



TIE THAT BINDS

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Attitude is the Real Disability

Criminal Records

As I travel across the State I keep hearing that more and more referrals to the employment programs are people with disabilities, who also have a criminal record. Most of the information I find talks directly to the person with the criminal past, not to an agent or representative. But, I think we can adapt some of it.

Look at smaller companies. You will be working with the owner and you can demonstrate your abilities.

What jobs did you do when you were incarcerated? You have a skill, apply to those businesses in the community.

Get a GED.

Look at unskilled or semi-skilled positions to get started.

Look at Temp-to-hire agencies.

So now that you have found some employers who may want to talk to someone with a criminal past, how do you start out on the right foot? *Give the information asked for- no more.*

Keep good eye contact

Talk briefly about the past. Acknowledge and take responsibility. Talk about what you have done to change this aspect of your life. Be positive and concise. Do not ramble. Do not let your past be the last thing talked about. End the interview on positive.

As agents or representatives of people seeking employment, we want to be familiar with the Federal Bonding Program.

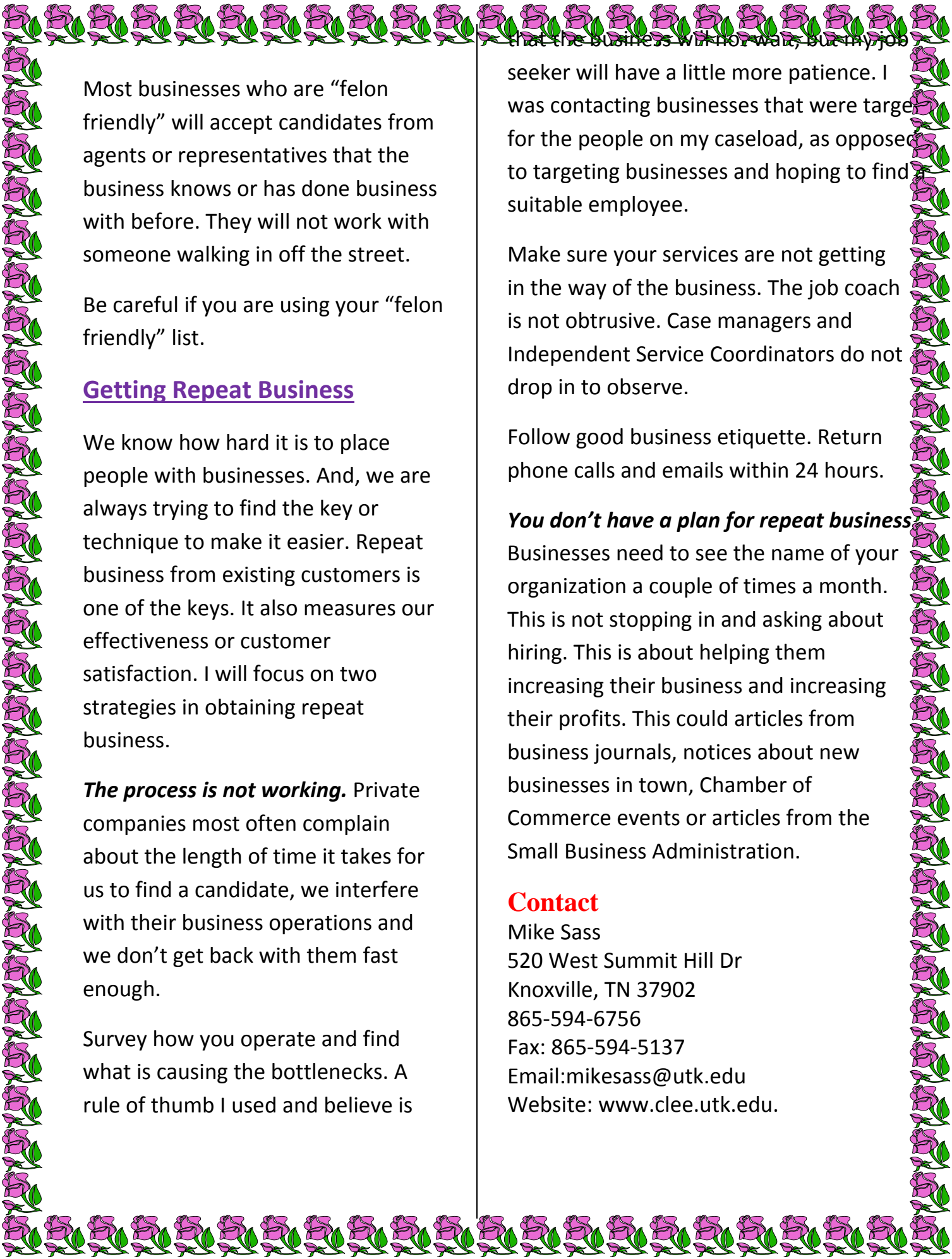
www.Bonds4jobs.com.

Felon Friendly Businesses

A number of you reading this newsletter are probably sitting on a piece of paper that lists businesses in your community that are felon friendly. We keep hearing that these are not always accurate or the most efficient way to prospect for employment.

Yes, there are businesses that are felon friendly, but when they heard there was a list out there and every agency in town came knocking, they shut that door of opportunity.

Other businesses are felon friendly, but are very specific about what type of felony they are comfortable in hiring. They are annoyed with repeated visits from agents or representatives who don't know the hiring process of the company.



Most businesses who are “felon friendly” will accept candidates from agents or representatives that the business knows or has done business with before. They will not work with someone walking in off the street.

Be careful if you are using your “felon friendly” list.

Getting Repeat Business

We know how hard it is to place people with businesses. And, we are always trying to find the key or technique to make it easier. Repeat business from existing customers is one of the keys. It also measures our effectiveness or customer satisfaction. I will focus on two strategies in obtaining repeat business.

The process is not working. Private companies most often complain about the length of time it takes for us to find a candidate, we interfere with their business operations and we don’t get back with them fast enough.

Survey how you operate and find what is causing the bottlenecks. A rule of thumb I used and believe is

that the business will not wait, but the job seeker will have a little more patience. I was contacting businesses that were targeted for the people on my caseload, as opposed to targeting businesses and hoping to find a suitable employee.

Make sure your services are not getting in the way of the business. The job coach is not obtrusive. Case managers and Independent Service Coordinators do not drop in to observe.

Follow good business etiquette. Return phone calls and emails within 24 hours.

You don’t have a plan for repeat business

Businesses need to see the name of your organization a couple of times a month. This is not stopping in and asking about hiring. This is about helping them increase their business and increasing their profits. This could be articles from business journals, notices about new businesses in town, Chamber of Commerce events or articles from the Small Business Administration.

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I DO TRAINING EVERY WEEK SOMEWHERE IN THE STATE.
OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS I HAVE COMPILED A LIST OF
THE 10 MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.

10. CAN I GET EXTRA HANDOUTS?

9. IS THERE A VEGETARIAN ENTRÉE?

8. DOES THIS COUNT AS TRAINING?

7. CAN I MAKE SOME PHONE CALLS?

6. SHOULD MY BOSS BE HERE?

5. WHERE IS THE RESTROOM?

4. AM I GOING TO LEARN ANYTHING?

3. ARE YOU QUALIFIED TO DO THIS TRAINING?

2. I NEED TO LEAVE EARLY, ARE YOU GOING TO COVER
ANYTHING IMPORTANT THE LAST HOUR?

THE NUMBER 1 QUESTION I GET.....

WILL WE FINISH ON TIME?

