



writing an effective Resume

A resume should be a well-organized profile of your qualifications for a career. Showcase your most marketable skills and experiences. Do not present a dishonest resume. Your resume should communicate enough information to an employer to elicit further interest. Leave out personal pronouns, avoid wordiness and don't get bogged down in details that are not of interest to potential employers.

Sections of a Resume

The resume is typically organized into sections arranged from most important to least important. The following is a description of the parts of a resume.

Identifying “Who You Are”

This should include your name, present and permanent addresses and telephone numbers, including area codes. You may want to include an e-mail address.

Professional Objectives

Prepare a brief, clearly defined statement indicating the field or position in which you are interested. Your career objective represents the theme of your resume, with the remaining information supporting your goal. If you are interested in more than one career field or position, you may need to have different resumes for each professional objective.

Education

For each post-secondary degree (most recent first), list:

- Your college or university, followed by your degree, major and graduation date.
- Your GPA only if it is 3.0 or better. If your GPA is less than a 3.0, you may want to identify only your major GPA.
- If you have worked during college, consider including the percentage of the college expenses you earned.
- If you do not include the following skills section, include your computer skills in this section.

Qualification or Skills

You may want to include a section which briefly summarizes any skills or qualifications you have gained from work experience and/or extracurricular activities that relate to your professional objective (this is especially helpful if your work experience is not career related).

Examples of summary statements are:

- Excellent time management skills developed through working 25 hours per week while a full-time student.
- Developed leadership skills by serving as a community assistant responsible for 40 residents.
- Knowledge of Microsoft Word, Access and Excel, Windows XP, and Peachtree Accounting. (Also see the sample resumes).

Resume



Work Experience

In a consistent manner, list your work experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent first). Experiences may include full-time or part-time employment as well as summer jobs, volunteer work and internships. Follow these guidelines:

- Give the names and locations of organizations for whom you have worked. List position, title and dates you were employed.
- If your experience is career related (and you did not include a “qualifications/skills” section), state the positive aspects of your work i.e., accomplishments, acquired skills and job growth. Quantify with numbers, i.e., “cash sales of \$9,000” or “supervised four clerks.”

Honors and Activities

- Honors – List any honors which indicate your strong academic abilities, i.e., honorary societies, scholarships, awards and dean’s list. Also include any honors related to character and/or community service.
- Activities – Employers look for well rounded individuals who involve themselves with extracurricular activities. Include both college and community activities. List offices, committees, responsibilities and contacts.

References

In case you do not have space on your resume to list references, you should state, “References are available upon request” at the bottom of your resume. Create a listing of your references with work addresses and phone numbers on a second page. Always make sure that you have permission from individuals before listing them as references.

Action Words

Following is a list of action words you may want to use in your resume. These words are action-oriented and represent skill areas you may have that would be beneficial to the potential employer.

accomplished	developed	implemented	participated
accelerated	directed	improved	performed
achieved	discovered	increased	planned
budgeted	distributed	initiated	presented
built	earned	instituted	processed
calculated	eliminated	launched	produced
charted	established	maintained	programmed
compiled	evaluated	managed	proposed
completed	exhibited	mastered	recommended
composed	expanded	mediated	reinforced
conducted	expedited	motivated	researched
consolidated	explained	negotiated	reviewed
created	facilitated	observed	scheduled
delegated	formulated	obtained	supervised
delivered	generated	operated	strengthened
demonstrated	handled	organized	updated



Resumes

YOUR NAME

Temporary Address (until Month, Day, Year): Permanent Address:
 Street Address Street Address
 City, State, Zip City, State, Zip
 Area Code/Phone Number Area Code/Phone Number

Resume Emphasizing:
skills, honors and activities

Professional

Objective: Seeking an entry-level position in business management.

Education: Name of School, Location of School

- Bachelor of Science, Business Administration, August 2007
- Emphasis: Marketing
- GPA: 3.67

Study Abroad

- Semester in England

Skills: Leadership Skills

- Raised sorority's average GPA by .75 points by designing and implementing a new study program while serving as Scholarship Chairman.
- Recruited 20 new volunteers in one month for Habitat for Humanity.

Interpersonal Communication Skills

- Developed through serving as a mentor in the Big Brother/Big Sister Program.

Sales Skills

- Top sales associate at Anne's Boutique in 2002.

Computer Skills

- Microsoft Windows XP and Office 2000

Employment

Experience: Sales Associate, Anne's Boutique, Athens, GA, December 2005 - May 2007
 Server, Starlight Cafe, Atlanta, GA, June 2004 - August 2005
 Sales Associate, Tom's Bookstore, Atlanta, GA, June 2001 - August 2003

Honors: Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society
 Alumni Scholarship
 Dean's List - 5 Semesters
 Community Service Award

Activities: Gamma Phi Beta Sorority
 Scholarship Chairman
 Habitat for Humanity
 Big Brother/Big Sister Program
 Yearbook Staff
 Symphonic Band

References: Available upon request.

