





WAY BEYOND THE **Help-Wanted** ADS

BY JENNIFER WILLIAMS

How LDS Employment Resource Services is helping people all over the world obtain the blessings of work.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE BUNDERSON

In many ways, Roger and LaSonja could not have been more different. Yet they had one very important thing in common—they both desperately needed work. Roger was a talented and highly educated engineer with experience in both the automotive and aerospace industries. LaSonja had been homeless for most of her life and was the mother of two young children, with one more on the way. Both were blessed when they turned to LDS Employment Resource Services (ERS).

Roger had been a valuable employee throughout his successful career. But company ownership changed, the work force was reduced by 25 percent, and Roger's position was eventually eliminated. Though he had not anticipated losing his job, he never dreamed he'd have a difficult time finding work as an engineer.

Roger's former employer provided the assistance of a professional outplacement firm. The firm assured him that with his expert skills and valuable experience, unemployment wouldn't

last long. Although Roger dutifully searched the job market and distributed copies of his résumé, days turned into weeks and weeks into months, and Roger became discouraged. "I felt extremely frustrated, knowing I was capable and experienced enough to provide for my family, yet being unable to find an opportunity to do so," he remembers. After more than seven months of unemployment, funds from Roger's severance package were gone and the family's savings were nearly exhausted.

LaSonja had been homeless nearly all of her life but she had recently been selected to receive her own subsidized apartment. Although she was overjoyed to finally have her own home for her children, she was just weeks away from giving birth. Her husband had left her and she needed work to be able to provide for her children. She worried that as a pregnant woman she would have great difficulty finding a job. To make matters worse, she did not know anyone who could help care for her two children when the time came for her to deliver her baby. She had no family nearby to offer support. "I was in a desperate situation. I was constantly worried about how I would feed my family and care for my children. I felt my burden was unbearable and I became depressed."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN; PHOTOGRAPH OF BOOKLET BY STEVE BUNDERSON

The Doctrine of Work

Work is a fundamental principle of the gospel. Adam was told, “By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread” (Moses 4:25), a commandment that was given for Adam’s benefit. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) confirmed, “Work is a spiritual necessity as well as an economic necessity.”¹

Though working to provide for ourselves and our families is necessary, from time to time it can be difficult to obtain adequate employment. No matter where you live, the job market is becoming more competitive and more fluid. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) observed, “You are moving into the most competitive age the world has ever known. All around you there is competition.”² In a world of increasing competition and economic uncertainty, we all need to be prepared for the possibility of unemployment or the need to make career adjustments.

The Church has established LDS Employment Resource Services to assist ward leaders in fulfilling their responsibility to care for members with employment needs. They also assist individual members as they seek to prepare for and obtain employment. In approximately 300 employment centers operating worldwide, services are available to assist those who are unemployed, underemployed, or planning to further develop their careers. It was through these centers that both Roger and LaSonja found the solutions to their employment problems.

Professional Placement Program

The professional placement program is designed to help professionals, managers, and executives find or upgrade employment. The program includes a career workshop, regular networking group meetings, and one-on-one coaching. Resources are also available for professionals, employers, and recruiters. Facilities and equipment are also made available for job searching.

After learning of Roger’s struggle, his ward employment adviser encouraged him to participate in the professional placement program at the Detroit Michigan LDS Employment Resource Center. A woman in attendance at the next weekly networking meeting was looking for employees to work in her manufacturing company. She was impressed by Roger’s valuable skills and experience. A job interview followed shortly thereafter and a job description was written specifically to fit Roger’s skills.

