfolio, or notebook to make note of any key learning.
- Ask them to identify goals they have for strengthening their own relationships with employers.
- Ask if any participants wish to share their goals.

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**Closure and Evaluation**

* (10 min.)*

**Materials Needed:**
- Community Workshop Evaluation Form

- Provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on the day's activities, ask questions, and to say goodbye.
- Provide participants with time to complete a written evaluation of the session and submit their comments prior to leaving.
- Distribute the evaluation form.
- You may decide to do a summary close or a closing quotation.
- Thank participants for their participation and contributions and be sure they know how to contact you for support as they continue their learning journey.
**Editor's Note**: I wanted there to be more group participation so I cut down on the lecture/informational parts of the workshop, and added more exercises. Due to the number of topics covered and the length and complexity of exercises and activities, there wasn't time for all the topics originally included. I omitted the following two activities. They could be included as optional topics/exercises.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optional Exercise: Addressing Work Maintenance Issues</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>(20 to 25 min.)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Circuit Coach Content:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Client Application Tool D3.5., Work Maintenance Strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Materials Needed:</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td>• Optional HO #1—Work Maintenance Strategies</td>
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**Optional Exercise: Addressing Work Maintenance Issues**

- Suggest to the group that one of the primary reasons relationships with employers fall apart is the lack of youths' work maintenance skills.
- Many times, youth just do not have the confidence to ask questions when they do not understand instructions, or they are not aware of the importance of taking the initiative or doing the job no one else wants to do. This is where the concept of work growth skills comes in. In this process, the counsellor, job developer, or work experience coordinator is responsible for the following:
  - reviewing workability skills with clients (Circuit Coach Section C3.2.)
  - discussing changing work dynamics
  - helping youth set goals (Circuit Coach Sections C2.1. and C2.2.)
  - listening and keeping notes about the work site
  - paying attention to work processes and details
  - improving his/her knowledge of the work site
  - reviewing employer expectations (Circuit Coach Section A3.)

- Let them know there is a wonderful client application tool in Circuit Coach (D3.5., Work Maintenance Strategies) that is quite effective for addressing work maintenance strategies.
- Invite participants to review the client application tool and discuss it with other members at their table. How might it be used with youth clients in their program?
Optional Exercise: Overcoming Negative Beliefs

(30 min.)

Circuit coach Content:
• Section A3.7., Overcoming Employers’ Negative Beliefs About Youth
• Self-application Tool A3.5., Key Points to Make to Employers

Materials Needed:
• prepared notes on flip chart about how to obtain employer buy-in
• pen
• paper
• Optional HO #2—Key Points to Make to Employers

Optional Exercise: Overcoming Negative Beliefs

- Tell participants that there are some basic underlying principles involved in overcoming the negative beliefs employers hold regarding youth.
- Remind them we have already discussed how employers will be more open to hiring youth when they see how youth can add value.
- Add that it is also important to note that employers will be more open to hiring youth when they have the opportunity to build personal relationships, and may be more open to hiring youth when we focus on the similarities between youth and their existing staff; our role is to help them see the youth as part of their team and build a relationship at the same time.
- There are others ways to obtain employer buy-in; these include:
  - appeal to an employer’s
    - sense of duty
    - sense of community
  - thank the employer publicly
  - use previous success stories when doing presentations

- Tell participants that another Circuit Coach tool, Key Points to Make to Employers, is great to use when in conversation with an employer.
- Distribute Optional HO #2—Key Points to Make to Employers.
- Ask participants to take a minute to read through the handout.
- Ask the participants to break into small groups of three or four.
- Ask each group to share their best practices on how to address employers’ negative perceptions of youth.
- Have each group create a checklist of key points to make to employers, by pulling information from the handout and adding their own best practices for addressing any negative perceptions of youth an employer might have, as well as any other information they think important to emphasize with employers.
- Ask the group to share their checklists.
Handouts and Facilitator's References
Handout #1—How Money is Made

Business Basics

Direct costs: Every business has direct costs. These are expenses that change directly as a result of the volume of business. For example, direct costs for a restaurant include the costs of food and beverages. As customers order food, more food needs to be purchased from suppliers. It's a direct relationship. For an automotive repair shop, parts are direct expenses. The more parts that are replaced, the more parts that need to be ordered.

