

*We keep moving forward, opening up new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths. (Walt Disney)*

## 3. STRATEGIES FOR AN EFFECTIVE JOB SEARCH

### OBJECTIVES

*The lessons in this chapter prepare you to:*

- Set personal goals
- Get organized
- Plan an effective job search
- Analyze job announcements and ads for critical information to better match your qualifications with the employers' needs
- Fill out job application forms and take employment tests
- Understand how to research potential employers
- Write effective resumes
- Translate military experience into job skills
- Write effective cover letters

## 3.1 SET GOALS

### What to Do

On the next page you will identify specific jobs you are interested in researching and pursuing. Once you know more about a particular field or you want to explore career options, use the form on the following page to help you explore your options.

**Step 1:** Identify jobs that interest you and write the titles on the following page.

**Step 2:** Find out the salary range and necessary skills. Compare these to your financial needs and transferable skills.

**Step 3:** Identify the training experience you need to qualify for the positions you find interesting.

**Step 4:** Include your family members in your decisions.

*So many of our dreams at first seem impossible. And then they seem improbable. And then, when we summon the will, they soon become inevitable. (Christopher Reeve)*

# PROFESSIONAL GOALS WORKSHEET

Job Title	Salary Range	Necessary Skills	Your Skills	Training/ Experience Needed
1. _____	\$ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
2. _____	\$ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
3. _____	\$ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
4. _____	\$ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
5. _____	\$ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____

## What to Know

Now that you have done a personal appraisal and some career exploration, you need to make some career decisions to provide direction for your job search. You need to establish realistic goals, then figure out the best way to achieve them.

There are three types of goals:

- Short-range (6 months to 1 year)
- Intermediate-range (1 to 5 years)
- Long-range (5 to 10 years)

You may need to make realistic career goals for each time range. What you want to be doing in five years may not be feasible now, but you can work toward that goal. You may need to find a short-term, stopgap job before you can obtain the appropriate, long-term position you really want. You may need to obtain a position or training in the short-term in order to qualify for the long-term position you would like to pursue.

You need to have some consistency between your short-term and long-term goals. Each job along the way should be a step toward your long-term goal. You have already started the process of personal appraisal. This is an important step in goal setting.

You might also want to refer to your individual transition plan from pre-separation counseling.

## What to Do

It is difficult to make decisions about which goals to pursue if you do not know what your goals are or how you want your career to progress. Your goals must be SMART:

Specific  
Measurable  
Adaptable  
Realistic  
Trackable

### 1. Specific

If your goal is not specific you may not have a firm idea of how to get that job.

*EXAMPLE: I want a good paying, daytime job so I can continue my education.*

This job goal is not specific enough to suggest where to start looking for this kind of employment. Your job search will not be focused. You may find a job, but it will probably not be the most appropriate one.

*EXAMPLE: I want a job in warehousing because I already have military experience doing this type of work. It needs to be part-time and at night so I can use my military education fund to attend school during the day which will enable me to change my career. The position must pay at least \$7.00 per hour and have a minimum of pressure so I can concentrate on my studies.*

This employment goal is specific enough to suggest where to start looking for this kind of employment.

## 2. Measurable

Make a realistic, daily/weekly time table. This allows you to measure whether or not you are consistent in your employment search efforts.

*EXAMPLE: I will contact 3 employers per day on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. On Monday and Friday, I will answer newspaper ads and send resumes.*

Setting up a time table avoids procrastination.

## 3. Adaptable

Setting an employment goal is like using a road map with optional routes. If your search is not getting results, try an alternative route to your destination.

*EXAMPLE: I have been looking for a \$9.00 per hour, part-time, evening warehouse job so I can go to school during the daytime.*

*I have not had any results. I will begin looking for a \$8.00 per hour, daytime warehouse job and will go to school during the evening.*

Change your search method if it is not working. If your search method is working stick with it. Remember: You can stick with your employment search method but change your employment preference, the wage you want, or the hours you will be available to work.

## 4. Realistic

Make sure your employment goals are realistic for your personal needs, the local economy and the job market. Your goals may be appropriate for your current needs, but not realistic for the current economic situation. You may have to settle for a position with less pay, less benefits and less advancement because the position you need and want is not available in your local employment market. You may have to consider other work until you can move to an area that has the employment opportunities you want and need.

## 5. Trackable

You need to be able to trace your steps in your search for appropriate employment. Keeping track of where you go, with whom you speak and the results of each contact is extremely important. If your search is not getting results, you need to be able to look specifically at your efforts in order to see if there is some element that is missing or needs to be added. You cannot improve what you cannot track.

Now that we have demonstrated the **SMART** technique, write your own short-, intermediate- and long-range goals. Make them employment related. It is easiest to start with long-range goals and work backwards to short-range goals.

## 3.2 GET ORGANIZED

### Schedule Your Time

Think of looking for a job as a job. It requires planning and follow-through. At the beginning of each week, prepare a schedule with blocks of time for each type of activity (phone calls, reading ads, writing letters, etc.). Then, as the week progresses, make changes to allow time for interviews. Below is an example of a weekly schedule. **NOTE: Set time aside to enjoy your family and friends, and relax.** The sample schedule below shows Friday afternoon and Saturday as time off.

The advantage of a schedule is it allows you to plan and use your time most effectively. It helps you avoid saying things like: “I really wanted to, but...”; “I just couldn’t find the time...”; or “I wish I had....” At the beginning of each week, plan for each type of activity. Then, when an employer gives you a time for an interview, you can rearrange your schedule to use your time efficiently.

Looking for a work is a full-time job. **Keep good records.** Use office software to organize company and interview notes, schedules, resumes, etc. Get a calendar and keep it current. Your time is valuable and there is much to be done in finding the right job for you. Schedule carefully, balancing your needs.

The Company Information Record and Job Search Log further in this section will help you record your job search efforts and your progress in pursuing specific jobs. Be sure to prioritize your time. Some tasks are more important than others.

The method you use to keep track of your job search is not important, but keeping track of it is very important! The chart shown is designed for a searatee doing full-time job searching. You may want to use the sample chart provided, or you may want to develop your own system. However you decide to do it, make sure you do it well!

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sunday	
8:00	Search Internet and want ads	Make personal visits or interviews	Search Internet and want ads	Telephone calls, applications, or inquiries	Telephone calls, applications, or inquiries	Search Internet and want ads	
9:00			Letters, applications				
10:00	Networking calls		Phone calls	Letters/ applications			Letters/ applications
11:00	Letters/ applications		Follow-up activities	Follow-up activities			Admin. tasks
12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
1:00	Letters, phone calls or interviews	Letters/ applications	Search for new prospects—visit library to read professional magazines, directories, etc.	Make personal visits to employment agencies	Time off	Prepare weekly schedule	
2:00		Phone calls					
3:00		Follow-up					
4:00	Administrative tasks	Administrative tasks	Administrative tasks	Administrative tasks			

## 3.3 APPROACH THE JOB SEARCH PROCESS

### What to Know

Finding a job is hard work. It is a job in itself. You should treat it just like a job, and use every resource available, including friends, acquaintances, relatives, teachers and professors. When you speak with these contacts, ask them about where they work.

#### Job Search Methods

##### Check with:

- Your transition office
- State Employment Services
- Private employment agencies
- Internet
- School placement offices
- Civil Service Administration (for testing)
- Union hiring hall
- Chambers of commerce
- Employers

##### Answer ads in:

- Local, state, national newspapers
- Professional or trade journals

##### Apply directly:

- Job fairs
- Private Industry Council
- Employers

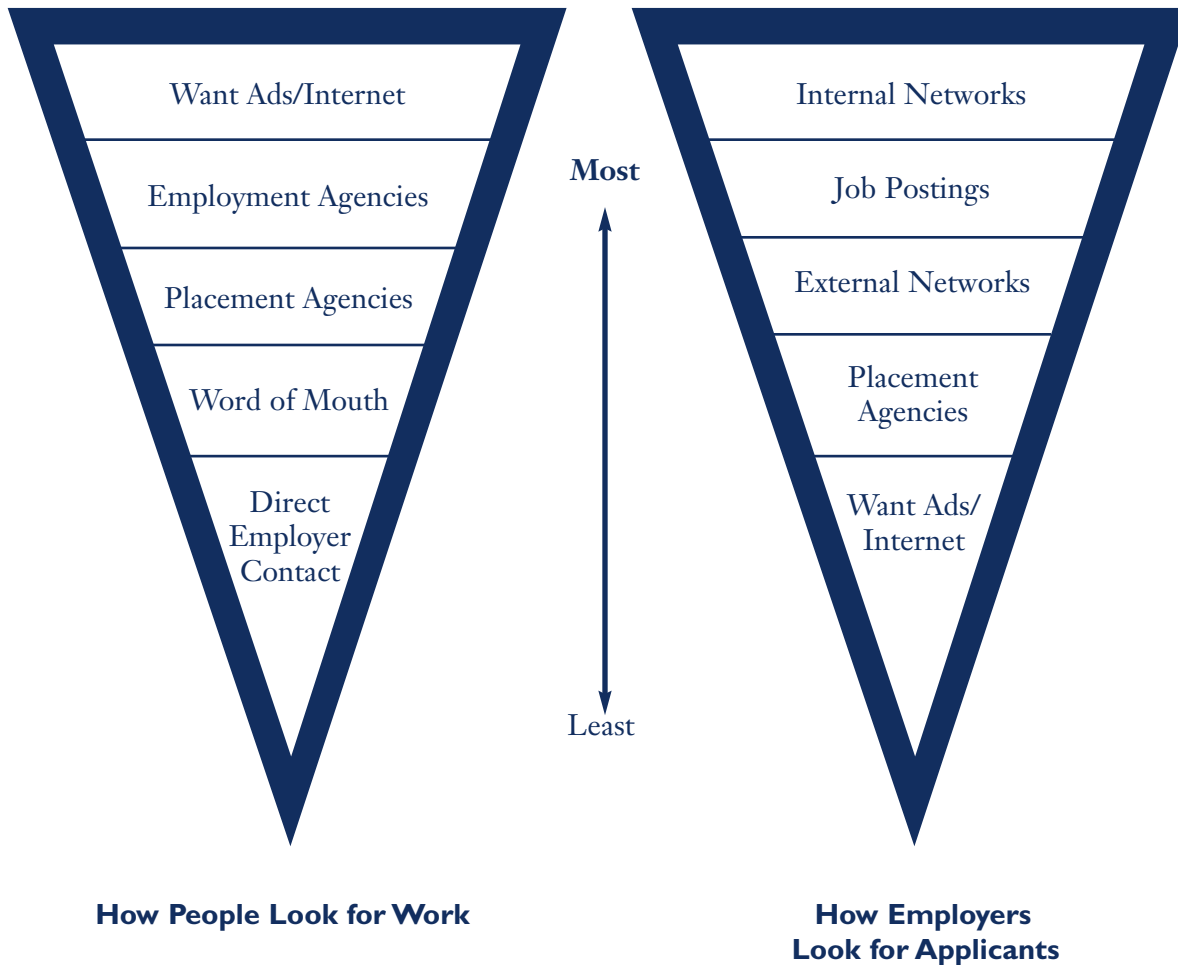
##### Contact local organizations

### Hidden Job Market

The *hidden job market* simply refers to the fact that **most** jobs are not advertised. Eighty percent of all positions are filled **without** employer advertising. These positions are filled by, or created for, candidates who come to an employer's attention through recommendations from employees, referrals from trusted associates, recruiters, or direct contact with the candidate. Effective networking—using your contacts to connect with the employer's contacts—is the key to the hidden job market. You need to become skilled at finding the hidden job market in order to have access to as many jobs as possible. Employers are constantly on the lookout for suitable candidates to replace departing, retiring, or inefficient workers; to work on new projects or to add expertise in a particular area. Employers often have an immediate need to fill a position (someone resigns, a contract is awarded, etc.). Employers review resumes on hand or interview a prospective employee before advertising. Making these connections requires diligence and hard work.

*People who wait for all conditions to be perfect before acting, never act.*

## COMPARE HOW EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR APPLICANTS WITH HOW PEOPLE LOOK FOR WORK



**The Problem:** Most job-seekers spend their time checking and responding to want ads, yet employees hire the least number of people through want ads.

**The Solution:** Identify companies you want to work for, try to get informational interviews, ask for a job, leave a resume, fill out the job application, check back periodically. Show enthusiasm but do not be a pest.



## Networking

Getting people involved in your search is called networking. It means using personal contacts to get information about job leads and contacts. Regardless of the type of job you are looking for, building a network will help you tap into the hidden job market. You never know where the best job lead will come from. The figure below will help you to consider those people you should involve in your effort to find work.

Start building your network by making a list of all the people you know. Do not limit the list to people who know the work you do. The people on this list are your primary contacts. They do not have to be people who know about possible job leads, they just might be people who know other people that have knowledge of job leads, occupational information, specific employer contacts, etc.

Before you begin contacting the people on your list, decide what type of information you want from the contact. You may be looking for:

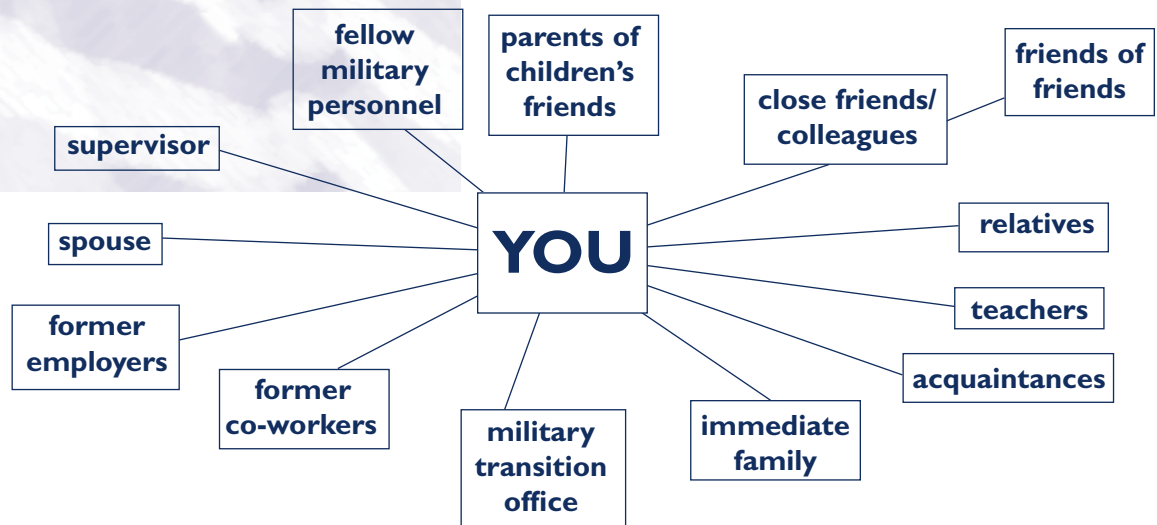
- information about a particular company, industry or line of work;
- a referral to someone who might be able to help you; or
- advice on conducting your job search.

In many cases, you will want to ask to set up a brief meeting with the person. It is not a job interview. . . but it may bring you a job lead. Always have plenty of resumes available.

If you feel awkward or embarrassed contacting people to ask for something, remember:

- most people like helping other people;
- many people have been in your shoes and remember how hard it was; and
- some people will have a job opening, or know of one, and feel that fate brought you to them!

Begin your networking by calling the people on your list you can talk to most easily and work up to making the calls that are more stressful. You may have to force yourself to make the first few calls, but it does get easier with each call!



## 3.4 RESEARCH COMPANIES

### What to Know

One of the most critical elements but least used job search “tools” is researching companies. Most applicants think it is difficult to get information, or simply fail to see the value of the effort.

#### Research is a good idea because:

1. You may get to know someone in the organization, and therefore have a personal contact.
2. If you have information about the company, you can do a better job of identifying transferable skills and matching those to the organization and the job.
3. You can ask questions in a job interview that are based on information few other applicants have.

Researching a company can make you “look better” when compared to other candidates, because so few applicants do their homework.

### What to Do

The Internet is a critical element of successful job searching. Items you might want to research: company growth, city’s average salaries for field, annual reports, cost of living.

For example, if you wanted to find the ABC Company’s annual report for last year, you’d go to a search engine and do a “key word” search by typing in “ABC Company Annual Report.” The search engine will then generate a list of links to webpages that contain the key words you specified. The list of webpages is usually sorted by relevance, meaning that the ones at the top of the list are probably most closely related to what you’re looking for.

There are plenty of reference materials available in libraries to give you information on a company. You can do the research yourself or ask the librarian for help. A professional librarian is trained to find information from a variety of sources, or to direct you to other resources available in the community. Your local public library may also have a special Business Reference Section, which collects additional information on businesses in the local area. This information generally tends to be more current than annual publications. In any case, the Reference Desk at any library is a good starting point for your research.

**After you have done research**, you may then call the company to get additional information. You should call to ask for information for two reasons. First, to request printed material about the organization such as an annual report or brochure. Second, try to speak with someone about the job you want. Refer to section 2.1, “What to Say on the Phone.”

## Practice

The Company Information Record on the following page has space for information you might be able to find on a given company.

Create and prioritize a list of companies that interest you in order to research them.

As you research companies, keep a record of important information on the Company Information Record form. Use one page for each company. Keep this information organized and easily accessible. Copy one worksheet for each company you are researching. Refer to “What to Say on the Phone” in section 2.1.

### Things to research before contacting a company:

1. Number of employees;
2. What the company does (service and/or products);
3. Business volume, net worth, profit and loss, company stability, etc. (see company’s annual report if available);
4. Company competitors;
5. Company history and future plans;
6. Company locations (headquarters, branch offices, international offices, retail outlets, etc.);
7. Salary range or hourly rates paid for various positions;
8. Contact names (department heads, human resource manager, people you know who work there, former employees, etc.);
9. Employment activity (recent hiring, firing, layoffs, etc.); and
10. Titles of positions that interest you.

