

SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON PLAN:

EMPLOYMENT FOR NEWCOMERS



OVERVIEW

Achieving self-sufficiency is critical for newcomer success. As such, all adults who are able to work should make finding employment a priority and be willing to accept the first reasonable job offered to them.

KEY MESSAGES

- Early employment and job retention are essential to survival in the receiving community and must be the primary focus for all employable adults—both men and women.
- Your first job may not be in your chosen profession, but it isn't one that you will need to keep for the rest of your life.
- Newcomers play a central role in finding and obtaining employment in their receiving communities. Employment can be found through community connections, inquiring with area businesses, looking online or in newspapers, or enrolling in a job placement program.

OBJECTIVES

After this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Describe why it's important for all eligible employable adults, regardless of gender, to seek and obtain employment.
- Describe why it's important to accept the first reasonable job offered.
- List at least three means of finding employment.

USE OF SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON PLANS

This supplemental lesson plan may be incorporated into an existing pre- or post-arrival Cultural Orientation (CO) curriculum. It may also be used on its own to support participants in gaining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to navigate employment in their host country.

The lesson plan is a suggested guide and can be presented or modified to suit the needs of participants and the context in which CO is being provided. For in-depth guidance on how to implement a CO training program, visit the Resources section of the RITA web site at <https://www.ritaresources.org> or go directly to the *CO Insights Guide* at <https://bit.ly/2Zwn7H8>.

ACTIVITY: MUSICAL CHAIRS¹

PURPOSE

To support participants in understanding the competitive nature of the receiving country's job market; and to impress upon them the importance of accepting the first reasonable job offered as a means to rebuild their lives and become self-reliant.

PREPARATION

- Identify appropriate music that can be played during the activity. Ensure that the music volume is loud enough so all participants can hear.
- Set up chairs in a circle with the seats of the chairs facing outward; include one fewer chair than the number of individuals that will participate in the activity.
- Tape pictures of common jobs on the chairs so that they can be seen by participants as they circle the chairs.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Chairs
- Music that can be heard by participants
- Pictures of common jobs in the receiving country

INSTRUCTIONS

- Identify individuals to participate in the activity.
- Inform participants that each chair represents a job in the receiving country, and that the goal of the activity is to find a job.
- Ask participants, "What jobs do you see? Of these jobs, is there one that you prefer?"
- Instruct the participants that you will play music. When the music begins, they should walk in a circle around the chairs. When the music stops, they should find a chair in which to sit.
- Start the music and remind participants to find an available seat.
- After a few seconds, stop the music; one participant should be left standing. Pause for reflection. Ask participants if they got the job they wanted.
- Remove a chair and play the music again.
- Continue to play until there is only one player left in the final seat.



MODIFICATIONS AND TIPS

- This activity is modeled after the game of Musical Chairs.
- Depending on the time available and number of individuals participating, you may wish to remove more than one chair at a time.
- Participants with vision or hearing impairments should be provided with a guide.
- Participants with mobility issues can observe the activity. Acknowledge and be inclusive with participants who are observing so that they are not isolated.
- Create a safe and comfortable environment.
- Ensure that participants know that it is okay to answer honestly. Remind participants to respect each other's answers.
- Do not pass judgment on participants' responses.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

- What strategy did you use to get a chair? How can you apply this strategy to getting a job?
- Did you get your preferred job?
- What are the consequences of passing up a job?
- Did anyone not sit in a chair because the job image attached to it was not appropriate for their gender?
- What are some means of finding employment here?

¹ Materials adapted from RSC Africa's U. S. Refugee Admissions Program.