



JOB SEEKING TIPS AND STRATEGIES

Matching Your Skills to the Job

In considering your resume, employers will be interested in the skills you can bring to a position. There are three categories, technical/job skills, self-management skills, and transferable skills.

Technical or Job Skills

Technical or job skills are acquired through learning and on-the-job training/specific skills acquired for specific jobs. The following are examples of technical or job skills.

- welding
- taking blood pressure
- carpentry
- automobile repair
- keyboarding

Self-Management Skills

Self-management skills are very similar to personality traits. If you are a person who is always on time, you are punctual. Other examples include being logical, creative, friendly, organized, and helpful. Think about who you are and how you go about your life to determine your self-management skills.

Key Self-management Skills

<input type="checkbox"/> accepts supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> gets along with others	<input type="checkbox"/> hard worker
<input type="checkbox"/> good attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> completes work on time	<input type="checkbox"/> punctual
<input type="checkbox"/> honest	<input type="checkbox"/> productive	<input type="checkbox"/> enthusiastic

Other Self-Management Skills

<input type="checkbox"/> ambitious	<input type="checkbox"/> dependable	<input type="checkbox"/> loyal	<input type="checkbox"/> mature
<input type="checkbox"/> capable	<input type="checkbox"/> energetic	<input type="checkbox"/> flexible	<input type="checkbox"/> efficient
<input type="checkbox"/> responsible	<input type="checkbox"/> independent	<input type="checkbox"/> intelligent	<input type="checkbox"/> cheerful
<input type="checkbox"/> competent	<input type="checkbox"/> creative	<input type="checkbox"/> friendly	<input type="checkbox"/> good-natured
<input type="checkbox"/> conscientious	<input type="checkbox"/> patient	<input type="checkbox"/> imaginative	<input type="checkbox"/> open-minded
<input type="checkbox"/> reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> helpful	<input type="checkbox"/> industrious	<input type="checkbox"/> problem-solver
<input type="checkbox"/> modest	<input type="checkbox"/> sincere	<input type="checkbox"/> flexible	<input type="checkbox"/> sense of humor
<input type="checkbox"/> motivated	<input type="checkbox"/> versatile	<input type="checkbox"/> patient	<input type="checkbox"/> learn quickly
<input type="checkbox"/> resourceful	<input type="checkbox"/> trustworthy	<input type="checkbox"/> tactful	<input type="checkbox"/> well-organized
<input type="checkbox"/> eager	<input type="checkbox"/> enthusiastic	<input type="checkbox"/> thrifty	<input type="checkbox"/> self-confident

Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are similar to job skills, but tend to be more general. These skills can be easily “transferred” from one type of job to another. Customer service and conflict resolution are examples that can be used in a variety of job types.

Key Transferable Skills

<input type="checkbox"/> instruct others	<input type="checkbox"/> meet deadlines	<input type="checkbox"/> organize/mange projects
<input type="checkbox"/> budget money	<input type="checkbox"/> meet the public	<input type="checkbox"/> public speaking
<input type="checkbox"/> manage people	<input type="checkbox"/> negotiate	<input type="checkbox"/> communication skills

Skills Working with Things

<input type="checkbox"/> assemble things	<input type="checkbox"/> good with hands	<input type="checkbox"/> use complex equipment
<input type="checkbox"/> construct/build	<input type="checkbox"/> inspect things	<input type="checkbox"/> operate tools/machines
<input type="checkbox"/> drive/operate vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/> repair things	

Skills Working with Data

<input type="checkbox"/> analyze data	<input type="checkbox"/> audit records	<input type="checkbox"/> check for accuracy
<input type="checkbox"/> budget	<input type="checkbox"/> calculate/computer	<input type="checkbox"/> detail-oriented
<input type="checkbox"/> compare	<input type="checkbox"/> manage money	<input type="checkbox"/> keep financial records
<input type="checkbox"/> research/investigate	<input type="checkbox"/> take inventory	<input type="checkbox"/> locate information
<input type="checkbox"/> evaluate	<input type="checkbox"/> observe/inspect	<input type="checkbox"/> record facts

Skills Working with Words and Ideas

<input type="checkbox"/> communicate verbally	<input type="checkbox"/> design	<input type="checkbox"/> public speaking
<input type="checkbox"/> correspond	<input type="checkbox"/> inventive	<input type="checkbox"/> remember information
<input type="checkbox"/> create new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> logical	<input type="checkbox"/> write clearly

Skills Working with People

<input type="checkbox"/> administrator	<input type="checkbox"/> instruct	<input type="checkbox"/> perceptive
<input type="checkbox"/> advise	<input type="checkbox"/> interview skills	<input type="checkbox"/> persuade
<input type="checkbox"/> care for others	<input type="checkbox"/> kind/understanding	<input type="checkbox"/> pleasant
<input type="checkbox"/> help others	<input type="checkbox"/> listen	<input type="checkbox"/> sensitive
<input type="checkbox"/> coach	<input type="checkbox"/> negotiate	<input type="checkbox"/> tactful
<input type="checkbox"/> counsel	<input type="checkbox"/> outgoing	<input type="checkbox"/> tolerant
<input type="checkbox"/> diplomatic	<input type="checkbox"/> patient	<input type="checkbox"/> trusting

Leadership Skills

<input type="checkbox"/> arrange social events	<input type="checkbox"/> initiate new tasks	<input type="checkbox"/> negotiate agreements
<input type="checkbox"/> competitive	<input type="checkbox"/> make decisions	<input type="checkbox"/> plan events
<input type="checkbox"/> delegate	<input type="checkbox"/> manage/direct others	<input type="checkbox"/> results-oriented
<input type="checkbox"/> explanation to others	<input type="checkbox"/> mediate problems	<input type="checkbox"/> risk-taker
<input type="checkbox"/> influence others	<input type="checkbox"/> motivate team members	<input type="checkbox"/> self-confident
<input type="checkbox"/> solve problems	<input type="checkbox"/> self-motivated	

Creative/Artistic Skills

<input type="checkbox"/> artistic/expressive	<input type="checkbox"/> perform, act	<input type="checkbox"/> drawing, art
<input type="checkbox"/> dance	<input type="checkbox"/> present artistic ideas	

List your additional technical, self-management, and transferable skills:

Employment History

Fill out the following profile worksheet. You may need to write or call someone to research accurate names and addresses. Minnesota phone directories and a Minnesota Business Directory are available in the library transition resource center for your use.

