

# Coaching for Advancement: Information Gathering Questionnaires

## Development of ILAP Planning and Goal Setting Questions

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## Earning a Pay Raise

If you are working at an employer site, you will want to make sure you have certain information about the job, advancement, hours and pay raises. It is important not to coach the customer toward a goal that is not achievable. There is merit in asking your customers questions about the employer even if you already know the answer. You can test the level of knowledge the customer has about the worksite and policies. Of course, this should be asked in a way that doesn't belittle the customer. They should be asked in a way that promotes conversation.

Here is information you need to know about each position related to pay:

**Pay range**

**Requirements for the job**

**Policy for pay increases**

**Whether a personnel handbook is in use and up to date**

**Whether pay increases are linked to appraisals**

This questionnaire is best used as a conversation starter and a beginning point of planning for a pay raise. It is not intended that every question would be asked. Once you come to an answer that suggests that you have enough information to create the next step in the plan, then stop and write the plan. The questions are in categories that are somewhat sequential.

## Earning a Pay Raise

Baseline questions about the customer's current pay:

- What do you earn now?
- When did you last receive a pay raise?
- Are you still on the same hourly rate as when you started your current job? (How long has he/she been on this job?)
- When you were hired, did the employer tell you the range of salary for someone in your position?
- When you were interviewed, did the employer tell you when a raise might be possible? Have you had any discussion about a pay raise either at the interview, during the hiring process or at any time since?
- Do you have performance related pay?
- Do you have a Trade Union and are you a member?

What does the customer know about the policies and procedures for the particular employer?

- Do you know the minimum and maximum wage in your job role?
- Does your employer have a pay increment system?
- Do you have an employee handbook or personnel handbook? If no, do you know if they have one? Could you ask your supervisor?
- What is the pay structure with your employer?

Refer to:  
handbook  
manager  
HR  
Friends/colleagues  
Union

- Do you know if pay increases linked to appraisal reviews?
- Do you know if you would get higher pay if you had additional skills and qualifications?
- Are there alternate shifts that you can work that pay higher wages?

What does the customer know about the pay rates and conditions of the industry in which they work?

- What's the normal pay for the industry?
- How's the industry doing?
- Is your employer in a good position in the market?
- Have you checked what similar jobs are paying?
- Are other companies recruiting people with your experience?
- Have you contacted your employer's competitors to see if they have openings?

What steps has the customer taken to position themselves for a raise? Where are they in the process of earning and requesting a raise?

- Have you had an appraisal/performance review and completed your probationary period?

If No – ask for a review of your performance, present any evidence you have of your performance.

If yes - What was the outcome of your last appraisal review?

- Has anyone spoken to you about how you are doing at work?

If yes – what did he/she say?

- Have you discussed a pay raise with your manager?

If yes, what did he/she say?

If no, what is your feeling about asking for a raise?

- Has anyone else received a pay raise that you know of?
- Can you take on additional responsibilities that can be used in other aspects of the business?
- Have you asked your manager for additional duties?

- Are you willing to do additional training in your own time if it helped you to earn additional responsibilities and pay?
- Would it be possible to keep a journal that outlines what you do, special projects you have worked on, and what you have accomplished? This could be used during a performance appraisal.

### Recommended Activities that Could Result in a Pay Raise

- 1) Ask about raise points at hire. Enter into salary negotiations at hire/review.
  - 2) Bring in a staff/employee handbook so you and the case manager can review it.
  - 3) Ask for a raise but only after a minimum of three months on the job if no raise point has been established.
  - 4) Check with competitors. See if they pay more.
  - 5) Work on shifts that have a pay-differential.
  - 6) Ask about the criteria to get a raise.
  - 7) Find out about bonuses and incentives for working faster.
  - 8) Keep a list or a log about what you do. Make a list of special projects you have done. Be prepared to explain why you should get a raise. Present your "portfolio."
  - 9) Work with your case manager to write a list of transferable skills.
  - 10) Look for a better paying job while you are still employed.
  - 11) Ask the case manager to follow-up with the employer. Let them ask about a raise.
  - 12) Practice how to ask for a raise. Role play with staff.
  - 13) Do not talk about how much money you make to other employees. Hold confidences.
  - 14) Ask employer for a performance review between raise points.
  - 15) Do work that is out of your class of work.
  - 16) Take training to learn new skills that are needed at the next higher level.
  - 17) Learn negotiation skills.
  - 18) Stay on your job through the raise point so if you look for another job you can say you made the higher rate.
  - 19) Participate in union activities.
  - 20) Write a proposal saying what you do, and compare it to what employers pay.
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## Earning a Promotion

If you are working at an employer site, you will want to make sure you have certain information about the job, advancement, hours and pay raises. It is important not to coach the customer toward a goal that is not achievable. There is merit in asking your customers questions about the employer even if you already know the answer. You can test the level of knowledge the customer has about the worksite and policies. Of course, this should be asked in a way that doesn't belittle the customer. They should be asked in a way that promotes conversation.

