

## Basic Employment Issues

In this section, we'll explore some basic issues involving looking for work and dealing with different job situations.

### Work as a Part of Your Support System

Staying sober, staying free of crime: those are the most important considerations when making decisions about where to work. *This is not an excuse not to work.* Just choose the best option you can. Wherever you end up working, deal with it responsibly and honestly.

Work is usually either a source of support or a harmful influence in your life. Think about it. The people you work with are the people you spend the most time with. If they draw you into your old thinking patterns, bad things will happen. If they understand your efforts and don't get in your way, or even help, that's incredibly valuable.

And it's not just the people. The work situation itself can be helpful or harmful, too. If you need to take a long bus ride to get to your workplace, it's probably not wise to take a job that starts at 6:30 A.M. There's no need to add more stress to your life.

Granted, you'll get frustrated and stressed out while you look for work—and in any work setting. But remember to be flexible and not respond automatically. Don't spend your time or energy judging others. Focus on becoming responsible for your own actions.



*“Oh, that was a beautiful job, working maintenance at a store. The money wasn't great but I just kept doing the job, proving they could count on me. Everybody loved me. That job was what really got me going.”*

— Don. P.,  
former offender,  
Wisconsin



EXERCISE **25** EXERCISE

## Identifying Helpful and Harmful Work Situations

As a group, brainstorm three examples of both helpful and harmful work situations. Then, write them below.

### ► Helpful work situations

EXAMPLE:

*Working with co-workers who support your recovery.*

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

### ► Harmful work situations

EXAMPLE:

*Working as a bartender when you are in recovery.*

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