

# **2023**

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## **EMPLOYED** **A JA COMPANY** **ANNUAL REPORT**



**SCHOOL: GLENOAK HIGH SCHOOL - CANTON, OHIO**  
**TEACHERS: AMANDA DE FAYS & MIKE NIEPORTE**  
**VOLUNTEER: KELLY RANDALL**  
**JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF NORTH CENTRAL OHIO**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research indicates that 73% of job seekers are stressed before an interview. Who can blame them? After all, job interviews are already competitive by nature, and if you want to do well there are so many things to prepare. Resumes, reference letters, brag books...and that is just the tip of the iceberg! Information overload makes it difficult to narrow down what could be helpful, what is incorrect information, and what you need for the interview. Parents can struggle with teaching their kids about interviews because the climate has changed since many of them were interviewed. And let's face it, it takes a tremendous amount of time to do your research. Mentoring programs teach a lot and are helpful, but it is difficult to prepare everyone for their specific interview as each person has individual needs. There has been a long-running issue of being unprepared for an interview, or at least, there used to be...

Here at Employed, we have created a unique employability kit. We have worked with HR and hiring professionals across a variety of industries to include everything that a job candidate would need to prepare for the interview. Tips, activities, and interview questions that include guidance to ensure success for every candidate are included in the kit. What I personally love about the kit is that it genuinely does help people. We are making a difference one sale at a time, and have received fantastic feedback from our very happy customers. To expand our reach, we have chosen to donate one kit for every 10 kits sold to Mentor Stark Opportunity Club, which helps individuals prepare for jobs and career paths.

Thank you,

*Ethan Philpott*

Ethan Philpott - CEO, Employed



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### Summary of Finances

Sales - \$1,220

Net Profit from Sales - \$490.49

Net Profit Including Prizes - \$3,490.49

Kits Sold - 61

Profit Margin Per Unit - 69%

Profit Per Unit - \$13.88

## Our Mission

**PROVIDING TOOLS TO ENSURE EVERY  
JOB CANDIDATE'S SUCCESS!**

**NEO MICROGRANT RECIPIENT**



VEALE YOUTH  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
FORUM



ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
AT JCU



# OUR PRODUCT

Our product is an employability kit that provides candidates the tools they need for success! Each of our kits consists of:


- 75 **Interview** Tip Cards:
  - 25 **Pre-Interview** Tips Cards
  - 25 **Day-of-Interview** Tip Cards
  - 25 **Post-Interview** Tip Cards
  - 35 **Activity Cards** that direct users to our exclusive interactive website to complete hands-on activities including but not limited to: Resumes, Cover letters, Elevator pitches, W-4s, Roth-IRAs, Thank You Cards, ...and more!
- 50 of the **most common interview questions with guidance** on how to give the best answer during an interview
- **Cool extras** such as a coupon for \$75 off a \$250 purchase at the Men's Wearhouse



## ALL OF THIS FOR ONLY \$20!

### What's included in our employability kit:

**75 Tip Cards:**  
Pre Interview,  
Day-Of, &  
Post Interview




**Commonly Asked Interview Questions & Answer Guidance**


**Interview Question:**  
Tell me about a time you failed to reach your goal.

**Interview Question Answer Guidance**  
It happens to everyone. The interviewer is not concerned about you failing but more interested in your reaction and if you stayed persistent (vs. giving up) and kept a positive attitude (vs. feeling dejected). Share an example that shows your grit and ability to persevere in the face of adversity.


**Hands-On Activities**



**QR Code Link for Additional Resources**



**Building Elevator Pitch**



BUILT UPON THE GUIDANCE OF HR PROFESSIONALS

SIMPLE TO USE AND TIME EFFICIENT

AFFORDABLE!

# ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP



We worked hard to develop main guiding principles to help steer our company to success and meet our goals. They kept us moving forward and we credit them for our company's success:



- The Power of Positivity
- Fostering Accountability
- Incentive Programs

**Positivity** We know that everyone responds well to positivity, and we worked very hard to ensure a positive working environment. Each day, our company started with a meeting to cover the goals we were looking to accomplish. However, we also understand the importance of strong team morale so once a month we reserved a “fun day” for our company. Taking the time play a game, eat lunch together, or just simply just “step away” helped recharge us for the next several weeks of work.

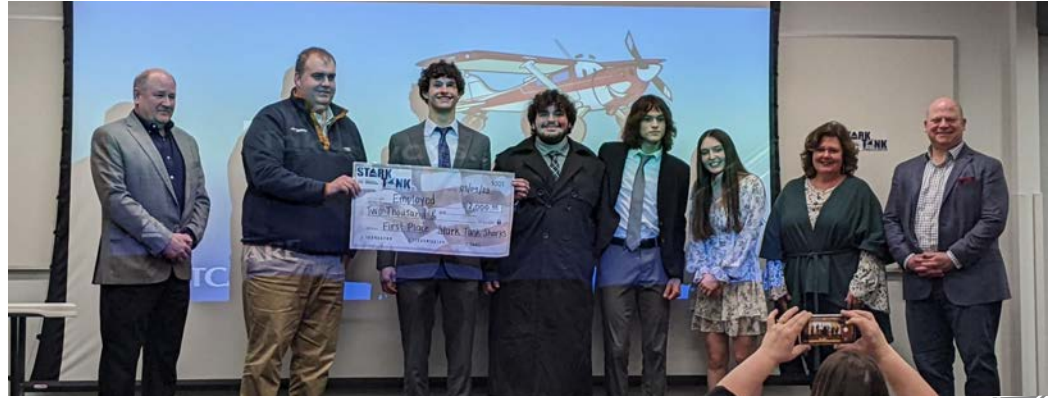
Accountability is another guiding principle for our company. The management team used a servant leadership style in most instances so they were held accountable for helping the entire team achieve their goals. Most meetings were democratic in nature so everyone had ample opportunity to have their voice heard by others. At times this year, we even enlisted the help of our mentors (JA volunteers and teachers) to increase accountability when we needed to increase our efficiency to achieve tight deadlines.

**Incentives** As our company went several months before launching our product, it was important to keep each team member incentivized to do their best work before actual monetary rewards started rolling in. We launched an Employee of The Week Program early in the year as an example of a non-monetary incentive and also started paying monetary incentives to top salespeople once our product launched. More recently, we discovered the power of group incentives and have decided to reward ourselves with a prize to be determined if we hit our team sales goal.

Accountability



# INNOVATION AT WORK



## More than a game:

When Employed first started working on our idea, we thought of making an interview game. However, our market research led us to create a personalized kit so that our users were able to get a more individualized experience from our product. Next, we evolved our idea from just offering our customers interview tips to including hands-on activities and an interactive website so job candidates could actually PRACTICE the skills they needed before the interview.

## Information from the experts:

To ensure we delivered a quality product that had integrity, we created a survey for human resource professionals with questions and shared it on our social media accounts, through personal invitations and LinkedIn. Our survey included the following questions:



- *What are tips or advice you would give a candidate to help them perform their best as they PREPARE for the interview:*
- *What are tips or advice that you would give a candidate to ensure success POST INTERVIEW:*
- *Share 1 or more of your favorite interview questions to ask during an interview:*
- *Your choice - Share an interview success or disaster story that you think future candidates could benefit from:*
- *Is there anything else you would like to add that you think would be of value to future interview candidates?*

## Transitioned game to personalized kit

OCT 25, 2022



## Interview game idea

OCT 17, 2022

## Kit info research & development w/HR expert survey

NOV 7, 2022 - JAN 13, 2023

## Manufactured first kits & made first sale

JAN 16, 2023



## Sold 12 kits in one day!

FEB 27, 2022

## Awarded 1st place at Stark Tank

MAR 9, 2023



# 31 COMPLETED SURVEYS

Across a variety of industries

# MARKETING STRATEGIES



## Push Marketing

- Face to Face
- School Events
- Hartville Market
- Trade Show



## Pull Marketing

- Social Media
- Word of Mouth
- Repository
- Advertisements



Our in-person selling display

## Website & Customer Service:



Get in touch with us at [employed.ja@gmail.com]

