

3A JOB STORIES

Cecilia Amaya

My Current Job

I am a home health aide. I work for Premier Home Health Care. I am a person who likes to help others. I enjoy spending my time with people who need my help. My patient is a nice person; every day he is waiting for me happy with a smile when he sees me. He just speaks Italian and English, so I try to practice my English with him. It's funny because he corrects me every time I don't pronounce a word correctly. His family is nice to me. I feel like one of their relatives.

I enjoy my job and enjoy practicing my English with my patient. But the first day I felt nervous because I didn't know who my patient was. But days later, I felt better because he is a good guy. Some days we play bingo and sometimes he talks to me about his life. When he was a child he lived in Pennsylvania with his parents and eight siblings.

We also do exercise and watch TV shows and TV news in English. When he feels sad, we look at photos and he tells me about many trips he took in his life. He went on many cruises and went to many different countries. He was a person who did everything himself but now he needs help all the time because ten years ago he had a bad stroke. But day by day he tries to exercise, take medication, feel happy, enjoy time with his family, and be more optimistic about his life. God bless him and his family. I hope I can work a long time with him.

Li Ping Chen

Story about a Job

My uncle was the boss of a restaurant. One summer when I was 15 years old, I worked for my uncle. I worked ten hours every day in the kitchen without air-conditioning and most of time it was more than 100 degrees outside. I studied how to kill and cut chicken, duck, goose, fish, and crab. I was really fatigued and hot. I didn't want to do anything except sleep after work.

One day, my aunt left because she had to do something, I was glad to hear that because I was able to be a cashier, and there was air-conditioning in the hall! A man gave me 100 yuan and his check. The check was 36 yuan, and I gave him 74 yuan in change. The man looked a little strange and left. As soon as I found the mistake, I burst out of the restaurant. But the man was gone. Two hours later, my aunt came back and checked the money. I wondered if I should tell her about the mistake because she looked a little strange too.

Finally, I decided to tell her if she asked me. But she never mentioned the matter.

I am not sure if she remembers the matter now. Many times I've wanted to tell her but I don't know how.

Shu Fang Chen

Bakery Job

When I came to America, I didn't know how to speak English. I didn't know what kind of job I could do. One day I was walking on the street when I looked at the window of a bakery and saw they needed a salesperson. I walked into the shop to ask about the job, and a woman asked me, "Do you speak Cantonese?" I said no, and she told me to leave my phone number and that she would call me back. After one day, the woman called me to offer me the job, but she needed me to work early in the morning, 6 am to 10 am—just four hours, \$4.25 per hour.

Every morning I woke up at 5:30 am. When I woke up I heard the garbage trucks in the street. I had never worked at a bakery before, so the first day I didn't know how to work. I just watched my colleagues work, but I still didn't know how to give change. So the first day I did not do anything. Everyone looked at me like I was crazy. But I knew I had never worked at a bakery before so I needed time to learn.

After two days I knew how to do the work. After I had worked at the bakery for two weeks, they changed to another boss, but I still continued working there. The new boss gave me six dollars an hour. I was very excited and I thought the new boss was a good man.

After two months I quit my job and I found another place to work.

Xiu Zhen Chen

I Loved My Job

In my country, I was a kindergarten teacher. I loved this job.

After I graduated in 1992, I became a teacher's assistant. I taught three-year-olds. My class had twenty children. My partner was a very experienced teacher; she taught me a lot about how to teach children.

After a few years, I changed to another kindergarten. This was a private school. Here I was a teacher. I taught four-year-olds, but my class had fifty children, and each class had three teachers. Every day, I needed to talk to every child, play with them outside for two hours, and encourage them to do something by themselves. Sometimes they helped us clean the chairs, tables, and cabinets, mop the floor, or fold the blankets. They especially liked to mop the floor. If a child was shy, his or her parents told me to let their child help me, because if a child helped us do something, I would give them a reward: red flowers. After nap time, we often helped the girls comb their hair, so they were very happy. After school, they told their parents and their friends.

Every day, we gave them a safe and happy life. Over the year, they could improve their self-care ability. They loved our school. They loved their teachers too. I enjoyed this job very much!

Yu Yu Chen

Dream Job

There are many kinds of jobs in the world, such as writing, nursing, teaching, and engineering. But different people choose different jobs as their ideal careers. This is because everyone has his own interest. Everyone has his dream job, but if you ask me, my answer will be: no comment. Because I don't have any idea about my dream job at this moment.

I used to want to be a teacher. Teaching is a great job in my mind. And the teachers are great too. They have to know various kinds of knowledge. They have to take care of lots of students at the same time, and help the students to solve any problem. So, teaching is not an easy job at all. I didn't work hard enough in studying, so to be a teacher is not my dream job anymore.

I still have to think about my dream job. I am an outgoing girl, and I like doing some exciting things. I think my dream job will be very fun, interesting, and relaxing. Maybe being a tour guide is the best choice for me because I can work and play at the same time!

I believe I can find a good job that I like one day!

Si Ting Fan

First Job

I have had five jobs in my life. When I was eighteen years old, I got my first job. I had just graduated that year. I got that job through my uncle. I sold many kinds of shoes. My boss had four stores in my hometown. The store I worked at was not far from my home. But I couldn't go home except on my day off. I remember I had to work 10:00 am to 10:00 pm. It was very long hours. Every day, we were very busy. We could watch TV, play on our phones, or talk when there weren't any customers. So I enjoyed that job. My boss and co-workers were very nice. We were happy every day. We worked together, we ate together, we lived in the same house.

I remember the happiest thing was going on a trip together. I was so excited, because I could go on a free trip with my co-workers. That was my first experience to go to Shen Zhen Happy Valley. It's a famous place. There are a lot of rides. I was very excited and a little afraid because I had never gone on an amusement park ride before this trip.

We also went into the haunted house. I was very nervous and a little expectant. When I went through the haunted house, my heart beat faster. There were a lot of ghosts that came out. We had fun the whole day. We were all tired when we got home.

