

JOB SEEKERS TOOLKIT



Employment Marketing Skills



Vocational Rehabilitation Services
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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GETTING STARTED

Assisting you with getting a job is the main goal of your partnership with VR. Finding a job is itself a job that requires discipline, hard work and a positive attitude — and sometimes it's difficult to know where to begin.

This toolkit is designed to help you gain (1) the job-seeking skills you'll need and (2) a familiarity with procedures, good practices and typical situations you may encounter in your job search.

Let's Go to Work!

First, let's take a quick look at some pre-employment needs:

Basic and Job-Search Needs:	Have	Need
Housing		
Transportation		
Clothes for interviews		
Clothes for work		
Childcare		
Alarm clock		
Telephone (or reliable way to get messages)		
Email address		
Driver's license/ID and Social Security Card		
Completed sample job application		
Résumé		
References (at least three people not related to you, who know your skills and will say good things about you)		
Information on how earnings will affect any benefits you receive		

Items I need	Actions I'll take to get what I need

What Every Job Seeker Needs To Know

To be successful in your job search, you need to know:

- Your skills and abilities
- The jobs you're interested in
- The employers at these jobs

1. Your experience, skills and abilities:

- What skills do you have?
- What skills have you used?
- Which skills do you like to use?
- What functional limitations, if any, do you have?
- What kind of work setting suits your personality type?
- What are your work values?

2. The jobs:

- What jobs interest you?
- What are you qualified to do?
- What job experience do you have?
- What jobs are available in your area?

3. The employers:

- Where would you like to work?
- What do you know about the business?
- Do you need special skills to work for the business?

Taking a Look at Who You Are

Skills are not the only thing you bring to the workplace. Other important dimensions of who you are include your values, interests and personality.

Your values play an important role in your job satisfaction. Examples of values include autonomy (or self-direction), prestige, security, interpersonal relations, helping others, flexible work schedule, outdoor work, leisure time and good salary.

Your interests are your likes and dislikes regarding various activities. People who have certain interests might enjoy work that taps into these interests.

Your personality reflects your individual traits, motivational drives, needs and attitudes.

Your skills are what you're good at and what you enjoy doing.

Your counselor can advise you on how to go about a self-assessment of all these dimensions.

Identifying Your Skills

Let's take a look at three categories of skills —

- **Hard Skills-** Specific job skills that you learned through training and/or work experience. (See page 5-6.)
- **Transferable Skills-** Skills that can be taken from one job to another and that you've learned and practiced through other life experiences such as community activities, hobbies or volunteer work. (See pages 7-8 for examples.)
- **Soft Skills-** Skills, abilities and traits that pertain to personality, attitude and behavior. (See page 9 for examples of soft skills.)

List Your 'Top Ten' Skills	
Job-Specific Skills	Transferable and Soft Skills
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Do your skills:

- Match your career goals?
- Prompt you to think of other jobs that might interest you?

(<http://www.slideshare.net/Rahulkunwar/soft-skill-training>)

Job-Specific or 'Hard' Skills

Hard skills are the abilities and knowledge you've gained through training or on the job, for example: computer programming, web design, nursing, electrical, legal and others that may be included in your job requirements.

Administrative and Financial

Account	Compute
Allocate	Copy
Analyze	Dispatch
Appraise	File
Arrange	Follow-through
Audit	Keep Records
Bookkeep	Maintain
Budget	Meet deadlines
Calculate	Prepare
Classify	Purchase
Collate	Raise Funds
Collect	Record
Compile	Retrieve

Counseling and Education

Care	Support
Coach	Speak
Collaborate	Advise
Counsel	Clarify
Guide	Coach
Lead	Coordinate
Listen	Develop
Mentor	Encourage
Observe	Explain
Refer	Facilitate
Relate	Inform
Sensitivity	Stimulate
Service	

Creative and Communication

Act	Listen
Create	Negotiate
Design	Paint
Edit	Perceive
Express ideas	Perform
Imagine	Persuade
Innovate	Report
Interpret	Speak
Interview	Visualize
Invent	Write

Management and Sales

Assess	Manage
Coach	Mediate
Contract	Motivate
Delegate	Organize
Develop	Plan
Direct	Make Policy
Evaluate	Solve Problems
Hire	Reconcile
Influence	Recruit
Initiate	Schedule
Lead	Sell
Make decisions	Supervise

Physical and Technical

Assemble	Feed
Bend	Grind
Bind	Handle
Build	Lift
Cut	Move
Drill	Punch
Drive	Repair

Research and Scientific

Analyze	Interview
Clarify	Investigate
Collect	Read
Critique	Reason
Evaluate	Review
Examine	Survey
Gather	Synthesize
Inspect	Troubleshoot
Interpret	

(<http://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-skills.html>)

Top Ten Soft Skills for Job Hunters

People Skills and Relationship-Building Are Key to Success

- 1. Strong Work Ethic:** Are you motivated, dependable and dedicated to getting the job done, no matter what? Will you be conscientious and do your best work?
- 2. Positive Attitude:** Are you optimistic, pleasant and polite? Do you have a good sense of humor? Are you respectful of others? Do you practice honesty in all things?
- 3. Good Communication Skills:** Are you both verbally articulate and a good listener? Can you make your case and express your needs in a way that builds bridges with colleagues, customers and vendors?
- 4. Time Management Abilities:** Do you know how to prioritize tasks and work on a number of different projects at once? Will you use your time on the job wisely?
- 5. Problem-Solving Skills:** Are you resourceful and able to creatively solve problems that will inevitably arise? Will you take ownership of problems or leave them for someone else?
- 6. Acting as a Team Player:** Will you work well in groups and teams? Will you be cooperative and take a leadership role when appropriate?
- 7. Self-Confidence:** Do you truly believe you can do the job? Will you project a sense of calm and inspire confidence in others? Will you have the courage to ask questions that need to be asked and to freely contribute your ideas?
- 8. Ability to Accept and Learn from Criticism:** Will you be able to handle criticism? Are you coachable and open to learning and growing as a person and as a professional?
- 9. Flexibility/Adaptability:** Are you able to adapt to new situations and challenges? Will you embrace change and be open to new ideas?
- 10. Working Well Under Pressure:** Can you handle the stress that accompanies deadlines and crises? Will you be able to do your best work and come through in a pinch?

Notes:

Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are the skills you've gathered through various jobs, volunteer work, hobbies, sports or other life experiences that can be used in your next job or new career. Transferable skills are important to those who are looking for their first jobs and to those re-entering the workforce.

The job titles you've had may tell little about what your actual jobs required. It's important to think about each job you've held to discover what skills you actually used to do that job. If you are re-entering the workforce or entering it for the first time, you can look at your life experiences to get this information.

Such self-assessments are essential to helping career changers find suitable careers — and this involves finding out what careers best utilize your skills and to learn about various occupations and what skills are required for each.

Once you've identified your transferable skills and have an idea about where you can use them, you now have to convince potential employers. One way to do this is to write an objective that tells which skills are applicable to the position you are seeking.

The other way is to write a skills-based résumé — either a functional or combination résumé. We'll talk more about these types of résumés later in the training.

Types of Transferable Skills:

Key Transferable Skills

- Setting/meeting deadlines
- Planning
- Speaking before groups
- Accepting responsibility
- Working independently
- Solving problems
- Negotiating/resolving conflict
- Organizing/managing projects
- Written and oral communication
- Managing time

Relating to and Helping People

- Supporting others
- Asserting/confronting with respect
- Counseling
- Listening
- Motivating
- Delegating with respect
- Developing rapport
- Conveying feelings
- Persuading
- Teaching
- Dealing with the public
- Supervising
- Being sensitive, perceiving feelings
- Cooperating
- Sharing credit
- Representing others

Dealing with Data/Information

- Analyzing data/facts
- Making decisions
- Maintain financial records
- Researching
- Evaluating
- Using technology to analyze data
- Taking inventory
- Organizing data
- Attention to detail
- Gathering information

Dealing with Things

- Driving or operating vehicles
- Assembly or making things
- Attention to safety
- Following instructions
- Operating tools, machinery
- Repairing things
- Using complex equipment
- Using good eye-hand coordination

Communication

- Speaking effectively
- Writing concisely
- Listening attentively
- Expressing ideas
- Facilitating group discussion
- Providing appropriate feedback
- Perceiving nonverbal messages
- Persuading
- Reporting information
- Describing feelings
- Editing
- Interviewing

Research and Planning

- Forecasting, predicting
- Creating ideas
- Identifying problems
- Imagining alternatives
- Identifying resources
- Setting goals
- Defining needs
- Developing evaluation strategies

Organization, Management and Leadership

- Initiating new ideas
- Handling details
- Coordinating tasks
- Managing groups
- Coaching
- Promoting change
- Selling ideas or products
- Decision making with others
- Managing conflict

Day-to-day Skills that Promote and Effective Workplace

- Implementing decisions
- Cooperating
- Enforcing policies
- Enlisting help
- Being punctual
- Attending to detail
- Meeting goals
- Organizing

YOUR JOB SEARCH

A very important aspect of the job search is organization. Keeping yourself organized will prevent you from misplacing important information. Determine what method you will use to organize your job search information. You may want to create a folder or three-ring binder in which to keep important information related to your job search.