Resume Emphasizing:
skills, honors and activities

YOUR NAME

Temporary Address (until Month, Day, Year): Permanent Address:
 Street Address Street Address
 City, State, Zip City, State, Zip
 Area Code/Phone Number Area Code/Phone Number

Professional

Objective: Seeking an entry-level position in business management.

Education: Name of School, Location of School

- Bachelor of Science, Business Administration, May 2008
- Emphasis: Marketing
- Financed 50% of education through summer and part-time employment

Study Abroad

- Semester in England

Computer Skills

- Microsoft Windows XP and Office 2000

Employment

Experience: Consultant, Pastro's Auto Restoration, Wilkesburg, PA, May 2006 - Present

- Converted manual record keeping systems to a computerized system.
- Set up database for the company which included:
 - past and present client information parts and material inventory.
 - automatic estimating and billing procedures.
- Results: 25% decrease in costs and 40% reduction in labor time.

Carpenter, Collins Construction Company, Morrow, PA, September 2003 - May 2004

- Supervised and scheduled a crew of 3 laborers.
- Researched costs of materials and provided recommendations to employer.
- Results: 25% decrease in costs and 40% reduction in labor time.
- Prospected jobs to develop new clients. Secured over 30 new clients in a one and a half year period.

Contractor, Self-Employed, Lexburg, PA, June 2002 - August 2003

- Designed and built porches, patios and decks.
- Solicited new clients through local advertising.
- Performed all job materials and purchasing procedures.
- Employed two laborers.

Activities: College and high school golf team
 Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity

References: Available upon request.



sample
Resume

MARY JOHNSON

Temporary Address:

360 Happy Lane
Atlanta, GA 30333
(770) 555-1234

Permanent Address:

123 4th Street
New York, NY 10023
(212) 555-5000

Education:

Clark Atlanta University, School of Business

Bachelor of Arts: May 2008

Major: Business Administration

Concentration: Marketing

Experience:

9/01 - Present

The Center for Collaborative Learning

Market Research Assistant

- Conduct secondary research on health care trends.
- Administer telephone surveys.
- Maintain databases.

6/00 - 8/01

Ketchum Public Relations

Marketing Student Intern

- Instructed store managers on Visa Cash transactions.
- Advised customers how to utilize Visa Cash Cards.
- Customer service and information representative.

12/99 - 4/00

Omni Coliseum

Service Representative and Usher

- Provided information to Omni guests.
- Directed and escorted patrons to seats.
- Assisted parent with children.
- Organized and assisted in training of new ushers.

6/99 - 8/99

Water Wear

Sales Associate Summer Intern

- Participated in meetings with manager/owners and buyers for stores.
- Coordinated displays and managed stock inventory.
- Prepared and gave sales presentations.

Skills:

Computer: Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, Excel, Power Point.

Language: Spoken and Written Spanish.

Interpersonal: Team building skills, cross functional collaboration skills.

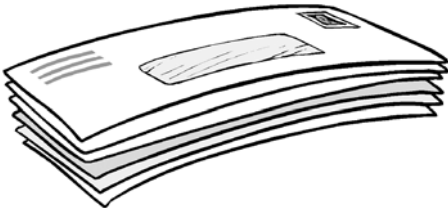
Memberships:

Marketing Club

New York Club

NAACP

Big Sisters



writing **Letters**

During the job search process, there are many times when it is appropriate to write a letter to an employer. When writing a letter, be sure to carefully proofread for grammatical and typographical errors. The following are basic types of letters that you will be sending to employers. Samples of the cover letter and thank you letter appear on subsequent pages.

Cover Letter

A cover letter (or letter of application) accompanies your resume. It should market your qualifications and communicate your skills, accomplishments and potential to the employer. It should also highlight experiences most relevant to the job/employer.

Thank You Letter

A thank you letter should be sent to an employer immediately after an interview. Make sure you thank the employer for taking the time to interview you and reinforce your interest in the employer and in the position. Also, mention some key points that were mentioned during the interview. If you forgot to mention something important about yourself at the interview, you can mention it in the thank you letter.

Application Status Letter

If an appropriate amount of time has passed after you have interviewed with an employer, you may send a letter to the employer inquiring about the status of your application. Reiterate your interest in the position and in the organization, remind the employer of your qualifications and recap the history of your personal contact with the employer. Be sure to thank the employer for their cooperation.

