

PART II

EMPLOYMENT SEARCH & INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

Overview

The purpose of Part II is to provide students with the personal and technical knowledge and skills needed to market themselves, conduct a job search, complete job applications, prepare an effective resume and cover letter, compile a comprehensive portfolio, successfully interview and negotiate for salary and benefits, and appropriately leave a job.

Marketing Yourself

If you view yourself as the product you most need to sell—focus on your strengths and articulate them in everything you write and say—you will be confident knowing that you are presenting yourself in the most competitive way. It may sound crass to talk about yourself as if you were a box of soap detergent, but learning how to effectively market yourself is the single most important element to a successful job search.

As with the marketing of any product, you need to develop supporting documentation to convince clients that you are worth the investment of their time and energy. The written marketing pieces over which you want to have the greatest amount of control are your personal resume and the cover letters you develop to connect the resume to the positions in which you are interested.

Conducting a successful marketing campaign means learning what the customer wants, needs, and/or expects from a product or service. The following table provides the intangible qualities and skills employers are seeking. You need to convey to employers in your cover letters, on your resumes, and during interviewing opportunities that you have those qualities. Think of specific examples that will help you demonstrate that you have them, examine your class work, involvement with campus or community organizations, or work or volunteer experiences. You need to focus on the job-related skills employers are seeking, many of which are tangible. However, determining ways to describe the intangibles on that list, such as your flexibility, may take some thought.

<i>Top 10 Personal Characteristics Employers Seek in Job Candidates</i>	<i>Skills Employers Want</i> (Scale of 1 to 5 with 5 = extremely important)	
1. Honesty/Integrity	Interpersonal	4.67
2. Motivation/Initiative	Teamwork	4.65
3. Communication Skills	Analytical	4.56
4. Self-confidence	Oral Communication	4.53
5. Flexibility	Flexibility	4.52
6. Interpersonal Skills	Computer	4.32
7. Strong Work Ethic	Written Communication	4.12
8. Teamwork Skills	Leadership	4.08
9. Leadership Skills	Work Experience	4.05
10. Enthusiasm	Internship Experience	3.77
	Coop Ed Experience	3.37
<p><i>Source: Job Outlook '98, National Association of Colleges and Employers, 62 Highland Avenue, Bethlehem, PA 18017-9085, www.jobweb.org</i></p>		

CONDUCTING A JOB SEARCH

This section includes the following: Record Keeping, Researching Prospective Employers, Finding Prospective Employers, Conducting an Internet Job Search, Job Seeking Approaches, Ten Step Job Search Game Plan, and College Career Services.

Record Keeping

Record keeping is important. It helps you to keep track of your job search efforts and allows you to review your responsibility for taking further action in the employment process. Save copies of the letters you send, keep copies of your resume, references, applications, etc. It is a good idea to maintain a notebook, file, and calendar just for your job search. Keep these records and a pencil and notepad by the telephone. If an employer is interested in you, they'll call. If they aren't, you'll usually get a letter in the mail. Program your answering machine with a business-like message. Be prepared!

Job Search Records		
Networking Contacts	Job Prospects	
Person/Title/Telephone Company name and address Referred by _____ Comments Date visited Thank you note/other correspondence sent Copies of any materials submitted	Company name Complete address and telephone number Primary contact/title Secretary's name Referred by _____ Dates and kind of correspondence sent Responses received	Copies of any materials submitted Phone calls Interview dates and comments Research notes, photocopies of articles, etc. Thank you note Business card

Researching Prospective Employers

Job search efforts are more effective if you target or match your goals with the needs of an organization. You must research organizations to find out the needs and employment requirements of the employer. An interview is enhanced by the candidate's knowledge of the employer. Researching an organization will give you an edge compared to the next candidate. By being very familiar with information a company provides about itself on the Internet, or in print form, a potential interviewee can predict possible interview questions. There are companies that will clearly ask, "What do you know about our company?" Researching the organization will give you a ready answer.

What Do You Need to Know About An Employer?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the organization get started? • What is the product or service it provides? • Who are the customers? • What kinds of positions does this firm offer? • What is the hiring process? • Do they use an unusual type of interview? • Where is the company located? • Are there other offices? • How many employees and locations are represented? • Do they have international operations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the company doing – is it competitive? • Is it growing? • Who are its competitors? • How do they compete with their competitors? • What kind of company culture does it have? • Is it strictly a formal/suit environment, or are flexible attire and schedules available? • How are employees supervised and managed? • Does it have a training program or career path information? • What are the priorities in terms of long range organizational goals?
<p><i>Source: Career Services Center, University of Nebraska Career Handbook, UNL Nebraska Union, Lincoln, NE</i></p>	

One of the best ways to find out about employers in your area is to conduct an information-only interview. You may have heard that the XYZ Company is the best employer in town and you can find out why by conducting this type of interview. This interview allows you to ask questions that you cannot ask in a actual employment interview. An example might be: “How much could I expect to be paid as an entry level _____ in this area”?

The information only interview is a great tool for networking as well as getting information about possible employment in the area. Through an information-only interview you have talked with a person that may be in the position to employ you now or in the future. This person may give you names of others to contact in the area. Remember networking is a key component in finding a job.

Conducting An Information-Only Interview	
Preparing for the Interview	The most important thing to remember is that you are in charge of this particular interview and you want to be prepared. Don’t show up and expect the employer to interview you, you are interviewing him/her. Take the steps necessary to make the experience meaningful.
Determine an Employer Who Can Hire You	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the business you want to interview. • Call and ask the name of the manager or supervisor of the department of your career field. You want to interview this person and not the Human Resource Manager. The HR Department will be the last to know if they are planning to hire in this particular department.
Arrange for the Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compose yourself and practice what you want to say. • Call the manager/supervisor of that department and introduce yourself and explain that you would like to do an “information-only interview” with him/her at their convenience. Let them know you only need 20 to 30 minutes of their time. • After you have arranged for the interview prepare questions and prepare yourself.

Conducting An Information-Only Interview

<p>Conduct the Interview</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may be nervous but that too will pass. • Dress as through you were going on a job interview. Look as if you are part of the organization. You want to impress the employer. • Arrive a few minutes early (usually 10 minutes). • Introduce yourself and explain that you are seeking information about careers in the area. • Give some brief information about yourself such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - your career field - your educational background - maybe some personal information but not too much • Now go to your prepared questions. • Watch the clock because you only asked for 20 to 30 minutes. • In closing ask if they know of any company in the area that may have an opening in your career field. Don't ask for a job - remember you are only seeking information! • If they give you a name, ask if when inquiring about this position you can use their name. Remember employers do not like to hire strangers and if you can "name drop" you are no longer a stranger. • Hopefully he/she will ask you for a resume, but you did not bring one along because you were only seeking information. You will be happy to send one. • In closing remember to say "thank you."
<p>Follow-up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you get home set down immediately and write a thank you letter and if they asked for a resume enclose one. • You will want to follow-up with any names that are given to you as this is great networking. • The employer may not have a position at this time, but if you have made a favorable impression and follow-up in a timely fashion, they may keep your name on file. It is not uncommon for a person to be offered a position simply because they did an information-only interview.
<p>Sample Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How long have you worked in this particular career? • When did you start with this company? • What do you like best and least about this career? • What would be a typical day for an entry level person in this career? • Where could I expect to be in this career in 5 years? • What could I expect for a starting wage? • What are typical benefits with companies in the area? • What type of training could I expect? • Should I continue to gain more education? • Do you know of employers in the area seeking employees with my background? <p>The questions could go on and on, so choose only questions that are important to you. You can receive a great deal of valuable information. Don't stop with only one \information only interview, continue with one or two more. You will then have a clear vision of what employment in your career field is like.</p>

Finding Prospective Employers

There are a number of factors to be taken into consideration in finding prospective employers. The following will be covered in this section: (1) the Visible and Hidden Job Markets, (2) Small Employer Job Search, and (3) Local vs. National Job Search.

(1) Visible and Hidden Job Markets

There are generally two job markets to be considered: the visible market includes those jobs that have been publicly announced and the hidden market includes those jobs not advertised or widely publicized. Most job seekers, when presented with these two options, will naturally say they prefer to shop the hidden job market—assuming that it will be the less crowded market. However, since they don't know how to access it, they often find themselves in the congested aisles of the visible job market. It is not necessary to totally concentrate on one market at the expense of another, but you do need to allocate your time accordingly. If you've done your homework, you should know which market employers in your field are most likely to use.

The following list shows the effectiveness of career job search methods based on the results of a United States Department of Labor study.

Hidden Job Market	63%	Want Ads	14%
Employment Agencies	12%	Other	11%

Visible Job Market	Hidden Job Market
<p>Jobs that have been publicly announced.</p> <p>Resources for the Visible Job Market (include but are not limited to the following)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • campus Career Services offices • classified sections of newspapers • job vacancy and resume databases on the Internet • employment listings on employer home pages • classified sections of professional and trade journals • public employment agencies (Job Service or Workforce Development) • private employment agencies • public sector employment offices (state, city, county and federal personnel offices) • professional association placement services • career fairs • job hot lines • bulletin boards 	<p>Jobs not advertised or widely publicized.</p> <p>Resources for the Hidden Job Market (include but are not limited to the following)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • networking (friends, family, former employers, professors) • alumni • informational interviews • mentors – formal and informal • newspaper articles • trade & professional organization directories • industry/trade/agency/professional organization directories • chamber/city directories • telephone books • internship; volunteer work • part time and/or summer employment • free-lance work • temporary agencies • Internet news groups • industry/trade/agency/professional organization websites • teachers and instructors
<p>Direct Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon learning of an opening, whenever possible, place a phone call to the person supervising the position. Introduce yourself and pose a few well phrased, relevant questions. This information will enable you to target your resume and cover letter. • Review your network. Identify and talk to anyone who might have some insight into the organization, or the position (clients, competition, current employee). • Respond to the ad with your targeted materials, complying with the instructions for making application. • Follow up with a phone call to determine (1) that your credentials were received and (2) whether there is any additional information that you can provide to assist them in their decision making process. 	

(2) Small Employer Job Search

Don't Overlook Small Employers! There is a good chance that you'll find your first career job after college with a small employer. More small and medium-sized employers are hiring from the college campus today.

Job growth nationally is occurring in smaller organizations. It may take more effort to identify these organizations since they are not "name brand" or may not have the recognition in the market place as larger, public organizations.

Take a look at what's important to small employers. While grade point average (GPA) is important to many "big" employers, smaller employers tend to place less emphasis on GPA and more on other qualities and characteristics. What small employers really want most are candidates who can get along well with other people, people who can communicate well—candidates who have what large employers are apt to call "interpersonal skills."

Small employers use newspaper advertisements heavily when looking for people to fill professional positions. But by no means are want ads their only source. In searching for jobs with small employers, pay attention to employee referrals and personal contacts. Networking is an important and effective tool in getting a job with a small business. Be sure you're listed with the career services office, as well as with the local and state employment offices. Small employers use these sources regularly. There are plenty of small employers already using the 'net,' so surf it!

Small Employer Job Search			
Characteristics Needed to Secure Employment With Small Businesses (Characteristic cited by % of respondents)		Where Small Employers Find People to Fill Positions (Hiring Methods Average)	
Ability to get along with others	99.6	Newspaper advertisements	4.2
Communication skills	98.4	Employee referrals	3.8
Personality/likeability	95.3	Internal promotion	3.8
Generalist skills	92.2	Personal contacts	3.5
Computer skills	90.7	Local employment agencies	2.8
Interview skills	81.0	College career services offices	2.5
Availability	80.2	Unsolicited applications	2.5
Loyalty	77.1	Executive search firms	2.4
Entrepreneurial skills	74.4	State employment agencies/job services	2.4
Prior experience	80.4	Job fairs	2.2
High GPA	7.0	Internships/Co-op Education	2.1
Gender	5.0	Internet web sites for jobs	1.9
		<i>5-point scale: 1 = Don't use at all 5 = Use a great deal</i>	
<p><i>Source: Job Outlook '98, National Association of Colleges and Employers, 62 Highland Avenue, Bethlehem, PA 18017-9085, www.jobweb.org</i></p>			

(3) Local vs. National Job Search

The sources available for seeking employment locally differ from those available for a national search. The following table provides resources for each type of search.

Local Vs. National Job Search	
Are You Looking for Employment Locally?	Are You Looking for Employment Nationally?
<p>Nebraska is a state filled with large and small employers. Corporate information is likely to be available in your campus library or your career center library. Smaller firms may be found in local publications like the <u>Midlands Business Journal</u>, the <u>Omaha World Herald</u> and other local publications, or in information provided by the organizations to your Career Services Office.</p> <p>You can also find business information by contacting the firms directly and requesting annual reports or contracts, asking faculty, checking with alumni who may work for the organization, and reading corporate home pages on the Internet.</p> <p><i>Local Directories:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * (State) Manufacturer’s Annual Register * (Area) Industrial Purchasing Guide * Membership Rosters – Various manufacturers * (City) Chamber of Commerce Business Directory * (Local) Directory of Business and Ind. Consultants * (Local) Yellow Pages of Telephone Directory * Campus library 	<p>Nationally, if you are trying to identify businesses within a field to target look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Yellow pages * Campus library * Standard and Poor’s Register of Corporations * Publications for potential investors * CD ROM employer information/subscriptions * WWW employer information/subscriptions * Thomas Register of American Manufacturers * College Placement Annual * Directors and Executives * Moody’s Industrials * Other Moody’s Publications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moody’s Public Utilities Moody’s Railroads Moody’s Banks, Insurance, Real Estate, and Investment Trusts * Standard Corporation Records * Dun & Bradstreet * (area) Manual of Securities * Poor’s Register of Directors and Executives * Directories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Press of the Nation The Standard Advertising Register Croners Trade Directory of the World * Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Careers Directory Careers in Nebraska State Government Careers in Nebraska City Government * Research – Research Centers Directory * Journalist/Advertising/Media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quill Careers Edition Literary Marketplace, Press Radio-TV Directory Editor & Publisher International Yearbook * Language Occupations/Jobs Abroad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directory of American Firms Operating Abroad Handbook of Foreign Language Occupations * Law Firms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Martindal-Hubbell Directory * Corporations/Manufacturing Industries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard and Poor’s Corporation Records Fitch’s Corporation Manual * Miscellaneous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educator’s Placement Guide Yearly Catalog of Voluntary Services and Action Opportunities Directory of International Voluntary Organizations

Conducting an Internet Job Search

Pull up a comfy chair, boot up the computer, and click the old icon for the Internet browser. It's time to look for a job!