Starting Your Job Search

A job search includes:

- **Assessing** your career goals, experience, skills and abilities
- **Researching** open and hidden job markets and potential employers
- **Writing** résumés, cover letters and follow-up and thank-you notes
- **Completing** applications and related documents
- **Arranging** informational interviews
- **Interviewing** for particular jobs
- **Negotiating** compensation package, e.g. salary, benefits, vacation and sick leave
- **Accepting or declining** an offer of employment

Job search resources/strategies include:

- Direct contact with companies
- Employment agencies, public or private
- Classified ads in newspapers or magazines
- Job postings within organizations or agencies
- Job postings on company internet sites
- Job postings on job search engines and job boards
- Networking to find a position through someone you know

Job Board and Job Search Engines

Job boards post jobs supplied by employers. The employer pays a fee to list their jobs on the site. Monster.com is the largest and best known job board.

Job search engines scour all over the web and pick up job listings from job boards and employer websites. Job search engines like Indeed, Monster, Career Builder, Simply Hired, LinkedIn, GlassDoor, Job.com etc are some of the names which are most popular among job searchers.

(<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/jobsdatabases/f/job-board-search-engine.htm>)

Tips for Job Market Research

What is a job market?

A market is where buyers and sellers meet. A job market is where job seekers go to find jobs that are available from employers. The job market is defined by personal factors such as how far a job seeker is willing to travel for work. A job seeker who can travel 30 minutes to get to work can access a larger job market than someone who can only travel 10 minutes. The job market is also defined by community characteristics such as the industries that are available in a physical area.

Why is it important to identify the job market?

Job seekers must be aware of jobs that are available in the local job market in order to be realistic about the job search. Knowing what industries and types of jobs are available allows job seekers to be most efficient with the time they spend in job search activities. When job seekers explore their own interests and abilities, address lifestyle factors such as transportation and child care, AND examine the local job market, they are more likely to be focused and effective in identifying and applying for jobs.

How do I learn about jobs that are in high demand?

Check out the the “Occupational Outlook Handbook.’ You can find it at:
<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/><https://www.ncworks.gov/vosnet/lmi/faq.aspx>

How do I find out how a company’s doing and its plans?

Look at the company’s annual report, the business pages of local newspapers, business periodicals and journals and check with the local Chamber of Commerce

How can I find names of suitable employment agencies?

Check with the Better Business Bureau. Ask for referrals, ask other job seekers, ask local human resource professionals what agencies they use.

How do I find out about state government opportunities?

Two excellent sources are the Employment Security Commission and the NC Office of State Human Resources www.ncesc.com, www.osp.state.nc.us/jobs

How do I find out about federal government opportunities?

Here’s the website for the The US Office of Personnel Management:
www.usajobs.opm.gov

The Internet: A Valuable Job-Search Tool

- **Research jobs.**
- **Post your résumé.**
- **Network with new contacts.**
- **Follow up with existing contacts.**
- **Contact employers and others.**
- **Complete applications for jobs.**
- **Use social media to connect with employers.**
- **Manage social media content and photos to create a favorable impression for your site's visitors.**
- **Use your privacy settings for content and photos not intended for employers.**

Social Media and Social Networks

When you are searching for a job, it's important to include social networking in your search. Employers use social networking sites for recruiting employees and checking out their applicants. Surveys show that 90% of companies currently check on their potential hires on social media.

Facebook

Facebook is an online networking site that allows users to create connections based on their social, political, religious, personal and professional interests. Some job seekers are using Facebook for professional and business networking in addition to social networking. Job seekers should be sure that their social images won't hurt their job searches. Employers often use Facebook to see what job seekers are doing in their free time.

www.facebook.com

Twitter

Twitter is an online conversational tool that lets users stay connected with individuals or companies. Employers and job sites post job openings on Twitter and share information about things going on in the company. Job seekers use Twitter to let others know they are looking for work and share their skills and accomplishments using instant messaging or SMS. People and companies use Twitter in many ways including making job matches.

www.twitter.com

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is an online social network for professionals. Job seekers use LinkedIn to connect with people who have similar jobs or who work in industries that match the jobs they want. Companies use LinkedIn for hiring and for connecting their business with affiliates or industries and many other business-related groups. You must create a profile and then you will be able to connect, network and job search. It is important to update your profile with information about your skills and work experience. Because LinkedIn is focused on career networking, job seekers should keep their profiles and contacts strictly professional. Remember, your LinkedIn account can be seen by potential employers.

www.linkedin.com

Be Professional. Be Cautious.

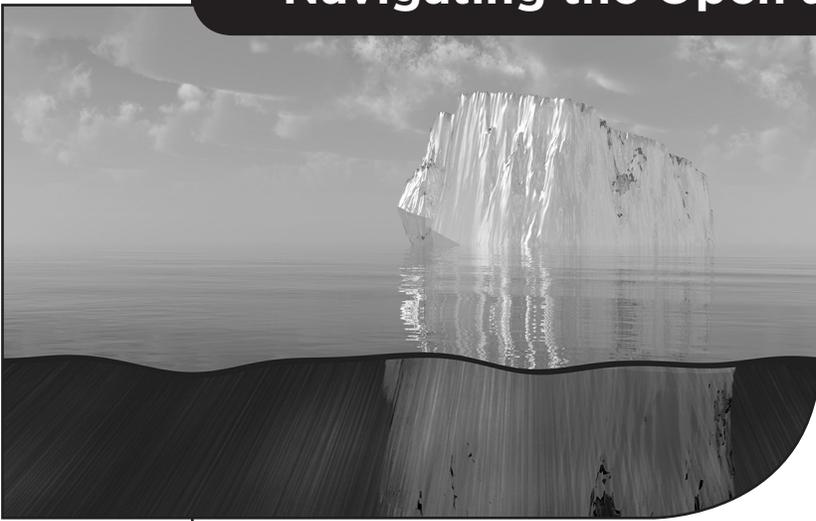
The best way to find a job, most people agree, is through networking. As a job seeker, you can network on the internet, go to meetings, join a job club or tap into your personal networks by asking friends or family to help you connect with a certain company. Never share information on any social media site that could harm your reputation or reveal information you do not want to be made public. Always know how to use your privacy settings. If you do not have the ability to set up a social network, ask someone in your professional circle to assist you, such as your Vocational Rehabilitation professional, your career counselor or a friend. You could also take a networking class.

For more information on social media and internet job search and networking;

Visit: **<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/networkingsites/a/networkingsites.htm>**

Credit: **<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/networkingsites/a/networkingsites.htm>**

Navigating the Open and Hidden Job Markets



Just as most of the iceberg is under water, most jobs on the market are 'hidden.' As many as 80% of jobs are never advertised and are not visible to the general public.

These jobs are harder to access but, because of this, there is also less competition for them. When a position is advertised on the open market, it is easily accessible to anyone who sees the advertisement, but there is a lot of competition. In order to find hidden jobs

we must be willing to explore. We do this through networking, cold calls, direct contact and old-fashioned hard work.

There are actually two job markets. The one that is available to everyone in search of jobs is the 'open market.' In the 'open market,' there are limited jobs that are advertised to the public or posted on job boards, career sites or the company's website. Then there is the 'hidden job market' in which jobs are not advertised or posted.

Learning to navigate the hidden market requires two things from you:

- Willingness to take an active role in your job search, which is easier than sending out résumé after résumé and not hearing anything.
- Willingness to learn new job-search skills that you can put into action immediately.

An expanded world of opportunities awaits those with the skill, curiosity and energy to seek them out. Your VR professionals are happy to assist you in this effort.

From the book, [Unlock the Hidden Job Market: 6 Steps to a Successful Job Search When Times are Tough](#), (Mathison & Finney, 2010)

Managing Your Time During Your Job Search

When you are unemployed, staying motivated for your job search can be hard. It is much easier to involve ourselves in activities that keep us preoccupied and less focused on becoming employed.

However, most of your day should involve actively looking for a job. The benefit of being out of work is the time you have available for looking for work. In fact, looking for a job is a full-time job in itself. Staying motivated can be hard, but managing your focus and your time will help.

Stay on a schedule, just as if you were working. For example, wake up early, make coffee, have breakfast, shower, dress and begin your job of finding a job by researching job listings, applying for openings, networking and following up on jobs that you applied for previously.

Staying on a schedule may be difficult without a current employer to hold you accountable. It is important to remain productive and actively involved. It is also a great idea to have something current on your resume. If unemployment leaves a gap on your resume, it would be to one's advantage to consider a volunteer activity.

Time management is very important when taking on a volunteer position while seeking paid employment. Volunteer activity can be a great opportunity to make new business connections to assist with employment. Managing your day to day activities can be a challenge. However, the reward could be making a connection while networking or volunteering that you would not have made in a traditional job search.

Remember to have a plan each day and manage your time to meet the ultimate goal of success in a new job or career.

“The upside of being out of work is that you have plenty of time to conduct a proper job search.” —Tammy Gooler Loeb, Career and Executive Coach

Setting SMART Goals

Setting goals allows you to have greater control over your future. When you know what you want to achieve, it is easier to determine the steps that will enable you to achieve it. Goal-setting can be applied to everything you do and is a skill worth developing.

Why Set Goals?

Studies have shown that people who set goals for themselves are more likely to:

- Experience less stress and anxiety
- Concentrate and remember better
- Demonstrate greater self-confidence
- Perform better and achieve more
- Be happier and more satisfied

What Are SMART Goals?

Whether you are setting long-term or short-term goals, you want every goal to be a **SMART** one: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ction-oriented, **R**ealistic and **T**imed.

Specific: Each goal should be a detailed statement of your desired result. Exactly what is it you wish to accomplish? It is difficult to determine action steps for vague goals and even harder to recognize when they have been achieved.