Direct costs are almost always charged back to the customer directly, or marked up to cover the indirect costs associated with handling the products and their expenses.

Indirect costs or overhead costs: Every business also has indirect costs, or overhead costs. These are costs inherent in running the business, whether or not any customers show up. These costs include:

- the costs of space (leases, rent)
- communications costs (telephone equipment, line charges, fax equipment)
- equipment costs (computers, machines, tools, vehicles, etc.)
- wages and benefits
- professional fees (lawyers, accountants, etc.)
- marketing costs (brochures, ads, signs, etc.)
- utility costs (heat, electricity, etc.)

These costs are accrued whether the business sells anything or not. Understanding this is vital: The employer has to cover these indirect costs, and then address direct costs, before any thought of profit. Indirect costs typically range between 20 to 40 percent of the business income.

Gross sales: The total amount of money a business takes in, excluding taxes, is called gross sales.

Profit: Profit is what's left over when direct costs and indirect costs are paid out of gross sales, and when taxes are paid.
Handout #2—Employer Needs Analysis
(Circuit Coach Self Application Tool 3.3.)

When making a call to an employer for the purpose of a job placement, you will need to obtain answers to the following questions in order to assess the employer's needs:

1. What is your workload like right now?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

2. What isn't getting done that could be done by an energetic and motivated young worker?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

3. How many young people between the ages of 16 and 25 do you have working for you? (If none, why not? What about hiring a young worker that you could train for the future of your business?)

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

4. If you do have young people on staff, what kinds of jobs do they do? (Follow up: Is there any room for another young worker?)

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
5. How would you rate your satisfaction with the job performance of your younger employees? (If it is positive, ask if they would consider taking on another young person. If the answer is negative, pitch the case that your client may prove otherwise.)

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

6. What products or services do you produce that are used by the youth market? (Follow up: What about using young people to sell or market your product or service to other young people?)

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

7. What thought have you given to the future of your workforce? Are you training young people to replace older workers as they move on and/or retire?

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

8. What kind of technology are you currently using in your business (i.e., many young people are already computer literate)?

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
9. If you're not willing to hire at the moment, then what about having a young person come in and job shadow someone, or do an information interview (i.e., get career exposure)?
Facilitator's Reference #1—Coaching Activity
(Circuit Coach Self Application Tool A3.6.)

In the following exercise, you will get a chance to apply some coaching skills. As you know, open communication between yourself, the client, and the employer is critical to the success of the work experience. Below, you will find a scenario in which a miscommunication has taken place between the client/employee and the employer. In this scenario, the youth worker/work developer uses triadic counselling to resolve the issue. Read the example below. At the end of this scenario, you will find another scenario with which you can practise. Write a script that describes the way the second counselling session might go, and what you would do to help the employee and employer resolve the situation.

Example of Triadic Counselling #1

Tina has been working at the Destiny House Hotel. She has been on her work placement for approximately three weeks and has been doing extremely well. One evening, she is asked to work at a banquet that will be held in two weeks, and she agrees. She later realizes that she had specifically asked for that evening off. She is upset that her supervisor, Rocko, forgot about her request. Rather than explaining the situation to her supervisor, she decides to call in sick at the last minute. The employer becomes very upset because Tina has just put him in a difficult situation. After a short, heated conversation, Rocko fires Tina. The following day, Tina calls the youth worker/work developer who set her up on the job site. She is very upset and believes that Rocko is out to get her. Tara, the youth worker, calls Rocko to get his side of the story, which is entirely different. He believes that he can no longer trust Tina and that she purposely tried to sabotage him. Tara sets up a time where the three of them can sit down and try to resolve and bring closure to the situation.

Dialogue

Work developer: Well, I decided to call this meeting to see if we could resolve some of the issues around what happened, or even to just bring closure to the situation.

Employer/Rocko: I think this is a good idea, but I doubt we will resolve anything.