## COMPANY INFORMATION RECORD

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person's Title or Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person's E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Webpage: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Position or Department of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_

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Required Skills, Credentials, Education, Work Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

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Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

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## JOB SEARCH LOG

Date	Company Name	Contact Name	Activity	Remarks	Follow-Up

## 3.5 JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE

### What to Know

One of the first steps in finding a job is to identify where you can get job information and help. Where you go will depend on the type of job you want, where you want to live and work, and the available jobs in your field. Some sources of job information are:

#### 1. Internet

There is information available for virtually all interests: graduate or professional schooling, full or part-time employment, internships, company profiles, summer jobs, or relocation assistance. The number of webpages available grows daily. Another advantage of the Internet is that you can access current information at all hours of the day or night. You can access information about your local area as well as take your search far beyond your regular boundaries. This is especially helpful if you want to relocate to another area. Another advantage is that using the Internet in your search demonstrates your leading-edge skills to potential employers. Not only do you know how to use a computer but you also know how to navigate online. The Internet can help you explore career alternatives and options that you maybe haven't considered. You can find some self-assessment tools online, and loads of occupations and disciplines to explore. No one website will meet all of your needs. The transition website has many useful links to a variety of job search related sources.

#### 2. State Workforce Agency (Employment Office)

Assistance in finding jobs is offered to veterans at State Workforce Agency (SWA) offices throughout the country. The local SWA offers services both to job-seekers and employers at no charge. Although the SWA provides assistance to everyone looking for a job, veterans are given priority. The SWA staff will evaluate your interests, skills, aptitudes and abilities and match them with employers' job requirements. Qualified applicants are referred to employers for job interviews. Qualified veterans are referred to employers ahead of non-veterans. Call the number listed in your telephone book under "State Government."

#### 3. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) staff and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)

Primarily located in the offices of the State Workforce Agency employment offices, these staff provide assistance exclusively to veterans. They directly provide or facilitate the provision of labor exchange services, including assessment, counseling, testing, job-search assistance, referral and placement.

#### 4. Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment is an employment-oriented program that assists veterans with service-connected disabilities by offering them services and assistance to help them prepare for, find and keep employment.

#### 5. Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT), U.S. Department of Labor

Apprenticeship is a combination of on-the-job training and related classroom instruction in which workers learn the practical and theoretical aspects of a

highly-skilled occupation. Apprenticeship programs are sponsored by joint employer and labor groups, individual employers, and/or employer associations. The BAT gives priority to veterans to help them gain entry into apprenticeship programs. All programs registered with BAT are recognized by State Apprenticeship Councils and meet VA regulations for training programs, which makes enrolled veterans eligible for VA educational assistance allowances.

For further information; write the Office of Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave, NW, Washington, D.C., 20210. You may also contact your nearest BAT Regional Office (*look in the blue pages of your phone book*).

## 6. Private Employment Services

Private employment agencies are not all the same. They are regulated by each state Department of Labor, licensing bureau. States regulate the percentage agencies are allowed to charge. The applicant (you) might have to pay for the agency to market you to local employers. They will counsel on how to dress, prepare your resume, interviewing assistance; but, will not get the job for you. Most employment agencies do not charge for their services. Employment agencies can also be employer fee paid. This means the employer will pay the hiring fee.

Other possibilities might be the fee would be split between you and the employer, or the employer might make an agreement to reimburse the fee once you have completed a probation period. Carefully read any contract you sign, and understand the terms. Get a copy for your records.

Career counselors are not employment agencies. Their function is to assist you in creating or upgrading a resume, dressing for success and interviewing skills. Career counselors usually charge a flat fee from \$500.00 to \$3,000.00. They do not arrange interviews for you, they point you in the right direction. Sometimes there are additional charges for extra services. Be sure anyone you use has good credentials. Ask to see and check their references.

Headhunters are people hired by organizations to locate specific types of people. They are paid by the company. Most often headhunters will not work with people who are looking for salaries less than \$40,000.00 and this number fluctuates depending on industry and geographic location. Don't expect a headhunter to burn up the phone lines trying to find you a job.

Temporary services put you on their payroll. As their employee, you are then sent out "on assignment" to other employers. You are paid by the temporary service, not by the company in whose office or plant you are working. Most temporary services do not have any benefits for their employees. Many temporary services will offer you training free of charge to update or to expand your skills. Many will allow you to come into the office on your own time and learn computer software. It makes you more marketable. There is usually no fee charged at a temporary service.

**7. College/School Placement Agencies**

Most institutions of higher education provide some kind of placement service, but this service is usually only available to students and alumni of the school. Some school/college placement agencies also provide instruction in job-hunting skills.

**8. Military and Professional Associations and Organizations**

Military and professional associations are useful for specialized occupations. They can provide information on areas where the demand for a particular occupation is higher, as well as information on employers hiring individuals in a particular field. Some of the organizations even provide specific job search and career instruction assistance.

**9. Telephone Directory Yellow Pages, Industry Directory**

These are useful sources of information if you already know the type of job you want. These sources provide lists of companies employing individuals in various types of jobs.

**10. Industrial and Craft Unions**

Industrial and craft unions tend to deal with a limited number of occupations. They are advantageous because they have exclusive hiring authority for some firms. If you have appropriate skills and/or aptitude and interests, this could be of value to you.

**11. Job Fairs**

A useful tool in meeting employers and delivering resumes is attendance at job fairs. Contact either your transition office, local chambers of commerce, and other business organizations which provide services to the community or further information about these events.

**12. Transition Offices**

Transition offices provide individual assessment, classes and workshops, and leadership consultation. Primary transition office programs and transition assistance from military service include relocation, financial management and aid, information and referral, family readiness, and family life skills.

**13. Chambers of Commerce**

Chambers of commerce offer rich resources about the businesses in their area and offer contact information for many of them. Their services are usually free for job-searchers. Publications are available, but only list member companies. Some have meetings that are open to the public.



## 3.6 JOB SEARCH ONLINE

### What to Know

Searching for jobs online is becoming increasingly significant in the job search process. There are some occupations that lend themselves to this process more than others. You first must first determine what job search sites would be best for you to find the particular occupations that interest you. Some sites specialize in certain types of jobs. Use the resources provided by your transition office and the transition website to research these. With thousands of job sites online, advertising millions of jobs, where do you begin? It can get confusing and frustrating if you don't know where to look. To practice, begin with a large, popular site, such as Americas Job Bank (AJB).

### What to Do

Once you get into the site, it will ask you several questions. First, in which state and locations you are willing to work. Identify these, then look under job families, which are broken down into many different job fields, depending on the site, and then individual job titles under each one. When typing in keywords, it is important to try and keep your search as broad as possible in the beginning. Once you have identified a variety of job titles, try and narrow it down. For example, if you wanted to be a “camera operator for television,” but do not have the experience to obtain that job right now, type in the word “television.” This will give you a deeper variety of job titles relating to jobs that may help you work up to the position you ultimately want. For example, a “camera utility” worker is a job title that is more entry level than television camera person. Type in a variety of keywords separated by commas to get an even broader perspective. Understand that how you type in keywords will dictate your results, because “construction, project manager” will give you an entirely different list of jobs than “construction project manager.”

As you look at specific titles that interest you, it will narrow your search. Employers often list jobs in a wide variety of titles for the same occupation. Finding these jobs is part of the challenge. If you stay with just one job title, you may miss out on a variety of jobs in related areas. In AJB, if you are looking for a construction project manager position, you might look in occupation fields such as management and engineer rather than construction. You need to understand how each site is organized, as each is different. Experimentation is important in locating all of the jobs that interest you. Look at both the big sites and also the specialty sites catering to the specific occupations that interest you. There are job search engines that provide extensive lists of job sites.

When you identify a job opening, try and research the company to find out all you can about the company and the job. You can also go directly to specific company web sites to locate job openings they may have and apply for them online.

### Applying for Jobs Online

There are several ways to submit your resume online. One of them is posting your resume on a job search career site.

#### Posting Your Resume on a Job Search Career Site

There are countless job search career sites on the web. Each is unique in its own way, but for the most part, similar in many respects of creating a resume on their site. Sites such as America's Job Bank have a way for you to register on their site and post your resume, hoping employers will utilize these career sites to recruit you as a potential employee.

- Most of these online resume builders are simple and straightforward. They give you a step-by-step, fill-in-the-blank process that is easy to follow. More than likely they require you to register on their site, which is usually free. Some of these sites are good and some are not so great in terms of resume format, so be selective.
- With each fill-in-the-blank space, you must carefully edit and proofread your documents. Spell check is usually not provided by the site. To spell check the document yourself, save the resume to your computer, spell check the document in your word processing program, then go back to the online document and make corrections.
- The objective is what the employer will usually use to screen applications. If interested, they will open the entire resume to review. Therefore, be sure that your objective is simple and clearly stated. A mistake many job seekers make is trying to sell your skills here by making their objective statement too long.
- Posting your resume on a website may not be the most effective way to get a job. The main reasons why this technique does not work are that individuals do not target their search or that the resume is poorly written. The best resumes are targeted resumes, and posting a resume on a web site does not allow for the most effective targeting.

*Wealth comes to those who make things happen, not to those who let things happen.*

## 3.7 ANALYZE WANT ADS

In addition to using online search techniques, reviewing want ads in the classified section of newspapers and specific industry publications is also helpful. A small percentage of job-seekers find employment by responding to want ads. While want ads are not the only way to find a job, looking through want ads can give you a good idea of the availability of jobs in certain industries. You may be able to find out what kind of experience, qualifications, salary and skills are needed for certain jobs. If certain jobs do not appear in the want ads, it does not necessarily mean that there are no job openings in that field.

**Most new ads are published Wednesdays and Sundays, so pay attention to these days.** Read the want ads cover to cover, because jobs that interest you may be listed in unexpected places. For example, want ads for drywallers might be listed under construction, painters, laborers, home builders, carpenters, etc.

When reading and responding to want ads be aware of the following:

- Some ads do not give a company name, you reply to a P.O. box, making it impossible to do any research on the company.
- Ads that promise a big paycheck with little experience required usually indicate sales positions that work on commission.
- If the contact for the ad is an employment agency, find out if they will charge you a fee. Some agencies charge the employer a fee, some charge the job-seeker a fee.
- Multiple position ads usually indicate a new or expanding company. Competition is often fierce for these positions.
- Some ads use the word “preferred” (degree preferred, two years experience preferred, etc.). This usually means you can apply if you do not have that particular skill or ability as long as you have the other qualifications.
- When sending a resume in response to a want ad make sure you meet the minimum requirements. If the ad says certification, license, degree, experience, etc. required, you might be wasting your time if you do not have those qualifications. If it says “no phone calls,” do not call.

## 3.8 COMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS

### What to Know

Using the **Master Application Worksheet** (refer to section 1.2, Create a Career Catalog) makes filling out application forms much easier. Almost every employer will require you to fill out an application form, even though the company may already have your resume and cover letter. Applications may be used to make the first “cut” in screening applicants for interviews. The form may be a test to see how well you follow directions. It is always a good idea to take your time and do it well.

When possible get two copies of the form. Use one as a draft copy before completing the final form.

### What to Do

Use the following suggestions to complete application forms:

1. Be prepared when you fill out the form.
2. Read and follow all directions **before** beginning to fill out the form.
3. Make your application neat and easy to read—it will be judged on appearance and content. If possible, type the form. If you can't type the form, print neatly.
4. Do not write “see resume,” even if the application repeats information.
5. Read each question and decide how you will answer before you begin to write. This will help you fit the answer into the available space, as well as write the best answer.
6. Answer all questions. If a question does not apply or you feel the question invades your privacy, write N/A for “not applicable.” **Do not leave blank spaces.**
7. Do not scratch out or write over mistakes. If you must correct over a mistake, cross out the error completely with a single line (—).
8. Take your time, but work steadily. If you take too long filling out an application at the company, the employer may think you are not prepared.
9. Answer questions honestly—never lie, and do not use sarcastic answers.
10. Ask questions if you do not understand something about the form.
11. After you complete the form, check it for accuracy, correct grammar, and spelling. Make sure it is neat, and make a copy for your records.

12. Follow up on the application at regular intervals (about every week) until you hear from the employer.
13. Work Experience: Make sure you have all the information you will need with you. Work on describing your duties before you fill out an application, so you can be brief and clear in your descriptions. If you prefer not to give your salary history, write “will discuss in interview” in the space provided. However, keep in mind some employers will screen you out. When giving your reason for leaving, never give a negative answer. “I completed my military goal,” “moved,” and “seasonal,” are all very acceptable answers. Do not write “fired.” If you were fired, write “will discuss in interview.”
14. Position Desired: Always fill in this space! Never write “any” or “will do anything!” Do some research first so you know what jobs you qualify for and are available in the company.
15. Salary Desired: Before filling out an application, be sure you know the lowest salary you would accept and the wage range for the position you want. Call a few companies in the area and ask the pay range for the type of job for which you are applying. It is okay to write “open” or “negotiable” rather than putting a figure on the application to identify the salary.
16. Availability: Unless you cannot start a job right away, write “immediately” in this space. Otherwise, write the date you will be available to start work. If asked what hours or shifts you will work, write “open” unless you have specific requirements.
17. Special Skills, Abilities and Training: You are often asked to list any special skills, abilities, experiences and/or training you have that relates to the position you want. This is an opportunity for you to highlight anything that may possibly set you apart from other applicants.

### Your Right to Privacy

According to the Personal Privacy Act it is inappropriate for employers to request certain information on application forms. If you encounter a job application that requests this information, it is your decision whether or not to supply it. If you choose not to answer these types of questions make sure you write N/A (for Not Applicable) to indicate you have seen the question. Some examples of inappropriate questions include: date of birth, marital status, dependents, health, citizenship, and social or religious affiliations.

*I am not afraid of tomorrow, for I have seen yesterday and I love today. (William Allen White)*

## 3.9 OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEDERAL CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYMENT

### **Veterans Preference and Direct Appointment Authority for Federal Employment**

Applying for a job with the federal government is different than applying for a private sector position.

As a veteran, you may have an advantage applying for work with the federal government. Not only do certain veterans get extra points for veteran status in the selection process, but they also receive credit for their time in the military toward federal years of service for seniority and retirement. Keep in mind that there may be an application/employment waiting period for some veterans. Retirees have different rules which apply to them. Check the Transition website for the most current information.

By law, qualified veterans with a service-connected disability or who served on active duty in the United States Armed Forces during certain specified time periods or in military campaigns may be entitled to preference over non-veterans both in federal civil service hiring and/or in retention during reductions in force.

### **Federal Application Procedure**

In the past, the United States Federal Government required job applicants to submit a standardized application form known as the SF-171. Today you can apply for most federal jobs with a resume or an optional application (OF-612). The Office of Personnel Management (OPM), which is the government's hiring authority, now accepts resumes. Check the job posting/announcement to see which format and method of delivery they prefer.

Even if you submit a general application form, you may also be required to submit additional information targeted for each position—for example: OF-612, computer scan forms, etc. However, the resume will be considered the primary application.

If an applicant simply submits a regular resume they will never be referred and never qualify for any federal position. Resumes must be targeted and be completely tailored to the position. Federal resumes could be several pages in length as opposed to the preferred one page by private sector employers. Be sure to read the job announcement carefully to see all of the requirements for submitting an application.

There is computer software available at most Transition Offices which will enable you to use electronic versions of Federal Employment forms and/or help you with your resume or application.

## What A Resume For Federal Employment Must Contain

Read the job announcement carefully. You may lose consideration for a job if your resume or application does not provide all the following information and any additional information requested in the job announcement.

### Job Information

- Announcement number, title and grade(s) of the job for which you are applying

### Personal Information

- Full name, mailing address (with zip code) and day and evening phone numbers (with area code)
- Social Security Number
- Country of citizenship. Most Federal jobs require United States citizenship
- Veterans' preference
- Reinstatement eligibility (if requested, attach SF 50 proof of your career or career-conditional status)
- Highest Federal civilian grade held. Also give job series and dates held

### Education

- High school (name, city, state, zip code)
- Date of diploma or GED
- Colleges and universities (name, city, state, zip code)
- Major subjects studied
- Type and year of any degrees received (if no degree, show total credits earned and indicate whether semester or quarter hours)
- Send a copy of your college transcript only if the job vacancy announcement requests it

### Work Experience

- Give the following information for your paid and nonpaid work experience related to the job for which you are applying (do not send job descriptions)
- Job title (include series and grade if Federal job)
- Duties and accomplishments
- Employer's name and address
- Supervisor's name and phone number
- Starting and ending dates (month and year)
- Hours per week
- Salary
- Indicate whether they may contact your current supervisor

### Other Qualifications

- Job-related training courses (title and year)
- Job-related skills, for example: other languages, computer software/hardware, tools, machinery, typing speed
- Job-related certificates and licenses (current only)
- Job-related honors, awards, and special accomplishments, for example: publications, memberships in professional or honor societies, leadership activities, public speaking, and performance awards (give dates but do not send documents unless requested)

**Mary LouAnne Jenkins**

123 Pearl Street  
 Rockville, Maryland 12345  
 Telephone: Daytime (111) 222-3333 / Evenings (444) 555-6666  
 Email: MaryLou@email.com  
 SSN: 123-45-6789

**PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE**

Equal Employment Specialist, GS-260-12, DD Form 0028

**SUMMARY**

- Over 15 years of professional experience with the public.
- Personable and persuasive in communicating creatively with thousands of customers from all cultures and economic levels.
- Proven skill in persevering to solve customer's problems.
- Self-motivated and confident in making independent decisions.
- Very well organized and able to meet deadlines.

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Country of Citizenship: United States of America.  
 Veteran Status: 10 Point Veteran (see attached documentation).  
 Reinstatement Status: Not Eligible.  
 Civil Service Status: No prior civil service appointment.

**WORK EXPERIENCE****Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Counselor, October 19XX to present**

United States Air Force

123 Alameda Avenue

Lowry Air Force Base, Colorado 12345

\$29,000 per annum/plus excellent benefits/40 hours per week

Doug Ridenour (999) 989-9898

- Assist employers with equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaints, question and inquiries.
- Supervise a staff of five. Coordinate work schedules, organized work flow, trained new personnel, and served as office manager.
- Orient new employees in personnel procedures and EEO guidelines.
- Instruct military training regarding EEO procedures and activities.
- Counsel military members in their rights and responsibilities concerning on-the-job problems and issues.
- Organize administrative processing of EEO claims, increased the productivity of the EEO section by 45 percent.



## Mary LouAnne Jenkins

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### **Personnel Director, March 19XX to September 19XX**

Balvin Corporation

123 Westcliff Street

Council Bluffs, Iowa 12345

\$27,000 per annum/40 hours per week

Michelle Owens (123) 456-7890 (contact encouraged)

- Resolved wide range of customer problems, applying diplomacy and assertiveness to: personnel actions, salary and payment problems, management decisions, and culture/communication barriers.
- Organized the logistics of speaking engagements and investment seminars: location, catering, seating, lecture, speakers, travel.
- Maintained extensive financial records regarding individual and corporate clients.
- Supervised the personnel office operations. Reviewed personnel files, updated training records, recorded personnel actions and supervised the hiring/firing process.

