

Your Image On Paper



Helpful
Hints For
Your Résumé



You've got 20 seconds!!!

That's how long it takes for a screener in the personnel department or a busy hiring manager to decide if your résumé deserves a second look. That's less time than even the shortest television commercials, less time than a football huddle.

A résumé is a marketing tool. It should sell you to prospective employers the same way an advertisement entices you to purchase a product. It is the first impression employers will have of you, and from it they will decide if they want to meet you.

Writing a résumé is a good self-assessment. It is an opportunity to focus on your strengths and interests and will help you prepare for a job interview. Résumés should not be over one page in length.

Types of Résumés

Chronological Résumé: the traditional résumé. The summary of your education and experience beginning with the most recent and working backwards in time.

- This form works best for an individual who has followed a specific career plan with jobs of increased responsibility.
- Does not work well for an individual with frequent job changes, gaps in employment history, or someone who wishes to use skills acquired in non-work settings.

Functional Résumé: Highlights your skills, experience, and accomplishments in specific areas such as administration, communication, marketing, management, or planning.

- May or may not include a work history.
- Effective for individuals who are reentering after a work gap.
- Those who have or will be changing careers.
- Individuals who have been in the same or similar positions for a long period and the work responsibilities are repetitive when listed chronologically.

Combination Résumé: Uses a combination of the above résumés. Used when the formats of just one of these don't cover all you want it to.



The Essentials

- ❖ **Name**
- ❖ **Address**
- ❖ **Phone number** (including area code)
- ❖ **E-mail address** (if appropriate)
- ❖ **Career Objective** – indicates the kind of job you are seeking. Should be specific enough to imply that you know what you are looking for, but not so specific that you won't be considered for a broader range of positions.
- ❖ **Education** (high school & college)
- ❖ **Experience/Skills** – including skills and accomplishments. What you did is as important as how well you performed, so emphasize your unique accomplishments. {include dates}
- ❖ **Extra-Curricular Activities**
 - **Community Service**
 - **Professional associations and memberships**
 - **Honors & Awards**
 - **Leadership**
- ❖ **References** –include address, title, phone number

Key Words for Résumé and Cover Letter Preparation

Action Words

actively	delegate	generate	motivated	proficient
accelerated	develop	increased	organize	recommend
adapted	demonstrate	influence	originate	reduced
administer	direct	implemented	participated	reinforced
analyze	effect	interpret	perform	reorganized
approve	eliminated	improve	plan	revamped
coordinate	established	launched	pinpointed	responsible
conceived	evaluate	lead	program	responsibilities
conduct	expand	lecture	proposed	revise
completed	expedite	maintain	proved	review
control	founded	manage	provide	schedule
created	significantly	simplicity	set-up	solve
strategy	structure	streamline	successfully	supervise
support	teach			

Self-Descriptive Words

active	consistent	efficient	logical	positive
adaptable	constructive	energetic	loyal	practical
aggressive	creative	enterprising	mature	productive
alert	dependable	enthusiastic	methodical	realistic
ambitious	determined	extroverted	objective	reliable
analytical	diplomatic	fair	optimistic	resourceful
attentive	disciplined	forceful	perceptive	respective
broad-minded	discrete	imaginative	personable	self-reliant
conscientious	economical	independent	pleasant	sincere
sophisticated	systematic	tactful	talented	will travel
will	relocate			

Basic Résumé Writing Principles

The Résumé Should:

- Have INSTANT eye appeal; be attractive and easy to read. Margins should be consistent and complement the paragraphs of information.
- Be uncluttered, neatly blocked and organized so that key points are quickly zeroed in on by the reader.
- Be on white, off-white, or a subdued color of paper. Do not use brightly colored paper.
- ALWAYS include a cover letter on the same color/bond/size paper.
- Be consistent regarding indentations and layout format. Do not change graphic display techniques from paragraph to paragraph.
- Stress accomplishments and acquired skills. Keep the purpose of the résumé in mind as it is written and edited.
- NEVER have handwritten corrections.
- Use strong actions words—adjectives that describe—and use them in the same tense.
- Pleasing to look at but don't let it become so elaborate that its appearance over shadows the content.
- Absolutely no mistakes, no white-out, no typos or misspelling; have others proof it for readability. Don't trust spell check, a word may be spelled correctly but doesn't make cents (sense). Get the point. ☺

Proofread! Proofread! Proofread! and Proofread again!!!

The Résumé Writer Should:

- Refrain from the use of sentences.
- Take special care with spelling and punctuation. Always consult a dictionary.
- Plan your layout, making sure your résumé is long enough to read, and short enough to sell. Usually one page, never more than two pages.
- Allow adequate “white space” between margins and paragraphs for emphasis and neatness. Use CAPITALS, underlining and space to emphasize.
- Slant the content of the résumé toward the type of position for which the applicant is applying.
- Customize your résumé. Target each job objective with a specific résumé that shows the skills you have for that job. Generalized, one-size-fits-all résumés rarely get you an interview.