I liked that job, my co-workers, and my boss. I worked there for two years.

Yueh Hong Hsia

Untitled

My first job when I graduated from high school was at a hotel. This was a new hotel; they needed fifty people for work. They hired new graduates. Everyone had to be 1.6 meters tall and about 17 or 18 years old. These requirements were very high.

They divided us into different departments. I was in the customer service department. When I worked I had to wear traditional clothing and high heels. My position was meeting planner. Usually companies or government departments came to our hotel to have meetings. I needed to know how many people would come to the meeting and arrange guest rooms, arrange meals, and reserve meeting rooms. I also had to prepare fruit, cigarette, and tea.

This hotel was very strict with employees. I had long hair, but the requirements were that everyone had to have cute short hair. We also couldn't fall in love and we had to provide service with a smile. If someone complained about us, money would be deducted from our bonuses.

But employees had good benefits. They had free meals and good salaries. During the Chinese New Year, everyone wanted to take a vacation, so there were fewer people working in the hotel. But the hotel was very busy.

Wei Run Li

Puerto Rican Cuisine

One day one of my mother's friends called her and talked to her about her friend who would open a new restaurant in Puerto Rico, so she asked my mother if she knew someone who wanted to go there and work in the restaurant—but someone who had experience in cooking. Then my mother told her she would help her find a person to go there and work for them. The next day my mother talked to me about that job, and asked if I wanted to travel to Puerto Rico and work there. But at that moment I was working in my cousin's restaurant and I didn't want to leave. But my mother told me if I went there I would get more experience in cooking, better pay, and meet more friends.

So one week later I bought the airplane ticket and flew to Puerto Rico. When I arrived, the boss came to pick me up and he took me to my apartment.

The next day he talked to me. He saw I was very young, so he refused to hire me. He thought I had no experience in cooking. Then I told him it was fine, I would find another job elsewhere. But the next day he fired someone and then he finally agreed to hire me. He told me he would give me a chance to work there with them, one trial week. If I didn't work well, he was going to fire me.

The restaurant was a buffet. Everything was new to me and very different from Mexico. But I never gave up, I tried to learn as fast as possible, like how to cut vegetables, fruits, fish, and the most difficult was cutting meat. Every time I wanted to be more efficient, each time be faster and do better. Then I learned how to prepare salads and make different kinds of sauces.

After one week of training the boss decided to hire me at his restaurant. The boss told me I was a hardworking, efficient, and very smart person. After that week he started to teach me how to cook, I was so excited to learn. In less than two months I learned to cook almost all the dishes at the restaurant and finally the boss gave me a little raise. But I was not satisfied with that raise because I already knew almost everything.

A few months later, I finally decided to leave Puerto Rico and return to Mexico.

Xiao Xia Li

Temporary Cashier

I was an accountant at a small company. One day, my boss asked me do some of the tasks of the cashier, because our co-worker Cui took maternity leave for three months. I agreed to this arrangement.

I was very busy between my two positions of accountant and cashier. My boss gave me 7,000 RMB in cash from the company's reserve. I used this cash to pay the company's daily petty expenditures, such as office supplies, some goods payments, and expense reimbursements. In addition, I could receive some cash from our company's customer's project payment. I had to record every single transaction in a cashbook and check the reserve money balance to make sure it equaled the cashbook's balance every day. If the cashbook's balance and the cash balance were not equal, I would be in trouble. I had to count again even though it meant I had to work overtime.

Near Lunar New Year, my boss authorized me to withdraw 80,000 RMB in cash from the company's bank account for the workers' wages and some payments for goods. That was my first time to face 80,000 RMB in cash. When I withdrew it at the bank counter, I put all of it in my hand bag. It was so heavy. My mouth kept saying "God bless me, God bless me..." as I rode my motorcycle and carried my ponderous hand bag.

At holiday time it was always crowded on the street. In general, it took about twenty minutes to ride to the company but I spent double that time. Fortunately, I arrived at the company's office. The 80,000 RMB and I were both still alive. I heaved a great sigh.

Later, my boss came to my office and said, "Did you withdraw the money from the bank?" "Yes, I did," I said. "If I would like you to deposit that money back at the bank, what would you think?" he asked. "Are you kidding me?" I replied. He heard my answer and he smiled and said "Yes."

Although I was a cashier for only three months, it added experience to my career.

Xue Ying Li

My Parents' Jobs

I remember my parents really loved their jobs when I was a child and they were very busy. My father worked in government. My mother had a small hotel with my aunt. They were very busy every day. Every morning they brought my brother and I to school and then they went to work.

My father worked in the armed forces for a few years. He taught the new soldiers kung fu and how to shoot. So he often wasn't at home. He was a serious guy. My brother and I didn't like him. So he didn't spend much time at home. We were free and happy.

My mother worked in her hotel. She received customers and cleaned the rooms. She was enthusiastic, nice, and talkative. So we really loved her. Sometimes the customers lost things or money in their rooms and my mother would keep it until the customers came back.

Year after year they stuck to their posts. Although it was very hard, they still loved their work. Now they are retired. They travel everywhere. They don't want to live in the U.S. or Canada because they want to enjoy their lives. They often talk about their jobs and interesting things about their jobs.

Li Lian Liang

Learn from Work

In 2000, I graduated from high school. I got my first job from my uncle's recommendation. I was an office clerk in a lighting factory. It was about three hours from my home, so I had to live in the factory. I thought, "I am new. I don't have any work experience. I need to work harder than other people." And I also wanted to learn a lot of from working.

My dormitory was close to the lighting sample room. One night after working for two months for the factory, I saw the light in the sample room was still on. I went into the room, and I saw Fanny was taking pictures of the lighting. Fanny was a computer major, but she was also a lighting catalog designer. "Is there anything I can do for you?" I asked Fanny. "I need to finish my sample book in a month. I have to work overtime this month. If you help me, that would be better," Fanny said. I said, "I have time in the evening. I can help you this whole month, but you need to teach me how to do it." Fanny said, "Of course. I can teach you."