Acceptance Letter

If an employer offers you a position and you accept it, send a letter of acceptance expressing your appreciation of joining the organization. Confirm your date of hire. Also, if you received an offer letter from the employer, you may briefly confirm the terms of employment.

Rejection Letter

If you choose not to accept an offer of employment, you should send the employer a letter letting them know that you are declining their offer. Express your appreciation for the offer, and above all, don't burn any bridges!



sample

Cover Letter

- Always enclose a cover letter when you mail out a resume.
- Cover letters should be individually typed and signed.
- Your cover letter should be brief, usually one page and follow the general guidelines given below.

Your Address
City, State, Zip Code
Date

Contact's Name
Title of Contact
Company Name
Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. (Contact's Last Name):

Your opening paragraph should arouse interest on the part of the reader. Tell why you are writing the letter. Give them information to show your specific interest in this company.

Your middle paragraphs should create desire. Give details of your background that will show the reader why you should be considered as a candidate. Be as specific as possible about the kind of job you want. Don't make the reader try to guess what you would be interested in.

Refer the reader to your general qualifications on your enclosed resume or other material. Use as much space as needed to tell your story, but keep it brief and to the point.

In your closing paragraph, ask for action. Ask for an appointment suggesting a time when you will be available. A positive request is harder to ignore than a vague hope.

Sincerely yours,

Your handwritten signature

Your typed name

Enclosure

Your Address
City, State, Zip Code
Date

Mr. John Doe
Director of Human Resources
Acme Service and Merchandising
123 Main Street
Anytown, WY 55555

Dear Mr. Doe:

I learned about your company through the Career Guide that I received through the Office of Career Services at _____ University and would like to inquire about employment opportunities in your management training program. I want to work in retail management and am willing to relocate throughout the eastern United States.

I will receive my Bachelor of Science in Business Administration this May. My interest in business started in Junior Achievement while in high school and developed further through a variety of sales and retail positions during college. My internship with a large department store convinced me to pursue a career in retail. The enclosed resume summarizes my other qualifications. When I researched the top retailers in the east, ABC Retailing emerged as having a strong market position, an excellent training program and a reputation for excellent customer service. In short, you provide the kind of professional retail environment I seek.

Realizing how busy you are, I would appreciate a few minutes of your time. I shall call you during the week of April 21 to discuss employment possibilities. In the meantime, if you need to contact me, my number is 555-555-1234. Please leave a message if I'm not in, and I will return your call as soon as possible. Thank you very much for considering my request.

Sincerely yours,

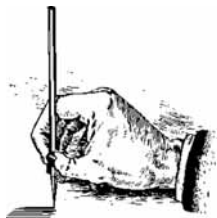
Your handwritten signature

Your typed name

Enclosure

- Leave a 1" margin on all sides and make top and bottom margins as equal as possible.
- Be sure to proof the final version for any typographical or grammatical errors.

Thank You Letter



Your Address
City, State, Zip Code
Date

Name of Interviewer
Title of Interviewer
Company Name
Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. (Interviewer's Last Name):

In the first paragraph, state when and where you had your interview and thank the interviewer for his or her time. Reaffirm your interest in the organization.

In the second paragraph, mention something that particularly appeals to you about working for them and reinforce a point or two in support of your application.

If after the interview you thought of something you wish you had said, the third paragraph of the letter is a good place to bring that up. You can also restate your understanding of the next steps in the hiring process.

In the last paragraph, thank the employer for considering your application and ask for further communication.

Sincerely yours,

Your handwritten signature

Your typed name

Your Address
City, State, Zip Code
Date

Ms. Jane Smith
Director of Human Resources
Modesto Advertising
152 Center Drive
Centertown, PA 55555

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you for meeting with me last Monday, July 28, to discuss the position of copywriter at Modesto Advertising, Inc. I was quite impressed with the enthusiasm you displayed for your company's future and the helpfulness of your office personnel. Learning about Modesto's present media campaign for the Pennsylvania Sausage Company was exciting and demonstrated your creative approach to advertising. Modesto Advertising is a company with which I want to be associated.

Your description of the special qualifications needed for this position was especially interesting. My ability to work under pressure and meet tight deadlines has already been proven in the advertising position I held with Slippery Rock Rocket. As I stated at our meeting, I enjoyed the challenge of a competitive environment in which success is based on achievement.

I would also like to mention that since our meeting, I have received the College Reporter's Award for an article of mine published in the Rocket. This is my first national award, and I am quite encouraged by the approval of my work.