Personal History:

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Work History #1

Company: _____

Supervisor: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Employment Dates: _____

Position: _____

Duties: _____

Work History #2:

Company: _____

Supervisor: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Employment Dates: _____

Position: _____

Duties: _____

Work History #3:

Company: _____

Supervisor: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Employment Dates: _____

Position: _____

Duties: _____

Work History #4:

Company: _____

Supervisor: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Employment Dates: _____

Position: _____

Duties: _____



Education History Worksheet

When people think of education, school comes to mind. However, school is not the only source of obtaining knowledge. You may have had other types of training in your lifetime such as CPR, parenting, or operating a forklift. Keep this in mind when completing this section.

Education History #1:

School/Class: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Degree/Certificate/Date: _____

Education History #2:

School/Class: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Degree/Certificate/Date: _____

Education History #3:

School/Class: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Degree/Certificate/Date: _____

Education History #4:

School/Class: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Degree/Certificate/Date: _____

Applications

Sometimes a company's policy may require you to fill out an application before being considered for a job. An application allows an employer to compare you to other applicants.

- Read the directions carefully.
- Keep it as neat as possible; re-do poorly done applications, if possible.
- If an application is mailed to you, make a photocopy. Fill out the copy first, and then rewrite your information on the original.
- Provide positive information.
- Hobbies and interests that you list could relate to what the employer is looking for or could include tasks needed on the job, requiring less training by the employer.
- Application request for "pay desired" is best left "negotiable" or "open."
- If possible, do not indicate a specific title for position desired—leave it broader.
- Do not use lazy responses such as "see resume" or "same."
- Include volunteer work as it shows that you are responsible and may include skills needed for the job.
- Criminal record checks by employers are common. The employer may even ask you to sign a release form to allow them to look beyond what is just public record.

Application for Employment

We consider applicants for all positions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, the presence of non-job-related medical condition or handicap, or any other legally-protected status.

(Please Print)

Position(s) applied for:		Date of Application
How did you learn about us?		
Advertisement <input type="checkbox"/>	Friend <input type="checkbox"/>	Walk-in <input type="checkbox"/>
Employment Agency <input type="checkbox"/>	Relative <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other _____		
Last Name		First Name
Middle Name		
Address		City
State	ZIP	
Phone Number(s)		Social Security Number

If you are under 18 years of age, can you provide required proof of your eligibility to work?

Yes No

Have you ever filed an application with us before?

Yes No

If yes, give date _____

Have you ever been employed with us before?

Yes No

If yes, give date _____

Are you currently employed?

Yes No

May we contact your present employer?

Yes No

Are you prevented from lawfully becoming employed in this country because of visa or immigration status?

Yes No

Proof of citizenship or immigration status will be required upon employment

On what date would you be available for work? _____

Are you able to work Full-Time Part-Time Shift work Temporary

Are you currently on "lay-off" status and subject to recall?

Yes No

Can you travel if a job requires it?

Yes No

Have you been convicted of a felony?

Yes No

Conviction will not necessarily disqualify an applicant from employment

If yes, please explain:

We Are an Equal Opportunity Employer

Education

	Elementary School	High School	Undergraduate College / University	Graduate / Professional
School name and location				
Years completed	4 5 6 7 8	9 10 11 12	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
Diploma / Degree				
Describe course of study				
Describe any specialized training, apprenticeship, skills and extra-curricular activities.				
Describe any honors received.				
State any additional information you feel may be helpful to us in considering your application.				
Indicate any foreign languages you can speak, read and / or write				
	Fluent	Good	Fair	
Speak				
Read				
Write				
List professional, trade, business, or civic activities and offices held You may exclude memberships that would reveal sex, race, religion, national origin, age, ancestry, or handicap or other protected status				

References

Give name, address, and telephone number of three references who are not related to you and are not previous employers.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Have you ever had any job-related training in the US Military? Yes No
If yes, please describe _____

Are you physically or otherwise unable to perform the duties of the job for which you are applying? Yes No

Employment Experiences

Start with your present or last job. Include any job-related military service assignments and volunteer activities. You may exclude organizations that indicate race, color, religion, gender, handicap, or other protected status.

Employer #1		Dates Employed		Work Performed
		From	To	
Address				
Telephone Number(s)		Hourly Rate/ Salary		
		Starting	Final	
Job title	Supervisor			
Reason for leaving				
Employer #2		Dates Employed		Work Performed
		From	To	
Address				
Telephone Number(s)		Hourly Rate/ Salary		
		Starting	Final	
Job title	Supervisor			
Reason for leaving				
Employer #3		Dates Employed		Work Performed
		From	To	
Address				
Telephone Number(s)		Hourly Rate/ Salary		
		Starting	Final	
Job title	Supervisor			
Reason for leaving				
Employer #4		Dates Employed		Work Performed
		From	To	
Address				
Telephone Number(s)		Hourly Rate/ Salary		
		Starting	Final	
Job title	Supervisor			
Reason for leaving				

Special Skills and Qualifications

Applicant's Statement

I certify that answers given are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I authorize investigation of all statements contained in this application for employment as may be necessary in arriving at an employment decision. This application for employment shall be considered active for a period of time not to exceed 45 days. Any applicant wishing to be considered for employment beyond this time period should inquire as to whether applications are being accepted at that time. I hereby understand and acknowledge that, unless otherwise defined by applicable law, any employment relationship with this organization is of an "at will" nature, which means that the employee may resign at any time and the employer may discharge employee at any time with or without cause. It is further understood that this "at will" employment relationship may not be changed by any written document or by conduct unless such change is specifically acknowledged in writing by an authorized executive of this organization. In the event of employment, I understand that false or misleading information given in my application or interview(s) may result in my discharge. I also understand that I am required to abide by all rules and regulations of the employer.

