

Dude, Where's My Job?

April 13, 2009 | KUC 313 | 2 to 3 p.m.

Program Overview:

A person's **attitude** when looking for a job is the **most important** part of finding employment. This program will help participants identify their key attitudes about looking for a job and consider suggestions for becoming more self-directed in the job search. Participants will identify their *attitudes* on *four basic scales*:

1. Luck vs. Planning
2. Uninvolved vs. Involved
3. Help from Others vs. Self-help
4. Passive vs. Active

Not Covered Today ...

For the sake of time and clarity, the following *will not* be covered in this presentation:

- *How* to job search
- *How* to network
- *How* to interview
- *How* to write resumes & cover letters

For these topics, please check out other presentations offered this week in “*Career Countdown: Prepared or Scared*” as well as our resources on the web

(www.mtsu.edu/~career | Resources)

Locus of Control

Locus of Control – describes the degree to which individuals perceive that outcomes result from their own behaviors, or from forces that are external to themselves (Mind Tools, 2007). The concept of locus of control was developed by psychologist Julian Rotter who devised the Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (Locus of Control) .

Figure 1: Locus of Control



Internal LOC

- Inclined to take responsibility for actions.
- Not easily influenced by others.
- Do better at tasks where they can work at their own pace.
- More likely to pay attention to the content of the opinion-holder.

External LOC

- Tend to blame outside circumstances for their mistakes.
- Credit their successes to luck rather than own efforts.
- Readily influenced by opinion of others.
- More likely to pay attention to the status of the opinion-holder.

(Locus of Control)

Benefits of Internal LOC

In general, people with an internal locus of control:

- Engage in activities that will improve their situation.
- Emphasize striving for achievement.
- Work hard to develop their knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Are inquisitive, and try to figure out why things turned out the way they did.
- Take note of information that they can use to create positive outcomes in the future.
- Have a more participative management style.

(Mind Tools 2007, Page 4)

Example of Locus of Control

- John and Katie each receive a D on a class test.
- John has an internal *LOC* and attributes his grade to lack of studying.
- Katie has an external *LOC* and attributes her grade to a poorly made test and an ineffective teacher, both of which are out of her control.
(Gantz, 1999).

Importance of Control

- Control plays an important role in several psychological theories including learned helplessness, and self-efficacy theories (Wise, 1999).
- Locus of Control influences one's academic success and health behaviors (Wise, 1999).
- We will look at Locus of Control as related to job search issues.

Learned Helplessness

- Individuals' attributions about their perceived inability to have any control over past situations tends to lead to expectations about what will occur in future situations (Liptak, 2006a, pg.3)

Self-efficacy

- Beliefs or expectations that people hold about their abilities to accomplish certain tasks (Wise, 1999).

Job Search Attitude Inventory

Is a brief, 32-item inventory designed to make job seekers more aware of their self-directed and other-directed attitudes about their search for employment (Liptak, 2006a).

The JSAI only looks at attitudes. It does not measure:

- IQ
- Stress
- “Normalcy”
- Illnesses
- Psychiatric Disturbances
- Trauma, etc.

It is **not** a **test**; there are no right or wrong answers!

JSAI Scales (Step 2)

- **Luck vs. Planning** – how much you emphasize planning a job search rather than relying on luck.
- **Uninvolved vs. Involved** – how involved you are in your search for a job.
- **Help from other vs. Self-help** – how much you depend on outside agencies or on yourself to find a job.
- **Passive vs. Active** – how much control you have in your job search.

(Liptak, 2006a&b)

2 Types of Job Seekers (Step 3)

Self-directed and Other-directed

Self-directed job seekers:

- Take full responsibility for what happens in their lives.
- Know the role they fulfill in life and have set goal to reach their full potential.
- Realize finding a job is their responsibility.
- Have desire to succeed and are motivated from within.

(Liptak, 2006b)

Strategies for Improving Attitudes (Step 4)

- Goals, simple steps, S.M.A.R.T.
- Enhance self-esteem – 3 things you have done well
- Luck may play a role, your responsibility to seize it
- Learn job search methods
- Forget failures, focus on accomplishments
- Don't procrastinate – sense of urgency
- Seek out people who will encourage you
- Join clubs and organizations for support and networking
- OJM & HJM; diversify your portfolio

(Liptak, 2006b)

- **Develop your next steps!!!**

Tips for Developing an Internal LOC

- Recognize the basic fact that you always have a choice – making no choice is actually a choice.
- By working toward and achieving goals, you are controlling what happens.
- Develop your decision making and problem solving skills so that you can feel more confident, and in control of what happens.
- Pay attention to your self-talk. When you hear yourself saying things like, "I have no choice" or "There's nothing I can do", step back and remind yourself that you do, in fact, have some degree of control. It's your choice whether you exercise it or not.

(Mind Tools, 2007)

Managing Drawbacks with Internal LOC

- There can be times when having an external locus of control can be an advantage, particularly in situations where people need to be considerate and more easy-going.
- People with a strong internal locus of control tend to be very achievement-oriented, and this can leave people around them feeling "trampled" or "bruised."
- A very strong internal locus of control can create a tendency to want to control everything which can lead to difficulties in taking direction.
- If you have a strong internal LOC, make sure you pay attention to the feelings of people around you - otherwise you'll seem arrogant, and people may not want to work with you.
- Having an external LOC is not always bad: There are some situations where this approach can work well. The key for your own personal development is understanding your natural tendency and then adapting it to the situations you are faced with.

References

- Gantz, Mandy (Last revised 2006). *Do you have the power to succeed? Locus of control and its impact on education*. Oxford, Ohio: Miami University. Accessed 17 Mar, 2009, <http://www.units.muohio.edu/psybersite/control/education.shtml>.
- Liptak, John (2006a). *Job search attitude inventory administrator's guide*, 3rd edition. Jist Works.
- Liptak, John (2006b). *Job search attitude inventory*, 3rd edition. Jist Works.
- *Locus of Control*. Encyclopedia of Childhood and Adolescence. FindArticles.com. Gale Research 1998. Accessed 17 Mar, 2009, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_g2602/is_0003/ai_2602000356.
- Mind Tools (2007). *Finding out who is in charge of your destiny*, Accessed 17 Mar, 2009, www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCDV_90.htm.
- Wise, Michelle (Last revised 2006). *Locus of control in our daily lives: How the concept of control impacts the social world*. Oxford, Ohio: Miami University. Accessed 17 Mar, 2009, www.units.muohio.edu/psybersite/control/overview.shtml.

Additional Resources

- *Locus of Control Quiz*. Mind Tools. Accessed 17 Mar, 2009, www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCDV_90.htm.
- *Locus of Control Quiz*. Goolkasian, Paula. Professor of Psychology and Director of Cognitive Science, University of North Carolina, Charlotte. Accessed 17 Mar, 2009, <http://www.psych.uncc.edu/pagoolka/LocusofControl-intro.html>.