### **Personnel Director, January 19XX to February 19XX**

ABC Corporation

1234 Jenson Avenue

Minneapolis, Minnesota 54321

\$23,000 per annum/40 hours per week

Jerry McMond (333) 567-8900 (contact encouraged)

- Supervised 20 personnel clerks in the performance of their duties.
- Developed and administered a new filing system.
- Monitored the office budget and initiated all work orders and purchase requisitions.

### **EDUCATION**

M.A., Public Relations - University of California, Santa Barbara, 19XX

B.A., Humanities - University of California, Santa Barbara, 19XX

A.A.S., Personnel Management - California Community College, 19XX

High School Diploma - Bellview High School, Bellview, California, 19XX

Additional course work in psychology and business management. Elected to

Phi Delta Kappa academic honor society. Graduated Magna Cum Laude.

### **TRAINING**

Legalities of EEO, 19XX

EEO Grievance Process Training, 19XX

Total Quality Management Techniques, 19XX

Managing Diversity, 19XX

Personnel Management for Business, 19XX

## Mary LouAnne Jenkins

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### **ADDITIONAL SKILLS**

Fluent in Spanish, French and English  
Proficient in Macintosh and IBM Hardware  
Efficient in the use of MS Word, WordPerfect and Harvard Graphics  
Typing Speed: 85 words per minute

### **MEMBERSHIPS**

Member of the Air Force Reserve  
Member of the Rockville Chamber of Commerce  
Elected treasurer of local Civic Association 3-year term  
Voted to Board of Directors for Rockville Methodist Church 1-year term  
President of PTA 2-years consecutively

### **CERTIFICATE/LICENSURE**

Certificate of Qualification for EEO Operations, 19XX

### **HONORS, AWARDS AND SPECIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Air Force Achievement Medal, 19XX  
Published Management Techniques in Personnel Today Magazine, 19XX  
Letter of Appreciation for Outstanding Performance, 19XX

## Filling Out the Optional Application for Federal Employment — OF-612

Transition offices may offer assistance in completing a federal application and in composing resumes for Federal employment.

Here are some tips for filling out the OF-612 and the additional knowledge, skills and abilities narratives required in most case-examining job announcements. An example of the expanded format which may be used in preparing the work experience blocks follows the tip section.

1. Plan carefully. Your OF-612 is the first thing a prospective employer sees; apply the concept you are preparing “an interview on paper.”
2. Prepare your basic or “master” OF-612 after reviewing the X-118 Handbook and some current announcements in your field. The X-118 is a qualifications information source which is available in most CPOs and transition centers or libraries. For Wage Grade or Blue Collar information, use the X-118 C.
3. The announcement may detail Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) which must be documented on plain paper.
4. Prepare a separate narrative on each “selective” or “quality ranking” or KSA factor as stated in the job announcement. This could make the difference in whether or not you are considered for the position. A typed supplemental statement relating your experience to these factors helps avoid having to tailor your OF-612 each time you apply for different positions. Include concrete examples of work performed. The same information may need to be repeated to address multiple KSAs within the same application.
5. Block 8, “Work Experience,” is the most important part of your OF-612. Neglecting to provide complete information for jobs similar to the one sought could cause you to be disqualified for the positions. Start each section of Item 8 with duties, which are what you do for your employer; list all key duties, including those not listed in your position description.
6. Follow the brief Duties narrative with a series of “bullet” entries which are concrete examples of **WHAT** you did, **HOW OFTEN**, **HOW MUCH** money or **HOW MANY** units of activities were produced, **WHO** you dealt with inside and outside the organization, and **WHY** the activity was done—i.e., how your product was used by others. Work from most important to least important examples.
7. Next, in each section include accomplishments, which are things you did which were above and beyond what is normally expected of you; describe those accomplishments which represent your highest skills. You may indicate major accomplishments after each work experience block.

8. Start with your most recent job which is similar to the work sought. **YOU NO LONGER HAVE TO GO BACK 10 YEARS.** Other work experience may either be summarized in one additional block, or you may continue to add new blocks as far back as needed.
9. Work performed as a volunteer may also be used to demonstrate your qualifications for a position. Remember to include volunteer or unpaid work experience that is related to the position for which you are applying.
10. A key item to provide on your OF-612 is evidence that you have progressed in each job, as well as from one job to the next. Clearly describe how you have assumed more responsibilities or more demanding duties with each job.
11. Use separate experience blocks for each employer, promotion, substantial salary change, job reassignment, or detail.
12. In Item 2, fill in the lowest grade level shown on the announcement you will accept. If qualified, you may be considered for grade levels above the level you indicated.
13. In Item 12, list degrees you expect to receive within nine months of the date of your application. Education may be substituted for experience, but experience is the major factor for most evaluations.
14. In Item 13, indicate any special qualifications, skills, and accomplishments: memberships, publications, presentations, letters of commendation, certificates, nominations, honors, awards, etc. Do not attach copies unless instructed to do so.
15. After you complete your OF-612, save the original. You will probably be able to use it for other, similar jobs. Photocopies are acceptable, but each copy must be signed and dated in ink. Fill in the job for which you are applying (Item 1), and the vacancy announcement number (Item 3), and the signature and date (Item 18) at the time of application.
16. You may be able to claim 5-point veteran preference/direct appointment authorities, if entitled to it, on Item 15 of the OF-612, **BEFORE RECEIVING YOUR DD Form 214.** This has been established in an OPM directive to federal agencies. You must provide proof of preference in competitive examining prior to entry. You can not claim 10-point preference without the documentation noted on the Standard Form 15, Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference.

*Transition offices offer assistance in completing a federal application and in composing resumes for federal employees.*

## 3.10 CREATE AN EFFECTIVE RESUME

### What to Know

Many people think that a resume is only for white collar jobs. On the contrary, in our changing job market almost everyone will need a resume, including most blue collar workers.

The resume is a selling tool that outlines your skills and experiences so an employer can see, at a glance, how you can contribute to the employer's workplace. More to the point, what we are actually doing is applying for an interview. Only in the rarest of cases will a resume in and of itself directly secure a job offer. The goal of an effective resume is to highlight and summarize a person's qualifications.

### What to Do

The first step in creating your resume is to determine which jobs you are both qualified for and interested in. In today's job market it is crucial to be as specific as possible. Your experience in the military has probably given you a wide variety of skills that you can apply in several career fields. **Make a determination of what you want to do.** To clarify your skills selection refer back to transferable skills, section 1.4. Use the statements you wrote to help you decide.

Once you have identified the types of positions you want to pursue, you need to select the resume format that best introduces you to the job market. This is a marketing decision based on the message you want to send to a potential employer. Target your skills to fit the job you are applying for.



*Many people think that a resume is only for white collar jobs. On the contrary, in our changing job market almost everyone will need a resume, including most blue collar workers.*

## RESUME FORMATS—WHICH ONE IS BEST?

Resume Format	Advantages	Disadvantages	Best Used By
<b>Chronological</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widely used format</li> <li>• Logical flow, easy to read</li> <li>• Showcases growth in skills and responsibility</li> <li>• Easy to prepare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasizes gaps in employment</li> <li>• Not suitable if you have no work history</li> <li>• Highlights frequent job changes</li> <li>• Emphasizes employment but not skill development</li> <li>• Emphasizes lack of related experience and career changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals with steady work record</li> </ul>
<b>Functional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasizes skills rather than employment</li> <li>• Organizes a variety of experience (paid and unpaid work, other activities)</li> <li>• Disguises gaps in work record or a series of short-term jobs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viewed with suspicion by employers due to lack of information about specific employers and dates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals with no previous employment</li> <li>• Individuals with gaps in employment</li> <li>• Frequent job changers</li> <li>• Individuals who have developed skills from other than documented employment</li> </ul>
<b>Combination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlights most relevant skills and accomplishments</li> <li>• De-emphasizes employment history in less relevant jobs</li> <li>• Combines skills developed in a variety of jobs or other activities</li> <li>• Minimizes drawbacks such as employment gaps and absence of directly related experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusing if not well organized</li> <li>• De-emphasizes job tasks, responsibilities</li> <li>• Requires more effort and creativity to prepare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career changers or those in transition</li> <li>• Individuals reentering the job market after some absence</li> <li>• Individuals who have grown in skills and responsibility</li> <li>• Individuals pursuing the same or similar work as they've had in the past</li> </ul>
<b>Target (should be used in all resumes)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalized to company/position</li> <li>• Shows research</li> <li>• More impressive to employer</li> <li>• Written specifically to employer's needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time-consuming to prepare</li> <li>• Confusing if not well organized</li> <li>• Should be revised for each employer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone – because any of the other formats can be made into a targeted resume</li> </ul>



## Translate Your Military Experience Into Civilian Terms

As you create your resume, avoid military jargon and military terms. Most civilian employers will not understand military jargon, abbreviations and acronyms.

Therefore, use the following guidelines to prevent this problem:

- Write out terms and, when necessary, explain what they mean.
- For specialized military training, list the names and number of hours of professional and technical training you have taken. Only include training if it relates to the job.
- Briefly explain any course that may be pertinent to the job. For example, write, “Management and Supervision” as a course title. Then add the course content: equal opportunity law; giving and receiving positive and negative feedback; and giving directions.
- Use civilian equivalent phrases and titles. Civilian recruiters will not take the time to translate your resume into civilian terms, and therefore may not see you as qualified for the position. Below are some military terms with recommended civilian equivalents.

<b>Military Terms</b>	<b>Civilian Equivalent</b>
NCOIC .....	Supervisor, Manager, Coordinator
TDY/TAD .....	Business Related Travel
PCS .....	Relocation
NCO Academy .....	Leadership or Management Training
War College.....	Executive Military Leadership School
Command and Staff College.....	Senior Military Leadership School
Basic Officers Course .....	Entry Level Officer Leadership Course
Basic Training .....	Introductory Military Training
O7 and above.....	President, Senior Director, Chairman of the Board, Managing Director
O5 and O6 .....	Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Program Director
O4.....	Senior Administrator, Department Head, Program Manager
O1 to O3 .....	Executive, Administrator, Manager, Project Officer
WO1 to WO5 .....	Director, Specialist, Facilitator, Technical Manager, Technical Specialist
E7 to E9.....	Director, Supervisor, Department Manager, Operations Manager, Senior Advisor
E4 to E6.....	Assistant Manager, Line Supervisor, Section Leader, Task Leader, Supervisor, Foreman
E1 to E3 .....	Production Worker, Assembler, Technician, Assistant, Apprentice, Team Member

## Follow These Resume Guidelines

1. Write your resume to show employers three things:
  - The amount and kind of **responsibility** you have handled.
  - The **results** you have achieved.
  - The **relevancy** of your past responsibilities and accomplishments.
2. List your **achievements** and **how you solve problems**, not simply your responsibilities. In other words, explain how you increased operational efficiency, the amount of money you saved or raised, the number of people who used the service or product, the action that came about as a result of your efforts, etc. Write these items in phrases that identify the problem, note the solution, and describe the result.
3. Use **statistics or numbers** when you can, to show the results of what you did (i.e., size of organization, number of people supervised, length of report, time involved, size of budget, amount of money raised, etc.). Identify types of people, services, products, and programs with which you worked.
4. **Write your own resume.** Seek all the advice you can, but since you'll be the one at the interview, you'll make the best author. If you decide to use a resume writing service, work closely with the writer to make sure that the resume reflects your experience and personality.
5. Keep your resume **brief, clean and easy to read** with lots of white space on the page. Use the minimum number of words to convey what you wish to say. Be able to **defend every word**.
6. **Be specific** about your job and accomplishments; leave nothing to the imagination.
7. **Be selective** in the information that you include in your resume. Choose only information that relates to the jobs you seek.
8. Include **volunteer** experience **relevant** to the position sought. Also, include data on travel, languages, hobbies, certificates, if relevant to the target job.
9. Match the style of your resume to the style of the company. Avoid the slick look that many resume services offer. Print your resume and cover letter on matching bond paper (white, bone, or ivory). Do not print on the back side of your resume. Use a standard typeface and black ink.
10. Avoid gimmicks. **Be creative, but always professional.**
11. If possible, keep an electronic copy of your resume so you can easily make changes. Check with your transition office, public library, State Workforce Agency employment office or community college career center to see if they have computers available that you can use. Alternatively, you can write your resume by hand and pay a service to type it and save it electronically.



12. Be impressive in describing your experiences, but always be **100% honest**. Never exaggerate or misrepresent yourself.
13. Make several **drafts** of your resume—boil it down to essential information and have it critiqued before it is copied. Recognize that you may need to write several different resumes in order to customize it for specific jobs.
14. **Always** send a cover letter to accompany your resume.
15. **Do not include names of references** on your resume.
16. **Do not mention salary** on your resume.
17. **Keep everything positive** in what you say about yourself—stress your strengths, not your weaknesses.
18. **Use feedback** from friends, relatives, and interviewers as to how your resume is coming across and modify where necessary.
19. Your resume should not be longer than two pages. One page is usually enough, especially if you have limited work experience. When mailing resumes, do not staple any documents together.
20. Include a **Special Skills** section where you can note languages you speak, read or write; computer hardware and software you can use; and machinery or equipment you can operate, build or repair. **Do not use military terminology!**
21. Emphasize credentials (licenses or certifications) obtained if they relate to the job that you are seeking. They can either be included in the “Highlights of Qualifications” section or in the “Education and Training” section.
22. Information you **should not include** on your resume:
  - marital status
  - names, ages, and number of children
  - spouse’s job
  - age
  - race
  - photograph of yourself
  - religious and political affiliations
  - height and weight
  - salary for each previous job
23. **Be Dynamic.** Use the **action verbs** on page 74 to begin each sentence in your resume. Avoid using the phrase “responsible for... .” Most interviewers interpret that phrase to mean you did not complete the action yourself. It is recommended that you use present tense for current jobs and past tense for jobs you have previously held.

## Resume Worksheet

Building a good resume takes a lot of time and thought. You will not be able to do this quickly or in one sitting. Try to see it as a process taking one step at a time, so that it will not seem so overwhelming. You will discover just how well the time was spent when you have a good resume.

As you prepare your resume for each application, make sure you know how the employer wants to receive it. Do they want it mailed via U.S. Postal Service? Do they want it e-mailed? Submitted online? If a resume is submitted in a form that does not meet their expectations, it may not even be considered.

Once you feel the resume looks and reads well, have a professional review it for ease of reading, spelling and grammar. Make sure you use terminology that is common to the industry in which you are applying. Do not use military terms and acronyms. For example, do not make employers guess what a M1A1 Tank Crewman is and how that position relates to the job applied for. Your responsibility is to interpret for the employer the skills you have to match their needs.

Format has to do with organization of information. This manual provides you with examples of how to organize the same information using the three resume format styles. Refer to the example resumes further along in this section to see which best fits you and the position you seek.

- Name:** Use your complete name, not a nickname, as it appears in your normal signature.
- Address:** Make certain it is complete and spell out Street, Avenue, etc.
- E-mail:** Make sure that it is a professional address i.e. MarySmith@email.com versus MaryLovesBubbleGum@email.com
- Phone:** Include area codes and use numbers where you can be reached personally, by voice mail, or by a professional message on an answering machine. Never leave a number for a machine that has something “cute” or “funny” as a greeting.

**Employment/Job Objective:** The most effective, well-written job objective is a targeted job objective that is for a specific job (bookkeeper, medical transcriber, diesel mechanic, etc.) with a specific company (for General Motors, Johnston automotive, etc.). Since you may need a different resume for each opening you locate, you will also need to change the job objective and especially the specific company for each resume. Be sure that you know the actual title of the job when you apply. If you put down that you are seeking a position that is not open, then you may not be considered. For example, if a line position is open and you are asking for a management job, then you may never get the interview that you want. Your objective can also be repeated in the body of the cover letter. Make the objective short and to the point. Consider this the title of your resume. The rest of the resume must convince the hiring authority that you have the background and skills to do the job and are well worth an interview.

Do not assume that any job objective is better than no objective. If your objective is vague and unfocused, you appear indecisive and unable to make decisions and set goals. This is not a description of duties or a vague description of a job. Avoid statements such as “a position that will utilize my broad talents and allow me to grow.” If this is your objective, better to leave it off your resume.

Using a job objective has been an optional issue on a resume in the past, but in recent years it has become more important. There are times when you absolutely need a job objective, such as:

- When applying online. Often jobs are sorted by objectives and directed to the correct department for review.
- When applying to large companies, to avoid the human resources department deciding the position you should fill.
- Posting resumes on job search sites, such as America’s Job Bank (AJB). Employers decide whether to review your resume based on the job objective.
- Resumes for scanning. The objective becomes a key word in the screening process.

**Targeted Job Objective:** When you know the name of the company, it is always good to mention it in the objective.

#### Examples of Good Targeted Job Objectives

- Seeking a position as a Licensed Vocational Nurse for St. Mary’s Hospital
- A position as a Bookkeeper for M&M tax consultants
- Position as a Security Guard for Brinks International

**General Job Objective:** Occasionally you do not know the actual company you are sending your resume to and a general job objective is most effective in these circumstances. When you do not know the name of the actual company or are going to a job fair and will hand out resumes to several companies, then the objective needs to be more generic. Often jobs that are posted on the Internet are blinds ads from head hunters and you will not be able to find the company name.

- Entry level position in multi-image production company
- Position as a Health Educator
- Project management position in Marketing

**Summary of Qualifications:** Write a summary that highlights your professional background as it relates to the needs of the company. This normally appears at the top of your resume and is intended to draw attention to specific personal qualities and skills you possess that make you a unique and qualified candidate. Hiring managers need to see immediately you have the skills and experience they need. If an employer has to figure out what you can do for him, the odds are you won’t get an interview. Do not repeat the same statements used in your resume, but you may summarize some information. Your company research will be invaluable here to help you relate your qualifications to the needs of the company. This can be in the form of a paragraph or a short list, with 4-5 one line bullet statements. Remember a resume is a sales tool and this is a good place to catch someone’s interest and to “brag” about your best qualities.