Measurable: Identify the means by which you will achieve each goal. How will you know when you have reached it? There are two types of goals: performance goals and outcome goals. Keep in mind that you will always have more control over performance than you will over outcome, so set performance goals whenever possible.

Action-Oriented: Describe your goals using action verbs. What will you do (step by step) to reach your goal?

Realistic: Choose goals that are possible and achievable. Who do you know who has achieved goals similar to yours? Goals set too high will discourage you while goals set too low won't challenge and motivate you.

Timed (Schedule): Determine deadlines for each of your goals. Deadlines can be flexible and adjusted as needed, but deadlines that specify time limits help keep you focused and moving toward your goal.

(<http://career-intelligence.com/smart-goals-for-a-job-search/>)

Networking

Networking is more about asking for time, information, advice and referrals than directly about a specific job. It is a very effective job search method, but it requires time, effort and organizational skills to obtain the maximum benefit.

Networking Strategy

Identify your network: Use the networking map on the next page to list as many people as you can. Include neighbors, former employers, co-workers, classmates, former teachers and church members.

Select the most promising contacts: These are people who are in the fields that interest you or who may know others in that field.

Prepare your script: State that you are seeking information and that you are not asking for employment. Remember you are requesting time, information, advice and/or referrals

A face-to-face interview is always the best. If this is not possible, a telephone or email interview is also effective. When networking by email, be sure to ask only a few questions at a time. You may also request an appointment via email. In person, by phone or by email, ask your contacts for the following:

- Information about companies that employ people with your skills
- Leads to any openings they know about in the industry
- Other people to contact

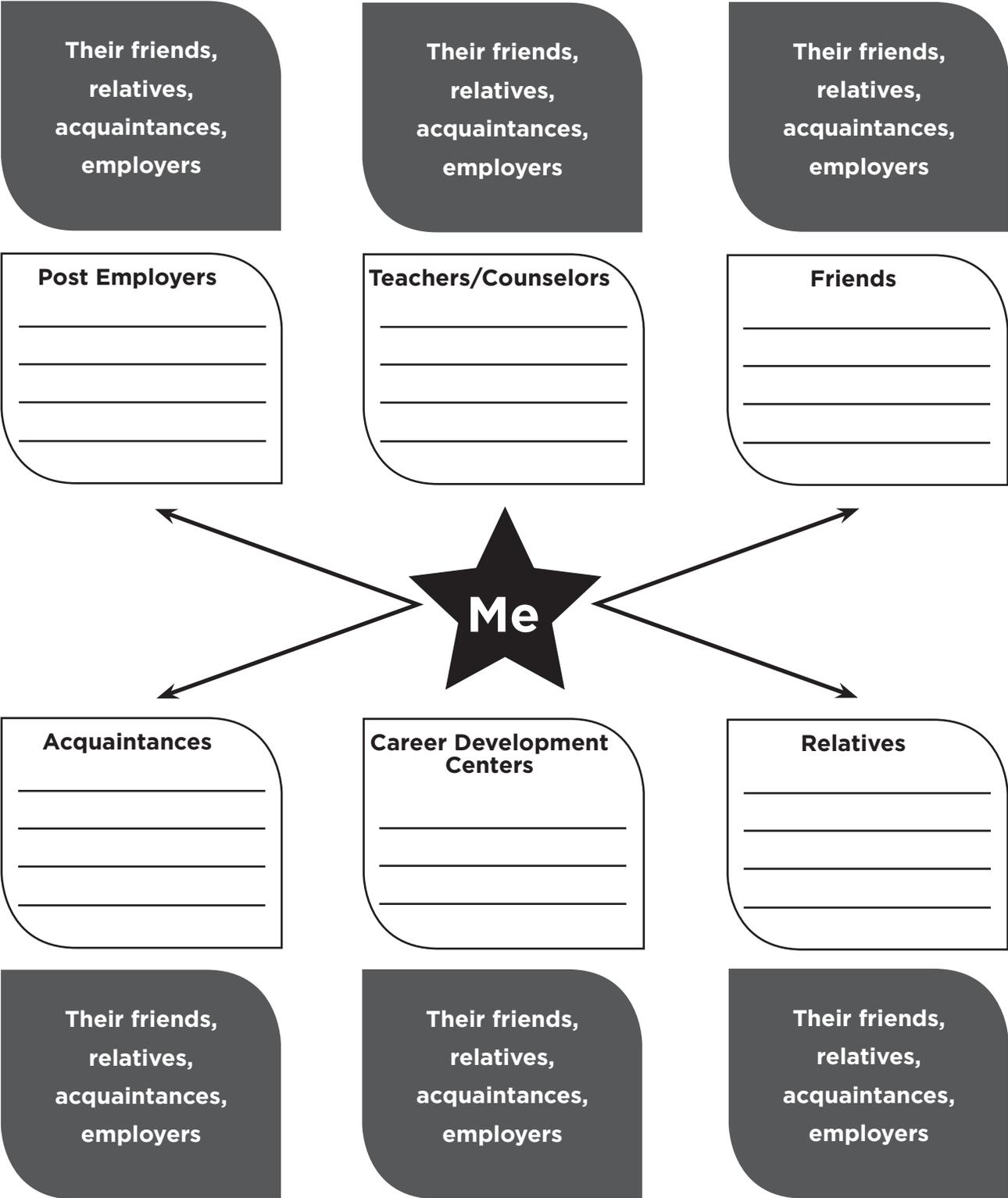
Follow up: Keep accurate records of all your contacts and referrals. Always send a thank-you note to acknowledge the employers, contacts and referrals for their time and information.

Expand your network: Continue to generate a list of people you can contact. Use meetings, conferences and social gatherings to add people to your network. Remember: you can contact people you do not know. You can collect names from the newspaper, professional journals or company web pages and brochures. Let people know how you found their names when you request information.

From the book, The Job Hunting Handbook (Dahlstrom, 2004).

Networking Map Activity

Fill in the blocks with names of networking contacts in appropriate places:



Replying to Help Wanted Ads

Look for ads in:

- School and university publications
- Government publications
- Professional or trade publications
- Community bulletin boards
- Newspapers
- Business and trade newspapers

Choose the right ad.

Read classified ads carefully and focus on the jobs of interest to you and those for which you are qualified. If an ad interests you and you meet the minimum qualifications, apply for the job!

Follow up.

After applying, be determined to follow up on a phone call within a week. This reminds the business who you are and shows your interest in the job.

Help-Wanted Activity

Directions: Read the two sample classified ads below and then answer the questions.

Word Processor (5). Immediate work. Needed 6 weeks for project near downtown area, 45 wpm, Exc. hourly wages. Call Don 372-0010.

Receptionist for local law firm. Pleasant, bright person. Must enjoy public contact. Excellent telephone and typing skills and good eye for detail. Exp. preferred. Call 275-0400.

1. Which ad is looking for more than one person? _____
2. If you were looking for a long-term position, for which job would you not apply? _____
3. Which job requires experience? _____
4. Which job specifies typing as a requirement? _____
5. Which job is more suited for an outgoing type of person? _____

The Direct Approach: Letter & Follow-up Call

Even if they have no current job openings, you can generate a list of companies to target based on your research. Your list should have 10-15 companies at all times.

Send a résumé and cover letter to the company. Address the letter if possible to the person who makes the hiring decisions. Even if you are told there are no openings, one or more could develop in the future. Keep in touch periodically. Keep cover letters short and to the point!

Sample Cover Letter

*109 West Eighth Avenue
Gastonia, NC 27514
704-555-5555*

JoannaSmith@yahoo.com

October 23, 2014

Mr. John Doe
Burlington Industries
800 K Street, N.W., Suite 720
Charlotte, NC 55555

Dear Mr. Doe:

In May, I will graduate from Central Piedmont Community College with an Associate Degree in Computer Engineering and am researching employment opportunities in the Charlotte area.

I very much appreciate your volunteering recently to help students with job search information, and I hope your schedule will permit you to provide me with some further advice.

Specifically, I am interested in learning how the engineers in your firm began their careers. My résumé is enclosed to give you some information about my background and project work.

I will call you in two weeks to arrange a time to speak with you by telephone or perhaps visit your office if that would be convenient. I will be in the Charlotte area during the week of November 21.

I very much appreciate consideration of my request, and I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Joanna Smith

Joanna Smith

Enclosure

Keep It Up!

During your job search, it's important to stay motivated and focused on your plan. It's easy to become discouraged, but try to turn any negative thoughts and beliefs into positive ones.

Negative Beliefs	Positive Beliefs
Employers don't want to hire someone with a disability.	Employers want to hire qualified applicants.
I can't compete with applicants who don't have disabilities.	I am qualified and will make a dedicated, hardworking employee.
The competition is overwhelming.	Nine out of 10 people won't take time to learn how to become a skilled job seeker. I will!

Here are tips to help keep up your spirits and self-esteem when the going gets tough:

- Form a 'buddy' job search team. See if your school or organization has a 'job club' where you can find additional support.
- Rejections simply mean you haven't found the right job match yet. Don't take them personally.
- Maintain your health and energy level. Eat the right kinds of foods and get enough sleep.
- Get up every morning and 'dress for work.' You are 'working' whether or not you have appointments that day.
- Look for support from family and friends. Hang out and spend time with upbeat people.
- Keep in mind there are thousands of people with disabilities who are successfully employed.

