

Lesson 2: The Role of Priesthood and Relief Society Leaders

Resources Available to Ward Leaders

While the bishopric primarily coordinates ward welfare efforts with quorum and Relief Society leaders, these ward leaders may also call on the other resources shown below for specialized assistance with employment-related needs.

Employment Specialists



Ward and stake employment specialists work closely with quorum and Relief Society leaders to assist members with their employment efforts. These specialists typically have expertise in job search planning, interview preparation, résumé writing, and/or networking. They gather and share information on job openings, skills of other ward and stake members, and Church and community resources that could benefit members in need.

Employment specialists are also encouraged to work closely with employment resource center staff and become familiar with all the resources and services offered at the center.

Mentors



The bishop, quorum leaders, or Relief Society leaders may assign a mentor to provide one-on-one help to an individual or family in need. A mentor is typically a ward member who already has a relationship with the individual or family or who has experience in their specific areas of need. The mentor works closely with the individual or family to help them create a self-reliance plan and/or to achieve the specific goals outlined in their plan.

Family Finance Training



In some cases, identifying financial goals is key to developing a plan for career self-reliance. Often, members or families who feel they have employment challenges have not learned to develop and live within a budget.

The Church has prepared several materials to help families better manage their finances. These include “All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Finances,” “One for the Money: Guide to Family Finance,” and Family Finance Lesson Materials. Bishopric, priesthood quorum, and Relief Society leaders can teach from these materials. Mentors and employment specialists can also use them as they help individual members or families develop financial habits that lead to increased self-reliance.

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Church Welfare Operations



Employment resource centers can provide additional resources and services to supplement the ward's efforts to help members become self-reliant in their careers. The likelihood of success is much greater when ward leaders and employment specialists work as a team with employment center staff.

In some areas of the world, Deseret Industries stores or development specialists can partner with ward leaders to assist members with special career challenges, such as lack of skills or disabilities.

Community Resources



Community resources, including government resources, provide another source of help to those with employment needs. There are organizations which provide:

- Job training and placement services
- Financial assistance for education
- Small business support and microcredit loans
- Help for people with disabilities

Employment specialists and employment resource center staff can help make ward leaders aware of the available resources in the community so that these leaders can refer members to them, as needed.