CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

JobVision:

Your Guide to Future Employment

6th Edition

Job Vision - Your Guide to Future Employment
6th Edition, Winter 2009

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Your First Step:

Who Am I?

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Your First Step:

Who Am I?

The Basics

The first step in a successful job search is **a thorough assessment of yourself** - your skills and interests.

Why bother? With this information you will be able to **identify and research opportunities, write an effective resume and cover letter, know what you have to offer an employer** and **handle an interview with confidence.**

Research

Some Questions to Consider:

What is important to me?

Examples:	leadership	security
	continued learning	responsibility
	creative activities	challenge
	helping others	money

What are my personality strengths?

Examples:	enthusiasm	honesty
	self-confidence	initiative
	dependability	resourcefulness
	persistence	hardworking

What kind of work environment do I want?

Examples:	in an office	in an industrial setting
	outdoors	

What type of work do I want?

Examples:	clerical	scientific
	creative	social service
	manual	serving the public
	technical	enterprising

Develop Your Skills Inventory

Action

It is important to identify yourself to potential employers in a way that is relevant to them. Employers want to know what you can do for their company based on your accomplishments, education and training, your work experience, your knowledge and abilities. In other words, **why should they hire you?** Integral to all this is knowing what your **skills** are.

A guide to building a Skills Inventory:

Think about **Outcomes**:

· Past accomplishments
· What you did, how you did it, why you did it, what the results were, what you learned

Think about **Transferable Skills**. These are skills that may have been developed through your academic background, paid or volunteer work experience and extra curricular activities. Transferable skills can be used in any setting:

· Writing	· Presentation	· Budgeting
· Communication	· Decision-making	· Training
· Teamwork	· Goal setting	· Problem solving
· Leadership	· Motivating	· Time management
· Interpersonal	· Scheduling	· Organization

A more exhaustive list of transferable skills is available on page 20.

Think about **Self-Management Skills** (rooted in attitude and behaviour) such as:

· Honesty	· Adaptability	· Assertiveness
· Responsibility	· Integrity	· Ethics
· Initiative	· Humour	· Self confidence

Think about **Specific Work Content Skills** (related to your field) such as:

· Computer/software	· Baking	· Laboratory work
· Accounting	· Nursing	· Translation
· Waste management	· Graphic design	· System analysis

What Are Employers Looking For?

Research

So what do employers want? Recent employer surveys conducted by various organizations indicate that recruiters seek the following skills, regardless of the position or the work environment:

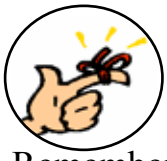
Initiative/self-directed and motivated
Interpersonal abilities
Written and verbal communication skills
General competence with software applications (i.e. word processing, spreadsheets, etc..)
Teamwork
Organization
Analysis and problem solving/thinking skills
Flexibility and adaptability
Time management
Accountability
Continuous learning

Find more information on the skills that employers seek at these sites:
www.makingcareersense.org
www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/general/home.shtml

A Few Interesting Links About Self Assessment…

Cybersearch

www.conferenceboard.ca/education/learning-tools/employability-skills.htm
www.quintcareers.com/transferable_skills.html
www.jobsetc.ca/toolbox/quizzes/quizzes_home.do?lang=e
careerpathsonline.com/employment-options.cfm
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/youjob/
careerplanning.about.com/od/selfassessment/Self_Assessment.htm
www.rileyguide.com/assess.html
assessment.monster.ca/
www.nextsteps.org/career/selfex.html


Remember

You have to know who you are and what skills you have to offer before you can sell yourself to a potential employer.

Get Informed:

Research! Research! Research!

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Get Informed:

Research! Research! Research!

Now that you have completed your self-assessment you probably have a good idea of which industry or field you are interested in. You now have to investigate these areas and **researching** here is key.

The Basics

The more you know about your industry the more you'll know about the options and opportunities out there and how to get them.

Remember too that you will be expected to know and speak about your field and the position you are looking for when you meet with employers.

Some Things You Need To Know

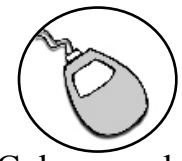
Research

· What entry-level positions are available in my field?
· What are the key trends and issues in this field?
· In what direction is the industry headed?
· What are the current events? Important past events? Future events?
· What companies belong to this industry? Develop a target list of 15-20 companies.
· What is the starting salary range and earning potential?
· What skills are needed in this profession or industry?

Sources

There are many places you can look for this information:
· Internet
· Books and other literature on careers and training programs
· News items, job ads, magazine articles, etc.
· Professional associations
· Library reference section
· Yellow Pages
· Business/trade/professional directories
· Government publications (labour market information, job profiles etc.)
· Annual reports, press releases, company brochures, etc.
· Career and job fairs

Using The Internet As Your Source For Research


Cybersearch

You will find great online resources at Centennial College's Learning Resource Centre (**www.lrc.centennialcollege.ca**). The following web sites can also help you with your research.

Industry Profiles or Professional Associations:

ic.gc.ca/
www.careekey.com/links.htm#top (US site)
www.councils.org
www.amcdirectory.com/contact/associations/index.shtml
www.charityvillage.com/cv/nonpr/profas.asp

Occupational Profiles:

www.ontariojobfutures.net
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/career/descrip.html
www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/
www.skillsontario.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=41&Itemid=55&lang=en

Labour Market Information:

jobfutures.ca
www.labourmarketinformation.ca/
www.onwin.ca
www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/on/lmi/llmi.shtml

Lists of companies in your field:

www.yellowpages.ca/searchBusiness.do
www.ic.gc.ca/
www.globeinvestor.com/series/top1000

Company web site identification through various search engines:

www.google.ca
www.yahoo.ca
www.sympatico.ca
ca.msn.com

Company profiles and job description research on job search web sites:

www.workopoliscampus.com
company.monster.ca
www.workopolis.com

Articles, press releases and annual reports on specific companies:

www.marketwire.com
www.newswire.ca
globeinvestor.ar.wilink.com
canadianbusiness.com

Informational Interviews

The Basics

Sometimes the best information comes first-hand. This means having an informal meeting with an individual who works in your field to talk to them about their job and the industry in general. This could include friends, relatives, teachers, former employers or co-workers, members of social groups and people who work for some of the companies that you have found while researching. You are not expecting these people to give you a job but to provide you with honest answers to your questions.