In this month after work, I went to help Fanny. It was not easy for me to do this thing. It took me a lot of time to learn and do it well. I learned how to put the lighting pictures into the computer and use Photoshop to erase the picture's background, and then insert a new background.

One month later, we finished this task. Fanny and I became good friends. She also taught me a lot of computer knowledge: how to surf the internet, communicate online, and how to use Outlook, Word, and Excel. I thank her for her teaching. Now I still keep in touch with Fanny.

Dan Lin

Job Story

I've been a supermarket cashier for about two years. When I started this job, I was very excited.

My coworkers are very friendly. At the supermarket we usually accept food stamps, debit cards, credit cards, and cash. When I take care of a customer at check-out, they usually don't want change: quarters, dimes, or nickels. They always say, "I owe you one cent or two cents. I will give it to you next time." I don't know why twenty percent of the people are like that.

I remember one busy day. Every check-out station was busy. There were a lot of customers in line. One customer bought stuff that totaled forty-two dollars. He opened his bag, took out a plastic bag, and a lot of quarters dropped out. He counted the quarters: five dollars, ten dollars...

I told him it was a busy time. He said, "Quarters are money, too." Another customer answered, "If everyone like you paid in quarters, what would the cashier do?" At the moment the guy's face was shy. He took out a twenty-dollar bill in exchange for the quarters.

Sen Liang Lin

Your Favorite Job

Jobs are what everyone has to face. The world provides many different professions for us. Some people work because they like this occupation, some people work just for their living expenses. To do a job all your life that you don't like is very painful, so doing your favorite job is the best thing.

I used to be a businessman and I have also been a hair stylist. But now I am a pastor. I like the job I have now.

When I was a businessman, I was busy during the day. In the evening, I attended various dinner parties. This was not how I wanted to live. So I went to an adult education beauty salon class, and after studying for half a year, I got the course-completion certificate. So I opened a salon, and I became a hair stylist. I not only provided service to customers, but I also trained other workers. I could bring beauty to customers, and that made me very happy.

During this period, because I am a Christian, I often went to church. God touched me to help the church do some things. Little by little, I found that I not only liked the church, but I also preferred to help the members of the church. Finally I felt God's calling upon me, He wanted me to serve Him full-time. I successfully entered Fujian Theological Seminary, and after many years of studying, I became a full-time evangelist. Now I am a pastor. My job is to help people to get the grace and help of God. I found the happiest job is the God-arranged job.

Xiu Kui Ng

We Are Together

I used to work at a small restaurant. It was a good work environment. It was organized and clean. When I worked there, if sometimes another section needed help, the manager asked me to do different things.

I liked to work there because all of my co-workers were nice and friendly. Even though work was difficult, we didn't feel pressure. The manager was especially understanding. He cared about workers, as everybody knew. I remember my co-worker, Mandy, one day received a phone call from her daughter's school. Her daughter was

sick. She needed to pick her up, but it was the busiest time of the day. She was very worried. When the manager found out, he told Mandy to put down what she was doing and go to pick up her daughter.

It was just a little decision, but at the moment, the manager was very respectful. All of the co-workers told Mandy to not worry anymore. We worked together and we helped each other, so working there was both hard and happy.

Lily Sun

Part-Time Job

After I got married my husband worked every day and sometimes he had to travel because of his job. I was bored staying home by myself so I decided to search for a part-time job. One day my friend told me the travel agency that she worked for was looking for a part-time tourist guide. I was so happy and went for the interview and I got hired right away.

My first trip was going from Hong Kong to Hainan Island in China. When we arrived at the Hainan Island Hotel, my job was to assign rooms to each traveler. Before I made any arrangements, a gentleman rushed up to me and asked me to assign his wife and children to a room on the lower floor. I told him no problem. The hotel only allowed four people in a room, and he was traveling with his wife and three children, so he needed two rooms for his family.

The next few days of the tour I noticed that he and a single lady traveler were acting very fishy. After returning back to Hong Kong, I told my co-worker what happened, and my co-worker said this is not unusual and it happens all the time. What a bad guy he was! Now, the only thing I can do is to wish his wife will never know what happened.

On another tour to Thailand, there were two single men in the group and they requested two rooms. I wondered why, because they had to pay more money. When we arrived in Thailand, they were so excited. At night they hired a local tour guide to take them to a red light district to have fun. At midnight I was by the front desk to arrange breakfast for the group and I saw them come back with two beautiful women. I smiled.

Half an hour later, I saw those two women leave the hotel with a smile. The next morning the tour went on and I saw the two men were very quiet and kind of upset but I didn't ask why. At the end of the tour I asked the local tour guide if he knew what went on that night and he said they hired two women that night without knowing they were lady boys. I was laughing.

Reina Takami

Teamwork

I worked as an electronic parts buyer in a Japanese company for ten years. I loved my job. I am so proud that I have so much experience in purchasing. When I was a buyer, every day was so exciting. I negotiated terms of contracts and the parts' prices with suppliers, and adjusted the parts' lead time. When some quality issues of the parts came up, I went to our supplier's factory many times with our company's quality assurance staff to improve the parts' quality.

In my opinion, a good buyer builds a good relationship with suppliers. A good relationship means a win-win connection.

I will never forget one thing that happened. My company's new product's first production schedule was very tight. Usually we needed one month to deliver a key part. But at that time, we only had ten days to produce that part. I requested and negotiated with our supplier. I visited our supplier's factory every day to check the parts were made within the shortest time. This part had over fifty steps to manufacture. I had to make sure that no time was wasted with every step.

Finally, we made it. I carried the parts from Shenzhen to Hong Kong. And my co-worker took the earliest night flight to carry the parts to our factory in Japan. We did what we thought we couldn't do at the beginning. Our supplier, my co-worker, and I made the impossible become possible. It's the power of teamwork. Thank you to everyone who helped me at work.

Ingrid Villanueva

Jobs

My first job was when I was eighteen years old. I worked in a clothing factory. I did different jobs there; for example, sticking price tags and checking sewing and finally doing general revision of the work that everything was correct. I worked in this place for a year and a half then immigrated to the United States.

