

Interview Outline: Perpetual Education Fund

In March 2001, President Gordon B. Hinckley announced the Perpetual Education Fund (PEF) in the priesthood session of General Conference.

Purpose statement: The Perpetual Education Fund has been established to provide worthy young adults with the support and resources necessary to improve their lives through education and better employment.

The PEF embraces eternal principles, including the importance of education, integrity, hard work, and self-reliance. It also encourages members to become "one," since all are invited to give of their means to build the fund so more youth may be served.

Background Questions for All Interviewees

1. Tell me about:
 - a. Where you were born and raised.
 - b. Your family.
2. How did you gain your testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ?
3. Describe your previous service in the Church.

Questions for PEF Administrators

1. Tell me about your education and career.
2. When did PEF start in this area?
3. Is the PEF available in every nation in the area? If not, why not?
4. How is the program administered in each of the nations? Through missionaries, people with callings, staff?
5. Are the economies in the nations in your area able to absorb these trained workers, and can the students get good jobs?
6. Who were those who started the program? Are you the original administrator?
7. How did you get a job working for PEF?
8. Describe the work you do as an administrator for PEF in working with:
 - a. Local priesthood leaders.
 - b. Applicants.
 - c. Your staff.
9. Do you work only for PEF, or do you have other assignments?
10. What services are provided in a PEF service center?
 - a. How are service centers manned or staffed?
 - b. What if an applicant cannot come to a service center?
11. Describe your staff. Where do they come from? What is their background?

12. Describe your relationship with:
 - a. PEF administration at Church headquarters.
 - b. The Area Presidency.
 - c. Banks or special organizations that handle the financing.
 - d. Schools.
 - i. Are there any problems with the schools accepting PEF payments?
 - ii. Are there schools that offer the type of vocational training that President Hinckley envisioned?
13. Describe the people who apply for PEF.
 - a. How many apply from each country in the area?
 - b. What is the breakdown by gender?
 - c. How many are returned missionaries?
14. Describe the application process.
15. How many applications are accepted and rejected?
 - a. Generally speaking, why are applications accepted, and why are they rejected?
16. What percentage of participants finish the program and get jobs?
17. Describe some of the success stories.
18. What happens to those who drop out?
19. Discuss paying back the loans:
 - a. What percentage of participants pay back their loans, and how are loans tracked?
 - b. What are the challenges in repaying loans?
 - c. How are the students in this area doing?
 - d. What happens to those who do not pay back loans?
20. Do you ever get a sense that people join the Church to get access to the PEF?
21. Will PEF continue to grow and spread in the area?
 - a. If so, what will enable that growth?
 - b. If not, why not?
22. What are the challenges?
23. What other important things have we not discussed?
24. What has working in PEF brought into your life? How has it strengthened your testimony?

Questions for PEF Missionaries

1. Tell me about your education and career.
2. Is this your first mission as a couple? If not, describe your previous missions.
3. Did you apply for the PEF specifically?
4. Discuss the training you received prior to departure. Was it adequate for the realities of the service you render?
5. Describe in detail your duties as PEF missionaries. Is PEF your only assignment?
6. What is your interaction with:
 - a. Applicants.
 - b. Priesthood leaders.

- c. Banks.
 - d. Schools.
7. Describe a typical day as a PEF missionary? Discuss specifics.
 8. Based on your understanding of the program and the realities you see, what are the greatest challenges for the PEF in this area?
 9. What other important things have we not discussed?
 10. What has working in PEF brought into your life? How has it strengthened your testimony?

Questions for PEF Recipients

1. How did you first hear about the PEF?
2. When did you first realize that this program was something that you wanted to participate in?
 - a. Describe your career plans and how PEF fits into those plans.
3. Are you a returned missionary?
 - a. Was missionary service a factor in the application process? (Was it a requirement?)
4. Describe the application process.
 - a. What did you have to do to apply?
 - b. Was the process easy or difficult?
 - c. Did you have to list your training plans?
5. What did you do after you learned that your application had been accepted?
 - a. Did you go to a school and enroll?
 - b. How did you begin to access the funds to pay for schooling?
 - c. Did you have to go to a bank and set up a loan account in anticipation of the loan repayment?
 - d. If not, did you have to meet with the PEF director or missionaries to work on loan repayment?
6. Describe the training or schooling you are receiving.
 - a. How much does it cost?
 - b. Are you a full-time student, or do you also work?
 - c. How are you doing in your studies?
 - d. When will you be done with your training?
7. Describe the job market you will face after you graduate.
 - a. How certain are you that you will get a job when you are done?
 - b. Discuss your plans to repay your loan.
8. Do you know of others, perhaps friends of yours, who have been turned down for PEF funds?
 - a. If so, what are they doing with their lives?
9. What would you be doing right now if the PEF had not accepted your application or if there were no PEF?
10. Describe your life with and without the PEF.
11. What final comment do you want to record regarding PEF?