Star Move

Even though the thought of meeting with someone you don't know well or do not know at all is a daunting one, informational interviews are very effective in researching career options and job opportunities. An informational interview is also your first step to successful **networking**, a skill that is highly valuable to the job search process. It also gives you direct contact with a potential employer who may remember you when a position comes up.

What you'll get out of it:

· First-hand, current information about the industry
· Exposure to people who may be in a position to offer you a job
· Tips on how to break into the field
· Candid opinions about the job or industry
· First-hand observation of the working environment
· Practice networking skills
· Make new contacts

Action

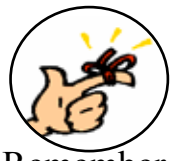
How to do it:

1. Make a list of the people you want to meet with and gather their contact information. The previous research you have done on specific companies comes in handy here.
2. Prepare a script introducing yourself, who referred you to them (if anyone), the nature of your call and a request for the interview. Do not read your script - it is just a guideline. Try to be natural. See page 51 for sample scripts.
3. Take the list of questions you have prepared with you to the interview and be prepared to answer questions about yourself and your interest in the field.
4. Bring a copy of your resume with you in case your contact asks for it. Do not offer it, as you are there for information only, not to ask for a job.

5. Listen attentively and take notes.
6. Ask for the names of anyone else who may be able to assist you in the same way.
7. Thank the person for his/her time and inquire if you may contact them in the future.
8. Always follow-up with a thank you letter. See sample on page 75.

Star Move

If you continue to do this for a period of time not only will you gain crucial information but you will also build up a good **network** of contacts for your future job search and you may just find yourself in the right place at the right time.

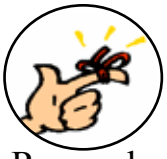

Remember

You will get refusals but try not to be discouraged. Stay positive and continue your efforts. You will find people who are receptive and willing to help.

Sample Informational Interview Questions

Research

· What is the best educational background for this type of position?
· How did you get your job? What jobs and experiences have led you to your present position?
· Can you suggest some ways a student could obtain this necessary experience?
· What do you like most about your job?
· Can you tell me about a typical day/month?
· What is a typical career path in this field?
· From your perspective, what are the problems you see working in this field?
· What changes do you see in the future for this particular industry?
· Based on what I have told you about my interests, strengths and qualifications, do you think this industry would be a good fit for me?
· With the information you have about my education, skills, and experience, what other fields or jobs would you suggest I research further before I make a final decision?
· Why did you decide to work for this company?
· What do you like most about this company?
· What can you tell me about the corporate culture?
· How does your company differ from its competitors?


Remember

Always thank your contacts for any assistance they provide. Remember that they are taking time out of their busy schedules to help you.

A Few Interesting Links About Informational Interviewing…

Cybersearch

www.quintcareers.com/informational_interviewing.html
jobsearch.about.com/od/infointerviews/Informational_Interviews.htm
www.jobsetc.ca/content_pieces.jsp?category_id=420&lang=e
www.canadiancareers.com/infointerview.html

A Few Interesting Links For Salary Information...

www.salaryexpert.com
www.jobfutures.ca/
salary.monster.ca/
www.canadiancareers.com/salary.html

Market Yourself:

The Tools You Need

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Market Yourself:

The Tools You Need

The Resume

What is a resume anyway? Students most often answer, "Well, I guess it's a list of my past jobs and education." In fact it is much more than just a list of your past jobs.

The Basics

Your resume is a *marketing piece about you*. Think of your resume as an *advertisement of your skills*. The employer is buying your skills so ensure that your resume clearly outlines what you can do.

In today's competitive job market employers will compare your resume to many others to determine who they will interview. On average the initial resume review is done in **30 seconds**. It is therefore important that you include pertinent information that will be of immediate interest to the employer.

What to Include

Action

Contact Information

· Include your name, address (permanent and temporary, if necessary), telephone numbers (only list numbers that have voice mail capability) and e-mail address.
· If you have designed your own web site, you may include your URL. Make sure that the content of your web site is professional and error-free.
· Do not include personal data such as social insurance number, age, sex or marital status.

Career/Job Objective

· This is a brief statement (one or two lines) that indicates the type of employment/career that you hope to pursue.
· Your objective must be customized to the position that you are seeking.
· It may also be included in your cover letter instead of in your resume.

Education and Training

· Include the name of your degree/diploma, the name of the institution, the location of the institution (city and province only) and the dates attended.
· You may list 4 to 6 applicable courses as well as major projects. Your projects should be outlined in 1 or 2 lines.
· You may include your Grade Point average (GPA) if desired.
· You may include your High School Diploma if you have recently graduated, if you were part of a special high school program or if you graduated from a recognized institution.

Work Experience

· Include permanent, part-time, volunteer and other relevant positions.
· Volunteer positions and co-op or field placements can also be listed under a separate heading if necessary.
· State your job title, date of employment and name and location of your employer(s).
· Use short phrases to describe achievements, skills and knowledge obtained in this position.
· Use action verbs and qualify and quantify your achievements wherever possible, e.g. "Professionally handled 200+ customer service queries on a daily basis"

Specialized Skills

· Highlight computer skills. Be sure to include all hardware and software programs.
· Note language skills. Indicate if you are fluent in a foreign language e.g. written and oral skills.
· Highlight special training e.g. First Aid, CPR and other certifications.