I moved to Fort Worth, Texas. In this city I had different jobs, all temporary. My first job in Texas was in a corn dog factory. A corn dog is bread with a sausage inside. I worked in the packing area for two years.

Later I worked in a fruit factory. There we washed the fruit then put it in machines which cut the fruit and separated it. Next we put plates under each machine and arranged each kind of fruit on the plate. I worked there for six months.

Later I worked at the Mattel company loading and unloading packages of toys. I worked there for one year then I came to New York in 2009. Later I started to work at Hooters restaurant in the kitchen area and later I worked in a cleaning company. In this job I cleaned different places; for example, in the Bronx, Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. I cleaned buildings, apartments, and penthouses. I worked for this company for almost five years. Now I work at McDonald's restaurant. I've work there for almost two years. I work in the kitchen area.

Sophia Wang

Interesting Job

Through the world, we can see most people at least have a job sometime in their whole lives. No wonder! People make money to just fill their stomachs with food to give them energy that they need for daily activities. At work, people through cooperation and communication complete tasks, and also have lots of fun, and me too.

I had a really complicated job when I was seventeen. I was brave but pure at that age. Someone recommended me to a boss in the Fashion Clothing Company. When I first met the employer, he told me his secret. He said, "I lost money gambling, and I owe someone money. So I'm going to go abroad. I hired you to keep my property safe. So if you guys can sell the inventory, I can pay you." I felt excited and responsible, and I signed a contract for one year with this bankrupt boss immediately. Don't laugh at me!

The next day, I came to work early because I wanted to be an enthusiastic employee. I organized the meeting table with stationary and seven cups of tea in the office upstairs. I checked the inventory, counting how much clothing we had at the warehouse behind the office. I greeted my six coworkers. I went downstairs, the metal rolling door had been raised and the store opened, with stylish mannequins in pretty clothes in the middle of the window. It was a nice day with fresh air and shining light. But few customers walked in to buy our products although I was friendly and pleasant to them.

Every day the same situation repeated again. Three months later, we were involved in trouble. We didn't have enough money for our salary. Six coworkers made the decision to quit this job. I paid the utilities and maintenance fees with my own money. How come? It really challenged me. How could I make this business bloom? How could I reach the breaking dawn from the darkness? I was motivated to do research and I discovered that there was an economic recession. And people wanted to get cheaper goods than before.

I got a new idea. I rented a stand at a street market on weekends where attractive housewives went to purchase clothes for their family members and I offered an 80% discount when they went shopping there. The result was I sold out fast. It was a miracle! People were crowding each other around my stand, grabbing their chosen clothes. Business blossomed.

After two months, there were no clothes in the warehouse or store. I waited for my boss to come from abroad. I still had half a year to work for him. I knew what people liked according to psychology: they liked things with good quality and a cheaper price.

I considered factory clothing. When the factory received a foreign order, the factory usually produced more than was necessary. So during the annual clearance period, the clothes were usually on sale by the ton, cheaper and in popular styles. So I hired four workers to fix and iron them and they sold out. Six months passed by, and

my boss came to Shanghai from Hong Kong and sold his small company to me with a mortgage from a bank. Little by little, I made contracts with five factories and I needed more workers. When I was nineteen, my small company business was as amazing as a cherry blooming.

Qiong Wu

Working in a Hotel Kitchen

My first job was at a hotel kitchen. I thought it was an interesting job because I wanted to be a cook and it was a great opportunity to get paid while learning from a chef. The chef that taught me about cooking was from my hometown, Anhui. Because he had great cooking skills, he won a lot of awards for cooking.

I was really lucky to learn from him for a while. In the beginning, I was very excited and hard-working. A few weeks later I thought the job was really boring and tedious: it was washing and chopping every single day.

After a few months the chef taught me a few simple stews for the employees at the hotel. Now when I think about it, it was a really tough time. The chef required me to learn the basic skills, like knife skills and flipping the pans. That wasn't easy. I cut myself all the time and I was unable to flip a pan that heavy. Finally, when I cut my finger again, I decided to give up my ridiculous chef dream.

Although it was a short-lived experience, it taught me a lot of things. I learned how to cook Shanghai food and Jiangzhe food. But I never want to go back to that kitchen ever again.

Alyssa Xie

My Old Colleague

Eight years ago, I worked at a bakery on Mott Street. I worked six days a week from 12 pm to 10:30 pm. One of my coworkers named Zhen was very funny in my point of view. She always forgot to do something she was supposed to do and these mistakes always made me laugh.

In our store, we were mostly busy in the morning and afternoon. One morning I was substituting for my coworker. My boss told Zhen to stand at her spot and serve the customers. A while later, a customer asked Zhen if there was *chashao bao* and Zhen told her there was *chashao bao* over there. So the customer asked Zhen to get it for her. But Zhen told the customer, "No! I can't leave my spot because my boss told me not to move." When I heard this, I thought it was very funny and I totally cracked up.

There was another time that she made a mistake. Whenever a customer ordered a milkshake, she always forgot to add the flavors or fruit or anything that the customer wanted to be added. Her silliness was what made me laugh all the time. However, Zhen is a nice, direct, and zealous person. It's just sometimes she is not careful enough. Right now we are still in touch.

Joyce Yang

My Last Job in China

From 2008 to 2011, I worked for the Tian Yi Chuan Mei Company. This was an advertising company. I worked there for about three years. I did sales and marketing. I liked this job because I could talk to many different people. I didn't have to stay in the office and I could make more money.

Our company did advertising for buses, taxis, bars, and billboards. I had ten co-workers. They were very friendly. We had a party twice a month. We ate a lot of food, drank, and went to KTV. My boss's name was Jun Lin Zhao. He was very nice. Right now sometimes I talk to my boss and co-workers on WeChat.

I left this company in 2011 because I needed to take care of my son. My mom took care of my son while I was at work, but she was going to take care of my sister's son. So I quit my job.

