Session 56: Keeping the Job: Habits That Protect Recovery

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

Materials: Whiteboard; workbooks and pens; the Session 56 handout (Keeping the Job)

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

- Name the five keeping habits: early, ready, steady, honest, teachable
- Identify their personal job-risk pattern from past employment and write its interruption
- Build a payday protocol with their accountability partner (linking Session 26)

Opening (3 minutes)

Newcomer bridge (60 seconds): This is Phase 5 — Giving Back. The one idea today is that keeping a job is built one ordinary shift at a time, with habits that protect recovery. You are welcome here without earlier sessions; everything you need for today is in this session. Getting hired is a door. Keeping the job is a house you build one ordinary shift at a time. Today we name the habits that keep people employed — and the exact ways people in early recovery talk themselves out of jobs they needed.

Check-in prompt (8 minutes)

Name, craving 0–10, one word for your week — then: "Think of a job you lost or quit in the old life. What was the first small sign — before the end — that it was going wrong?" 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 26 handled money and stewardship; this session handles the conduct that keeps money coming. Employers fire for patterns, not incidents: lateness that becomes a climate, moods that become weather, small dishonesties that become policy. The keeping habits are boring and total: early enough that traffic cannot fire you, ready with tools and a clear head, steady in mood on bad-news days, honest about mistakes the same shift they happen, and teachable when corrected without a speech.

- **Early is a decision made the night before** Shoes, clothes, keys, alarm, bus money — laid out before bed. Morning chaos is where jobs and cravings both start their day; the night-before routine (Session 7) is an employment practice.
- **Mistakes reported fast are small** Tell the supervisor what happened, what you have already done about it, and what you need — in that order, the same shift. A mistake confessed at 10 a.m. is training; discovered at audit, it is character.
- **Payday is a planned event, not a weather event** The Session 26 order holds at work scale: what comes in, what must go out, decided before the money arrives, with distance between impulse and access — and a partner who knows the plan and asks about it by name.

Sources & Evidence — Facilitator background — do not teach

Relapse prevention treats structure, routine, and pre-decided responses to high-risk moments as protective, and recovery capital research counts sustained employment among the resources that hold

a recovery up (Marlatt & Gordon, 1985; Granfield & Cloud, 1999). Key sources for this session: Marlatt & Gordon (1985); Granfield & Cloud, 1999; SAMHSA (2012). Evidence strength: Moderate. Spiritual practice: Daily examen / evening inventory — correlates with routine self-review and habit formation; evidence: Moderate (Marlatt & Gordon, 1985). 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. Which of the five habits is your historical weak one? Give the evidence.
2. What is your payday pattern from the old life, hour by hour — and what replaces the first two hours of it now?
3. Who corrects you at work if you start sliding — and if the answer is nobody, who should it be?

Skill practice (12 minutes)

Risk-pattern map (solo, then pairs): each person writes the story of one lost job in four beats — the first small sign, the rationalization, the point of no return, the ending — then marks the earliest beat where a keeping habit would have interrupted it. Pairs exchange maps and each partner writes one if–then for the other's earliest beat, in the Session 29 format.

Personal application — homework (5 minutes)

Set up the night-before station this week — one place for clothes, keys, and work gear — and use it every work or program day. Write your payday protocol on a card and give a copy to your accountability partner. Participants write it in their workbook before leaving. Facilitator: name the homework again at the door as people leave.

Facilitator notes and cautions

Do not let the room turn into complaints about specific employers, and never advise a participant about a live dispute with a current employer beyond the session's habits; workplace conflicts, injuries, and wage issues are referred to the Program Director. Habits are the curriculum; cases are not.

Closing (2 minutes)

Early, ready, steady, honest, teachable — five unglamorous words that will keep you fed and free. Set the station tonight. Next session: from a job to a vocation — matching the work to the life you are actually building.

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 ☐