If, for example, you are applying for a position as an Administrative Assistant, you might want to list things such as:

- Five years experience in customer service
- Organized and efficient
- Ability to relate detailed information to the overall project for improved customer service

**Some other examples include:**

- Over 15 years of diverse and challenging experience, combined with powerful presentation skills, a disciplined approach to the task at hand and the innate ability to anticipate potential obstacles are attributes that contribute to a strong record of excellence and acknowledgment for “getting the job done.”
- Over three years experience ordering and maintaining a complex four million dollar inventory of parts. Filled orders in a timely fashion with 100% accuracy. Skilled at operating inventory control software.
- Five years experience in heavy equipment operation. Knowledgeable of related OSHA regulations with a perfect safety record. Experience in both commercial building and road construction.
- Over 12 years of technical sales and marketing experience including:
  - electronic component sales
  - knowledge of Unix, Pascal, Sun work station, Fortran
  - new software business start-up and market presentation
  - international marketing penetration

**Employment History:** This portion of the resume is probably the most important.

- Depending on the style you select, it will dictate where and how you will organize the information. To make this process easier to understand, there are several examples of each format in the TAP manual.
- There are many books that provide example resumes. See the transition website for specific recommendations.
- To begin exploring your employment history, write down everything you can about what you did in a specific job. Include:
  - skills
  - accomplishments
  - machines you can operate;
  - computer software you can run
  - improvements you suggested or made in a process or system.
- Try to include specific and quantifiable data. Refer back to section 1.4 and look at the skill statements you made and incorporate them.

Once you have written a paragraph or pages of information, find qualifications relating to the job you are seeking. If the job you are seeking is an entirely new field, but uses a lot of the specific skills from your past experience, consider putting information into categories. An example would be if you have been a Military Police Officer and want to go into private investigation, you could group bullet statements under categories such as investigation, case management, and security to create a combination resume. Or, if you were an electronics technician for the past four years in the military plus worked in the same field for two years prior to joining, and want to go into the same field of work, then you would write a chronological resume to show stability and progressive job responsibilities.

**Quantify your Experience, Responsibilities and Accomplishments:** The next step is the basics of every resume. List all results/achievements you have produced that relate to the position desired. Results sell, job descriptions don't! Refer back to the skills section and expand on these to use when writing your resume. Employers need to see accomplishments they can relate to with regard to the open position. The question that must be answered is, "What is this individual going to do for me?" Achievements that relate to the specific position will answer that question.

Describe what you accomplished with numbers, percentages, etc. Explain how many times annually, what percentage of increase or decrease you produced, how large a group you supervised or trained, etc.:

- Supervised 14 member staff to complete \$5.4 million project three months ahead of estimated date.
- Produced 150 percent of quota for eight consecutive months resulting in \$400,000 additional savings for the department.
- Administered travel budget of \$15 million dollars.
- Reduced inventory loss by 20 percent over six month time period resulting in first ever decrease in inventory loss.
- Developed training program for a 600 person organization.

**Education:** Make sure you include education that is relevant to the job you are applying and start with the most recent.

- List colleges, trade schools, military training schools (if you are applying for a job as a security guard, then your specific firearms training would apply, but if you want to work as a supervisor in a pre-school, this would not fit), correspondence courses, etc.
- List the location of the school but you do not need to include dates attended, especially if your knowledge of the technology is not current. Normally you do not list grades or specific classes; however, if you want a job where you have little experience and have a specific course that would directly relate, then you may want to point this out somewhere in the education section.

If you have recently graduated and took classes at night while working full-time, then the fact you graduated Magna cum Laude might be important to some employers. Always relate the information on the resume to the job.

*Resume writing takes a blend of creativity and skill. If you create a resume on a computer you can tailor it to the requirements of the different jobs you apply for.*

## ACTION VERBS TO DESCRIBE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

*The following verbs can be used to help you describe your skills and experience.*

PEOPLE	THINGS	IDEAS
<input type="checkbox"/> Accomplished	<input type="checkbox"/> Built	<input type="checkbox"/> Adapted
<input type="checkbox"/> Activated	<input type="checkbox"/> Calculated	<input type="checkbox"/> Analyzed
<input type="checkbox"/> Adapted	<input type="checkbox"/> Changed	<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinated
<input type="checkbox"/> Adjusted	<input type="checkbox"/> Compiled	<input type="checkbox"/> Created
<input type="checkbox"/> Administered	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Defined
<input type="checkbox"/> Advertised	<input type="checkbox"/> Constructed	<input type="checkbox"/> Devised
<input type="checkbox"/> Advised	<input type="checkbox"/> Created	<input type="checkbox"/> Educated
<input type="checkbox"/> Analyzed	<input type="checkbox"/> Designed	<input type="checkbox"/> Established
<input type="checkbox"/> Arranged	<input type="checkbox"/> Drafted	<input type="checkbox"/> Executed
<input type="checkbox"/> Assembled	<input type="checkbox"/> Edited	<input type="checkbox"/> Explained
<input type="checkbox"/> Assisted	<input type="checkbox"/> Enlarged	<input type="checkbox"/> Illustrated
<input type="checkbox"/> Calculated	<input type="checkbox"/> Established	<input type="checkbox"/> Implemented
<input type="checkbox"/> Catalogued	<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluated	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated
<input type="checkbox"/> Chaired	<input type="checkbox"/> Examined	<input type="checkbox"/> Innovated
<input type="checkbox"/> Coached	<input type="checkbox"/> Expanded	<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated
<input type="checkbox"/> Conceptualized	<input type="checkbox"/> Expedited	<input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed
<input type="checkbox"/> Conciliated	<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitated	<input type="checkbox"/> Investigated
<input type="checkbox"/> Conducted	<input type="checkbox"/> Familiarized	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained
<input type="checkbox"/> Consulted	<input type="checkbox"/> Formulated	<input type="checkbox"/> Marketed
<input type="checkbox"/> Contracted	<input type="checkbox"/> Generated	<input type="checkbox"/> Modified
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinated	<input type="checkbox"/> Governed	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitored
<input type="checkbox"/> Delegated	<input type="checkbox"/> Guided	<input type="checkbox"/> Negotiated
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrated	<input type="checkbox"/> Hired	<input type="checkbox"/> Obtained
<input type="checkbox"/> Devised	<input type="checkbox"/> Identified	<input type="checkbox"/> Organized
<input type="checkbox"/> Directed	<input type="checkbox"/> Improved	<input type="checkbox"/> Presented
<input type="checkbox"/> Distributed	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased	<input type="checkbox"/> Presided
<input type="checkbox"/> Effected	<input type="checkbox"/> Indexed	<input type="checkbox"/> Processed
<input type="checkbox"/> Explained	<input type="checkbox"/> Informed	<input type="checkbox"/> Proposed
<input type="checkbox"/> Indoctrinated	<input type="checkbox"/> Inspected	<input type="checkbox"/> Publicized
<input type="checkbox"/> Managed	<input type="checkbox"/> Installed	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommended
<input type="checkbox"/> Motivated	<input type="checkbox"/> Invented	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorded
<input type="checkbox"/> Organized	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepared	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruited
<input type="checkbox"/> Programmed	<input type="checkbox"/> Programmed	<input type="checkbox"/> Related
<input type="checkbox"/> Promoted	<input type="checkbox"/> Revised	<input type="checkbox"/> Surveyed
<input type="checkbox"/> Stimulated	<input type="checkbox"/> Specified	<input type="checkbox"/> Synthesized
<input type="checkbox"/> Supervised	<input type="checkbox"/> Used	<input type="checkbox"/> Transmitted
<input type="checkbox"/> Taught	<input type="checkbox"/> Wrote	

## Resume Writing

The purpose of including **accomplishment** statements in a resume is to create a visual value statement in the mind of the reader. This statement a snapshot which enables the employer to SEE you in action. It is important that you describe yourself with effective statements that create that picture. Accomplishment statements become the basis for answers to questions in the interview. This will be discussed later in the interview portion of the TAP manual.

*An accomplishment can be described is a series of actions (skills) that you took to complete the task or project, overcome the challenge, solve the problem or meet/exceed the goal you set and that ended in a positive, measurable result.*

### Creating Accomplishment Statements

**Step 1:** Think of this as a story with a title.

Identify the Scenario. Some topics (titles) may include:

- A task you performed alone.
- A project you worked on as a team member/team leader.
- A challenge you overcame in the job setting.
- A problem you solved.
- A goal you set.

**Step 2:** Identify the action you performed to tell the story.

Use the skills you identified on pages 17-21.

- Planned, organized and directed a 4 day training exercise. . .
- Troubleshoot, disassembled and repaired mobile over 300 pieces communications equipment. . .
- Recorded, documented and tracked daily, weekly and monthly reports.
- Formed, created and lead special security force.

**Step 3:** Which resulted in:

End with a **positive** and **measurable** conclusion.

- Which reduced accidents from 30% to under 2% in two weeks.
- Which enabled constant communication in 4 different states.
- Which increased the training rate of employees by 45%.
- Which provided search and recovery support for disaster victims.

### Resume Review

The next few pages contain example resumes showing the format styles:

- combination
- chronological
- functional

Take the time to review these resumes to help assist you in the writing of your own. These resumes are not to be used for you personally. That is to say, you can not just put your name on one of these and say it is yours. Everyone's resume is unique and different containing skills and education that you alone possess.

**Mark Andrews**  
 2345 Brook Avenue  
 Englewood, Colorado 80123  
 (123) 456-7890  
 MarkAndrews@email.com

**Objective:** Seeking a position as an armed security guard for Pinkerton Services

### HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Government secret security clearance
- Bilingual-fluent in both English and Spanish
- Proficient in Windows XP software
- Superior performance award for past four years in security management
- Able to make difficult decisions in stressful situations

### EXPERIENCE

#### Security

- Supervised the security of \$100 million of highly sensitive equipment
- Monitored restricted personnel in a correctional facility to ensuring they remained in detention
- Experienced in handling confidential material
- Trained in diffusing hostile situations
- Certified in the use of tear gas, C-4, and TNT
- Qualified sharpshooter in small arms and assault weapons

#### Investigation

- Investigated security and safety violations and wrote detailed incident reports
- Proficient at research and legal report writing
- Experienced at proofreading and checking content of investigative reports

#### Communication

- Proven ability to communicate effectively in diverse environments
- Experienced in complex radio communications under adverse conditions

#### Supervision

- Instructed, supervised and evaluated the performance of 25 personnel
- Coordinated work assignments, evaluated performance and disciplined a four-member security team

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

19XX-20XX	<b>Security Specialist</b>	U.S. Marine Corps
19XX-19XX	<b>Warehouseman Supervisor</b>	Micro Chemical, Inc. Denver, CO
19XX-19XX	<b>Security Guard</b>	Mayfield Malls, Denver, CO

### EDUCATION

<b>U.S. Marine Corps</b>	Specialized Training: Explosives, Firearms, Leadership, Diversity, and Communication
<b>Metro State College</b>	42 Semester units in Administration of Justice Denver, CO



**Mark Andrews**  
 2345 Brook Avenue  
 Englewood, Colorado 12345  
 (123) 456-7890  
 Mark\_Andrews@email.com

**Objective:** Seeking a position as an armed security guard for Pinkerton Services

**HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- Government secret security Clearance
- Bilingual-fluent in both English and Spanish
- Superior performance award for past four years in security management
- Able to make difficult decisions in stressful situations

**EXPERIENCE**

- 19XX-20XX      **Security Specialist**      U.S. Marine Corps
- Supervision of \$100 million of highly sensitive equipment
  - Monitored restricted personnel in a correctional facility to ensure they remain in detention
  - Experienced in handling confidential material
  - Trained in diffusing hostile situations
  - Certified in the use of tear gas, C-4, and TNT
  - Qualified sharp shooter in small arms and assault weapons
  - Proofreading and checking contents of investigative reports
  - Proven ability to communicate effectively in diverse environments
  - Instruction, supervision and evaluation of 25 personnel
- 19XX-19XX      **Warehouse Supervisor**      Micro Chemical, Inc., Denver, CO
- Proficient at using Windows 3.x
  - Supervised a crew of 15 in daily operations, including evaluation and discipline
  - Monitored complex cataloging and ordering systems
  - Helped develop and implement an effective security system
- 19XX-19XX      **Security Guard**      Mayfield Malls, Denver, CO
- Coordinated work assignments, evaluated performance and disciplined a four-member security team
  - Investigated security and safety violations and wrote detailed incident reports
  - Helped diffuse conflicts in a public environment with regard to everyone's safety

**EDUCATION**

- U.S. Marine Corps**      Specialized Training: Explosives, Firearms, Leadership, Diversity, Communication
- Metro State College**      42 Semester Units in Administration of Justice      Denver, CO

**Mark Andrews**

2345 Brook Avenue  
 Englewood, Colorado 12345  
 (123) 456-7890  
 Mark\_A@email.com

**Objective:** Seeking a position as an armed security guard for Pinkerton Services

**HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- Government secret security clearance
- Bilingual-fluent in both English and Spanish
- Superior performance award for past four years in security management
- Proficient in Windows software
- Able to make difficult decisions in stressful situations

**EXPERIENCE****Security**

- Supervised the security of \$100 million of highly sensitive military equipment
- Monitored restricted personnel in a correctional facility ensuring they remained in detention
- Experienced in handling confidential material
- Trained in diffusing hostile situations
- Certified in the use of tear gas, C-4, and TNT
- Qualified sharp shooter in small arms and assault weapons

**Investigation**

- Investigated security and safety violations and wrote detailed incident reports
- Proficient at research and legal report writing
- Experienced at proofreading and checking content of investigative reports

**Communication**

- Proven ability to communicate effectively in diverse environments
- Experienced in complex radio communications

**Supervision**

- Instructed, supervised and evaluated the performance of groups of up to 25
- Coordinated work assignments, evaluated performance and disciplined a four-member security team

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

<b>Security Specialist</b>	U.S. Marine Corps	
<b>Warehouseman Supervisor</b>	Micro Chemical, Inc.	Denver, CO
<b>Security Guard</b>	Mayfield Malls	Denver, CO

**EDUCATION**

<b>U.S. Marine Corps</b>	Specialized Training: Explosives, Firearms, Leadership, Diversity, and Communication
<b>Metro State College</b>	42 Semester units in Administration of Justice Denver, CO

**James Donaldson**

12 Emerson Drive  
 Norfolk, Virginia 12345  
 (123) 555-1234  
 jdonaldson@ibm.net

**Objective:** Service representative for Accounting Software International, specializing in conversions.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- Excellent teacher/trainer; patient and effective when working with a wide range of personalities.
- Accomplished in identifying and solving computer related problems.
- Project oriented, sticking to a task until completed.
- Successful in learning and comprehending new systems and methods.

**RELEVANT EXPERIENCE****Bookkeeping**

- Reconciled loan payment records between servicing company and 150 lending institutions.
- Reconciled cash records to computer records for over 200 accounts on a monthly basis.
- Prepared monthly payroll, paid bills and processed tuition payments for private preschool.

**Teaching/Supervising**

- Trained nine people in investor accounting, most of whom had no previous experience.
- Wrote an Investor Reports instruction manual minimizing training time for new employees.
- Maintained cordial working relations, while explaining and clarifying others' errors.
- Interviewed and hired four staff members.

**Computer Usage**

- Worked with computer analyst in development of computerized specialty reports.
- Assisted in implementation of new program on a PC, for accounts payable.
- Input monthly account records on a PC and generated trial balance.

**Problem Solving**

- Balanced seven months of critical reports for a large Federal agency involving \$350,000 of equipment for six major divisions which had been neglected for five months.
- Designed an account coding system to eliminate dual coding and time wasted correlating reports.
- Reviewed company procedures, identifying sources of high error frequency, and submitted recommendations to supervisors.

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

19XX-20XX	<b>Treasurer/Bookkeeper</b>	Little Tikes Preschool, Napa
19XX-19XX	<b>Investor Accountant Supvr</b>	First Bank Corps, Pleasanton
19XX-19XX	<b>Account Reconciliation</b>	Donzall and Associates, San Francisco
19XX-19XX	<b>Investor Accounting</b>	Meitus Investments, Santa Rosa
19XX-19XX	<b>Financial Specialist</b>	United States Air Force

**EDUCATION**

Northwest College, Berkley

**Susannah Holt**

123 Walpert Street  
Hayward, California 12345  
(123) 555-1234

**Objective:** Position as Volunteer Coordinator for Marin Humane Society

**HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- Demonstrated talent in assessing skills and making appropriate volunteer placements.
- In-depth experience with pet therapy programs.
- Established and managed a successful pet care business.
- Supervised volunteers at local humane organizations.
- Over 10 years of effective public relations experience.

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE****Pet Therapy Programs; Volunteer Work**

- Implemented a new pet therapy program at The Latham Foundation for Human Education, thoroughly researching other programs and selecting the most appropriate features.
- Introduced pet therapy program to nursing homes:
  - made initial contacts and described the program benefits
  - scheduled visits to nursing homes
  - coordinated efforts with Oakland SPCA
- Served as a volunteer at three area humane organizations.

**Communications & Public Relations**

- Worked directly with hundreds of pet care clients, advising and assessing their pet care needs.
- Effectively handled emergencies and customer inquiries, as BART train operator, earning commendation for outstanding service to patrons.
- Mediated between volunteers and staff to maintain harmonious working relationships, and maximize volunteer job satisfaction within the limitations of the program.

**Management, Supervision & Training**

- Started a pet care business from scratch:
  - interviewed job applicants, assessed their skills, placed, trained and supervised
  - wrote all the contracts, generated billings, followed up on billing
- Trained new BART train operators.
- Trained new volunteers at Latham Foundation and at Oakland SPCA.

**WORK HISTORY**

19XX-present	Train Operator	Bay Area Rapid Transit - Oakland
19XX-XX	Owner/Manager	Dog's Best Friend, pet care - Albany
19XX-XX	Humane Educator (volunteer)	Latham Foundation and Oakland SPCA
19XX-XX	Owner/Operator	Collins Trucking Co. - Albany
19XX-XX	Kennel Aide	Berkeley/East Bay Humane Society

**EDUCATION**

**A.S. Degree, Biology - Laney College, Oakland**

**Judy Rogers**

123 St. George Ave. #22  
Alameda, California 12345  
(111) 111-1111

**HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- Over 15 years professional experience with the public.
- Personable and persuasive in communicating creatively with thousands of customers from all cultures and economic levels.
- Proven skill in persevering to solve customers problems.
- Self-motivated and confident in making independent decisions.
- Very well organized and able to meet deadlines.

