

A Job Offer Knocks on the Door

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Imagine going to the eye doctor and being told you have a major retinal detachment, need urgent surgery and cannot go back to work. With three young children, those were shocking words to absorb. My husband Ed couldn't even help his father with farm chores that evening in June 1985.

Ed received home assistance through the Association for Visual Rehabilitation and Employment (AVRE) in Binghamton, NY. In 1989, he received life skills and computer training at the Carroll Center for the Blind in Newton, MA.

In 1990, Ed was hired as a customer service representative. The state provided on-the-job training with equipment to compensate for his limited vision, including a closed-circuit TV and speech-access computer.

Losing all vision in 1998, he relied solely on speech software. Using dBase III for DOS, he rewrote all the software for shipping and receiving, production project sheets, invoicing and generating quotes, tracking production performance, tracking customer complaints, quality review sheets, and led the Customer Fulfillment Team. Executives from other companies complimented how professionally he handled his work and phone responsibilities.

However, in October 2001, he was again unemployed, contacting AVRE for more assistance. Updating his resume, his employment specialist went with him to job interviews. At Cornell University, one office told him he was their best interviewee, but they said they needed a sighted person for the job.

With few job openings for which he was qualified and with the challenge of transportation to and from work because we live 20 to 25 miles from larger towns, Ed uttered this earnest plea to God: "I've done all I can, Lord. If I'm going to work again, you're going to have to bring the job to me."

On June 3, 2003, our 25-year-old daughter died. With local churches praying for us in this and also for a job for Ed, a local businessman heard of our needs. He was the owner of a local custom mixing and packaging plant for food products. Knocking on the door one day, he asked what Ed could do and how they might put his skills to work. Having applied there previously with nothing available for his skills, Ed had given up hope. Now, his AVRE employment specialist visited that company and set up a new speech-accessed computer for Ed's job as office assistant. He has worked there since then, responsible for trucking quotes, making collection calls, and contacting suppliers for ingredient documentation.

God brought the job to Ed, just as he prayed! The company has been so good to him and has now set him up to work from home a few hours a day. We're so thankful for their faith in Ed's ability, and even more so for God's answer to our prayer.