Awards and Special Accomplishments

· List all academic awards, special distinctions and noted honors. Provide an explanation of the award or distinction if it is not self-evident.
· Describe any special accomplishments that were not included in a previous section.

Activities and Interests (within the last five years)

· List participation in clubs and professional organizations.
· Include volunteer experience unless it is previously mentioned.
· List non-controversial interests, particularly those relating to your field.

References

· A reference notation such as Available On Request is optional.
· Omitting your reference names on your resume will ensure that your references will not be bothered with unnecessary phone calls.

Possible Resume Headings

There are many possible resume headings. Choose those that make the most sense for your background and experience.

Action

Career Goal, Career Objective, Employment Objective, Goals, Objective, Position Desired

Personal Profile, Professional Qualifications, Qualifications, Highlights of Qualifications, Profile Summary

Academic Background, Academic Training, Education, Educational Background, Professional Education, Additional Education, Additional Training, Other Education, Professional Development, Special Training, Certifications, Licenses, Courses of Interest, Related Courses, Career Related Courses, Major Academic Projects

Employment, Experience, Other Employment, Other Experience, Professional Background, Professional Experience, Related Experience, Relevant Experience, Work Experience, Internship Experience, Practicum Experience, Experience Highlights, Field Experience, Summer Work Experience

Acquired Skills, Additional Skills, Career-Related Skills, Computer Skills, Computer-Related Skills, Areas of Expertise, Areas of Knowledge, Special Skill(s), Language Competencies, Language Abilities

Affiliations, Associations, Conferences Attended, Conferences/ Conventions, Memberships, Papers Presented, Presentations, Professional Associations, Professional Memberships, Publications and Conference Papers

Special Recognition, Academic Honors, Scholarships and Awards, Awards, Achievements

Travel Abroad, Studies Abroad, Overseas Travel, Foreign Experience, International Experience, Overseas Studies, Foreign Studies

Activities, Activities and Interests, Community Involvement, Community Service, Extracurricular Activities, Interests, Leisure Activities, Professional and Community Activities, Related Activities, Special Interests, Volunteer Activities, Volunteer Experience

Focus on Transferable Skills

Star Move

Transferable skills are those that can be taken from job to job and from industry to industry. When you describe what you've done in your past jobs, instead of speaking about your non-related duties, speak about the skills you used when carrying out those duties. For example, would an employer rather read that you made cappuccinos at the coffee shop or that you provided friendly and efficient customer service? Likely, you will not be able to use your expertise with the latte machine as a Junior Account Manager, nor will the potential employer be interested in this experience. But your customer service skills will be of utmost importance.

Here are a few more examples of transferable skills for you to think about:

Communication
· Explain and clarify concepts to clients
· Write effective correspondence

Think and Solve Problems
· Research and resolve customer issues and problems
· Read, analyze and assess information
· Think critically and act logically to evaluate situations and take action

Working With Others
· Effectively worked as part of a team
· Contribute ideas and information to the group
· Interact with people of various backgrounds and ages

Organization and Management
· Prioritize and handle multiple tasks simultaneously
· Coordinate department work flow
· Plan and organize all aspects of department events
· Ensure timely delivery of projects

Information Management
· Set up and maintained information filing systems
· Maintain internal record keeping systems
· Maintain sales records and prepare reports

Customer Service
· Successfully meet customer needs as per organization's policies
· Established and maintain customer base
· Answer client inquiries and provide information

Resume Verbs

Star Move

When describing your on-the-job accomplishments and skills start each phrase with a descriptive action verb like the ones below. Do not start your points with “Duties included” or “Responsible for”.

Management Skills

Administered	Coordinated	Improved	Produced
Analyzed	Delegated	Increased	Recommended
Assigned	Developed	Oversaw	Reviewed
Attained	Directed	Planned	Scheduled
Consolidated	Evaluated	Prioritized	Supervised

Research Skills

Clarified	Examined	Interpreted	Reviewed
Collected	Identified	Interviewed	Summarized
Critiqued	Inspected	Investigated	Surveyed

Technical Skills

Assembled	Designed	Maintained	Remodeled
Built	Devised	Operated	Repaired
Calculated	Engineered	Overhauled	Solved
Computed	Fabricated	Programmed	Upgraded

Teaching Skills

Advised	Developed	Explained	Instructed
Clarified	Enabled	Facilitated	Persuaded
Coached	Encouraged	Guided	Set goals
Communicated	Evaluated	Informed	Trained

Creative Skills

Conceptualized	Developed	Illustrated	Invented
Created	Directed	Initiated	Originated
Customized	Established	Integrated	Planned
Designed	Founded	Introduced	Revitalized

Clerical or Detail Skills

Approved	Compiled	Monitored	Recorded
Arranged	Executed	Organized	Retrieved
Catalogued	Generated	Prepared	Screened
Classified	Implemented	Processed	Tabulated
Collected	Inspected	Purchased	Validated

Communication Skills

Addressed	Corresponded	Influenced	Negotiated
Arbitrated	Drafted	Interpreted	Persuaded
Authored	Edited	Mediated	Promoted
Collaborated	Formulated	Moderated	Wrote

Which Format to Use

The Basics

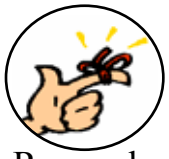
As in any advertisement, it's not just what you say, but how you say it. Why do some ads jump out at you? Think of what factors persuade you to read more - layout, style and size of the print, use of white space, etc. The same principles apply to your resume. The way the information is presented is as important as the words themselves.

Combination Resume
This format includes elements from both the chronological and the functional resumes (below). Although it maintains a chronological format, relevant skills, knowledge and experience can also be highlighted throughout the resume. Main headings may include: Summary of Qualifications, Education, Major Academic Projects, Related Experience, Other Experience, Technical Skills, Community Involvement and others. This the preferred resume format as it can be tailored to emphasize specific skills while still maintaining the reverse chronological structure that employers like.

