Session 54: Work as Recovery: The Honest Way In

Duration: 60 minutes • Recovery education group. Ensure all participants are seated and ready

Materials: Whiteboard; workbooks and pens; the Session 54 handout (My First-Target Job List)

Learning objectives — by the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- State what work provides recovery besides money: structure, evidence, identity
- Build a realistic first-target job list from their strengths (Session 32) and current limits
- Name the recovery risks inside their likely work settings and pair each with a guardrail

Opening (3 minutes)

Newcomer bridge (60 seconds): This is Phase 5 — Giving Back. The one idea today is that work is where recovery meets the public, honestly. You are welcome here without earlier sessions; everything you need for today is in this session. Work is where recovery meets the public. A job will structure your week, test your honesty, introduce you to strangers who owe you nothing, and pay you for the privilege. Today we treat work as what it is in this curriculum: a recovery practice with a paycheck attached.

Check-in prompt (8 minutes)

Name, craving 0–10, one word for your week — then: "What is the best job you ever held — not the best-paying, the best for you? What made it good?" Log every craving score on the roster.

Passing is honored — you may pass any question, prompt, or practice without explanation, step out and rejoin, and choose a partner-only option where one is offered.

Teaching (20 minutes)

Session 25 framed work and calling; this session gets practical about entry. Employed and purposefully occupied hours are hours the old cycle cannot easily claim, and a kept job is public evidence — to family, to courts, to yourself — that the new life is load-bearing. Entry is honest about constraints: records, gaps, transportation, and the house schedule are facts to plan around, not verdicts to hide from.

- **Structure is relapse prevention** A shift is an anchor the whole day can be tied to (Session 7). When you choose between two jobs, weigh the schedule's effect on meetings, sleep, and check-ins — not just the hourly wage.
- **Start where you can be kept** The right first job is the one you can still be doing in ninety days: within your transportation, inside your physical limits, clear of your highest-risk people and places (Session 29). A smaller job kept beats a bigger job lost loudly.
- **Every workplace has a chain** Payday people, after-shift rituals, the coworker who uses — map the job's warning signs before the first shift, and pre-decide your exits the way Session 29 taught: if–then, written, with a person attached.

Sources & Evidence — Facilitator background — do not teach

Recovery capital research links employment and meaningful roles to sustained recovery, and SAMHSA counts Purpose — including work — among the four dimensions of recovery (Granfield & Cloud, 1999;

SAMHSA, 2012). Key sources for this session: Granfield & Cloud (1999); SAMHSA (2012); Bandura (1977). Evidence strength: Moderate. Spiritual practice: Service and helping others — correlates with meaningful work, structure, and recovery capital; evidence: Moderate (Granfield & Cloud, 1999; SAMHSA, 2012). Full citations: Appendix H. The session's Scripture material is in its optional handout (Appendix I), as theological foundation, quoted from the King James Version.

'Evidence strength' grades the correlated mechanism, not the spiritual practice itself

Pause midway through teaching: ask, "What part of that sounds most like your life right now?" Take two or three answers, connect them to the teaching, and continue. Teach in your own words — the bullets are your map, not a script to read aloud.

Discussion questions (10 minutes)

1. What does work give you besides money — and which of those gifts do you need most right now?
2. Read your first-target list aloud. Which entry is fantasy, and which is this month?
3. What is the riskiest hour of your likely workday, and what is the guardrail?

Skill practice (12 minutes)

First-target workshop (solo, then pairs): from the Session 32 strengths inventory, each person drafts a first-target job list — three realistic targets with the actual way in (a name, a place, an application). For the top target, write the schedule test: shifts against meetings, sleep, transportation, and the 90-day plan. Partners audit for fantasy: any target that fails the schedule test gets revised, not defended.

Personal application — homework (5 minutes)

Take one real step toward the top target this week — the application, the visit, the call — and write down the name of the human you dealt with. Bring the name to the next check-in. Participants write it in their workbook before leaving. Facilitator: name the homework again at the door as people leave.

Facilitator notes and cautions

Never shame a participant's work history or current limits in the room, and never let the session become a job fair of other people's businesses. Participants with legal or licensing barriers are referred to the Program Director for the program's current guidance rather than receiving room-generated advice.

Closing (2 minutes)

Work is not the reward for recovery; it is one of its engines. Pick the target you can keep, and take the step this week. Next session: the honest application — records, gaps, and references, handled without lying and without groveling.

Fidelity check for this session: objectives named at the start ☐ craving scores logged ☐ skill practice completed in full ☐ homework written down by participants ☐ session note filed today ☐