**RELEVANT EXPERIENCE****Sales & Marketing**

- Made direct presentations to area retail store owners and buyers, marketing Christmas ornaments and gift items imported from the Philippines.
- Co-hosted sales seminars for potential real estate partnership investors.
- Oriented customers by answering questions regarding project details.
- Followed up by phone to verify their commitment to invest in the partnership.
- Canvassed by cold calling for contributions to a nonprofit organization.
- Consistently surpassed sales quotas in retail clothing and houseware departments.
- Co-led voter drive and personally persuaded 2,000 citizens to sign the petition in support of placing a community improvement initiative on the ballot.

**Organization & Customer Service**

- Resolved wide range of customer problems, applying diplomacy and assertiveness to delivery delays, fee and budget problems, property management decisions, airline emergencies and in-flight problems, and culture/communication barriers.
- Organized the logistics of speaking engagements and investment seminars: location - catering - seating - literature - speakers - travel.
- Maintained extensive financial records regarding individual and corporate clients.
- Successfully collected \$250,000 in overdue or unbilled fees by thoroughly auditing billing records and persevering in telephone collection follow-ups.

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

19XX-present	Office Manager/Bookkeeper United States Navy, San Francisco
19XX-19XX	Office Manager/Bookkeeper Grothe & Associates, San Francisco
19XX-19XX *	Philippine Import Sales Self-employed, selling to Bay Area stores
19XX-19XX *	Neo-Life Vitamin Sales Self-employed, selling to flight attendants *part-time, concurrent with airline employment
19XX-19XX	International Flight Attendant Transamerica Airline, Oakland
19XX-19XX	Editorial Coordinator Sakes Psychology Today Textbook Division, San Diego
19XX-19XX	Emergency Room Receptionist Kaiser Hospital, Hayward
19XX-19XX	Retail Sales Macy's Roos Atkins, part-time during college

**EDUCATION**

**B.A.**, Speech/Theatre Arts - University of California, Santa Barbara, 19XX

**Charlene Seamers**

1212 Colby Lane  
 Mountain View, Colorado 12345  
 (970) 555-3211  
 CSeamers@email.com

**HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- Passed EMT Boards with 98% performance accuracy
- Proven ability to respond immediately and confidently in emergencies
- Able to function at top performance through 24 hour shifts
- Make numerous and difficult decisions under stressful conditions
- Four years experience as a medic

**Crisis Evaluation & Response**

- Effectively evaluated thousands of emergencies
- Adapted immediately to constantly changing circumstances
- Able to effectively communicate vital signs, preliminary diagnosis and status to attending physicians
- Extensive triage experience as a combat medic

**Medical Skills**

- Over 24,000 blood draws
- Operation of Centrifuge
- Administer shots
- IV certified
- CPR certified
- Take and record vital signs

**Training/Supervision**

- Team leader for up to 20 people, working in demanding and stressful situations
- Trained staff of five in procedures, daily routines and assisted in upgrading skills
- Completed written and verbal evaluations for assigned staff of five
- Trained American Red Cross CPR for adult certification

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

19XX-20XX	Medic/EMT	United States Army	
19XX-19XX	Admittance Clerk	St. Joseph Hospital	Denver, CO
19XX-19XX	Candy Striper	Kaiser Hospital	Longmont, CO

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Specialized Military Training from 8-40 hours:

- Leadership
- Drug and Alcohol Counseling
- Suicide Intervention
- Sexual Harassment

Medical Specialist Training U.S. Army	San Antonio, TX
Certified Nursing Assistant Denver General Hospital	Denver, CO

**Mike Swanson**

122 Bending River Road  
 Grand View, Michigan 12345  
 (123) 456-6789

**Objective:** Seeking a career in inventory control for Grand View Supply Company

**PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY**

- Over sixteen years experience in inventory management
- Adept at defining customer requirements and meeting their needs
- Knowledge, training and practical experience with computerized data bases for tracking, ordering, receiving, and reporting of materials, supplies and shipments

**EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS**

**United States Navy** - April 19XX to July 20XX

- Directed supply and warehousing activities for materials valued in excess of \$65 million
- Processed over 700 shipments of personal property and household goods both domestically and overseas
- Guaranteed expeditious shipment and compliance to guidelines

**IBT Technology** - November 19XX to April 19XX

- Ordered, received, quality inspected, stored, preserved materials
- Packaged, shipped, and issued materials and cargo in excess of 75 shipments a day
- Compiled and maintained monthly reports on warehouse stock and requisitions

**SPECIALIZED RELATED TRAINING**

- |                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Financial Management        | • Customs Inspector         |
| • CPR and Standard First Aid  | • Supervisory Safety        |
| • Shipment Management         | • Small Business Purchasing |
| • Supply Operations           | • Alcohol and Drug Safety   |
| • Financial Reports Recording | • Micro Computer Literacy   |

**EDUCATION**

- Modern Accounting - Pacific Academy of Accounting (8 months)
- Financial Management/Operations Training - Accountants International

**PERSONAL STRENGTHS**

- Committed to Customer Service satisfaction
- Reliable, detail oriented team player
- Professional integrity, strong moral courage and honesty

**Mary Alexander**

9876 Wonderview  
 Chicago, Illinois 12345  
 (222) 123-4567  
 Mary-Alexander@email.com

**SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE**

- Excellent food service management skills
- Experienced in all aspects of food service preparation
- Self motivated and able to motivate others
- Interface with all ages and ethnic backgrounds
- Proven ability to work efficiently and effectively under pressure

**WORK HISTORY**

- 19XX-20XX    **Manager, Food Service**    Ft. Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas
- Planned menus, portions control and nutritional value of food served
  - Ordered and inventoried food for over 2,000 meals daily
  - Supervised staff of 20 including; scheduling work hours, assigning duties, and evaluating performance
- 19XX-19XX    **Food Service Worker**    Oxnard School District, Oxnard, California
- Prepared nutritional breakfasts and lunches for over 450 students and faculty daily, including box lunches for special occasions and field trips
  - Maintained cleanliness and sanitary conditions of all equipment, utensils, spaces and storerooms
  - Implemented a successful student evaluation system to receive feedback on meals served
  - Volunteered to work with school lunch vendors to coordinate set up and implementation of the traffic flow

**EDUCATION**

- Specialized Training    • Safe food handling
- Nutritional needs and balanced meals
  - “Save a Back” training
  - Mid management and leadership strategies
- High School Diploma    Alameda, California



**Jeffrey Peterson**

123 South Taylor Street  
Lima, Virginia 12345

Home: (000) 555-5555

Office: (000) 555-5555

**OBJECTIVE:** Electrician with full range of responsibilities from maintenance to installation.

**SUMMARY:** More than 12 years experience in all phases of the electrical field. Expertise in troubleshooting electrical circuits and providing necessary maintenance. Effective supervisor of tradespeople.

**EXPERIENCE**

19XX - Present

XYZ Management Company, Lima, Virginia

**Master Electrician**

- Total electrical renovation of apartments for new tenants, replace fixtures, switches, receptacles and wiring.
- New wiring of single family homes, townhouses, commercial work on high rise office buildings in the Central Virginia area.

19XX-19XX

United States Army, Fort Bragg, North Carolina

**Electrician**

- Repaired, installed, adjusted, modified, and tested electrical systems and devices for 300,000 square feet of office and classroom space; including:
 

-Electrical panels	-Fluorescent	-Magnetic Starters
-Conduit	-Computer	-Switches, Receptacles
-Motors	-Breakers	-Incandescent Lights
-Ballasts	-Wire	-Telephone Lines
- Purchased over 1,000 electrical items.
- Trained two apprentices on electrical maintenance procedures.
- Supervised from 1-4 trades people.
- Read blueprints and schematics for wiring of new equipment, new additions, and new buildings.
- Worked with voltages up to 480-volt 3-phase systems.

19XX-19XX

Morgan's Pharmacy, Retail Clerk

**EDUCATION**

19XX-20XX

Best Community College, North Carolina  
Courses focused on technical mathematics.

19XX-19XX

Training Community College, New York  
Electrical Construction, 1,920 hours of study, certificate awarded 19XX.**SPECIAL LICENSE**

April 6, 19XX

Virginia Journeyman's License #5678-JK

**Janis Jenkins**

123 Pearl Street  
Rockville, Maryland 12345  
Telephone: (301) 555-1111  
Janis-Jenkins@email.com

**PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE**

Administrative Assistant position coordinating, analyzing, and planning budgets.

**COORDINATING SKILLS**

Coordinated fund-raising activities of twenty members of the local Parent Teachers Association (PTA) successfully raising \$8,000 for playground facilities. As member of the Women's League of Rockville Methodist Church, initiated a relief center to meet clothing needs of the community. Also developed a schedule to meet demands of five busy household members, including carpools, cleaning, cooking, and general house management.

**BUDGETING SKILLS**

As Treasurer of our local Civic Association, managed \$22,000 budget for two years. Organized and managed family budget for 17 years. During this period, have accumulated savings necessary for four years of college for daughter. In addition to financial matters, have learned to budget time through well-organized scheduling of community activities and family responsibilities.

**COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Developed interpersonal skills during ten years' experience with PTA and church members. Have learned the subtleties of persuading adults to contribute time and money to community projects. Have invested considerable time and effort in developing open communication between family members. Possess ability to retain a sense of humor in tense situations.

**MEMBERSHIPS**

Elected treasurer of local Civic Association 3-year term. Voted to Board of Directors for Rockville Methodist Church 1-year term. President of PTA 2 years consecutively.

**EDUCATION**

Thirty semester hours  
High School Diploma

General Education, Metro State College  
Bremerton, Washington

## What to Do

These sample experience statements are provided as examples only. You must craft your own experience statements to reflect your actual work experience as appropriate for each of your targeted resumes.

Verb tenses in your experience statements should be consistent with the rest of your resume. If you start writing in the present tense, stick with it. If you used the past tense for the rest of your resume, use it for the experience statements too.

These statements are generalized. Your statements need to be targeted to the position you are trying to obtain. The most effective statements are those that are both targeted and results-oriented. To effectively write experience statements you must also include statements that emphasize your results.

### Enlisted Experience Statements

#### US Air Force DEFENSE ATTACHE

- Managed and maintained organization budget of \$1.2 million
- Managed and maintained fiscal data, along with internal information files
- Coordinated with host country officials for aircraft over-flight and landing clearances and official maritime visits
- Provided direct personnel support, including records maintenance and benefits counseling, for 40 embassy officials

#### US Air Force VEHICLE MAINTENANCE CONTROL AND ANALYSIS

- Reviewed maintenance schedules and notified mechanics about 45 vehicles' service needs
- Verified work performance by comparing maintenance schedules to records of work actually performed
- Prepared charts and reports to track maintenance activities
- Calculated how many mechanics and spare parts were needed to maintain equipment in good order
- Operated computers and other office equipment to input and access maintenance data

#### US Army ARMAMENT REPAIRER

- Repaired and maintained various advanced military weapons systems valued at up to \$500,000
- Cleaned and lubricated electro-optical fire control components to ensure proper maintenance
- Repaired and maintained sophisticated weaponry such as missile mounts, platforms, and launch mechanisms
- Tested and adjusted weapons firing, guidance, and launch systems

### **US Army MOTOR TRANSPORT OPERATOR**

- Determined best travel routes, confirmed arrival dates, and verified cargo types resulting in a 20% increase in on-time arrivals
- Ensured vehicles are properly loaded to meet required safety standards
- Checked engine oil, fuel, fluid levels and tire pressure for vehicle safety inspections
- Drove vehicles over a variety of road types, traveling alone or in convoys transporting both personnel and cargo
- Performed routine vehicle maintenance and repairs for six different types of vehicles

### **US Coast Guard MACHINERY TECHNICIAN**

- Operated, maintained, and repaired internal combustion engines, boilers and main propulsion power transmission equipment for assigned vessel
- Operated, maintained, and repaired auxiliary fireroom, refrigeration, air conditioning, electrical, and machine shop equipment
- Organized and lead emergency response drills for 25 personnel
- Performed maintenance related administrative functions such as inventory, ordering supplies and completing required reports

### **US Navy AIRMAN**

- Assisted in the maintenance of aircraft aeronautical and support equipment
- Performed maintenance service, cleaned aircraft and assisted in aircraft handling
- Operated sophisticated aircraft communication and radar equipment
- Maintained and operated aircraft defensive weaponry and in-flight refueling systems
- Operated helicopter hoists to lift equipment and personnel from land and sea

### **US Marine Corps PERSONNEL CLERK**

- Organized, maintained, and reviewed 75 personnel records including pay documents
- Entered and retrieved personnel information using an automated information system
- Prepared organizational charts, wrote official correspondence, and maintained reports
- Assisted assigned personnel and their families with pay and benefit issues
- Provided current information about personnel programs and procedures to employees and administrators

### **US Marine Corps MACHINE GUNNER**

- Operated and maintained sophisticated equipment designed for tactical operations
- Operated communications equipment and various support vehicles
- Supervised 20 personnel in special work groups ensuring completion of assigned tasks
- Performed emergency maintenance on three different weapons systems
- Worked effectively in groups with diverse team members

## Officer Experience Statements

### US Air Force DEVELOPMENTAL ENGINEER

- Performed studies of how workers and tasks were organized in large operations
- Measured workloads and calculated how many people were needed to effectively perform tasks at optimum efficiency
- Provided detailed instruction for performance improvements and proper equipment utilization
- Planned and carried out the purchase of equipment and services for maximum productivity in reorganized operation
- Directed internal quality control and production control programs for organization of over 1,500 personnel

### US Air Force EXPERIMENTAL TEST NAVIGATOR, OTHER

- Directed course of multiple aircraft by using radar, sight, and other navigational methods
- Operated and maintained sophisticated communications equipment for four different aircraft
- Inspected and tested pre-flight navigation and weapons systems
- Guided large tankers and other aircraft during in-flight refueling operations
- Provided other pilots with instrument readings, fuel usage, and flight information to ensure safety standards were maintained and to increase efficiency

### US Army PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

- Ordered diagnostic X-ray and laboratory procedures and wrote patient consultations to specialty clinics
- Directed services, taught and trained medical technicians, and performed as medical supervisor for designated units of up to 125 personnel
- Managed personnel, facilities, and equipment required to operate medical clinics
- Functioned as senior staff person to the Director, advising on medically related matters pertinent to the success of the unit
- Participated in the delivery of health care services to patients
- Prescribed courses of treatment and medication when required and made appropriate medical record entries

### US Army MILITARY POLICE

- Provided leadership for various law enforcement activities including physical security, arrest procedures and criminal investigations
- Planned, coordinated, directed and updated law enforcement procedures for assigned jurisdiction of 220 personnel
- Directed and supervised the administration and operation of confinement and correctional facilities and hospital prisoner wards
- Supervised and administered the development and operation of an ongoing criminal investigation program for a large installation

### **US Coast Guard DATA PROCESSING**

- Prepared data processing plans and budgets for an organization of 150 personnel
- Developed and monitored \$1.4 million in contracts for data processing equipment and services
- Translated specific objectives and needs into computer systems requirements
- Designed and maintained computer software and databases
- Planned and supervised the installation of new processing equipment, surpassing previously set performance goals by 30%
- Directed various teams of computer systems specialists and computer programmers

### **US Coast Guard BOATSWAIN SPECIALTY**

- Planned and managed various seaboard-operating departments to ensure full efficiency
- Arranged and supervised various training exercises for hundreds of personnel to reach and maintain peak performance levels
- Supervised 16 personnel and provided individual evaluations on a routine basis
- Directed search and rescue missions in training and in actual emergencies

### **US Navy ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING OFFICER**

- Directed daily operations for a large electronics department including supervision of 4 administrative personnel
- Provided technical and engineering assistance to resolve complicated problems
- Directed design, installation and testing of electronic equipment
- Developed test standards and operating instructions for electrical and electronic systems
- Ensured satisfactory and timely completion of assigned tasks
- Inspected all electronics system installations

### **US Marine Corps AMMUNITION OFFICER (II, III)**

- Supervised and coordinated ammunition supply and renovation functions, including, procurement, receipt, storage, issuing, handling, shipment, salvage, and renovation of ammunition
- Operated static ammunition supply points and established field supply points in forward areas
- Advised senior leaders on matters related to the development of ammunition allowances for both training and combat operations
- Directed the daily activities of 15 assigned personnel

## Salary History

The purpose of a salary history when required by the employer is to determine a salary and compensation fit. This information **SHOULD** be given if the employer asks for it specifically in a job announcement or on an application. **DO NOT** give this information unless asked, as current career managers agree that providing prospective employers with your salary history can work against you.

When a salary history sheet is required you should calculate your actual salary by factoring in your Base Pay, Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS), Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) and any other special pay allowances. Remember to calculate the rate for the non-taxable value of the tax-free portions of your pay, and any other money added to your pay. Although you are creating this sum based on different items, only write one total sum on the salary history sheet or application that you give to the employer.



*If you know how, you will always have a job. If you know why, you will be the boss.*

**Margaret Jones**  
586 Easter Avenue  
Miami, FL 12345  
(123) 345-6789  
MIJones@email.com

### **SALARY HISTORY**

Yeoman Third Class (Personnel Administrator)  
\$32,000/yr. + excellent benefits  
United States Coast Guard, Miami, FL 19XX-20XX

Administrative Assistant \$25,000/yr. + benefits  
Central Communication Corporation, Chicago, IL 19XX-19XX

Bookkeeper \$21,000/yr. + benefits  
First National Bank, Chicago, IL 19XX-19XX



## Resume Review

Before you start using your resume for job search, have someone familiar with resumes review yours. Possible resources could be:

- Transition offices
- Human Resource Personnel
- Employers you can ask for feedback as to how your resume could be improved
- College Career Centers
- Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Representative (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) located at state employment offices



*It is more important to know where you are going than to get there quickly. (Mabel Newcomer)*

## RESUME CHECKLIST

An employer-ready resume must be OK in every category.