Here are some suggestions to help you take an active approach to your job search:

- Try to devote more time each day to searching for jobs.
- Identify multiple methods and sources for finding job leads.
- Use some of these methods and contact some these sources every day.
- Think of finding employment as a full-time job.
- Remember: The early bird gets the worm. No sleeping in!
- Be assertive and willing to take risks that make sense.
- No matter what happens: keep moving toward your goal.

Tip: *Keep in close contact with your VR Counselor or Business Relations Representative while searching for employment.*

YOUR JOB APPLICATION

Completing a job application may be your first “test” in obtaining the job you want. Employers use job applications to capture basic information about people interested in working for their companies. They also use applications to determine an applicant’s basic fit for the job. Do you complete all of the sections? Can you follow directions? Do you include information that demonstrates you are a good match? Understanding what employers need from you on an application and how they will use this information to select the best candidate will help you to pass this “test” with flying colors!

Completing Job Applications

Information Needed for Applications:

- Driver's license number
- Social Security number (list last four digits only, if form allows)
- Work experience: employers' names, addresses, phone numbers, supervisor names
- School and training experience
- Military record (Form DD-214)
- Club and organization memberships
- References

Tips for Completing the Application:

- Bring three professional-looking copies of your résumé.
- Be prepared to complete online applications by bringing needed information.
- Take the application (several copies) home to complete, if allowed.
- Follow directions carefully; read over all questions first and answer all completely.
- Print or type neatly; use black ink.
- Complete the entire application, leaving no blank spaces.
- Be specific about the position you want. Under position desired, do not write 'open'.
- Print 'N/A' (not applicable) on questions that do not apply to you.
- Use action verbs. (See 'Résumé Word List' on pages 36-37.)
- Check your grammar and spelling.
- If you are at the work site and have made several errors, ask for another application.
- Do not write 'refer to résumé' or 'see résumé' on the job application.
- Be sure to sign and date the application.
- Be ready to complete online personality profiles after completing applications.

How to Handle Difficult Questions:

- Problem questions should be addressed honestly and appropriately.
- If you were fired, be honest. If the job ended, use the appropriate terms such as: 'seasonal employment,' 'moved' or 'laid off.'
- If you have a small amount of work experience, include volunteer work, hobbies, chores and educational experiences.

Explaining Gaps in Employment:

It is important that you try to account for your past 10 years when completing an application. Here is a list that may give you ideas for discussing any gaps in your employment.

- Continued my education or training
- Worked part-time
- Self-employed
- Raised children
- Traveled
- Received career counseling
- Use general dates.

Example: 'Fall 1993 - Spring 1994' or use just the years '1993 -1994'

WORK EXPERIENCE

Please list your work experience for the past five years beginning with your most recent job held. If you were self-employed, give firm name. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Name of Employer: Address: City, State, Zip: Phone number:	Name of last supervisor:	Employment dates	Pay or Salary
		From:	Start:
		To:	Final:
Your last job title:			
Reason for leaving (be specific):			
List the jobs you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company:			

Name of Employer: Address: City, State, Zip: Phone number:	Name of last supervisor:	Employment dates	Pay or Salary
		From:	Start:
		To:	Final:
Your last job title:			
Reason for leaving (be specific):			
List the jobs you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company:			

Name of Employer: Address: City, State, Zip: Phone number:	Name of last supervisor:	Employment dates	Pay or Salary
		From:	Start:
		To:	Final:
Your last job title:			
Reason for leaving (be specific):			
List the jobs you held, duties performed, skills used or learned, advancements or promotions while you worked at this company:			

Are you currently employed? Yes No
May we contact your current employer? Yes No
Did you complete this application yourself? Yes No
If not, who did?

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes No
If yes, explain number of conviction(s), nature of offense(s) leading to conviction(s), how recently such offense(s) was/were committed, sentence(s) imposed, and type(s) of rehabilitation:

Have you ever been in the armed forces? Yes No

Specialty: _____ Date Entered: _____ Discharge Date: _____

Are you now a member of the National Guard? Yes No

If hired, can you provide proof of U.S. citizenship or proof of your legal right to live and work in this country? Yes No

Have you ever been employed with this company? Yes No

If yes, when? _____

Do you have any friends or relatives employed by this company? Yes No

If yes, please provide their names and relationship to you

If hired, would you have a reliable means of transportation to and from work? Yes No

Are you able to perform the essential functions and duties of the job for which you are applying? Yes No

If not, please describe the functions or duties you are unable to perform:

REFERENCES

Please list below three persons not related to you who have knowledge of your work performance and/or personal qualifications within the last 5 years.

Name:	Occupation:	
Company name:	Address:	
Telephone:	Email:	Number of years acquainted:
Name:	Occupation:	
Company name:	Address:	
Telephone:	Email:	Number of years acquainted:
Name:	Occupation:	
Company name:	Address:	
Telephone:	Email:	Number of years acquainted:

APPLICATION FORM WAIVER

Please read each paragraph carefully, initial in the space beside it and sign below:

_____ I hereby certify that I have not knowingly withheld any information that might adversely affect my chances for employment and that the answers given by me are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I further certify that I, the undersigned applicant, have personally completed this application. I understand that any omission or misstatement of material fact on this application or any other document used to secure employment shall be grounds for rejection of this application or for immediate discharge if I am employed, regardless of the time elapsed before discovery.

_____ I hereby authorize Mock Company to thoroughly investigate my references, work records, education, driving record, credit history, criminal background and other matters related to my suitability for employment. I further authorize the employers, schools and other references I have listed to disclose to Mock Company any and all documents, transcripts, letters, reports and other information related to these references, without giving me prior notice of such disclosure. I hereby release Mock Company, my former employers, and all other persons, corporations, partnerships and associations from any and all claims, demands or liabilities arising out of or in any way related to such investigation or disclosures.

_____ I understand that nothing contained in the application or conveyed during any interview which may be granted or during my employment, if hired, is intended to create an employment contract between me and Mock Company, other than one that is 'at will.' I understand and agree that, if I am employed, my employment will be of an 'at will' nature, whereby either the employee or the employer may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or notice. I further understand that my employment, if hired, is for no definite or determinable period of time and may be terminated at any time, at the option of either myself or Mock Company, and that no promise or representation contrary to the foregoing is binding on the company unless made in writing and signed by me and the company's designated representative.

Signature of applicant: _____

Date: _____

Mock Company is an equal employment opportunity employer. We adhere to a policy of making employment decisions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship, age, or disability. We assure you that your opportunity for employment with Mock Company depends solely on your qualifications.

Thank you for completing this application form and for your interest in employment with our business.

Online Applications

Résumé

Create or update your résumé. Use keywords to aid in your résumé being selected by software systems. Customize your résumé for the job. Explain employment gaps. Review and edit as needed. Add your name into the file name of your résumé, so that employers will connect you with the résumé when they review it (e.g., yournamerésumé.doc). It is always a good idea to look at examples before creating a résumé or updating your existing one.

Work History Sheet

Have details of your employment history ready to include contact information, education, employer addresses, phone numbers, supervisor names, job titles, starting and ending dates of employment and salary history. Online applications usually ask for the same information as paper applications

Time

Before you start online job applications, it is important to have ready and available a current work history, résumé, cover letter and reference list. Gather all the information before beginning. Have ample time to concentrate and focus on your application process

Rested and ready for personality exams

Part of an online job application process may include an online employment test or personality exam.

Email Address

To apply for a job online, you will need an email address for job-searching and internet access.

Posting and Uploading a Résumé

Some websites require you to upload an existing résumé from a word document on your computer. Other websites may allow you to copy and paste from your résumé into an online profile or to use a résumé builder that is already available in the job application system.

Cover Letters

Prepare and have ready a basic cover letter that you can customize for each job for which you apply.

Journal of Jobs for Which You've Applied

Tracking the jobs you apply for is very helpful when doing follow-up activity. Write down the dates you mailed, emailed or submitted an application electronically through the job site. Record the contact information for each application such as a website address, email addresses, phone numbers, addresses and contacts persons' names that were provided.

<http://jobsearch.about.com>

YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Your resume is 'the story of you' — at least the job-seeking you. It can provide the all-important first impression to employers and others who can assist in your job search. On it you can present your skills, experience, and other traits and qualities that will hopefully prove to be match for the job you're going after.

Putting Your Résumé to Work

There are several styles of resumes: chronological, functional, a combination of these two, and – increasingly – electronic. On the following pages, we'll take a look at each of these, but first a few pointers that apply to whatever style suits you best:

- Be **clear, concise and concrete** in describing your skills and experience.
- Use **standard fonts** such as Times New Roman, Futura, Palatino or Century.
- Use a font size of 11 or 12 points, but do not use effects such as Italics, underlining and shadowing.
- Use **key words** to define your skills, experience, education and professional affiliations.
- In most cases, it's best to list only the **last 10 years of your work experience**, unless you absolutely believe the work done earlier in your history is an exact match for the job you're applying for.
- That said, it's good to have your complete **work history** at the ready for those instances when more information is requested.
- In most cases, it's best to stick to **black ink** on white paper. If you're sending to a creative business – for example, a marketing or advertising firm – using a single color might be appropriate for emphasis, for example with your name and subheads dividing sections. Don't overuse color and don't use pictures.
- Do not use vertical and horizontal lines, graphics, shading and boxes.
- Consider having **two versions of your résumé**: one on paper and one to use electronically.

The average employer may spend no more than 30 seconds scanning your résumé, so be sure to make the most of your 30 seconds!

