

Script: The Seed for a Good Life

Hardware Store Owner: My nephew moved to New York. He needs a job.

César: What kind of job is he looking for?

Hardware Store Owner: Well, he's young. He's starting college but he needs money so... César, I'm sorry, but I have to give him your job.

Gabriela: You were tired of that place anyway.

César: I was. There was no future there. Maybe I have no future.

Gabriela: What are you talking about? You have so much experience. You worked in a hardware store, in restaurants, you've done electrical work, construction.

César: Yeah, gardening, house painting... That's the story of my life. Going from one job to another.

Flor: One of my cooks will be out for a few weeks. It's not permanent but the job's yours if you want it.

César: Of course I want it. I can start right now.

Flor: Oh, he's not leaving until the end of next week.

César: Flor, I can't wait until next week. I need a job right now.

Flor: I am sorry, César.

César: I'll be here.

Flor: César, you put the audio system in this restaurant, remember? You ever put a radio into a car?

César: Yes. I've done that. I used to help my friend who worked with cars back in Ecuador.

Flor: I just got a new car stereo. They put it in at a shop near the baseball stadium. There are a lot of car places in that area. You might find something there.

César (asking a manager): Are you hiring?

(manager shakes her head no)

Manager (at a different shop, speaking to César): We're not hiring at the moment. Give me your number and I'll call you if I need someone.

Car Audio Shop Manager: You worked at a car audio shop before?

César: No. But I put in car radios for my friends.

Car Radio Shop Manager: Okay. That's good. Come back tomorrow and we'll try you out. If you're good, you've got the job. Three days a week.

César: I'll be here.

Mr. Ramon Quintero (to adult ESL class): Remember everyone, next week we learn about resumes and interviews with a counselor from the library career center. It will be very useful.

(César is on the phone in the beginning of this scene. The action switches back and forth between César and the person he is talking to, Gene, who is in front of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

Gene: Hello?

César: Hey, it's César.

Gene: Oh hey, how are you?

César: Can you take some of my paintings to sell again?

Gene: Yes, I will take them. Your paintings are good. Remember, commission is 50 percent. So if I sell one for 50, you'll get 25.

César: If you could sell any, that would be great.

Gene: Sounds good.

César: I need the money.

(Gabriela has finished her ESL class and is walking towards César in front of the library. Cesar sees her and the scene continues.)

César: That was Gene. I'm going to make some paintings and he's going to sell them.

Gabriela: That's good. How did it go at the restaurant?

César: The manager offered me a temporary job. The thing is, it doesn't start for a couple of weeks. But, I might have another part-time job too.

Gabriela: What's that?

César: Putting in car stereos. I went to a couple of car shops. One is going to watch me work tomorrow. If they like what I do, they'll give me the job.

Gabriela: That's fantastic. Let's go in.

César: I don't have time for the library.

Gabriela: But that's why we met here. They have a career center. Let's take a look.

César: I'm exhausted. Maybe some other time?

Gabriela: That's beautiful, Xio. Xio Cielo.

Xio: What about my brother? What's your name?

César: What did he say?

Xio: No answer. He's quiet. He must be sleeping.

César: I think so. I think it's time for all of us to get ready for bed.

Car Audio Shop Manager: You did well, César. It's part-time, three days a week, you can start the day after tomorrow.

César: That's great! That's the best news I've heard all week. I need to ask about the pay. Is it by hour or by the day?

Car Audio Shop Manager: By the hour.

César: How much?

Car Audio Shop Manager: It's minimum wage and talented guys like you get tips too.

Customer: Excuse me, here, I almost forgot this. The radio sounds great.

César: What are you growing here?

Simon: I'm growing some cabbage, turnips and tomatoes.

César: It's very nice. It's beautiful.

Simon: The seeds have been in my family for a very long time. I don't believe we've met.

César: I've walked by this place many times but never came in. Do you own all of this?

Simon: No. This is a community garden. It belongs to the community. Are you a gardener?

César: I used to be. But in New York I can't afford the land.

Simon: You don't have to own the land to grow things here.

César: You mean anybody can grow things here?

Simon: Yes, man. You have to sign up first. I'm one of the organizers. I can put you on the waiting list. You'll get in.

César: It would be so good to grow some vegetables. Gabby would love that.

Simon: Gabby? Is that your wife?

César: Yes, Gabriela. We're going to have our second child soon.

Simon: Congratulations! I'm Simon Winston, by the way.

César: César.

Simon: I know you're a gardener. What else do you do for a living?

César: Good question. I just lost one job in a hardware store but I got another job today, putting in car radios. I'm also going back to work at a restaurant. That's the story of my life. Going from one job to another. I'm tired of it. I want a career.

Simon: Have you gone back to school or done any career training?

César: No.

Simon: Why not? What are you waiting for? You have to plant seeds for a garden to grow. You're a gardener. You know that. Education is the seeds for a career... a good life.

César: That's true, I suppose.

Simon: Now, you're going to need a resume.

César: A resume. What do you put on a resume?

Simon: You know, your work experience and skills. A person with your work experience can make a good resume.

César: Do you have a resume?

Gabriela: No... But now that you mention it, we're going to learn about resumes in my class.

César: Do you think I can join the class?

Gabriela: I thought you didn't want to take classes. You said you didn't have time.

César: Well I've been thinking. Education is the seed for a good life. Right, Xio?

Xio: Where do you learn that, papi?

Gabriela: I need to go.

Nana Aidoo: Together. Who, what, where, when.

Class: Who, what, where, when... Who, what, where, when.

Nana Aidoo: Who.

Class: Who.

Nana Aidoo: What.

Class: What.

Nana Aidoo: Where.

Class: Where.

Nana Aidoo: When.

Class: When.

