



JOB CLUBS / EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SUPPORT GROUPS

WHAT IS A JOB CLUB?

A job club, or employment transition support group, is basically a small group for the unemployed or underemployed that provides support, encouragement, networking, and tools to aid the members in finding a job that provides meaningful work.

WHY WOULD A CHURCH HOST A JOB CLUB?

At any time, and especially during a severe economic downturn, the task of seeking employment is daunting, and even depressing. Hosting a job club is an opportunity for a Gospel focused church to open their doors and lives to those who are struggling with unemployment, offering practical assistance alongside spiritual and emotional support.

WHO IS A JOB CLUB FOR?

A job club serves those in your congregation and in your community who are unemployed and in the job search process. It is especially helpful to those who have been unemployed for a while and are in need of support and help in moving forward in their job search. This form of small group can serve any demographic of job seekers.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF A CHURCH HOSTED JOB CLUB?

As a church hosting a job club, your goal will ultimately be to restore relationships with God, self, others, and creation. By welcoming community members struggling with unemployment you have the opportunity to restore their relationship with God through salvation, to restore their self-dignity and self-worth by affirming they are created in God's image and loved by Him, to restore their relationship with others as unemployment can often lead to stress with those closest to them, and to restore their relationship to creation by helping them to find and keep meaningful work.

HOW DOES A JOB CLUB WORK?

There are various models for job clubs depending on the hosts organizations goals and available resources. The basics are fairly simple though.

The club meets at least weekly for 1-2 hours. A meeting should include time for participants to report on their job search to their group and to receive constructive feedback and encouragement on their efforts. The group should offer encouragement but also accountability. Some job clubs set a time

frame for each session, maybe 6 weeks or even as long as 6 months, in order to encourage participants to find a job. After all the idea is that the job club is temporary!

Most clubs offer regular large group sessions (biweekly or monthly) with guest speakers on topics such as: writing a good resumé, how to network, using LinkedIn, interview skills, etc.

HOW DO WE START A JOB CLUB?

1) Decide if this is an opportunity to collaborate with a neighboring church or organization. Reach out to others to see if there is interest in joining you.

1) Recruit volunteers who have a desire, and the skills, to assist the unemployed. A leadership team will be needed for organizational needs as well as volunteers to lead each job club small group. If you want to serve refreshments, you should consider a team to handle that.

2) Identify your audience. Will you focus on the professional and semi-skilled worker, or the less skilled worker? Or both? This will also determine the level of volunteers and services you will need.

3) Decide on the structure of club meetings, and if or how often you will have larger group meetings with guest speakers. Will you include a devotional as part of the meeting? How will you incorporate prayer if most of the club members are not believers?

4) Set a time and place to start and then spread the word. Use social media such as NextDoor or Facebook groups for your church's neighborhood. Let your congregation know as well.

WHAT DO WE DO ONCE THE CLUB IS WELL ESTABLISHED?

You may find that once your job club is well established new doors are opened! Be prepared to follow God's leading and to listen to your club members and be willing to be innovative. Your community job club members may want to know more about Christ and become a part of your church body. You may find a need for a 'lab' where job seekers can access the internet to seek and apply for jobs, to craft resúms, etc. You may find that the networking in the job club leads to a pool of talent and a pool of employers that need to be matched up. There are a number of models of church hosted and community job clubs that have grown into a separate organization. You may find that the club dynamics will change as the economy changes or adapt to a certain demographic group.

Read more here:

[Job Clubs: One churches can implement "economic wisdom"](#) (Made to Flourish)

[Back on the Path](#) - local job club at Cave Spring UMC

[Job Transition Support Group](#) of Wooddale Church, MN

[CirclesUSA.org](#) - a model of community and support for those living in or near poverty