For more information, check out:

<http://law.unh.edu/careers/legal-career-toolkit/resume-writing-dos-and-donts>

<http://susanireland.com/resume/examples/format/>)

Résumé Word List

Some 'action verbs' that can demonstrate your functional skills.

Acted	Calculated	Decided	Evaluated	Guided	Judged	Monitored
Adapted	Chartered	Defined	Examined	Handled	Kept	Multiplied
Addressed	Checked	Delegated	Expanded	Headed	Learned	Negotiated
Administered	Classified	Delivered	Experimented	Helped	Lectured	Officiated
Advised	Coached	Designed	Extracted	Identified	Led	Offered
Allocated	Collected	Detected	Facilitated	Illustrated	Lifted	Operated
Analyzed	Communicated	Directed	Filed	Imagined	Listened	Overhauled
Approved	Compared	Documented	Financed	Implemented	Logged	Performed
Arranged	Ascertained	Completed	Computed	Drove	Dug	Fixed
Followed	Improved	Improvised	Made	Maintained	Received	Reviewed
Assisted	Conceived	Edited	Formulated	Increased	Managed	Trained
Attained	Coordinated	Eliminated	Founded	Indexed	Manipulated	Updated
Audited	Copied	Empathized	Gathered	Initiated	Mediated	Validated
Brought	Counseled	Enforced	Gave	Inspected	Memorized	Valued
Budgeted	Created	Established	Generated	Interpreted	Mobilized	Visualized
Built	Dealt	Estimated	Governed	Investigated	Modeled	Wrote

Some 'adaptive skill words' that can reflect your functional skills.

Active	Creative	Efficient	Firm	Mature	Positive	Sensitive
Adaptable	Dependable	Energetic	Honest	Methodical	Productive	Sincere
Adept	Determined	Enterprising	Innovative	Objective	Reliable	Successful
Broad minded	Diplomatic	Experienced	Instrumental	Outgoing	Resourceful	Tactful
Competent	Disciplined	Fair	Logical	Personable	Self reliant	Versatile
Conscientious	Discreet	Forceful	Loyal	Pleasant	Sense of Humor	

Skill verbs that can describe your functional skills.

Achieve	Act	Deliver	Draw	File	Finance	Make
Manage	Produce	Promote	Repair	Research	Take	Instruction
Administer	Edit	Imagine	Manipulate	Publicize	Schedule	Talk
Analyze	Elicit	Implement	Motivate	Purchase	Select	Teach/Train
Assemble	Eliminate	Improve	Negotiate	Question	Sell	Tell
Build	Emphasize	Improvise	Observe	Raise	Sense	Troubleshoot
Calculate	Enforce	Increase	Organize	Read	Separate	Tutor
Communicate	Establish	Influence	Originate	Realize	Serve	Type
Compose	Estimate	Interview	Paint	Reason	Service	Umpire
Consult	Evaluate	Invent	Perceive	Receive	Set	Understand
Control	Examine	Judge	Perform	Recommend	Sew	Unify
Coordinate	Expand	Keep	Persevere	Reconcile	Shape	Upgrade
Copy	Experiment	Lead	Persuade	Record	Speak	Use
Count	Explain	Learn	Photograph	Recruit	Study	Utilize
Create	Express	Lecture	Pilot	Reduce	Summarize	Verbalize
Debate	Extract	Listen	Plan	Refer	Supervise	Weigh
Define	Figure	Maintain	Problem-Solve	Remember	Supply	Work
Write						

Source: North Carolina State University Placement Manual, 2003

Employment References

References should include at least three people (not relatives) who have knowledge of your skills, accomplishments or personal qualities. One of those should be a professional reference – one who is familiar with your work performance.

- **Get permission from the individual(s) you want to list as a reference(s).**
- **Include your references' email address and phone numbers.**
- **Keep your references informed about your job search.**
- **Offer them any specifics they should include if contacted by an employer.**
- **Be sure to thank your references for their help.**

Unless you are instructed to include them, references are usually not included on résumés. Have reference names and information available on a separate sheet of paper for the interview. The sentence 'References furnished upon request' is no longer necessary on résumés.

Types of Résumé

Chronological Résumé

The chronological résumé emphasizes work experience. Many employers prefer this style because it enables them to quickly match your prior work experience to their immediate needs. For recent graduates, it's a place where they can show part-time, co-op and summer employment as relevant work experience.

Creating a Chronological Résumé

- Begin with a 'career objective' to reflect your strengths and skills without limiting your options.
- Create a 'Summary of Qualifications' statement: three to four sentences about who you are, your experience and your credentials.
- With 'Work Experience,' start with your most recent position and work back in time. Give the name of the company, city, state, job title, major duties and accomplishments.
- Keeping your job objective in mind, emphasize the duties and accomplishments that highlight the strengths for which the employer is looking.
- Use action verbs (examples: managed, coordinated, reorganized) to begin each phrase.
- Use bulleted lists for easier reading and to highlight each separate activity or achievement.
- If you have completed a related course or received a diploma/degree in the last five years, it should go near the top of the résumé. Otherwise, education should be listed toward the bottom.
- Keep the length of your résumé to one page, two at the maximum. If using a second page, type your name only in the upper-left corner of the second page.
- Proofread for good grammar, spelling, clarity and conciseness. Use spell-check!

Functional Résumé

A functional, or skill-based, résumé is arranged in such a way that the reader can assess what you have to offer in the quickest, easiest, most powerful way. Points to remember about functional resumes:

- Include multiple skills sections and bulleted content that demonstrate competencies and proficiencies.
- Do not include job title, company name, location, and dates of employment. However, you may choose to list some or all of this information near the end of the document.

Who should develop a functional résumé? Applicants who:

- Have gaps in their work histories
- Are re-entering the workforce
- Have frequently changed jobs
- Are trying to transition into new careers

What should a functional résumé contain?

- A clear record of key academic achievements; a list of previous jobs, paid or voluntary; a summary of honors, interests, languages, GPAs, SAT/ACT results, etc. The résumé can be detailed, but not overly embellished with too much information.
- Employers easily spot the résumés that add ‘fluff’ or stretch dates to hide gaps. For example, to explain gaps due to caregiver responsibilities, using the language: “Devoted four years to managing an estate and complex medical decisions while caring for a terminally ill parent (relative)” is much better than: “took time off to care for a sick relative.”

With any gaps in employment, organize information around these questions:

- How did you use your time away from work?
- Did you acquire new skills? If so, how? Where?
- Did you deepen existing industry knowledge or cultivate new contacts?

Don't forget:

- Determine functional titles that best describe your skill area(s) and are related to your job goal.
- Stress your accomplishments, results and abilities.
- Include ALL volunteer experience, especially those that demonstrate or produced employable skills.

Electronic Résumé

There are at least two good reasons to create an electronic résumé: (1) you can email your résumé to networking contacts or hiring managers and (2) you can post your résumé on electronic databases that are viewed by employers.

Because employers are increasingly performing electronic scans or searches for key-words – i.e. those that appear in the job posting – successful electronic résumés require a different strategy from paper ones.

- Searches are done for key words and phrases that describe the skills and core work required for each job. Focus on using nouns rather than verbs. In the phrases ‘supervised several staff’ and ‘manager of several staff,’ ‘manager’ will stand out, whereas ‘supervised’ might be skipped over.
- Use labels or keywords, terms that employers search for when trying to fill a position. They are the essential qualifications required to do the job: education, experience, skills, knowledge and abilities.
- Place the most important keywords toward the beginning of the résumé. The program may have a limit to the number of items it will scan, and it usually starts at the top of the document.
- Put your name first and contact information on a separate line.
- Keep your résumé and cover letter to no more than 65 to 70 characters per line in case those who read your résumé have different email programs and different-sized screen widths.

- Keep the design simple. Use white space. Computers like white space. They use it to recognize that one topic has ended and another has begun.
- You can use modest design elements. Highlight areas with asterisks (*) and use capital letters instead of underlining.
- When using bullets in your résumé, be sure to insert a space between each bullet and text so that the bullet doesn't interfere with a keyword search.
- Minimize use of abbreviations, except the more common ones like BA (Bachelor of Arts).
- Use common language. Not all systems have a full-fledged synonym table so try to maximize the 'hits' between a position search and your résumé by using words everyone knows. Do, however, maximize the use of industry jargon, i.e. terms used in that business.

When you email your résumé, it goes to one person or organization. This is different from posting your résumé.

The most common method is attaching a file that contains your résumé to an email and sending it.

How you email your résumé will depend on the email software you are using. If your software won't let you attach a file, simply paste it in the text (message) area of your email, and send it. Then ask if they would like you to (U.S.) mail a copy for their records.

Warning: Some employers who advertise online do not accept résumés via email. Be sure to read a listing carefully before you respond to it.

When you email or post your résumé, always enter something in the subject line (something interesting, preferably). You can use the job title that was advertised, citing any relevant job numbers as noted in the ad. Don't leave the subject line blank.

Include a cover letter when emailing your résumé unless you receive instructions indicating otherwise. The same rules apply as with standard mail. If there is no cover letter, the reader doesn't know what job you are targeting, so remember to send your résumé and cover letter in one file. **Would you mail a cover letter and résumé in separate envelopes? Never!**

Chronological Résumé Sample

Anita Carter

anitac@dotmail.com
5820 Harrison Ave.
Yourtown, NC 21011
(919) 230-5555

Objective

Hotel or restaurant management trainee

Summary of Qualifications: Two years experience in all aspects of the restaurant business. Proven customer service and organizational skills. Dependable, conscientious and able to handle a variety of tasks simultaneously.