FOR PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

Arrange Interview Yes No

Remarks

Interviewer Date

Employed Yes No Date of Employment _____

Job Title _____ Hourly Rate/Salary _____ Department _____

By _____

Name and Title

Date

Resumes and Applications

A good resume is an important job search tool and “sells” your employment skills to a prospective employer.

Tips for an Effective Resume

1. **Try to Use a Computer**—There are computer programs that make it much easier to prepare your resume. Your local library, work force center, or “quick print” shop can help. Practice on the computer in the library transition resource center.
2. **Be Specific**—Don’t waste valuable space with overused, general statements. An example of a general or “flowery” statement is: “A challenging position enabling me to contribute to organizational goals while offering an opportunity for growth and advancement.” Be direct and to the point in identifying your accomplishments.
3. **One or Two Pages**—If your career justifies a two-page resume, go ahead and create a document that explains the full range of your experiences and accomplishments. On the other hand, don’t ramble on about unrelated experiences. Ask yourself, “Will this statement help me land an interview?” Every word should sell you.
4. **Avoid Use of Personal Pronouns**—There should be no mention of “I” or “me” and only limited use of articles such as, “a,” “an,” and “the.” Also, do not use abbreviations.
5. **List Only Necessary Information**—Do not include your interests unless they are related to the job. For example, if applying for a position as a ski instructor, list cross-country skiing as a hobby. Personal information such as date of birth, marital status, height and weight, and salary or wages should not be on the resume.
6. **Center or Align Headings**—All headings should be easy to locate and consistent in layout.
7. **Avoid Making Excuses**—Don’t include the reasons you are no longer working at each job listed on your resume. The phrases, “company sold,” “boss was an idiot,” and “left to make more money” have no place on your resume. Be positive.
8. **Check for Typos**—Check for typos, grammatical errors, and coffee stains. Use the spell check feature on the computer and ask one or two friends to review the resume to find mistakes you might have missed.
9. **Use Quality Copy Paper**—Don’t try to save money by printing your resume on cheap copy paper instead of good quality stock. A resume should be printed on paper with a high percentage of cotton fiber; it should also be mailed in an envelope with a high percentage of cotton fiber. You can find resume paper and envelopes at any store that sells office supplies. Inspect copies for smudges and marks before distributing.

Getting your Resume Out

- Resumes should be sent to a person by name; make the extra effort to find out the name and title of the appropriate person.
- If you are asked to send a resume to Personnel or Human Resources, also send a resume to the person in charge of the department for which you want to work. Though the personnel staff executes the screening, the department manager has the final hiring authority.
- Always send your resume with a cover letter.
- When directly contacting employers, always have a copy of your resume available and offer it to them.
- When applying for a job with an employment application, you may want to attach your resume. Always take the time to completely fill out the application. NEVER write on the application, “see resume.”
- Give a copy of your resume to your references as it provides information about you and helps them talk to an employer about your qualifications.
- Always phone the employer before or after sending your resume. Be courteous and professional and sell your qualifications.
- Always bring extra copies of your resume to an interview.
- Finally, follow up, follow up, follow up! It is no use mailing resumes if you do not take the time to follow up your efforts.

Functional or Skills Resume

- Emphasizes your abilities and often doesn't mention employers and job titles.
- Helps mask limited experience or gaps in your employment record.
- Places attention on results you can produce—emphasizes your skills and how you can use them.
- Looks different than more common resumes, and potential employers may find it harder to read or assume that you are trying to hide something.

Action Verbs

Use the following list of action verbs on your resume to describe your skills, and what you job requirements and activities were are your previous jobs.

Accomplished	Corrected	Grew	Organized	Solved
Accelerated	Corresponded	Guaranteed	Originated	Staffed
Achieved	Counseled	Guarded	Oversaw	Started
Activated	Created	Guided		Streamlined
Actuated	Criticized		Performed	Strengthened
Addressed	Cut	Halved	Planned	Stressed
Administered		Hastened	Prepared	
Advertised	Decreased	Headed	Prescribed	
Advised	Delegated	Heightened	Presented	Stretched
Analyzed	Demonstrated	Helped	Procured	Structured
Approved	Designed	Hired	Produced	Studied
Arranged	Determined		Programmed	Succeeded
Assembled	Developed	Identified	Promoted	Summarized
Assisted	Devised	Illuminated	Proposed	Supervised
Attracted	Diagnosed	Illustrated	Protected	Supplied
Audited	Diagrammed	Implemented	Provided	Synthesized
Authored	Directed	Improved	Purchased	Systemized
	Disciplined	Improvised		
Backed	Discovered	Initiated	Realized	Taught
Began	Disseminated	Innovated	Received	Terminated
Bid	Distributed	Interpreted	Recommended	Tested
Brought	Documented	Installed	Reconciled	Took over
Budgeted	Doubled	Instituted	Recorded	Tracked
Built	Drafted	Instructed	Recruited	Traded
	Drew up	Introduced	Redesigned	Trained
Calculated		Invented	Reduced	Transferred
Caught	Earned	Investigated	Rendered	Transformed
Charted	Edited	Interviewed	Reorganized	Translated
Closed	Enhanced		Replaced	Triggered
Collected	Enlarged	Launched	Represented	Tripled
Compiled	Established	Led	Researched	Trimmed
Completed	Evaluated	Logged	Restored	Traced
Composed	Executed		Reviewed	
Compounded	Expanded	Maintained	Revised	Uncovered
Conceived	Expedited	Managed	Revitalized	Unified
Consulted		Maximized	Routed	Unraveled
Conducted	Facilitated	Minimized		Upgraded
Confined	Filed	Modernized	Safeguarded	Utilized
Consolidated	Forecasted	Modified	Scheduled	
Constructed	Formulated	Motivated	Secured	Vacated
Consulted	Founded		Selected	Verified
Contracted		Negotiated	Served	
Consulted	Galvanized		Serviced	Won
Contracted	Gathered	Obtained	Set up	Worked
Contributed	Generated	Opened	Shut down	Wrote
Controlled	Ghostwrote	Operated	Simplified	
Converted	Governed	Optimized	Slashed	
Coordinated	Graduated	Ordered	Sold	

Functional Resume

Paper color such as off-white can get more attention for your resume. Odd colors, however, may look unprofessional.

