



Intensive Employment Program for Women Exiting Prison 2012



Fitted for Work (FFW) was delighted to receive the support to deliver 3 women exiting prison programs, two at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) and one at Tarrengower Prison.

These programs (designed as work expos) fill a gap in support provided to women exiting prison and are important in preparing the women for release from prison and for orienting them to a transition to work.

The programs included 5 modules:

- (1) dressing for interviews - FFW brought donated work appropriate clothing into the prison
- (2) resume drafting - participants' resumes were drafted or reviewed
- (3) interview skills - mock interview sessions were carried out by our trained volunteers
- (4) training/career guidance and what to expect at Job services and from Centrelink
- (5) health and wellbeing

From the first program last May at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, 29 women provided feedback. 97% reflected that the program was useful or really useful and 65% of the women also liked or loved it. The benefit most cited by the participants was in relation to the provision of information, particularly around available resources and services. Many women also stated that the interview techniques and practice were useful with 73% indicating that their expectations were met. 72% also indicated that the career guidance was the session they benefited from most.

Women commented that they gained confidence, information, an updated resume and interview skills. All participants found the presenters helpful and their expectations were met. After attending the event many women expressed thoughts and feelings ranging from; satisfied, interesting, helpful, to informative. One participant reflected both in the evaluation forms and verbally in front of the group that the women at Tarrengower needed this type of program and that sessions should be held regularly at the prison. This was agreed by many of the participants.

FFW is grateful to StreetSmart for enabling these women, often the most marginalised in society, and at great risk of homelessness, to have access to programs that help them gain the skills, confidence and self-esteem to secure sustainable employment.