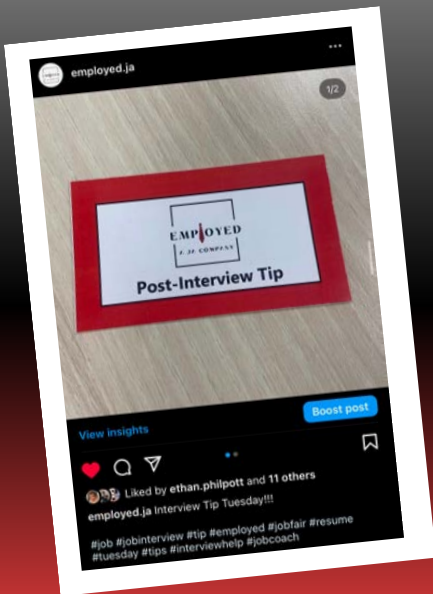
Not only can people contact us through our social media accounts, but also through our e-commerce website!

## Social Media

@Employed.ja   

We used our social media as often as possible. Every Tuesday we posted our "Interview Tip Tuesday" post, which brought a lot of consistency to our social media. We also found that when we put a lot of hashtags on our posts, it brought a lot of attention.

We used Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok but found that our Instagram got the most traffic and interactions. We especially used Instagram reels to our advantage.



Learn to Listen

## The Evolution of our Logo



After receiving consistent feedback that our initial "tie" logo did not portray a gender inclusive message, our company decided to ask the market for feedback. We designed several versions of new logos and used social media to help us pick our new winner. We believe the new "handshake" logo is relatable to all and effectively shares the message that Employed can help every job candidate achieve success.

# SALES STRATEGIES

As we spent so much time researching and consulting with experts in the field to perfect our employability kit, we knew we had a quality product upon launch. However, we may have initially underestimated how difficult it would be to sell a professional product as a group of high school students. We quickly discovered the key to increased sales was increased CONFIDENCE and implementing the following strategies and techniques helped us accelerate our sales and rapidly generate profit.



## Role Playing:

This was the first experience for each of team members with outside sales. In taking the time to practice both our sales script and how to handle the most common customer objections (which we learned to look at as selling opportunities) led to more confidence in front of the customer.

## Customers vs. Consumers

Even though many of our high school peers are the perfect target market to utilize our employability kits, it took some trial and error to realize they may not always be willing to purchase the kits. However, we found that parents of high schoolers absolutely were willing to buy the kits for their students to help them get jobs.

Once we realized this, we started setting up more opportunities to get in front of the paying customer (events where parents of high schoolers would be such as freshman orientation at our school) and our sales started to sky rocket.

In addition, we are more proactively seeking B2B selling opportunities such Indian River Correctional Facility and Stark County Schools counseling departments. Currently, we are also exploring the idea of selling sponsorship space on our kits and then handing out Employability Kits at local graduation ceremonies.



## Testimonials:

The early results are in and we are extremely proud of the fact that the employability kits are working! We routinely receive feedback from customers that they got the job, were better prepared than the next candidate, and overall feel more prepared to pursue their career goals because of the kits. The success of our customer base gives us even more confidence when we sell our employability kits.

# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Profit Per Unit

69%  
or  
13.88

## Investment & Capitalization

To obtain capital to start up our business, we pitched our idea to the JA sharks. We secured a \$200 loan at 5% interest, and purchased the supplies we needed to create our first batch of kits.

## Units Sold and Break-Even Point

To date, we have sold a total of 61 kits for a total of \$1,220 in sales. With our profit margin being \$13.88 per unit, we broke even on the start-up capital loan at 15 units sold. We are currently in talks with the Department of Youth Services and Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections to make a large B2B sale.