Here is information you need to know about each position related to promotional opportunities:

- \* Next steps on Career Ladder
- Qualification for next step
- Process for earning promotion
- Availability of next position
- Any policies related to promotions
- Job description for next position

**This questionnaire is best used as a conversation starter and a beginning point of planning for a promotion. It is not intended that every question would be asked. Don't limit yourself to the questions listed below. Once you come to an answer that suggests that you have enough information to create the next step in the plan, then stop and write the plan.**

## Earning a Promotion

Baseline questions about the possibility of a promotion.

- Do you know what position that you want to try for?
- Is the position available or soon to be available?
- Do you know the qualifications necessary for the position?
- Do you know the salary and benefits associated with the increased responsibility of the position?
- Do you have a job description for the position you'd like to aim for?

What does the customer know about the company policies and procedures for earning promotions?

- What is the company policy on promotion?
- Does your company promote regularly?
- Do they promote from within?
- What opportunities are available?
- Are positions posted or do you have to hear about them through the grapevine?
- Do you know what the company looks for when they promote people?

What steps has the customer taken to position themselves for a promotion? Where are they in the process of earning and requesting a promotion?

- Has anyone talked to you about higher level positions?
- Have you discussed promotion with your supervisor or anyone else at work?
- Have you offered to take on extra duties?
- Would you consider moving to another company to achieve this goal?
- Do you know if other companies have openings?
- Have you prepared yourself for interviews?

Has the customer considered the implications of the promotion on family and life?

- Are you aware of the responsibilities of becoming a supervisor/team leader/ manager from being a team member (or moving to this higher level position)?
- Are you able to accept the responsibility of the new job?
- Have you checked that promotion is compatible with your home circumstances? E.g. financially, work life balance
- What do you hope to gain by getting a promotion?
- Have you considered/ spoken to your family about the impact a promotion may have on your lives?
- Would there be any childcare/ transport issues?
- Could you cope with the additional workload?
- Has the customer considered the training and qualifications needed to qualify for the position?
- What skills do you presently have that would help you obtain promotion and be a success?
- Are there any additional skills/qualifications that would help you obtain a promotion?
- Does your work offer any courses that could help?
- Are there any courses available outside of work that you know of that could help?
- Could you take on extra duties in order to increase your skills?
- Could you shadow a colleague or line manager in order to increase your skills?
- Why is it desirable at this time?

### Recommended Activities that Could Result in a Promotion

- 1) Ask for a job description of your position and for any positions that you might someday be interested in moving into. When asking, tell the supervisor you want them so you can better understand how the organization functions and where you fit into the company.
- 2) Compare the qualifications on the job description to your qualifications for the job. Make a plan to get the needed qualifications.
- 3) Show initiative by asking for special projects.
- 4) Work to meet and exceed all production standards.
- 5) Identify the "power" in the company and ask them to be your mentor.
- 6) Find successful people in the position you want. Journal two things you notice about them. Try to practice those characteristics.
- 7) Practice expressing ideas for work with your case manager and friends.
- 8) Accept extra hours when the supervisor makes the request.
- 9) Do informational interviews with people who are at higher levels. Ask them what they did to advance.
- 10) Solve personal problems outside of work. Discuss only work issues at work.
- 11) Offer to do jobs outside of your job duties.
- 12) Let the supervisor know when you have completed your tasks and can accept more jobs.
- 13) Ask for a performance review. Ask what is needed to advance.
- 14) Document in a journal your accomplishments. Let the employer know about things you've done. Do this indirectly. "Over the weekend, I was thinking about x. I sat down and wrote down some of my ideas." You just let the employer know that you were doing things during off work time and showed initiative.
- 15) Volunteer to work in/at the job you'd like to move into.
- 16) Ask what people look for in people to promote.
- 17) Volunteer any time a supervisor will be out to do part of their work tasks.