Work Experience

Restaurant Hostess *Perry's Restaurant, Smalltown, NC* *2002 - present*

- Greeted customers quickly and assigned them to appropriate sections.
- Handled customers' questions, complaints and inquiries to assure satisfaction.
- Assisted wait staff with necessary duties to increase table accessibility and turnover
- Handled cashier's duties of processing charges, direct billings and cash sales.
- Reconciled cash register receipts at closing of restaurant.
- Audited supply report and customers' records for accuracy.

Server *Perry's Restaurant, Smalltown, NC* *2000 - 2002*

- Greeted customers with enthusiasm and communicated daily specials to over 75 individuals daily.
- Handled banquet room, including set-up of food and beverage tables. Waited on customers and provided hospitality as requested.
- Performed kitchen duties, including assisting specialty chefs, dishwashers and bus crews as needed.

Cashier *Regional Grocery Store, Anothertown, NC* *1998 - 2000*

- Checked and processed grocery orders.
- Reconciled cash drawer daily.

Education

Taylor Community College, Taylor, N.C. 1995 - 1998

Continuing Education Courses: Hospitality, Business Management, Supervision

Functional Résumé Sample

Amanda D. Ondricek

444 South 3rd East Apt. 3 • Rexburg, ID 83440 • 655.222.2777

ond07777@byui.edu

EDUCATION

Brigham Young University-Idaho, Rexburg, Idaho
B.S. in Social Work, Spanish emphasis | Graduating December 2010

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

TRAINING/LEADERSHIP SKILLS

- Conducted over 100 one-to-one résumé, cover letter and job interview mentoring sessions which assisted college students in presenting themselves successfully to potential employers
Directed the training and teaching of 6 instructors and 2 instructor supervisors for several college-level general studies course sections
- Coached junior employees in time-saving techniques, company policies and sales tips
- Trained and oversaw the efforts and activities of a small team of full-time volunteers for 9 months
- Managed and monitored the online discussions and assignments for 90 freshmen in a general studies course
- Consulted with 20-30 students a week in one-on-one settings, giving positive and constructive feedback
- Accommodated individual students with learning and language disabilities to help them succeed
- Maximized capacity to meet needs of students and office staff by taking initiative to apply and adapt to rapidly changing policies and procedures
- Encouraged academically and emotionally struggling 12-year-old student through positive activities and instruction

ORGANIZATION/COORDINATION

- Prepared and presented 45-minute life-enhancement lessons daily to inner-city youth. Inspired teen students to love learning and fulfill responsibilities through effective course instruction and delegating class duties
- Provided 70 hours per week of service for 13 months, which involved planning and teaching life improvement lessons to Hispanic children, youth and adults
- Contributed to an effective annual career fair by coordinating with participants, setting up equipment, and staffing aspects of the event
- Increased camp enrollment through innovative advertising and new enrollment activities
- Organized enrollment campaigns and delegated assignments to 15 other students
- Spearheaded the planning of 'Oppression Awareness Week' activities for over 2,000 students
- Led group discussions with over 70 local community leaders, teachers and students to explore effective ways to resolve cultural and personal challenges

Combination Résumé Sample

Combining functional and chronological, this format works well if you are changing jobs/careers or just emphasizing your skills and work experience.

Bob Green

86 South Green Street
Morganton, NC 28655
(828) 555-5555

Objective: To obtain a position in PC-support services

Relevant Skills:

Systems: Apple, IBM, UNIX

Software: Windows, Microsoft Office 2010 and Office 2010, Adobe Acrobat, Adobe InDesign, Corel Photopaint, Filemaker Pro, and QuarkXPress

Programming Languages: Cobol and HTML

Experience:

- Excellent background in computer systems, hardware and software
- Trained individuals at many levels in computer literacy
- Arranged service and maintenance for all computer products
- Developed and executed databases to increase company efficiency
- Devised workstations for cost-effective use of hardware and software

Employment:

- PC Training Director
Any Company, Charlotte, NC, 4/97 - Present
- Customer Support Manager
Any Other Company, Statesville, NC, 6/94 - 2/97
- Assistant Computer Operator
The Computer Company, Raleigh, NC, 1/91 - 5/94

Education:

- Western Piedmont Community College: AA in Computer Systems Administration, 6/98
- IBM and Apple Service Schools
- Microsoft Software Seminars

Cover Letters

Usually accompanying your résumé or application, a cover letter allows you to tell the employer why you believe hiring you is a good decision.

An effective cover letter:

- Is no more than one page and is typed neatly and error-free on good-quality paper.
- Is addressed to a specific person. (Avoid using 'Dear Sir' or 'To Whom It May Concern.' If you are unsure of the name, use 'Dear Hiring Manager,' 'Dear Manager,' 'Dear Human Resources Manager' or 'Dear Recruiter.')
- Is straightforward, professional and positive.
- States how you heard about the opening through a person, job listing, ad, etc.
- Is tailored to a specific position in a specific organization, demonstrating how your qualifications match the requirements of the job.
- Demonstrates your knowledge of the organization and the job.
- Should include the name(s) of anyone who referred you to this employer.
- May be included in the body of an email.

An inquiry letter:

- May be addressed to a company that may be hiring but has not advertised.
- Tells why you are interested in working with the company.
- Tells how you would benefit the company with your skills and experience.

A perspective letter:

Tells the company that you are interested in jobs they may be hiring for now or in the future that match your skills and experience.

Sample Cover Letter

Mary Smith
300 Somewhere Lane
Ohmigoodness, NC 55555
919-555-1234 Home
919-555-5678 Cell
email@myemail.com

March 10, 2014

Dear Hiring Manager:

When you employ the right professional to assist your valued customers with timely, friendly and proactive service, increased customer loyalty almost always results.

In my long experience in the service industry, I have assisted all types of customers in all types of settings, and it has taught me how to meet or exceed customer expectations with service that sells.

Of utmost importance to every company is spreading the word about your business through loyal patrons. Positioning a company for better exposure and greater marketability is something that I have performed with success many times.

I am an excellent trainer who achieves success with her teams by building morale and self-confidence and sharpening their people skills so they can make the sale.

It would be a pleasure to interview with you, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Very sincerely,

Mary Smith

Mary Smith

YOUR JOB INTERVIEW

Getting an interview means you are one step closer to getting the job you want. Whether you are interviewed on the spot or as part of a scheduled meeting, you want to be prepared to highlight your strengths and help the employer see why you are a good match for the position. First impressions do matter — especially in job interviews. Building confidence to successfully participate in job interviews helps you to show an employer your very best.

Planning for the Job Interview

Before the interview:

- Use your research techniques and sources to learn as much as you can about the company and the job you are pursuing.
- You will use that information to impress the employer with your knowledge about the organization, and you will be prepared to relate your skills and abilities to the business' needs.
- If you have the opportunity to do a practice interview, by all means do it!
- Prepare some questions that you will ask the interviewer about the company, job and work environment.
- You may want to find the interview location a day or two ahead of time to make sure you know where to go. Plan to arrive about 15 minutes early.
- Bring copies of your résumé and two forms of identification.
- Don't bring others with you to the interview.

Be mindful of your appearance:

- Take a shower with soap, use deodorant, brush teeth.
- Have clean, neat hair.
- Clean and trim your fingernails.
- Shave or trim beards and mustaches.
- Don't wear loud fashions and flashy colors.
- Wear clean, freshly pressed clothes and clean, polished shoes.
- Use make-up lightly; use perfume or cologne lightly or not at all.
- Make sure any body art and jewelry are appropriate to the position.
- Don't smoke before or during the interview and don't chew gum.
- Be mindful about body language: sit up straight, keep feet on the floor, don't fidget.

Remember to:

- Turn off your cell phone.
- Write your interviewer's name and the position you are interested in on your notepad.
- Offer a firm handshake, sit up straight and look your interviewer in the eye.

After the interview:

- Be sure to ask anyone who participated for a business card.
- Send a thank-you note within a day or two of the interview, thanking the interviewer for the time spent with you and stating again your interest and qualifications.

From the book, The Job Hunting Handbook, (Dahlstrom, 2004).

The Behavioral Interview

Behavioral interviewing is based on the belief that past behavior and performance are the best predictors of *future* behavior and performance. Employers identify job-related behaviors, knowledge, skills and abilities -- called 'competencies' -- that the company has decided are desired for a particular position.

Examples of Behavioral Interview Questions

- Tell about a time you had to coordinate a number of work priorities. How did you handle it?
- Describe a situation where you have had to deal with a customer who was upset.
- Tell me about a time when you had to follow a policy which you didn't agree with.
- Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation and how you coped with it.
- Discuss a time when you had to make a split-second decision.
- Tell me about a time when you persuaded someone to see things your way.
- Give me an example of a time that you showed initiative and took the lead.

How Can I Best Answer Behavioral Questions?

Your response needs to be specific and detailed. A complete answer should explain the task or problem which you were responsible for, the specific actions you took and the results of your actions. Tell the interviewer a 'story,' with a beginning, middle and end, about how you used a skill. You may use work experience and activities, hobbies, volunteer work, school projects or family life as examples of your past behavior.

Interviewer May Use the 'STAR' Technique

Describe a situation/task you had to complete at work, home or school.

Sample answer: 'A deadline was approaching on a team project that I was leading, and one team member was not going to finish her portion on time.'

What *action* did you take?