Functional or Skill Based Resume
This format emphasizes the most relevant skills and qualifications that can be drawn from education, work experience and extracurricular involvement. Skills are usually grouped according to the position sought. An employment history, in reverse chronological order, is also provided but without a description of accomplishments for each job. Job seekers who have gaps in their employment history or individuals who have limited experience in the targeted field often use this format.

Chronological Resume
This format emphasizes dates. Employment and education histories are listed in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent information and working backwards in time. Main headings include: Objective, Education, Employment, Activities and Interests. This format does not focus on skills and may make unrelated jobs and gaps in experience obvious.

See pages 24, 26 and 28 for a sample resume of each format.


Remember

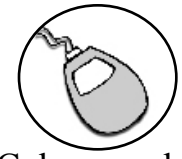
Whatever format you choose, make sure your resume is organized, easy to read, consistent and free of errors.

Other Resume Tips:

Star Move

· Choose a format that is easy to read and organized
· Make sure the format you choose is consistent throughout the resume
· Don't use more than two font styles
· Use a font size of 10 or 12
· Print your resume on quality paper of a neutral colour (white, off-white, light grey etc.)
· Limit your resume to two pages. Any longer and it becomes a chore to read
· Emphasize your skills by using **resume verbs**
· Use precise point form statements starting each point with a resume verb
· Focus on your accomplishments/skills, not your duties
· Use buzzwords and phrases mentioned in the job posting/description
· Make sure your resume contains absolutely no typing, spelling or grammatical errors
· Use underlining, bold or capitals to enhance certain important information (diplomas, job titles, etc.)
· Avoid the use of italics
· Include your name and phone number on all pages
· Do not use coporate logos on your resume (it is illegal)
· Do not use corrective liquid or make handwritten changes
· Use a high quality printer
· Be truthful but without underselling yourself
· Have several versions of your resume specifically targeting different positions
· Ensure that your resume is visually appealing with the most critical information standing out and quickly identifiable by the employer
· Always tailor your resume to the specific job

A Few Interesting Links About Resumes...


Cybersearch

www.workopoliscampus.com (click on Resources Centre)
resume.monster.ca/
www.jobsetc.ca
www.jobstar.org/tools/resume/index.cfm
jobsearch.about.com/od/sampleresumes/a/sampleresume2.htm
www.rileyguide.com/resprep.html
www.canadiancareers.com/resume.html

Sample Combination Resume

Career/Job Objective
A brief statement (one or two lines) indicating the type of employment or career sought and your potential contribution to the employer. It must be customized to the position that you are seeking. It may also be included in your cover letter instead of on your resume.

PAT M. SMITH
1234 College Street, Toronto, Ontario M4C 1Z1
Residence: (416) 123-4567 Messages: (416) 111-9999
psmith@centennialcollege.ca

CAREER OBJECTIVE

A position in sales and marketing where my customer service experience, technical knowledge and communication abilities will be useful in managing accounts and acquiring new clientele.

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Four years of experience in customer service related positions
- Knowledge of marketing principles and theories
- Skilled at identifying and soliciting new clients
- Proficient in Word, WordPerfect, Excel and Lotus Notes
- Sound leadership skills and strong communication abilities
- High energy, dynamic and achievement-oriented individual

Highlights, Summary or Profile of Qualifications
A summary of the main qualifications that you have to offer the employer. This summary may include experience, knowledge or skills related to the position in question.

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

Sales Representative — **ABC Computer Outlet**
Toronto, Ontario (2000 to present)

- Assess client's needs and recommend the appropriate goods or services
- Professionally and courteously serve over 50 clients daily
- Assist in the display of merchandise
- Demonstrate excellent product knowledge
- Continuously promote after-sale services (product warranty, maintenance, etc..)
- Received "Employee of the Month" award for three consecutive months

Customer Service Representative — **The Kitchen Store**
Scarborough, Ontario (1998-2000)

- Greeted customers and discussed the type, quality and quantity of merchandise sought for purchase or rental
- Prepared sales contracts and accepted cash, credit card or automatic debit payment
- Assisted with inventory verification and product ordering
- Demonstrated excellent communication and presentation skills

Related Work Experience
Related jobs are listed in reverse chronological order. The focus is not on the positions and/or employers. Responsibilities and skills are clearly noted, using action verbs and achievements are qualified and quantified wherever possible.

Telemarketing Clerk — **Telephone Sales Inc.**
Toronto, Ontario (Summers 1996, 1997 and 1998)

- Generated over $10 000 in subscriptions and product sales each summer
- Prepared and administered sales contracts
- Answered inquiries and provided information

Contact Information
This information should be reproduced on both pages

PAT M. SMITH **/2**

Residence: (416) 123-4567 Messages: (416) 111-9999

Other Experience
Non-related positions are listed in this section to account for periods of time or to demonstrate work experience in general. Skills pertinent to the position sought can be noted if necessary. Specific duties are not usually mentioned as they are unrelated to the desired position.

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Security Guard **Toronto Security Services**
Toronto, Ontario (1997-1998)

- Answered inquiries and provided general information to visitors
- Performed administrative duties according to established procedures
- Maintained composure and professionalism under pressure

EDUCATION

Marketing Diploma **Centennial College**
Toronto, Ontario (1998-2001)

Relevant courses included:

Operations Management	Personal Selling
Introduction to Retailing	Direct Response Marketing
Marketing Analysis	Sales Management

Education
Focus is on the diploma/ degree pursued. Courses and academic projects can also be highlighted

Major Academic Projects

- Analyzed various sales management problems and developed creative solutions
- Developed scripts for prospecting new clients
- Thoroughly researched a particular product and facilitated a sales presentation

Ontario Secondary School Diploma **Sir John Smith**
Toronto, Ontario (1993-1998)

Additional Information
Includes general information that does not need to be prominently featured. Sub-headings will vary according to position and industry.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Affiliations Canadian Professional Sales Association (2001-present)

Computer Skills MS Office, Internet and various E-mail programs

Interests Tennis, Badminton, Movies and Gardening

REFERENCES

Available Upon Request

References
This caption is not mandatory. References are never included in a resume. If required for an application process, they should be listed on a separate page and provided as a separate document.