Design Tips

With very few exceptions, stick with one-no more than two-fonts. Use highly readable fonts. This is not the time to show off all the cute characters you have at your disposal. Let the message shine through. Use no clip art or graphics other than the simple bullets for lists or unobtrusive rule lines to separate sections, if desired. Keep it all on one page if at all possible, two if absolutely necessary. Brochure-formatted résumés are not completely uncommon but for most jobs a standard letter size, portrait-oriented format is best.



Résumé Tip: Be Sure T's Are Dotted



The best—laid plans of mice and men...
Not to mention their résumés.
The summaries that job hunters send to prospective
employers often go awry,
despite the most careful planning.



For example, here are the excerpts from some
real-life résumés, as collected by
Accountemps, a major temporary-
employment contractor, and reprinted
In Working Woman magazine:

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- “Education: Curses in liberal arts, curses in computer science, curses in accounting.”
 - “An obsession for detail; I like to make sure I cross my i’s and dot my t’s.”
 - “Auditing for small manufacturing companies since 1877.”
 - “Referees available upon request.”
 - “My résumé shows my critical career developments. I’m also including other important parts of me.”

Describing Your Jobs on Your Résumé

Following are commonly held jobs and their required duties.

Field	Position	Duties
Fast foods	Crew Member	Take and fill customer orders; operate cash register; maintain sanitary conditions. (OR) Expedite customer orders at counter and at drive-thru; handle money; maintain clean and orderly work area.
Baby-sitting	Baby-Sitter for the Robert Smith Family	Supervise the safety and activities of three young children; prepare snacks and meals; do light housecleaning.
Paper carrier	Paper Carrier	Deliver daily newspapers to 50 customers; collect monthly payments; maintain accurate records.
Medical occupation	Dietary Aid	Prepare trays for residents according to specific dietary needs; sanitize dishes, glassware, utensils, pots, and pans; keep work area clean and orderly.
Child care	Prekindergarten Teacher	Oversee the safety and play of young children and the feeding and changing of infants.
Grocery store	Customer Service	Bag grocery items; assist customers in loading their vehicles; stock and face shelves and displays; maintain clean and orderly conditions.
Grocery store	Cashier	Ring up customer sales using proper store codes; process cash, check, food stamp, and credit card payments; bag items and maintain clean work area.
Lifeguard	Lifeguard	Supervise the safety and activities of patrons; perform CPR and administer first aid when needed; enforce pool rules.
Landscaping	Landscaping	Seed, sod, mow, weed, fertilize, water, and aerate customer lawns; plant and transplant shrubs, trees, and flowers; build rock walls and install fountains
Lawn care	Lawn Care	Maintain yards for 10 customers; mow, trim, and edge lawns; prune hedges and shrub; weed and mulch beds.
Restaurant	Bus Person	Clear, clean, and set tables; assist servers as needed; maintain sanitary conditions.
Movie theater	Cashier/Usher	Sell and collect movie tickets; expedite snack orders; handle money; stock supplies and food items; direct customers to proper theater areas; maintain clean conditions.
Fair parking	Parking Attendant	Direct fair traffic to designated parking areas.

Farr, J. Michael, & Pavlicko, Marie. VoTech Student's Guide to Job Hunting. Thomson Delmar Learning: Clifton Park, NY. 2007, page 177-178.



Electronic Résumés

An electronic résumé is intended to be delivered via e-mail or through an online application form. The electronic résumé has no text formatting, making it scannable, or able to be read by any e-mail or résumé tracking program. For example, using all capital letters in a standard font such as Time or Helvetica for headings eliminates formatting that might be specific to your word processing program.

The following guidelines to facilitate electronic processing of a résumé are suggested by Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology Career Services (2001) and The Santa Clara University Career Center (n.d.):

- Use plain fonts, such as Arial, Verdana, Helvetica, or Courier.
- Do not use italics, boldface, or underlined text.
- Use 10- or 12-point font.
- Do not use graphics, decorative borders, or other visual elements.
- Avoid using indentations to minimize the problem of misalignment and document asymmetry. Separate sections using capitalized headings and an additional line of space.
- Adjust margins so that the Résumé fits into a standard e-mail window. The left margin should be set at 1 inch and the right margin at 3 inches.
- Save your document as “Text Only with Line Breaks.” Your word processing program may warn you that you will be losing some of the formatting. Click “OK.”
- Edit and clean up your document by opening it in a text editor program such as Notepad®.
- Use a bulleted list to present information clearly and concisely.
- Cut and paste your résumé into the body of an e-mail rather than sending it as an attachment.
- Conduct a trial run by sending the résumé to a friend with a different e-mail program to test its legibility. Ask the friend to print the document to ensure that it prints accurately.