The information superhighway has brought a wealth of knowledge into the living rooms of America, and its worth as a valuable job-searching tool shouldn't be overlooked. Along with finding information on writing resumes, salaries, relocation, and interview tips, you can research potential employers, peruse want ads by company or career field, submit your resume online, and even take self-assessment tests!

While the Internet certainly doesn't replace face-to-face contact and networking functions, the World Wide Web (WWW) remains an excellent avenue for information. Professionals are using listservs and news groups to talk about issues and trends in a variety of career fields. Tapping into this maze of information can help you network with prospective employers and access job listings, as you explore the hidden job market.

(1) Competitive Advantages of Searching Online

One reason why an Internet job search is effective is that most employers are seeking candidates who have computer acumen, regardless of their majors. As a result of this need for computer-literate employees, many employers post their job opportunities on their organization's web sites or with one of the job-search bulletin boards. This means the job hunter that can conduct an effective electronic job search demonstrates valuable computer skills to potential employers (sometimes even before a formal interview takes place).

In addition, using the Internet to conduct your job search has three advantages:

1. Not everyone is using it. Even though millions of people are online, fewer than half of today's college students use it for job search purposes.
2. You increase your marketability to potential employers by demonstrating your ability to use a rapidly growing and extremely vital component of the computer industry—the Internet.
3. Networking, researching companies, and answering help wanted ads can be completed in a fraction of the time that it used to take someone who relied on more traditional job-search methods.

In the future, the Internet will do more than just list jobs and market services. Career center web sites will become service-based instead of simply being an information provider. There will be more interactive workshops and other educational job-search programs on the WWW so students can gather information, process it, and put it to use.

(2) Getting Connected

It's time to activate your e-mail account! When you subscribe to a listserv (also called a mailing list) postings are sent directly to your e-mail address. Remember to keep a copy of the subscription directions so that you know how to "unsubscribe" when you no longer wish to receive so many e-mail messages!

For news groups, e-mail messages are posted to an electronic bulletin board on the Internet. Mailing lists or listservs are like e-mail magazines that automatically come once you subscribe. Usenet News groups, however, are like an e-mail "movie" that you have to seek out to review each time.

Getting connected is easy, but first you must find the appropriate listservs and news groups. Try contacting professional organizations related to your career field. Many of them sponsor their own electronic discussion groups.

(3) Internet Etiquette

Before you leap into a cyberspace discussion there are a few things that you need to know about "etiquette." It is important to "lurk" on a listserv or news group for at least a week or two before posting a message. "Lurking" will help you identify appropriate topics for the list. Look for a discussion group's FAQ page to find "frequently asked questions" and the answers to them.

Sometimes you will obtain better information if you reply to an individual person on the list rather than to the entire group. Never assume that your individual e-mail messages will be private. There have been many instances when a private message was mistakenly sent to the entire list! To ensure that this doesn't happen, don't reply to the group message. Instead, post a message to the private e-mail address for that person.

Be respectful of the other members. Keep your messages short and to the point. Avoid posting messages in a reply such as: "I agree", "So true!", "I'd like to see that information too." It's a waste of time and space. Capital letters should only be used to emphasize a particular point or subject heading. In general, capital letters are considered as SHOUTING.

When seeking information on the Internet, keep an open mind to all things found there. While you might be specifically looking for a discussion group, if you stumble upon a research paper in your field, don't automatically discount it. In that paper you might find information related to your career interests and the author of the paper might be a viable networking contact!

(4) Types of Internet Services

Internet Services	
Job Seeking	Much of your job search may be able to be done in your home or in your community with any computer connected to the Internet. The World Wide Web (WWW) has opened up a vast number of resources useful to the job seeker.
Job Listing	Job listings are most commonly used. Colleges and universities, professional associations, employers, and commercial on-line vacancy services post listings. Some of these services require membership, which may involve a fee. For most, however, you may view the vacancy and then apply. In some services, you actually complete an on-line application. You may need to do some searching to find the right service for your field—no need to view biology jobs if you want to be an accountant.
Employer Information	Employer information available on the WWW may be more up-to-date than printed materials. Viewing an employer's "home page" will provide information about their products and services and may provide you with other types of information not available elsewhere (such as individual profiles, costs of services, or product developments). Some company home pages also include current openings at their company. Remember that the employer is the author, so other research is necessary to gain a balanced picture of this employer. Also, employers are equal on the WWW, so an impressive home page may be a two-person company and a less impressive page may be one of the Fortune 500.
Community Information	Community Information may help if you decide to relocate. You may be able to learn about a city and its activities, history, or climate and then connect to top employers and relocation services. Some communities are placing their local newspapers on-line, so you could learn about businesses and search for an apartment easily. If you are contemplating relocation for a specific job, it would be wise to use the Internet to help you calculate salary based upon the new location's cost of living. "Show Me the Money" from studentCenter.com or "The Salary Calculator" both help you analyze options.
Search Engines	Search Engines are sites that allow you to do keyword searches. A search for "Nebraska" may bring up "State Government," the "Nebraska Business Assistance Page", "Kimball Nebraska," "UN Central Administration Home Page," and "Joe's Nebraska Home Page." Some searches may be helpful in identifying new resources; others may be entirely unrelated to your job search. By quickly scanning the site you might find a very helpful "tidbit" of information.
Electronic Mail (e-mail)	You can use this method of communication to network with professionals in your chosen field, to contact potential employers, and to transmit your resume electronically. A potential employer won't be concerned with what time you choose to contact them, as they can view the e-mail at their own convenience.

(5) Networking

While the Internet certainly doesn't replace face-to-face contact and networking functions, the World Wide Web (WWW) remains an excellent avenue for information. And all at your fingertips 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!

You can talk to other job seekers and even chat with career counselors. You can ask them for tips on writing an effective electronic resume, leaving them notes on the electronic bulletin boards. This can also help you establish a network of people who were able to give you some "cyber advice" on your job search.

(6) Preparing for Interviews

The Internet can help you prepare for your first round of interviews in three ways.

- First, you are able to gather a lot of information about the business and the department so you can easier answer the question: "What do you know about our business and why do you want to work here?"
- Second, you can use chat rooms, listservs, and bulletin boards to get the valuable resume and interview advice that is needed.
- Third, you can actually practice answering common interview questions in StudentCenter.com's (www.studentcenter.com/) Virtual Interview.

Your job search time could be significantly reduced by learning how to conduct the search electronically.

(7) Strategies for Internet Use

Although the Internet may seem like a magic solution to the hassle of a job search, technology is no substitute for strategy. You still have to figure out what you want to do, for what type of employer, and in what geographic area. You will have to identify your strengths and know how to describe those skills to potential employers. And although your initial contact may come electronically, there is no replacement for personal direct contact. The Internet is just one more tool to add to your list of resources, and if used wisely, can be a great time-saver and open up unknown possibilities.

Your strategy:

- For all resumes you post or transmit on the Internet, be sure to use key words to describe your academic, employment, and extracurricular experiences.
- Follow the rules for scan able resumes so your key words are readable.
- Customize your resume and include a cover letter that tells the employer how you are qualified to do the job.
- Read the application instructions and be careful about routinely giving permission for anything to be done with your information.

(8) Websites

Getting connected is easy, but first you must find the appropriate listservs and news groups. Try contacting professional organizations related to your career field. Many of them sponsor their own electronic discussion groups.

Career Services/Career Planning & Placement Offices

University of Nebraska - Lincoln	http://www.unl.edu/careers
University of Nebraska - Omaha	http://www.unomaha.edu/~career/
University of Nebraska - Kearney	http://www.unk.edu/departments/student_service/career_services/
Central Community College	http://www.cccneb.edu
Metropolitan Community College	http://www.omahacareernetwork.org
Mid Plains Community College	http://www.mpcca.ne.us
Northeast Community College	alpha.necc.cc.ne.us
Southeast Community College	http://www.college.sccm.cc.ne.us
Western Nebraska Community College	http://www.haminal.wncc.cc.ne.us
Chadron State College	http://www.csc.edu
Peru State College	http://www.peru.edu
Wayne State College	http://www.wsc.edu

Community Information Websites:

Omaha Career Link <http://www.omaha.org/careerlink.html>
Lincoln On-Line <http://www.lincoln.inetnebr.com>
Kearney <http://www.unk.edu/kearney.kearney.html>

Vacancy Listings:

State of Nebraska Job Listings <http://www.state.ne.us/personnel/per.html>
Online Career Center <http://www.occ.com>
America's Job Bank <http://www.ajb.dni.us>
Career Mosaic <http://www.service.com/cm/cml.html>
Monster Board <http://www.monster.com/home.html>
Nation Job Network <http://www.nationjob.com>
Omaha Employment Link <http://www.careerlink.org>
<http://www.omaha.com>
<http://www.accessomaha.com>
<http://www.ne.jobsearch.org>

Employer Information:

Job Web <http://www.jobweb.org/>
FedWorld <http://www.fedworld.gov/>
Yahoo! <http://www.yahoo.com/>
Information Site <http://www.jobhuntersbible.com/>
Self-Inventory <http://www.washingtonpost.com/parachute>
<http://www.2h.com>
<http://www.keirsev.com>
<http://www.studentcenter.com>

Mega-Lists:

Catapult <http://www.jobweb.org/catapult/catapult.htm>
Job Hunt <http://www.job-hunt.org/>
Job Search <http://www.fedworld.gov>
<http://www.ipa.com>
<http://www.ajb.dni.us>
<http://www.careermag.com>
<http://www.saludos.com> (Hispanic)

Job Seeking Approaches

Research and your own personal style will determine which of the following job seeking approach will be the most comfortable and effect for you. Statistically, the most successful approach is networking. The following table provides a brief summary of a variety of approaches.

Job Seeking Approaches	
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an exhaustive list of people you know—include acquaintances from the various roles that you play (student, relative, friend, former/present employers, neighbor, member). • Contact these people and let them know that you will be graduating soon, specifically what your skills are and the type of position/organization that you are seeking. • Ask if they can suggest someone for you to talk to who has a connection with the industry or position that you have identified. If you have a particular organization in mind, ask if they know anyone within that organization. • Ask them to keep you in mind should they hear of any positions or prospects and offer to send them a copy of your resume. • Using a database or a simple index card file, develop a prospect list. Systematically contact each of the individuals to whom you have been referred, mentioning the referring party’s name if you have been given permission to do so. • Ask each of them for a referral and ask them to keep you in mind should they hear of anything. • Offer to send your resume. • Keep your prospect list updated and accurate.
Mail Contact	<p>Effective research will enable you to target your materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a targeted resume and individualized cover letter, clearly demonstrating the fit between your skills and abilities and employer needs. • If you do not receive a response within a week to 10 days, follow up with a phone call.
Telephone Contact	<p>Before you make a call, prepare a script. Write down everything that you’d like to say.</p> <p><i>A telephone contact is a brief statement that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes who you are • Tells the position you want • Tells what you have to offer • Meets the 3 major employer expectations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appearance – looks and sounds like the kind of person who can do the job. 2. Dependability – Tells the employer that you can be depended on. 3. Skills – Convinces the employer that you can do the job. • Outlines how you may benefit the organization (3 strengths) • Tries to set up a meeting <p><i>Advantages of using the telephone:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saves you time and money • Uncovers hidden job leads • Creates a positive impression with employers • Puts you in contact with the person doing the hiring • Gets you more interviews!

Job Seeking Approaches

<p>Telephone Contact (continued)</p>	<p><i>Parts of the telephone conversation:</i></p> <p><i>Target</i> – Person who would supervise you <i>Introduction</i> – Who you are <i>Position</i> – What you want to do <i>Hook</i> – What you have to offer <i>Clincher</i> – Your key strengths (state 3 of your strengths) <i>Goal</i> – To get an interview or referral</p> <p><i>Telephone Contact Goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to the hiring authority • Present your entire script without interruption • Get an interview! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask three times: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For the position you want 2. To discuss future openings 3. For information about the organization - If no interview, get a referral - Set up a date and time to call back <p><i>The Three Magic Questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you know of any openings for a person with my skills? 2. Do you know of anyone else who might know of an opening? 3. Do you know someone who knows lots of people?
<p>In-Person Contact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress appropriately, resume in hand and a specific contact person in mind. • If the individual you need to see is busy, ask if you may wait. If this is not acceptable, leave your resume and call back in a few days. • Don't take personally an individual's unwillingness to see you on the spot.

10 Step Job Search Game Plan

Design a game plan. Each step of your job search must be firmly linked to the next, resulting in a game plan that puts you in control of your job search.

1. *Focusing your job search – assessment*
 - * Assessing skills, interests, aptitudes and characteristics
 - * Analyzing past positions and accomplishments
 - * Evaluating current job market and career alternatives
2. *Writing a professional resume*
 - * Defining your objective
 - * Designing a chronological or chrono-functional resume
 - * Writing accomplishment statements with results
3. *Preparing letters for results*
 - * Writing cover letter and search firm letters
4. *Using references effectively*
 - * Writing reference letters
 - * Preparing your references for potential reference calls
5. *Networking into the hidden job market*
 - * Identifying where 80% of jobs are found
 - * Developing a contact list
 - * Designing a personal marketing plan
 - * Targeting researching companies
6. *Using search firms and agencies with caution*
 - * Learning to research and select the pros
7. *Identifying ad response sources*
 - * Learning to “telemarket” yourself
 - * Developing telemarketing scripts
8. *Interviewing successfully*
 - * Understanding the dynamics of the interview
 - * Reviewing dos and don’ts in the interview
 - * Identifying the interviewer’s hidden agenda
 - * Developing proper responses to tough questions
 - * Videotaping practice interviews
9. *Negotiating professionally*
 - * Utilizing the total system for maximum results
 - * Developing negotiating strategies
 - * Evaluating multiple offers
10. *Achieving placement*
 - * Accepting a better job, with a better company
 - * Designing a letter of understanding
 - * Getting off to a good start in your new job

The decision to work or not to work is definitely yours—but if you choose to work while you are in college, utilize all resources available to you, especially those at your Career Services Center or Student Employment Office. Trained and knowledgeable professionals in these offices can make your job search easier. The following chart provides a brief summary of the career services offered on many college campuses.