<b>CONTENT</b>		<b>OK</b>
<b>Order of Information</b>		
Does the most important category come first?		
Is the organization logical and clear?		
<b>Completeness</b>		
Are all major topics emphasized by the employer covered?		
Is each area concise yet complete?		
Are duties <i>and</i> achievements described in specific terms?		
<b>Relevance</b>		
Is there a clear reason for each piece of information?		
Has the information been tailored to a targeted field and job?		
<b>LANGUAGE</b>		<b>OK</b>
<b>Word Choice</b>		
Are action verbs or nouns (key words for scannable resumes) used?		
Are inappropriate jargon and military abbreviations avoided?		
Is the language clear and straightforward?		
<b>Mechanics</b>		
Are there any errors in spelling, grammar or punctuation?		
Are there any typographical errors?		
<b>APPEARANCE</b>		<b>OK</b>
<b>Layout</b>		
Is the resume appealing and easy to read?		
Does it use headings effectively?		
Does it use white space, indentation, underlining, capitals effectively?		
Does it have a professional look?		
<b>Consistency</b>		
Are layout features—headings, spacing, type face, ink—consistent throughout?		
Is the wording consistent throughout?		

## References

A reference is someone who can attest to your ability to perform a task, substantiate your training, document your measurable results and/or confirm your qualifications. Some employers prefer to contact references by phone rather than by letter.

List 6-8 people who would agree to be a reference for you. Use previous supervisors, professional acquaintances, teachers, etc. You may be asked to include both personal and professional references. If you use a personal reference, make sure they are employed, and preferably in a responsible position. Personal references should not be members of your family. Supervisors, coworkers and teachers are persons to consider when assembling references.

For people who will not be physically available (on deployment, moving to another location, overseas, retired) ask them to write a letter of reference for you. Make certain letters are written on letterhead from a company. Employers prefer being able to contact a person by telephone as opposed to a letter.

Never relinquish an original letter of reference, always supply a copy.

Always ask permission to use a person as a reference. Give a copy of your resume to each reference. Make sure you know how each person wants to be contacted. Have current phone numbers. Recycle the list if you send it out several times.

Remember to add your list of references to your career catalog. Type your list in advance so you can mail it out upon request. See following page for an example.



*Never let what you can not do interfere with what you can do.*

**Dennis Jacober**

123 Spruce Tree Circle  
Des Moines, Iowa 12345  
(123) 456-7890

REFERENCE SHEET

**PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES**

Julia Silvers, Administrative Manager  
Kent Products, Inc.  
123 West 32nd Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 12345  
(111) 111-2222

Captain Robert Williams, U.S. Marine Corps  
1234 Jefferson Avenue  
St. Paul, Minnesota 12345  
(123) 456-7899

Joseph Mitchell, Director of Marketing  
Jones Imports  
12 Wheeling Circle  
Idaho Falls, Idaho 12345  
(111) 111-2222  
jmitchell@jonesimports.com

**PERSONAL REFERENCES**

Joy Smith  
1234 East Park  
San Francisco, California 12345  
(123) 456-7899

Jason McMurphey  
11 Market Street  
Nashville, Tennessee 12345  
(123) 456-7899

Sally Matheson  
22 Wilson Circle  
Greenville, South Carolina 12345  
(123) 456-7899

*Sample Letter of Recommendation*

Company Letterhead  
(if applicable)

Phone Number  
Address  
E-mail address

September 1, 20XX

Dear Hiring Authority: (Use name of authority if possible)

(Re: your name)

As the (supervisor, crew leader, coordinator, etc.) of (your name) I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation. (Your name) and I have worked together for 2 years and in that time (your first name) has proven to be a creative problem-solver and a detail oriented technician. Having been in a position to watch (your first name,) I can say without hesitation that s/he has a high level of integrity and well developed sense of responsibility for any tasks assigned.

As you can appreciate, with cutbacks in the military, we have had to do more with less. Even with these new alignments (your first name) has picked up the slack whenever required and has even sought out additional opportunities to assist in the completion of each project. (Your name) has been the recipient of (name of award/honor) for saving 65 man-hours per month by streamlining our purchasing process. For us, this equals and annual dollar savings of more than \$40,000.00. An unexpected benefit of this streamlining was an increase in morale and efficiency.

It would be my pleasure to answer any questions you may have about (your name). Please do not hesitate to contact me at \_\_\_\_\_, or call me at \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

(Signature)  
(Name)  
(Title)

## Different Ways To Send A Resume

Once the resume content has been determined, the next important step is to determine which method of delivery will be required. It is the goal and responsibility of the applicant to meet the employer's expectations. The procedure may be stated in the job announcement. A quick call to the employer may answer the question.

The following information will describe the different ways in which resumes and cover letters can be sent in to an employer. This will enhance the speed in which you can deliver the resume to the employer in the most 'appropriate' and preferred form.

The most traditional ways in which resumes are sent are by post office or express mail delivery. The electronic methods include:

- Fax
- E-mail as an attachment or inserted as text
- Electronically generated forms supplied by the company

Each has advantages and disadvantages. Resources which give more information, publications and tutorials on these methods are available through the transition website.

### E-mailing Resumes

Pay close attention when submitting a resume online. Applying for job openings online is a great way to find a wider base of job openings, but there are several techniques and tips for doing this effectively.

- You can search a company directly. They will often have you fill out an application online and then have you submit a resume. Most large companies even have a resume builder on their web site. For this information look under "employment," "occupations," "jobs" or "careers."
- You can create a resume with a word processing program and then cut and paste it into the body of an email to submit. Realize that it will often not look the same after you have pasted it into the site. Try to use basic fonts such as Times Roman that are somewhat universal to all systems. Bullets frequently create random spacing, so it is best to leave them out. Text can automatically be left justified and make the beautiful resume you created look unorganized and messy. Bold rarely transfers. You need to look at the text after it is pasted and correct it carefully before submission. Companies may ask that you submit a resume directly through email. Use ASCII text format to submit your resume in this manner.
- Some job search sites will not accept attachments. Be sure that you are submitting your resume in the format preferred by the employer.
- Recognize that many postings on the Web are from headhunters who will contact you if they feel your resume is significant in terms of placement potential. In this situation, it will be impossible to determine the company to which you are applying.
- Keep in mind that submitting resumes online requires the same concentrated effort in terms of targeting information, researching the company and focusing on the specific job description. A well-written resume is just as important here as when faxing or sending through the mail.

### Scannable Resumes

Some larger companies may have a scanner system to read resumes. Its function is to change the resume printed on paper into an electronic format. The information or 'data' can then be processed, compared, assessed or extracted as needed to determine if the applicants are qualified. This is primarily used as a screening technique. Special formatting and keyword or skill sets are required for maximum success.

Scannable resumes are used by companies as a method to determine qualifications compared to their database. The format allows the employer to search for key words contained in your resume. The resume writer needs to research and gather information from sources that use specific job descriptors, personal traits and experiences. Use job announcements, industry publications and other profiles which would meet the companies standards, jargon and criteria for that position.

#### 7 Points To Keep In Mind When Creating Scannable Resumes

1. Your name should be the first item on a scannable resume. Scanners will file resumes under first line information.
2. Use nouns: production scheduling, network management, etc., more than verbs: organized, scheduled, maintained, etc.
3. Minimize the use of abbreviations and jargon.
4. Always send originals. Use a laser printer whenever possible. Do not use dot matrix.
5. Do not fold a scannable resume, do not use staples, and avoid compressed space between letters. Use standard sized business paper, no legal or other odd sizes.
6. Use "fine mode" when faxing instead of "regular."
7. Some employers will ask that you send your resume as a text file, or inserted into the body of an e-mail message. To accomplish this, save your resume in ASCII text format.

*Every man's work, whether it be literature or music or pictures or architecture or anything else, is always a portrait of himself. (Samuel Butler)*

Kevin Menninger  
 324 Stoney Road  
 Stamford Connecticut 12345  
 (123) 456-7899

#### OBJECTIVE

Position as an elementary education teacher in Greenwood County School District

#### SKILLS

Over 12 years of teaching experience  
 Curriculum designer and teacher for a large organization  
 Proficient in teaching culturally diverse populations  
 Bi-lingual: Spanish and English  
 Teaching Certificate  
 Team-teacher orientation

#### EXPERIENCE

Drill Instructor/Lead Trainer  
 U.S. Marine Corps  
 19XX-20XX

Trained 1200 military personnel  
 Handled personnel inquiries and complaints  
 Served as mediator between conflicting parties  
 Maintained personnel relations  
 Assisted with adjustment, benefit, health, and personnel issues

Assistant Teacher  
 Shields Elementary  
 19XX-19XX

Assisted in the design of curriculum and lesson plans  
 Taught math, science, english/spelling and geography  
 Instructed typically developing and special needs children  
 Participated in the Parent Teacher Association Meetings  
 Consulted with students' parents

#### CONDUCTED SPECIALIZED TRAINING TO INCLUDE

Adult/Child CPR Certified Stress Management  
 Management and Leadership  
 Cultural Diversity and Awareness

#### EDUCATION

19XX	Certified Teacher	State of Connecticut
19XX	B.A. Education	Bowling Green State University

#### PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Parent Teacher Association Member for Greenwood County  
 National Association for the Education of Young Children



## 3.11 WRITE COVER LETTERS

### What to Know

The purpose of a cover letter is to introduce yourself and sell the employer on how well your specific skills, abilities and attributes match the organization's needs. It is critical that you take the time to prepare a creative, hard-hitting cover letter that gets the attention of the reader immediately. This is the first document a potential employer will see about you and it has to do much of your initial marketing. The cover letter is a chance to “speak” to the reader or the interviewer. By developing skills- and achievement-oriented letters, you will give yourself a competitive edge. Each letter needs to be individually developed for each position.

### What to Do

All effective cover letters have three main parts.

- They identify the specific job and how you learned about it.
- They match your skills, training, and experience with those required for the job, using your specific knowledge of the company.
- The last line should emphasize your interest in the job and indicate your plan for follow-up.

#### Cover Letter Guidelines:

1. The cover letter should not repeat your resume.
2. Use standard business letter format.
3. Type the letter on bond paper that matches your resume.
4. Proofread carefully. Make sure that there are no typographical errors (typos) and that the proper grammar was used.
5. Sell yourself! Make the reader want to speak with you. Be formal, polite, honest, and assertive.
6. Keep the letter to a page or less.
7. Sign and send the original. Keep a copy.
8. Address the letter to the hiring authority and include their title. If you are answering an ad that does not give a person's name, call the company and find out to whom it should be addressed. If you cannot get a specific name, start the letter with “Dear \_\_\_\_\_(manager of department/title of position).”
9. Do your homework on the company. (Refer to the section 3.4, Research Companies).

**NOTE:** As you work on your own cover letters, use the sample letters on the following pages as a guide.

## General Outline For A Cover Letter

Your Name  
Your Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Your Phone Number  
Your E-mail Address

Date of Letter

Employer's Name  
Employer's Title  
Company Name  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear [Employer's Name]:

**INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH:** You want to tell the reader why you are writing and name the position or department for which you are applying. You also want to capture the reader's attention. Mention how you heard about the organization or the opening. Name someone you and the reader know in common or someone in the company that knows you. Show you have done some research on the company by talking about new projects the company has taken on, the particular management philosophy they use, or citing something you have read about them.

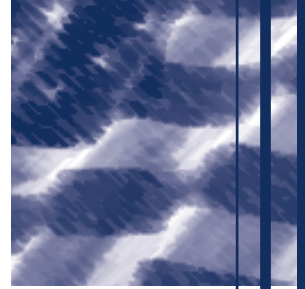
**BODY:** In this section you want to build a connection between your background and the company's needs. If you have any directly related experience or education, summarize it here so the reader can look for it in your resume. If you have skills or accomplishments that relate to the job, mention them here. You are effectively summarizing your skills as they relate to the company research you have done. Be sure to do this in a confident and positive manner.

**CONCLUDING INFORMATION:** Indicate your interest in the job. Tell the reader you will be calling to follow up. State you look forward to being able to discuss your background in an interview. Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration. Do not mention your unavailability—if you will not be available until three months from now, the cover letter is not the appropriate time to convey that information.

Sincerely,

Signature

*A cover letter is usually your first opportunity to make an impression on an employer. Make it a good impression.*



*Sample Cover Letter***James Donaldson**

10 Emerson Drive  
Norfolk, Virginia 12345  
(101) 555-1234

July 12, 20XX

Ms. Mary Smith  
Personnel Director  
Accounting Software International  
5678 East Doral Street, Suite #1200  
Lockridge, Tennessee 12345

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am applying to your ad in the Lockridge Examiner on July 8, 20XX,

I was particularly attracted to your position because of my interest in accounting software and the opportunity to use my computer skills in a more specialized career.

As you will notice on my resume, I have extensive experience and skills that are relevant to this position. My particular expertise is in implementation and training conversions to new computer software systems and programs. I strongly feel my talents could be valuable to Accounting Software International in achieving its' corporate goals.

I believe I would be a good candidate for your position as a service representative. I will call you next week. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*James Donaldson*

Enclosure

**Nabil T. Rama**  
123 Williams Lane  
Castro Valley CA 12345  
(555) 111-1111

September 15, 20XX

Mr. R.L. Montrose  
Department K  
Glick, Schilling & Martin Co.  
1234 Drawbridge Road  
McLean, VA 12345

Dear Mr. Montrose:

I am applying for the position of translator in response to your ad in the *San Francisco Examiner* on September 14.

I was particularly attracted to this position because of my interest in international affairs, travel, and the opportunity to use my language skills. This seems a perfect opening to combine my twenty-year career in the military with a possibility for an exciting future with Glick, Schilling & Martin.

I have an excellent command of both the Arabic and English languages, as well as international exposure through my career travels and self-education.

I believe I would be a good candidate for your position as translator and as we agreed upon, I will call you Thursday to follow-up. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Nabil T. Rama*

Enclosure

*Sample Cover Letter*

**John Doe**  
12 Foothill Lane  
Berkeley, California 12345  
(555) 111-1111

September 15, 20XX

Mr. Dwight Smith  
Chief Executive Officer  
Genentech, Inc.  
1234 Point San Bruno Blvd.  
South San Francisco, CA 00000

Dear Mr. Smith:

It was a pleasure to attend the Genentech Shareholders meeting last week.

After the meeting, I introduced myself to you and expressed my excitement following the company as a shareholder and now my desire to work directly for Genentech.

During the question period, I asked if the company had any plans for the treatment of breast cancer. The treatment of this disease and others by the activation and restoration of the immune system with the immune or regulatory drugs created at Genentech is of particular interest to me.

I would be thrilled for the opportunity to contribute to the work your company is doing in this field.

Enclosed is my resume which you kindly requested. Thank you very much for your interest and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

*John Doe*

Enclosure

Thomas Gaines  
123 Southbend Road  
Suitland, SD 12345  
ThomasG@email.com

April 10, 20XX

Mr. Wallace  
Human Resources Specialist  
ABC Corporation  
Suitland, MD 12345

Dear Mr. Wallace:

I was so pleased at the opportunity to meet you this past Thursday at the Chamber of Commerce Job Fair. Your remarks to the group were memorable and rich with implications for area businesses.

As we discussed on Thursday afternoon, I have just relocated to the Suitland area and seek a management position in the manufacturing industry. Your firm's expansion sounds like a great opportunity for me to contribute to the growth of a successful machinery company. I have twenty-two years of experience in management and supervision with a variety of manufacturing companies. Furthermore, I have specialized computer training that will be useful in tracking your company's production, budget, and performance. I feel my skills and experience are a perfect match for the management position you described to me during our conversation.

I look forward to talking more about opportunities at ABC Corporation. I will call on Wednesday to set up an appointment with you to discuss these items further.

Most Sincerely,

Thomas Gaines

Enclosure

*Success is a state of mind. If you want success, start thinking of yourself as a success. (Dr. Joyce Brothers)*

## 4. INTERVIEWS

### OBJECTIVES

*The lessons in this chapter prepare you to:*

- Interview
- Take employment tests
- Present your 30-second commercial
- Prepare for interviews
- Dress appropriately for interviews
- Sharpen listening skills
- Interpret body language
- Answer questions
- Ask questions of the employer
- Evaluate the interviews
- Analyze a rejection subsequent to an interview

## 4.1 UNDERSTAND THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

### What to Know

The purpose of all interviews is to find the best person for the job. However, interviews can be conducted in different ways. Interviewing is a two-way process.

### The Interview

1. An individual interview is like an in-depth conversation. The interviewer may be the person who will be your supervisor. Hiring decisions are often made based on this type of interview. Count on discussing your skills, experience, training and how they all relate to the duties and opportunities of the job. There will usually be time for you to ask questions. You must sell your:
  - skills;
  - enthusiasm;
  - interest; and
  - understanding of the job.
2. A panel interview is frequently used by government agencies and companies filling a professional or managerial position. Usually three or more people sit on the board, and all candidates are asked the same questions. A selection board interview usually involves more structured questions than an individual interview, and generally does not include a discussion of salary and benefits. The process can be stressful because you have to answer questions from several people. Be sure to make eye contact with everyone on the panel. When answering a question, it is especially important to make eye contact with the person who asked the question.
3. The phone interview is another strategy that some employers use. In this situation, the hiring manager or selection committee interviews job applicants over the telephone as a screening technique. Phone interviews are used to make a first round of cuts to the applicant pool. If the employers are interested in candidates they will then schedule face-to-face interviews. Remember, as soon as you pick up the telephone you are making an impression. Be sure to review the telephone tips in section 2.
4. Stress interviews are another format that some employers, frequently law enforcement organizations, use to evaluate candidates. The interviewers' job is to intimidate you. They want to find out how you handle stress. The rationale behind the tactic is that if you're unable or unwilling to handle conditions of imposed stress, it's unlikely you'll have the ability to maintain your composure under conditions of real stress. In response to this tactic, it's important that you don't react defensively, but instead remain calm and respond appropriately.
5. The observational interview format may be used by an employer. In this format, the candidate is asked to demonstrate his/her abilities with some of the skills required for the position. This may include giving a demonstration of public speaking ability, answering telephone calls, or operating a piece of equipment while the interviewer observes your performance.



## Interview Stages

Most interviews break into four stages. The better you understand each stage, and what is expected of you, the better your chances of being selected.

### 1. Introductory Stage

The interviewer forms an initial impression that can contribute to acceptance or rejection. The decision to hire is not made at this stage, but it begins here. Remember, you never get a second chance to make a first impression!

### 2. Employer Questions

The interviewer tries to determine how well your attitude and skills fit with the company image and work culture. The interviewer is trying to match your specific skills and abilities to the job.

### 3. Applicant Questions

The interviewer is trying to determine your level of interest in the job and your degree of knowledge about the company. This is the time to clear up uncertainties.