Web Résumés

A Web résumé is posted on the Internet and is typically used to display an individual’s skills in designing hypertext markup language (HTML) documents. It is beneficial to individuals seeking art or graphics positions and has the capacity to include electronic media such as video and advanced graphics.



RATING	ADVANCED 9-10 POINTS	PROFICIENT 7-8 POINTS	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT 6-5 POINTS	NOT PROFICIENT 4-0 POINTS
FORMAT/LAYOUT	The resume consistently follows formatting guidelines for length, layout, spacing, and alignment. Format and layout make the resume exceptionally attractive, drawing attention to the content, and enhancing readability.	Formatting guidelines for length, layout, spacing, and/or alignment are almost always followed. 1-2 problems in format and layout, but readability and attractiveness are not affected.	Formatting is repeatedly inconsistent in length, layout, spacing, and/or alignment, reducing readability and attractiveness	Formatting guidelines for length, layout, spacing, and/or alignment are not followed, making the resume unattractive or hard to read.
STYLE	The fonts are consistent and easy to read. Font size varies appropriately for headings and text. Use of font styles (italic, bold, underline) is used consistently and improves readability.	The fonts are consistent and easy to read. Font size varies appropriately for headings and text.	Fonts are not used consistently, varying in style and size and making the text difficult to read.	No consistency in fonts. A wide variety of fonts, styles and point sizes was used.
MECHANICS (Spelling, Punctuation/ Capitalization)	There are no errors in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization in the resume.	There are 1-3 errors in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization in the resume.	There are 4-5 errors in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization in the resume.	There are more than 5 errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization in the resume.
GRAMMAR/ VOCABULARY	The resume uses accurate English grammar and vocabulary (word forms, word choice). Action verbs are consistently used in past tense.	There are 1-3 errors in the use of English grammar and vocabulary (word forms, word choice). Action verbs are almost always used in past tense.	There are 4-5 errors in English grammar and vocabulary (word forms, word choice). Action verbs are often not used in past tense.	There are more than 5 errors in English grammar and vocabulary (word forms, word choice). Action verbs are usually not used in past tense.
CONTENT	The resume includes all necessary items (Headings, Career Objective, Education, Experience/Skills, Extra-Curricular Act., References) and follows guidelines consistently (e.g. objective, action verbs, dates, places). Relevant education and experience substantiate position sought and are presented in reverse chronological order.	Almost all necessary items are included and guidelines are followed for the most part. 1-2 errors in presentation of the content (e.g. objective, dates/places, action verbs, use of reverse chronological order).	Several necessary content items are missing or there are several errors in presentation (e.g. objective, dates, places, actions verbs or use of reverse chronological order).	Presentation of content contains many errors or omissions, e.g. in the use of chronological order, action verbs, objective, dates, places, etc.

RATING	ADVANCED 9-10 POINTS	PROFICIENT 7-8 POINTS	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT 6-5 POINTS	NOT PROFICIENT 4-0 POINTS
CAREER OBJECTIVE	Statement is clear and concise.	Statement is somewhat clear but could be improved.	Statement is inappropriate, contains spelling or grammar errors.	No objective statement is included.
EDUCATION	This section is organized, clear, and well defined. It highlights the most pertinent information. This section includes: institution with its location, graduation date, and may include GPA, and any relevant course work.	This section is organized and easy to read but is missing pertinent information.	This section is not well organized. There is no order to how information is formatted in this section.	This section is missing the most crucial information.
EXPERIENCE/SKILLS	Well defined with relevant employment information included for each position: job title, company name, address, phone number, dates. Skill statements are descriptive, clear, in bulleted format, with appropriate use of action verbs.	Includes most employment information. Skill statements are not detailed enough to fully describe skills and abilities. Could improve use of action verbs.	Most employment information is incomplete. Skill statements are sentences in paragraph format without using action verbs. Does not adequately describe skills and abilities.	All employment information is incomplete. Does not include descriptions of each position (when relevant) and offers little or no detail to describe skills and abilities. No use of action verbs.
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES Examples: *Accomplishments *Interests *Leadership (Separate section optional. May be included in qualifications or experience)	Section is organized. Includes appropriate information: organization name and dates. Describes leadership roles held. Lists interests and accomplishments.	Section includes appropriate information but is difficult to follow. Some information is omitted. Could improve on leadership roles held and interests.	Missing key information including the organization name and dates, leadership positions held and interests.	Resume is missing Leadership, accomplishments, or interests.
REFERENCES	3 references are listed and include the name, title, address and phone number. References are complete, professional and appropriate.	Some references are incomplete or are not appropriate.	Most references are incomplete and/or are inappropriate.	References are not included.

