# Kentucky APSE 2021

# **Developing Relationships is as Easy as 1,2,3**

Scripts to customize and rehearse, so you don’t feel like you don’t know what to say.

**A quick note about scripts.** These are just examples, to show you how a conversation could start and flow during the initial stages of creating a relationship with an employer. You do not want to EVER read these scripts as they are written, instead use them to think about the last 5 employers you needed to get to know. Recall the conversations you had, and looking at the framework of these scripts, write what you would have said differently/how you want to have these conversations in the future.

**Scenario 1:** You are reaching out to companies about their hiring needs follow these steps and then use the scripts below:

1. Talk to someone at the company, maybe it’s someone from HR, maybe it’s a supervisor or hiring manager.
2. Introduce yourself using the introduction tips provided in this presentation.
3. Ask them “Can you tell me a little about what makes an employee successful in your jobs/in this specific job?”, then follow your script.
4. LISTEN – focus on what they are saying to capture what is important to them, do not start thinking through your client caseload.
5. Thank them and describe next steps “Wow, thank you so much, I have a much better idea of what you need. I'm going to review possible candidates and will be back in touch tomorrow with information about who may be a great match”

Scripts:

You: Hi, I saw on your website that you are hiring for production coordinators, and I can see the job description but had a few more questions about the role, if you have the time?

Employer: Yes, a production coordinator makes sure materials are available to the operators at the exact moment they need it, so as to not slow down the line.

You: Ok, so what makes a good production coordinator? Is it attention to detail? Big picture thinking? Ability to multitask? Operating forklifts? Using the computer software to schedule things? Things like that?

Employer: Well, yes attention to detail and big picture thinking, but multitasking isn’t that important, nor is using the computer or forklifts. Yes, scheduling and linear thinking are important. I think the ideal candidate is a fairly concrete thinker, but not rigid. They need to be flexible and be able to problem solve but ideally, they are planning ahead to avoid problems.

You: Ok, I think I have it. What would make you terminate a production coordinator? What are the biggest mistakes they can make?

Employer: Well, ha ha not showing up for work is a big one. But seriously, someone who is easily frazzled and panics instead of responding, someone who cannot manage to keep an eye on 6 different functions at the same time and someone who cannot get along with others. They don’t need to be extra social, but teamwork and essential communication are important.

You: What does essential communication mean to you?

Employer: Essential communication is when you provide the information needed without lots of extraneous details. Keep things simple when communicating.

You: Ok, great! I understand. I will review our candidates and get back to you tomorrow evening with how many candidates we think we have. And if we don’t think we have a good match, I will let you know that and try to find a couple of resources you can use to look elsewhere.

If the example above does not seem relevant to you, here is one more:

You: Hi, I saw on your website that you are hiring for grocery associates, and I can see the job description but had a few more questions about the duties and responsibilities, if you have the time?

Employer: Yes, a grocery associate can either be assigned to stocking the shelves or managing the POS stations.

You: Ok, so what are the key characteristics for success in these roles? Is it attention to detail? Lifting, reaching, bending? Customer service? Cash handling and operating the register? Complete knowledge of the entire inventory and locations in the store? Things like that?

Employer: Well, yes except it is divided between the 2 positions. Those at the POS, must focus on the interaction with the customer and their experience in the store while either operating the register accurately or effectively bagging the groceries according to our protocols and loading them back into the customer’s carriage. Those in stocking positions need a much more precise adherence to our protocols for stocking and rotating stock on the shelves, following the planograms and managing the cartons and access materials as they unload the pallets. They also need to be able to respond to questions from customers who need direction in finding a specific item but that is only about 5% of their time.

You: Ok, I think I have it. What would make you fire a grocery associate? What are the biggest mistakes they can make?

Employer: Well, ha ha not showing up for work is a big one. But seriously, someone who is rude to the customer or mishandles financial transactions, especially cash. Well, those are immediate termination situations. But everything else, like cannot stock according to the pace expected, well then, we’ll coach and work with them. Both jobs are demanding, and we know that.

You: What do you mean by demanding?

Employer: Well, they are physically demanding, at the POS our associates stand their entire shift, and the stock associates are lifting, bending, walking, pushing, etc. But they are also doing all of that in the midst of customers who may not be patient or polite and we teach our associates how to manage that kind of interaction and how to engage management so they can get back to their duties.

You: Ok, great I understand. I’ll review our candidates and get back to you tomorrow evening with how many candidates we think we have. And if we don’t think we have a good match, I will let you know that and try to find a couple of resources you can use to look elsewhere.

**Scenario 2:** you get a call saying “Hey, we are a company that wants to hire pwd”.

Either respond with:

“Wonderful, we have a specialist that can discuss this with you! Can I connect you with them?” or “Let me forward you to their cell phone.”

Or identify that you’re the correct person and continue with this script (being conversational while asking questions, not interrogating):

”What kind of operation/positions do you have in mind/need to fill?”

“Tell me more about what you have in mind”

“Have you or your company recruited people with disabilities before?”

“I would love to meet you in-person to see the workplace and learn more about the jobs, is this possible?”

“What kinds of questions do you have about working with our agency to source candidates?”

After each question, be quiet and listen to their response. Take notes, in fact, let them know you are taking notes so they do not misinterpret any pauses.

THEN, and **this is so important**, when they ask you questions, be positive, concise and curious with more questions. **Even if,** in your mind, you are thinking “there’s no way any of my clients can/want to do the jobs they are talking about/can get to that location/would want those jobs”. Even if you are thinking any of those thoughts, resist the impulse to shut down the conversation. Instead, be open, ask more questions, keep your mind open to other possibilities. If you’re unsure that you can help them meet their labor needs, keep the conversation going. Develop a relationship to explore what other opportunities might exist. Always remember to use honesty, give before you take, and follow up regularly.

Boom! Now you know what’s important to them and you can start looking at your job seekers and present them (and their skills) within the terms of what the employer thinks is most important, which is called “using the business case”.