

SEO Title: 10 Job Hunting Tips for Teens with Autism to Succeed

Meta Description: A step-by-step guide for teens with autism to get their first job with resume tips, interview prep, workplace expectations, & building confidence for success.

URL:

A Job Hunting Guide for Teens with Autism

Navigating new responsibilities and expectations can feel overwhelming. At PS Academy Arizona, we know that the journey to employment is about building a strong foundation with skills, confidence, and a good mindset. This guide can help teens with autism and their parents understand what it takes to succeed in the 'real world' job market.

1. Understand an Employer's Expectations

Before jumping into job applications, you'll want to understand the basics of making a good first impression. Employers look for candidates who show they're serious about the opportunity, so here's how to show them:

- **Dress Professionally:** Clean, wrinkle-free clothes and closed-toe shoes show you're putting in an effort.
- **Hygiene is Non-Negotiable:** Employers notice details. Brushing your hair, showering, and wearing deodorant are small steps that show self-awareness and respect for those around you.
- **Be On Time:** Arriving late or underprepared can be a red flag for employers. Being on time is expected, so showing up 5-10 minutes early is a good way to ensure you're always on time while giving yourself a moment to get focused before starting work.

These three important tips can be overlooked when trying to find a job, but they are foundational pieces that show potential employers your commitment to work.

2. Build a Strong Resume (And Customize It)

Your [resume is a chance to introduce yourself](#) before you ever walk through the door. Start with what you have, no matter how big or small.

- Highlight any volunteer work, hobbies, or school achievements. Did you help at a local shelter? Play on a sports team? These experiences demonstrate skills like teamwork, time management, and responsibility.
- Tailor your resume to the job. If the description mentions teamwork, make sure your resume reflects that you worked well with others.
- Keep it short and simple: one page is enough.

Tip: While it's important to embrace who you are, you don't need to share everything upfront. Avoid listing autism on your application, it's better to focus on your **skills** and **qualities** that match the job description. If accommodations are needed, they can be addressed after you've been offered the job.

Applying for jobs is a numbers game. Even if a listing says "no experience required," competition is real. You might need to apply to multiple jobs before finally landing one, so don't give up.

3. Start Small and Build Stamina

If you've never had a job, it's okay to start small. If you're able, volunteering or working a few shifts a week is a great way to get comfortable with job responsibilities. Over time, you can add more hours as confidence grows.

- Look for volunteer roles at libraries, animal shelters, or local food banks.
- Small businesses are often more accommodating and can often provide a smaller, supportive environment to learn the ropes.

Remember: The first few weeks of any job will feel uncomfortable, but sticking with it helps build resilience. Having patience and pushing yourself in new or uncomfortable work situations is a normal experience when starting any job.

4. Practice for Interviews

Interviews can feel intimidating, but practicing helps reduce anxiety and boost confidence.

- Research what may be common questions, like "Why do you want this job?" or "Tell me about yourself," and prepare answers.
- Work on clear, confident body language: sit up straight, maintain eye contact, and practice giving a firm handshake.

- Have some questions of your own. At the end of an interview, it's common to ask questions like "What will a typical day here look like?" or, "How can I be successful in this position?"

Tip for Parents: Teens with autism may need extra time to process interview questions. Practicing with family or mentors helps build this skill.

5. Presentation Matters and First Impressions Count

You might not realize it, but employers notice the little things, like clean clothes, good posture, and polite language. Even if you don't feel 100% comfortable, showing that you're trying will make a positive impression.

- Avoid complaining about things like school during interviews. Stay upbeat and focus on your skills.
- Turn off your phone and avoid distractions. Being present shows respect.

6. Know the Job Will Have Its Ups and Downs

There are going to be parts of the job you do *not* like. Maybe you'll have to clean, organize shelves, or deal with frustrating customers. Those are normal parts of being employed.

- Employers don't allow constant complaining. It brings down team morale and can make others lose focus. Practice filtering negative comments and focus on what needs to be done.
- Attitude is everything! A positive mindset will help you stand out as someone who works hard, even when tasks are challenging.

7. Look for Jobs That Match Your Strengths

Think about the skills or environments where you feel most comfortable.

- Detail-oriented? Jobs like shelving books or stocking items might be a great fit.
- Prefer working with animals? Pet grooming or shelters may be good places to start.
- Love routine? Jobs with predictable schedules, like bakeries or cafes, can be easier to fit in with your existing schedule.

If you're not sure where to start, [simplify your choices](#) by narrowing down your skills and what you think you'd enjoy. Talking to a parent or a mentor is another great way to get advice from others who already have experience.

8. Be Prepared to Learn New Skills

Every job comes with a learning curve, and it's okay to ask for help when you need it.

- Write down important skills, tasks, or advice throughout your training and work to help you remember.
- Ask for feedback from your manager to know how you're doing. Employers appreciate workers who are eager to improve.
- If you need accommodations, like a quiet workspace or written instructions, let your employer know; they should be willing to help.

9. Stick It Out

The first days and weeks of a new job can be stressful as you learn routines and responsibilities. However, that anxiety will often lessen over time.

- Give yourself at least three months to settle in. By then, you'll feel more confident in your abilities.
- Remember, growth is part of any job. Celebrate your small wins, from remembering a new task to earning your first paycheck.

10. Lean on Your Support Network

Parents, teachers, and mentors can play a key role in helping teens with autism get their first job. At PS Academy Arizona, we collaborate with parents to set realistic expectations and support teens as they build skills that make them more hireable.

Tip: Don't be discouraged by rejection. It's part of the process for everyone, even adults. Think of each interview and application as helping you grow closer to the right opportunity.

A Checklist for Parents: The Keys for Employability

As parents, you play a vital role in helping your teen prepare for success. Here's a quick checklist:

- ✓ **Personal Hygiene:** Hair brushed, teeth clean, deodorant on.
- ✓ **Professional Attire:** Clean, appropriate clothes for interviews or work.
- ✓ **Punctuality:** Practicing arriving early for commitments.
- ✓ **Resume Prep:** Helping with layout, grammar, and tailoring applications.

- ✓ **Practice Interviews:** Role-play common questions and build confidence.
- ✓ **Realistic Expectations:** Reinforce that it may take time to find the right job.

Ready to Take the Next Step?

Getting a job is about gaining independence, building confidence, and learning new skills. At PS Academy Arizona, we're here to help teens navigate the transition to employment and thrive in the 'real world.'

If you're ready to get started, [reach out to us](#) today to learn more about our [transition program](#) and how we can support you or your child's journey to employment success!