**QUICK
STUDY.
ACADEMIC**

RESUMES & INTERVIEWS

A COMPREHENSIVE JOB HUNTING GUIDE

GENERAL INFORMATION

PURPOSE of a RESUME

Resumes don't get jobs, they get interviews. They alert prospective employers that you are seeking employment in their organization.

A MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOL

- **Your resume must pass the 5 to 15 second glance test** because employers and employment agencies receive hundreds of resumes for every job available.
- Meet employer needs by including achievements, solved problems, transferrable skills, and initiatives you have taken to get results.

PLANNING & ORGANIZATION

- Expect to write more than one draft.
- Be brief, concise and action oriented.
- **Write your own resume** or be an active partner in providing information. Avoid packaged resume services where everyone's resume looks alike.
- **Use short words and sentence fragments.**
- **Avoid jargon** and exaggeration.
- Use **bullets** to set off each major idea.
- **Avoid** the use of the word "I".
- **Use action words** to describe skills, completed tasks, functions served and achievements, e.g., designed, met, led, organized.
- **Quantify** with numbers, dollar amounts, and percentages whenever possible, e.g. led committee of 7 persons, organized event for 100 people which raised \$2,000 for club charity fund raiser.

APPEARANCE COUNTS

- **Error proof your resume.**
- Spelling, punctuation, typing errors, erasures, correction fluid marks will screen you out from being considered for an interview.
- Have others **proof read and critique** before you prepare the final document.
- Use 20 lb. bond paper in white, eggshell or cream with black print.
- **Use standard print style** for easier reading.
- Special effects should only be used for the creative industries of public relations, advertising, marketing, and the media. Others should be conservative in nature.
- **Margins** should be about 1 1/2 inches on top and each side with at least 3/4 inch on the bottom.
- **Better to use two pages** than to squeeze everything on one page.
- Use letter quality or laser printers. Photocopies should be sharp and clean. Black spots, smudges, or shadows are not acceptable.

- Honors and awards should be included in a separate section. Grade point average for recent graduate without work experience is advisable only at a 3.5 level or better.
- Recent graduates should include percentage of expenses you earned if more than 50%.
- **Don't include** months, height, weight, gender, religion, marital status, health, number of children or organizations considered controversial or which will screen you out.
- **Length depends on experience.** One page for recent graduates without extensive work history. Two pages are acceptable for experienced applicants. 2+ for executives.
- **Overqualified** - emphasize your experience and skills are more valuable, that you are a team player and that you don't expect to start where you left off.

TYPES of RESUMES

Each style serves different needs

CHRONOLOGICAL

- Organizes job history information with most recent experience listed first.
- Most common format because it is easy to write.
- **Best used by people who have had one job or have been in the same field for a long period of time.**
- Does not serve recent college graduates well. Part time and summer jobs may not relate to college major or industry in which one is seeking employment.

FUNCTIONAL

- Organizes experience in terms of skills and accomplishments.
- **Best used by career changers, frequent job changers, & those with limited experience.**
- Red flag to employers that all information is not included.
- Can be used by recent graduates with limited work experience. Emphasize courses of study and extracurricular activities.

COMBINATION

- Uses features of both types.
- Skills and experience are presented as themes.
- Positions and companies follow chronologically.
- Matches achievements and skills to job requirements.
- Shows stability and employment history.
- Recommended for its versatility and its impact on employers by matching your skills to their specific needs.
- May be more difficult for inexperienced resume writers to write and lay out.
- **Recommended for mid-career changers (downplay earliest dates) and recent graduates.**

RESUME LETTER

Resume Letters are an alternative, either in response to a blind ad or when you want the reader to focus on specific accomplishments and skills which will match a position description.

- **First paragraph** - includes why you are writing (source of ad and date, people, newspapers, InterNet)
- **Second paragraph** - Bullets of your skills and/or experiences that match employers' requirements
- **Third paragraph** - Request for interview or for further information about the specific position or the application process and that you will follow-up.

CONTENT OPTIONS DO'S & DON'T'S

- **Listing job objectives can be restrictive.** Your objective is to get an interview for every job you are applying for.
- Stay clear of trite phrases and stiff language.
- Summaries are helpful. They recap experience and skills in a short introduction at the beginning of the resume. Usually written in paragraph style.
- **List education first only if** you are a recent graduate or you are applying for a professional position in education, social work, engineering, law or medicine. Major courses of study can be included in summary.
- Continuing education, certifications, company training workshops, and licenses are included in the Education segment after Employment History.
- Dates of graduation are included only for recent graduates. Omit date after five years. Employers are interested in related experience and skills.