College Career Services	
Career Counseling	Counselors can assist you in discovering which career is right for you, increase your knowledge of career opportunities, employment trends, and salary ranges. Find out what talents and skills you have to offer employers in today’s job market.
Career Seminars/ Job Search Assistance	Seminars on a wide range of career topics are scheduled throughout the year. Develop and practice interviewing skills. Learn appropriate questions to ask your interviewer. Receive individual job search assistance/counseling on resume writing, interviewing and other aspects of the job search.
On-Campus Interviewing	<p>Employers may conduct employee interviews on campus for full-time and part-time positions. Register in advance as interviews are by appointment only. Your goal for such an interview is to advance to the next level in the employer’s job selection process, which could include a follow-up interview via phone or at the employer’s work site.</p> <p>On-Campus Interviewing Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Thoroughly research the firm:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -review printed and online company information -review information about the specific position(s) for which you are qualified and/ or have the greatest interest • <i>talk with alumni who might be willing to share some details about their work products and services, key markets, corporate culture, etc.</i> • <i>Practice your interviewing skills:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -rehearse answers to sample interview questions, but avoid sounding over-rehearsed -attend special career services workshops about job interviewing -talk with friends about their interviewing experiences -conduct a “mock” interview with your career counselor • <i>Wear appropriate interview attire</i> • <i>Evaluate your interviewer: Is he/she a technical or nontechnical person? Respond accordingly with language that matches the interviewer’s orientation</i> • <i>Be prepared for the interviewing method (traditional or behavioral)</i> • <i>“Close the sale.” Unless the position and your skills are a complete mismatch, convince the employer that you are interested in working for the firm</i> • <i>Collect business cards; jot down key notes on the backs</i> • <i>Write follow-up letters of appreciation, and re-close the sale</i>
Current Job Listings	Job listings are received daily and kept on file. Examine the up-to-date listing of jobs in the area. You may be able to access America’s Job Bank and/or receive job bulletins and job listings. Use on-line referral system if available.
Referrals to Employers	Resumes of applicants may be sent to employers. You must register to take advantage of this service.
Interest Assessment	A variety of instruments are available to assist you in making a career choice. Utilize user-friendly computer systems such as NCIS, CHOICES, DISCOVERY and SIGI, interest inventories and personality inventories.
Internships/ Cooperative Education	Hands-on experience in your major field of study can be arranged. Gain career-related experience while attending school.

College Career Services

<p>Career and Job Fairs</p>	<p>Job information fairs take place throughout the year. Meet with representatives from business, government, social service, science and technology and many other career fields. Ask questions about career and future career opportunities as well as the skills and training employers are seeking. These events allow employers to collect job-search paperwork from a significant number of candidates, talk with people long enough to develop some first impressions, and distribute information about their firms. Career and Job Fair Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wear appropriate interview attire.</i> • <i>Take several copies of a strong “general” resume with you to give to employers you may not have researched.</i> • <i>Take several “targeted” resumes, cover letters, and/or academic summary sheets to give to the employers you have researched and want to impress.</i> • <i>Use a firm handshake and have ready a 30- to 45-second personal introduction highlighting your academic and career interests.</i> • <i>Start with a few employers who interest you but who are not among your top choices, to gain confidence.</i> • <i>Approach your top choices when you are feel focused, articulate and have a high energy level.</i> • <i>Ask employers for their business cards</i> • <i>Jot down key notes from each conversation on the backs of those cards.</i> • <i>Send follow-up thank-you letters to the employers you most want to impress, and be sure to include key points from your notes.</i>
<p>Employer Information Sessions</p>	<p>Employers view these as important pre-interview programs. They are designed to let recruiters meet interviewees and other interested students and provide a substantial amount of information about their companies. Employer Information Session Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Do basic research on the company. Visit the company’s web site, read any materials sent to you in advance, and review the company literature on file in your career services.</i> • <i>Attend sessions whenever you can, and arrive on time. If you can’t attend a session, contact the recruiter in advance to let him or her know.</i> • <i>Unless the employer specifies otherwise, wear appropriate interview attire to the session.</i> • <i>Use an adapted version of the 30- to 45- second personal introduction you developed for the career fair.</i> • <i>Find someone in the crowd to tell you who people are and what they do, and strategize how you can gain the most from the event.</i> • <i>Take along a few copies of your resume, just in case some representatives ask to see it.</i> • <i>Collect business cards; jot down key notes on the backs of the cards.</i> • <i>Listen to the presentation, and reflect on your own academic training and experiences.</i> • <i>Begin formulating some of the interview questions you might be asked.</i> • <i>Practice your responses to those questions.</i>
<p>Employer Information Library</p>	<p>Employer information is available for you to review. Become knowledgeable! Obtain employer information from business files, videos and employer directories. Knowledge about your interviewer gives you a major advantage.</p>
<p>Alumni Career Networks</p>	<p>Visit with alumni who have volunteered to provide career-related information to currently enrolled students or fellow alumni. These networks can help you explore and clarify your career options, conduct informational interviews, seek internship and externship opportunities, make valuable connections for employment. These networks are computerized, allowing you to query the data bases for information such as academic majors, occupational interests, and geographic locations.</p>

THE EMPLOYMENT PROCESS

The employment process includes the development of a resume, creation of a portfolio (optional), writing of a cover letter, completion of employment applications, and preparation for employment interviews.

Resume

In today's competitive job market, companies are deluged with resumes and cover letters for every opening. In less than 20 seconds your resume needs to grab the attention of the employer creating a desire to interview you. Therefore your resume should focus on your accomplishments and contributions with particular emphasis on your strengths.

(1) Employers Use Resumes to:

- Screen applicants and determine who to interview.
- Develop interview questions.
- Judge your communication skills.
- Remind them of your qualifications.

(2) What Employers Look For

Employers are looking for your ability to do the job. In your resume you want to demonstrate relevant experience with specific concrete information. Personal attributes employers are looking for include:

- Initiative and self motivation
- High energy level
- Ability to communicate effectively
- Leadership potential
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Critical thinking and reasoning abilities
- Willingness to assume responsibility
- Capacity to work as a team player
- Skill in dealing with stress
- Persistence

As you begin to work on your resume you will want to inventory your experiences in the following areas:

- Academic background
- All employment including summer jobs
- Internships/cooperative education experiences
- Extracurricular activities
- Volunteer work

Consider the skills you developed in each experience. When you write your resume you will want to highlight the most significant and relevant features of each experience. The key will be writing accomplishment oriented statements introduced with action verbs. Use concise, direct language that targets your achievements and skills to each employer's needs.

(3) Elements of a Resume

The following chart lists the six major elements of most professional resumes.

Elements of a Resume	
Heading	<p>Include name, address, e-mail address, and phone number. Example:</p> <p>JULIE DELP 123 Lynwood Avenue Manchester, Nebraska 54105 (888) 555-5555 jdelp@alo.net</p>
Objective or Summary of Qualifications	<p>An objective should concisely describe your immediate employment goal and is an essential component of the resume. You may choose to also incorporate the objective statement into your cover letter. In the objective, state your employment goal and what you have to offer the employer.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Example: To obtain a position in financial services using well-developed research, analytical and quantitative skills.</p> <p>A summary of qualifications describes your skills and experience in relation to your career interest. A summary of qualifications offers you the opportunity to highlight your most important assets.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Example: Researched and wrote detailed reports in city government position. Addressed student concerns as elected Student Assembly representative.</p>
Education	<p>List institutions attended and locations, degrees and dates received, major and areas of concentration. If you are in college or are a college graduate it is not necessary to list your high school, especially if you graduated more than 10 years ago. This is also a good place to list honor societies, dean list, merit scholarships and academic awards. You can also list courses relevant to the employer's needs, if your major does not directly relate to your employment goal.</p>
Work Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include the position you held, the name of the organization, city and state, and months and year of employment. • Summarize what you accomplished that supports the position you are applying for keeping in mind the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep statements brief and to the point (use phrases) • Focus on accomplishments • Show quantitative or otherwise tangible results • Avoid the use of the "I" • Use action verbs such as "supervised" or "Developed" • Eliminate positions held for less than 4 months • Round off dates months and years (January 1995 - February 1999) <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Example: CGI, INC., Freson, NE Product Manager, 5/99 to present</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed product launch of the new networking software product. • Directed all marketing activities, including direct mail campaign, trade show demonstrations, advertising, and channel marketing programs. • Increased sales by 25% within six months of launch.
Special Skills	<p>List computer languages and programs, knowledge of foreign languages, laboratory and research skills, analytical skills, and management skills not listed elsewhere.</p>
References	<p>Most resumes will state: "Available upon request" or "Enclosed". Some employers say it is not necessary to state either as they already know you will supply references if requested.</p>

(4) Resume Formats

The two basic types of resumes are chronological and functional. Some resumes use features of both and are called combination resumes. Your resume should reflect your goals and unique background, so choose the type that best describes your accomplishments and is most likely to lead to an interview.

Resume Formats	
Chronological Resume (most common)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Focuses on employment history and education * Best for individuals with a solid work history * Effective when staying in the same field * Format most seen by employers * Useful when moving up the career ladder * Appropriate for recent college graduates
Functional Resume (least common)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Effective when changing fields of work * Effective when reentering the work place * Highlights your skills * Best for individuals with a weak employment history or frequent job changes * If included, employment and education are listed briefly * Least preferred by employers
Chrono-Functional Resume (combination)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Merges elements of functional and chronological resumes * An increasingly popular choice * Highlights marketable skills and abilities at the top of the resume * Allows for detailed description of employment and educational background * Preferred by employers over the functional resume

(5) Resume Tips

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Visual effect is important * Solid content * Professional appearance * Be positive * Quantify when possible * Employ white space * Use action verbs (see next page)) * Show results when possible * Print on good quality paper
(20 lb, cotton bond not typing paper) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Accuracy is critical * PROOFREAD * Spell check * Be truthful * Do not give reasons for changing employers * Do not offer any negative information * Do not state salary requirements |
|---|--|

ACTION VERBS

When describing your job duties and responsibilities it is best to use action verbs. This lets the employer know you were actually performing a job duty. Use past tense for previous experiences; present tense for current positions.

accommodated	delegated	initiated	reconciled
accumulated	delivered	inspected	recorded
achieved	demonstrated	installed	rectified
acquired	designed	instituted	redesigned
acted (as)	developed	instructed	reduced
adapted	devised	integrated	referred
addressed	devoted	interacted	refined
adjusted	diagramed	interfaced	registered
administered	directed	interpreted	regulated
advised	distinguished	interpreted	reinforced
allocated	documented	interviewed	reorganized
amended	doubled, tripled	introduced	reported
analyzed	drafted	invented	represented
appointed	earned	investigated	researched
approved	edited	launched	resolved
arranged	eliminated	maintained	restructured
assembled	employed	managed	revised
assessed	encouraged	marketed	revitalized
assisted	enforced	minimized	scheduled
assumed	engineered	modernized	screened
attained	enhanced	modified	searched
attracted	enriched	motivated	secured
audited	ensured	negotiated	selected
augmented	established	observed	served
authored	evaluated	obtained	served
automated	executed	operated	simplified
averted	exhibited	orchestrated	sold
broadened	expanded	organized	solicited
budgeted	expedited	oriented	solved
calculated	explored	originated	stimulated
centralized	extracted	participated	strategized
clarified	facilitated	performed	streamlined
collaborated	finalized	persisted	strengthened
collected	fine-tuned	persuaded	submitted
combined	forecasted	planned	suggested
communicated	formulated	practiced	summarized
compiled	founded	predicted	summarized
compiled	framed	prepared	supervised
completed	gathered	presented	supported
completed	generated	presided	surpassed
composed	governed	prevented	surveyed
composed	guided	processed	systematized
computed	highlighted	produced	traced
conceived	hired	programmed	traded
conceptualized	identified	projected	trained
conducted	illustrated	promoted	transferred
contributed	implemented	proposed	transmitted
converted	improved	provided	updated
coordinated	improvised	publicized	upgrade
corresponded	incorporated	published	validated
counseled	increased	quantified	verified
created	influenced	recognized	

(6) Internet Resumes

The newest form of job hunting involves posting your resume on the Internet. Technology has given us the ability to reach many employers by simply posting our resume on the Internet. Give it a try and see what happens.

Recommendations for posting your resume on line.

- No line of text should be longer than 65 characters, including spaces
- Pay close attention to choice of words. Employers who search for on-line resumes typically use *key word search* programs. If your resume does not include these key words, it will not be retrieved.
- Remember that your information will be available to anyone who wants to see it, so avoid confidential information.

When writing a *scannable resume* remember.

- Specify skills using nouns instead of verbs. For example, “responsible for training...” should be worded, “trained new employees.”
- Use lots of white space to aid the computer in recognizing the information
- Avoid underlining, bold facing, varied fonts, or other fancy formatting options. These can result in misread information and potentially could cost you an interview.
- Use words that everyone will be able to recognize.
- Do not fold or staple a resume that will be scanned.

You may have to construct a resume specifically-designed for scanning or on-line use, as the traditional resume formats will not scan well. The underlining, bolding, etc. used to attract attention can be misread information when a resume is scanned. The alternate resume will contain the same information as your traditional resume but it will be worded differently and the format will be different.

(7) Sample Resumes

Sample Chronological and Chrono-Functional Resumes are provided on the following pages.

Sample Chronological Resume

JANE E. DOE

Current Address:
1812 27th Street, Apt #1
Columbus, Nebraska 68601
(402) 562-1875

Permanent Address:
RR 3 Box 35
Farewell, Nebraska 68722
(308) 345-1234

OBJECTIVE: To obtain a position in the accounting profession where I can apply the skills I have learned.

EDUCATION: Central Community, Columbus, Nebraska
Courses:
Principle of Accounting I & II
Personal & Business Income Tax
Business Communications
Computerized Accounting
Computerized Farm Accounting I & II
Microcomputer Fundamentals
Spreadsheets I & II
Payroll Accounting
Farm Accounting
Graduation date - December 1999

Farewell Central High School, Farewell, Nebraska
Graduation date - May 1997

WORK EXPERIENCE: Central Community College, Columbus, NE
September 1998 to present
Position: Tutor/Learning Assistance Aide
Duties/Responsibilities:
Assist students with homework
Supervise Learning Center when instructors are in class

Pet Care Specialists, Columbus, Nebraska
September 1997 to present
Position: Receptionist/Technician
Duties/Responsibilities:
Greet clients and patients
Answer phone
Schedule appointments
File client folders
Compute clients' bills
Prepare deposits
Assist veterinarians with surgery and care of animals

Go Mart, Farewell, Nebraska
August 1995 to August 1997
Position: Cashier/Clerk
Duties/Responsibilities:
Greet customers
Use cash register and credit card machine
Stock grocery shelves and coolers

Jane E. Doe

**WORK
EXPERIENCES**

Various Neighbors (14 families), Farewell, Nebraska
January 1991 to July 1998
Position: Child Care/Nanny
Duties/Responsibilities:
 Care for up to four children at a time
 Cook
 Clean
 Laundry

**VOLUNTEER
EXPERIENCE**

Farewell Public Schools, Farewell, Nebraska
January 1995 to May 1995 and August 1995 to May 1996
Position: Office Aide
Duties/Responsibilities:
 Answer phone
 Make copies
 Design activity programs
 Address and stuff envelopes
 Prepare deposits

**HONORS/
ACHIEVEMENTS**

President's college honor roll
Phi Theta Kappa - served as secretary
Valedictorian of high school class
Presidential Academic Fitness Award
US Marine Corps Scholastic Excellence Award
Math and Science Award
4 year high school honor roll

REFERENCES

Enclosed

Jane E. Doe

REFERENCES

Julie Arens
Veterinarian/Co-worker
1969 34th Avenue
Columbus, Nebraska 68601
(402) 562-1245

Vicki Vannier
High School Accounting Instructor
PO Box 72
Farewell, Nebraska 68722
(308) 652-2201

Duane Waddle
College Agriculture Instructor
PO Box 1027
Columbus, Nebraska 68601
(402) 562-1259

Sample Chrono-functional (combination) Resume

JANE E. DOE
PO Box 1027
Columbus, Nebraska 68601-1027
(402) 562-1298

CAREER OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position that utilizes my management and accounting experience and educational background.