Again, thank you for considering me for the position of copywriter. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Your handwritten signature

Your typed name



Interviewing

For most fields, without an interview, you will not get hired. Effective interviewing skills are a must! There will be others competing with you to obtain the same position. It is critical not only to convince an employer that you can do the job, but that you can do the job better than the other candidates. Following are steps you can take **BEFORE**, **DURING** and **AFTER** an interview that will help place you ahead of the competition and ease your tension about interviewing.

Preparation for the Interview

The time that you spend preparing prior to the interview will be time well spent in your job search process. The following are some tips on what you can do to prepare yourself for an interview.

Understand What Employers Look For

Interview Preparation/Knowledge of Employer:

- Make sure you are knowledgeable about the employer and the industry.

Self-Confidence/Verbal Communication Skills:

- Practice so you can have the ability to listen effectively, verbalize your thoughts clearly and express yourself confidently. Articulate! Articulate! Articulate!

Goals/Motivation:

- Demonstrate an interest in the employer and desire to work hard and succeed.
- Show you have the ability to identify and work toward specific goals.

Qualifications:

- Be able to relate your academic program, skills and/or prior work or internship experience to the needs of an employer.

General Personality:

- Try to exhibit these traits: Poise, Enthusiasm and Ambition.

Work Ethic:

- Are you someone who is willing to accept responsibility and keep commitments?

Research the Employer

It is important that you research an employer so you can relate your abilities to the needs of the employer. Also, by having “done your homework”, it will show an employer that you are interested in the employer and the position. Refer to the section “Researching an Employer” for more information.

Be Prepared to Answer and Ask Questions

Review the lists of questions on pages 19 & 20 in this handbook.

Dress Appropriately/Professionally

Your appearance has an effect on the interviewer’s initial impression of you. Refer to the wardrobe and appearance guidelines on the following page.

Interviewing



Women

- Suit or tailored dress in solid or subtle color, no extreme slits.
- Polished and closed toe shoes, basic dark pumps with medium or low heels.
- Nails subtle if polished, clean and not chipped.
- Make-up should be minimal.
- Clutch or small shoulder bag, choose between an attache or handbag (not both).
- Simple and basic jewelry, one ring per hand with the exception of the wedding set.
- Always wear hosiery and keep color neutral.
- Light perfume, if any.

Men

- Navy, charcoal gray or pin-stripe suit.
- Shined shoes. Tassel loafers, wing tip or lace-up shoes preferred.
- Clean nails.
- Conservative red or navy striped tie, simple and neat.
- Solid white shirt.
- Avoid flashy cuff links, rings or neck chains.
- No earrings of any kind.
- Over the calf dark socks.
- No strong fragrant cologne.

Keep Your Documents Handy

You may wish to carry a briefcase or professional looking notebook with your questions written in advance. It is a good idea to include additional copies of your resume, letters of reference and a quality pen.

Arrive Minimally 10-15 Minutes Early

It is critical that you arrive on time to an interview. Arriving late to an interview not only wastes the interviewer's time, but also sends the message that you are not serious about your job search or about keeping commitments.

During the Interview

During the interview, it is your job to convince the interviewer you are the most qualified applicant for the position. Remember, you only have one chance to make a good first impression!

The following are some tips on what you should do and not do during an interview.

Do

- Shake hands firmly.
- Be enthusiastic, confident, courteous and honest.
- Sit erect and pay attention. Act relaxed.
- Show interest and knowledge in the position and company.
- Convey willingness, ability and compatibility.
- Avoid the use of non-sentences such as umm, uh, ya know, well and yeah.
- Present the best of your experience or qualifications.
- Listen to the questions carefully and give clear, concise and thoughtful answers.
- After the interview, establish a date for your next communication.
- Remember to thank the interviewer for his/her time.

Don't

- Don't call the interviewer by his/her first name unless invited to do so.
- Don't let the employer's casual approach fool you – maintain a professional image.
- Don't dominate the interview or appear arrogant.
- Don't discuss your personal problems or criticize yourself.
- Don't speak or act in a nervous manner.
- Don't ask questions that the interviewer has already answered.
- Don't interrupt when the interviewer is talking.
- Don't bring up negative information about past jobs, co-workers or former employers.
- Don't smoke or chew gum.



Interviewing

Post Interview

Send the interviewer a thank-you letter as soon as possible after the interview (see sample thank you letter). Reiterate your interest in the position and the organization. If you get no response from a thank you letter, or if a date has passed when an employer was to contact you, don't hesitate to phone the organization. Above all, let them know you have a continuing interest in them.



