



## 7 TIPS FOR APPROACHING A PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER

### 1. Research your targeted employer

Learn about your employer through their website, trade publications, newspaper coverage, and other related sources. Talk to other professionals in the field about the employer and industry trends. Include relevant information in your pitch, such as if a company is expanding or experiencing increased sales. Demonstrate your initiative and that your program is tuned into their needs.

“When I initially meet the employer I bring up what I’ve recently read about their company, e.g. “huge increase in profits, expanding company, hiring 2000 more employees in coming years, etc.” as a means to break into the company hiring dept.” *Refugee Job Developer, New Jersey*

### 2. Meet prospective partners in person

Send an informational packet about your agency in advance and follow up by scheduling a meeting at a convenient time. During the meeting, be concise and informed. If possible, designate one person to follow up and handle future communication.

“We find a multi-visit approach helps. First, I see the receptionist and leave a card. Second, I call to set up the appointment with HR, and third to actually meet with someone. This isn’t very creative, but persistence is probably the best thing we can suggest.” *Refugee Job Developer, World Relief – Moline*

### 3. Talk to the right person

Deliver your pitch to someone with the authority to hire. If your contact seems hesitant to hire immigrants, reach out to another person in the business if appropriate. Be persistent. You may need to make your pitch several times. It might take a couple of contacts to connect with the right person.

“Walk in ten doors and one will open.” *Refugee Job Developer, Catholic Charities, Cleveland, Ohio*

#### **4. Offer solutions**

Businesses want to hear about how you are going to help them, not how they can help your clients. Highlight your agency's experience providing services, especially your experience with English language training (ELT) and workplace-based classes.

"The initial pitch means a lot. I've learned that many employers are not able to distinguish between the free services that we provide and the for-profit services of a temp/recruiting agency. So I've learned to pitch the IRC employment team in a way that explains right away that we are free and our services are unique." *Refugee Job Developer, International Rescue Committee, Baltimore, MD*

#### **5. Don't give up if the employer is resistant at first**

Take the time to understand why an employer is resistant and if possible make appropriate adjustments to your services. It may be something as simple as adapting the classes. Ask satisfied employers to share their success stories. Don't take complications personally or immediately assume that they reflect deeper biases against your client.

"In the past, we have had some companies refuse certain groups, but not our program as a whole. In this case, we would identify what the issue was with the group as a whole, and provide more in-depth services." *Refugee Job Developer, Catholic Charities Phoenix, Arizona*

#### **6. Don't make promises you can't keep.**

Highlight what you can provide to the business and be clear about what is beyond your scope. Not being able to follow through on promises often causes more damage. Reassure the employer that you are just as invested in your client's success at work as he or she is.

"When I first started as a job developer, I got into the bad habit of making promises I couldn't keep. I often just said "yes" to the employer because I knew that's what they wanted to hear instead of being honest and saying "I'm sorry I don't think that's possible.'" *Refugee Job Developer, Cleveland, Ohio*

#### **7. Know when to call it quits**

In most instances, providing basic information about newcomers and their legal status breaks through employer resistance. However, if a company does not seem to value or promote diversity in their workplace, trying to set up workplace ELT classes is counterproductive.

"I carefully watch the interaction of the employees that already work at the company as I walk through with their owner or supervisor. I can discern the feelings that are there and what their work culture is like. I take more care in determining if the company is a company that cares about the future of their employees. *Refugee Job Developer, Catholic Social Service, North Carolina*