

# TIE THAT BINDS

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## ATTITUDE IS THE REAL DISABILITY

### SPOC

In July of 2004 I wrote my first article about SPOC. I made some reference to Dr. Spock and Mr. Spock. Over the years people have forgotten the SPOC connection to employment. It was over a decade ago that businesses were telling us that they wanted a Single Point of Contact. Employers were, and are still, telling us that they don't have time to listen to every Social Service Employment Program tell the business about their wonderful program.

Employers do not recognize the difference between Goodwill, CP centers, ARC, Vocational Rehabilitation and Mental Health Centers. All they remember is "those disability people are knocking on my door....again".

In response to the business community, many rehabilitation providers banded together and formed Area Employment Consortiums. These consortiums were years in developing as each agency relinquished it's "territory" and developed working agreements, values and ethics that all members agree to follow.

The business is comfortable in notifying the single point of contact (SPOC) of openings and the requirements of the position. The

SPOC broadcasts the openings to the Area Employment consortium members with the instructions and requirements listed by the employer.

Instructions are along this line. Forward qualified candidates to the SPOC and the SPOC will forward to the employer. **(Yes, this could be a screening process, but that is a benefit we offer to employers. We will screen applicants, so they don't have to run ads and spend man hours sifting through applications.)** Or the company could say that agencies that have qualified employees can contact them directly. **(As an agency, you better have the qualified candidate and not be wasting this decision-makers time, or you will break the trust that has been established.)**

Employers who are comfortable with using a SPOC have had success in hiring people with disabilities. They know what works for them and are looking for others that fit their success profile. You are not going to change their mind. You are going to help them meet their staffing need.

### Training Tips

I am always looking at ways to improve training and the classroom presentation. The current thought is that when working with adults is to have a give and take of information. Adults have lived full lives and have experiences worth sharing with others.

I did find some information that is useful for classrooms or for job coaches.

Be prepared.

Set the stage.

Engage your audience.

Have fun.

Read the crowd.

Ask for feedback.

These are good points if you are teaching one on one or in a classroom. Remember those teachers that made an impression on you. They had some qualities you can use when teaching or job coaching.

## Behavioral Interviews

When employers use behavioral interviews, they, likely, want to know skills that a candidate has and how it applies the positions that they are hiring for. The same happens when employers talk to job developers, client representatives or employment agents. Do you have the skills or experiences to help my company be better?

*Give an example of how you used logic to solve a problem.*

*Give an example of a goal and how you reached it.*

*Did you ever make a risky decision?*

*How do you meet tight deadlines?*

*What do you do if you disagree with a boss?*

*Give examples of how you work as a team.*

The preceding are examples of behavioral questions.

When responding to behavioral questions you need to remember CAR; **Challenge, Action, Result**. That is to re-phrase the situation into a real life experience, what action you took and the successful result of your action. Weak answers to these types of questions usually are because the interviewee is vague on the situation and answers in hypotheticals. Bring real life experiences into your responses.

When you are representing your agency or your client to businesses, you need to respond in the same way. Bring real life experiences into your response. This is your opportunity to build credibility of your agency and yourself.

You don't need a warehouse of stories, but you need to have 4 to 6 events that you are proud of. These stories can be weaved into a variety of questions you may be asked.

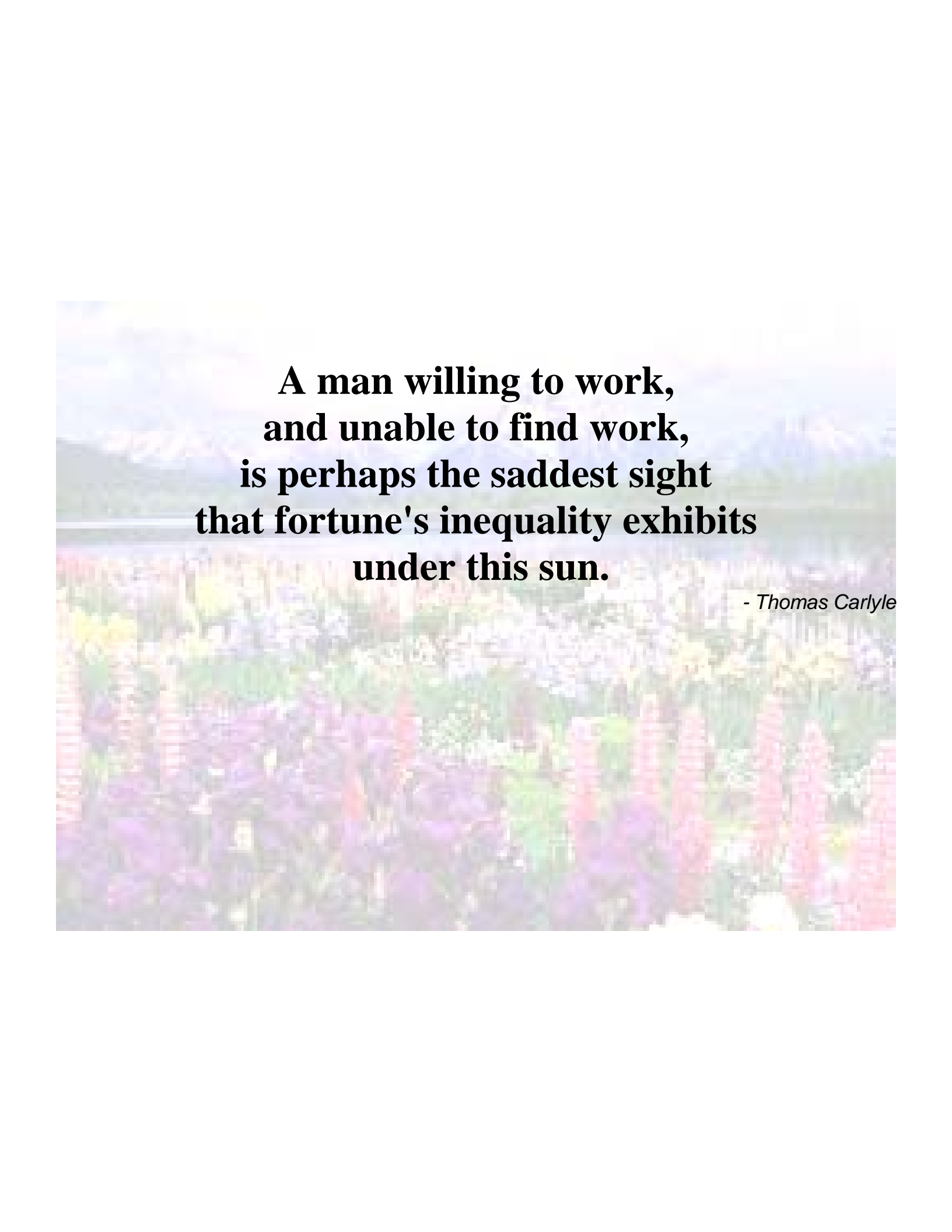
Then, you can highlight the **Action** and **Result** for the particular **Challenge**.

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**A man willing to work,  
and unable to find work,  
is perhaps the saddest sight  
that fortune's inequality exhibits  
under this sun.**

*- Thomas Carlyle*