Job Offers

Following are factors you will want to consider when determining whether you will accept a position or not. While salary is an important factor, be sure you weigh your starting salary against the salary potential of the position and against the cost of living of the geographic area where you plan to live. Also, consider these factors:

Job/Employment Related Factors

- Potential for career advancement.
- Work schedule (traditional "9:00 - 5:00" or flexible hours).
- Work environment/attire (formal vs. informal).
- Bonus or commission plans.
- Benefits such as profit sharing, 401K plan, insurance, etc.
- Travel.
- Reputation and stability of employer.
- Size of employer.
- Ability to gain a mentor.
- Type of industry.

Geographic/Life-Style Factors

- Geographic location.
- Climate.
- Social life for singles, couples or family.
- Commute to work.
- Availability of suitable housing.
- Size and type of community(suburban, metropolitan, rural).



traditional Questions

Think of Intelligent Questions to Ask the Interviewer

1. How would you describe a typical day on the job?
2. What do you feel is the greatest challenge in this position?
3. What personal qualities, skills or experience would help someone do well in this position?
4. What are the company's plans for future growth?
5. How do you view this organization as a place to work?
6. What are the typical career paths? What are realistic time frames for advancement?
7. How are employees evaluated and promoted?
8. How much contact and exposure to management would I have?
9. What type of training program do you offer new employees?
10. How much freedom and responsibility is given to new employees?
11. Can you explain the performance review process?
12. What is the retention rate of people in this position?
13. What opportunities exist for professional growth and development?
14. What makes your organization different from your competitors?
15. Are co-op, internship or summer positions available?

Anticipate Answers to Questions an Interviewer May Ask You

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your short-term and long-term career goals, and how do you plan to achieve them?
3. What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
4. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
5. How has your college experience prepared you for a career?
6. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
7. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization?
8. What do you know about our organization?
9. Why do you want to obtain a position at our organization?
10. Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?
11. Why should I hire you?
12. What qualifications do you have that make you think you will be successful?
13. What do you REALLY want to do in life?
14. What do you think it takes to be successful in an organization like ours?
15. How would you define the word, success ?
16. What qualities should a successful manager possess?
17. Do you have geographical preference? Are you willing to relocate? Travel?
18. What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work?



behavioral Questions

Many employers are moving away from a resume-driven style of interviewing to a behavioral format. Behavioral interviews are very probing in nature and are based on the concept of predictable future behavior. In other words, what you have done in the past strongly suggests what you will do in the future. Navigating these interviews successfully requires that you know yourself inside and out. This will require a lot of introspection and soul-searching on your part.

You must be able to:

- Know why you have made the decisions you have made that have brought you to this point in your life.
- Explain and defend your decisions.
- Provide concrete, specific examples of where you have demonstrated the proficiencies employers are seeking.

Example Behavioral Interview Questions

1. How have you demonstrated initiative?
2. How have you motivated yourself to complete an assignment or task that you did not want to do?
3. Think about a difficult boss, professor or other person. What made him or her difficult?
How did you successfully interact with this person?
4. Think about a complex project or assignment you have been given. What approach did you take to complete it?
5. Tell me about the riskiest decision that you have made.
6. Can you tell me about an occasion where you needed to work with a group to get a project done?
7. Describe when you, or a group you were a part of, were in danger of missing a deadline.
What did you do?
8. Tell me about a time when you worked with a person who did things very differently from you.
How did you get the job done?
9. Describe your three greatest accomplishments to date.
10. Tell me about a situation when you had to learn something new in a short time. How did you proceed?
11. Can you tell me about a complex problem that you solved? Describe the process you utilized.
12. Tell me about a challenge that you successfully met.
13. Walk me through a situation where you had to do research and analyze the results for one of your classes.
14. What leadership position have you held? Describe your leadership style?
15. Have you generated any new ideas or suggestions while at school or work?
16. Summarize a situation where you successfully persuaded others to do something or to see your point of view.
17. Give an example of when your persistence had the biggest payoff.
18. Describe a situation where class assignments and work or personal activities conflicted.
How did you prioritize? How did you manage your time? What was the outcome?
19. How have you most constructively dealt with disappointment and turned it into a learning experience?
20. Describe a situation in which you effectively developed a solution to a problem by combining different perspectives or approaches.



give your best effort every day on your New Job

Whether it's your first professional job as a new graduate or a part-time, on-campus job while you're still in school, it is critical to your success to get started on the right foot.

The following tips can help you to excel and avoid some of the common pitfalls of being the new kid on the block.

Be dependable - Dependability can be demonstrated in many ways. For example, don't forget to call if you're sick or going to arrive late. This lets your supervisor know your job is important to you.

Plan to work hard and do more than is expected - Avoid it's not my job thinking. Take the initiative and ask for additional assignments once you've completed yours.

Establish mutually agreed upon goals with your supervisor - Determine what is expected of you from the very beginning. This includes developing clear deadlines for your projects.