Johnny G. Doe
5656 110th Street
Huntington, Ohio 59123
(234) 555 – 1123

Always include a daytime telephone number.

OBJECTIVE: To be a baker in a food service setting.

Be concise when listing specific descriptions.

EXPERTISE:

- Able to work from scratch or with mixes
- Experience making uniform breads, buns, Danish, and sweet rolls in large quantities
- Expertise creating raised and cake donuts
- Developed a variety of cakes and icings from scratch
- Maintained clean work environment

Keep to one page if possible but no more than two pages. Use action verbs.

ABILITIES:

- Experience using bread molder, bun rounder, sheeter, and donut fryer
- Able to operate reel, rack, and conventional ovens
- Work with horizontal and spiral bread mixers and bread and bun slicers
- Experience with proof boxes
- Possess basic computer skills

STRENGTHS:

- Capable of effectively supervising others
- Able to troubleshoot problems
- Offer good customer relations
- Work well alone or with others
- Quick to learn new skills
- Dependable, reliable, and self-motivated

You may add a section: References available upon request. Be prepared to produce the references.

WORK HISTORY:

1996-present: MCF- Moose Lake, Painter
1990-1996: MCF- Faribault, Baker

EDUCATION:

1990-1994: Central Minnesota Vocational School
1999: RSAT Transitional Program

List major study focus, degrees, licenses, certificates and/or any coursework applicable.

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Chronological Resume

List everything in order with dates

Sally M. Sample
1001 Ram Road Fort Collins, CO 80525
(970) 555-1234 sallysample@colostate.edu

Summary of Qualifications

- Three years experience in retail management, with specialty in purchasing and floor display design.
- Utilized strong communication skills in a variety of professional settings.
- Enthusiastic dedication to excellent customer service.

Education

- 2000-2002 **MA Speech Communications**
Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO
GPA 3.6/4.0
- 1995-1999 **BA Anthropology**
Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, AR
GPA 3.5/4.0
Dean's List

List jobs separately with skills acquired at each job listed below.

Professional Experience

- 2001-2002 **Assistant Office Manager**
Department of Speech Communications, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO
- Managed departmental supplies budget, oversaw office purchasing and inventory, overhauled department-wide filing system, supervised part-time staff.
- 1999 **Intern**
Sharkey's Community Grocery Corporate Headquarters, Washington, DC
- Assisted company publicist with writing press releases, designing weekly advertisements, and managing customer databases. Developed research methods for determining customer preference for shopping hours.
- 1997-1999 **Assistant Night Manager**
Sharkey's Community Grocery, Jonesboro, AR
- Purchased, stocked and maintained dairy and ice-cream sections, oversaw point of purchase display construction, scheduled twenty part-time employees.

List additional skills, activities, and achievements not acquired on the job.

Skills

- Computer Skills:** Microsoft Word, Excel, Corel Draw, Paint Shop Pro, QuickBooks, Oracle Small Business, basic HTML knowledge
- Special Skills:** Thorough knowledge of MMORPG and single-player gaming systems, thorough knowledge of Internet applications.

Name:
Address:
City/State/Zip:
Telephone:

Objective:

Expertise (skills):

Abilities:

Strengths:

Work History (including your job at the institution):

Education:

Cover Letters

A cover letter works well alongside a resume. It introduces you, your skills, and your experiences. Always include a brief, professional, and positive cover letter when sending a resume.

Sample Cover Letter

January 1, 2003

Address the letter to a person by name.

William Barnett
Supervising Engineer
Montgomery Water Company
P.O. Box 1875
Montgomery, Alabama 26134

Explain purpose of your letter. Identify the position you are applying for and how

Tell why you are qualified.

Dear Mr. Barnett:

Please accept this letter of application for the chemical engineer position recently advertised.

My experience includes managerial and practical engineering work in both the water treatment and chemical industries. It is my intention to pursue a position where I can utilize my past experience and education.

The enclosed resume highlights my qualifications. I will call your office next week to schedule an interview to discuss the industry and any future openings you may have at Montgomery Water Company.

Thank you for your consideration.

Thank them for considering you.

Sincerely,

Juanita Hartly
1986 Glen Street
Dothan, Alabama 26134
Phone (205) 555-1754

Always include a daytime telephone number.

Enclosure: resume

If this is a pre-interview letter, enclose resume.

Thank You Letters

A well written thank you letter helps you stand apart from the crowd. It thanks the interviewer or job search contacts for what they did, and at the same time, puts your name in front of the employer again. The extra effort in writing a thank you letter shows that you are someone that will take time to show appreciation for the efforts of others.

May 30, 2001

Nancy K. Doe
Personnel Director
Dexter Manufacturing Company
Dexter, Maine 04930

Dear Ms. Doe:

Thank you for interviewing me last Wednesday for the position of Line Quality Inspector. I believe Dexter Manufacturing Company and I have a lot in common!

The information you provided about your community was very helpful. Relocating to such a beautiful area is very appealing.

As you requested, my references and transcripts are enclosed. I look forward to meeting with you again. Until then, don't hesitate to call me with any further questions regarding my candidacy for this position.

Sincerely,

Ray T. Simmons
268 6th Ave.
Laconia, New Hampshire 03246
(397) 222-1111

Follow up quickly. Send a letter the same day if possible.

Indicate specifically the reason for the thank you.