If I go back to China, I think I will go back to work for this company. I liked this job.

Wei Wen Zeng

My English Teacher

When I graduated from middle school, I got good scores and went into the best high school in Nanchang. This school was very good and strict. Most of the students were excellent. Even though my math and physics were okay, my English always fell behind. Sometimes I wasn't able to pass the tests. Sometimes I got low scores. I always lost my confidence.

One day, my English teacher called me and seven other classmates to go to her office. She talked with us one by one. Then she told us, "This isn't your fault because your foundation is low. You can't give up. I will help you." After that, she came to school one hour early to teach us to pronounce and read from the beginning. After school, she left school one hour late to teach us grammar and writing. She did this for about one year. All of us were able to catch up. Some of us went to the top of the class. She was very happy. It wasn't easy to do it because she also needed to take care of her family.

After I left college, I seldom used English in my life. I almost forgot it all until I came to the U.S. When I first arrived at JFK, I couldn't understand any words. Fortunately I still remembered some vocabulary and grammar that my English teacher taught me. I held a pen and a paper every time and everywhere when I wanted to do something because I just could write a little bit by using English. It helped me pass the most difficult time. Thanks to my English teacher.

Now I study English at University Settlement. My listening has improved a lot, but my speaking is still very poor. I need to work harder and practice more. I dream one day I can speak English fluently.

3P JOB STORIES

Noelia Cardoso

Trick or Treat

I can remember all the tricks I learned when I worked in a shoe shop. I would like to say in school you can learn how to be a good worker but the truth is you need to know the treat for every job.

I like to be efficient in everything I do and cooperative with my co-workers because if you don't work hard sometimes you have to do it again. When I started work I thought it was so hard to remember all the names of the different types of shoes.

But let me tell you a secret.

There is no secret—it's just a trick. When a customer wants a specific shoe and there is not the size he needs, you have to resort to your tricks. You need to bring the model he wanted and at least five other options so that you tell him that you have other options and you need to be pleasant to customers and so friendly.

You will make sure they don't leave the store without buying some shoes. Also you need to make the customers feel like they can buy nice shoes in that place.

Susana Chan

Job Story

In 1988, my company sent me and several colleagues to set up factories in Zhuhai, China. One of these industrial buildings had four storeys. Due to the rapid development of business, the place was not big enough. In 1991, it moved to an industrial city. There were four buildings, six floors per building, and I managed two floors of the production line which was producing 3.5 inch floppy disks. There were 1,500 employees. At that time, the production was ranked as the top in the world. The production was 700,000 pieces per day. The production line was divided into two shifts, twelve hours per shift, and my working hours were from 9 am to 6 pm. In case of an emergency, I had to immediately return to the factory. The work pressure was very high. In December, 1994, the company went public and laid me and my colleagues off because of our low academic qualifications.

Therefore, I went back to Hong Kong and rested for a few months. One day, I received a call from another 3.5 inch floppy disk factory owner. He invited me to help him. This factory had only 550 employees. Afterwards I also invited my former subordinates to work in this factory. We were very happy to work over there. There was also a male colleague who was transferred from Hong Kong. He is my husband now. We met there and dated for six months. Finally, we decided to get married. During this period, nobody in the factory knew that because we did not want it to affect our jobs—until we invited our boss to attend our wedding ceremony. He was surprised and shocked. As of today, I still remember that scene. Other colleagues were surprised and shocked too.

I remember that, during the Chinese New Year, the workers were reluctant to work on the first day of the New Year. And the boss said, "Be sure to meet the shipment date. The schedules are absolutely impossible to change." My heart was really bad. My subordinates and I discussed whether we should give them holiday pay, which was three times the wages. Anyway, the supervisors did not accept it. At that time, I really did not know how to deal with it.

Suddenly, I remembered that their wages were calculated in the morning, so I said to them, "I also agree with your opinion, but after 12 am is the beginning of the next day, and so we start from the night shift this time." They said, "You are very smart." And I answered them, "This is according to your request to start on the second day. Is that right?" Everyone was silent, and I said again, "I will notify the cook to add one chicken leg for each person for the dinner: that will be the gift for the New Year."

The chicken was paid for by me privately. I only hoped that everyone would have a happy New Year and also to meet my boss's request. Finally, the shipment was on schedule. After this incident, my subordinates admired me so much. They said, "Only you can get this problem solved." I answered them, "Wisdom comes from God!"

As of today, due to advanced technology, we still keep in contact even though we are so far away. Every time I go back to Hong Kong, they will call me back to China to see them.

Ji Wen Chen

Job Story

When I was twenty-two years old, I borrowed two thousand dollars from my mother and I opened a shop. A wool factory sold their wool clothing to me. I shared the shop with other people. I only got a wall. I put a foam board on the wall. I pinned clothes onto the foam board. Each piece of clothing sold for twenty-five dollars.

I sat down when I finished putting the clothes on the wall. "Where are my customers?" I looked at the door. I hoped someone would come into the shop. I was worried. A few minutes later, a woman came in the shop. She bought five pieces of clothing. I was happy. Later another customer came in and also bought five pieces of clothing. And then another person came. But all the customers bought the same clothes. There were some clothes that people did not like. I was worried again.

I called the factory. I wanted to get more popular items to sell. I sold the more disliked items of clothing for a cheaper price. Some people gave me feedback. I listened carefully and did a correct order. I did a good job. I worked very hard. I was always friendly and pleasant to customers. I also paid back my mother.

Qi Wen Chen

A Past Job Which I Liked

I like to work. If I don't have a job, I feel insecure. I have tried many different kinds of jobs in my life.

I think my luckiest day was three years ago when I got a job as a counselor in a Medical Beauty Consulting Company. That was an exciting and challenging job. It was a field that I had never touched before. My responsibilities included answering the phone and providing consulting services online. It seemed simple, but it was extremely hard, because you needed to get the clients to trust you completely, only through online or phone conversations. So you had to be professional, convincing, and confident. At first, I felt it was very hard for me because I was always afraid to make a phone call or answer the phone. And my manager was very strict.