### 4. Closing Stage

The interviewer will draw the session to a close. If you are sure you want the job, make your intentions clear at this time.

Following are some examples of how you may conclude an interview. As you read the examples, remember, assertive is okay, aggressive is not!

*“Mr. Brown, is there anything that I didn’t cover that you’d like me to?”*

*“After meeting with you, I’m even more convinced that I’d be a good fit for this position.”*

*“Ms. Jones, when do you plan to fill the position?”*

They will usually tell you. If so, you can politely suggest you will call that day.

*“If you don’t mind, I’d like to call you on that day to find out what my status is.”*

*“Would it be OK if I called then to check the status of the position?”*

Usually the hiring authorities for the position will confer before anyone is offered a job. So, do not expect a decision to be made about the position immediately.

## What to Do

Remember, interviews are about sharing information. Your responsibility is to focus the interview on a match between your skills, knowledge, and experience and the company’s needs.

## 4.2 TAKE EMPLOYMENT TESTS

### What to Know

Some companies give employment tests as part of the interview process. The tests usually are related to aptitude, basic skills, or attention to detail. Usually they have been normed against people who work in similar positions and have taken the test. The tests help the employer determine if you are likely to be a good fit with the company and the job.

Usually your test scores will be in points that are added into a total rating score that is based on your resume, cover letter, references and your interview. Examples are:

- Keyboarding
- Work Samples
- Physical Agility
- Personality

### What to Do

The following is a set of suggestions to use as you take employment tests. Read and consider each suggestion.

1. Read and/or listen to directions carefully.
2. Take the tests seriously.
3. Try to relax while taking the test.
4. Skim the entire test before you start to be sure you know what it is about.
5. Read each question carefully and completely before you begin to answer it.
6. Ask if there is a penalty for guessing answers you are not certain about. In general, if there is a penalty, do not guess unless you can narrow the answer to one of two possible choices.
7. If the test is timed—and many are—ask how the test is being scored to know if accuracy or completion is more important.
8. Write your answers clearly. You cannot get credit for anything that is not readable.
9. Use your time wisely. Do not linger too long on any one question. If you do not know the answer, skip to the next item.

*Don't get screened out! Employers generally use applications to make the first cut in screening applicants.*

# 4.3 30-SECOND COMMERCIAL

## What to Know

The 30-second commercial is a statement to describe the skills and services that you have to offer an employer. It is essentially a brief monologue that sells your professional abilities and reflects your ideal job profile.

## What to Do

Choose a combination of the following components that will comprise your pitch:

- Greeting** .....include your first and your last name
- Experience** .....accumulated experience in your specific industry and jobs
- Areas of Expertise**.....your major job functions and skill categories
- Strengths** .....specific skills that you possess
- Accomplishments** .....specific accomplishments that emphasize your strengths
- Professional Style** .....traits and characteristics that describe how you perform your job
- Job Search Strategy** ..what you want to do with your experience

Examples of these components:

- Greeting** *Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Experience** *I'm an experienced \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Areas of Expertise** *Or I have \_\_\_ years of experience in the \_\_\_\_\_ industry with expertise in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Strengths** *My strengths are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Accomplishments** *I have been recognized for \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Professional Style** *I'm \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Job Search Strategy** *I am interested in expanding my experience into \_\_\_\_\_.*

My 30-second commercial:

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## 4.4 PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS

### What to Know

- A successful interview begins with homework and preparation.
- Your responsibility is to know as much about yourself and the company before you walk into the interview.
- Research the company as much as you can before your interview. Some ways that you can get information about the company include the Internet, asking family and friends who are familiar with the company, asking someone who works there, and researching trade publications.
- Planning and preparation makes you confident and will help you perform in the interview.
- Practice, practice, practice your answers to common interview questions.
- Some questions that you may be asked include:

*Why did you leave the military?*

*What are your strengths as an employee?*

*Why did you leave your last job?*

*Where do you see yourself in 5 years?*

*What are you looking for in a job?*

*Why are you interested in our company?*

### What to Do

Your chances of getting the job are zero if you don't know what you want. You must also know a few things about the company before the interview. Use the guidelines on the following page to prepare for the interview.

*A successful job interview requires preparation. Practice, practice, practice!*

## GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWS

### Be Prepared

- Anticipate possible questions and practice answers to each of them.
- Research the company before the interview.
- Prepare questions to ask in the interview.
- Do a dry run going to the interview location before the day of your interview.
- Get a good night's sleep before the interview. Review your research.
- Get up in time to shower and dress carefully.
- Know the name(s) of the interviewer(s) and how to pronounce them correctly.
- Leave for the interview with plenty of time to spare. Make sure you know how to get there, where to park, and how much time to allow for traffic.

### Look Good

- Go to the interview neat and clean.
- Dress conservatively and comfortably.
- Avoid heavy makeup and trendy or flashy clothes or jewelry.

### Be Punctual

- Arrive 15 minutes ahead of schedule.

### Be Aware of Body Language

- Turn off electronic devices (cell phone, pager, etc.).
- Offer a firm handshake.
- Stand or sit erect but comfortably.
- Sit down only after offered a chair.
- Lean forward in your chair and relax.
- Don't fidget.
- Use eye contact, but don't stare.

### Carry A Portfolio

- Show the interviewer that you planned ahead.
- Bring all necessary information:
  - pad and pen
  - a calendar
  - the completed Master Application Worksheet
  - several copies of your resume
  - a copy of the application form
  - letters of recommendation
  - samples of work (if appropriate)
  - your notes on the company
  - your questions to ask the interviewer
  - any correspondence from the company
  - reference list/letters of reference

### Be Enthusiastic

- Have a positive attitude in the interview.
- Be friendly, but not casual.
- Be professional and courteous to everyone.
- Don't be negative about anything!
- Sell yourself – the difference between bragging and self-confidence is enthusiasm.
- Use eye contact and voice expression to your benefit.

### Say Thank You

- At the end of the interview, thank the interviewer for the time.
- Follow-up with a brief thank you note that:
  - reviews points brought up in the interview, and
  - adds ideas you forgot to mention.

### Smile

- Do not grin, but smile as you would in any conversation.

## PHONE CALL FOR AN INTERVIEW (CHECKLIST)

Remember, this is your first chance to make a good impression. Your interview begins here. When you receive a call for an interview, be sure to find out the following information.

Company name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Position you are interviewing for: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and title of person conducting the interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Where and when to report: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Anything special to bring to the interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Who is calling: \_\_\_\_\_

Position of caller: \_\_\_\_\_

Return phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 4.5 DRESS FOR SUCCESS

### What to Know

You should look your best when you go to a job interview. Dress one step above the dress required for the job. You only get one chance to make a first impression, so make it a good one. Remember, first impressions are formed when the interviewer first sees and greets you. You need to look professional, confident, and competent.

To help you decide what to wear to an interview, visit the company and notice what people are wearing. Make sure your interview clothes are appropriate for the job you are applying for and for the location of the interview. Do not wear a suit to an interview at a construction site, and do not wear jeans and a sport shirt to an office setting. You will find differences in the way people dress depending on the industry they work in. It is always better to find yourself over-dressed than under-dressed for an interview.

Try to think ahead to the interview. If there is a possibility you will be required to perform a task, make sure you are prepared. For instance, if you are applying for a job as a welder, you may be asked to demonstrate your skills on the spot. You should have your work clothes and tools available at the interview.

### Guidelines

#### Dress For Men

Use the following list to check yourself prior to an interview. You may want to seek an opinion from someone in the field in which you are interviewing.

- Hair should be trimmed, neat, and clean. Have a clean shave. If you wear a beard or a mustache, be sure to trim neatly.
- Wear glasses with up-to-date frames and clear lenses. Do not wear sunglasses with dark tints or mirrors.
- Wear no more than one ring on each hand and a watch. Do not wear any other jewelry such as bracelets, necklaces or earrings. Cover or remove any body piercings.
- Depending on the position you are applying for wear:
  - A navy blue or gray suit, single breasted; white or pinstripe dress shirt and a matching silk tie; or
  - Navy blue or gray jacket; coordinated gray, tan, or charcoal slacks; white or pinstripe dress shirt and coordinating silk tie; or
  - White, pastel, or pinstripe dress shirt and conservative tie; coordinated navy blue, gray, charcoal, or brown dress pants; or
  - Plain sports shirt; coordinated navy blue, gray, charcoal, or brown slacks; or
  - Clean sports shirt and clean casual pants.
- Tip of the tie should come to the center of belt buckle.
- Belt should show no signs of wear or weight gain/loss; should match shoes.
- Nails should be cut short, filed and clean.
- Clean and polished conservative dress shoes with dark socks. Work boots may be appropriate for some job interviews. No loafers or tennis shoes.

- Minimal or no aftershave, perfume or cologne, no strong smelling deodorants, and no smoking.
- No gum, candy, or other objects in your mouth.
- Carry a good leather or leather-like portfolio or slim briefcase.

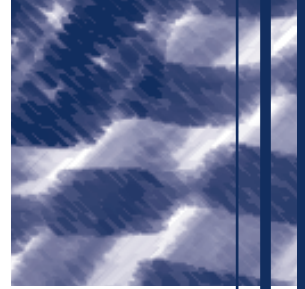
## Guidelines

### Dress For Women

Use the following list to check yourself prior to an interview. You may even want to seek an opinion from someone in the field in which you are interviewing.

- Clean hair, short or tied back and professional.
- Makeup should be simple. Avoid bright colors or too heavy an application.
- Wear glasses with up-to-date frames and clear lenses. Do not wear sunglasses with dark tints or mirrors.
- Simple earrings, not dangling; a pin or a necklace and a watch; no more than one ring per hand; no more than one bracelet.
- Job experts and employers are split on the notion of pantsuits, so a skirted suit is a safer choice.
- Depending on the position you are applying for, wear:
  - A seasonal business suit in solid color or conservative pattern with tailored or pleated skirt; blouse in a complimentary solid color such as white, cream or pastel; skirt should come to the knee; or
  - Jacket in solid color or conservative pattern; coordinating blouse and tailored or pleated skirt in appropriate length; or
  - Tailored blouse, preferably with long sleeves, in white, cream or pastel; coordinating tailored or pleated skirt in solid color or conservative print or pattern and appropriate length.
- Nails should be short to medium length; manicured with light or clear polish.
- Medium heel pumps, no open toes or backs; no scuffs or nicks in heels; do not wear flats.
- Stockings or pantyhose should be flawless (no runs) and conservative in color. Wear them even in the summer.
- Minimal perfume or cologne, no strong-smelling deodorant, and no smoking.
- No gum, candy, or other objects in your mouth.
- Carry either a good leather or leather-like portfolio or purse—not both.

*A great pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do. (Walter Bagehot)*





## 4.6 SHARPEN LISTENING SKILLS

### What to Know

Listening to the interviewer is as essential as talking honestly and openly about your skills and abilities. Concentrate on what is being said and how it is said, rather than on how you are doing. By listening to the interviewer's statements, comments, and questions, you can get a better understanding of the organization and what it would be like to work there. Moreover, in some interview situations, especially managerial interviews, you will be evaluated on your listening skills.

The phrase *listening skills* sometimes surprises people because most people view listening as a natural process rather than a skill. People with this opinion unfortunately have confused the word hearing (a passive activity) with listening (an intentional act that requires skill). Following are some techniques and guidelines that you can use to become a better listener.

### What to Do

1. If distractions are a problem in an interview, you can control them in the following ways:
  - If the distraction is external, control it by focusing your concentration.
  - If the distraction is internal (inside your head), control it by reminding yourself to pay attention and try to relax.
2. Paraphrase the interviewer's comments by restating the main idea or content to:
  - check and clarify accuracy;
  - let the interviewer know you understand; and
  - encourage more discussion.
3. Focus on key words, main ideas, and examples to help you retain important points.
4. Ask questions if you do not understand what the interviewer is saying or asking. Do not pretend to understand if you do not understand.
5. Take notes only if it will not distract you from the conversation. Write them in a list or outline form. Always ask the interviewer's permission before taking notes.
6. Make sure you understand what you are being asked.

## 4.7 INTERPRET BODY LANGUAGE

### What to Know

In a job interview, the interviewer will judge you on how you look and how you act, not just on what you say. Your actions, manner, and appearance add up to your body language. They give nonverbal information about your work-related skills, attitudes, and values. In fact, often nonverbal cues are just as important as verbal information in determining who gets hired. After all, everyone the company interviews will probably be qualified for the job. You want to appear to be more qualified than everyone else.

Below are a number of critical nonverbal issues. Familiarize yourself with the positive actions and appearances and use each to your best advantage.

### What to Do

1. Dress for success by following the preceding guidelines. The way you look is the first nonverbal message you send.
2. Offer a firm, warm, whole-hand handshake. Shake hands with both men and women the same way. You wouldn't give men and women different salutes, so don't shake hands differently. Practice your handshake before the interview.
3. Make eye contact with the interviewer(s). Your eyes are your most powerful communication tool. Many interviewers use your eye contact to look for enthusiasm, sincerity, and for possible inconsistencies in your responses. If you use natural eye contact, the interview will become more like a conversation between acquaintances, and you will get over some of your nervousness.
4. Sit up straight, but not stiff, and lean forward toward the interviewer, ever-so-slightly. Good posture will help you listen and make you look interested.
5. Use natural gestures. If you normally use your hands to gesture as you talk, do so in the interview. Gestures help you relax, convey enthusiasm and release nervous energy. One caution here: Avoid nervous gestures such as drumming your fingers, playing with a pencil or cup of coffee, jingling the change in your pocket, tapping your foot, swiveling in your chair, etc.
6. Speak clearly, and not too fast. Expression is a powerful way to show enthusiasm. Do not speak in a monotone voice. Allow your volume to rise and fall and pronounce words clearly. Use good grammar and think before you speak. The interviewer will assess your communication skills based on how clearly you express yourself.
7. Your face conveys your attitude, and reinforces what you say. Avoid frowning. Frowns are an intimidation factor—you don't want to intimidate the interviewer. Smile naturally.

8. Remain attentive and eager to listen. Reinforce the interviewer's comments with nods just as he or she does with you.
9. Notice the nonverbal cues of the interviewer. The interviewer's facial expressions will let you know how well they are listening. If the interviewer seems not to be paying attention, shorten your answers, use an example, or ask a question. If the interviewer gives indications that the interview is almost over, help bring the session to an end.

According to researchers, 65% of the meaning in an interaction is conveyed nonverbally.

*Birdwhistell, R. (1955) Background to Kinesics. ETC., 13, 10-18.*



*Body language is just as important as verbal communication.*

## 4.8 ANSWER QUESTIONS

### What to Know

Most interviewers ask similar questions during job interviews. These questions relate to how your skills, knowledge, training, and work experience fit the job opening in the company. Unfortunately, many job hunters do not expect the questions, and do not practice their answers before an interview. As a result, applicants may not present their strongest assets. It is difficult to give good answers to questions on the spur of the moment. If unprepared, the simplest question can throw you off balance.

You can improve your chances for success if you practice answering questions. Read the following questions, write down your own personal answers, and practice your answers out loud. Then, when an interviewer asks one of the questions, you'll be ready.

As you read the questions and begin to develop your own answers, use the following ideas:

1. Keep your answers brief, but be certain you answer the questions thoroughly.
2. Use evidence, examples, data and anecdotes to illustrate your points.
3. Think about your answer before you start to speak. It is okay to pause and collect your thoughts, and then give your answer. Try to relate your response to the position for which you are applying.
4. Remember, most questions have more than one purpose. As you develop your answers, think about the match between your skills and the company's needs.
5. Every chance you get, explain how you would go about doing a job rather than just saying you can do it. Do not volunteer information you are not asked for—you might talk yourself out of a job.

*Be nice to people...nice gets nice, and all things being equal, courtesy can be very persuasive.*

## TOUGH QUESTIONS AND TOUGH ANSWERS

The following list of questions and answers may help you prepare for your interview.

### 1. Tell me about yourself.

Be thorough, but brief. Talk for no more than two minutes. Be logical. Be positive. Discuss your education and professional achievements and goals. Then briefly describe your qualifications for the job and the contributions you could make to the organization. Refer to the 30-second commercial in section 4.4.

### 2. Why did you leave the military?

This can be a difficult question. “I achieved my goals in the military and I’m now looking for a new challenge.” You could then explain what your goals were, how you met them, and where you see yourself going now.

### 3. Why are you leaving your current position?

This is a critical question. Do not bad-mouth previous employers. Don’t sound too opportunistic. It is good to state after long personal consideration you wanted an opportunity to expand your background/knowledge. You feel your chance to make a contribution at this time is very low due to company restructuring. Still attempt to score points.

### 4. What do you consider your most significant accomplishment?

This can get you the job. Prepare extensively. Tell a brief story, which includes details and your professional involvement. The problem, action, resolution organization works well here. Describe a situation that presented a problem, detail what actions you took to resolve it, and discuss what the resolution was. This should be an accomplishment that was truly worth achieving. Some aspects that you could discuss include: hard work, deadlines, overcoming obstacles, important company issues and relations with coworkers.

### 5. Why do you believe you are qualified for this position? Why should I hire you?

Pick two or three main factors about the job and about you that are most relevant. Discuss for two minutes, with specific details. Select a technical skill, a specific management skill (organizing, staffing, planning) and a personal success story.

### 6. Have you ever accomplished something you did not think you could?

Show you are goal-orientated, have a strong work ethic, personal commitment and integrity. Provide a good example where you overcame numerous difficulties to succeed. Prove you are not a quitter and you’ll get going when the going gets tough.

### 7. What do you like/dislike about your current position?

Interviewer may be trying to determine your compatibility with the open position. Stating you dislike overtime or dislike specific details, or that you dislike “management” can cost you the position. There is nothing wrong with liking challenges, pressure situations, opportunity to grow, or disliking bureaucracy.

### 8. How do you handle pressure? Do you like or dislike these situations?

High achievers tend to perform well in high pressure situations. Conversely, this question also could imply that the position is pressure-packed. If you perform well under stress, provide a good example with details, giving an overview of the stress situation. Try to relay the situation as a challenge rather than focusing on your ability to handle pressure. The interviewer will see you turn a negative into a positive situation.