COVER LETTERS

- **Always** included with resumes on your own personalized letterhead preprinted on same paper as resume, addressed to a specific person you have verified. Show how well you know the industry or company and how your strong points answer the company's needs.
- 1st paragraph explains why you are writing.
- 2nd / short middle paragraphs include your qualifications and examples of your experience, use action verbs and complete sentences that are brief and specific, expand on facts in resume, give new facts.
- Close with another positive statement and tell reader when you will call as a follow-up to set up an interview.
- **Well written letters demonstrate your intelligence, manners, personality and motivation. Letters are also necessary for developing contacts, networking, obtaining information, reactions, suggestions. Use to approach employers about existing or future job openings, as a thank you for information and time or as a follow-up for other reasons.**

ACTION VERBS

Following is a list of verbs which are examples of capabilities and which demonstrate skill areas. Use ones which describe paid or unpaid work you have done. Begin each skill or achievement on your resume with an action verb. The word list may also be used to jog your memory of your skills and achievements which will transfer to a new job or will interest a potential employer.

- **Achieved**, acted, added, administered, advised, analyzed, applied, appraised, approved, arranged, assembled, assisted, attended
- **Balanced**, bought, budgeted, built
- **Carried**, categorized, centralized, changed, checked, clarified, cleaned, coached, collated, combined, communicated, compared, compiled, completed, composed, computed, conceived, conceptualized, condensed, conducted, controlled, converted, conveyed, coordinated, corrected, corresponded, counseled, created
- **Deal with**, decided, defined, Delivered, demonstrated, designed, determined, diagnosed, directed, distributed, diverted, drove, duplicated
- **Edited**, encouraged, enlisted, ensured, equipped, established, evaluated, examined, expanded, experimented, extracted, expedited
- **Facilitated**, finalized, financed, fired, folded, formulated, fostered, found, founded, furnished
- **Generated**, governed, guaranteed, guided
- **Handled**, headed, helped, hired, hypothesized
- **Implemented**, improved, improvised, increased, influenced, informed, initiated, innovated, inspected, installed, instituted, instructed, integrated, interpreted, interviewed, introduced, invented, invested, investigated
- **Judged**, jazzed up, joined, jumped, justified
- **Kept**, kicked off, knitted
- **Launched**, learned, lectured, led, liquidated, listed, listened, located, logged, lowered
- **Maintained**, managed, marketed, maximized, measured, merged, minimized, modernized, modified, motivated
- **Negotiated**, notified, numbered
- **Observed**, obtained, opened, operated, organized, outlined, overhauled, oversaw
- **Packed**, patrolled, persuaded, picked, planned, posted, prepared, prescribed, processed, produced, published, purchased
- **Qualified**, questioned
- **Raised**, read, realized, received, recorded, recruited, reduced, refined, related, reorganized, reported, represented, researched, responded, restored, restructured, retrieved, revamped, reviewed, revised
- **Selected**, served, serviced, set up, shipped, simplified, sold, solved, sorted, staffed, standardized, started, strengthened, studied, supplied, supported, supervised, systematized
- **Tabulated**, tailored, taught, tended, told, totaled, trained, transacted, transferred, translated, transported, treated, typed
- **Uncovered**, undertook, unified, updated, upgraded, used
- **Verbalized**, verified
- **Weighted**, withstood, worked, wrote

- Professionals may include more than two pages in a curriculum vitae. Should include publications, research, and dissertation information.
- **Omit hobbies or special interests** unless they have a direct bearing on the job. Cite specific accomplishments to support their inclusion.
- Omit photographs unless they are required for the industry, i.e., modeling, on-air media.
- **Don't include salary requirement or reasons for leaving a job.**
- **Do not include references** in a resume.
- Never send a resume without a **personalized cover letter**
- Faking resumes is acceptable, but always follow up with a hard copy.

INTERVIEW STRATEGIES

PLAN AHEAD

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

It is an accepted fact that many interviewers make decisions about an applicant during the first five minutes and spend the rest of the time justifying that decision. Be ready to take advantage of that very small amount of time to make the right impression. If you have done your research and your practice, you can.

PROFESSIONAL DRESSING

If it's a professional position - look like a professional.

FOR WOMEN:

- Wear a suit or skirt and tailored blazer, dress, or dress with jacket; in conservative style, color and fabric.
- Keep makeup and accessories to a minimum.
- No fragrances. Clear or light colored nail polish
- Lower heel shoes in the event that an extended tour of the facility is part of the interview.

FOR MEN:

- Wear a suit; blue or gray, conservative. For a more casual job; slacks and shirt with tie is acceptable.
- Shirts of solid color, preferable white. Ties with conservative small pattern or stripes, shoes shined.
- Shave, no fragrances, hair clean, neatly trimmed, no flashy jewelry or earrings, nails clean and trimmed.

NETWORKING & MEETINGS

DEVELOPING CONTACTS

Networking or informational interviews, is an excellent way to research a company while a company gets to know you in a nonthreatening situation.

