Women at YCI Fight for Job Center

With the extreme budget cuts that have injured the state this year, some of the people hit the hardest are those without a voice. York Correctional Institution in Niantic is the only women’s prison in the state. It is also the sight of the second reintegration unit created as part of Governor Malloy’s Second Chance Society bill.

In July, the women at YCI were informed that the job center located in the reintegration unit was being removed. Realizing the negative implications this would have on the inmates, a group of women inmates organized and requested a meeting with the Commissioner of the Department of Correction and other members of the administration. Their request was granted and the women presented their case. Soon after the meeting, they were informed that the Job Center would remain at YCI.

The job center provides necessary supports for women who are transitioning back into society. The center offers resume workshops, key training, Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint classes. It also provides an array of resources from job openings to training programs available for the women upon their release.

Speaking to one of the women who was a member of the group, she stated, “We need this job center not only because it provides us with the knowledge we need to get a job when we are released, but also because it helps to build up our confidence, and we all need that.”

Submitted by:
Sarah Very, Career Specialist
A person forms a first impression in a matter of seconds. The phrase, “you never get a second chance to make a first impression,” holds exceptionally true in an interview. Take advantage of each and every second you have. Every second needs to be productive!

1. Arrive on time, which means 15 minutes early. There is nothing worse than arriving to a job interview late. It sends the message that you do not really care about the opportunity, and that you are scattered and unreliable.

2. Smile! The first thing we notice on another person is their face. You want to project a sense of confidence and professionalism, and smiling will do just that. It will emit a sense that you are a warm and welcoming person.

3. Maintain eye contact. By maintaining eye contact you show you are a skilled and attentive listener.

4. Shake their hands. By initiating the hand shake, you are showing the interviewer you are confident, professional and also cooperative. You may want to practice this so you can ensure you have a firm handshake that is not too strong, but not too limp either.

5. Introduce yourself. This can help to break the tension and can also give way to some small talk which can help you to feel more comfortable.

6. Speak clearly. Speak in a confident and clear manner, and ensure that what you are speaking about is appropriate and relevant to the conversation at hand.

7. Dress appropriately. Even if the company has a casual dress code, it is wise to dress in a professional manner when portraying yourself in an interview. Be sure to cover tattoos, remove piercings, stay away from loud jewelry and perfume. The most interesting thing in the room should be you.

Submitted by:
Sarah Very, Career Specialist

You Never Get a Second Chance to Make a First Impression

John M. began attending STRIDE classes at the Cybulski Community Reintegration Center, and after graduating from the STRIDE class, returned to Fairfield County after serving nine years in prison. When John’s Job Developer first met him in prison, John spoke of a dream he had to return to sea and resume working on commercial fishing boats. With a lot of foot work and follow through and with the help of his Job Developer, John returned to the water in less than 30 days and is working for a local shellfish company full-time. Congratulations to John for achieving his goals.

Submitted by:
Rob Hebert, STRIDE Program Job Developer Region II

Would You Like More Information On STRIDE?
Contact Julie Scrapchansky
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www.QVCC.edu/STRIDE/

If I Had My Child to Raise Over Again
by Diane Loomans

If I had my child to raise all over again,
I’d build self-esteem first, and the house later.
I’d fingerpaint more, and point the finger less.
I would do less correcting and more connecting.
I’d take my eyes off my watch, and watch with my eyes.
I would care to know less and know to care more.
I’d take more hikes and fly more kites.
I’d stop playing serious, and seriously play.
I would run through more fields and gaze at more stars.
I’d do more hugging and less tugging.
I’d see the oak tree in the acorn more often.
I would be firm less often, and affirm much more.
I’d model less about the love of power,
And more about the power of love.