Client/Tina: I agree.

Work developer: Well you may be right, but let’s try. Is everyone willing to give it a go? (Tina and Rocko nod.) I know you’re really busy Rocko, so I was hoping we could keep this to about 15 or 20 minutes. Is that okay with everyone? (Again there is agreement.)

Work developer: First of all, I think we should talk about what brought about the firing of Tina.

Client/Tina: Well, I was asked to work at a banquet on a day that I specifically asked to take off.
Employer/Rocko: If you asked for it off, why did you agree to work it when you were asked?

Work Developer: How about if we have Tina explain first, and then hear from Rocko.

Client/Tina: Well, I didn’t realize what day it was until I got home and checked my calendar. Also, I remember asking for it off and it upset me that I wasn’t important enough for you to remember that.

Employer/Rocko: Well, you didn’t remember immediately, so why would you expect me to?

Work developer: So let me get this straight: Tina, you asked Rocko for that specific day off ahead of time, and Rocko agreed. Then, when he asked you to work that day you got upset.

Client/Tina: I asked about a week before and assumed Rocko would write it down.

Work developer: And Rocko, you just plain forgot. I guess it gets pretty hectic around here when you’re doing a big banquet.

Employer/Rocko: You’re right. I have a million things to think about. I should write that type of information down, but I am a pretty busy person. Even though things like days off are very important to staff, they sometimes slip my mind.

Client/Tina: I can understand that. I should have told you as soon as I realized, rather than waiting until the last minute.

Work developer: Rocko, that must have thrown you off when Tina phoned in sick at the very last minute.

Employer/Rocko: No kidding. You really put me in a spot when you called in like that on such a busy night. I guess I got pretty hot under the collar. Sorry about that, I was just really harried.

Client/Tina: I’m sorry about that, too.

Work developer: Rocko, what could Tina do to help avoid this kind of thing from happening again?

Employer/Rocko: Well, from now on, staff should put their requests for days off in writing and put them on my desk and on the posted work schedules. That way, I wouldn’t have to rely on my memory for these things.

Client/Tina: That’s a good idea.
Work developer: Rocko, how was Tina's performance prior to the incident at hand?

Employer/Rocko: It was great. That’s part of the reason I reacted so harshly when she called in. She was always pretty reliable. I never expected her to put me in the situation that she did.

Client/Tina: I’m really sorry for putting you in that situation, and I want to let you know that I really enjoyed working for you.

Work developer: So to date, you’ve seen Tina as a good dependable employee. Tina what do you like about working here?

Client/Tina: I think this place has a great staff and a great operation. And I like that it’s so busy. I’d rather be busy than bored.

Work developer: Given that this was a good working relationship for you both before this problem, Rocko, is there any possibility of giving Tina another chance?

Employer/Rocko: Do you want to work here, Tina?

Client/Tina: I would love another chance. This is the best job that I have ever had.

Employer/Rocko: Okay. Tina, give me a call on Monday morning, and I’ll have a schedule made for you.

Client/Tina: Thank you, Rocko. I really appreciate the second chance.

Work developer: Thanks to both of you for the meeting and thanks a lot for your time, Rocko. I am glad that both of you decided to give this a second chance and everything worked out the way it did. Let me know if there is anything else I can do. Bye to both of you and have a good day.

Sometimes, more involvement on the part of the youth worker is required during a triadic counselling session and, of course, in some situations the outcome is not always so positive, but it is vital to bring closure to these situations. These sessions are also a good way for clients to learn to deal with situations and people rather than run from them. Job maintenance is one of the most important roles that a youth worker must play; it is also the most difficult.