- Do research about the company and/or the industry in libraries, magazines, journals, etc. to augment your interest in the company.
- Find out the name of an appropriate person to call for an appointment.
- Call or write asking for the opportunity to speak about job opportunities in the industry.
- Assure the person you are seeking information, not a job offer.
- If possible, refer to a mutual acquaintance or something from your research to break the ice and get the appointment (this can be a phone conversation or a personal meeting).
- Organize your questions to take a minimum amount of time (15-20 minutes in person, less on the phone). Take notes.
- Thank the person for his/her time and say you will appreciate any referrals or leads they might give you. Ask if you can leave your resume.
- Send a follow-up letter, mention specific points of the conversation as appropriate and thank them.

SAMPLE NETWORKING QUESTIONS

Begin with general industry questions and be ready to add specific company questions as appropriate.

- What special skills are needed in this type of work?
- What are the major problems and issues?
- Are there opportunities for advancement?
- What are the salary ranges for various jobs?
- What advice would you give someone interested in a career in this field?
- What future do you see for the industry? Could you suggest anyone I might talk to who might have more information about a position in this field?

PRACTICE EVERYTHING

This can't be stressed enough. The more you go through the entire scenario, actually practicing the greeting, standing, sitting, saying the words aloud as well as picturing it in your mind, the more comfortable you will be and the more effective your presentation.

- **Getting to the interview.** If possible, make a trial trip to anticipate traffic or parking problems. If you are taking public transportation, allow time for delays.
- **Different settings.** Test chairs and sofas, sitting across a desk or table, or side by side with someone. See how the clothes you plan to wear are affected (slide up, open up or are pulled up) by various seating positions and how you will be able to make notes in each situation.
- **Answering questions.** Practice short, summary type answers for questions which begin with words like, "Summarize for me ..." or "Give me a brief recap of ..." as well as specific details to add to questions like, "Give me an example of a problem you've had and how you handled it... or Tell me some specific details about...". Be confident and concise, but not so brief that important information is omitted.
- **Rehearse with others.** Ask a friend or family member to role-play the interviewer. Go through several interviews this way with notes. Memorize and practice the answers to questions until they sound natural and unrehearsed. The more you tell your story, the more relaxed and adaptable you will be. A tape recorder or video recorder can give you valuable feedback.
- **Facts about the company.** Find information about the company and decide how you will use it in the interview. Information may be available at the local library under corporations or in newspaper or periodical articles. Include how your achievements fit the company objectives.
- **Questions you will ask.** Do ask questions! It shows your interest. The best questions are about the job, the company, expectations and other related areas. Sample questions are on the reverse of this page.
- **What to take to the interview.** Extra copies of your resume, paper and pen, reference letters, work samples, dates, addresses, reminder notes.

NON-VERBAL LANGUAGE

- **Handshake:** Always shake hands; use firm, but not crushing pressure. Also appropriate at the conclusion of the interview regardless of whether you are pleased or disappointed.
- **Eye contact:** Be natural, as with any conversation. Avoiding contact can be read as a sign you are not interested or too shy to handle a job which requires working effectively with others.
- **Sitting:** Choose a chair closest to the interviewer; sit comfortably, but don't slouch. Leaning slightly forward shows interest, but don't lean on the desk.
- **Gestures:** Use hands naturally to make a point. Don't cover your mouth as you speak or twist your hands together.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

SCREENING

Screening out those who don't meet the company's requirements— by comparing your qualifications with job requirements.

- Treat screeners as though they were making the final decision — they are deciding if you will go to the next step.
- Use the information you gain to your advantage in subsequent interviews.
- Your main purpose is to make a good impression. The company will be looking for someone who can solve problems and be a productive member of their team.

ONE-ON-ONE

Most often used by companies.

- **Informal:** Interviewer has a general idea of what to ask, but follows the trend of the conversation rather than any preset list of questions.
- **Structured:** Questions are written out, based on job requirements and will be asked of every applicant. Often a longer interview since all questions must be asked of all candidates and then compared.
- **Unstructured:** After one or two questions, the interviewer may sit back and wait for you to make the next move. Ask questions about the job or the company and after an answer, respond with how your strengths and interests match.
- **Sequential:** Interviewing with several people one at a time. Handle this as though each one was the only one, even if it means many things will be repeated.

GROUP

You may meet with more than one person at a time.

- Teamwork is important. They want to see how effective you are as part of a group.
- Start your answer by looking at the questioner. Then make eye contact with each member of the group as you speak.
- Don't assume the questioner is the decision maker. Try to figure out the power structure within the group, but don't let it distract you.

ON-CAMPUS

- Schedule your appointment early in the day.
- Be prepared to give details of your accomplishments and how your skills and interests fit company needs based on your research.

TELEPHONE

Screens out least qualified applicants, can also be done by faxes and computer modems.