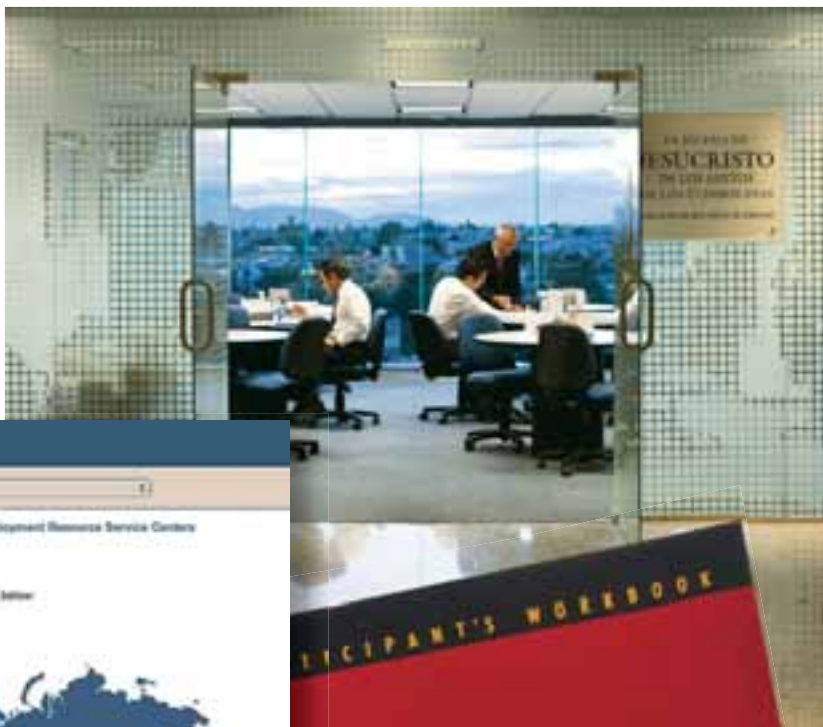
Career Workshop

The Career Workshop helps develop the skills needed to achieve career objectives. The workshop takes about 12 hours to complete and is taught in four units. During the workshop participants are taught to search hidden job markets and to network during their job searches. They craft short, powerful

Left: Employment resource centers are an excellent place for job seekers to do valuable networking.

Right, top and center: In more than 300 centers worldwide, including these in Mexico, Latter-day Saints learn job-search skills that go far beyond mere searches of newspaper and online job listings.

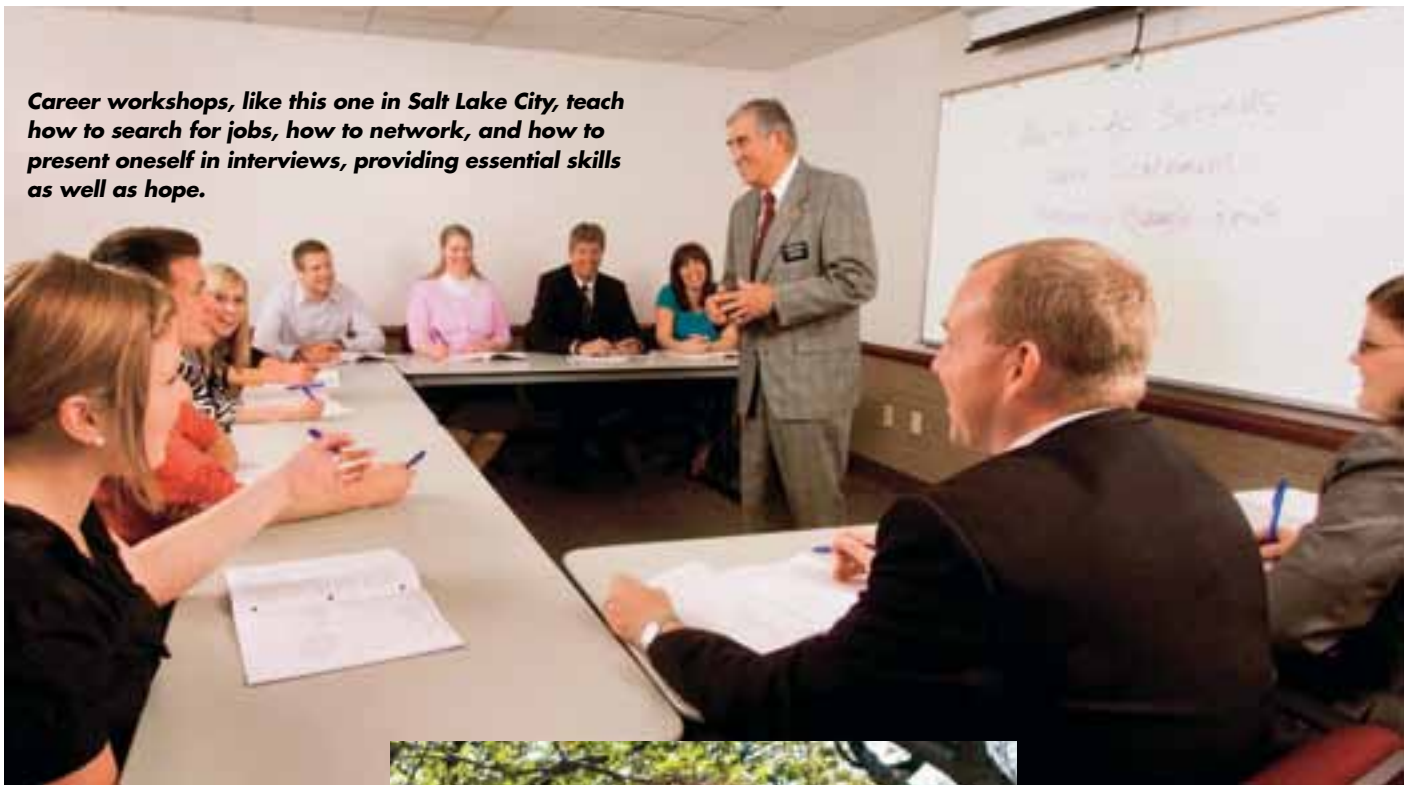
Below: To find LDS Employment Resource Centers visit providentliving.org and click on “Find Jobs and Other Opportunities” and then select “Find an Employment Resource Center.” Career workshops taught at these centers help those members wanting to change or begin careers.