A thank you letter should be short and friendly. Be sure to use proper grammar and correct spelling.

Always include a daytime telephone number.

Let them know that you are available at their convenience and you are happy to supply any information needed.

A personal letter can be handwritten. If your handwriting is not neat and legible, type it.

Job Searches

Statistics show that nearly two-thirds of all positions in the workforce are filled by “hidden” job-seeking methods. Below are descriptions of both “traditional” and “hidden” job-seeking methods.

Job-Seeking Methods

- **Help-Wanted Ads in the Newspaper**—only 15 percent of all jobs available are listed in the help wanted ads, and competition is fierce because almost everyone reads them.
- **Sending out Resumes**—almost all job search books recommend it, but doing that alone as a job search method does not work very well.
- **Private Employment Agencies**—charge fees for finding you a job. The fees range from 10 to 15 percent of your annual income.
- **Local Government Workforce Centers**—post job openings and will post your resume for potential employers. They also provide assistance in resume writing. Workforce centers have a number of useful publications to help you choose a career.
- **Job Clubs**—various community agencies and local churches host job club meetings in their facilities. The meetings provide job leads, job search tips, and support.
- **Warm Contact**—let it be known to others that you are seeking employment. Let friends, relatives, neighbors, former employers, former co-workers, church members, etc., know that you are looking for a job.
- **Cold Contact**—means going directly to possible employers. This requires a lot of time and traveling around town. Cold contacts may not be easy for most, but remember the worst that can happen is that they will say no.



- **Public Library**—is a great resource for job seekers. It has directories for local, state, and national organizations, businesses, and corporations. Most libraries also have out-of-town newspapers and phone directories for assistance as well.
- **School Placement Offices**—at private, trade, technical, and vocational schools. Some prospective employers notify these schools of openings, and schools may reserve these prospects for their own students.
- **Trade Magazines and Journals**—often list jobs available in their field. Review only current issues.
- **Accept an Entry-Level Position**—to get your foot in the door and then volunteer to help with more responsible positions within the business.
- **Temporary Help Agencies**—are a fast source of income and supply you with helpful experience, even though the pay may be lower and fewer benefits offered. Many times the temporary job can turn into a full-time position.
- **Volunteer Work**—shows employers a positive work ethic and may serve as a foot in the door to a potential employer. It is also an excellent opportunity to network. If you are volunteering for an organization, ask your volunteer coordinator to be a job reference for you.
- **Internet**—allows you to browse at your convenience at home and most public libraries. You can find many different websites containing possible employment opportunities. Be sure you have no special release conditions prohibiting your use of the Internet.
- **Job Card**—Below is an example of a pocket-sized card to leave with an employer. These are especially handy for “drop in” or cold contacts for employment.

Name: Lana Loftus

Telephone: (612) 555-6873

Position: Computer Technician

Skills & Experience: Two-year degree in Computer Science, Two-year degree in Business Management. Worked as the supervising technician for Steffen's Mortgage Company (five years). Type 80 words per minute. Excellent problem-solving skills. Very motivated. Able to manage multiple tasks at the same time.

Comments: I am able to start immediately and willing to travel or relocate if necessary. I will also work over-time hours as needed.

Job Search

Complete the following three job search worksheets. Look for three specific job openings in the community that match your skills and interests. Unfortunately, being incarcerated limits available resources to newspapers, library references, trade magazines, and journals.

Example:

Seeking Method: Employment Weekly Newspaper

Company: Steffen's Custom Motorcycles

Contact Person: Mr. Olson

Applying Position: Custom Motorcycle Technician

Address: 123 45th Street North

City: Bloomington State: MN Zip: 55420

Phone: 612-555-5555

Job Search #1:

Seeking Method: _____

Company: _____

Contact Person: _____

Applying Position: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Job Search #2:

Seeking Method: _____

Company: _____

Contact Person: _____

Applying Position: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Job Search #3:

Seeking Method: _____

Company: _____

Contact Person: _____

Applying Position: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Notes:

Reference Worksheet

An employer may want to contact someone who has knowledge of your job performance and/or character. It is important when filling out a job application to have your reference's permission before using his or her name. References should be chosen from a professional standing rather than personal relationships, if possible. List three potential references you might use.

Reference #1:

Name: _____

Occupation: _____

Professional Relationship: _____

City, State: _____

Phone: _____

Reference #2:

Name: _____

Occupation: _____

Professional Relationship: _____

City, State: _____

Phone: _____

Reference #3:

Name: _____

Occupation: _____

Professional Relationship: _____

City, State: _____

Phone: _____

Telephone Etiquette

It is almost guaranteed that you will talk to a professional employer on the telephone at some point in the hiring process. In an extensive job search you will be using the telephone to conduct research, cold-call employers, make networking contacts, schedule meetings, and interview. Your first phone call to a potential employer can often mean the difference between getting an interview and being overlooked as a candidate.

- Whenever your first contact with an employer is by telephone, always be courteous to whoever answers the phone. The support staff is often who decides whether calls should be put through, and it is not uncommon for supervisors themselves to answer the phone.
- Wear a smile on the telephone—they may not see it, but they will hear it.
- In general, it's best to make calls in the morning when people are alert and not yet involved in the day's events.
- If you can't get past a shrewd receptionist, try before 8:00 a.m., during lunch, after 5:00 p.m., or Saturday morning. If you still can't get through, ask for the receptionist's assistance.
- If you were referred by a mutual contact, give that person's name to the receptionist.
- The first rule of telephone etiquette is to be prepared. Know whom you want to speak to and what you want to say. If you sound hesitant or unsure of yourself, you may have more difficulty getting past the person answering the phone.
- Outline in writing what you want to say. This is important in the early stages of cold calling or when the call is very important. As you gain confidence, you will "script" most of your calls in your head.
- Make sure there are no distracting noises in the background; crying children, loud lawnmowers, kitchen noise, barking dogs, etc., will detract from your professionalism.
- Like it or not, voice mail is a part of our lives. Speaking to a machine adds a new dimension to telephone skills. Knowing what you will say if you get someone's voice mail and having a "script" ready will enable you to leave a simple, clear, and concise message. Your message should be 30 seconds or less and include a phone number with area code.
- Do not ask a potential employer to hold while you answer, "call waiting."