Sample answer: 'I called the rest of the team members and asked for their input. We collectively decided to extend her deadline by half a day. We prepared to spend some extra time on our last meeting. I coached this team member to help her complete the assignment in the extended time allotted.'

What was the *result* of your actions?

Sample answer: 'A more collaborative effort was used to finish the presentation, and team members had to adjust their time management skills. The presentation went well, and the project was finished on time. We learned about time management, flexibility, confronting team members and leadership styles in the process.'

(Quintessential Careers, n.d., sample_behavioral.html)

The Telephone Interview

Be prepared:

- Have your résumé, the job description and questions to ask the employer in front of you.
- Be ready to give examples of your accomplishments and previous work experiences.
- Write down the name of the person interviewing so you can call him or her by name and send a follow-up thank you note.
- Have notes about the company so you can refer to them quickly.
- Have your calendar ready for scheduling further any contacts.

Be present:

- If you stand up, your voice will project better and you will feel more engaged.
- Be enthusiastic and smile: it will come through in your voice.
- Conduct your interview in a quiet place. Be sure children and pets are not in the room. Do not answer another telephone or doorbell or have any other distractions. You should also disable your phone's call-waiting feature, if possible.
- Speak directly into the telephone. Land-line telephones have clearer connections than cell phones with less chance of being disconnected.
- Speak slowly and clearly. Remember: your voice is a major factor in distinguishing you from other candidates.
- Ask for clarification when needed, especially if you are unsure of the question and need time to think or process the question and give your best answer.

Questions you might ask:

- What are some skills and attributes that you seek in the person filling this position?
- What would a typical work day be like?
- How would you describe your company 'culture'?
- How will my performance be measured?
- What type of support does this position receive?
- Does your company support professional development and training?
- What is the next step in the interview process?

Practice!

Ask your VR Counselor or Business Relations Representative to practice a telephone interview with you. Ask for feedback on your answers and the way you use your voice, including any bad habits such as too many 'ums' or 'ahs'.

The Video-Call Interview (*FaceTime or Skype*)

Increasingly technology has allowed us the convenience and time-savings of interviewing remotely using camera-equipped computers.

You and your interviewer can arrange a mutually convenient time for an interview done in the privacy of your home with no travel time or cost involved. There is often less stress resulting from the travel and any uncertainties in finding the interview site in an unfamiliar location.

You will need reliable equipment with a good webcam, a sufficiently high-speed connection, a quiet place without distractions to do the interview and a feeling of ease with being 'on-camera.'

Remote Interviewing Tips:

- Use an area free of interruptions, people walking by, doorbells, opening/closing doors, etc.
- Practice the interview with a friend or family member before the day of the appointment.
- Move pets and children to another area where they won't be seen or heard.
- Dress just as you would for an in-person interview.
- Adjust the camera, sound volume and background.
- Turn off all phones and other electronics.
- Close other programs on your computer.
- Use good posture, sit up straight.
- Do not sit in a swivel chair — swiveling may give the appearance of fidgeting.
- Keep a 'cheat sheet' where only you can see it, but don't rely on it too much.
- Place everything you'll need within reach, including water if you think you'll need it.
- Look directly at the camera, not the screen — it's tempting to watch yourself or the interviewer.
- Avoid talking over the interviewer, speak at a normal pace and don't rush the conversation.
- Notice if the interviewer is interested and engaged in the conversation.
- Follow up with a thank-you note within 24-48 hours of the interview.

(USA Today, August 2013, story/tech/personal/2013/08/01/13-tips-for-a-great-skype-interview/2608915/)

Practice Interview Questions Activity

Directions: The following questions are frequently asked during job interviews. Using complete sentences, write a response to each question.

1. “Tell me about yourself.”

The employer is not asking for your life story. It’s best to answer this question with a brief summary of the educational and work background that best qualifies you for the position.

2. How have your education and/or employment experiences prepared you for this job?

Know the requirements of the job, and discuss how your educational and employment experiences have prepared you to meet those requirements.

3. What are your career goals?

It’s wise to keep your answer to this question related to the job you seek. Any career goals mentioned should be related to progressing along that line, and they should be in line with what might be possible in that particular company.

4. Where do you see yourself in five years?

Avoid responses like ‘returning to school,’ ‘starting a business,’ ‘moving away,’ or ‘retiring.’ Employers want to know that if they invest in hiring and training you, you will stick around for a while. Focus on professional goals as they might fit into this company’s structure.

5. What do you consider your best qualities or strengths?

Talk about strengths you have that directly relate to this job. You may want to mention two or three, unless the interviewer asks for a specific number.

6. What do you consider your weaknesses?

There are several approaches to this question. If you see yourself as having no weakness in relation to the job you’re interviewing for, you should say that. If you do have a weakness, be honest about it, but be sure to add how you have taken or plan to take steps to overcome the weakness. There’s an old ‘school of thought’ that suggests describing yourself as a ‘perfectionist’ or a ‘workaholic’ to portray your weakness as a ‘positive’ to impress your interviewer. Don’t do it. Hiring managers see this as the ‘oldest trick in the book.’

7. Why do you want to work for this company?

The interviewer wants to know that you have done your homework and made a conscious choice to pursue a job with this company. Give some specifics you learned in your company research that interested you and that you think fit with what you want and have to offer.

8. What did you like and dislike about your last job?

When talking about what you liked, focus on challenges, responsibilities, people and accomplishments. Be careful with responding on what you disliked. Be sure not to ‘bad-mouth’ your former employer or co-workers. Try to mention a condition or situation you disliked that would not exist in the job you seek.

9. Which course(s) did you like best in school?

If you know the job, it will be easier to answer this question. Try to mention courses that would serve you well in this job. If the job requires math skills, mention enjoying math. If it requires reading and writing, you may want to mention that you enjoyed English. If the job requires working with the public or you know it will involve interaction with people who speak foreign languages, you may want to mention foreign-language courses.

10. Why should I hire you for this job?

Talk about how your qualifications match the job and what makes you a good match.

11. How would your last supervisor or teacher describe you?

To prepare for this question, it would be helpful to take a look at old performance reviews or grade reports. Before your interview, you could seek out former supervisors and/or teachers to get their thoughts.

12. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?

Don't say 'money!' You may want to answer with 'the feeling of satisfaction I get with a job well done' or 'acknowledgement when a job is done right.'

13. What was the reason for your lapse in employment?

Mention situations that prevented you from having paid employment but allowed you to gain new skills and knowledge. Examples might be: running a household, caring for children or elderly parents, volunteer work and taking courses or traveling. You could also mention that you've taken time to make sure you are choosing the right career path and job for you. It is important to emphasize that whatever circumstances kept you from work in the past would not affect your ability to perform this job.

14. If applicable, what was the nature of your felony conviction?

Honesty is the best policy here. Describe, very briefly, what happened. Explain that you made a mistake and that you have paid your debt. If you took courses or learned a trade while incarcerated, mention that and other efforts you undertook to better yourself. Explain that that part of your past is behind you and will not affect your ability to perform well for this employer. Ask for a chance to prove it.

(Quintessential Careers, n.d., behavioral_interviewing.html)

Questions You Might Ask in an Interview

While, as the job applicant, the interview is mostly about you, you are also ‘interviewing’ the employer because it’s important for both of you to learn about the other and for you to know as much as possible about the organization. Some of the questions below might in differing situations be helpful to both you and the employer.

The Job

- Is this a new position, or am I replacing someone?
- If this is a new position, why was it created?
- What specific skills are necessary to succeed in this job? Are there any special demands?
- Are there specific challenges an employee would face in this position?
- Would you please describe the person who would best fit the job and company?
- Do you have anything to add to the job description that was advertised?
- If I am hired, what tasks would you like for me to accomplish first
- Does the job require travel? If so, how much?
- What is a typical work day like in this position?
- How much autonomy would I have in making decisions?
- How much input would I have in determining objectives and deadlines.
- How do you measure an employee’s performance and provide feedback?
- How does an employee know he or she is performing to expectations outside of formal reviews?

The Workplace

- How would you describe your management style?
- How would you describe the working environment?
- Who would be my immediate supervisor, and where does he or she fit into the organization?
- Who would be my direct reports and/or how many would I have?
- How would you describe my potential co-workers as a group?

At Interview’s Conclusion:

- Is there anything else I should know?
- Is there anything else you’d like to know?
- Do you have any feedback for me?
- Do you have any concerns? What can I do to alleviate them?
- When may I expect to hear from you again?

You are the best judge of which of these questions are appropriate and which are not. Remember: the employer will appreciate you asking questions that reflect an active interest in joining and benefiting the organization.

Five Best Things to Say in an Interview

By Catherine Conlan
Monster Contributing Writer

The best things you can say in an interview won't necessarily get you the job, but they can certainly pave the way. Keep these five things in mind as you go through the interviewing process to give yourself the best chance at landing the job.

Ask Good Questions

According to Howard Pines, founder and CEO of BeamPines, "the best thing a candidate can do at an interview is ask good questions."

Doing so shows that you are thoughtful and interested in understanding the company. There's usually a chance to ask questions at the end of your interview, so be ready with questions that show you're engaged in the process.

Pines suggests several questions, including:

- What are the biggest short- and long-term issues I would need to focus on in this position?
- What would I need to focus on differently than the previous person in this position?
- What organizational issues should I be aware of?

"I'm Flexible."

Whether it's about possible job duties, a potential start date or simply timing for the second interview, stressing your flexibility makes you easy to get along with.