QUALIFICATIONS

MANAGERIAL CAPACITY

- * Direct supervision of 10-15 management staff and overall supervision of 700 field employees.
- * Second in charge of the District Office. Oversaw general office operations.
- * Took corrective actions to ensure quality control of workload with budgetary restraints and scheduled deadlines.
- * Ensured compliance with EEO & AA principles in staff employment, promotion, and development.

ACCOUNTING SKILLS

- * Accounts receivable and payable, general ledger, payroll, and taxes, both computerized and manually.
- * Daily cash logs and bank deposits.
- * Daily balancing of receipts for hotel-restaurant-lounge-gift shop. Ran room and tax on guest portfolios.
- * Public utility power bills and verification summaries.

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

- * Determined assignment directives for staff and prepared job materials for each.
- * Production coordination-shipping, receiving, inventory control, and order processing.
- * Designed general office procedures
- * Analyzed computer summaries
- * Created spreadsheets to aid in correlation of data and research projects.
- * Controlled lead files and provided necessary follow-up
- * Correlated data for Cooperative board meetings.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- * Conducted individual and group training to teach supervisory techniques and administrative responsibilities.
- * Cultivated public awareness
- * Customer relations and complaint solving
- * Vendor liaison
- * Answered phones and directed calls.
- * Reservations
- * Public utility language

PROFESSIONAL CREATIVE IDEAS

- * Created manual summaries for management updates when software failed.
- * Implemented importing and exporting program, shipping, receiving, customs procedures and product development.
- * Developed marketing video-production, copy, and audio
- * Developed print advertising-layouts, photos, and copy

ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS:

- * Computers-IBM PC, Apple, DEC hardware/Microvax equipment.
- * Lotus 123 and Surpass Spreadsheets, MBA Accounting, Word, and WordPerfect
- * Knowledge of general office machines and procedures

Jane E. Doe

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Central Community College, Columbus, Nebraska

Major: Accounting

Major Courses Completed:

Principles of Accounting I & II

Spreadsheets for Accounting - Lotus 123

Written Communications I

Introduction to Microcomputers

Cooperative Education

PROFESSIONAL SEMINARS

Management-By-Objective

EEO & AA Compliance Time Management

Supervisory Techniques

EMPLOYMENT

Related Work Experience:

Administrative Assistant; Nebraska Electric G & T Cooperative, Columbus, NE

January 1991 to Present

Field Operations Manager; U.S. Dept. Of Commerce/Bureau of the Census, Grand Island, NE

March 1988 to January 1990

Administrative Assistant; Shell Valley Fiberglass, Inc., Platte Center, NE

May 1986 to June 1987

Auditor/Desk Clerk; Best Western - Regency West, Omaha, NE, January to December 1986

General Work Experience:

Carpject Needle Inspector; Becton-Dickinson, Columbus, NE; 1990

Bartender/Cocktail Waitress:

Backwoods Lounge, Columbus, NE; 1987 - 1991

Quart House Lounge, Columbus, NE; 1966 - 1987

Lark Lounge, Columbus, NE; 1984 - 1986

REFERENCES

Available upon request

Portfolio

In today's competitive job market, a professional portfolio is an effective way to showcase relevant knowledge and specific skills to an employer. Along with a resume, a portfolio should be designed to provide further evidence of professional qualities and abilities.

(1) Purpose of a Portfolio

The portfolio is an excellent tool to market capabilities to an employer in a job interview. In addition, portfolios can be created to negotiate promotions and raises or to apply for bonuses, scholarships or grants. A professional portfolio:

- ◆ illustrates goals and development over time.
- ◆ shows a record of professional development by outlining achievements on the job or in the classroom.

The process of developing a portfolio can be a real morale and self-esteem builder. By documenting the quality and quantity of professional development, individuals ultimately develop a framework for self-assessment and can more clearly evaluate what they have to offer an employer. In essence, portfolios provide a foundation for monitoring career-long self-directed goals.

(2) Benefits of a Portfolio

Creating a professional portfolio provides the following benefits:

- ◆ Provides room for details that do not fit on the resume or helps maximize assets if you have little work experience.
- ◆ Assists in effectively preparing for a job interview.
- ◆ Requires the individual to assess their strengths and how those strengths benefit an employer.
- ◆ Allows an individual to gain a competitive edge and distinguishes them from other candidate.
- ◆ Provides interviewers with a tangible illustration of relevant skills.
- ◆ Communicates a high level of preparation to the employer.

Electronic portfolios use interactive multimedia to increase the range and type of materials that can be included as evidence of learning. Advantages of electronic portfolios include:

- ◆ Information can be easily stored digitally on a computer hard drive or other media.
- ◆ Electronic information takes up very little physical space and is easily accessed.
- ◆ Text, graphics, animation, sound and video can be easily added.
- ◆ Valuable computer skills can be gained while creating or editing the portfolio.

(3) Creating a Portfolio

Following completion of the self-assessment and the gathering of required materials, an individual is ready to compile the information in an organized and professional manner. The portfolio should be arranged to show how specific abilities relate to the employers' needs. A well organized portfolio is indicative of a serious job seeker.

The following tips are provided to assist in compiling the portfolio:

- ◆ Arrange items in a loose leaf binder using sheet protectors.
- ◆ Create a table of contents.
- ◆ Be consistent with font type, headings and placement of items (keep similar items together).
- ◆ Place the most important and relevant materials closer to the front of the portfolio.
- ◆ Use index tabs and/or title pages to divide and label each section.
- ◆ Omit page numbers to make it easier to add and move items around.
- ◆ Use copies of all items (keep the master copy of all items).
- ◆ Above all else, keep it simple but demand that it looks professional and is error free.

The following documents may be included in the portfolio. Some documents may not apply to everyone and some

individuals may think of other information they would like to include. The key is to include anything that is reflective of your ability to benefit the employer:

Portfolio Documents	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resume or Vitae (even if this has already been provided to the employer) • An official copy of college transcripts • A list of experiences that do not fit on the resume • Evidence of professional affiliations • Writing samples • Letters of recommendation or thanks from previous employers, campus organization advisors, or leaders of volunteer projects in which you have been involved • Evidence of specific skills (e.g., class projects, items produced during internship or co- op experience) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of technical or computer skills that would be beneficial to the employer • A list of conferences and workshops attended and a description of each • List of extracurricular activities and/or community service projects • Certificates of special awards (athletics, honor roll, scholarship, academics) • An outline of short-term and long-term goals • Additional documents that reflect your ability to benefit the employer
Additional Portfolio Inclusions for Specific Majors:	
<p style="text-align: center;">Education Majors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of teaching philosophy • Teaching honors/awards • Student teaching evaluations • Videotape of your teaching • Teaching tools you have used • Sample syllabi and/or lesson plans • Innovations in the classroom (e.g., use of new technology) 	<p style="text-align: center;">The Arts (Performance or Design)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual work samples or photos of them • Video/audio tape of work • Course descriptions for specific classes or workshops • List of mastered competencies • A photograph of yourself • Favorable reviews or excerpts of reviews

(4) Presenting Your Portfolio to An Employer

An employer should know about a portfolio from the very beginning of the job search and interview.

Job Search: The portfolio should be mentioned in the reference section of the resume and in the cover letter.

Interview:

- ◆ Always bring the portfolio to interviews.
- ◆ Look for opportune moments to use the portfolio to address employer questions.
- ◆ Use the portfolio to “speak” when telling the employer about strengths and skills. (The portfolio does not forget anything under pressure!).
- ◆ If unable to show portfolio to employer in detail during the interview, offer to send copies of items in your portfolio to the employer.

Once a job offer has been accepted, remember to keep the portfolio current. One way is to create a portfolio file to save materials regarding written samples, projects and ideas which brought about positive results. Anything saved and organized now will help prepare for a future job search!

Cover Letter

A cover letter is your sales pitch to a prospective employer. Your aim is to stand out from the other job seekers in a positive way. The cover letter is the place to demonstrate why your skills and background make a perfect match for the position for which you are applying. It is a little window into your personality and can suggest to an employer, “I’d like to interview this person; they sound like someone I’d like to get to know better.” Your cover letter should answer the question “Why should I hire you?”

Think of the cover letter as a bridge between the employer’s needs and your abilities. Your objective, in addition to building that bridge, is to stimulate interest in your background and qualifications. A good cover letter expands upon the resume and brings it to life. The purposes of a cover letter are to: introduce you and your resume, indicate your knowledge and interest in a specific position, explain briefly what you have to offer, and request an interview.

(1) Guidelines for Writing a Cover Letter

Great cover letters do not just happen, they require time, planning and effort. However, all your hard work will pay off when your cover letter places you ahead of the competition.

Rules to Follow	Things to Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Always mail a cover letter with a resume ◆ Paper and envelope should match the resume ◆ Whenever possible, address your letter to an individual ◆ Do not restate your resume ◆ Answer the skills and qualifications asked for in the job announcement ◆ Try not to begin a paragraph with “I” ◆ Do not overuse the word “I” in the body of the letter ◆ Use proper English, avoid slang and abbreviations ◆ Use action verbs such as “designed” or “implemented” ◆ Provide all requested information ◆ Personalize each letter ◆ Respond to the needs of the company ◆ Be honest and factual ◆ Hand sign, rather than type your signature ◆ Use a business letter format ◆ PROOF! PROOF! PROOF! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Comparisons and clichés ◆ Wasted space. Make every word count. ◆ Form letters ◆ Inappropriate stationery ◆ Amusing anecdotes ◆ Personal photos ◆ Personal information such as age, weight, height, marital status, etc. ◆ Not enclosing promised materials such as a resume ◆ Gimmicks ◆ Spelling and grammar errors ◆ Messy corrections ◆ Omitted signature ◆ Handwriting the envelope ◆ Do not use your current employer’s letterhead

(2) Structure of the Cover Letter

The following elements should be taken into consideration in writing your cover letter.

Structure of the Cover Letter	
Tone/Presentation	Use a positive and outgoing writing style that projects energy and confidence. Avoid negative and apologetic statements that undermine your efforts to sell yourself. Adopt a business-like, but cordial tone. Always use a business letter format, and remember every line should start at the left margin. You will double space between paragraphs.
Your Return Address and Date	You place your return address and date at the top of the letter. Example: <i>RR 4 Box 123 South Fork, NE 68721 July 2, 2000</i>

Structure of the Cover Letter	
Addressee and Salutation	<p>Address each cover letter to a specific person. A brief phone call should provide the name of the person in charge of hiring in your targeted area. If you are not sure of the gender of the addressee, use the full name: Dear Terry Smith, rather than Mr. Smith or Ms. Smith. You will also state the person’s title, place of employment and complete address. Example:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Terry Smith Supervisor of Information Technology XYZ Corporation 1234 Main Scottsbluff, NE 68992</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Dear Mr. Smith</i></p>
First Paragraph	<p>Tell why you are writing in such a way as to arouse the employer’s interest. In this first paragraph:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • state the position for which your are applying • reference where or how you heard about the position • provide a brief statement about what you can offer them <p>Your letter should convey a genuine interest in the position. Avoid unrelated career goals.</p>
Second Paragraph	<p>The second paragraph should highlight and detail your qualifications for the position. Highlight one or two of your accomplishments that make you the ideal candidate for the position. The idea is to demonstrate what you can do for the company not what the company can do for you. This is also the place to emphasize any special skills, education, or training that might set you apart from the competition. Be sure to use terms that the employer used in the advertisement. Do not call attention to your shortcomings or weaknesses</p>
Third Paragraph	<p>The third paragraph is used to display your specific knowledge about the company. Be sure to verify the accuracy of any company information you mention in your letter.</p>
Final Paragraph	<p>Request action. Ask for an interview appointment. Suggest a time. Tell the employer that you will call to make an appointment (be sure to follow-up). It is a lot harder for the employer to ignore a request for action than a wish-wash “call me if you’re interested” approach. Before closing, thank the prospective employer for their time and consideration.</p>
Signature	<p>In closing, use the term “Sincerely” and sign your name. When you sign your letter you are saying, “the above information is correct.” If it is not signed the employer may wonder about the facts you stated. Example:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Sincerely (4 spaces for your signature) Jane Doe</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Enclosure: Resume</i></p> <p>When enclosing a resume or other vital information, be sure you show this below your name. (See above example).</p>

(3) Sample Cover Letters

Use the following samples as a reference when writing your own letter. Every time you send a resume you must write a *new* cover letter. In other words each time you apply for a different job, it calls for a new cover letter. Why? Because each letter is personalized and written for a specific job.

Your current address
City, State, Zip Code
Date

Name of addressee
Title
Company, firm, or organization
City, State, Zip Code

Salutation (non-sexist if individual's name is not known) :

Explain the reason you are writing; specify the position or field in which you are interested. Tell how you learned of the opening, mentioning the name of any mutual contact. Make a brief statement about what you have to offer them.

This paragraph is your chance to sell yourself regarding your qualifications for the position. Specifically describe any special training or related experience you may have had, especially as it relates to the qualifications listed in the job description. One way to accomplish this would be to write one paragraph relating relevant education and a second paragraph highlighting your significant work experience.

The third paragraph could contain more information about your qualifications, and it should also state something specific about the company, firm, or organization. This lets the employer know you have done your homework. If at all possible, tie your skills and qualifications to information about the company.

In your closing paragraph, ask for action. Specify a date and approximate time you will call for an appointment, or you can suggest an appointment time and indicate you will call later for confirmation. Include your telephone number if you are requesting additional information. However, the main purpose of your conclusion is to prepare the reader for a favorable response to your next initiating action.

Sincerely

Your hand-written signature

Your name, typed

Enclosure

Job Announcement

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Full time, A.A.S. Degree required, experience or knowledge in agriculture accounting, general office duties, working with the public, scheduling meetings, recording of business meetings. Good communication skills required.