Sample Functional Resume

Objective (optional)
A brief statement (one or two lines) indicating the type of employment you are pursuing. It must be customized to the position you are seeking.

PAT M. SMITH
123 Corner Street Toronto, Ontario M1T 1T1
Residence: (416) 123-4567 Cellular : (416) 222-5555
E-mail : patsmith@e-mail.com

OBJECTIVE
To obtain a position in a residential facility that assists youths in successfully reconnecting with their community.

Relevant Skills Section
This format emphasizes most relevant skills and qualifications that can be drawn from education, employment or extracurricular involvement.

RELEVANT SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Intervention Skills

- Experience working with families, schools and other service providers
- Demonstrated crisis prevention and intervention skills
- Understanding principles of harm reduction
- Skilled at providing information, counselling and referrals to young adults in distress
- Experience in assessing situations and providing appropriate solutions

Casework Management and Administrative Skills

- Worked collaboratively with numerous social workers to establish individualized case management plans
- Ensured compliance with all operational procedures and legislative policies
- Maintained follow-up services and support after discharge
- Referred individuals to appropriate community services as necessary
- Assisted with the planning and supervision of the daily activities of the residence
- Proficient with WordPerfect and Word, familiar with spreadsheet packages

Interpersonal Skills

- Accountability, flexibility and professionalism in performing all duties
- Demonstrated interpersonal and communication (both oral and written) skills
- Displayed sound decision-making and the ability to resolve conflicts sensitively and respectfully

WORK EXPERIENCE

Youth Service Worker
ABC House, Toronto, Ontario Summer 2003

Administrative Assistant
The Admin Group, Mississauga, Ontario 2000-2002

Work History
An employment history, in reverse chronological order, is also provided. Dates can be provided on the right hand side to remove the focus on on time periods.

Contact Information
The information should be reproduced on both pages.

PAT M. SMITH
Residence: (416) 123-4567 Cellular : (416) 222-5555

Education and Training
Relevant courses can be mentioned to display specific knowledge, if appropriate.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING
Correctional Worker Diploma
Centennial College, Toronto, Ontario 2002-present
Expected Date of Graduation: April 2004

Relevant courses include:

Client Care	Interpersonal Skill Development
Security Skills	Community Resources and Corrections
Group Dynamics	Criminal Justice System

Certification in First Aid and CPR
St. John's Ambulance, Toronto, Ontario Fall 2002

Ontario Secondary School Diploma
Sir John Smith, Mississauga, Ontario 1997-2002

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
Volunteer
Street Helpline, Toronto, Ontario 2001-present

Volunteer
First Night Festival, Toronto, Ontario Winter, 2001-2002

Volunteer
The Toddler Day Care, Toronto, Ontario 1999-2001

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Computer Skills
Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint, Internet

Additional Headings
Additional sections supporting your skills and qualifications for the position in question can be added to the resume.

Languages
Fluent in English and French

Interests
Tennis, golf, cooking and reading

Excellent references available upon request

References
This caption is not mandatory. References are never included in a resume. If required for an application process, they should be listed on a separate page and provided as a separate document.

Sample Chronological Resume

Contact Information
Do not include any personal data such as date of birth, marital status, citizenship, etc..

PAT M. SMITH

1234 College Street, Toronto, Ontario M4C 1Z1
Residence: (416) 123-4567 Messages: (416) 111-9999
psmith@cencol.on.ca

Education
Focus is on the dates and diploma/program. Courses and academic projects can also be highlighted.

EDUCATION

2002-present
Network Specialist Post Graduate Diploma
Centennial College, Toronto, Ontario
Expected Date of Graduation: December 2003

1998-2001
Bachelor of Computer Science
University of Technical Sciences, Ottawa, Ontario

WORK EXPERIENCE

Summer 2002
Internet/Intranet/Network Technician
ABC Company, Toronto, Ontario

- Oversaw initial setup of server from conception to launch in a Windows Back Office Server environment
- Administered web site and LAN (capacity planning, performance tuning, upgrades and documentation)
- Provided training and technical support to users on the LAN
- Installed and configured firewall software for enhanced Internet/Intranet security
- Repaired, configured, set up and modified IBM compatible PC's and peripherals
- Maintained, installed and supported client PC's in a LAN environment
- Administered e-mail server (MS Exchange)
- Administered (File Transfer) FTP server

Work Experience
Jobs are listed in reverse chonological order and position title is highlighted. Responsibilities and skills are also clearly noted. Action verbs are used and achievements are qualified and quantified wherever possible.

September 2001 - May 2002
Customer Service Representative/Team Leader
123 Call Centre Ltd., Ottawa, Ontario

- Used a workstation running "G LINK" mainframe operating system in a LAN/WAN environment
- Professionally handled over 250 inbound and tracing calls per day
- Trained new and existing employees with new products and services
- Assisted customers with various queries.
- Efficiently solved various problematic scenarios
- Developed strong interpersonal and communication skills

Contact Information
This information should be reproduced on both pages.

PAT M. SMITH 2/2
1234 College Street, Toronto, Ontario M4C 1Z1
Residence: (416) 123-4567 Messages: (416) 111-9999

WORK EXPERIENCE CON'T

1997-1999 **Clerk**
Smith and Sons Ltd, Ottawa, Ontario

Specialized Skills
A section on skills specific to your field/ industry can also be added to this resume format.