- 18) Help your supervisor do some of his/her tasks.
- 19) Have lunch time conversations with people in other departments about work issues. Do this to learn about other jobs, NOT to complain about your unit.
- 20) When bringing a problem to a supervisor, always bring a solution.
- 21) Do not bad mouth or gossip about others.
- 22) Find out what is important to management and concentrate on doing those things well.
- 23) Watch for openings in the company. Apply for those openings. Do not expect to automatically get promoted without asking for the position.
- 24) Anticipate staff changes B retirements, promotions, quits. Get the credentials you'd need to move into that position.
- 25) Join a professional organization in your field of fascination.
- 26) Offer to coach or train a new employee.
- 27) Listen for something your supervisor hates to do. Volunteer for that job.
- 28) Be a friend to new employees. They may move up.
- 29) Inquire about additional training you can take at work that might be offered through the company.
- 30) Offer to help co-workers.
- 31) Present a proposal for a new idea of something you would like to try on the job.
- 32) Apply for the next level. Make sure the supervisor knows you want to move up.
- 33) Take care of equipment and tools.
- 34) Make the person ahead of you successful so they move up.
- 35) Dress and behave like the people who are at the next level.
- 36) Keep a list of things you are doing, skills you are developing, and your accomplishments. Use these on resumes to show why you should advance.
- 37) Explore advancement opportunities with other employers.

## Increasing Hours

If you are working at an employer site, you will want to make sure you have certain information about the job, advancement, hours and pay raises. It is important not to coach the customer toward a goal that is not achievable. There is merit in asking your customers questions about the employer even if you already know the answer. You can test the level of knowledge the customer has about the worksite and policies. Of course, this should be asked in a way that doesn't belittle the customer. They should be asked in a way that promotes conversation.

Here is information you need to know about each position related to increasing work hours.



**Maximum hours allowed in position**  
**Roadblocks to working more hours**  
**Options for increasing hours**  
**Policies related to hours**

This questionnaire is best used as a conversation starter and a beginning point of planning for increasing hours. It is not intended that every question would be asked. Don't limit yourself to the questions listed below. Once you come to an answer that suggests that you have enough information to create the next step in the plan, then stop and write the plan.

## Increasing Working Hours

Baseline questions about increasing work hours:

- How many hours are you currently working?
- How many hours would you like to have?
- Are the number of hours you work regular or does it vary each week?
- Have your hours increased or decreased since you began working at the company?
- In the last 2 months have you had any time off or been late?
- How often do you miss work per month?
- Do you have phone or access to a phone so you can be reached for extra hours?
- Have you ever been asked to work extra hours and if so, did you accept those hours?
- If you could not get more hours working for this company, would you consider finding another job where more hours were available?
- Would you consider working a second job to pick up more hours?

Does the customer know the companies policies for work hours and scheduling?

- Could you increase your hours in the job you are currently doing or is there no scope for this?
- Do you know what the current policies are concerning hours worked and scheduling?
- Do those workers who work different shifts obtain more hours than those on other shifts?
- Do you have an employee handbook?
- Is it possible to work in two different jobs/departments at this employer in order to pick up additional hours?

Has customer considered the implications of the additional hours on family and life?

- What made you decide to increase your hours?
- Would there be any issues concerning childcare if you increased your hours?
- Would there be any issues concerning transportation should you accept more hours?
- Do your family members support the idea of you working more?
- Would your responsibilities increase by taking on extra hours? Is that acceptable to you?

What steps has the customer taken to position themselves for extra hours?

- Have you asked your existing employer for extra hours?
- Have you offered to work extra in the event that someone calls off or the manager needs extra coverage?
- Could you work hours that are difficult for the employer to get employees to work?
- Have you offered to fill in when others are off?
- Have you told your co-workers to call you if they have hours they can't cover? When the co-worker asks for the time off, s/he can tell the employer you agreed to cover his/her shift.
- Have you offered to work holidays, weekends, evenings and the less desirable shifts?
- Could you learn additional duties so you can fill in for people who are in positions different from your own?
- Have you offered to come in at short notice to cover absences?
- Could you propose new ideas about things that need to be done? Create some hours?  
Could you offer to do a task you see needs to be done?
- Could you offer to retrain or undergo further training within the company to get a job with more hours?
- Have you had good feedback from your employer about your performance?