“It was difficult to support a family and attend college on my previous income. I was able to enroll in the Perpetual Education Fund to help fund my studies but was later dismissed from my job. It turned out to be a real blessing. I visited the employment center the next day and an employment adviser helped me create a plan of action. The Career Workshop taught me how to make contacts and network effectively. The very week after I finished The Career Workshop courses, I secured an interview with an international company. With the help of my Heavenly Father and the techniques I learned in the workshops, I was able to respond to the employer’s questions in a satisfactory manner and was offered the job. My new salary is now four times greater than my previous salary. I am able to provide a much better life for my family and serve more faithfully in my church callings.”

Marcos Elias Lima, Brazil

Career workshops, like this one in Salt Lake City, teach how to search for jobs, how to network, and how to present oneself in interviews, providing essential skills as well as hope.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY WEIDEN C. ANDERSEN; PHOTOGRAPH OF FLYERS AND WORKSHOP BY STEVE BUNDESON; PHOTOGRAPH OF LASONJA LYMAN AND PAMELA CAINE PROVIDED BY PAMELA CAINE

statements that relay talents, skills, and experience with confidence. Participants also learn about résumé writing, interviewing techniques, career planning, and even salary and benefit negotiation.

LaSonja's life changed for the better when she participated in the Career Workshop offered at The Chicago Illinois LDS Employment Resource Center. Her journey there began with two eight-year-old girls. When LaSonja's daughter Tatiana attended school in their new neighborhood for the first time, she told her teacher that her mom would need help babysitting while she was at the hospital with their new baby. Emily, a Church-member classmate, asked her mother, Pam, if they could help. It wasn't long before Pam and LaSonja became close friends and LaSonja learned about the Church's Employment Resource Services.

In The Career Workshop, LaSonja received career coaching from employment advisers Elder and Sister Lewis, who helped her identify her talents, interests, employment needs, and career goals. Together they



Above: LaSonja Lyman (left) was greatly blessed when her friend Pam Caine pointed her toward LDS Employment Resource Services.

completed a strategic job search, created multiple résumés tailored to highlight LaSonja's various skills, and prepared her for job interviews. "I had always worked in order to pay the bills, but LDS employment services taught me to search for employment opportunities that used my talents and interests. When I later got

a job that I enjoyed, I found I was happier, more confident, and a better mother at home with my children," she recalls. It only took LaSonja a matter of days to secure a job in a medical office that brought her great satisfaction in addition to providing for her family. "I am so thankful to Pam for being a wonderful friend," LaSonja says. "Because of her kindness in my time of need, I was introduced to LDS Employment Resource Services. Her kindness has changed my