Discussing Your Conviction Record

Be aware that the law prohibits felons from holding some types of jobs. However, there are many jobs available for offenders. Remember it is most important to tell the truth.

For many just out of prison and applying for a job, the most difficult part is facing the question on the application, "Have you ever been convicted of a felony?" Let's say the employer needs someone with your energy and skills. He or she says "I see that you checked 'yes' on the felony question. Can you please tell me about that?" What will you say?

Three Choices for Discussing Your Record

1. Tell the truth—always the best choice.
2. Lie about it—and get disqualified or fined.
3. Avoid the subject—refusing to discuss it will "kill" the interview.

Steps to Discussing your Conviction Record

Step 1: Own it. Take responsibility for your actions

Show them you are owning up to your behavior. Statements should begin with "I." Placing blame on someone or something else (it wasn't my fault or I didn't know) is the worst thing you can do. Suggested openers could be: In the past...

- I made some bad choices.
- I made bad judgments.
- I made a bad decision.
- I did something I shouldn't have.

Step 2: State the positive changes you have made since the conviction:

- Completed GED.
- Completed a Critical Thinking Skills course.
- Paid restitution.
- Participated in counseling or treatment. Maintained aftercare.

Step 3: Tell them what you have learned or realized:

- Express your regret and speak about the lessons you have learned.
- I'm not proud of what I've done; I'm sorry it ever happened.
- I wanted fast money and now I see it was wrong.
- I wish I had realized sooner just how immature and irresponsible I was being.
- I lost sight of what was really important; my priorities were really mixed up.

Step 4: Talk about the new goals you have and how that part of your life is over.

- I now have new goals in life. I'm very focused on establishing a successful career. I'm moving forward and am willing to work hard to make it happen. I can't un-do the past, but I did learn from it and will not repeat the same mistake.

If Asked—Were you Incarcerated?

- I did spend some time at an adult correctional facility for some bad choices I made.
- I used the time to take advantage of education offered and by participating in various courses (name a few) and volunteering to work while I was there.
- My time there helped me to focus and set new goals.
- I'm ready to work hard and do a good job.
- Remember: Once you get the job, the word may get out that you are an ex-offender. Stay professional – never discuss your past with fellow workers.

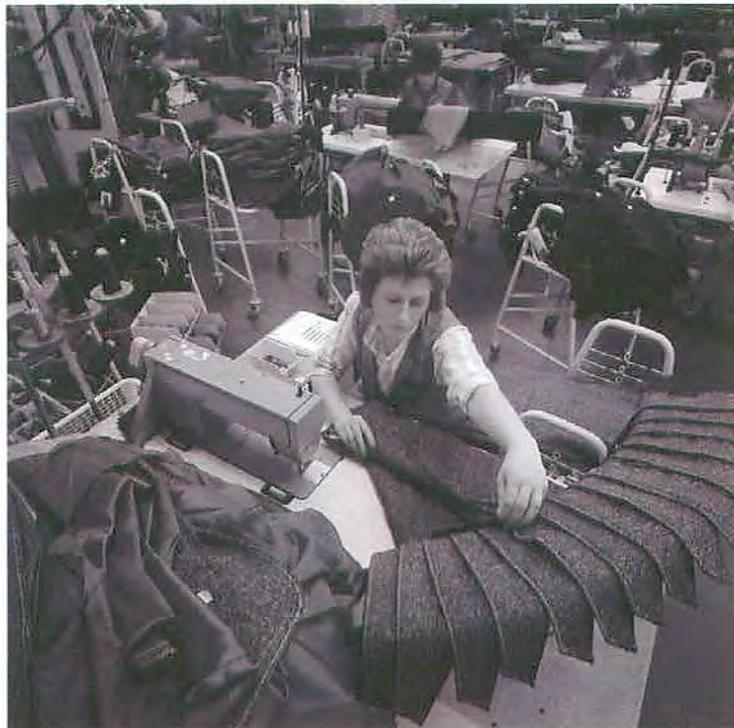
Don't lie!

Don't give details!

Don't get defensive!

Don't volunteer information!

Keep answers brief and to the point!



Minnesota Bonding Program

Fidelity bonding is employee dishonesty insurance that protects employers against theft of money and property by employees. This insurance is a job placement tool because, in effect, it guarantees the job honesty of the applicant. It helps market the applicant's strengths to the employer, and can apply to any job. The Minnesota Bonding Program (MBP) provides individual fidelity bonds to employers for job applicants who may be denied coverage by commercial carriers because of a:

- Record of arrest, conviction, or imprisonment
- History of alcohol or drug abuse
- Lack of employment history
- Dishonorable discharge
- Poor credit history

Either the job applicant or the prospective employer (on behalf of the applicant) may make the initial contact with a local Minnesota Workforce Center to apply for bond insurance coverage. Minnesota Bonding Program pamphlets are available in the library transition resource center.

Minnesota Work Opportunity Tax Credit

This is a program that lets an employer reduce his or her taxes by hiring individuals in certain "targeted" groups. Ex-felons are one of these groups! The employer can deduct a percentage of the first \$6,000 in wages paid to you directly from his or her taxes. None of this comes out of your pocket. In fact, it helps your chances of being hired, providing that the employer knows of this program. You may receive a pre-certification for this program before you leave a Minnesota correctional facility. Ask about it. You will need it to be eligible for the program. Minnesota Work Opportunity Tax Credit pamphlets are available in the library transition resource center.