**9. Good employees can take the initiative and get the job done. Can you describe yourself in terms of this statement?**

A proactive, results-oriented person does not need constant supervision. To convince the interviewer you know how to take initiative you must describe a situation in which you were self-motivated. Try to discuss at least one example in depth. Demonstrate a strong work ethic and creativity.

**10. What is the worst or most embarrassing aspect about your career? How would you have done things differently now with 20/20 hindsight?**

This is a question to find out if you are introspective and if you learn from your mistakes. The right answer indicates an open, flexible personality. Do not be afraid to talk about negative results or problem issues, particularly if you have learned from them. Dynamic, high-performance individuals learn from mistakes. End your story on a positive note.

**11. How have you grown or changed over the past few years?**

To discuss this effectively is indicative of a well balanced, intelligent individual. Maturation, increased technical skills, or increased self-confidence are important aspects of human development. Overcoming personal obstacles, or recognizing manageable weaknesses can make you an approachable and desirable employee.

**12. What do you consider your most significant strengths?**

Know four or five key strengths. Be able to discuss each with a specific example. Select those attributes that are most compatible with the job opening. Most people mention management ability or good interpersonal skills in response to this question. If you can not describe the specific characteristics of management, such as planning, organizing, budgeting, staffing, etc., do not say you have strong management skills. If you mention interpersonal skills you should be able to clearly explain what you mean.

**13. What do you consider your most significant weakness?**

Show by specific example how a weakness can be turned into a strength. Balance any negative with a positive statement. Example: "I tend to be a workaholic, but have learned to better manage my time."

**14. Deadlines, frustration, difficult people and silly rules can make a job difficult. How do you handle these types of things?**

If you can't deal with petty frustrations you'll be seen as a problem. You certainly can state your displeasure at the petty side of these issues, but how you overcome them is more important. Diplomacy, perseverance and common sense can often prevail even in difficult circumstances. This is part of corporate America and you must be able to deal with it on a regular basis.

## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

**15. What kind of work are you looking for?**

**16. What do you know about our company?** (This is your opportunity to shine with the amount of research that you've done. If you have contacts in the company this is a good time to do some name dropping.)

15. What can you do for us that someone else cannot?
16. What things about your previous jobs have you disliked?
17. What goals have you set recently?
18. Where do you expect to be in five years?
19. What do you think of your supervisor?
20. What does your supervisor think of you?
21. What do your subordinates think of you?
22. How did previous employers treat you?
23. What is your management style (democratic, team player, etc.)?
24. Would you describe a few situations in which your work was criticized?
25. What are your two biggest accomplishments in:
  - a. your present or last job;
  - b. your career so far?
26. How long would it take you to make a contribution to our company?
27. What do you expect as a starting salary?
28. Tell me about yourself:
  - a. Are you creative? Give an example.
  - b. Are you analytical? Give an example.
  - c. Are you a good manager? Give an example.
  - d. Are you a leader? Give an example.
29. I have interviewed several people with more experience. Why should I hire you instead of them?
30. What jobs have you held? How did you get them and why did you leave?
31. Why did you choose your field of work?
32. How do you spend your spare time?
33. What personal characteristics do you feel are necessary for success in your chosen field?
34. Do you prefer working with others or by yourself?
35. What kind of boss do you prefer?
36. Can you take criticism without getting upset?

## ILLEGAL INTERVIEWING QUESTIONS

Inquiry Area	Illegal Question	Legal Question
National Origin/Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you a U.S. citizen?</li> <li>• Where were you/your parents born?</li> <li>• What is your “native tongue?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you authorized to work in the United States?</li> <li>• What languages do you read/speak/write fluently? (This is okay only if this ability is relevant to the job.)</li> </ul>
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How old are you?</li> <li>• When did you graduate?</li> <li>• What’s your date of birth?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you over the age of 18?</li> </ul>
Marital/Family Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What’s your marital status?</li> <li>• Whom do you live with?</li> <li>• Do you plan to have a family? When?</li> <li>• How many kids do you have?</li> <li>• What are your child-care arrangements?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would you be willing to relocate if necessary?</li> <li>• Would you be able and willing to travel as needed by the job? (This is okay if it is asked of all applicants.)</li> <li>• Would you be able and willing to work overtime as necessary? (Again, this is okay only if it is asked of all applicants.)</li> </ul>
Affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What clubs or social organizations do you belong to?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.</li> </ul>
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How tall are you? How much do you weigh? (Questions about height/weight are not acceptable unless minimum standards are essential to job performance.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of the job?</li> </ul>
Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you have any disabilities?</li> <li>• Please complete the following medical history.</li> <li>• Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list them and give dates when these occurred.</li> <li>• What was the date of your last physical exam?</li> <li>• How’s your family’s health?</li> <li>• When did you lose your eyesight? How?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job? (This question is okay if the interviewer has thoroughly described the job.)</li> <li>• Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job-related functions?</li> </ul>



Inquiry Area	Illegal Question	Legal Question
Disabilities (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you need an accommodation to perform the job? (This question can only be asked after a job offer has been made.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of the hiring process, after a job offer has been made, you will be required to undergo a medical exam. (Exam results must be kept strictly confidential, except medical/safety personnel may be informed if emergency medical treatment is required, and supervisors may be informed about necessary job accommodations, based on exam results.)</li> </ul>
Arrest Record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you ever been arrested?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you ever been convicted of _____? (The crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)</li> </ul>
Military	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you've been in the military, were you honorably discharged?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve?</li> <li>What type of training or education did you receive in the military?</li> </ul>

*Taken from: "Handling Illegal Questions." Kaplan, Rochelle. Planning Job Choices, 1998. National Association of Colleges and Employers, 1998, pp. E61-2.*



*Worrying about what is right is always more important than worrying about who is right.*

## Situational Questions

You also need to think about “What if . . .” questions. These can be difficult to answer. For instance:

*“What would you do if your supervisor told you to do something illegal?”*

Use common sense. These types of questions need answers based on your knowledge, experience and personal values. Consider what the employer wants to hear. A calm approach is best. Don’t rush into an answer. It is better to cushion your answer. For example: *“One thing I might consider doing, would be . . .”* If the interviewer does not like your solution, you can consider a different approach.

Another situational question might ask for an example of how you had to deal with a difficult situation. The interviewer might ask you to describe a time when you had to deal with a difficult supervisor, co-worker, or customer. You should highlight your contributions and keep your answer relevant to the job you are interviewing for.

Another area of difficult questions may concern your family responsibilities, age, health or other personal information. They are not always fair questions and may be illegal, but you need to be prepared to deal with them. Refer to the application section that deals with inappropriate questions. You may choose to deal with these type questions by refusing to answer, in which case you will probably not be hired. Another response could be: *“If you can tell me how that relates to the position, I would be happy to answer the question.”* You must make the decision about how to answer based on how much you want the job.

An interviewer will form opinions about whether you are:

- Mature
- An initiator
- Emotionally stable/even-tempered
- Thorough
- A team worker
- Self-confident
- Tactful
- Assertive
- Adaptable
- Conscientious
- Tough minded
- A hard worker
- Self-disciplined
- Honest and sincere

## Guidelines for Salary Questions

1. Do not mention money or benefits until the interviewer brings it up, or until an offer has been made.
2. Give the amount as a range, for example \$20,000 to \$23,000 rather than saying \$21,000. A range gives room to negotiate.
3. You can find out a realistic salary from researching the occupation. Check the Internet for salary information. Another resource for information might be the local state job service.
4. Sometimes an employer will bring up salary early in an interview. If you are not ready to discuss this question simply say:

*“Before I can give an answer to the salary question, I would like to know more about the position.”*

5. The best time to discuss the salary and benefits package is after you have a job offer, when you are in a much better bargaining position.
6. Remember, there are many benefits to a job besides salary, such as:
  - opportunities for advancement and training
  - benefits, i.e. parking, transportation, tuition reimbursement, childcare onsite, fitness center, health insurance, etc.
  - good working conditions
  - good hours, flexible scheduling, etc.
7. If possible, wait until you find out about the benefits and are offered the job before you answer questions about salary.
8. If an employer asks you about the minimum salary you will accept, don't give a figure you think will either be too high or too low.

If you are too high, they'll think that you won't take the job at a lower salary and might offer it to someone else.

If you are too low, you might get the job at a much lower salary than you could have gotten. This little mistake could cost you thousands of dollars!

9. Here are some ways you can answer the question about minimum salary:

*“I'm really interested in long-term growth and advancement. Right now, I'm willing to consider whatever your company pays people with my skills.”*

*“I don't have a particular amount in mind. I'm interested in a career with your company, not just a job.”*

## 4.9 ASK QUESTIONS DURING INTERVIEWS

### What to Know

During a job interview, you will be asked questions about your work experience, education, and goals. Your answers and the nonverbal messages you send determine the impression you make. However, interviewers also learn about you, and remember you, by the questions you ask. They often judge your thinking skills based on the kinds of questions you ask. Interviewers respect candidates who think about their choices carefully, and they appreciate knowing you have done your homework.

During the interview you will also be deciding if the company is a good place to work. Based on the answers to your questions, you will learn about the employer. Look for a match between the company and your goals, needs, and attitudes.

It is a good idea to write out five or six questions before the interview. Revise the questions for each interview based on your research. If a question gets answered before you ask it, choose another question from your list.

Your questions should do two things. They should get the information you want to know about the company. They should also reflect your knowledge of the company. Use the information you learned while doing research on the company to write your questions.

### What to Do

Following is a list of suggested questions. Many of these questions could have been answered during research of the company. Do not bother to ask something you already know. Add some questions of your own.

1. I feel I have a clear picture of the job, but could you please give me a few more details?
2. How would you describe a typical day on the job?
3. What are the promotion possibilities?
4. Where does the job fit into the organization?
5. To whom would I report?
6. What other positions would I interface with while performing my duties?
7. How would you describe the work environment?
8. Do your employees work individually or as a team?

9. Where is the job located?
10. What career opportunities exist in the company?
11. What further education or training does the company consider important for my future progress?
12. How are performance reviews done?
13. What is the general management style with regard to customer service, products, or employees?
14. Is this a newly-created position or am I replacing someone?
15. How would I be trained or introduced to the job?
16. What are the department's goals for the year?
17. When will you make a decision?
18. Does the company have a promote-from-within policy?
19. What kind of work schedule does the company have?
20. Does the company require employees to relocate, and if so, how is that done?
21. Does the job require travel and, if so, how much?

The best questions show that you have done research about the company and, at the same time, get you information you really want to know. The following are three examples of this type of question. Of course, you will tailor each question to the company information and the job opening.

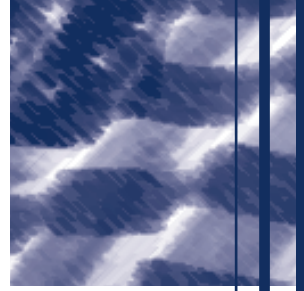
1. What opportunities might I have to work in the \_\_\_\_\_ area?
2. Your company literature indicated that the company actively encourages continuing education. What opportunities are there?
3. In your Annual Report, the company president talked about a new fiber optics division. What are the research goals of that division and how would it relate to the division where I am applying?

Good questions can use information the interviewer shared with you earlier in the interview. For example, if the interviewer mentioned that the company plans to develop new products, you might ask how those plans will affect the job you are seeking.

Some questions are not appropriate for the first interview. Salary and benefits are important, but save those questions until an offer has been made unless the interviewer brings them up.

Finally, pay attention to the time left in the interview. Usually, the interviewer will invite you to ask questions during the last five to eight minutes of a one hour interview. So, when you have an interview scheduled, write out at least six questions you want to ask to help you get the information you need. Ask only the most important questions. If time is short, say something like: I had hoped to ask you several things, but as our time is short, let me ask the two questions that are most important to me.

If you think that there are any questions on the interviewer's mind that might work against your being considered for the position, you can address these questions yourself. Remember, issues are situationally dependent. Some employer concerns might be military spouse issues, commuting, relocation, military stereotypes, disabilities, etc. You might say "I realize that my home is 40 miles from the office, but I enjoy the time I spend commuting, that wouldn't be a deterrent for me." "I realize that many people believe that someone with a military background might be rigid, but I pride myself on being innovative. I enjoy change" or "I realize that accepting this job would mean relocating to another state, but my family and I have already discussed it and agree that it would be a great opportunity for us." Another way that you can address these issues is by asking the interviewer if there are any questions that you haven't answered to his/her satisfaction. DON'T address limitations that the interviewers aren't already aware of or that won't interfere with your ability to do the job.



*Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.(Mark Twain)*

## 4.10 FOLLOW UP AFTER INTERVIEWS

### What to Know

Every interview is an opportunity to improve your interviewing skills. You can also maximize your potential for success in every interview. To help you learn from your experience and to increase your chances for success, do two things at the end of each interview:

1. Send a thank you note or letter to the interviewer.
2. Take a few notes about how you did.

### What to Do

Do these two things right after each interview. Your notes will be most useful if you make them while the interview is still fresh in your mind. Use the Post Interview Checklist on the following page. The notes will help you in two ways:

1. If you are called for a second interview, you can easily review what went on in the first. If you note what you wore you can dress appropriately for the second interview as well.
2. If you do not get the job, you can review your interview performance and improve it for the next time.

Only about 5% of those looking for jobs actually send thank you letters. Write a thank you letter soon after the interview, the same day is best. Be sure to check spelling, grammar, and punctuation. You can type or hand write this letter. You should tailor your letter to the culture of the company and the relationship you established with the interviewer. Send a formal business letter if you feel the interviewer and the company call for that. If you established a good rapport with the interviewer, send a handwritten note. As for e-mailing thank you notes, career experts and employers are not in total agreement, but the company's culture should guide you. If people in the company rely heavily on e-mail, your e-mailed thank you will seem appropriate. It is also a fast solution if you know the company will be making its hiring decision quickly. It is still a good idea to follow up your e-mailed thank you with a hard-copy version. The thank you letter is a good way to add anything you forgot, or wish you had said in the interview. You can reinforce important information that you provided in the interview. You can state your interest in the job, or you can let the employer know that you appreciate their time. If you were interviewed by a panel, it is best to send a thank you letter to each of the interviewers. Be sure to vary the letters by a few sentences in case they compare them.

## POST INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date to Call Back: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Decision: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Was I on time? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

2. Did I dress appropriately? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

3. Do I need to send additional information?

- resume or application Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
- reference list/letters of reference Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
- work samples Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

4. Did I give a positive indication of my interest in the job? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

5. Did I mention who referred me? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

6. What was the interviewer's general impression of my resume? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What was discussed the most? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What did the employer seem particularly interested in? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What questions did I have the most difficulty answering? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What questions did I answer most effectively? \_\_\_\_\_

11. What further information did I obtain about the company by asking questions? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What can I do to improve my effort? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Did I send a thank you letter? \_\_\_\_\_



*Sample Thank You Letter***Thank You Letter**

The reasons for sending a thank you letter are to remind the interviewer of your interest, to say thank you for the interview, and to add anything you forgot to mention. Two sample thank you letters that you can use as models follow.

February 2, 20XX

Mr. William Thomas, President  
Washington National Bank  
1111 Washington Street  
Los Angeles, CA 12345

Dear Mr. Thomas:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview yesterday. The information you shared with me about the Washington National Bank was most interesting, and I am excited about the possibility of applying my education and experience in the position of loan officer for your bank. The expansion and public lending plans are especially intriguing, and I look forward to helping the bank enter the new market.

If I can provide you with any additional information, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

*Charles Henderson*

Charles Henderson  
1111 E. Hollywood Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 12345  
(123) 456-7890

*Thank You*

*Front of Card*

February 2, 20XX

Dear Ms. Anderson:

Thank you for the interview this afternoon. I appreciated the time and consideration you gave me.

The Cable Installer position we discussed definitely sounds interesting to me. I feel that I could make a valuable contribution to WCC.

I look forward to hearing from you next Thursday.

Sincerely,

Judy R. Smith

*Inside of Card*

## 4.11 ANALYZE WHY YOU DID NOT GET A JOB

### What to Know

There are many factors that can prevent you from getting a job, such as:

- Sometimes the company decides not to hire anyone, or hires someone with more experience;
- Sometimes they hire from within the company;
- Sometimes your style does not fit the style they want; or
- Sometimes you are overqualified and the interviewer believes you will not stay with the company.

Rejections are part of the process and you should not get discouraged. Don't take it personally—sometimes the company's decision has nothing to do with you. But you should learn from every interview how to improve your interview skills. In that way, you can keep your self-esteem and improve your chances for success.

Look at the following list of factors, and think about how many of them are in your control. Start now, and work on the ones that you can get under control as you prepare for your interview.



*A turn in the road is not the end of the road unless you fail to make the turn.*

WHAT WENT WRONG	WAYS TO IMPROVE
1. Poor manner and self-presentation, ranging from being arrogant to a poor handshake.	1. Follow guidelines for verbal and nonverbal interaction and for listening.
2. Poor personal appearance and careless dress.	2. Follow appearance guidelines.
3. Lack of enthusiasm and interest or no evidence of initiative.	3. Use voice expression and nonverbal cues.
4. Lack of clear goals or ambition.	4. Link skills to position, emphasize your career.
5. Poor speech habits or inability to express self.	5. Practice answers so you use good grammar and improve your oral presentation.
6. Lack of preparation. Failure to research the company. Inability to ask intelligent questions or make intelligent comments.	6. Research the company, practice answering questions. Ask informed questions about the job and the company.
7. Failure to look at interviewer or demonstrate interest.	7. Use body language guidelines.
8. Unrealistic salary demands or more interest in salary than opportunity.	8. Research and emphasize a realistic salary.
9. Inability to relate skills and knowledge to job or indefinite responses to questions.	9. Prepare and practice answers to anticipated questions. Emphasize your transferable skills.
10. Negative comments about previous employers or exhibiting friction with various types of authority.	10. Consider and practice answers about work experience and your relationship to supervisors and organizations.
11. Lack of interest in company/industry.	11. Research company/industry.
12. Weak excuses or hedging about unfavorable information in background.	12. Better prepare yourself to deal with prior problems. Acknowledge mistakes, talk about learning from them, present a positive picture.
13. Unwillingness to start where needed and working your way up.	13. Emphasize that you want the job and are willing to make a commitment.
14. Lack of knowledge in specialized areas.	14. Practice answers to anticipated questions so you can reveal your specialized knowledge.
15. Poor attitude as illustrated by lack of courtesy, cynicism, strong prejudices or low moral standards.	15. Reconsider how you present yourself. Think before you speak.