



Success Story Questions

Thank you for sharing your story! You're helping us reach and *inspire women* hoping to begin their journey to success just like you. Your story will be shared via our monthly newsletter and other channels to help our supporters understand our mission and the women we serve.

Here are a few questions you can answer:

- What is your background? (I can use LinkedIn to help fill this in as well)
- Why did you decide to contact Dress for Success Twin Cities? Did something specific prompt you to reach out?
- How did you find out about us?
- How was your experience with DFSTC? Anything to highlight?
- What are you doing now?
- What are your goals for yourself now?
- What does success mean to you?

You're welcome to respond via email or I am happy to schedule a call any time!

Please let us know which professional headshot you prefer to be used. If you need help having one taken, please let us know.

Sample responses can be found below.

Sample 1:

Here are a few questions you can think over:

1. What is your background? My background has included various career experiences and opportunities. These have included working in the hospitality, retail, corporate finance, social services, and health and wellness sectors.

I relocated to Minneapolis in 2013, after a job layoff in Chicago. My family suggested that I move here because I had NO family left in Chicago. My daughter and her family moved here in 2008.

During one of my visits here in 2012, I saw a local newspaper advertisement about a Community Health Worker, (CHW) training program and applied. I visited Summit Academy, took the assessment tests, passed them, and then went back home to Chicago. A year later I moved here and enrolled in the Community Health Worker program and graduated in Fall 2013.

Since 2013 I have worked at various Not-for-Profit organizations in Minneapolis as a CHW and gained tremendous experience. Some of these settings have included community centers and social service Agencies.

2. Why did you decide to contact Dress for Success Twin Cities?

I was referred.

3. How did you find out about us?

From Summit Academy after I completed my CHW training in 2013. I had never heard of the Dress for Success organization prior to relocating to Minneapolis. Since then, I have learned that DFSTC is part of a global network of 140 independent local affiliates, located in 22 countries worldwide!

4A. How was your experience with DFSTC?

My experiences with DFSTC have been awesome.

DFSTC has allowed me to continuously utilize my community outreach, facilitation, and presentation skills to enhance the knowledge base of the women being serviced by the organization. Also, DFSTC recommended me to participate the WomenHeart training program sponsored by the Mayo Clinic in Oct. 2022. After an extensive selection process, I was accepted into the program and am now a WomenHeart Champion!

4B. Anything to highlight?

DFSTC's commitment to women from diverse backgrounds and cultures is what really encouraged me to want to participate and volunteer with them even more. DFSTC has given me the opportunity to showcase my skills and talents. Additionally, DFSTC supports, encourages, and uplifts participants to reach their highest potential!

5. What are you doing now?

I am back in class, learning more about technology and working on my business plan.

6. What are your goals for yourself now?

To continue with my technology classes and share resources and information with women and older adults who might be intimidated of computers and technology. My goal is to start a basic technology training program for older adults.

It would assist community organizations such as churches, community centers, and social service agencies with training older adults to learn more about their smartphones, email, tablets and computers without being intimidated.

7. What does success mean to you?

Success to me means, being able to give back to your community while providing educational and economic advancement opportunities for yourself and others. Throughout my life, I have always volunteered with community organizations because I felt it was important to give back. My legacy motto is "Each one, reach one, teach one, and then play it forward"!

Sample 2:

I first found out about DFSTC by taking an online class through another agency about re-entering the job market. The speaker shared information about DFSTC and encouraged the women to contact the organization and see what programs and services were available as well as look at the online recordings. By September 2021, I was participating in Monday's EmPower Hours, the Professional Women's Group, and special programs - like a weekly financial course.

DFSTC has been invaluable to me! As a 55-year-old woman who homeschooled my daughters for over 20 years, I had been out of the job market and was not ready to look for a job - much less know where or how to begin. The last time I actively looked for a job was in 1995. Needless to say, technology alone was significantly different as well as where and how to search for jobs. No longer could I rely on my work experience because it was over two decades old.

So, I needed to "re-invent" myself. DFSTC got me started with a Confidence Kit. Being a homeschool mother, I didn't need an extensive or professional wardrobe. This was a challenge because building a wardrobe is a huge financial undertaking when starting from scratch. The Confidence Kit provided me with a beautiful array of clothing that was appropriate for job seeking and working.

Around that same time, there was an EmPower Hour that focused on taking care of yourself and thinking about the image that you project. It was an eye-opener because no longer was I a young, up-and-coming potential employee. I was a woman at the upper-end of the age spectrum who hadn't had to care about appearance - because that wasn't something that was relevant when teaching. After that EmPower Hour, I made three appointments - one for make-up, another for essential garments, and the third for a haircut. These simple appointments also helped give me the confidence I needed to feel better about myself as I prepared for interviewing.

Through DFSTC, I learned where to look for potential jobs, how to re-word my resume, and how to handle difficult interview questions. I also learned practical life skills - like budgeting and how to look for community resources that would help me with making ends meet. I was realizing that I needed to address some fundamental issues - such as finding free or affordable food - because of my basic needs weren't being met, then it would be difficult to focus on anything beyond that.

Eventually, I got a job that built upon my homeschool teaching experience. I received another Confidence Kit. This one had such a beautiful selection of clothing and accessories. It was like someone knew exactly what I needed and would love to wear! It was just the boost I needed as I prepared to start working.

As I began my job, it was not exactly how I envisioned it. Although there were some highlights each week, overall it was not as good of a fit as I had hoped. I continued attending EmPower

Hours and Professional Womens Group throughout this time. Each week, there were new ideas, advice, and encouragement given. These sessions provided a sense of stability, comfort, and ideas for moving forward.

Many people in the community who I had volunteered with through different organizations and clubs were asking me how I liked my job. I told them about the challenges with it and expressed my desire to find something more aligned with my background. I was becoming more confident in speaking up for what I wanted to do with this final stage in my career. Because I spoke up and advocated for myself, people began spreading the word for me and would suggest others to talk with. In a short period of time, I was approached by an organization to help with its marketing, social media, and public relations. Better yet: I could work from home (my ideal location!). After discussing a consultancy role with the organization, I took the position! Although I am doing both the work position as well as being a consultant, I feel like both positions use gifts that I am skilled at as well as provide me with something I need and want in a job.

DFSTC has been like a rock of stability and routine through my re-entering into the job market and my new jobs. I am incredibly grateful for the generosity of DFSTC with the wealth of information shared online as well as the Confidence Kits. Without DFSTC, I would never have been ready or able to transition to this next phase of my life. With DFSTC, I have been able to confidently and capably face unfamiliar situations and workplaces and thrive in them!