

Limited English Speaker's Guide to Getting a Job in the Bay Area



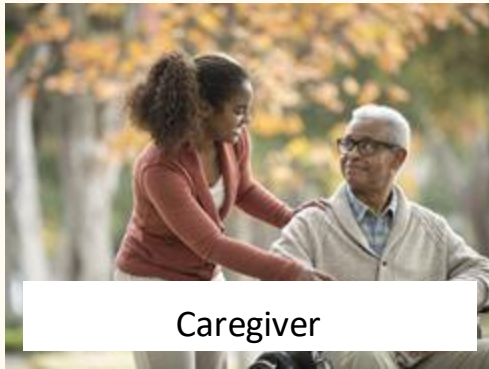
Limited English Speaker's Guide to Getting a Job in the Bay Area

This guide will give you a general overview of the process to get a job in the San Francisco Bay Area and is geared towards English language learners.

Please know that the process to getting a job can look different for different kinds of work, for different cities, and for different people.

Getting a job is not easy, but with hard work and patience, you can do it! Also, know that as your English improves, many more job opportunities will open up for you.

Which **kinds of jobs** can be suitable for limited English speakers in the Bay Area?



Note: This is **just the first step** of your career journey in the US. With increased English level, you can get a better job with time!

General Job Search Timeline

1. Identify
2. Search
3. Apply
4. Interview
5. Get hired!



1. Identify

Identify: What kind of job do I want and have the skills for now?



This is something that your Case Worker or Counselor can help with too!

2. Search

Some restaurants, stores, and businesses will put “Now Hiring” or “Help Wanted” signs in their windows. Walk around in your neighborhood to take a look – this is a good way to see which businesses are hiring!

You can always go into any business, such as a grocery store or clothing store near your house, and ask any employee if the store is hiring now, and how to apply if so. They should connect you with the store manager for more information.



2. Search

SEARCHING FOR JOBS ONLINE

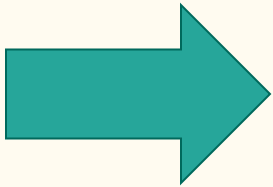
Some common job search websites for looking for entry-level jobs in the Bay Area:

- [Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)
- [Localwise.com](https://www.localwise.com)
- [www.CareerBuilder.com](https://www.careerbuilder.com)
- [www.SimplyHired.com](https://www.simplyhired.com)
- <https://www.instagram.com/oaklandhasjobs/?h=en>
- <https://sfbay.craigslist.org/d/jobs/search/jjj>



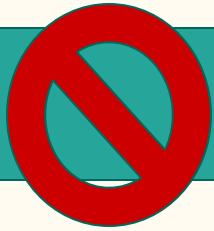
2. Search

Example of
searching for jobs
online



The screenshot shows the Indeed job search interface. At the top is the Indeed logo with the tagline "one search. all jobs.". Below the logo are two search input fields: "what" for job title, keywords, or company name, and "where" for city, state, or zip code (optional). A "Find Jobs" button is positioned to the right of the "where" field. Below the search fields, there is a notification: "772,617 new jobs in the last 7 days" and "Search job sites, newspapers, associations and company career pages.". At the bottom of the page, there are navigation links for "Job Trends - Salaries - Forums - Browse Jobs - Tools - Advertisers - Publishers - Blog - About - Contact" and regional links for "Canada - Germany - France - Spain - India - UK". The footer contains the text "©2009 indeed".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gqsnA2Lk-0>



Beware of Scams When Applying to Jobs Online!

- Jobs should not ask you for money or your bank account information when applying.
- Jobs will commonly ask you for your full name, address, email, and even sometimes social security number and if you are legally authorized to work in the US when filling out an application.
- If you want to apply to a job at a specific company (ex: Safeway, Macy's), it is best to go directly to that company's website to apply (for example: <https://www.safeway.com/>) . Most company websites will have a “Careers,” “Jobs,” or “Join Our Team” button on the bottom of the website.
- If you want to do a general job search for a kind of work (ex: Security Guard, Server), it is best to use common job search websites like Indeed.com or the other websites listed on the previous page to search. If you just type “Security Guard jobs” into Google, for example, you will likely get many unofficial and scam job websites that will pop up.

3. Apply

RESUME

When you apply for a job in the US, it is helpful to have a resume!

Here are some free resume templates:

<https://templates.office.com/en-us/resume-templates>

Sara Stephens

1 Main Street, New Cityland, CA 91010
Cell: (555) 322-7337 - example-email@example.com

Summary

Outgoing and friendly Cashier with reputation for accuracy and high customer service standards. Track record of correctly handling payments and maintaining correct drawer totals. Organized, detail-oriented, and collaborative team player seeking part-time position.