Medical technology changes all the time, so we had a training session every Friday. At the training session, my manager often called me to demonstrate how I communicated with the clients on the phone. She said, "I called on you not because you are the best, but because you are the worst. Your voice is too soft, so nobody can hear you. You don't have confidence and you are not very professional. How could you get the clients to trust you?"

At this time I was under a lot of pressure and I was afraid to go to training sessions. But I never thought to give up the job. I worked harder than before. I worked overtime to recite the information about the medical technology and to take the initiative to contact clients to exercise my communication skills.

Two months later, through my efforts and my co-workers' help, my performance ranked the first and this lasted a few months. After that, at the training sessions, my manager often called me to share my experiences and how I could improve in such a short time.

Sing Cheng

Easy? It Is Not Easy.

I've worked at Multi-Cultural Radio Broadcasting Incorporated for four months. This studio has radio and television stations. They have Cantonese and Mandarin channels and a Chinese weekly magazine. I found this job at that magazine. I'm a radio announcer assistant. At the beginning, I thought radio announcing was easy. They sit in a studio room, say something, and play songs. That is a piece of cake. After a few months of working, now I know I was completely wrong. Let me describe the working process of an announcer.

Usually radio programs are one hour, but you need to prepare for three or four hours. When an announcer confirms next week's topic, then you need to find detailed data. You have to search for history, etymology, celebrations around the world, footnotes, etc. As the information and communication technology is so

advanced and highly developed, you have to make sure everything is true and not fake. Finally, you review all the notes.

There are two types of radio programs. One is live, which needs an experienced announcer to do it. They interview people or people call in about things like taxes, immigration, or applying for government benefits. This one has a lot of pressure. You cannot replay if you make a mistake. The other one is pre-recorded. That is easy. You can correct the program until it is okay. By the way, a new announcer has two or three months' training.

All the programs need a week of preparation time. If someone has an emergency, and cannot be on duty, the show must still be broadcast.

Four months is a short time. That's all I know about it now.

Wing Man Cheung

My First Job

The summer vacation after I graduated from middle school, I began my first job in my life. It was a part-time job. I was a waitress in a coffee shop. The owner of the coffee shop was my aunt.

I had to get up early every day. I had to go to the coffee shop at half past six in the morning, because the coffee shop opened at seven o'clock in the morning, and before seven a.m., I needed to sweep the floor clean, and then clean up the tables, put out the dishes, knives, and forks, and tidy up.

I worked very hard. Our coffee shop's coffee was very good, so every day there were a lot of people lining up to buy our coffee. In addition, our cookies were also very good.

In my job, I could meet a lot of people. They came from different places. Most of the guests were very friendly, but still a few people's attitudes were very bad. I remember one morning it was raining outside. Then a middle-aged man came in. He was holding an umbrella and the umbrella was dripping. I politely said to him, "Good morning, sir. Could you put the umbrella in the bucket by the door? Because your umbrella will make the floor wet and other customers might accidentally slip." After listening to what I said, the man didn't do anything. He just went to order. When he finished, he found my manager and complained about me. He said my service was very bad. Then I was docked a day's pay. At that time I felt very sad. I nearly cried. Later when my aunt found out, she reissued my day's pay.

Nian Ci He

My First Job

Twenty years ago, most people had no cell phones. If you wanted to find someone, in addition to the telephone, you could also use a BP machine. My first job was as an operator at a communications company. Our job was to answer calls, type each message into the computer, and send the message to the BP machine's owner. So we needed to type very fast. To improve our typing speed and prevent typing wrong words, there was a quiz every week and a test every month. These results affected our monthly income and year-end bonuses. I really, really hated this endless testing.

Four years later, I quit this job because the pressure was too much. Then I found my second job. It was in data entry. In the interview, the interviewer saw my work experience and he asked me, "Did you work at Guo Xun Communications?" I answered "Yes," and then he didn't ask me any more questions. Then he said, "I know this company's workers are excellent, so welcome to our team." I was very surprised and very grateful to the previous company. If there hadn't been such a hard assessment system, I would not have passed the interview so easily.

Nicole Li

My First Job

As I am writing this article about my job, it reminds me of many things. Most people remember their first job. After graduation I got a job at an import and export company. It was near my apartment, so it just took me fifteen minutes to get to work. That was one of the reasons I liked this job. My supervisor was a woman. She was very smart and efficient. I was new in this company. It was my first job, so I needed to learn how to do things. Sometimes my co-workers helped me and taught me, but I still was nervous and busy.

One day, I saw a man in the hallway. I didn't know him. He was handsome. My colleague told me he was our general manager. He had just come back from a business trip. He was the second reason I liked this job.

My business department had many things to do. One day, it was time to go home, but I hadn't finished my work. I stayed at the office, and the other co-workers left. I locked the door because nobody was there and it was getting dark. At about 8:30, I was working, when suddenly somebody knocked on the door and said, "Is anybody inside? I see the light on."

I was scared. I asked, "Who are you?" He said, "This is..." Oh, it was our general manager, but I couldn't recognize his voice, so I wouldn't open the door. I answered him, "My name is... I need to work overtime." He said, "It is too late, you should go home and do it tomorrow." I said, "Okay, I will leave right now."

After that he left. I was worried, because it was impolite to talk through a door. In a few days, we had a meeting, and the manager said we should leave work on time and not work overtime. It was unsafe. I didn't know if it was good news or bad news for me.

Zhu Li

Job

I have had many jobs in restaurants in the U.S. I am thinking about changing to a different type of job, but I can't. I have lived in the U.S. for many years. In the U.S. people speak English everywhere. English isn't my mother tongue and I don't have any diploma, so it is very difficult for me to find a job. But I have had two volunteer jobs.

I go to church with my daughter every Sunday. The church is near my house. One day a sister said to me, "Can you work for God?" I answered her without any hesitation: "Yes, I can."