- Used ACCPAC Order Entry software to warehouse and rotate equipment, parts and supplies
- Implemented a project/labor costing log using Lotus 123 version 2.0 which reduced staff overtime expenses by 30%
- Developed strong interpersonal and communication skills

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Networking: TCP/IP, OSI, Microsoft LAN Manager, Novell Netware, Internet, Ethernet, SNA, and LAN-WAN interconnection

Programming: C, C++, Visual BASIC, FORTRAN, Pascal, SQL, UNIX Shell Script, BASIC, Clipper, Algol 68, and 80X86 Assembler

Operating Systems: UNIX (bsd & SVr3/r4), MS Windows, MS DOS, MS Windows NT, Solaris, VAX/VMS, and Macintosh System 7

Applications: Microsoft Office including Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access, Microsoft Visual C++, Microsoft Project, Microsoft Publisher, Lotus 123, Lotus Freelance

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional Information
Includes general information that does not need to be prominently featured. Sub-headings will vary according to position and industry.

Special Training
Summer 2001 **Microsoft Certification**, Microsoft Institute, Toronto, Ontario
October 1999 **Customer Service Training**, 123 Call Centre Ltd., Ottawa, Ontario

Activities and Interests Golf, Reading, Running

EXCELLENT REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

References
This caption is not mandatory. References are never included in a resume. If required for an application process, they should be listed on a separate page and provided as a separate document.

Electronic and Scannable Resumes

Cybersearch

Many companies use technology to help them manage the multitude of resumes they receive. Often a resume is scanned or entered into a database where it is stored before it is even read. When an employer wants to look for a candidate they can just search their database using keywords, much the same way you might search for something on the Internet. It's a good idea to have a scannable or electronic version of your resume that can be easily read by the company's system.

Scannable or Electronic Resume - What's the Difference?

The Basics

Scannable Resume
A scannable resume is a resume created for scanning into an applicant or resume tracking system or resume database. Although your scannable resume can be a paper or electronic version (both, when done properly, can be successfully scanned and read by the applicant or resume tracking system), the term "scannable resume" usually refers to the paper version of your resume. The electronic (e-resume) version is usually known as your plain text resume.

E-resume
An e-resume is a scannable resume saved in an electronic format vs. a paper format. It is also known as a plain text resume (or ASCII Keyword Resume). An e-resume is generally first read by computers (applicant or resume tracking system or computer database) instead of by a person. While an e-resume can be printed and scanned, it is usually entered into the employer's database directly from its electronic format. The e-resume is used for online application purposes (e-mail, e-forms, web sites).

How to Prepare a Scannable Resume (Paper or Electronic)

Formatting

Warning

All the effort you have put into the formatting and layout of your traditional resume will be wasted when scanned and may even prevent your resume from being scanned successfully. Because you want your scannable resume to be easily read by the employer's computerized system you should strip your resume of all fancy formatting. This plain text format also ensures your resume will be electronically readable by the employer's computer system.

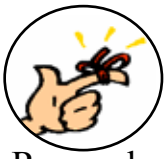
Action

Your first step should be to save a version of your resume as a plain text file instead of as a word processing (Word, WordPerfect) file. This will remove the formatting and special fonts. To do this using Microsoft Word follow these steps:

1. With your resume file open, click on 'Save As' under the 'File' menu
2. Type the file name in the 'File Name' box (e.g. Resumetext)
3. Select 'text only' under the drop-down box called 'Save as Type'
4. Click on 'Save'
5. Close your new document (e.g. Resumetext), but keep MS Word open
6. Go to 'File', 'Open' and locate your document (e.g. Resumetext)
7. Click 'Open'

This process will remove all formatting commands and may create some errors. You must therefore scroll through your resume and correct any errors and enhance the appearance of your resume, using these guidelines:

· Flush all text to the left for an easy-to-read format
· Do not use bold, italics, underlining, centering, indenting, boxes, bullets, graphics, columns or shading
· Do not use special fonts. Use sans serif fonts such as Arial or Helvetica in a font size of 10 to 14 points
· Use asterisks (*), plus signs (+) or dashes (-) instead of bullets
· Use capital letters instead of bold lettering or underlining
· Use dashes (-) instead of horizontal lines
· Use the space bar instead of the tab key for indenting
· Keep your resume to a maximum of 65 characters per line, which will accommodate most e-mail programs (when sending your resume)


Remember

Employers will expect you to have computer skills. Applying online or by e-mail shows you are up to speed with technology.

Make Sure It's Searchable

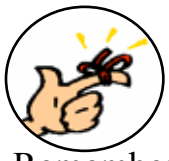
Star Move

Your resume is now scannable and readable by the applicant or resume tracking system. Your next step is to make sure that it is also searchable and that it can be retrieved during searches. You must therefore add a **Keyword Summary** to your resume. Basically, your scannable resume contains the same information as your traditional resume with an additional category called a Keyword Summary at the top or the bottom of your resume.

The Basics

Keywords are nouns that describe your skills and experience instead of the action verbs used in your traditional resume. These keywords will be crucial in increasing your chances of having your resume retrieved from the database. You must remember:

· Computers are programmed to search for nouns not verbs
· Your "Keyword Summary" can be up to 25 or 30 words
· Do not use abbreviations, unless previously explained in your resume
· Use industry buzzwords
· Your traditional resume sections follow or precede the Keyword Summary


Remember

If you aren't sure whether or not a company is scanning resumes try calling their Human Resources department and ask for their preferred resume format.

Sending Your Scannable Resume

Cybersearch

There are different ways of sending a scannable resume to an employer. You should always follow the instructions provided by each employer, as they may differ from the general guidelines provided in this booklet. If in doubt, contact the Human Resources department of the company in question and ask for clarification concerning their application process and procedures.