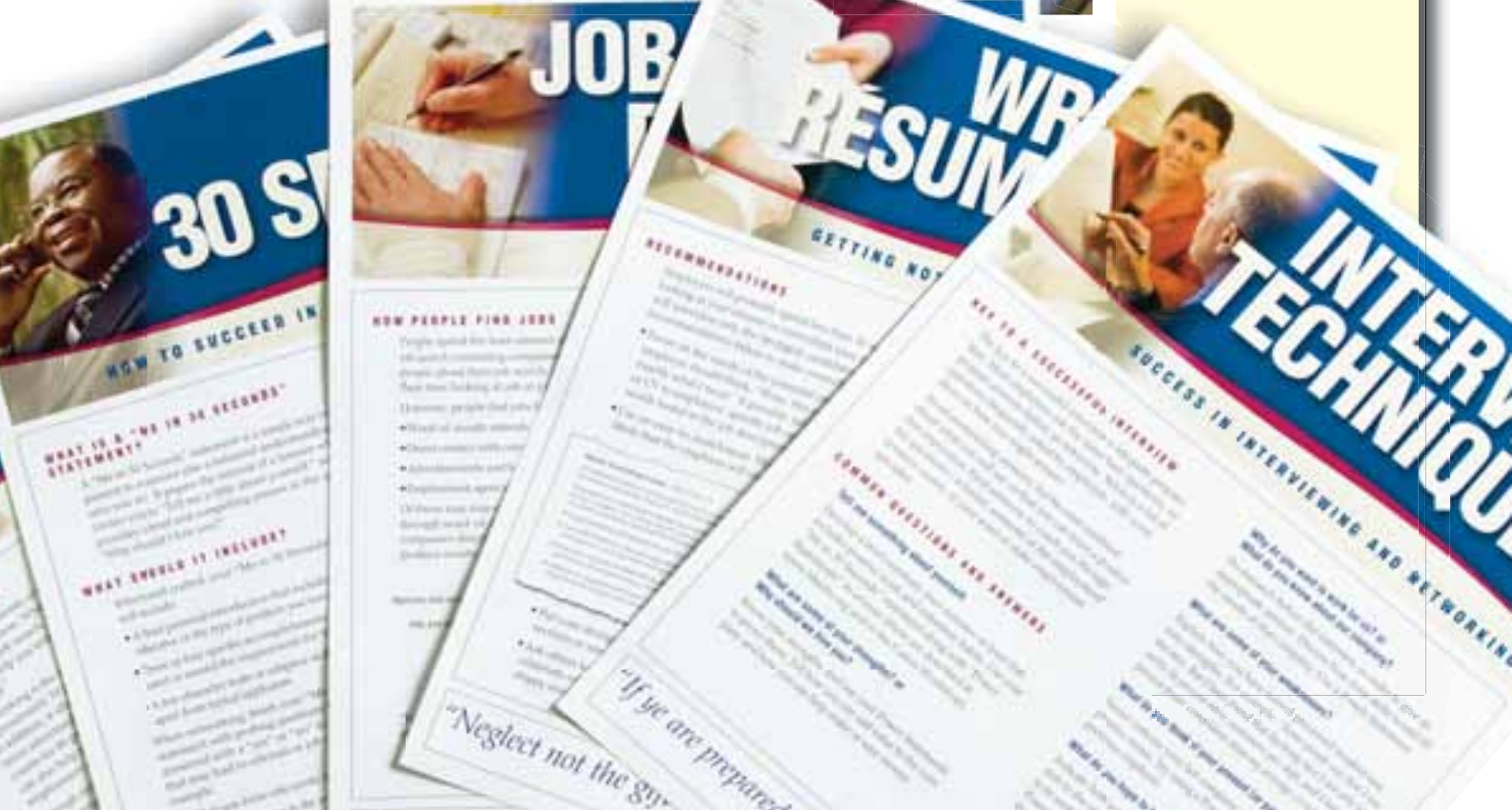
Right, top and center: At centers like this one in Mexico, members can:

- Consult current lists of available job openings.
- Use available equipment like computers and fax machines for such tasks as researching and applying for jobs online, sending application forms, and printing résumés.