Hiring managers don't like complications, and having to coordinate complicated schedules or haggle over a job description eventually just makes you look difficult. While you certainly don't want to be a pushover, show your potential employer that you're interested in results that work for everyone.

The Company's Own Words

Before your interview, become familiar with the company's website and literature. Pay attention to the words used --what's important to the organization?

"In your interview, hit key words that appeared on the company website or brochure," says Olivia Ford of Adeptio. "These key words might include team, leadership, simplistic, culture or growth."

Mixing these keywords into your answers can provide a subtle hint that you are plugged in to what the organization is looking for.

“That’s a Good Question.”

Use this phrase instead of blurting out “I don’t know” if the interviewer stumps you with a surprise question. It can give you a few moments to come up with an answer and, in the meantime, strokes the interviewer’s ego a little bit too. Avoid the “I don’t know” answer when possible, but of course don’t lie about your experience or training.

Reasons You Want the Job.

Knowing a job prospect’s motivations is important for managers who are hiring.

During your interview, talk about how this position fits into your future plans and the ideas you have about your career, how it fits with your values and what you would like to learn from it. Talk about how you see yourself in relation to the company and what you believe you can bring to the position.

These kinds of thoughts show who you are as a person and go a long way toward giving the hiring manager an idea about how you might fit in the company’s culture and values.

Finding the Right Way to Disclose a Disability

By Suzanne Robitaille,
The Wall Street Journal

Disclosing a disability is a personal decision but can be beneficial if done right. Only you can decide whether — and when — to tell your new employer about your disability. Disclosing a condition can help protect your legal rights but can also leave you open to discrimination. Still, experts say you're better off giving management a heads-up. Here are a few different approaches to disclosure:

Know the company. Before you even apply for a job, you can scope out a firm and its culture. Some companies have disability-friendly reputations, which can help quell fears about revealing your condition. Check out NBDC (business-disability.com) and the National Organization on Disability's (nod.org) membership lists, or ask the company for a list of employee networks and scan for one related to disabilities. Those networks and groups can be critical. KPMG LLP's disabilities network, for example, offers employees resources, tools, advice and counsel for living with a disability or caring for someone who has one. You also can ask colleagues and friends or search Internet groups for insights into corporate culture.

Choose the time. Don't reveal your disability on your resume or in a cover letter unless there is a direct relevance to the job. The best time to disclose to a hiring manager is during the first or second interview, once you have had a chance to demonstrate your skills and competency, says Lana Smart, director of corporate services for the National Business and Disability Council, a network of more than 100 U.S. companies that seeks to integrate people with disabilities into the workplace. At that point, you will be able to respond positively to specific disability issues that may be raised. "Discrimination is less likely face-to-face," Ms. Smart says.

Tell someone you trust. If you've waited until you've had a chance to prove yourself before disclosing your condition, you should seek out a trusted colleague, mentor or boss you get along well with to make the revelation. Dana Foote, an audit partner at KPMG's Omaha, Neb., office, who has multiple sclerosis, says she put off disclosure for three months until she started having symptoms. "At that point I trusted my boss, and he knew I was a good worker so it wasn't a big deal," says Ms. Foote.

Get accommodated. Your rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act to "reasonable accommodations" to perform your job aren't protected until you've disclosed your disability, says Judy Young, a vice president for Abilities Inc. "As soon as you realize you need an accommodation, you should tell someone," says Ms. Young, who has counseled Fortune 500 companies on hiring people with disabilities.

Join a network. Participating in a disability employee group lets you reap the benefits of a company's disability resources. This is a good option if you don't want to reveal the scope of a disability, but want to know your options and make connections, says Barbara Wankoff, KPMG's national director of workplace relations. A support network can help you find others facing similar situations and gain the courage to speak up — a move that may help your career in the long run, Ms. Wankoff says.

Practice Interview Evaluation

Did the Applicant:	Needs to Improve	Good	Great
Smile?			
Appear neat and clean?			
Introduce self?			
Shake hands?			
Address employer by name?			
Have good eye contact?			
Respond well to questions?			
Ask good questions?			
Exhibit enthusiasm about working?			
Appear to have a positive attitude?			
Overall Comments:			

What I'll Do to Improve My Interviewing:

Thank You and Follow-Up Activity

Soon after your interview -- the next day is best -- a thank-you letter may be emailed, typed or neatly written on stationery or a pre-printed 'thank you' card. The letter should state your continued interest in the job, your appreciation of the time spent with you during the interview and no more than one or two 'selling points' you might add as a candidate for the job.

6200 Waverly Street
Burlington, NC 27215

September 30, 2014

Mr. Mark J. Raynard
General Manager
Johnson Electronics, Inc.
230 Washington Avenue
Greensboro, NC 27408

Dear Mr. Raynard

Thank you for considering me for the position of electronics technician. I am very impressed with Johnson Electronics, Inc. and especially the enthusiasm your employees have for their jobs.

Thank you again for your time and interest. I am happy to provide further information if needed. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Mark Anderson

Mark Anderson

After the Interview:

- Send a thank-you note within 48 hours.
- Be prepared with references.
- Be prepared for a second interview if needed.
- Be prepared to discuss an offer or call to start work
- Unless you are asked to contact the employer at a specific time, follow up by phone or email within 10-14 days of the interview.

The '15 Commandments' of the Workplace

- 1. Be on time,** whether in showing up for work, returning from breaks, going to meetings or turning in assignments. Call in if you know you will be late or absent. Most companies treat absences or tardiness without notice much more seriously than simple absence or tardiness.
- 2. Follow the rules.** The rules are there to give the greatest number of people the best chance of working together well to achieve success.
- 3. Show a positive attitude.** No one wants to be around someone who is a 'downer.'
- 4. Be a problem-solver.** Anticipate problems and needs of management. Your bosses will be grateful, even if they do not show it.
- 5. Distinguish yourself.** Choose one or more of your job duties to improve and develop excellence. Become known as the 'go-to' person. Managers will remember you favorably. Look for opportunities to serve customers and help co-workers.
- 6. Take pride in your work** and show pride in yourself — but maintain your humility. Try your best. Always finish an assignment, no matter how much you would rather be doing something else.
- 7. Don't be afraid to ask for help.** It's a sign of a willingness to learn what you don't know.
- 8. Volunteer for training and new assignments.** Take a close look at people in your organization who are 'moving up.' They are the ones who have shown themselves to be willing to do undesirable assignments or take on new duties.
- 9. Never say 'that's not my job.'** Many, if not most, managers earned their positions by doing work turned down by co-workers who were in the habit of saying that, and they appreciate employees who help get the job done.
- 10. Be a good team member.** Constantly focusing on what makes you different from others — instead of how you fit into the company team — makes you look like someone who puts themselves first.

11. Show respect toward others. Never utter minority-related slurs or other derogatory terms. Use of such terms perpetuates undesirable stereotypes and offends others. It also tends to make others doubt your maturity and competence.

12. Avoid backstabbing, office gossip and spreading rumors. Joining in the office gossip may seem like the easy thing to do, but almost everyone has much more respect and trust for people who do not spread stories.

13. Avoid the impulse to criticize your boss or the company. It is easy to find things wrong with others. It is much harder, but more rewarding, to find constructive ways to deal with problems. Employees who are known for their good attitude and helpful suggestions are the ones most often remembered at performance evaluation time.

14. Avoid the temptation to criticize your company, co-workers or customers on the Internet. Social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and blogs offer many opportunities to vent. Just assume that anyone in the world can view what you put online and that employers may be able to take action against any employee whose online actions hurt the company or its business.

15. Continue to build and maintain your career network.

(Adapted from <http://www.texasworkforce.org/news/tbt/tbt0809.pdf> & <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/efte/tocmain2.html>)

Your Employment Rights

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or sex.

The law also makes it illegal to retaliate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit.

The law also requires that employers reasonably accommodate applicants' and employees' sincerely held religious practices, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business.

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation and telecommunications. Under the Act, an individual with a disability is defined as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such impairment.

Title I of the ADA relates to employment. It requires employers with 15 or more employees to provide qualified individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from the full range of employment-related opportunities available to others. Therefore it prohibits employers from discrimination on the basis of disability in recruitment, hiring, promotions, training, pay, social activities and other privileges of employment.

Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act requires affirmative action and prohibits employment discrimination by federal agencies of the executive branch.

If you feel your rights have been violated under any of these acts, you are urged to contact the nearest office of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC.)

The EEOC Charlotte District Office has jurisdiction over the State of North Carolina.

EEOC District Office

129 West Trade St.
Charlotte, NC 28202

Phone: 1-800-669-4000 | Fax: 704-954-6410 or 704-344-6734 | TTY: 1-800-669-6820

<http://www.eeoc.gov/field/charlotte/index.cfm>

You may also contact one of these offices:

Raleigh Area EEOC

Fayetteville St., Suite 700
Raleigh, NC 27601-1701
Phone: 1-800-669-4000
Fax: 919-856-4151
TTY: 1-800-669-6820

<http://www.eeoc.gov/field/raleigh/index.cfm>

Greensboro Area EEOC

2303 W. Meadowview Rd.
Greensboro, NC 27407
Phone: 1-800-669-4000
Fax: 336-547-4032
TTY: 1-800-669-6820

<http://www.eeoc.gov/field/greensboro/index.cfm>

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State of North Carolina | Pat McCrory, Governor
Department of Health and Human Services | Richard O. Brajer, Secretary
www.ncdhhs.gov

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