Keep your supervisor informed of your progress and ask for regular feedback on your performance - If any assignments are unclear, ask for clarification instead of proceeding in the wrong direction because you are fearful of looking foolish.

Learn the corporate culture of your organization and be willing to adapt to it - Organizations expect their employees to fit in and accept the corporate culture. If you don't understand it, you are more likely to make errors in political etiquette that can hurt your progress. For example, even though your supervisor told you the official starting time is 8:00am, when do most of the staff arrive and begin working? How do you learn what the culture is? Observe co-worker's behaviors and when in doubt ask questions.

Develop and utilize strong interpersonal communication skills, including both oral and written communication - Every job, including technical ones, will require some degree of personal interaction. You can demonstrate your people skills in a number of ways. Look for opportunities to make oral presentations and written reports and do them conscientiously and carefully, soliciting advice and help from others. Learn to listen carefully to be sure you fully understand instructions or requests. Demonstrate patience and sensitivity with others, avoiding public confrontations or complaining. Learn the art of tact when working on a team, which includes being receptive to others' input and knowing when to compromise. With written work, be sure you've proofread it carefully for content, spelling and grammar before submitting it.

Another aspect of good communication skills is developing relationships with your co-workers- Get to know and be known by others in your work environment... your professional growth depends on it. Get out of your office and network with key people. A friendly attitude can also help you tap into your organization's grapevine. Of course, this relationship building does not mean socializing the hours away at the expense of the job duties.

Speaking of duties, master your job tasks - If you're going to move up, you have to prove you understand and can accomplish the basic requirements of your job first.

Be assertive, self-confident and visible - Remember the three "E"s - enthusiasm, energy and excellence. These qualities make a positive impression with employers and co-workers and will serve you well in the future.

As with your organization's culture, be aware of its politics and who has the power (both officially and unofficially) to make things happen - As a newcomer, try to avoid playing politics before you know the ropes. Also, maintain confidentiality and avoid gossip - it can be destructive and puts you in a bad light.



Tools for the Job Search

Preparing and deploying your career plans is a process which requires your full commitment. You have invested thousands of hours to earn your degree. Taking “the path of least resistance” and using a misguided approach to the job search process will only reduce your chances of securing the job you really want!

Organizing an effective job search will assist you in achieving your career goals.

Self-Evaluation

Take time to sit down and evaluate YOU. Before you try to market yourself to potential employers, you need to know something about what you are looking for and what you have to offer. The more you know about your interests, skills, abilities, values, goals and personal qualities, the greater your opportunities are for finding the most suitable position and likelihood of success.

Network

Networking is a job search technique which involves seeking out and interacting with selected individuals who can assist you in getting job interviews and offers. Friends, neighbors, relatives and almost anyone you come in contact with can be in your network.

Researching an Employer

Part of your task in the job search is to find the most suitable position for yourself. You will need to use your research and investigative skills to discover job openings and to prepare for an interview. Be prepared!

Your Resume

A resume is a critical tool in your job search. It is, essentially, an introduction to a summary of your qualifications and experience that communicates enough information to an employer to elicit further interest.

Letter Writing Skills

Hone your letter-writing skills because they are essential to your job search. Excellent cover and thank you letters often make a difference in whether or not you are considered for a position.

Interviewing Skills

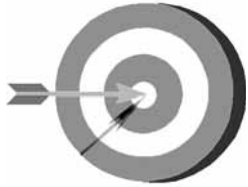
In almost every field, without an interview you will not get a job. It is in this stage of your job search that you convince an employer to hire you.

Determining Which Job Offers

This section outlines the factors you will want to consider when determining whether or not you will accept a position.

Making the Most of Your New Job

This section gives tips that can help you to excel and avoid some of the common pitfalls of being the “new kid on the block.”



Before you attend your school's Career Fair

Target the Top Five Companies of Interest

If possible, get a list of the companies/organizations who will be attending the career fair and plan your strategy for which companies you would like to visit (check with your career services office). Take time to research the five organizations in which you are most interested. Refer to section: "Researching an Employer."

Prepare a Resume

Most employers only want a one page resume. A well-written, error free resume is a must! Make sure you have multiple copies of both your resume and list of references on hand. Refer to section: "Writing an Effective Resume."

Questions for the Employer

Create a list of questions that you would like to ask the employers. Refer to section: "Questions to ask the Employer."

Be Prepared to Answer Questions

Employers will also be asking you questions! You will be expected to think on your feet, so be prepared to answer their questions. Refer to sections: "Traditional Interview Questions" and "Behavioral Interview Questions."