The job which I did in church was to take care of the children. I worked there once a month. The job was easy. I just went to church earlier than the children. I watched and protected them to avoid dangerous situations. When church began then I had to bring those kids upstairs. It was a very simple and boring job, but I loved to do it.

My second volunteer job was as a teacher's assistant to help the children who went on trips. That job was hard because we had to protect the children who walked on the street and they didn't pay attention to the traffic and some kids didn't behave well. I remember that one of the teacher's helpers told the kids, "Walk fast, but be careful," and then something that was not correct in English. Then some kids laughed. At that time I felt a little embarrassed. When we finally finished that job and the kids all safely returned to school, I felt free.

Right now to be a good mom is an important job for me.

Shu Yan Lin

A Take-Out Restaurant

I worked in a Chinese take-out restaurant for about fifteen years. I have a lot of friends and relatives who work at or own a restaurant. From working at a restaurant I learned how to cook, how to cut vegetables and meat, and how to speak English with customers. I had to fill out an inventory sheet every night and make sure there were enough supplies in the kitchen. I went to a training session. I passed the test and got a food protection certificate. I was a supervisor there. I didn't like my job because sometimes it was too busy. I always skipped my lunch or dinner. And I didn't have break time. I had to stand all day. I got varicose veins on my legs and it was itchy and painful in the summer. So I went to a hospital to get laser treatment and I had to wear tight socks for a period of time.

My kids didn't like to stay in the restaurant either. They said the air was bad there. But they came to visit me occasionally. When they came, they helped me do things. They were motivated and pleasant. One day, when my younger daughter was ten years old, she came to see me. She saw the beverage fridge didn't have enough sodas. She went to the storage room to get some more and put them in the fridge. She walked back and forth many times. After a little while, I saw the fridge's door was open for a long time. I wondered where she was. I went to the storage room. She was standing there in a bucket which was full of flour. Her whole body was white, even her face and hair. She looked very frightening and embarrassed. I asked her, "How could you drop the bucket?" She said, "The soda was up high and I couldn't reach it, so I stood on top of the bucket, but it wasn't strong enough." She walked into the restaurant. Everybody was belly laughing.

Jian Ting Ruan

Clothing Factory

My last job was my second full-time job in the U.S. It was at military uniform clothing factory. One of my aunt's friends, Anne, worked there. She was a manager there, and she suggested that I work there. I just went there and got the job. It was my first time working with more than one hundred people in one place.

They had different teams there. Each team made different parts of the flak jackets. I was on a flak jacket packing team the first time. All of the group members stood around a table and each person was responsible for a different step. One or two people picked up the flak jackets and parts of the flak jackets when they were finished by different teams. The first person wrote numbers on the flak jackets and made sure all of the numbers were correct before passing them to others. Another one wrote on the triangle bags, another one wrote on the square bags and the last two people just made sure one set had all of those before the jackets were packed and put into a box. We usually weighed them when we finished all the steps. Everything had to be one hundred percent correct with no mistakes. I worked slowly the first day and a manager kept watching me. Anne was afraid I would get fired. She talked to the boss and sent me to work at the auto machine.

I felt freer when I worked at an auto machine. I got paid per piece, not per hour. I worked slowly the first time I used the machine. I needed to learn how to use the machine. I put four-by-four-inch pieces of Velcro on the flak jackets. The only thing I had to check was for thread problems: that the threads didn't skip and that they stuck together.

Before long I worked faster on the machine, but my co-worker told me not to work fast the first week and make sure they paid good money per piece before I worked fast. I always checked the thread when I worked. If the thread wasn't good when I finished, I needed to dismantle it and do it again. The machine was my boss too. If the machine broke, I got no pay and had to use my time to wait for someone to repair it.

I met my first Latino friend there. He was a mechanic. He helped me a lot with the machine. I tried to study when he fixed my machine. Sometimes the company was downsized, so I took a long day off and waited until they called me back. The shortest time was a few days, and the longest time was one month. I quit this job last year because they hadn't called me back for a few months. Plus, I didn't learn any skills when I worked. So I went to school to study English and I want to find a good job. Sometimes after school I go to the factory to visit my ex-co-workers.

Wei Hong She

Things Happened in My Life

When I was in China, I was a bus driver. One night one driver from our team drove a bus over a small bridge. He drove too fast and couldn't stop the bus. It went on the wire fence beside the river, and then stopped. He turned back to check the passengers. NO! He left his seat and saw everybody lying on the floor. GOOD! Nobody got hurt. But he had to stop driving for half a year as punishment. Every time we saw him we all teased him.

Another thing happened in America when I worked in a nail salon. One day we were working when my boss saw a customer's mouth become crooked and her head nodded down. My boss called an ambulance right away and saved her life. Because she was a regular customer, my boss could figure out something was wrong with her. After she got out of the hospital, she still came to our store but she was different. A doctor had removed a

brain tumor and her reaction was much slower than before. My boss said she was a ten-year customer. She was very loyal.

I remember one more thing. It was one night after my husband showered. He said he heard “zzzzzzz” noise in the bathroom. He called the super to come to look at it, and the super and one of our board members came to our bathroom. They couldn’t find out what happened. They went to the hallway and talked. I was watching TV. When my show finished, I went to the bathroom to check. I found the problem. I called for my husband and the noise stopped. I showed him: it was his electric razor. He forgot to turn it off after he used it. He put it on the rack and it made the buzzing sound.

Nu Tran

Memory Experience Work

I remember my first work experience. I came to New York in 1991 and I moved to Brooklyn in 1992. At that time my brother’s friend helped me get a job at a hotel. I was very happy that they hired me. The Paramount Hotel is at 46th Street and 7th Avenue in Manhattan. I worked there as a housekeeper and I worked full-time, seven hours per day, thirty-five hours per week. I worked from 8:30 to 4 pm, Wednesday to Sunday. I cleaned fourteen rooms every day.