For job maintenance to be effective, the youth worker must walk a fine line between the needs of the employer and the needs of the client. Both parties’ needs must be met by the youth worker and the program as a whole. If the youth worker and the program are unable to do this, then the program will not be successful. The business community is important because it is the backbone of employment programs and without businesses’ support, these programs would fail.
Example of Triadic Counselling #2

Jason has a work placement with a furniture appliance store. He is working in the warehouse moving appliances and loading delivery trucks. However, his placement is also supposed to include some experience "on the floor," learning about sales and customer service. He has been in his placement for one month and he hasn't even seen the showroom. Jason is worried that the boss doesn't think he could learn sales. He is getting depressed and losing confidence. The boss, on the other hand, hasn't moved Jason onto the sales floor because Jason has a ring in his eyebrow and another in his nose. He likes Jason, and thinks that he is outgoing, friendly, and polite, but he doesn't know how to talk to him about the rings. He's concerned that the rings will put off potential customers. As a result, he has been procrastinating about saying or doing anything.

Jason has contacted you and told you what he thinks. You contact the employer and hear his side of the story. You decide it's time to bring everyone together for a counselling session. Here are the first few minutes; you complete the rest of the script:

Youth worker: I have called this meeting to discuss some issues that have arisen in Jason's placement.

Employer: Thank you. I would like to speak with Jason about the way he looks, and I have been procrastinating about it. Jason, I am concerned about the rings that you wear and what effect that will have on customers.

Jason: Hey, I've been doing my best in the warehouse, and I was promised some experience on the sales floor. I don't know why my looks are a problem!

(Complete the rest of the script, taking time to develop as many ways as you think the conversation could go until you have resolved the situation.)
Optional Handout #1—Work Maintenance Strategies  
(Circuit Coach Client Application Tool D3.5.)

Ways to Become Indispensable at Work

This exercise works best if you can break your clients into small groups and turn it into a brainstorming session. Get them started by asking them to jot down, on flip chart pages, various ways of becoming valued employees, ways to become indispensable to their employers or to their team. Suggestions will likely include ideas like the following:

- be punctual
- make sure you understand what you are supposed to be doing before you do it
- dress in a way that is appropriate in that workplace
- be responsible for your own workspace
- make your team or your boss look good
- share information—the good news and the potential problems
- take responsibility for how you communicate with others
- be a problem solver, not a problem creator
- observe and anticipate what is needed and then offer solutions or suggestions to improve services

Your small groups will generate these few ideas and many more. This is a useful way to start conversations about adapting to the workplace and growing and learning while at work.
Optional Handout #2— Key Points to Make to Employers
(Circuit Coach Self Application Tool A3.5.)

It is important to know what key points you need to tell employers. When you are going to begin your networking duties, it is a good idea to write down all of the ideas you wish to convey. Remember, each program is different and so your points may differ. Here are some main points you may wish to discuss:

What Your Program Can Offer Employers

- trained persons
- community awareness
- free labour for a certain period of time
- 50/50 wage sharing
- comprehensive training plans
- job specific training

Who Your Client Group Is

- youth at-risk
- Aboriginal youth
- young offenders
- social assistance recipients
- unemployment recipients
- cognitively challenged persons
- physically challenged persons
- new Canadians
- post-secondary students

Cost of Participating in the Program

- time
- wage
- WCB

Obligations of Participating in the Program

- no obligation
- obligation to hire
- obligation to train

These are some of the main concepts involved in many programs. They also answer some of the common questions employers ask. There are many ways to answer these questions, and some ways are more effective than others. For instance, look at the answers in the following examples. Which is the most effective answer?
Example 1

Employer: What is your project about?

Work developer: It is a program that works with kids who have dropped out of school. Most of them have been in trouble with the law or on welfare and have never kept a job. We try to get them jobs and pay for them on job sites.

Example 2

Employer: What is your program about?

Work developer: We are a youth employment program funded by Human Resources Development Canada and Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development. We work with individuals who are 16 to 20 years of age because, demographically, they have the highest unemployment rate. The youth in our program have not completed high school, but have shown the motivation to want to work. Our program has the ability to pay its clients from one to seven months on a job site, depending on the individual and the employer. We are also able to cover WCB. Our program is very proactive in dealing with issues on the job site, including developing a training plan with each individual, and visiting them once every two weeks. Here is my card. If you have any questions, please give me a call.

Example 2 is a much better answer. It accurately describes the program and presents it in a professional manner. Analyze both answers and write down what the second work developer did right.

Comments:

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________