Source:

NOTE: Some content included in this Insight Byte may have been directly sourced from the study. If you plan to make reference to it, you must cite the original source.

Insight & Learning Question(s) Answered:
- How do we best link jobseekers and entrepreneurs to meaningful opportunities to increase their placement rate in quality jobs/entrepreneurial opportunities upon graduation?
- What combination of training, mentoring, experiential learning, etc. will have the greatest impact on building the needed skills and competencies and on sustaining job/employability/entrepreneurship outcomes?

Insight Byte:
This meta-analytic review examined the effectiveness of job search interventions in facilitating job search success (i.e. obtaining employment). Major theoretical perspectives on job search interventions, including behavioral learning theory, theory of planned behavior, social cognitive theory, and coping theory, were reviewed and integrated to derive a taxonomy of critical job search intervention components.

Findings:
- Summarizing the data from 47 experimentally or quasi-experimentally evaluated job search interventions, the study found that the odds of obtaining employment were 2.67 times higher for job seekers participating in job search interventions compared to job seekers in the control group, who did not participate in such intervention programs
- Job search interventions that contained certain components, including teaching job search skills, improving self-presentation, boosting self-efficacy, encouraging proactivity, promoting goal setting, and enlisting social support, were more effective than interventions that did not include such components
- Job search interventions effectively promoted employment only when both skill development and motivation enhancement were included
- Job search interventions were more effective in helping younger and older (vs. middle-aged) job seekers, short-term (vs. long-term) unemployed job seekers, and job seekers with special needs and conditions (vs. job seekers in general) to find employment.

Actionable Insights
- First, in designing job search interventions in the future, practitioners should take advantage of the study’s validated taxonomy of intervention components—i.e. teaching job search skills, improving self-presentation, boosting self-efficacy, encouraging proactivity, promoting goal setting, or enlisting social support. Career counsellors could also become more effective if they utilize these techniques in their day-to-day practices.
• In addition, the study found support for the synergistic effect of combining skill development-focused and **motivation enhancement-focused interventions**. This suggests that practitioners should try to incorporate activities serving for both goals into their interventions simultaneously.

• Given that sample characteristics (e.g., job seekers’ age, length of unemployment, and job seekers’ special needs and conditions in obtaining employment) influence intervention effectiveness, future job search interventions need to be **tailored to the special needs of their target populations**. For example, the study found that job search interventions are less effective for long-term unemployed job seekers. This may suggest that additions and/or modifications of the traditional job search intervention are necessary when it comes to that a specific group of job seekers (e.g. long-term unemployed individuals may need not only job search skills training but also occupational skills training; also, an intervention that gradually rehabilitates their self-esteem and healthy lifestyle may be an important addition to traditional job search interventions.

• The study also suggests that **enlisting social support from family and friends** is a critical component of successful job search interventions. As family members also bear the negative effects of unemployment, it might be beneficial to involve the entire family into the intervention. For example, interventions that are aimed at reducing the risk of family dysfunction in the period of job loss, such as lack of social support and presence of social undermining, could be beneficial. In addition, improving a married couple’s skills and self-efficacy in managing the financial issues that arise from unemployment could be beneficial as well. Thus, practitioners are encouraged to design and examine couple- or family-oriented job search interventions.

**Taking Action: What can you do next with this knowledge?**

1) Actions for the Global CC Team
   - Promote this insight byte amongst your network of partner workforce development NGOs and encourage them to reflect on how to implement the study’s findings and critical components in their own programs (if applicable)

2) Actions for the S2S practitioner network
   - Make use of this report to assess the effectiveness of your job intervention program and include the relevant components of job search interventions proposed by the study into your own program
   - Use this study as an opportunity to reflect on how central motivation enhancement is in your program design and tailor your intervention accordingly, to ensure that in addition to skills training, your beneficiaries also receive the necessary support and incentives to succeed in employment

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