

Peer Employment Support Group

Session One - What Work Means to Me

Session One is an opportunity to get to know your group members. Who is already employed; who wants to become employed; is there anyone who does not know if he or she wants to work or not, maybe have not even thought about it; and are there individuals that have no desire to work?

Session One introduces group members to the ideas, goals and philosophy of the Peer Employment Support group. You will introduce and discuss the group purpose, expectations, benefits, agreements and motto.

The following topic overview and activity can be used as a guide to move through the main purposes of Session One: to introduce the members to PES, set the foundation and atmosphere for ongoing groups and to begin to get to know the individual group members and their beliefs, hopes and desires around work.

As a facilitator you will introduce PES, and then the weekly topic. You can begin by telling part of your own story about working, your beliefs, hopes and dreams. Keep your comments brief. Encourage participation and involvement of all the group members. This is their time to explore, discuss and become involved in the group process.

Before Session:

- **Make enough copies of handouts for each group member.**
- Make sure you are familiar with the material.
- Go over the previous session topic to assure you can assist group members with a review.

Session format (1 hour group):

Introductions	1 minute
Motto	1 minute
New member orientation	2 minutes
Review of last week's topic	5 minutes
Overview of topic	1 minute
Discussion	10 minutes
Activity	10 minutes
Activity review & feedback	2 minutes
Summary	2 minutes
Open Discussion	25 minutes
Closing	1 minute

Begin Session:

Introductions - 1 minute

Facilitator introduce him or herself by first name.

Invite group members to introduce themselves by first name.

PES Motto - 1 minute

Read or have group members pass and read Motto.

New Member Orientation - 2 minutes

If there are first time members, review:

Meeting agreements

Roles/Expectations

Benefits of Participation

Peer Employment Support Group

Session One - What Work Means to Me

Review of Last Week's Topic and Homework - 5 minutes

Keep this review brief. You will not have time to ask all of the following questions. This review time is meant to reinforce the last week's topic, and members' commitment in achieving their personal employment goals.

Remember, last group we talked about _____.

What are some things you learned from the discussion?

Was everyone able to complete the assigned homework?

What kind of help did you need to complete the homework?

Did you set any goals last week? Were you able to accomplish them?
What kept you from accomplishing them?



Overview of Topic - 1 minute

Today we will be discussing what work means to each of us based on our beliefs.

Having a clear understanding of what work means to you by identifying your thoughts, feelings and beliefs around work will:

- ❖ help you to make conscious and knowledgeable employment decisions
- ❖ help you decide if it is time to begin taking action to become employed
- ❖ help you in setting employment goals
- ❖ give you an awareness of differences between each member so you can better support him or her
- ❖ give other members an understanding of your beliefs around work, so they can better support you

Each member will have the opportunity to share, ask questions, participate in group activities and receive support from other group members.

Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.
We have different skills, abilities and work histories.
Everyone's unique experiences and knowledge are important and of value.

Peer Employment Support Group

Session One - What Work Means to Me

Discussion - 10 minutes

Begin to engage group members with discussion questions.

Ask one or two of the following questions:

1. What are your thoughts or opinions about working?
2. What motivates you to work or not work?

As the facilitator, you can begin the discussion by sharing some of your own opinions, ideas, dreams, goals and or experiences about employment. Explain why you went to work and what motivated you.

Write answers or general themes on the board.

Distribute Handouts. Review page one of the handout using it as a discussion tool.
Tie-in answers to above question(s) into the discussion.



Activity - 10 minutes

Have group members begin to fill out Work Sheet.

Assist any members who may need individual help. Encourage members to help each other. If someone has difficulty with reading or writing another group member can volunteer to help. Or do the worksheet together as a group.

We need to stop now with our group activity. If you have not finished you can take the worksheet with you to complete. It is important that you complete the assignment and bring it back with you to the next session.



Worksheet Review and Feedback – 2 minutes

1. Are there any questions or comments about the worksheet?
2. Would someone like to share?

Give clarification and feedback where needed.

Peer Employment Support Group

Session One - What Work Means to Me

Summary - 5 minutes

Ask the following questions:

1. What have you learned today?
2. How will what you learned help you become employed?
3. What can you do between now and next group to better clarify your thoughts around work?



Open Discussion of Individual Employment Needs – 25 minutes

We now have time to talk about any individual employment needs you may have.

For anyone working, talk about any issues or positive things happening on your job.

For anyone not working, talk about help you may need, or what steps you can take to reach your employment goals.

It is always good to set goals. What are some goals you can set to help you become employed or stay employed?



Closing - 1 minute

Introduce next week's topic, time and location

Next week our topic will be _____. Our next meeting will be here, (give location), on (day of week), the (date), at (time). I'll see you then.

Thanks for attending.

End with an inspirational quote if there is time.

"Believe that life is worth living and your belief will help create that fact."
-William James.

Peer Employment Support Group

Session One - What Work Means to Me

HANDOUT

- ❖ Our beliefs influence the decisions we make and the goals we set.
- ❖ Many of our beliefs are based on what has happened in the past, which then influence the decisions we make for our future.
- ❖ Knowing your personal beliefs will help you make better decisions and set achievable goals.
- ❖ Learning about your thoughts and feelings will make you more confident in making employment decisions.
- ❖ We can come to know what our beliefs are by talking to others, sharing our hopes, dreams, thoughts and feelings.
- ❖ Facing your fears will help you find solutions to things that have kept you unemployed or underemployed.
- ❖ We can begin to change negative beliefs we have about working by listening to others share how they overcame their difficulties.
- ❖ Not all people think and feel the same way, we can learn from each other.
- ❖ Continue to talk to friends and professionals about your thoughts and feelings about work.
- ❖ Talk to friends and family members about the work they do. This will help expand your understandings around work.

Peer Employment Support Group

Session One - What Work Means to Me

WORKSHEET

1. What was the best job you ever had, why was it such a good experience?

2. Would you like to find employment in a profession you never worked in before?

Yes No Not Sure

If yes, what job would you choose? _____

Give reasons for wanting this type of work: _____

3. Have you ever had a job that did not work out for you? Yes No

What were the reasons it didn't work out?

I didn't like the job.

I didn't like the boss.

I had a hard time doing the job.

I got sick.

Others didn't want me to work.

Transportation was a problem.

Other _____

Would you do something different today that would have made a difference?

Yes No Not Sure

What would you do differently? _____

4. Would you rather work:

in a job you liked

in a job you were good at

with people you liked

in a job where you made good money