Learn to Sell Yourself

Create a 60 second commercial and practice, practice, practice! Your commercial should include:

- a) Introduction - Introduce yourself, offer a firm hand shake and a resume.
- b) Objective - Tell the employer why you are there and what sort of employment you seek.
- c) Brief summary of your education, experience, strengths, etc.
- d) Reiterate your interest and thank the employer.

Arrive Early/Stay Late

Sometimes arriving early means avoiding long lines. Also, you may find that some of the employers will leave before the career fair has ended and you don't want to miss an opportunity of speaking with a company/organization that you would like to visit with.

A Good First Impression is a Must

Be sure you are wearing professional business attire. If you are in doubt as to what is acceptable, refer to section: "Dress Appropriately" under "Interviewing, Before the Interview."

Summary

- Prioritize those employers with whom you would like to speak.
- Identify the information you hope to obtain.
- Identify personal strengths you would like to convey.
- Specify those goals you hope to achieve by attending the Career Fair.



During the Career Fair

Confidence Speaks Volumes

It is important that you understand that employers view candidates as possible future employees of their organization. Therefore, you need to display enthusiasm, confidence, sincerity and the ability to communicate clearly. Smile, walk confidently with good posture, and make consistent and direct eye contact.

Chart Your Course

Check the room out to determine where employers are located and in what order you plan to visit them. Avoid standing in long lines. If there is a long line to speak with a representative, keep moving and return later.

Introduction

Remember you only have one chance to make a first impression, so... when it's your turn to meet the employer, take a deep breath, smile, shake hands firmly and begin your "60 second" commercial (refer to section "Before the Career Fair"). Be sure to make eye contact with the employer throughout your conversation. Also, watch your tempo and tone when speaking to the employer. A common nervous habit is to speak too quickly and/or too loudly or softly.

Ask Pertinent Questions

- It is a good idea to ask one or two meaningful questions without monopolizing the employer's time. Refer to section: "Formulate Intelligent Questions to Ask the Interviewer."
- At this point, it is generally not a good idea to ask about salary.
- If you are currently an undergraduate, be sure to ask about internship, co-op, summer employment and scholarship opportunities.

Prepare to Follow-Up

When finished make sure to:

- Thank the employer for his/her time.
- Leave a copy of your resume.
- Get a business card, company literature and protocol for follow-up.
- If the employer says they do not have a position in your field, ask for the address of the Personnel Office so you can write. Nearly all employers hire all majors. The person you are talking with may not be aware of all the opportunities offered by the company.

As soon as you walk away from the interview, jot down a few notes about your conversation.

You may want to bring up a few memorable points from your visit to include in your follow-up letter.



After the Career Fair

Create the Competitive Edge

Do not make the mistake of believing that as soon as you have spoken to the last employer and left the fair that you are finished. Follow-up is imperative to making the most of your career fair experience!

Mail Thank You Letters

Mail thank you letters to employers that you meet within one week. Most candidates do not make the effort to send thank you letters; why not give yourself the competitive edge. (See “Sample Thank You Letter”)

Persistence Helps

Observe the follow-up procedures suggested by the employer. Once you have complied with these procedures, if a reasonable amount of time has passed and you have not heard from the employer, it is okay to send a letter to the employer inquiring about the status of your application.

Use Your Career Guide

This career guide is an excellent resource for you to reach those organizations that maybe did not attend the fair or you did not have a chance to meet. Be sure to review carefully the advertisements in your career guide. These advertisements will typically include open positions and contact information. Be sure to write a letter and send a copy of your resume to those organizations.

Summary

You make the most of your career fair experience when it results in subsequent interviews and, ultimately, employment. If you have followed the “before”, “during” and “after” steps, you are probably on your way to landing one or more interviews – and better yet, landing a career!

After reading the previous Career Fair sections, be sure to review this checklist before attending your Career Fair.

- Portfolio/Briefcase (Women should either carry a briefcase or handbag – never both).
- Pen and Notebook.
- At least a dozen resumes.
- Copies of transcript.
- Copies of list of references.
- Appropriate clothing, including comfortable, professional shoes.
- Small breath mints – no gum.
- A Positive Attitude!



Self -Evaluation

worksheet

An important aspect of your job search is understanding yourself. Self-evaluation can help you to determine what you are looking for in a career and what you have to offer. Below are 20 questions developed by executive recruiters to help you know yourself and your career aspirations better. They are also questions that an aggressive recruiter may ask you during an unguarded moment in the interview. Try them on yourself – and be frank; don't try to kid yourself! Review these questions about once every three months. They will help you keep an inventory of your career assets and liabilities.