- Expect a call outside normal business hours.
- Screen out background noises.
- Have all information by the phone.
- Offer to call back if time is inconvenient

STRESS

Interviewer stares, lets long silences go by, fires questions, interrupts answers, uses sarcasm, etc. When you recognize this:

- Take a deep breath and keep calm
- Answer as much as possible before the next interruption
- Don't let silences rattle you. May be time for a question.
- Don't be defensive or argumentative.

MEALS / COCKTAILS

May be to see how you handle a social situation. If there's a spill or other problem, stay calm.

- Order a nonalcoholic drink. You need to be in control.
- Order a meal in the middle price range or follow the lead of the interviewer. You will probably not have time to eat.
- Don't smoke.

AT THE APPOINTMENT

WHAT TO WEAR

If you can, visit the location or watch as they arrive or leave work to see how current employees (including bosses) dress. Keep in mind that you don't want anything distracting the interviewer from evaluating your skills or your abilities.

- **Clothing**, hairstyles and accessories must fit the company image and the job you are applying for.
- **Conservatism** is always in good taste. Your image is set with the interviewer within the first twenty seconds.
- **Hosiery** conservative. Women should carry a spare set.
- **Fragrances** and flashy jewelry are distracting. A no, no.
- **Teeth** brushed. Use a mint just before your interview.
- **Hair** clean, conservatively cut and combed.
- **Nails** trimmed and clean. Clear or light polish for women.
- **Shave** for the men. Shadow beards are for the movies.

BE PREPARED

- **Arrive before the actual interview time.** Usually 10 minutes before your appointment is about right. Give yourself time to avoid traffic, to park, and to walk to the office area.
- **Bring extra resume copies** and bring your notes on the company, your questions, contact numbers of references.
- **Be friendly to the receptionist.** Be pleasant and thank interviewer for their help. Don't assume the interviewer has time to visit with you.
- **Take the opportunity to look around.** See how the work area is organized and how the employees treat each other, customers or vendors.
- **Review any information you have with you.** Go through one final rehearsal in your mind.
- **Greet the interviewer with a firm handshake and a smile.** Repeat his or her name along with your appreciation for the opportunity to interview.

APPLICATIONS

Even if you have a resume, you may be asked to complete the company's application form. Do this even though the information will be duplicated. They are looking for how well you complete a document, how well you follow instructions, and whether the information is consistent.

- **Read through the application first.** Determine what they are asking for. If the application says "print", don't write.
- **Don't leave blanks or say "see resume."** Be as specific as possible. Have notes and/or extra resume copies with you to be accurate.
- **Read the disclaimers at the end of the application.** These usually have to do with references, employment requirements and other information. Sign the application and be prepared to follow the rules.

TESTING

Companies often use pre-employment tests to help in making decisions. Some common ones are:

- **Drugs/Alcohol.** Includes questionnaires and blood, urine or hair analysis testing. If you are turned down because of a positive drug test, you can ask if a validation test was done.
- **Psychological.** Includes personality and career interest tests.
- **Skills.** Includes keyboard, mathematics and dexterity tests.
- **Honesty.** Includes questionnaires and background checks.
- **Reliability/Dependability.** Includes questionnaires and background checks.
- **Teamwork.** Includes questionnaires and interaction exercises with other candidates.
- **Assessment Centers.** Various exercises simulate day to day (usually management) activities.
- **"In Basket"** skills test. Go through the entire basket first and set priorities. You may find a later direction which cancels a prior one.
- **Simulation.** You will be called on to act as you would in a real-life situation. For example, a sales presentation. If you have a choice of selling anything in the room, choose to sell yourself!

JOB SEARCH BASICS

Final notes which take us back to the beginning

- **Know thyself** - what you want, what's important to you, what you want to achieve, what you do well; Do a self-assessment. Use **Action Verbs** on 1st page for a skill-assessment.
- **View your job search** as an adventure to new places, people, ideas & things. **Embrace the unknown, learn about where you're going.**
- **Set aside a place to work near a telephone** - an office, a computer or a box in which to keep your information and notes organized.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

TYPES OF INTERVIEWERS

Interviewers may or may not be trained. Regardless, your answers should be based on your skills, qualifications and your previous research. Some attention can be paid to the interviewer's personality and formal or informal interviewing style.

- **When You Know the Person**
Stay on task, cover your experience and skills. Don't assume you have the job. Over-prepare and stay on your toes. Rehearse this interview like any other.