Questions Interviewers May Ask You

- Why should I hire you?
- Why do you think you might like this particular job?
- Why would you like to work for this company?
- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your main strengths? (skills, abilities, etc.)
- What do you consider your main weakness?
- Describe a time when you did not get along with a supervisor, teacher, or co-worker and how you handled the situation.
- What would you like to be doing five years from now?
- Tell me about your last job (likes and dislikes).
- How do you work under pressure?
- Tell me about any work gaps in your employment history.
- Have you ever been fired or asked to leave a job?
- Have you ever been convicted of a felony?
- What are your salary expectations?
- When would you be able to start work?
- Would you be willing to work overtime and/or weekends?
- Can you travel; do you have a car for travel?
- What can you offer our company?
- Do you have any questions? Always have at least one question!



**All interview questions are really asking the same question:
Why are you the best person for the job?**

Things to Remember for Completing Applications On-site

- Take along a copy of information and dates that you might need to complete the application, rather than trying to remember them and making mistakes on the application.
- Remember that false information given on an application may be grounds for dismissal even after you have been employed for any length of time.
- Take “white-out” or an erasable pen, as well as a small dictionary, with you when completing applications.

Face-to-Face Contacts

Creating a Good First Impression

People form an opinion of someone they meet in the first two to four minutes. For that reason, it is important that you pay attention to detail to create the best first impression you can. Some factors that affect the impression you make are appearance (hair, clothes, hygiene, jewelry, make-up), movement, mannerisms, personal space, and speaking manner. A weak or too firm handshake makes a negative impression. You should practice shaking hands before an interview. To help enhance your chances of making a favorable impression, follow the basic rules discussed below.



Communicate Your Best Image through Appearance

Dress appropriately. Keep your dress understated, conservative, and neat. If you're unsure about what to wear, a good rule of thumb is to dress slightly better than you would to report to the job every day. For example, if blue jeans are acceptable attire at the work place, you could wear casual dress pants to a job interview with such an organization. You can determine the dress code in a work place by asking or observing, if it is a public place. If you are still unsure, a suit in a dark or neutral color is almost always a good choice. Some social service agencies provide appropriate interview clothing to those in need.

Dress for Success

It is helpful to try a "dress rehearsal" before a job interview. You can increase your confidence by seeing your put-together, professional self; you can be assured that the clothing is clean and in good repair; and you can ask the opinion of a friend or relative.

Women should avoid:

- Hair that is over styled, teased, or moussed. It is best to keep hair conservatively styled.
- Dangling or large earrings.
- Too many earrings, rings, necklaces, or bracelets.
- Too much make-up. Too little is always better than too much.
- Too much perfume - none is better.
- Low-cut, tight, or short apparel.
- Exposed undergarment.
- Leather or suede apparel.
- Ruffles, bows, or fringe (they do not project a professional or businesslike image).
- Patterned nylons. Plain nylons are best.
- Very high heels.
- Glittery, silver, gold, or open-toe shoes.
- Showing tattoos or body piercings--cover with clothing or make-up if possible.

Men should avoid:

- Earrings, bracelets, pinkie rings, or similar jewelry.
- Too much aftershave or cologne - none is better.
- Unbuttoned shirts.
- Tee shirts.
- Patterned tee shirts under dress shirts.
- White socks with dress pants. Wear dark colored dress socks.
- White pants.
- Novelty or leather ties.
- Sneakers.
- Showing tattoos or body piercings—cover with clothing or make-up if possible.

Communicate Your Best Image by Being Prepared

- **Arrive early.** Plan your schedule and route so you arrive 10-15 minutes prior to the appointment. Allow time to stop in the building's bathroom, if there is a public one, for a last-minute check on your appearance.
- **Be prepared.** Bring a black pen, extra copies of your resume, your reference list, copies of licenses, driving record (for jobs requiring it), and social security or alien card.
- **Bring any other documentation** supporting your qualifications (portfolio, work samples, references, etc.).
- **Introduce yourself politely** using your first and last name and stating the first and last name of the individual you are to see.
- Do not chew gum.
- **Do not smoke.** It is best not to smoke just before an interview as many people find the smell on your clothes and hair offensive.
- **Say, "It's nice to meet you"** in your initial greeting to the interviewer. Shake hands firmly.
- **Address the interviewer as Mr. _____ or Ms. _____** unless you are requested to do otherwise. Don't assume that if the interviewer calls you by your first name you are both on a first-name basis!
- **Be willing to make a bit of small talk,** possibly about the weather, about the interviewer's good directions, or about traffic on the way to the interview.
- **Speak clearly,** and in a positive, audible manner – but don't be too loud.

Notes:

Interview Do's and Don'ts

Do—Do—Do

- Do bring a pen.
- Do arrive early to show how organized, prepared, and dependable you are.
- Do greet everyone including the receptionist in a courteous, friendly way.
- Do smile and show a positive attitude; be enthusiastic.
- Do greet the interviewer by name (not first name!).
- Do look the interviewer in the eye.
- Do offer a firm handshake and introduce yourself.
- Do wait for the interviewer to ask you to be seated.
- Do speak clearly and loud enough to be easily heard.
- Do relax if you can; remember the interviewer may be as nervous as you are.
- Do sit still.
- Do thank participants for their time, smile, and shake hands when the interview is over.
- Do depart in a positive manner.
- Do send a thank-you letter recapping your interest in the job.

Don't—Don't—Don't

- Don't chew gum or smoke; even if the interviewer does.
- Don't put anything on the interviewer's desk (elbows, purse, notebooks, etc.).
- Don't play nervously with your keys, rings, or pens.
- Don't slouch or look tired.
- Don't mumble or speak too softly.
- Don't avoid looking the interviewer in the eyes.
- Don't look too scared or nervous.
- Don't argue or act defensive or secretive.
- Don't talk too much or too little.
- Don't wear a hat or dark glasses.
- Don't talk about personal problems.
- Don't talk negatively about past schooling, jobs, or supervisors.
- Don't ask the interviewer if the company is stable or unstable.
- Don't fidget.
- Don't use slang.