The first two days of work were orientation and training. Starting on the third day, I worked on my own. I cleaned everything, I put out soap, a shower cap, toilet paper, and tissues, I changed the sheets, pillow cases, shower curtain, bath towels, and hand towels, and I vacuumed the room. At first this job was stressful and hard, because it was a heavy workload and I was a beginner. After work each day, I would get home really tired. Every day I cleaned different floors because I was a newbie. The rule at the hotel was that every newbie had to switch the floors they cleaned until they worked for a year and were given a certain floor to work on.

I always looked for a tip from the guests. I remember one time I got a twenty-dollar tip from one room, so I was very happy and excited. It encouraged me. Sometimes I got upset when the supervisor suddenly switched a few occupied rooms, and I had to clean checkout rooms, which took much longer and it also meant I would leave work later.

I am responsible, a little impatient, and anxious. I need more challenging experiences in my job. I have a lot of skills for working at a hotel. Finally I liked my job because it gave me a high salary, good benefits, and helped me settle in New York.

Zujia Wang

Recollections of Impressive Jobs in China

A long time ago, I had three very impressive jobs in China that I still remember. Right now, I’d like to recollect them.

The first impressive job was working in the desert in Xinjiang for a summer. The weather was hot and dry. The water was poor and salty. By day, the temperature was high. You were very thirsty, and needed to drink a lot of water. But you didn’t have any sweat on your body because the sweat evaporated very quickly. The water was too salty and bitter to drink. In the desert, you couldn’t walk far from your tent, or you would be lost.

At night, the temperature dropped very low. One night, it happened to blow hard with sand, and broke our tents. Everybody had a lot of sand all over their bodies. Luckily, it was easy to be gotten rid of, because the sand was so dry.

The best time was nightfall. You felt comfortable and watched the sky, stars, and satellites.

The second impressive job was working on the Yangtze River from Shanghai to Chongqing, about 2,400 kilometers. Different from the last job, the water was rich and soft. We lived on a new ship and looked like tourists watching the scenery and cities on both sides of the river. One day, when the ship reached the point where the river and Dongting Lake meet, the wind, rain, and waves were so strong that the ship almost sank. Right now, I’m still afraid of it. We preferred to live on land more than on the river.

The third impressive job was working on a farm in Hubei province for a year and a half. I learned how to plough the field with an ox. At first, it was very difficult to learn. The land on the mountain was hard and sticky. The weather in the winter was cold and wet with a little rain. The ox walked very slowly and breathlessly. After I had learned to do it, we moved to the plains where the environment was better.

Those three jobs impressed me forever.

Joyce Wei

Armored Car

More than ten years ago, I worked as a teller at a branch of Han Kou Bank. Every week we had to go to a company to pick up the money.

One day, we brought a money box to go back to the bank. There were five people in the armored car. One of us was a driver, two of us were tellers, and two of us were cash-in-transit guards. After a red traffic light, suddenly the engine didn't work. The armored car couldn't move. In a few minutes, the police came there and directed the flow of traffic. But the armored car still couldn't move.

Then one of the cash-in-transit guards, Jun, called the head office of the armored car company. On the phone, Jun said, "My name is Wang Jun. My employee ID is 3356. We are working and on our way to school. But the car can't move. There are many books in the car and our employees have sticks. Please give us support. We are at the traffic light between Hai Shou Street and Yue Fei Street, Han Kou. Thank you!"

At that time, I didn't understand what Jun meant. So I asked Jun why he said that. Jun smiled and told me, "When we are working, we can't refer to bank, money, or guns, otherwise maybe we will be in trouble. It's in order to prevent robbery. So we have to use specific code words instead of these sensitive words. School means bank, stick means gun. What does book mean? Can you guess?" "I know! I know! Book means money!"

In fifteen minutes, another armored car came. We four people took the money box and got in that armored car and arrived at the bank safely. Actually, that money box only contained less than 20,000 RMB, which was equivalent to less than \$3,000. No matter how much money was in the armored car, that was the working procedure.

Qian Zhou

My First Job

I have had four jobs in my life. I was a high school student when I was in China. I didn't have any work experience before I came to America.

My first job was as a waitress in a Japanese and Chinese restaurant in Kentucky. I got this job through a job agency in Chinatown. At that time I didn't know too much about the United States. I asked the staff person how far it was from New York City to Kentucky and she told me it would take me seven hours by bus to get there. I talked to the supervisor on the phone but I was careless so I didn't ask the supervisor a lot of questions.

On the second day, I went to the bus station. There were a lot of people but the bus was a van. I thought it didn't have enough seats. Finally, what the driver said proved that my view was right. He said we should share our seats, like four people can just sit in three seats. It was crowded but there was only one bus every two days, so we had to take it. I felt confused after eight hours because the driver told us that it took seven hours to get there. I just realized that the job agency told a lie to me. It was 5:00 a.m. when I arrived and I felt exhausted. I had to go to work at 10:00 a.m.

I was nervous on the first day and my supervisor was from Korea. She couldn't speak Chinese and when she talked to me, I needed my coworker to translate because I couldn't speak English. I didn't know anything about working as a waitress but I thought it was a good job because I could eat a lot of delicious food and the restaurant was not busy so my supervisor let us rest in the afternoon and then we could watch TV.

My coworkers were almost the same age as me and friendly to me. They were so nice. After one month, it was Chinese New Year, and my aunt told me that I should come back to celebrate with her and my cousin. I thought

Kentucky was too far from my home and I didn't want to take the bus one more time, so I decided to quit my job. It was my first job. I will remember it because I learned a lot.

Yun Jin Zou

Job Story

When I was a student in high school, I got a job at Wal-Mart. I was very shy at work. The first time I didn't know how to do anything in the store. I wanted to learn everything as soon as possible, and some of the guys were very kind and taught me a lot of things and knowledge. I remember one time I made a mistake. It was a small mistake, and my manager didn't blame me. He just told me don't do that and how to avoid it.

My second job was as a baker at 85° C Bakery. Thank God, I met a lot of people there that were kind, too. I learned how to make a cake and how to decorate cakes with cream. I work there with my friend and he could teach me. Some terrible problems I couldn't solve without him. So I am very happy I could meet a lot of co-workers and friends at my jobs.