Highlights

- Proficient in POS and register systems
- Mathematical aptitude
- People person
- Ability to mediate disputes
- Listening skills
- Familiar with loss prevention techniques
- Customer- and service-oriented
- Retail merchandising expertise
- Can stand for extended periods
- Energetic self-starter

Experience

Cashier

February 2008 to Current

Wal-Mart — New Cityland, CA

- Greet every customer with a smile and inquire about store experience.
- Answer questions about merchandise and maintain current knowledge of all promotions.
- Efficiently ring up items and process payments to keep customers flowing through check-out aisles.
- Assist younger cashiers with questions, difficult customer questions, and age-restricted purchases.
- Contact customer service managers to handle pricing issues and complaints.
- Volunteer for extra work to cover short-staffed shifts.
- Mentor junior cashiers and new employees.

Floor Associate and Cashier

June 2005 to January 2008

K-Mart — New Cityland, CA

- Worked as both electronics associate and cashier, depending on store needs.
- Merchandised displays to move selected items or set up for promotions.
- Suggested specific items based on customer needs to improve department revenue.
- Cleaned register area frequently, removed debris from shelves, and notified maintenance of any equipment or spillage issues.
- Promptly answered all intercom codes for assistance.

Cashier

September 2003 to May 2005

Quick Step Convenience Mart — New Cityland, CA

- Monitored gas pumps for customer problems, abuse, and theft.
- Kept drawer totals accurate for every shift.
- Put out new merchandise, straightened shelves, and alerted management of order needs based on observation and customer requests.
- Helped management with administrative functions such as scheduling and training.
- Offered suggestions for frequent signage changes to front windows to keep customers interested in new products.

3. Apply

JOB FAIRS

Attending job fairs (in person or online) is also a great way to meet potential employers!

This is a good website to learn about upcoming job fairs in the Bay Area:

<https://www.instagram.com/oaklandhasjobs/?h=en>



Example of in person job fair:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iq1M5RH0vIk>

3. Apply

After you apply for a job, it is a good idea to write down and track this information. That way when a company contacts you for an interview, you remember what the job is that you applied for. You can use a pen and paper or a computer to track the information below.

Job Title	Company	Date Applied	Link to Job Posting	Heard Back?	Notes
Cashier	Tom's Grocery	November 3	www.craigslist.com/cashierjob	No	Met Janet, the Hiring Manager, at a job fair
Dishwasher	Tino's Pizza	November 4	none	No	Saw a Help Wanted sign in window and filled out a paper application in the restaurant.
Security Guard	Safe Home Security Inc.	November 4	www.indeed.com/security123	No	
Prep Cook	Lily's Thai Restaurant	November 5	www.indeed.com/lilythai	Yes	Set up interview for November 8

Communication with Employers while Job Searching

Check your email every day!



Check your voicemail every day!

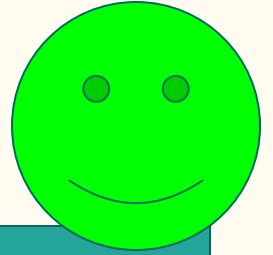
And, make sure your voicemail box is set up on your phone so employers can leave messages for you!



**Any new emails or
phone calls today from
jobs
I applied to?**

Tip: it is best to respond to employer phone calls and emails within 24 hours.

Sample Email Communication with Employers: Good Example



Dear Mr. Rodriguez,

Thank you so much for the interview offer! I am available at the time you proposed. Could you please share the interview address?

Sincerely,
Ali

What worked well for Ali?

- **Polite:** Ali thanked the employer for the interview offer.
- **Agreeable:** Ali agreed to the interview time proposed. It is expected that you will try your very best to make the proposed interview time work for you.
- **Prepared:** Ali made sure he knew the address for the interview in advance.

Sample Email Communication with Employers: Good Example



Hello Deborah,

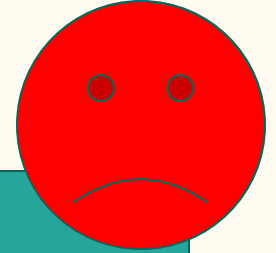
Thank you for the interview opportunity. Unfortunately I am not able to meet you at the time you listed, because I pick up my daughter from school at that time. Is there another time that works for you to meet?

Regards,
Hana

What worked well for Hana?

