



The *Career Gateway Job Seekers Guide* : a Tool for Career Planning

by *Lola Lucas*

Recently, the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) collaborated with the International Association of Jewish Vocational Services (IAJVS) in a project funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. The end product was the *Career Gateway Job Seekers Guide* to help adults to learn about themselves, the world of work, and then put the two together in a successful job search. It now appears in both print and online versions. Illinois was one of eight states that customized the national version. The guide now points to our own state's resources as well as general sites.

By working with the Jewish Vocational Services staff in Chicago, IDES was able to

provide job seekers with links to both the Career Information System (CIS) for high school and college students and the recently released ReNEW, an online tool for adults in transition from one job to another. Both of these offer extensive information on occupations: what they pay, their outlook and their training requirements, as well as links to job openings. They also list Illinois and national schools and scholarships. In addition, many other resources were added to the Career Gateway Job Seekers Guide, from Illinois workNet to social services in various parts of the state.

To use the guide, go to www.ides.illinois.gov and choose the "Individuals" pathway, then select Career Information. Click on

The Career Management Process



Users both begin and end with *Manage Your Career*, which builds a foundation for success. It covers realities of the workplace, how to budget, and how to care for oneself during times of change and stress.

Next, the wheel moves to *Assess Yourself*,

where users can fill in exercises to learn about their interests, values, and skills. The following step is *Explore Careers* and the links to CIS and ReNEW offer detailed information about occupations and other career resources in Illinois. This area also has resources for specific groups such as ex-offenders, disabled workers, youth, veterans, seniors and immigrants.

The next phase is *Create a Plan and Set Goals*, which shows how to make effective, achievable plans for the future. *Expand Skills*

CIS or ReNEW and log in with your city and zip code the first time (Option #2) from the home page create a My CIS Portfolio with your own easy to remember user name and password for future visits using login Option #1.

Next, click on the Career Gateway Job Seekers Guide, and that will take you to a quick login for their site.

Inside the Career Gateway Job Seekers Guide

Whether online or in the downloadable 90-page workbook, the career management process is the same, symbolized throughout by an ever-turning wheel.

Access the Career Gateway Job Seekers Guide:

1. Log on to www.ides.illinois.gov
2. Choose the “Individuals” pathway
3. Select Career Information
4. Click CIS or ReNew
5. Log in with your city and zip code
6. Create a My CIS Portfolio with a username and password
7. Click on the career guide

suggests ways to learn skills that are in demand by employers as well as how to pay for schooling. Then, *Find a Job* pulls everything together to launch a successful search for employment.

Finally, users return to *Manage Your Career* for suggestions on moving forward in the cycle, including tips for succeeding in the new job.

In the online version of the Career Gateway Job Seekers Guide, the worksheets are PDFs that can be filled in then saved. It’s now possible to store them in My CIS Portfolio in CIS or ReNEW by uploading them to the My Files and Links section of the portfolio.

Job search is no longer a one-time event. Job seekers need to be prepared to understand themselves, employers’ needs and current trends to move from one job to the next. The Career Gateway Job Seekers Guide is designed to help make these transitions safely.

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About Jewish Vocational Services

Founded in 1884, Jewish Vocational Services delivers non-sectarian employment and training services to help a diverse population explore career choices and find jobs. People who benefit include executives and middle managers, entrepreneurs, women returning to the workforce, young professionals, students seeking college counseling or scholarship assistance, refugees, persons with disabilities and the economically disadvantaged. Jewish Vocational Services helps more than 10,000 people annually match their skills to professional and business opportunities through a network of Chicago area employees. Visit <http://www.jvschicago.org> for more on their services.