Sample Cover Letter for Above Job Announcement

1234 28th Street, Apt. #23
Columbus, Nebraska 68601
July 2, 20__

W.E. Smith
General Manager
USDA Central Division
123 Main Street
Central City, Nebraska 68826

Dear W.E. Smith

Your advertisement for a full-time Administrative Secretary in the June 25th issue of the Elgin Review caught my attention. I am currently in my final semester at Central Community College-Platte Campus and will graduate on August 1, 2000. At that time, I will receive an Associate degree in accounting and agribusiness.

My intense on-the-job training and college accounting courses have helped me develop the required skills noted in the job description. Because of my college courses and my bookkeeping experience, you will see that I am a strong candidate. In addition, my coursework and data input at the veterinary clinic has required accuracy and knowledge of the computer.

I have had extensive experience working with the public as a receptionist, office assistant, cashier, and tutor. Doing the little things that make the business run smoothly is something that I enjoy. Idle time does not occur when I am working. I have acquired good telephone skills and know how to communicate with clients. By being a quick learner, training time for me would be short. Your company will appreciate the responsibility and reliability I have to offer.

You may reach me at 402-562-1298 to arrange a personal interview. Any Wednesday during the month of July would be a good time for an interview as Wednesday is my day off from work. While in college, I have worked 15-25 hours a week and maintained a 4.0 grade point average. You can expect this same hard work and dedication. My skills and knowledge, along with my willingness to work and learn, would make me a great asset to your company.

Sincerely

Jane Doe

Enclosure: Resume

Applications

Applications are used by employers to “screen out applicants.” They are designed to gather information on work experience, education, and gaps in job history. Job seekers should assemble this information in advance to make the application easier to complete. Many employers require the application to be completed at their place of business. Others may allow you to take it home.

(1) Guidelines for Completing Applications

The chart on the following page provides “Do’s and Don’ts” for completing applications and includes a reminder checklist. You may want to take a copy of the guidelines with you on your job search.

(2) Handling Illegal Questions

Questions regarding any of the following are generally considered to be illegal to ask on an application for employment:

Illegal questions on applications - Handle by placing a dash (-----)

- ◆ Height, weight
- ◆ Age, sex
- ◆ Marital status
- ◆ Size of your family
- ◆ Religion, politics
- ◆ Birthplace
- ◆ Race or national origin (It IS legal to ask if you are *eligible* to work in the U.S.)
- ◆ Handicaps or medical disabilities

The following questions on an application for employment are considered troublesome and are often avoided to avert potential problems.

Troublesome Questions

- ◆ Arrest record (it is legal to ask about felony convictions only)
- ◆ Military discharge
- ◆ Workers’ Compensation history
- ◆ Unemployment Compensation
- ◆ Health information

(3) Employment History

Many people are not sure about exact employment dates or termination dates, or even position titles and salary if it has been a long time since they have worked for a company. Prior to completing any application for employment, send your former employers a stamped, self-addressed postcard with spaces marked out for verification of your employment with them.

(4) Differences Between Applications & Resumes

- ◆ Applications encourage you to reveal your flaws; resumes allow you to reveal your strengths.
- ◆ Applications have limited space to answer set questions; resumes allow you to be creative.
- ◆ Applications ask for specific information including dates and names; resumes allow you to share the information you choose to share.
- ◆ Applications make it difficult to record your achievements; resumes allow you to spotlight your successes.
- ◆ Applications ask for what the employer wants to know; resumes state information you want employers to know.

Guidelines for Completing Applications

DO	DON'T	GENERAL RULES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Know what sort of job you want and be prepared to tell them why you are the one to do it ◆ Read every question before filling in the answers ◆ Read all instructions carefully ◆ Account for all time in your work and education history ◆ Fill in all the blanks; answer every question. Use N/A if question does not apply to you, or write “will explain in interview” ◆ Answer clearly and completely ◆ Spell correctly ◆ Be accurate. An inaccurate application says that you are an inaccurate worker ◆ Make sure your reason for leaving is a good one ◆ Use black ink or typewriter; print, don't write ◆ Use an erasable pen ◆ Be positive; be honest ◆ Bring information with you (social security number, drivers' license number, employment information from present and past jobs, school and training data, military training and experience, reference names and addresses) ◆ Remember to submit the application by the deadline date ◆ Remember to sign and date the application ◆ Keep a copy of your application form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Don't leave gaps in your job history ◆ Don't misspell words ◆ Don't submit a sloppy application ◆ Don't provide false information ◆ Don't exaggerate ◆ Don't forget to sign your application form ◆ Don't give an expected salary. Write “open” or “salary negotiable” ◆ Don't leave any question blank, fill with either a dash (--) or NA <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">Application Checklist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Did you follow all directions? ✓ Did you handwrite in black ink? ✓ Did you answer all questions? ✓ Is your application accurate & neat? ✓ Did you get permission from references and list complete and accurate reference information? ✓ Did you sign and date the application? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Try to avoid leaving any questions blank on applications, write “see me,” NA or (---) ◆ If applications ask if you have any friends or relatives who work for the company, be careful whom you choose. ◆ Be careful of gaps in employment. ◆ If you are fired or laid off, it is permissible to write “please see me” ◆ Get permission to list people as references ◆ For salary you expect, write “open” ◆ Employment History: List the month & year you started and ended each job; your supervisor's name, address, and phone number; your job title, location, salary, major duties, and your reason for leaving (keep it positive). ◆ Education & Certification: Know the name and city of the schools you've attended and the year you received your degrees and certification ◆ Special Skills: List any special skills you have that are related to the job, such as computer skills. ◆ Use black ink as applications completed in pencil fade and rub off in a very short time, and it makes them difficult to read. If there is a choice about which application gets the most attention, it will be the one that is easiest to read

Interview

Congratulations you have been invited to interview.

Your application form, cover letter and resume have gotten you to the interview. The interview is the stage where the hiring decision is made. You must use your skills to let the potential employer see there is a “match” between your skills and qualifications and the needs of the employer. Interviews are structured. The interviewer(s) knows what he or she wants to know and how much time he or she can take to get the information. You will hopefully assist them in every way.

(1) What Employers Look For

The interviewer will not only evaluate your specific job skills, but also your soft skills and transferable skills. The employer will search for your “life long learning” incentive, ability to follow directions and your commitment to their organization. During the interview the employers will be looking for many of the following characteristics.

CHARACTERISTIC	What Employer Will Look for in Interview	CHARACTERISTIC	What Employer Will Look for in Interview
Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not only grade point average, but . . . • Common sense • Ability to problem solve • Competent in your career area - skill match with job requirements 	Ability to Communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral • Written • Non-verbal (positive body language) • Ability to listen
Self-Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience, style and manner 	Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to do more than the job description • Ability to change.
Willingness to Accept Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience, school, and volunteer 	Self Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know yourself • Know your strengths and weaknesses
Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self starter 	Ability to Handle Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to manage stress • Don't panic, remain calm, are not easily flustered
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-curricular and volunteer experiences 	Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set reasonable obtainable goals • Short and long term goals
Energy Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiasm • Alarm clock skills 	Ethics and Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honesty
Imagination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originality • Creativity 	Competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy competition • Competing with self to always do better
Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to get along with others, especially co-workers and supervisors 	Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know where you want to go and how to get there
Sell Yourself and All Your Skills			

(2) Interview Formats

Employers may use different formats when conducting an interview. Be prepared for any of the following formats.

Interview Formats	
One-on-One Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ One employer representative conducts an interview with you.
Group or Panel Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Two or more employer representatives interview you alone (it could include 5 or 6 employer representatives). ◆ You may be interviewed in a group with other applicants. This is more common in the first round or screening interviews.
Observation Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ You may be asked to do a presentation or perform a task, and you will be evaluated on your skills. This type of interview is limited to specific positions
Video Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ With today’s technology this style of interviewing can be cost-efficient for the employer. It could also save you travel time and expense. ◆ Various technology can be used such as V-Tel where the PC is linked through the telephone line. ◆ Wear dark clothing, try to keep your hair off your forehead, speak clearly and don’t make any quick movements and/or gestures. ◆ Remember there may be a delay of a few seconds between your response and the employer’s reaction. ◆ You may have your resume handy for reference.
Telephone Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Be prepared. ◆ Your spoken word is your only communication skill available. ◆ You should be alone in a quiet room. ◆ Have your resume available for reference. ◆ You may take notes if you can listen and write at the same time. ◆ Be aware of so called casual phone conversation.

(3) Preparing for a Successful Interview

The interview starts the minute you drive onto the company parking lot. You never know who may be watching. From this point forward consider everyone you meet as the person who may make the hiring decision. Your appearance is very important, employers consider this part of your attitude. Employers say they can teach people how to do the job, but they cannot teach attitude.

“Be prepared,” don’t show up to an interview unprepared. You must know yourself, your skills, have knowledge about the position and the company. You must convey your qualifications to the employer in such a manner that he/she is convinced that you are the person for the job. You must attend the interview alone. Do not take your children, spouse, significant other, or friend. It is your interview and you want to impress the employers with your professionalism. Don’t forget that the follow-up also demonstrates your professionalism.

“IN THE BUSINESS WORLD DISCRIMINATION BY APPEARANCE IS A FACT OF LIFE.”
 Egon Von Fustenberg
The Power Look

Getting Ready for the Interview

Mentally	Think through your strengths and carefully analyze why the company should hire you.
Personal Appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Dress appropriately for the position. Some positions call for suits and others suggest chinos and a nice shirt. Know the difference, visit the company if possible, ask questions of instructors and those working in the field. ◆ Look the part - not only the position but part of the organization ◆ Be clean - including hair and fingernails ◆ Have your hair in some style - not in your face ◆ Leave the perfume and after shave off ◆ No sports attire - including shoes ◆ Shoes polished ◆ Women wear hoses - whether in style or not ◆ Never chew gum ◆ Watch the jewelry - one ring or set per hand, watch is ok, earrings no larger than a dime (nothing that dangles), small necklace or pin, no visible body piercing or tattoos ◆ Men - no earrings, be sure to shave
Speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Do speak clearly ◆ <i>Don't mumble</i> ◆ Do use standard grammatical English ◆ <i>Don't use slang or jargon, or a lot of "I mean's, you know's" or "like"</i> ◆ <i>Don't use words whose meaning or pronunciation are not entirely clear to you</i> ◆ <i>Don't swear</i> ◆ <i>Don't talk too loudly or too softly</i> ◆ Do speak with confidence ◆ <i>Don't giggle or guffaw</i> ◆ Do smile - appear as if you are enjoying the experience ◆ Do laugh quietly if the interviewer says something humorous
Body Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Actions speak louder than words - they remember what they see longer than what they hear. ◆ Non-verbal messages are usually more powerful than verbal messages. ◆ We communicate through posture, physical appearance, facial expressions, gestures, spatial distance, and tone of voice, as well as by words. ◆ Be sure verbal and nonverbal messages agree, that they do not contradict each other. ◆ Gestures are fine - don't over use them ◆ Maintain good eye contact.
Dressing Tips	You have the "right" to dress the way you want and they have the "right" to make a decision on appearance. This is not considered discrimination! See the Dressing Tips for Women and Men on the following pages.
<p>IN SUMMARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A job applicant should dress neatly and act friendly when reporting for an interview. ◆ While a young man creates a mildly positive impression if he wears a sport coat, shirt, tie, and slacks, he makes a stronger impression if he wears a suit. ◆ To make a favorable impression, you should not wear jeans, shorts, sandals, or sports attire. ◆ Failure to maintain eye contact with the recruiter, fiddling with objects on the desk, dirty fingernails, or speech loaded with jargon create "mildly to strongly negative" impressions. ◆ Trimmed hair and beards on males make a more positive impression. ◆ If the interviewer felt that an applicant was composed, cordial, cooperative, enthusiastic, and sincere, there was a strong positive influence. ◆ Being assertive, intelligent, independent, and inquisitive creates a mildly positive impression. Being grateful or jocular were considered neutral. ◆ Applicants who appeared to be nervous, defensive, tense, quiet, skeptical, or shy earned negative ratings. Strong positive ratings were given if the interviewee seemed relaxed, balanced, and professional. ◆ Casual interviews got a mildly positive rating, while those which seemed tense or dominated by either party were rated negatively. 	

Dressing Tips for Women for Employment Interviews

The attitude about dress has been changing in the work world and is going away from formal business attire to a more casual look. This **does not** mean that you should attend the interview dressed casually. You should dress for the position you are interviewing for and one step above what you would wear to work. Don't go overboard and dress in evening wear but do wear nice appropriate business attire.

- Hair** If your hair is long pull it up. You many want to have it professionally styled. Hair too long or too curly does not make a good business impression.
- Makeup** Do wear makeup, but apply it carefully and not to heavy. Base with a little blush, lipstick and light eye makeup.
- Clothing** The skirted suit is the most powerful look for women. The second most powerful is a one color dress. A pantsuit or a skirt and blouse is the least powerful look. Generally, one should never wear jeans to an interview. The best skirt length for business is around the knee area. You need to wear styles that flatter your body shape; however, avoid too short of a skirt or the skort outfit.
- Colors** The best interview colors are navy, shades of blues and teals, shades of burgundy or maroon, grays, or black. Black can be too overpowering for some people. Choose colors that compliment your skin color. It is best to avoid bright purples, greens, oranges, pinks and browns. White and cream are not good suit choices, but are excellent blouse colors.
- Hosiery** Neutral color. Do not wear navy or black.
- Type of Career** If you are going into retail sales or advertising, you may be able to wear the more dramatic styles or colors. You decide what is and is not appropriate. If you are dealing with people's money in accounting, banking or an office situation, it's best to stay conservative.
- Shoes** Most of the dress for success literature suggests that you wear simple pumps that match your hemline or are darker. **Do not** wear open toes or sling backs. Neutral colors are good for business.
- Purse** Carry a small purse or better yet a brief case, but don't carry both: you might look overloaded.
- Jewelry** Keep your jewelry simple and elegant. Don't wear dangling earrings or earrings larger than a dime. The best bracelet to wear is a watch. Only wear one ring per hand and one earring per ear. A simple chain is a better choice than a pendant if you neckline calls for it. Be careful that your neckline is not too low.
- Perfume** Don't wear perfume; some scents can be too strong. The interviewer should not be able to smell anything.
- Hands** Should be clean and nails should be manicured and if polished be sure it is a neutral color.
- Eye Glasses** Glasses test well in an interview situation. The darker your frame color, the more professional the look. Don't choose too trendy of a shape or color and don't wear tinted glasses to an interview.

If you are unsure how to dress ask questions of those in that career; if possible, ask those at the company you are interviewing. You may want to watch the people who work at the company as they leave work; then dress to fit in.