- **Polite:** Hana thanked the employer for the interview offer.
- **Communicative:** Hana made sure she communicated her schedule to the employer in advance (versus needing to cancel the interview “last minute” to pick up her daughter).
- **Respectful:** Hana respectfully accommodated the employer’s schedule by asking them for another time that would work for them.

Sample Email Communication with Employers: Bad Example



Hi Ms. Stephanie,

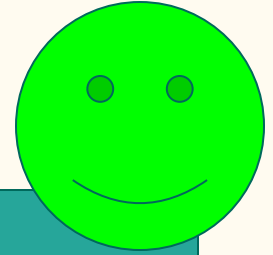
I can't come to an interview at the time you listed. I am free Tuesday and I will meet you then instead.

Sincerely,
Nguyen

What didn't work for Nguyen?

- **Not Polite:** Nguyen did not thank the employer for the interview offer.
- **Not Respectful:** While it is good that Nguyen communicated her schedule in advance to the employer, she did not respectfully accommodate the employer's schedule by asking them for another time that would work for them. Instead of asking, she *asserted* a time that she knew only would work for her schedule. This may be interpreted as rude by some employers.

Sample Email Communication with Employers: Good Example



Hi Peter,

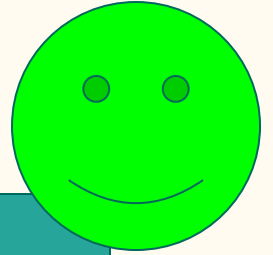
I am so sorry but I will need to cancel our interview tomorrow. My current job has just called me in to work then. Would you please reschedule with me for another time that works for you?

Quan

What worked well for Quan?

- **Polite:** While it is never ideal to cancel a job interview, Quan is polite by apologizing for needing to cancel.
- **Respectful:** Quan communicates the need to cancel the interview with as much advanced notice as possible – right when he found out he needed to go in to work tomorrow. This shows respect for the employer’s time. Quan also respectfully accommodated the employer’s schedule by asking them for another time that would work for them.
- **Communicative:** Quan includes the reason for needing to cancel the interview – due to being called into work in his current job. This will likely help make the employer more understanding of the reason for cancelling. For example, if the reason for needing to cancel was to go to a party with friends, the employer would probably not be so understanding! If a reason for cancellation was not included in this request to cancel the interview, the employer may interpret this as Quan not being serious about the job opportunity, and may not give Quan another chance to interview.

Sample Email Communication with Employers: Good Example



Hello Ms. Pearson,

I am so sorry that I did not show up to the interview yesterday. A family emergency came up, and due to the stressful situation, I forgot to email you or call you to cancel in advance.

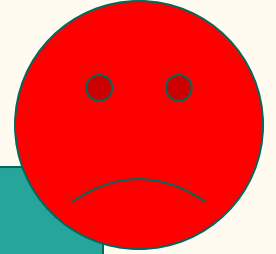
Might you consider offering me a second chance to interview for another time? Once again, my deepest apologies for the lack of communication yesterday.

Natalie

What worked well for Natalie?

- **Polite:** While it is certainly **not good** that Natalie did not show up to the interview OR communicate to the employer in advance, she is very apologetic.
- **Communicative:** Natalie includes the reason for not showing up to the interview or communicating about it – due to a stressful family emergency. This kind of emergency situation is likely the *only* kind of situation that an employer would justify for an applicant in both not showing up *and* not communicating about it in advance. If a reason was not included, the employer would likely interpret this as Natalie not being a reliable person, and probably wouldn't give Natalie another chance to interview.

Sample Email Communication with Employers: Bad Example



Hi Ms. Rogers,

I will not be coming to the interview today because the bus is late.

Regards,
Lee

What didn't work for Lee?

- **Not Polite:** Lee did not apologize for needing to cancel the interview.
- **Not Prepared:** For most employers, the bus running late will not be a justifiable reason for not being able to attend an interview. It is the applicant's responsibility to arrange transportation to the interview in advance so that they will arrive to the interview on time (or early!). The employer will likely interpret this message as Lee not being a reliable worker – he can't even show up to the interview, so he probably won't show up to his shift if given the actual job!

4. Interview

Before the Interview:

- ❑ Make sure you have replied to the employer to **confirm that you will be attending** the interview.
- ❑ Ensure that you know the interview **address** (if in person), **phone number** (if a phone interview) or **link** (if a video interview).
- ❑ **Review the job** and company that you have applied to.
- ❑ **Practice your answers** to commonly asked interview questions.
- ❑ **Plan your outfit:** you should dress in business attire (examples to the right).
- ❑ If the interview is in person, plan your **driving or public transit route** to the interview ahead of time. Make sure you leave plenty of extra time in case there is traffic or a delayed bus!
- ❑ If the interview is virtual, determine a **location that is quiet** with stable internet/phone connection as much as possible.
- ❑ Print a **copy of your resume** to bring with you to the interview if it's in person and if you are able.
- ❑ **Take a deep breath!**



4. Interview

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1) Tell me about yourself.