## Recommended Activities to Increase Hours Worked

- 1) Get daycare and transportation arrangements made so you can increase your hours of work or be available for overtime.
- 2) Propose new ideas about things that need to be done. Create a job.
- 3) Let the supervisor know you would like to work more hours.
- 4) Work hours that are difficult for the employer to get employees to work.
- 5) Offer to fill in when others are off.
- 6) Tell your co-workers to call you if they have hours they can't cover. When the co-worker asks for the time off, he/she can tell the employer you agreed to cover his/her shift.
- 7) Work in two different departments for the same employer.
- 8) Work a second job.
- 9) Offer to work holidays, weekends, evenings and the less desirable shifts.
- 10) Have phone or access to a phone so you can be reached for extra hours.
- 11) Work all of the hours you are already assigned.
- 12) Learn additional duties so you can fill in for people that are in other positions (other than your own).
- 13) Try your absolute best to cover any extra shift your employer asks you to work or you may be taken off the top of the list of employees to call.
- 14) Increase your productivity beyond the cost of paying you.
- 15) Market the employers' business.
- 16) Ask supervisor if there are unmet goals you can work on.
- 17) Offer to do a task you see needs to be done.

This questionnaire is best used as a conversation starter and a beginning point of planning for increasing hours. It is not intended that every question would be asked. Don't limit yourself to the questions listed below. Once you come to an answer that suggests that you have enough information to create the next step in the plan, then stop and write the plan.

### FINDING A JOB IN A FIELD YOU ARE INTERESTED IN

Are you working now? Or Do you still work at \_\_\_\_\_?

I assume it's something you don't find to be rewarding. Can you tell me about that?

Do you know what industry you would like to work in?

If no,

Recommend interest inventory or career exploration services.

If yes:

“What field are you interested in?”

Do you currently have the training, certification, or license to qualify for that position?

If yes, are you currently conducting an active job search?

If yes, tell me about what you have already done so I can see what help I might be able to offer. (Explore whether you can help with the resume, provide job listings, conduct mock interviews, or refer them to a job search skills class).

If no, “Lots of people think they want to work in a specific field and as a result, enroll in school, spend time in class and lots of money only to discover they don't really like the field they picked. How would you feel about me helping you to set up an informational interview with someone in that field, a job shadow day, a volunteer day or two so you can learn more about the job – what it's like, what the pay is, the working conditions, etc. – so that you can make a better decision?”

### Recommended Activities for Finding Job in Field of Fascination

- 1) Go on informational interview with someone who already works in the field you want to move into.
- 2) Take an interest test if you aren't sure what you want to do.
- 3) Find out the qualifications and education you need to get that job.
- 4) Volunteer or do a work experience on a job you think you might like.
- 5) Job shadow a person doing the job you think you might like.
- 6) Do one thing per week that moves you ahead on finding or acquiring your dream job.
- 7) Develop a career plan that moves you toward the dream job.
- 8) Talk to case manager about getting any training you need to get the dream job.
- 9) Ask your current employer what they think you'd be good at within that company. Learn enough about the job to see if you would like that position.

### Recommended Activities for Acquisition of Benefits

- 1) Inquire about insurance at work.
- 2) Get a personnel handbook. Bring it to the case manager to help you review.
- 3) Learn skills at this job and then apply with a company that offers benefits.
- 4) Work in jobs that have unions.
- 5) Research benefit packages for the company.
- 6) Ask for benefits instead of a raise.
- 7) Increase your hours to full time.
- 8) Provide employer with information on savings; i.e. reduced turnover rates when benefits are offered.
- 9) Ask if you can be part of a payroll deduction plan so you can purchase insurance.
- 10) Consider benefits beyond medical/retirement:

- Vacation
- Child care
- Training or educational benefits
- Location of work (home)
- Free technology available.

### **Recommended Activities for Getting into GED/ Vocational Training and Completing It**

- 1) Call a GED or vocational training center just to get information on hours of operation.
- 2) Visit the center to see what it is like and whether you'd like it.
- 3) Call your training advisor to see how to apply for school.
- 4) Get an application for the school.
- 5) Complete the application for the school.
- 6) Get an application for financial aid.
- 7) Complete the application for financial aid.
- 8) Audit a class for a day. See what it is like to be there. Observe.
- 9) Go to a new student orientation to hear more about what the program will be like.
- 10) Talk to a graduate or student that attends there to see what it is like.
- 11) Take a pretest to see where you would place.
- 12) Take an aptitude test to see if you have the aptitude to learn the skill.
- 13) Get a copy of the certificate or diploma and put it on your refrigerator to remind yourself why you are doing this.
- 14) Sign up for the course/program.
- 15) Explore distance learning opportunities.
- 16) Ask your employer if you could work a schedule that allows you to attend classes.
- 17) Write a list of the benefits of having your GED.
- 18) Write a list of the benefits of having a certificate in a vocational training program.