THE UNEXPECTED

- **Being late.** Phone, if possible. If not, apologize and ask if they can see you or reschedule.
- **Wrong date, time or place.** Apologize and try to reschedule. Send a letter indicating this is an unusual mistake.
- **Interviewer being interrupted.** Be patient, make a note where the conversation was stopped. Stay alert.
- **Off the wall questions.** Such as your favorite color, magazine, movie, dinner guest, animal, etc. Answer the best you can; try to determine if the interviewer is trying to put you at ease, having some fun or seeing if you can "think on your feet."
- **Illegal questions.** (Questions that could be interpreted as biased against women, minorities, seniors or disabled.) May be testing your reaction or may not know it's illegal. It is up to you if you want to question the job relatedness or to answer. It would probably not be advisable to enter into a legality hassle at this time or with this interviewer.
- **Getting caught in a contradiction.** Be honest that one or the other answer might have been an error due to stress or misunderstanding the question.
- **Changing answers.** It's OK when necessary. You may need to add, clarify or qualify a previous answer. When your mind goes blank. Ask the interviewer to repeat the question or restate it. They understand stress.

WHEN IT'S YOUR TURN TO ASK QUESTIONS

- **Company Questions.** What's the company's future? Is there a realistic career path? How does my department fit into the plan? What are the hours, co-workers, policies, etc.
- **Job Questions.** Is this a new or replacement job? Is there formal training? What kind? How much? Who pays for the training? Is there a probationary or tryout period? How do my responsibilities fit in?
- **Salary Questions.** These questions are usually reserved for the second interview. Be realistic about an offer. Can you live on it? Is there a bonus or commission in addition to the salary? How does it work? Is the salary at or above what others are getting for the same or similar jobs and experience. (More research for you).
- **Benefits Questions.** Company benefits are often worth from 25% to 50% or more of the cash salary offer and are important to consider. When will you be eligible for each plan? Do you have a choice of the benefits available? How much of the premium do you pay?
Note: should not be asked at the first interview.

CLOSING SIGNALS

Watch for these and be sure you have covered your own agenda for getting your skills and accomplishments across to the interviewer.

- Interviewer looks at watch.
- Interviewer may stand or sit up straight.
- Interviewer may ask if there is anything else about you not already discussed.
- Interviewer may ask if you have questions.

FOLLOW UP

Follow-up is often neglected, but it's just as important as research before an interview. You have an opportunity to help swing things your way when the interviewer needs a push.

- **During the Interview**
Think about how you will follow up. Write down names and titles, job duties and major points discussed.

- **After the Interview.**
As soon as you can, make additional notes on important points & anything needing strengthening or explanation. Write the interviewer on the same day, but not later than the next!

- **Follow-up Letter**
One page long expressing your thanks for the interview. State your interest in the job and a brief recap of how your qualifications meet the company's needs. Close with another statement of appreciation, your belief that you can perform the job successfully and you are looking forward to hearing from the interviewer, or that you will call at a specific time to follow up.

- **Follow-up Telephone Call**
Sometimes a call can move things along. Remember that a phone call must be planned and organized just like a letter or an interview. Write a script and keep it short and businesslike.

1. **When you have sent a follow-up letter** and have not heard back for a couple of weeks, a call may generate some interest or an answer about whether you are in the running.
 2. **When you have received another job offer** and want to see if this company is serious about you and your qualifications.
 3. **When something affecting your application has changed** and you want to make the company aware.
- **If not chosen** ask the interviewer to help you understand why you were not the one. Listen and make notes. Show you understand reasons & if you think you can overcome the say you still believe you are the right candidate and ask for a second interview. If you get a 2nd interview - rehearse, rehearse, rehearse!

MAKING THE DECISION

- **List the advantages and disadvantages** including job responsibilities, salary, location, working conditions, benefits and how it fits into your career goals.
- **If you have had a firm offer,** it is OK to contact other pending companies to find out their time frames for action.
- **Don't agonize after you've made the decision.** If you have thought it through carefully, it's probably right.
- **Contact all the people** who have helped you in your search to say thanks and let them know about your new job.

This **QuickStudy**® chart is designed to help you secure employment regardless of your educational level, if you are a student seeking part-time employment, a recent graduate, or a mid-career professional seeking a change. Prepared by two of America's leading career consultants and authors, **Toby Chabon and Carol Cheek** of Chabon Assoc., West Palm Beach, FL, publishers of *Job-Seeker's* software, it contains a wealth of tips, techniques and strategies proven successful by thousands of job seekers coast to coast. Use this chart as a guide for creating powerful resumes. And follow the interview preparation techniques to have greater control over your job search and increase your chance for a successful result. **Good Luck!** © 1995 BarCharts, Inc.

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- **Set your goals,** write action steps to achieve them
- **Make and prioritize** a list of people who can help you.
- **Research the industry** you're interested in. **Find information and leads** in newspaper/magazine articles, yellow pages, libraries, Chambers of Commerce & industry directories, annual reports and all forms of advertising.
- **Print business cards. Learn to network.** Get out and meet people at industry and civic groups, etc.
- **Rehearse everything,** telephone calls, eye contact, interview answers/examples of your skills, accomplishments, experience. **Builds confidence/improves delivery.**
- Check employment agencies, but **avoid up-front fees.**