## Return on Investment

Our initial investment came solely from the Junior Achievement loan we received that totaled \$200. In the end, with our microgrant and prize money added in, our return on investment was 1,745%! It's quite an accomplishment to turn a \$200 loan into a net profit of \$3,490.49.

**SELLING PRICE**  
**\$20**

**COST TO MAKE**  
**\$6.12**



## Employed INCOME STATEMENT FOR DATE ENDED April 6, 2023

Employed	
INCOME STATEMENT	
FOR DATE ENDED April 6, 2023	
<b>Revenue</b>	
Sales	1,220.00
Junior Achievement Loan	210.00* <i>(\$200 Loan + \$10 Starter)</i>
NEO Microgrant	1,000.00
Stark Tank Grand Prize*	2,000.00 *not yet received
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$4,430.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Cost of Goods Sold	373.32
Supplies Expense	61.20
Sales Incentive Contest	200.00
Sales Tax Payable	65.00
Loan Payable & Starter	220.00
Advertising: Social Media	19.99
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$939.51</b>
<b>Total Net Profit</b>	<b>\$3,490.49</b>

## Employed BALANCE SHEET April 6, 2023

Employed	
BALANCE SHEET	
April 6, 2023	
<b>Assets</b>	
Cash	161.00
Checking Account	1,504.86
Finished Inventory	200.00
Supplies	87.90
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$1,953.76</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
JA Loan Repayment	220.00* <i>(\$200 Principal, \$10Interest, \$10 Starter)</i>
Sales Tax Payable	65.00
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$285.00</b>
<b>Total Owner's Equity</b>	<b>\$1,668.96</b>

## Liquidation of Employed

Because of our product development time, we are just now developing our B2B connections. We have plans to continue to operate our company with all company members until May 2023. At this point, our profits will be divided equally among the 3 company members who are not continuing forward, and the remaining 2 members will be pursuing a future business venture with our concept.



# FUTURE APPLICATIONS

## Ethan Philpott | Chief Executive Officer

"Employed has made me better, it has taught me how to network, how to sell myself, and what is necessary to achieve success. These lessons will help me throughout life, whether college or anything to come."

## Layne Studer | Vice President

"The JA Company program has been a great experience for me. The program has taught me many skills I will use the rest of my life. Running a company is not easy but it has made me even more excited to run my own!"

## Jena Wagner | Marketing

"This year has taught me how to market and how to showcase my skills. I have learned many valuable skills and can't wait to use these experiences in the future."

## Nicholas Leon | Finance

"During my time at Employed, I stepped majorly out of my comfort zone. I learned many new skills including people skills. I have never sold anything to anyone before but I did and it felt good. Handling the finances was easy for me but it was fun to actually have a real company that relies on me and my knowledge."

## Dakota Preusser | Sales

"This year taught me perseverance, discipline, and a life-changing lesson. I now have experiences like selling a product for the first time and cold calls. I've learned going outside of your comfort zone will always get you positive results."

The **LESSONS** we learned through this experience go well beyond how to run a business - they emphasized lessons on teamwork, communication, motivation, consensus building, conflict resolution, and how to respond to setbacks.

The **IMPACT** of this project also will go well beyond the classroom. For instance, not only did our company victory in the Stark Tank contest lead to a cash prize of \$2000, but it has also resulted in valuable mentorship and advice. Our company now has the chance to sell sponsorship opportunities to several local businesses based off of connections and guidance provided from the "sharks".



## MENTORSTARK OPPORTUNITY CLUB



## OUR GIVEBACK

For each 10 kits we sell, we donate 1 back to an amazing organization right here in Stark County - MentorStark Opportunity Club, founded by Laurie Moline. To date, we have donated 7 kits and hope to donate more to help them further their mission. Mentor Stark has been very supportive of our goals and Laurie Moline has provided a great deal of input with our product, including an endorsement.