The Basics

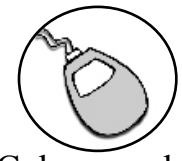
When sending a paper resume for scanning:
· Use a good quality printer (if possible laser printer)
· Always send original copies (do not fold or staple)
· Use white or a light-colored paper
· When faxing, use "detailed mode"
· When mailing, submit both a nicely formatted resume and a scannable version

When sending by e-mail:
· Include your cover letter and resume in the body of the e-mail
· Do not send attachments, unless specified
· Make sure that you've kept your resume to a maximum of 65 characters per line, which will accommodate most e-mail programs. Using more than 65 characters per line may affect your formatting and the employer will not be able to view your resume as you see it on your screen.
· Indicate the position title or reference number if given in the Subject heading

When completing a web form:

· Read the instructions carefully
· Follow all the guidelines mentioned on the web site. Web forms vary from company to company as well as from one job and resume database to the other.
· Be sure to complete all required fields
· You may be asked to enter your resume into a text box. Copy and paste your scannable or e-resume here. Scan through it and correct any improper line breaks.
· When uploading your resume to a job and resume database, keep in mind the potential drawbacks to your privacy and confidentiality.
    · Only post your resume on established services
    · Read their employer screening policies
    · Consider using code numbers and/or P.O. Box numbers instead of using your name and address

When to Use a Scannable or Electronic Resume


Cybersearch

It is becoming more prevalent for companies to use an applicant or resume tracking system to process applications, although it is not easy to determine who does and doesn't use these systems. It is best to have several versions of your resume: a traditional one to mail and fax, a formatted Word version to send as an attachment in an e-mail, and a plain text version to send via e-mail or paste into on-line applications on the Internet. Remember, if you are uncertain of which resume to use, contact the Human Resources department of the company and ask for clarification concerning their application process and procedures.

A Few Interesting Links About Electronic And Scannable Resumes...

Cybersearch

www.workopoliscampus.com (click on Resource Centre)
www.eresumes.com
www.careerperfect.com
www.rileyguide.com/eresume.html
resume.monster.ca/section1972.asp
jobsearchtech.about.com/od/resumewriting1/Writing_Electronic_Resumes.htm
www.quintcareers.com/e-resume_format.html
jobsearch.about.com/od/coverletters/Cover_Letters.htm
www.bestcoverletters.com/
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/career/cover-le.html

Sample Plain Text Resume with Keyword Summary

(This version can be printed for mailing or faxing purposes or used as an e-resume)

Keyword Summary
These are all skills, duties or responsibilities that can be found elsewhere in your resume but as active verbs. Since computers search for nouns instead of verbs, the Keyword Summary provides the format required to increase your resume's chances of being retrieved during searches.

```
PAT M. SMITH
1234 College Street
Toronto, Ontario
M4C 1Z1
Residence: 416 123-4567
Messages: 416 111-9999
psmith@cencol.on.ca

KEYWORD SUMMARY
----------------
Installation and configuration of computer programs, Computer Repairs, Web Site
Administration, E-mail administration, Training experience, Project Management,
Problem Solving Skills, Customer Service Skills

TECHNICAL SKILLS
----------------
Networking:
TCP/IP, OSI, Microsoft LAN Manager, Novell Netware, Internet, Ethernet,

Programming:
C, C++, Visual BASIC, FORTRAN, Pascal, SQL, UNIX Shell Script, BASIC

Operating Systems:
UNIX, MS Windows, MS DOS, MS Windows NT, and Macintosh System 7

Applications:
Microsoft Office, Microsoft Access, Microsoft Visual C++, Microsoft Project,
Microsoft Publisher, Lotus 123, Lotus Freelance and others

WORK EXPERIENCE
------------------------
Internet/Intranet Network Technician
ABC Company
Toronto, Ontario
Summer 2000

* Oversaw initial setup of server from conception to launch in a Windows Back
Office Server environment
* Administered web site and LAN (capacity planning, performance tuning, upgrades
and documentation)
* Provided training and technical support to users on the LAN
* Installed and configured firewall software for enhanced Internet/Intranet security
* Repaired, configured, set up and modified IBM compatible PC's and peripherals
* Maintained, installed and supported client PC's in a LAN environment
```

Continue with rest of resume

The Cover Letter

The Basics

When sending your resume to prospective employers, always include a cover letter. The cover letter gives you the opportunity to personalize your application.

Always address your cover letter to a particular person (the hiring manager or your networking contact) and tailor it to a specific company and job. This will personalize your letter and show you've done your research. Contact the company for specific contact information.

You should always send a cover letter, even if the posting only asks for a resume. It shows your professionalism and increases your chances when applying to advertised jobs.

Some Cover Letter Tips

Star Move

· Your cover letter should be one page with three to four paragraphs. See page 37 for suggested format.
· Use the same paper as your resume
· Check print quality for bleed, jagged or crooked edges and overall readability
· Use a font size 10 or 12
· Do not use corrective liquid or make handwritten changes
· Use a high-quality printer
· Give it to three friends or family members to review and edit
· Format your letter as you would a formal business letter.
· Use a formal writing style - the employer is not a personal friend or family member
· Be as concise as possible, without generalizing your skills (speak about skills specific to the particular job)

The Four Paragraphs

The cover letter should contain four paragraphs, each with its own purpose. To remember the purpose of each paragraph think of the following AIDA formula:

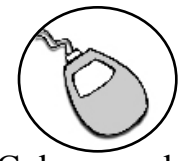
A **Attention:** Tell why you are writing. Name the position for which you are applying and how you heard about it (contact name/where posted/when posted).

I **Interest:** Tell the employer how your skills match those needed for the job. Use resume verbs (e.g. planned, organized, completed) to describe your skills as they relate to the job. When answering an advertisement, make sure to include all the requirements listed in the ad. This makes it easy to match you to the job.

D **Desire:** You may want to add a paragraph outlining why you would like to do this job or work for this specific company and how your goals and interests can contribute to the company. Mention something you have learned about the company during your research. This is your chance to show the employer your interest in the company and that you have done your homework.

