

2015 Breakthrough Employer Sodexo



Finding the right person for the right job can be a daunting task. It requires sifting through applicants, looking for someone who has the right skills and the right personality for the position. It can be even more daunting if you are the new company in town, as Sodexo was during the Summer of 2015.

Sodexo is an international food service and facilities management company that oversees the Hendry County School District's lunchrooms

and food production. When Sodexo first came to Hendry County, the company transitioned many of the school district's existing employees into its workforce. However, with 7,400 students at nine service sites, the company needed additional employees.

"Before school started in September, there were rumors that the school lunchrooms were going to change in Hendry County," says Magdalena Flores, Goodwill's Job-Link coordinator in LaBelle. "So I went to their office, and they were hiring at that time."

"Magdalena knew we were looking for people to help in the cafeteria, and I needed an admin," says Erwin Evans, Sodexo general manager. Shortly thereafter, Magdalena introduced Erwin to Minerva Garcia a Job-Link client. "We hired her pretty much right on the spot."

Minerva, or "Minnie," as the Sodexo team calls her, was the first of half a dozen employees that the company has hired through Goodwill's Job-Link Centers. As an administrative assistant, Minnie quickly became Erwin's go-to employee. Because she is bilingual, she has helped the company interview a number of Spanish-speaking applicants for jobs at Sodexo.

Erwin now reaches out to the Goodwill Job-Link Centers whenever openings become available.

"Every time he has a position open, he comes to me," says Magdalena. "We have a good relationship ever since they came here; it's worked out really well. I think that's the best thing that could happen for every Job-Link Center."

"When you are interviewing someone you have to assess their skills, as well as who they are as a person," says Erwin. "Working with Goodwill, half the job is already done. It's worked out well for us, and I'd highly recommend it."