Below: Resource materials like these are available not only at the LDS Employment Resource Centers but also at ldsjobs.org or providentliving.org.



"Thank you for letting me attend The Career Workshop. I learned many things which helped me secure a good job. Before the workshop I only received a few job offers for which I was overqualified, offering very little salary. I took The Career Workshop courses and my confidence grew. I was able to secure an interview for a wonderful job. The one who interviewed me was so impressed. I was offered a generous salary with opportunities for promotions in the future. This program is inspired. I pray that many will make use of this opportunity and reach greater heights."
Jaya Prakash Jala, India





PHOTOGRAPHS BY WEIDEN C. ANDERSEN; PHOTOGRAPH OF BOOKLET BY STEVE BUNDERSON

Above: Participants receive coaching suited to their individual needs.

Self-Employment

The Self-Employment Workshop is a series of courses designed to help individuals formulate ideas and transform those ideas into successful businesses both large and small. The courses can even help those with established businesses to enhance their business by developing a business plan. The workshop is divided into four courses: business ideas, market analysis, market strategies, and financial analysis. And the principles can be applied anywhere.

In Nairobi, Kenya, one couple had long struggled to find stable employment. The challenge to provide the necessities of life for their children was wearing on them both. There seemed to be nowhere to turn, as most of their friends and families found themselves in the same predicament.

A recent convert to the Church, the husband learned about the free employment services available at the LDS employment center in Nairobi while he was at Church one Sunday. He visited the center the following Monday. After attending several career and small-business workshops over the next few weeks, he felt confident he could be successful as an entrepreneur marketing his wife's cooking. With the assistance of an employment specialist, they completed a detailed business plan and went to work.

In her small kitchen, the wife prepared delicious samosas and mandazis, local dishes which they sold outside a nearby office building for the morning meal. Their baskets were soon emptied and the morning's earnings were used to purchase ingredients for the noonday meal.

Before long, their business flourished and became so popular they were able to obtain a contract to provide meals for employees at a large office building. They were slowly able to save enough to purchase a refrigerator, food-warming table, and other equipment to improve their business. The couple now find great satisfaction in being able to provide for their family. With the increased profits and demands, they have since been able to hire others to help them, creating employment opportunities for others in their ward.

It Works

In 2007, LDS Employment Resource Centers provided services to help more than 225,000 people through career training, education, improved employment, and self-employment training. But more than improved employment, LDS Employment Resource Services has helped to restore hope, peace, and confidence to individuals and families in over 50 countries. "For some, a new job brings



restore hope, peace, and confidence to individuals and families in over 50 countries. "For some, a new job brings increased self-confidence and direction that has a far-reaching impact on an entire family. We are truly involved in changing people's lives," says Gloria Purcell, manager of the Orlando Florida LDS Employment Resource Center.

To learn about volunteer opportunities at an employment resource center, contact or visit the center nearest you. To serve in an employment resource center as a full- or part-time Church-service missionary, speak to your bishop or branch president. ■



Top: Volunteer couples at LDS Employment Resource Centers make a significant contribution to the well-being of others.

Above: New resource materials are available for those hoping to start or improve their own small business. Contact your local employment center for more information.

"I took the self-employment and small business workshops which helped me to improve my business. I learned about micro-credit and small loan opportunities and was able to buy equipment that helped me add another line of products to my business. Now I am able to better manage my expenditures, earnings, and production. I have also learned how to better price my products. Because of these workshops my business is beginning to grow and progress anew. My life isn't the same. I feel important, successful, and my family also feels more confident."

Miriam Estela de Santis Agazzani, Argentina

"I am happy to find that I am still employable despite my age, marital status, and large gap in employment history. The Career Workshop taught me how to handle interviewers' questions about my background disadvantages. I just passed a whole day of interview screening and I'm hired! I was even able to negotiate Sundays off."

Arlene Daclan Regalado Dosdos, Philippines