



**JOBS FOR THE FUTURE**

# ADDING A GENDER LENS TO NONTRADITIONAL JOBS TRAINING

CREATED BY WIDER OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

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## **TOOL 1.5 PLANNING AN INFORMATION SESSION: STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL INFORMATION OR ORIENTATION SESSION**

This tool provides guidance for planning a short orientation to or information session about a jobs training program. It begins with an overview of the goals of the session, then itemizes the parts of agenda. Each agenda section includes a number of potential topics to present.

This tool uses materials handling as the target occupation for the training, but it is easily adapted to other occupations, and you can customize the agenda for your program. The tool includes ways to incorporate initial case management and work readiness assessments into the session.

A successful orientation to a training program shares information, offers it with enthusiasm and encouragement, and targets discouraged and nontraditional job applicants. Be concrete about job opportunities in the short term and descriptive about long-term career pathways. Emphasize the training's combination of skill building via classroom and hands-on training, supportive services to be a competitive and work-ready candidate, and employment referrals.

### **WHO SHOULD USE THIS TOOL**

Outreach and recruitment staff; case management staff; other staff who lead information sessions

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This tool is part of Adding a Gender Lens to Nontraditional Jobs Training, created by Wider Opportunities for Women for the GreenWays initiative and revised by JFF as part of the Delivering the TDL Workforce initiative. All tools are available online at: <http://www.jff.org/newlensonjobs>.

Supported by the Walmart Foundation, Delivering the TDL Workforce expanded high-quality transportation, distribution, and logistics training programs in ten regions and promoted best practices in program design and delivery, employer engagement, and workforce partnership development. GreenWays was supported by grants from the U.S. Department of Labor through Pathways Out of Poverty and the Green Jobs Innovation Fund.

## THE GOALS OF THE INFORMATION/ ORIENTATION SESSION

- > Introduce potential applicants to materials handling jobs and logistics career pathways, with descriptions of some jobs and information on what those jobs have to offer
- > Inform applicants about the specific preparation required to be a competitive candidate for materials handling jobs jobs
- > Describe how the training program can help build an applicant's skills, opportunities, and knowledge to begin a career pathway in green building maintenance
- > Lay a foundation of basic work-readiness skills needed for these jobs
- > Initiate assessment of candidates' skill sets and qualifications for these jobs
- > Excite and motivate candidates to apply to the program

Ensure gender and racial inclusivity with gender-neutral language, diverse role models, and an emphasis on career opportunities for traditionally underrepresented groups. Address up front issues that may be gender or race specific.

## LIST THE MATERIALS NEEDED FOR THE SESSION

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### THE INFORMATION PACKET

Hand these items out to every participant in an information or orientation session.

- > A description of the training program
- > An information flyer the participants can use to tell friends and family members about the program
- > Descriptions of career pathways in supply chain and logistics
- > List of requirements and documents that must be completed to enroll in the training program

## THE GREETING: ENGAGING APPLICANTS

Here are some ideas for engaging applicants as they arrive at the information or orientation session. As noted on page 4 in the section on "Integrating Assessment into Recruitment," several of these offer opportunities for gauging client's case management and work-readiness needs.

- > Greet each person and ask her to sign in.
- > Give the Gender Equity Quiz (*Tool 1.1*).
- > Give a customized quiz about materials handling jobs opportunities in your area.
- > Ask each person to fill out an application.
- > Show a short video on a repeat loop and/or a PowerPoint with pictures of the work environment and workers.
- > Display sample tools, materials, and other visuals.
- > Ask each person to fill out a card with a question she has about careers in logistics.
- > Ask each person to interview the person sitting next to her about why she is there. Provide a short form to fill out after the interview. Ask the participants to be ready to introduce themselves and the women they interviewed to the group.

## PROGRAM AGENDA

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

If the group is small enough, begin by asking attendees to briefly introduce themselves or the person they interviewed. Ask them to explain what they hope to get from the training program. By making expectations clear, these responses can help you tailor the session. The exercise can also introduce the concept and importance of setting goals.

### INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

Discuss how this is a program to prepare participants to help build the new economy.

Explain what the supply chain and logistics industry is. Use this as a chance to engage with participants by asking:

- > Can you describe what the logistics industry is all about?
- > What is the demand for machinists in the field?

## WHAT IS YOUR TARGET OCCUPATION?

An employer or employee role model can add a lot to this part of agenda, which addresses such questions as:

- > What do materials handling jobs entail? List the range of skills and duties.
- > What kinds of jobs are there in the logistics industry?
- > Where are they? What do they pay? What does a day at work look like?
- > What are the qualifications for the jobs?
- > How do you get a job in materials handling and other logistics careers?
- > What are the career pathways that this job might lead to?

Use visuals, such as large Post-It sheets or a PowerPoint.

### IDEAS FOR INDUSTRY PARTNERS AND ROLE MODELS TO INVITE

- > \_\_\_\_\_
- > \_\_\_\_\_
- > \_\_\_\_\_

## WHAT MAKES AN APPLICANT A COMPETITIVE CANDIDATE FOR A JOB?

If possible, have an employer or employee present this part of the session along with program staff. Explain that employers seek applicants with:

- > Hard skills (e.g., job-specific skills);
- > Basic work-readiness skills;
- > The ability to balance and manage work and family obligations;
- > Awareness of the natural environment and environmental protection; and
- > Specified levels of math, reading, and digital literacy.

## HOW WILL THE TRAINING PROGRAM HELP MAKE THE PARTICIPANT A COMPETITIVE CANDIDATE?

A program staff member explains that the training provides:

- > Career awareness and exploration;
- > Individual screening and an assessment that identifies areas of need;
- > Case management;
- > Classroom training;
- > Workplace training;
- > Job-readiness preparation; and
- > Referrals to employers with job openings.

## WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM THE TRAINING PROGRAM?

A program staff member explains that the training is designed for:

- > Those who need to improve their math and/or special concepts skills;
- > Those who want to refresh or enhance their skills; and
- > Those who want a supported environment that helps them get their feet wet in the logistics industry.

## HOW DOES A PERSON QUALIFY FOR THE PROGRAM?

A program staff member explains:

- > What an applicant needs to have to enter or qualify for the program;
- > What steps a person can take if she does not qualify now; and
- > How to stay connected to program while addressing requirements.

### STAFF MEMBERS WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE SESSION

- > \_\_\_\_\_
- > \_\_\_\_\_
- > \_\_\_\_\_
- > \_\_\_\_\_

## INTEGRATING ASSESSMENT INTO RECRUITMENT

You can use the session to introduce core competencies for work readiness and to begin assessing clients' assets, challenges, qualifications, and fit for the program. Here are some ways to gather information for gauging a client's case management and work-readiness needs. For example:

- > At the greeting and sign in, check the time each person arrives. *Can the client follow directions, make eye contact, be punctual?*
- > Use quizzes to determine if the client can follow directions and complete the test.
- > Ask each person to fill out an application. *Can the client follow written and oral directions?*
- > Ask each person to fill out a card with a question she has about the materials handling job. *Measure the client's writing skills.*
- > Ask each person to interview the person sitting next to her about why she is there and then write a short summary about what they heard. Ask the participants to be prepared to both introduce themselves and the person they interviewed to the whole group. *Evaluate how the client communicates with and listens to others, whether she sets goals, and her presentation skills.*

### TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE SESSION

- > Avoid workforce jargon.
- > Do use industry jargon but be informed and accurate.
- > Be enthusiastic and relational.
- > Avoid empty time. Keep the participants occupied before, during, and after the session.
- > Start on time.
- > Have back-up and back-up for back-up for your invited speakers.
- > Put your invited speakers as early in the agenda as possible.
- > Integrate work-readiness skill building and assessment throughout the session.
- > Avoid yes and no or open-ended questions.
- > Use a physical activity to demonstrate to participants what might be required in a green job.

## NEXT STEPS AFTER THE INFORMATION SESSION

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_