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Health Career Profile – Social Worker

When people lose their job or need to find a job, they will look for help at Workforce Development Center (WDC). It is a center that provides job readiness and job search skills. There are many WDCs located in New York. The WDC also provides education and skill training. Some WDC even provide social services.

Rhonda Harrison is a social worker at the Henry Street Settlement/Workforce Development Center. Her job is to meet with people and help them to manage their problems. She helps them to get ready for a job. First she will meet with them individually for assessment and write a case note. Then she will provide good information and guide them for what they will need to do. Her job is not easy because most of her clients don't like to listen to what she is asking them to do. They always have an excuse or just follow their own way of doing things. Most of her clients come in with many problems. For example, they are people who have lost a job or are looking for a place to live. Some do not have enough money to live or they have no way of getting interview clothes. Some have family issues and other personal issues. Her duty is to help them overcome their problems and find a job. Even though her job is not easy, she still enjoys her job because it is meaningful for her to help people who need it. To do her job, she needs communication skills, information resources and good listening skills.

As a social worker, she always wants to be fair and to have done her homework. I know what she is talking about. Sometimes, before she sits down with a client, she will think about what she is going to say. She wants to be better advocate for her clients-- that would make her happiest. She is not sure what her accomplishments are because she cannot count the number of people got jobs. But she does feel success when her clients seem more prepared for a job when they weren't before.

If she had a chance to change her job, she would want to be a policy maker because she feels that the funder requirements will not always be on the same page of the real world.

Interview- Questions and Answers

Q. What makes you want to be a social worker?

A. I went to a counseling school and met a social worker there. Then I learned more about social working and I liked it. Because it is a job about helping people, I went into social work.

Q. What are your duties?

A. The duties of a social worker are to help people to function better and to gain more control over their lives. So they have a better quality of life. At the WDC (Workforce Development Center), my job is to help people manage their main problem, which is finding a job.

Q. What is the biggest challenge at your job?

A. Telling people things that they don't want to hear.

Q. How do you deal with this population?

A. I always want to be fair and to have done my homework. I know what I'm talking about before I sit down with the client and sometimes I think about what I am going to say before meeting with them.

Q. What is your accomplishment?

A. Not sure if it is called accomplishment. Because I cannot count the number of people who have gotten jobs. But I do count success when they seem to be better prepared for a job. I am ready for people who want a job.

Q. Do you enjoy what you do now?

A. Most of the time. But I would like to be a better advocate for my clients. That is what makes me happiest.

Q. What skill do you need in order to do your job?

A. Learn how to be advocate.

Q. If you had a chance to change your job, what would you change it to?

A. A policy maker.