1. Would I work better in a large or small organization?
2. How important is geographic location to me? To my family?
3. Am I a loner, or do I work better as a member of a group?
4. Am I more comfortable following than leading?
5. Do I analyze better than I execute?
6. Do I prefer to work with people or things?
7. Do I work more successfully under pressure?
8. Am I a good planner or idea person?
9. Am I a good listener?
10. Do I think well on my feet, make decisions well?
11. Do I express myself well orally? In writing?
12. What characteristics do I admire in others?
13. Which function of my job do I perform most effectively?
14. Which function of my job do I perform least effectively?
15. What do I enjoy doing most?
16. In the past six months, what accomplishment has most satisfied me?
17. What have I done to correct my shortcoming?
18. What level of responsibility do I aspire to in five years?
19. What should I be earning then?
20. How will I achieve these levels? What skills do I need?



Networking: the hidden job market

Seeking a career? Most available jobs are never advertised in any print media. So how can you learn about these “hidden” jobs? The answer is networking.

What is Networking

Networking represents a substantial amount of all career placements. Networking means using personal and professional contacts to help make you aware of positions open within a variety of organizations and companies.

Why Network

Through the process of networking you can let people know the following:

- You are actively looking for a job
- Your skills
- What type of career you are seeking

The people in your network may be able to refer you to organizations that are currently hiring or even help you to get interviews or actual job offers.

Who to Network With

As a college student, you may think that you have no contacts who can help, but everyone you know has the potential to be a useful contact in your job search. Be inclusive when you decide who is a member of your network.

Consider starting with:

- Relatives
- Friends and acquaintances
- Classmates, teammates and co-workers
- Supervisors
- Colleagues from professional organizations and religious groups
- Former teachers and faculty

Let these people know your needs; then listen to their ideas and suggestions. Ask them for names of others who might be helpful in your search.

Keep a Filing System

Develop a record keeping or card file system for keeping track of each phone call, letter, interview, follow-up and promise. Without this, you may soon become quite confused.

Act Professional

Networking can be a tremendous boost to a job search, but employing inappropriate techniques can cause you to lose valuable opportunities. As long as you approach people to whom you are referred in a professional and courteous manner, most people will be willing to share information because they like to help others and/or they want to stay “well-connected.” When speaking to a contact to whom you have been referred, mention the name of the person who referred you early in the conversation.



Networking: the hidden job market

Give and Take

Remember that networking is a two-way street. You are developing a network of people to help you, and you should expect in return to help them. You might do the following:

- Send an article on a topic of mutual interest.
- Offer to treat them to lunch.
- Send a simple thank you note to individuals who have been particularly helpful.

When your job search is concluded, let them know that you have obtained a position and thank them once again. Then keep in touch with them periodically. They can be vital to your future professional development.

If you have further questions about networking, contact your Career Services Center.



Researching an employer

Should I Research an Employer?

Yes!

- This enables you to gain some idea of the career potential that exists with a particular employer.
- Helps you to determine geographically if employment location is feasible. Make sure the company has openings in your targeted career field(s).
- To help prepare for an interview with an employer.

Important Info You Need to Know About an Employer

Make sure that you are familiar with the following aspects of an employer.

- Name, age of company and location(s).
- Product lines and/or services.
- Parent company and/or subsidiaries.
- Financial picture of organization, assets, stock picture, recent mergers, etc.
- Major competitors.
- Growth history.
- Career possibilities.
- Deadline for application.



Researching an employer

Where To Find Information About an Employer

Your Handbook

This handbook is an excellent resource for you to reach organizations that are actively recruiting college graduates like yourself. Take time to review carefully the advertisements that these recruiters have placed in your Handbook. These advertisements will typically include open positions and contact information. You can then contact the organization if you desire additional information.

Newspapers

The business section of most newspapers contains numerous articles about local companies and their executives. The public library is a good place to find current newspapers and indexes of newspapers.

Internet

There are numerous places on the Internet that contain employer information.

Researching Companies: This site allows you to search for companies according to a number of search criteria. (www.companiesonline.com)

Researching Graduate Schools and Continuing Education Programs: The Council of Graduate Schools web site includes several resources for students. (www.cgs.com)

Directories

These resources may provide information about an organization's products or services, number of employees, principle executives, history, etc. You should be able to locate the directories listed below in the reference section of a public library.

- Dun & Bradstreet Business Information Reports
- Moody's Manual
- Standard & Poor
- Million Dollar Directory
- MacRae's State Industrial Directory
- Consultants and Consulting Organizations Directory
- Directory of Corporate Affiliations

Trade Associations

These organizations produce membership directories, journals and information briefs.

Find associations that match your career interest, and then write to ask for their membership list, any printed material they offer, if they publish job listings or have a resume referral service and if they have student memberships. Remember, almost every type of field or industry that exists has a trade association affiliation.