Dressing Tips For Men for Employment Interviews

Hair	Make sure your hair is neatly trimmed and groomed.
Clothing	The most powerful look for men is the suit or sports coat with dress slacks. Do consider the career you are entering.
Colors	The best interview colors are navy, gray, and black. Be careful, though, black can look too formal like a wedding or a funeral. Choose a classic cut and avoid trendy or western cut styles.
Shirt	Wear a dress shirt. Long-sleeves are more professional than short-sleeves. Most of the success-image resources suggest that you have your suit and shirt professional cleaned and pressed.
Tie	Choose a conservative tie in a color that compliments your suit and skin color. If you are going into retail sales or advertising, you might want a more flashy, dramatic look. Choose your ties accordingly. Generally, if you are dealing with people's money in accounting, banking, or management, it's best to stay conservative. The tip of your tie should hit the middle of your belt.
Shoes	Wear dress shoes that are neatly polished. Boots or sports shoes are not recommended.
Accessories	Choose accessories carefully. For interviewing no earrings as this could hurt your chances. Generally, a simple tie tack (if any), a watch and a wedding ring are the accepted jewelry. The best brief case is simple leather, but some experts suggest the attaché case is a sign of a junior executive without much power and say you should use a leather folder instead.
Hat and coat	Do not wear or carry hats or coats into the interview.
Cologne/ After Shave	Do not wear any - scents can be too strong. The interviewer should not be able to smell anything.

Good luck and don't forget to smile and say "thank you." If you want the job let them know! Remember, they want to hire people who want to work for them. *Don't forget to follow up.*

(5) Interview Do's and Don'ts

You are properly dressed and ready to answer any question asked of you. Be careful and follow some simple rules of etiquette about interviewing. You want to impress the interviewer(s) and let them know you are the person for the job.

- * Do arrive 10 to 15 minutes before your scheduled time. You may need to fill out an application or other papers.
- Don't be late or not show up without calling.

- * Do go alone to the interview.
- Don't take a friend, spouse or children to the interview.

- * Do go to the bathroom before you report to the interview.
- Don't embarrass yourself later.

- * Do arrive prepared, know facts about the company. Read company literature and examine company ratings.
- Don't arrive wondering what this company does or makes.

- * Do walk in and out of the interview with an assured, confident stride. Good posture can impress.
- Don't appear as though you lack confidence in yourself.

- * Do greet the interviewer by name such as: Mr. Jones or Ms. Smith
- Don't say, "Hi, Joe or Hi, Mary."

- * If he/she shakes hands with you, use a firm grip.
- Don't give a fishy handshake.

- * Do stand until offered a seat.

- * Do have an empty mouth except for your teeth.
- Don't chew gum, no candies, no breath mints, and no smoking.

- * Sit back in your chair with good posture.
- Don't lean on your elbow.

- * Do take your interview folder with you.
- Don't carry a large brief case or purse.

- * Do let the interviewer take the lead.
- Don't interrupt, mumble, preach, or try to control.

- * Do show enthusiasm and have eye contact.
- Don't talk to the floor or ceiling.

- * Do answer the question asked with honesty.
- Don't ramble and get off track. Most of all, give honest answers.

- * Do sell yourself.
- Don't assume they know your accomplishments.

- * Do practice possible answers before the interview.
- Don't hope to wing it.

- * Do remember the interview is a two way situation. They must impress you also.
- Don't assume you want to work for every company you interview.

(6) Types of Interviews

The purpose of the interview is for the employer to decide which candidate best meets their objectives, and for you the perspective employee to determine if this position and organization is right for you. To be invited to interview you have already met several of their requirements and now is the time to discuss your qualifications and objectives face to face with the employer.

The type of job, organization’s mission, work environment, and the interviewer’s personality will determine the structure of your interview. The interview for Assistant Manager may be structured differently than one for an entry-level position. Employers often use a combination of the following interview methods.

Types of Interviews	
Conversational Interview	<p>The interviewer will use a more casual approach and will ask non-directive questions so you will express yourself, your experiences, goals, and interests with minimum direction. This is sometimes referred to “non-structure” type of interviewing, but the interviewer has structured this interview to meet his/her needs.</p> <p>You may leave the interview and wonder if you were interviewed. The interviewer will offer you a seat and may offer you coffee or a soft drink. Of course, you will not accept the drink as the coffee and soft drink will make you have bad breath and what if you spill the drink? What a mess!</p> <p>Why a conversational or casual interview? Employers are comfortable with it and have the ability to find out more from you than you can imagine. Often we get into a conversation and begin to spill the beans, so to speak. Be careful that you don’t say too much. (See possible questions on page 42.)</p>
Question and Answer Interview	<p>For years this has been the most commonly used interview technique. The employer will ask all candidates the same questions and then evaluate them on their answers. This method of interviewing is easier for both the employer and the final candidates. Give an honest answer and remember your answers include more than your oral answers.</p> <p>It is easy to prepare for this type of interview as you can practice what you would answer many commonly asked questions. (See possible questions on page 42.)</p>
Behavior Based Interview	<p>This interviewing technique is currently used by many organizations. The behavior type is based on the belief that your past behavior is an indicator of your future behavior. This may also include questions about your education experience. Employers are very concerned about your attendance on the job and at school. They believe that if you missed class a great deal that you will miss work. In other words, they believe that your behavior will not change a great deal.</p> <p>The questions will be structured in such a manner to get you to reveal how you handled a specific situation and makes it difficult for the person being interviewed to give “canned” answered. (See possible questions on page 42.)</p>
Case Approach Interview	<p>The interviewer will present a situation or problem that may be relevant to the position and ask you to propose logical steps to resolve the situation. If you are entering a customer related type of business you may be asked: “A large customer of our organization calls and expresses a concern about an order they should have received two weeks ago. The call has been transferred to you since your supervisor is in charge of this particular order, but he/she is on vacation. Please explain your options and what action you would take and why.”</p> <p>This technique allows the employer to evaluate your organizational, analytical, and problem-solving approach to unfamiliar situations.</p>
Stress Approach Interview	<p>In this approach, the employer will create a stressful atmosphere so he/she can evaluate your composure, confidence level, and response to an unpleasant situation. Thank goodness this method of interviewing is not widely used.</p>

(7) Possible Interview Questions

Questions will vary depending on the type of interview. Some questions in the beginning of the interview are to help put you at ease. Employers frequently use a variety of interviewing techniques, so be prepared for any type of question. Some employers may also try to slip in a few illegal questions, so watch for them.

Regardless of the type of interview, remember the following:

- ◆ Answer honestly.
- ◆ Don't answer more than they asked.
- ◆ Don't answer with a "yes" or "no", explain your answer.
- ◆ Keep your answers brief and to the point.
- ◆ Listen
- ◆ If you do not understand the question, ask for an explanation.
- ◆ Keep eye contact

Possible Interview Questions	
Conversational Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me a little bit about yourself. I grew up on a farm with loving parents and I really enjoyed my childhood, how about you? • I know when I was in college we really enjoyed Thursday nights; I bet we could compare stories. • My favorite subject in school was gym, but I wasn't so hot in math. Do we have that in common? <p>Get the idea? The interviewer will lead you into questions that hit your comfort zone and you may tend to tell them things about yourself you wish you had not mentioned. Remember to keep it positive, constructive, and relating to the work situation, sometimes that is hard to do in a conversational interview.</p>
Question and Answer Interview	<p>Tell me about yourself.</p> <p>What are your short-range goals?</p> <p>What are your long-range goals?</p> <p>Why are you leaving your present position?</p> <p>What can you do for us that someone else cannot do?</p> <p>Why should we hire you?</p> <p>What is your philosophy of management?</p> <p>Do you prefer to work alone or with others?</p> <p>What kind of salary are you worth?</p> <p>What are your five greatest accomplishments in your present or last job? In your career so far?</p> <p>How long would it take you to make a contribution to the firm or organization?</p> <p>How long would you stay with us?</p> <p>What is your greatest strength? Weakness?</p> <p>If you could start again, what would you do differently?</p> <p>Are you creative? Give an example.</p> <p>Are you a good manager? Give an example.</p> <p>How would you describe your personality?</p> <p>Have you helped increase sales? How?</p> <p>Have you helped reduce cost? How?</p> <p>What do your subordinates think of you?</p> <p>Have you hired and/or fired people before?</p> <p>Do you work well with minorities?</p> <p>What other types of jobs are you considering? What companies?</p> <p>Why do you want to work for us?</p> <p>Why should we hire you?</p> <p>What interests you most about this position?</p> <p>Are you willing to go where the company sends you?</p>

Possible Interview Questions

<p>Question and Answer Interview (cont.)</p>	<p>What kind of decisions are most difficult for you? Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years? What training/qualifications do you have for a job like this? Why have you changed jobs so frequently? How many people have you supervised? What are the reasons for your success? What are your growth prospects at your current company? What do you want to make on your next job? What actions would you take if you came on board? What are your long-range career objectives? Why did you major in (a particular field)? If you were hiring a graduate for this position, what qualities would you look for? Why? State some event, happening, or accomplishment that brought you a great deal of pleasure? Why? State some event, happening, or accomplishment that did not turn out the way you wanted it too. How did you handle the disappointment?</p>
<p>Behavior Based Interview</p>	<p>What is the most memorable situation you have had when working with customers? Tell me about a time you had to overcome major obstacles to meet a challenge? How did you feel about it? Tell me about a mistake you have made in dealing with people. What did you learn? What aspect of your work habits do you need to work on in order to become the best employee you can be? What have you done or are you doing to work on these? How would you handle the situation when _____? Describe the supervisory style with which you work best. Why? Describe the supervisory style under which you last worked. How did it assist or hinder your efforts to do the best job possible? What training style works the best for you to achieve a good comfort level with new projects? Visual, verbal, hands on, etc. Do you take lots of notes, require close supervision, ask a lot of questions? In what ways has your present (past) employer developed you to take on added responsibility? Where do you see your career taking you in the next five years? How would taking this position assist your career development?</p>
<p>Illegal Questions</p>	<p>The EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) has said that all people in the United States should have equal rights for a job, therefore they have deemed certain questions as illegal questions for an employer to ask a potential employee. Following are a list of such questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age - Your birthplace or birthplace of your parents? - Religious holidays you celebrate - If you have children and their ages - Height and weight - Religious affiliation - Your married status - Your maiden name <p>These are but a few of the illegal questions that you may be asked.</p> <p>How to Answer Illegal Questions If you are asked an illegal question (or think it may be illegal) and it does not bother you to answer then do so, but if you are not comfortable answering, throw the question back to them. "Would you please explain what that has to do with my ability to do the job?" This way you have not told them that it is an illegal question or refused to answer, but you have let them know you are aware of such questions. They will probably be more careful from that point on in the interview.</p> <p>It is important for you to judge the employer. If they cannot justify their illegal questions, you need to give careful consideration as to whether you want to work for them. If they knowingly ask illegal questions, what other laws may they be breaking?</p> <p>You do not have to answer any question you are not comfortable answering, but you may not be offered the job. It is important for you to consider the situation.</p>

(8) Your Questions for the Interviewer

Near the end of the interview the interviewer should ask if you have any questions. Of course you have done your homework, so you will have questions for the interviewer.

You need to find out if this is the right place for you to work. You do not want to make a mistake and accept the wrong job. If you do, you are back in the job search situation again. The following chart provides three types of questions you may want to ask the interviewer(s).

Questions About the Position

- ◆ Ask for a detailed description of the position.
- ◆ Why is the position available?
- ◆ What will the anticipated indoctrination and training program be like and how long?
- ◆ Are advanced training programs available for those who demonstrate outstanding ability?
- ◆ What are the earnings of successful people in their third to fifth year?
- ◆ What is the next step in the selection process?
- ◆ Where do you see me in five years if I were to join the company?
- ◆ Ask to see where you will be working - only if they are obviously interested.
- ◆ Ask to meet the immediate supervisor - only if they are obviously interested.

Questions About the Company

The following questions are intended to help you become more knowledgeable about the company. They usually deal with the company's future, its employees, its competition, and its strengths. Your future with any company could depend upon this information.

- ◆ What are the company's greatest strengths?
- ◆ How do you rate your competition?
- ◆ Do you have offices or plants elsewhere? (You should know this)
- ◆ What kind of turnover does this company have in employees?
- ◆ How long has your company been in business?
- ◆ What's your view of the company's business outlook?
- ◆ What kind of employees do you generally look for?
- ◆ What are your company's plans for expansion?

Questions for the Second Interview

The following questions should **not** be brought up until the **second interview**. If the interviewer does not bring up salary, you are entitled to ask what he/she can offer, but not until the second interview.

- ◆ What is the rate of pay for this job?
- ◆ What benefits are available for employees of this company?
- ◆ What types of insurance plans are available? Does the company contribute to them?
- ◆ How long must I work before I am eligible for paid vacation time?
- ◆ How many paid sick days will I earn?

(9) Closing of the Interview

It is important for you to recognize when the interview is coming to an end. If you listen to the interviewer, you will not have to guess that it is closing time. The interviewer has made remarks that indicate the interview is coming to an end. You can recognize the nonverbal indications - tone of voice and physical movement reinforce the verbal message.

Now is the time for you to make your move. If there is anything you would like to add now is the time. Hopefully you have been given the opportunity to ask the employer questions. If not, ask if you may ask a few questions or provide additional information.

- ◆ If you have something of importance about your skills, work experience or education that has not been asked, now is the time to expand on this information.
- ◆ If you want the job, ask them to hire you. Is this going too far? Certainly not. Remember they want to hire people who want to work for them. Employers often hire the person who asked for the job.
- ◆ Ask when a decision will be made on the person hired. Time drags when you are waiting to hear from an employer and the phone does not ring. You may also ask if you can call them in a week. You must let them know that you are interested and that you want the job. If you say you are going to call, be sure to call.

When all of your questions have been answered, you should:

- ◆ Thank the interviewer
- ◆ Ask for permission to follow up in a few days with a telephone call
- ◆ Ask for the job if you want it
- ◆ Say “good-bye” to the interviewer, secretary and receptionist

(10) After the Interview

You should not take notes during the interview; but immediately after, write down pertinent information. It is a courtesy to write a thank you letter. Write the thank you or follow-up letter and mail it so that it arrives within two days after the interview. At this stage, you may want to analyze the entire interview process to improve your performance in a future interview.

Follow Up

The follow up is a critical step in the employment process. It is always proper to say “thank you,” and now it is important to make that gesture. An employer may have a difficult decision to make and the first or only person to send a follow up letter may become the new employee.

(1) Follow Up Phone Call

When you leave the interview you should always ask if you may call in a few days to check if the position has been filled. If they say “yes” be sure and call. You want to call the person you interviewed with and simply ask “has the position for _____ been filled?” If not, now is your opportunity to tell them again that you want the job.