Example answer:

My name is Elena and I moved to the US from Ukraine 3 months ago. In Ukraine, I worked as a Teacher. I am looking for a job to support my family while I improve my English.

1) Why do you want this job?

Example answer:

I would like the housekeeping job at the Oakland Hotel because I would like to get work experience in the US and practice my English in a job.

3) What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Example answer:

My strengths are working hard, being on time and reliable, and being friendly. My weaknesses are that I have limited computer skills and I am still learning English.

4) What is your schedule and when are you available to work?

Example answer:

I am available anytime to work, except on Friday I need to take care of my daughter.

Tip: jobs like when you have a flexible and open schedule to work as much as possible!

5) What is your desired salary for this position?

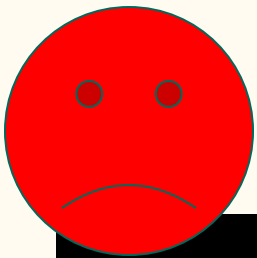
Example answer:

I am open to discussion about salary.

4. Interview

At the Interview:

- ❑ Try to arrive at least **5 minutes early** to the interview. You can get comfortable and take some deep breaths.
- ❑ **Turn off your phone** before entering the interview so that a phone call does not interrupt your meeting.
- ❑ When the person who is interviewing you introduces themselves, **shake their hand firmly**, smile, make eye contact, and say “It is nice to meet you!”
- ❑ Make **eye contact** and **sit up straight** throughout the interview.
- ❑ Show that you are **excited** about the job!
- ❑ At the end of the interview, **thank the interviewer** for their time and ask them if you can have their **business card or contact information**.



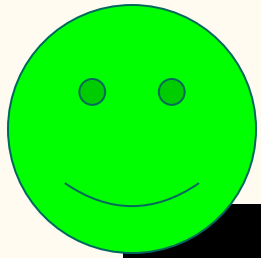
3. Interview Example: Bad



What didn't work well?

- Applicant arrived late.
- Applicant did not dress professionally.
- Applicant was chewing gum.
- Applicant was not sitting up straight.
- Applicant did not making eye contact with interviewer while speaking.
- Applicant was distracted and looking at her phone and texting while speaking.
- Applicant ended the interview unprofessionally with a “high five” instead of a handshake.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akjwDe0811A>



3. Interview Example: Good



What worked well?

- Applicant arrived on time.
- Applicant had warm demeanor and was smiling.
- Applicant was dressed professionally.
- Applicant was sitting up straight.
- Applicant was making eye contact with the interviewer while speaking.
- Applicant was focused and attentive to the interviewer while speaking.
- Applicant ended the interview professionally with a handshake, and thanked the interviewer for her time.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rdi-SNhe2v4>

4. Interview



After the interview -- send a thank you email if you can!

Dear Mr. Berhane,

Thank you for taking the time to interview me today for the Dishwasher position. I am very interested in the job. Please let me know if you have any other questions for me.

Sincerely,
Minh

Be Patient & You Will Succeed!



It commonly takes 1 or more months to get a job in the US after you start your job search.

You will likely need to apply to many jobs (usually more than 10 and sometimes many more!) until you hear back a positive result.

Be patient and apply to many jobs!

Tips to Succeed in A Job!

- ❑ When you start a job, get familiar with workplace policies and ask questions if needed.
- ❑ Arrive on time to your shifts.
- ❑ If you cannot come to work one day or are running late, it is important to let your supervisor know, in advance if possible.
- ❑ Be kind and friendly to your team. Help others and ask for help when needed.
- ❑ Continue working on skills such as English language, computer skills, etc outside of work as much as possible.
- ❑ If an issue comes up on the job, communicate with your supervisor and/or HR Department about it. They should be there to help you.
- ❑ Actively ask about and show interest in opportunities to advance within the company!
- ❑ It is recommended to stay in a job for a **minimum** of 6 months. Future employers look for company loyalty at your past jobs.
- ❑ If you decide to leave the job, give at least 2 weeks notice to your employer before leaving, and write a formal email to resign. This will help maintain a good relationship with them.
- ❑ When you leave a job, ask if your supervisor would be willing to serve as a reference for you for future employment. Ask for their personal contact information (phone, email) for your records.

Good luck in your job search!