Communicate Your Best Attitude

- **Sit straight and relatively still.** Avoid distracting wiggling or jiggling of your hands or legs or tapping and clicking of a pen.
- **Fold your hands comfortably in your lap** or on top of your resume materials. Do not cross your arms over your chest (makes you appear disagreeable) or spread them across the back of the chair or couch (makes you appear too relaxed, lazy, or disinterested).
- **Maintain good eye contact.**
- **Show reserved confidence.** Let the interviewer start the dialogue. Listen carefully.
- **Avoid interrupting,** even if the interviewer does most of the talking.
- **Ask questions** if you don't understand something.
- Be positive and upbeat in your remarks.
- **Avoid complaining** about a previous job or employer. Whether or not your remarks are true, you won't appear professional if you "harp" on these subjects.
- **Avoid criticizing** or disagreeing with the interviewer.
- **Tell the employer about your skills.** If you don't, no one else will! Don't make the employer work harder than you during the interview.
- **Welcome all questions** and give direct, honest answers. Take your time by developing the answer in your head before you respond.
- **Try to plan ahead for tough questions** and practice your answers before the interview.
- **For women, crossing your legs is acceptable,** but wear a skirt of appropriate length to do so.



Communicate Your Best Image by Finishing Strong

- **Don't overstay your time.**
- **If you want the job, say so!** Summarize why you are qualified. This is the time to state strengths and qualities you may have forgotten to emphasize earlier.
- **Thank the interviewer for his or her time and interest** and extend your hand for a strong parting handshake.
- **Be proactive in your follow-up.** Ask how you will be notified or arrange to call the employer to learn their decision.
- **Send thank-you letters or notes** within 24 hours to each person with whom you interviewed.
- **Use each interview as a building block for the next one.** You may go through many interviews before you connect with the right job. *It is not what happened at the last interview that is important, but what happens at this one!*



Reasons Employers Give for Not Hiring an Applicant

- Sarcastic or defensive responses.
- Boastful or “know it all” attitude.
- Over aggressive or high-pressure type.
- Makes excuses or lies about unfavorable facts in record.
- Seems unprepared for interview—late, cannot answer questions, etc.
- Poor grooming or personal appearance.
- Immature or ill-mannered behavior.
- Speaks negatively of former co-workers, school, or other people.
- Lazy or low on energy.
- Talks about personal problems.
- Radical ideas—politics, religion, dress, life-style, etc.
- Seems overly concerned about salary and benefits.
- Shows no interest in company or job.
- Undecided—appears to rely on others to make their decisions.
- Doesn't ask any questions about the job.
- Poor work history—a “job hopper.”
- Fails to make good eye contact.
- Limp handshake.
- Lack of confidence—poor posture, shy, etc.
- Unable to take criticism.
- Appears to have trouble getting along with others.



Job Survival Skills

There are things you can do to increase your chances of success on a new job. If you want to do well, you may need to change the way you act and some of your attitudes. Employers say more people lose their job because they do not use good work habits rather than because they are not able to do the job. The following list of suggestions is based on feedback from employers.

- **Positive attitude**—do not carry negative feelings into your new workplace. Take care of them elsewhere.
- **Always be on time**—Set an alarm clock to help you get up. Allow a few extra minutes for traffic problems and getting children to daycare. Reliability and dependability gain the trust and respect of your employers.
- **Good attendance and promptness** are always important. Ask your supervisor for the proper method of informing him/her in the event you will be unavoidably late or out sick. Unreliability may disrupt the work of other people who have to make up for your absence and sets a bad example—employers place this problem high on the list of reasons for firing people.
- **Honesty**—Employers don't want to pay someone who steals from them or can't be trusted. Dishonesty is one of the top reasons employers give for firing an employee.
- **Know and follow** all office rules, policies, and procedures. Read the employee manuals.
- **Follow directions and get along with your supervisor**—in a battle with a supervisor, you will almost always lose! This is one of the top three reasons people get fired.
- **Listen and Learn.** Be open to new ways of doing things, even if you were taught differently in school or on a different job.
- **Work efficiently.** Working too slowly or making too many mistakes is a major reason for job failure. You can see why—unproductive employees cost more than they earn!
- **Treat co-workers with respect, courtesy, and dignity.** Know your employer's harassment policy—monitor your own behavior and act early if you feel you have been placed in an uncomfortable position. Harassment can occur at any time and any place (before and after work, on and off work premises). Harassment can be verbal, physical, or visual and can occur whenever employees interact with each other, supervisors, customers, vendors, and other third parties.



Communication

- **Be a team player.** Be willing to help. Try to fit in with the team.
- **Ask for help** when you need it. If you make a mistake, let your supervisor know immediately.
- **When you need to talk** with your supervisor, ask when would be a good time to meet.
- **Follow the proper chain of command.** Discuss items with your supervisor first.

Getting Along with Others

- **Treat everyone with courtesy and respect.**
- **Always be friendly to everyone.** Be willing to go the extra mile. This creates goodwill with employers, co-workers, and customers.
- **Do not express your opinions, biases, or prejudices** about others while you are at work. Respecting differences is a priority in the workplace.
- **Accept criticism** as constructive. Do not become defensive or take criticism personally.
- **Keep your emotions under control.** The job is not the place to express or show your opinions or feelings.
- **Find a mentor,** someone who knows the company and the job well enough to coach you or show you the ropes.
- **Realize playing politics or power games** could be dangerous and backfire on you.
- **Show appreciation.** Let your supervisor and co-workers know you appreciate their training, support, input, feedback, etc.
- **Be willing** to do more than you are asked to do.

Chapter 3: Employment

Personal Skills

Employers will pay close attention to these. List five skills you have. They may be personal skills (loyal, good communicator, good work ethic, etc.) or technical skills (data processing, public speaking, artistic, etc.).

1

2

3

4

5

Job Search Strategies

List three job search strategies you have used in the past.

1

2

3

Which of the three job search strategies was most successful for you? Why?

What were the disadvantages of the job search strategies you used in the past?