If the position has been filled, let them know that you are still interesting in working for the company if they should have another vacancy. Companies want to hire people who want to work for them.

(2) Follow Up Letter

The follow up letter should use a business format and should be printed on the same paper as the cover letter and resume. Do not write a long letter in an attempt to sell yourself or rehash the interview. This would defeat the purpose of the letter. The letter should be sent the day following the interview, be short, and contain the statements regarding the following:

- ◆ Your appreciation for the interview time and information.

- ◆ Your confidence that you have the ability to do the job. Call attention to the most important aspect of the position and express your confidence to handle it.
- ◆ Your continued interest in the job.
- ◆ Your lack of interest - if you do not want the job. You do not have to give a reason just make the statement.

Follow Up Letter Format	
1st Paragraph	A polite thank you and a positive comment about the interview.
2nd Paragraph	Include other comments that may have been overlooked in the interview. These forgotten comments may help the employer select you for the job.
3rd Paragraph	Indicate you are interested and available for the job (only if interested). Give the employer an additional reason or two for hiring you.

(3) Sample Follow Up Letter

Sample Follow-Up Letter	
<p>3841 Beal Street San Jose, CA 95123-2019 June 27, 2000</p> <p>Mr. David Smith Supervisor Information Technology ACME Corporation 3877 Henderson, Street Concord, CA 94523-1717</p> <p>Dear Mr. Smith</p> <p>Thank you for giving me the opportunity to interview for the position of secretary with your company on June 26, 2000. Your interview was well-planned and informative. I was impressed with the facilities and the personnel I met.</p> <p>In our interview, I neglected to mention that I have also had some volunteer office and filing experience in my uncle's real estate business in Fremont, California.</p> <p>I am very interested in working for ACME Corporation as a secretary. If hired, I would be a most reliable employee. I am awaiting your decision.</p> <p>Sincerely</p> <p>Mary Connors</p>	

Employment Contract Negotiations

An area of the job search that is often overlooked or receives little attention is salary negotiation. You have received the offer and now it is time to discuss the terms of employment. Although negotiating salary and benefits is uncomfortable, it is necessary to ensure that the position you accept meets your needs as well as those of the employer. Prior to planning your negotiations, however, it is important to decide if this is the right position for you.

(1) Making the Right Decision

Many personal and professional reasons will factor into your decision to accept a specific job offer. All offers need to be evaluated based upon how the position relates to your individual, family, and career goals.

- ◆ **Individual Needs/Goals.** Does the job match your interests, values, skills, and beliefs? Does it provide you with the lifestyle, prestige, independence, creativity, security, and economic returns you are looking for in a job? Although all of your needs/goals may not be filled initially, is there potential with the company?
- ◆ **Family Goals.** Does this job accommodate your needs and lifestyle preference with regard to your family? Is it family-oriented? Is the geographical location conducive to you and your family's hobbies, community activities and social support groups?
- ◆ **Career Goals.** Is the nature of the employer, the pay and benefits, and the work activities what you are looking for in a job? What is the company's reputation? Do they provide adequate training initially and throughout your employment? Does the organization provide advancement opportunities? Is there job security? Do they offer opportunities for professional, personal, and educational growth? Are the surroundings and people pleasant? Is the salary adequate for your needs? How does the benefit package compare to those of other employers?

(2) Steps in Negotiating the Offer

Once you have decided to accept a specific offer, you will need to take the following steps to ensure effective negotiations.

- ◆ **Decide Your Conditions.** It is important to determine what you will and will not accept from an offer. Create a plan that will allow some flexibility. For example, if you ask for more salary but the organization cannot offer more money, would you be willing to take a signing bonus instead? Remember, you only have one opportunity to get the most from this offer so thoroughly plan prior to any negotiation.
- ◆ **Negotiate With ONE Organization.** Only negotiate with one organization at a time. Do not spend time negotiating with your second and third choice until you know that your first choice is no longer an option.
- ◆ **Call Early.** If you decide to accept an offer earlier than planned, call the organization and begin the negotiations early. If the company is still recruiting, they may be more inclined to negotiate with you.
- ◆ **Maintain Your Professionalism.** It is very important to portray a certain level of professionalism even after you have received an offer. The person that you are negotiating with may be your future supervisor!
- ◆ **Make a Decision.** Be prepared to make a decision once the organization has stated their final offer. It is not appropriate to try to hold out for more time or another offer.
- ◆ **Commit Fully.** Show enthusiasm for the position that you just accepted whether it was a difficult decision or not. No one wants someone working for them that acts like they would rather be working somewhere else!

(3) Negotiable Factors

Successful negotiation is not a “winner-take-all” situation. If a company is unable to meet your salary expectations, they may be able to negotiate with other more flexible parts of the offer such as your health plan, dental plan, retirement package, the type of schedule you prefer, etc.

Realizing that you may not be given everything you have asked for, you should enter into a salary negotiation with an open mind. Research the company and their benefit plans. How do they compare with others in the same industry/field? Prepare yourself mentally. Be sure you know exactly what you want. Finally, practice, practice, practice. Rehearse your presentation with another person posing as the employer and have them critique your performance. Negotiating may seem like a lot of work, but often results in a much more attractive offer.

An extremely important factor to consider is the benefit plan offered by the company must. A good benefits package adds about 30 percent to your compensation package. Therefore, it is wise to compare benefits before accepting a job offer. As the labor pool tightens, companies are relying on their creative side to provide benefits that will entice candidates to consider their employment opportunities. Definitions of various benefits being offered currently by companies are listed below.

The following tips will be valuable when negotiating various aspects of your salary and benefits packages.

Negotiable Factors	
Salary	Salaries may or may not be negotiable, so it is very important that you research what a “fair” salary is prior to negotiation. Researching salaries will provide you with an insight into what salary to expect according to geographic location, prior experience, college degree or major. You will find that the salary an employee receives varies greatly from job to job, employer to employer and from one region of the country to another.
Location of Position	If you are given the choice of the city where you would like to relocate, take the time to check out the geographic area. Does the community offer you the lifestyle you are looking for? If continuing your education is important, are there any colleges in the area that would allow you to work on an advanced degree?
Reporting Date	Depending on the company and your job, some employers might be able to offer a flexible starting date. If you would like time to take a break before starting your career, now is the time to negotiate your starting date.
Appraisal Review	Some employers may give bonuses for job performance. Since bonuses are often attached to your appraisal reviews, it might be possible to ask that you receive your review earlier than normal.
Relocation Expenses/ Signing Bonuses	Some employers may provide relocation benefits to help you move. This may include travel to the community to look for housing, mortgage assistance, moving expenses, and/or hotel/food expenses until you are settled. The benefit may also be in the form of a signing bonus, which is simply an agreed upon amount of money given to you at the time you accept the offer. If an employer does not discuss these benefits, you might want to consider negotiating for them.
<i>Source: Career Center, Florida State University, University Center - A4100, Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2490, 850-644-6431. April 12, 2000, www.fsu.edu/career</i>	

Negotiable Factors

Benefit Considerations (continued)	Health Insurance	With the rising costs of health care, it is very important to evaluate a company's health plan for the following financial reasons. Even if you have to pay for all or part of your coverage, it is less expensive to get insurance through a group plan than individually. Health insurance is comparable to nontaxable income. The average cost of providing health insurance is approximately \$3,500 - \$4,000 per year per employee. If you purchased health insurance on your own, you could expect to pay \$5,000 per year, which would come out of your own pocket after taxes were paid. In the event that you were sick or injured, your medical treatment is covered.
	401(k) Plan	This retirement plan allows you to put a certain percentage of your gross (pre-tax) income into a trust fund or other qualified investment fund. Many employers will match your contribution up to a certain percentage. Typically, you can direct your contributions and the matching funds into certain types of investments offered through your employer. These plans are also portable B you can take them with you if you change jobs.
	Cafeteria Plans	These flexible benefits plans allow you to put aside money (deducted from each paycheck) before taxes to cover various types of costs. These costs could include payment of health/life insurance premiums, vision/dental costs, or child care expenses. As a pre-tax deduction, this benefit will help reduce the amount you pay in taxes each year.
	Child Care Assistance	Some employers will assist with the cost of childcare by subsidizing the cost or possibly having an on-site day care for employees.
	Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	Many companies provide confidential counseling to assist employees with personal concerns that may affect their performance on the job. These programs assist with concerns such as marital/family problems or substance abuse.
	Flextime	This arrangement allows the employee to set their hours at work, within limits.
	Retirement Benefits	These benefits may be in the form of individual retirement accounts, profit-sharing plans, stock ownership plans, or 401(k) plans.
	Stock Ownership Plans	Depending on your years of service or earnings, employees are given the option to purchase shares of stock in the company in which they are employed.
	Telecommuting	After proving that you are a reliable employee, some employers may give you the option of working from home. You may be required to go into the office occasionally for meetings, however, the majority of time is spent in the home office. The company may provide equipment; however, in other cases the employee is responsible for the costs associated with telecommuting.

Benefit Considerations (continued)	Tuition Assistance/Reimbursement	Returning to the classroom to update your skills is made possible through a company's tuition assistance/reimbursement benefits. Many companies will reimburse an employee for a percentage of their tuition and books depending on the grade they received in the class. In most instances, the course needs to be related to the employee's job or the company's business.
	Wellness Programs	Many companies encourage their employees to participate in wellness activities sponsored by the company. Keeping their employees "well" helps reduce absenteeism, increases productivity, and keeps health care costs down. Employers may promote a healthy lifestyle by offering courses on topics such as: smoking cessation; stress-reduction; exercise classes; nutrition classes; and common health problems such as high blood pressure and cancer.
<i>Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers "Planning Job Choices 2000", 43rd Edition.</i>		

(4) The Final Step B Decline/Acceptance Letters

Decline Letters: Declining an offer should be done in writing and as soon as you accept another position.

Acceptance Letters: Prepare an acceptance letter that restates your understanding of the offer. Be sure to include the following:

- ◆ Salary
- ◆ Starting date and time
- ◆ Location
- ◆ Any perks, signing bonuses, etc. that were negotiated.

EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS

Now that you have secured yourself your dream job, you certainly do not want to lose it. Keeping a good job does not just happen. You have to make it a priority to keep the job. In other words you have to work at it. The first weeks on a new job are the most difficult. You must learn your new job and, in addition, learn the operation and structure of the organization. This is the time to ask questions. The more you ask, the less likely you are to make costly mistakes. The most successful employees not only do their job satisfactorily; they also fit into the organization. Getting along with other employees may take some work, but it is important enough to be worth the effort.

How to Keep Your Job

Employers say more people lose their jobs because they do not use good work habits rather than because they are not able to do the job. Being a good employee involves a lot of planning, knowledge, and hard work. The end result is worth it, however, not only in terms of advancement and job security, but in personal satisfaction as well.

Good Work Habits	
Attitude	A positive attitude is an important factor in job success. Keep negative feelings/thoughts to yourself. Be friendly to your co-workers, however do not form friendships too quickly. Try to build positive relationships with everyone you meet. Treat everyone with courtesy and respect.
Attendance	Always be on time, and never miss work unless it is absolutely necessary. Being reliable and dependable gains the trust and respect of your supervisor and co-workers.
Appearance	Your appearance is important. Find out what manner of dress is expected on the job. You should be appropriately dressed. Be clean and well groomed. Avoid wearing strong perfumes or colognes. Remember to look the part as each employee represents the company.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will be learning a lot of new information. Listen intently and take notes as needed to reinforce what you are learning. Ask questions. Acknowledging how much you don't know has a more positive effect than showing how much you know. Be open to new ways of doing things. Do not criticize or complain until you can prove you can do it in a better way. Know and follow all rules, policies, and procedures. Read the employee manuals. Learn all you can about the job you were hired to do before thinking about moving up. Be a team player. Be willing to help. Establish a positive relationship with your supervisor. When you need to talk with your supervisor, ask when a convenient time would be to meet. Ask how you can improve. Ask for help when you need it. If you make a mistake, let your supervisor know immediately. Find out how you can fix it. Follow the proper chain of command. Discuss items with your supervisor first.
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to starting the job, have all of your appointments with doctors, dentists, etc. out of the way. Have transportation and day care lined up. Have an emergency plan for day care and transportation. Take time to make new friends. Find positive and upbeat co-workers. Avoid negative, critical and gossiping people. Keep your personal life and problems at home. Do not use the employers' equipment and time to do personal things. Be patient with yourself and your employer. It takes time to get used to, learn and like a new job.

Good Work Habits	
Getting Along With Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not express your opinions, biases, or prejudices about others while at work. Diversity is a priority in the work place. It should also be a priority of yours. • Accept constructive criticism. Do not become defensive or take criticism personally. Consider changing if it is warranted. If you are unsure how to handle the situation, check with your supervisor. • Find yourself a mentor, someone who knows the company and the job well enough to coach you or show you the ropes. • Keep your emotions under control. • Show appreciation.

How to Lose Your Job

Let's say it is the week after you start work. Jennie, who works with you, comes in crying. She has been in the boss's office. "What is the trouble?" you ask. Jennie tells you she has lost her job. But she doesn't tell you the reason. Why do employees lose their jobs? Suddenly this question becomes very important to you. You do not want to lose your job. You may be afraid to ask your boss, so here is the answer to your question.

The managers of many businesses were asked why most employees are let go C they all put down the same three words: **POOR WORK HABITS**. The employees who lost their jobs knew how to do them. They could do them well, but did not realize that it takes more than that to keep a job. Their work habits and attitude lost them their jobs. The following table provides a list of some of the most common poor work habits that cause people to lose their jobs.

Poor Work Habits	
Lazy, Late, Absent	<p>Lazy workers don't do their full share of work. Other workers must work harder in order to get the work done C or more people must be hired to do the work the lazy employees fail to do. This is a poor way to run a business. Most employers will not keep a lazy worker for long.</p> <p>Employees risk their jobs when they are often late or absent from work. Many jobs depend on a number of people working together. If one person is late arriving or absent from the job, it affects the other employees. Employers cannot afford to keep this kind of employee.</p>
Not Following Directions	<p>Many people lose their jobs because they fail to follow orders. Employees who disobey the boss do not keep their jobs for long. Employers will not keep employees who do not follow directions.</p>
Complaining	<p>Some people lose their job by being troublemakers. It is easy to grumble and complain. Be aware that it may cost you your job.</p>
No Responsibility	<p>Some workers lack the desire to accept and gain responsibility. Good employees know how to gain and accept responsibility.</p>

GOOD WAYS TO GET FIRED!