Nana Aidoo: Together! Who, what, where, when. ... That's it. That's what you put on a resume. Who you work for – the employer, the company. What you did – your job title and a short work description. Where you did it – the location... New York City, Santa Domingo, Shanghai. When – the months and the years. You write this information about each job you have had.

Lian: Is that it? Is that all you put on our resume?

Nana Aidoo: You can also put your educational experience and the languages you speak.

Genevieve: What about your romantic experience?

Aba: And your picture?

Nana Aidoo: No pictures! A resume is not for online dating, my dear. The purpose of a resume is to get a job interview. In this country, you don't put information about your private life on your resume.

Salman: I heard that in an interview in this country, the employer cannot ask you about your private life... if you're married or single or about your sexuality or religion.

Nana Aidoo: That's correct. An employer cannot discriminate against you because of who you are. Let's practice. Turn to the student next to you. Talk to your partner about your work experience. Together, talk about the jobs you have had. Remember to say who, what, where, when.

Gabriela: I'll work with Kemala. César, you and Jian work together, good?

César: Hi Jian. I'm César.

Jian: Hi César. You're new in our class?

César: I'm Gabriela's husband. I'm just joining for the resume and interview workshops.

Jian: It would be good to have a career.

César: I think so. I'm always moving from one job to another. I'm ready for a change. I have my ID card, I'm going to make a resume. What do you do for a living?

Jian: I work in a restaurant. I don't even have an ID card.

César: You can get an IDNYC card. It's an ID card for all New Yorkers.

Jian: I don't know.

César: I have one. Gabriela has one too. It has a lot of benefits... Let's just work on the list of jobs we've done. Who, what, where, when?

Customer: You really know what you are doing.

César: I'm a quick learner.

Customer: I should remember that line next time I have a job interview.

Nana Aidoo: In a job interview, you introduce yourself with a strong handshake and a smile. Also, you make eye contact. You look at the person when you introduce yourself. You do not look down or look away... *Hi, my name is Nana Aidoo. Nice to meet you Ms. Aidoo.* Now, what are some things you can say in an interview to sell yourself? To convince an employer to give you a job.

César: I would say I'm a quick learner.

Nana Aidoo: Wonderful. The employer will like that. But, the employer will ask you to give an example. So César, can you give me an example when you learned something quickly on a job?

César: Yes. In my job now I put stereos in cars. The other day I had to put in a new kind of radio. I asked my coworker to show me and I learned very fast.

Nana Aidoo: Great example. There's a list of other useful things you can say in an interview.

Nana Aidoo: Nina. Say this line.

Nina: I'm a good problem solver.

Nana Aidoo: Diego.

Diego: I'm a good team player.

Nana Aidoo: Jenny.

Jenny: I'm a very hard worker.

Nana Aidoo: I speak English, Chinese, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Bengali.

Class: I speak English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic and Bengali.

Nana Aidoo: Practice these lines at home. Prepare an example for everything you say. César gave a great example of learning something quickly.

Ida: I don't know where to apply or what kind of job to look for.

Nana Aidoo: Well, at the career center here, you can learn about hospitality, security, medical billing, healthcare, lots of careers!

César: Where can we get help finding jobs in those careers?

Claudia: I went there! Workforce1. You can get help with career training, career counseling and they help you find jobs too.

Nana Aidoo: That's right. Remember the name Workforce1.

César: I'm really glad I joined her class.

Jian: I liked her too.

Gabriela: There it is, Jian. The IDNYC table.

César: Everyone needs an ID in New York.

Gabriela: There are many benefits. You can use it to open a bank account, to get into buildings. It shows that you are a New Yorker.

Jian: I don't want to give my information.

Gabriela: Your information is protected in New York City.

(*Simone appears!*)

Simon: César! Great you see you my friend!

César: Simon! What are you doing here?

Simon: I'm picking up some books. The library is one of my favorite places.

César: Me too. Let me introduce you do my wife.

Simon: Very nice to meet you Gabriela.

Gabriela: How do you know my name?

Simon: I'm a friend of your husband's. We're both gardeners. We met in the community garden.

Gabriela: The *what* garden?

César: The community garden. It's about a block from our apartment.

Simon: What's the matter? César, you don't talk to your wife?

César: No, I do. I asked her if she has a resume.

Gabriela: So you're the one that told my husband about resumes and education?

Simon: Yes, education is the seed for a good life. Right, César?

César: Right. This is my friend, Jian.

Simon: Very nice to meet you.

Jian: Nice to meet you too.

César: Excuse me, ma'am. Can I see your resume, please?

Gabriela: Yes, you may, when I am finished. But no pictures.

César: No pictures? No problem. *El amor es ciego.*

Gabriela: Love is blind.

César: We are taking a resume workshop.

Gabriela: We need help to type our resumes on the computer.

César: We also need email accounts so that we can apply for jobs online.

Librarian: I can help you with those things.

Gabriela (reading aloud off the computer screen): Dear Gabriela. Thank you so much for bringing me to the library. This is my first email to you. I love you. Sincerely, César.

Workforce1 Staff: Welcome to Workforce1.

César: My name is César Cielo. I want to find out about career training and job opportunities.

Workforce1 Staff: Nice to meet you. Do you have a resume?

César: Yes, I do. Here it is.

Workforce1 Staff: Beautiful. Here's the form to register. Fill it out and then you will meet with a career counselor. The counselor will look at your resume and help you find a career that is right for you.

César: Do you know about any specific career opportunities?

Workforce1 Staff: Yes. We have a calendar with new career opportunities every month.

César: Can you help me get an interview?

Workforce1 Staff: Yes, we can. The Workforce1 career counselor will tell you more. You came to the right place.

César: There you go, baby!

Xio: I'm up.