Be late for work... “I overslept...family didn’t wake me up...alarm didn’t go off...my watch stopped...missed the bus...had a flat tire(again!)...ran out of gas...I forgot what day it was...etc.”

Don’t show up... “I just had to go to my cousin’s wedding...had to go to my grandmother’s funeral...my back hurt...baby was sick...had something else to do...etc.”

Don’t call in when you are sick... “Who cares if I don’t call in, they won’t miss me...I don’t have a phone and it’s too much trouble to get to one...I was too hoarse to talk...etc.

Call in and tell them you are “sick” when you aren’t really sick.

Leave without an okay for time off.. “I’m afraid if I ask for time off, they will turn me down...so I’ll just take off for a couple of hours or may be the rest of the afternoon and let them know when I get back. What’s the difference?”

Tell your boss off...fight with your fellow workers...carry a chip on you shoulder...if you make a mistake, blame your fellow workers (but never yourself)...gossip and gripe about everyone but don’t offer to help, nor offer any suggestions for solving a problem...get ahead by shoving the other guy down.

Don’t bother to learn more...now that you have finally got a job, don’t rock the boat...be afraid of opportunity---especially if it is a chance to learn more about your job or what makes your company tick...and by all means avoid going to school during off hours...be satisfied with your pay.

Wear yourself out over the weekend...show up worn out on Monday morning.

Untidy dress...some employees are untidy in their dress and appearance. In some jobs this does not matter a great deal. But in jobs dealing with public, it is highly important.

Carelessness...workers who are careless are dangerous in many jobs...they don’t pay attention to the work you are doing...they become sloppy and it has to be done again...this all takes time and costs the boss money. Some stores get a bad name because of careless employees. .

Failure to follow the rules...every company must have rules. The rules are made to be followed by employees. The employee who thinks the rules were made for other workers will be in trouble.

Disloyalty...a disloyal worker is not good advertising for a company or product. A disloyal employee talks against the boss and the company. Once the boss finds out about the worker’s attitude, the disloyal worker will not have long to complain about the company. The worker will not have a job

Giving false statements...employers are not likely to keep workers who do not tell the truth. Many persons lie about their age in order to find jobs. This usually happens with people who have quit school who are under 18 years of age. Many jobs require the employees to be 18 years of age because of insurance requirements. If a person lies about their age and is hired, and then gets hurt on the job, the company can easily lose its’ insurance, and may times gets in trouble with the government because it has violated the law. If you lie about your age, what else will you lie about? False statements are made in other ways also. Everyone makes mistakes sometimes. Be willing to admit your mistake. Many employees try to talk their way out of their mistakes, or they blame it on someone or something else. The boss dislikes being fooled. If and when the boss finds out the truth - watch out. The employee who gives false information may get a final paycheck.

EMPLOYMENT TERMINATION

You have been working for XYZ Company and you believe it is time to leave. Respect your inner feelings regarding your job — you will know when its time to leave. Your job represents a large portion of your daily life, so it is important to feel good about what you are doing.

Actions to Take When Leaving a Job

People have many reasons for leaving an employer. Whatever your reason for leaving be sure to leave correctly. You do not want to “burn bridges” behind you, as you may need to go across that bridge again.

<p>Voluntary Resignation</p>	<p>People often resign because they have found another job that shows more promise, no longer feel the work they are doing is satisfying, or they want to make a career change. Regardless of the reason, never let leaving become a negative, emotional issue. Make sure you have another job, or at least the promise of one, before leaving.</p>
<p>Laid Off</p>	<p>“Laid off” means to be out of work through no fault of your own. Many times a general lay off is temporary. If you are laid off, you have only two choices: wait until your job opens again, or get another job. If you decide to wait until your job reopens, find out what your chances are for being taken back. In the meantime, you must plan your time and financial resources carefully. If you decide to try for another job, ask your employer for a letter of reference. This letter could help you during your next interview</p>
<p>Company Down Sized</p>	<p>If you are “down sized” this is no fault of your own. During the 90's many companies deemed it necessary to cut their work force. This may mean that your particular position has been eliminated and your services are no longer needed. This usually means you will search for another job with another company. Ask your employer for a letter of reference before you leave. It may take several weeks or even months to secure another position. You must plan your time and resources carefully.</p>
<p>Involuntary Termination</p>	<p>Being terminated is a serious matter. As a reaction to this unpleasant experience, your self-image and confidence may suffer for a time, but it is certainly not the end of your working career! Many people have been fired from a job, usually as a result of poor work habits and attitudes. Therefore, it is important to learn something from this negative experience!</p> <p>When you are fired from a job, there may be very little you can do about it but accept the situation. Consider it a learning experience. Your best approach is not to make excuses. Ask your employer to explain the reasons for releasing you. You should carefully examine these reasons and then consider changing certain work habits and attitudes in order to meet the expectations of another employer.</p> <p>If you believe you have been fired for unjust reasons, you may contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and talk with a counselor. They can advise you of your rights and further steps that may be taken. Once you file a compliant with the EEOC, they will investigate the situation.</p> <p>Now the question is, “should I mention being fired on an employment application blank or during future interviews?” You, of course, are the only one who can answer this question. Revealing your firing to possible employers might not be in your best interests. Many individuals who have been fired simply say that they are “making a career change” or “seeking employment in another industry.” In most cases, this type of positive comment satisfies the question, “Why did you leave your last job?”</p> <p>In the course of checking your references, an employer may find out that you were fired from your last job and ask for an explanation. If this somewhat embarrassing question arises, handle it calmly. At this point, what you say and the manner in which it is said are important. You should state that you discussed the problem issues with your past employer and have corrected these problems which could have a bearing on future employment. You might add that because of what you have learned from being fired, you are now prepared to be a better employee. Your next employer will probably be more willing to give you a chance if you are sincerely trying to improve your job performance.</p>

Resigning From a Job

Company policy for leaving should always be followed. Usually two weeks leaving notice is expected, although some jobs require more notice. This gives your employer time to hire and train someone else for your job. Your employer will appreciate your offer to help train your replacement and will most likely remember your spirit of cooperation when writing a reference letter or commenting about you. Most future employers will call your former employers about your work history while at that company or organization.

You should give notice orally and also in a well-written letter of resignation. This letter will be placed in your personnel file for future reference, and because of this letter, someone in the company might recall your courteous, business like approach and give you a good recommendation. This letter should include the following:

- ◆ The date you wish to leave
- ◆ Your reason(s) for leaving (keep it positive)
- ◆ Thanks for the skills you have learned
- ◆ Your appreciation of the people with whom you have worked.

A sample resignation letter is shown below.

Sample Resignation Letter

3567 Greentree Circle
Pleasanton, CA 94566-3133
July 3, 2000

Mr. Robert Kemper
Manager of Human Resources
Bendix Corporation
3826 Industrial Road
Pleasanton, CA 9456603133

Dear Mr. Kemper

Please accept this letter as notice of my resignation to become effective July 17, 2000. I have accepted a position as quality control supervisor with the Rand Corporation in San Francisco, and will be reporting for work on July 22, 2000.

I would like to thank the Bendix Corporation for giving me the opportunity to learn new and useful skills. Your management training program has been especially helpful. It has been a pleasure to work for the Bendix Corporation. I will always be proud to have been associated with such a fine company.

Sincerely

Jane Doe

Exit Interview

An exit interview is for your benefit. It will answer any questions they have and also give you the opportunity to have

your questions answered. This interview will probably be your last step in the process of leaving your present job.

You may be asking yourself why you have to have an interview to leave the job, after all you had one to get the job. The exit interview is totally different. You want to have an exit interview, so you leave with a clean slate and all of the business at hand settled.

Items To Be Covered

- ◆ Turn in any keys or tools furnished to you - sign off that these were turned back to the company.
- ◆ Where do you want your final paycheck sent?
- ◆ How do you want your vacation days treated? (If you gave two weeks notice and you have four days of vacation coming, maybe you would like to work six days and take the final four days as vacation. Maybe, just maybe, they would like for you to work the full two weeks and be paid for your vacation days).
- ◆ If you have a retirement account what do you want done with the account? Leave it there or draw it out and reinvest someplace else.
- ◆ Would you like to exercise your right to COBRA? You may be able to continue with their medical insurance for 18 months. You would be responsible for the premiums.
- ◆ You could ask for a letter of recommendation.
- ◆ You have the opportunity to thank them for employment.

EMPLOYMENT CATCH 22

Students and employers alike increasingly cite internships, part-time work, or volunteer experiences as the single most important factor in finding employment upon graduation.

Work Opportunities and Benefits

The obvious benefit of working is income to pay for tuition and living expenses; however, many less immediate benefits accrue to working students as well. The most valuable employment experiences give students the opportunity to work in a targeted field, increasing the chance of employment in that field after graduation. Even when not related to the student's major, however, work can benefit the student. Through work, the student can improve self-organization, establish a greater sense of responsibility, learn more about personal strengths, and clarify values - all while gaining self-confidence!

Work allows students to explore a career field, test career interests, and develop a career plan. Students also identify skills and build a professional network. Work experiences are resume-builders that give students a competitive edge in the job market after graduation. Employers believe that graduates who worked while in school experience a much easier transition into full-time employment after graduation. These graduates tend to have more realistic expectations and career goals than do their non-working counterparts. Perhaps for these reasons, employers like to hire graduates who worked for them while in school.

Balance Between School and Work

What about academics? Doesn't working affect academic performance? Certainly, as a student, academics should be your first priority. College students today have many demands on their time. In addition to the hours required in preparation for their courses, many are actively involved in student organizations that compete for study time. For active students taking a full course load, the decision to work while attending college warrants serious consideration. Students need to strike a balance between school and work.

In deciding whether or where to work consider work options that encourage academic success and maximize benefits to you as a student. Work that is related to your academic major is least likely to negatively impact academic performance. Employers who believe your education is important are more likely to provide a

supportive environment for student employees.

Value of Work Experience to Employers

There is some evidence that students who work actually do better in terms of academic performance and persistence than do their non-working counterparts. Working students learn time management skills, develop higher levels of motivation, enhanced self-esteem, and a strong support system. All of these things have been linked to academic success. Among the work available to students, internships and cooperative education experiences fit the optimal profile for academic performance and career success.

Employers surveyed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers prefer to hire graduates with prior work experience. They believe graduates with part-time work experience produce better quality work, accept supervision and direction more willingly, demonstrate better time-management skills, and are better able to interact with co-workers on team projects. Given two applicants with equal academic qualifications, 94% of these employers would hire the candidate with part-time work experience over the one without work experience. Employers rank work experience second only to communication skills.

Volunteer for Experience

Through volunteering, students often gain professional work experience and exposure to social problems in non-profit agencies. From the employer's perspective, volunteering demonstrates impressive motivation, commitment, and social responsibility. The valuable training student volunteers receive is, in itself, a form of payment for service.

Where Do You Start?

Above all, start early - don't wait until your senior (or last) year! Sometime during your freshman or sophomore year you should visit the Career Services Center or Student Employment Office on your campus. These offices post job listings for a number of local, national, and international opportunities. If you are awarded Federal Work-Study as part of your financial aid, check out the work-study jobs available to you. Most work-study positions are located on campus, but some are located in community service agencies off campus. Early in your academic career, you may want to explore part-time summer job opportunities. These positions may be local, throughout the United States, or overseas. The best time to apply for internships and coops is sometime during the second semester of your sophomore year. Unlike work-study, part-time jobs, and internships or cooperative education experiences are not contingent upon your financial aid award.

Selecting Employment

No doubt you, like most students, have learned valuable research techniques through your course work. Put those same research skills to work in your search for a part-time job or internship! Visit your Career Services library or resource area. Talk to employers at job fairs or career days hosted by your school, college, or university. Compile a list of employers - complete with addresses - likely to employ people in your career field. Counselors in your Career Services Center or Student Employment Office may assist you with developing your resume and preparing a cover letter to your target employers. They might also suggest resources for successful interviewing and job-search strategies to help you in your search for part-time employment or internships.

The decision to work or not to work is definitely yours - but if you choose to work while you are in college, utilize all resources available to you - especially those of your Career Services Center or Student Employment Office. There, trained and knowledgeable professionals can help make your job search easier. One thing is for certain - students who work part-time or who complete an internship during their college career are not likely to be found in the "Employment Catch-22" line upon graduation.

RESOURCES

America's Career InfoNet. Includes general outlook, wages and trends, state profile, resource library, career exploration. www.acinet.org/acinet/

Career Center, Florida State University, University Center - A4100, Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2490, 850-644-6431. April 12, 2000, www.fsu.edu/career

Cyberspace Resume Kit, Mary B. Nemnich, Fred E. Jandt, JIST Works, Inc., 720 North Park Avenue, Indianapolis, IN, 46202-3490, 317-264-3709, www.jistworks@aol.com or www.jobnet@aol.com

Employability Package for High School Students, Just Publishing, 8902 Otis Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46216-1033, 800-547-8366, www.jist.com

Employment Projections. www.stats.bls.gov/emphome.htm

Portfolio Websites:

www.sv400.k12.ks.us/port/why.html

www.eyesoftime.com/teacher/pfolio.htm (4/18/00)

www.cte.iastate.edu/portfolio.htm (4/18/00)

www.bsu.edu/careers/foliojsb.html

www.stuaff.nwu.edu/ucs/stuents/job-skills/portfolio.html (6/12/00)

Job Outlook 98, National Association of Colleges and Employers, 62 Highland Avenue, Bethlehem, PA 18017-9085, www.jobweb.org

Labor Market Information - All States. Links to labor market information sites for each state. www.state.sd.us/dol/LMIC/usmapLMlinks.htm

Minorities Job Bank. A job search utility. Has a hot jobs list. A good place to see salaries offered. www.minorities-jb.com/frames/frames18.html

Nebraska Databook. Statistical information from Nebraska on a wide variety of subjects. www.info.ded.state.ne.us/stahand/contents.htm

Nebraska Labor Market Information. Nebraska Department of Labor - Labor Market Information site with links to press releases, statistical data, and career and job sites. www.dol.state.ne.us/nelmi.htm

Nebraska Workforce Development. Nebraska Department of Labor site with information on Workforce Development programs, news releases, and links to other DOL-related sites. www.dol.state.ne.us

Omaha Career Network Center. www.omahacareernetwork.org

Planning Job Choices 2000, 43rd Edition, National Association of Colleges and Employers, 62 Highland Avenue, Bethlehem, PA 18017-9085, www.jobweb.org

State of Nebraska. Provides links to everything Nebraska from public information by industry to state government to tourism. www.state.ne.us/

U.S. News: Hot Jobs Tracks 2000. www.usnews.com/usnews/nycu/works/wocareer.htm

University of Nebraska Career Handbook, Career Services Center, UNL Nebraska Union, Room 230, Lincoln, NE