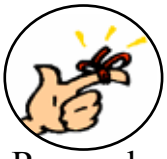
A **Assertiveness:** Ask for an interview. Use an appropriate closing to pave the way for an interview by suggesting a meeting to further discuss your qualifications and that you are awaiting an immediate and favourable reply. Refer to your attached resume. If you take responsibility for the next action (e.g. I will contact you by _____ to enquire about the status of my application.) you will be more proactive and will avoid the frustration of waiting for a reply.

A Few Interesting Links About Cover Letters...



Cybersearch

www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/step4_3.asp
http://resume.monster.ca/section1976.asp
www.rileyguide.com/cover.html
jobsearch.about.com/od/coverletters/Cover_Letters.htm
www.bestcoverletters.com/
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/career/cover-le.html



Remember

Don’t send out the same generic cover letter to several companies. Make the employer feel they are the only company you are applying to by doing research and customizing every letter.

Sample Cover Letter

Action

178 Green Street
Scarborough, Ontario
M2J 3C5

February 3, 2003

Ms. Tracy Jones
Food and Beverage Manager
Dobbs Catering
192 Purple Avenue
Pickering, Ontario
L1K 2R9

Dear Ms. Jones:

Please accept this letter in application for the position of Assistant Food and Beverage Manager as was advertised in the Toronto Star on February 2, 2003.

I feel that I am an excellent candidate for this position, as I will soon receive my diploma in Food and Nutrition Management from Centennial College. My previous work experience has exposed me to various aspects of the food industry including customer service and purchasing. My current position as a Nutrition Services Assistant has given me the opportunity to design menus that meet specific dietary needs. Additionally I offer the solid management experience I acquired as Assistant Manager for three summers at a local yogurt shop.

I understand that Dobbs Catering is growing rapidly in the area of special needs catering and I believe my experience in this area would make a great contribution to your organization. I am an enthusiastic person who enjoys working in a team environment.

I have submitted my resume for your perusal. I will call you the week of February 17 to arrange a meeting. If you require any additional information, please contact me at (416)200-0500. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(signature)

Chris Smith

Encl: Resume

Warning

DO NOT copy this sample cover letter! Your cover letter should be a unique letter that YOU write and as such, it should be different from other job seeker's letters. It is ok to look at samples to help you with writing style and format but you do not want a prospective employer to be turned off by a letter that shows lack of originality and initiative.

Your Job Search Strategy:

Looking for Work

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

Your Job Search Strategy:

Looking for Work

Where Are The Jobs?

The Basics

Looking for a job is a job in and of itself. Therefore, it is important to remain focused, organized and consider as many strategies as possible in order to enhance your chances of success. So where are the jobs? The first thing you should know is that there are two types of job markets available to you: the **advertised (visible) market** and the **non-advertised (hidden) job market**. It's your job right now to come up with a job search strategy to proactively access both of these markets and combine the techniques that follow in this chapter in a way that brings you employment success.

The Advertised Job Market

The advertised job market is just that - jobs that are advertised in some way. In this market jobs are posted in/on:

· Newspapers
· Online job posting sites
· Company web sites
· Employment newsletters
· Industry specific and association magazines and publications
· Career centre job boards
· Employment agencies
· Help wanted signs/billboards

Warning

The good thing about advertised jobs is that you know there is a concrete opening that you can apply to. However, **do not rely on this alone**! Advertised positions represent a mere 20% of existing openings. And remember these jobs are advertised. That means that there are many people applying for the same jobs, reducing your chances of getting noticed in the crowd. And often, by the time the ad is published the employer already has a good idea of who they are going to hire.

Enhancing your Chances in the Advertised Job Market

Star Move

To increase your chances of being noticed by an employer currently soliciting applications:

· Carefully read the job advertisement
· Research the company
· Include a cover letter even if the posting does not request it
· Customize your resume and cover letter
    · Address your letter to a specific person at the company
    · Match your skills to those required for the specific job
    · Include some information in your cover letter that shows you've done some research, e.g. outline the reason why you are interested in this specific company
· If applying to human resources, further your efforts by also approaching the manager of the department (for which you would work) with a resume and a cover letter that specifies that you also applied via human resources
· Follow-up with a telephone call to confirm receipt of your resume, express your interest in the job, ask specific questions and request an interview

Don't Stop There!

Warning

While looking at advertised job postings should never be disregarded, a good job search strategy combines a number of different techniques in combination. Since the advertised job market makes up 20% of the available jobs, perhaps you should spend only 20% of your job search efforts in this area. The other 80% of jobs are part of the **"hidden job market"** and it means being more **proactive** to get to these opportunities, which most often means **networking**.

The Hidden Job Market

The Basics

Why are 80% of employment opportunities part of the hidden job market? There are several possible scenarios to explain why positions are not advertised:

· The employer is informally looking for someone to avoid expenses and time demands of receiving hundreds of resumes as the result of an ad
· The employer has various projects to accomplish and has yet to make arrangements for new staff
· The employer wants reliable referrals from trusted employees/co-workers

· The employer has to deal with an unexpected situation (need to replace an employee who has recently quit, been promoted, left on medical or maternity leave, etc.)

Job search techniques that help you access the hidden job market include researching potential openings, organizing targeted mailings, considering cold calling, conducting telephone campaigns and, most importantly, **networking**.

Networking

The Basics

Networking means meeting with and talking to people who can help you in your search for work, be it by putting in a good word for you, providing insider information about your industry, letting you in on upcoming opportunities or helping to get in contact with the right person. Here's how to do it:

1. Make New Contacts

There are many places to go to find new contacts. Try these:

Research

· Your own extended family and friends
· Your friends' parents and other family members
· Your professors, advisors, coaches, tutors, clergy
· Your former bosses and your friends' and family members' bosses
· Your former co-workers and customers from previous jobs
· Classmates and friends you've made through your education
· Members of clubs, religious groups and other organizations to which you belong
· All the organizations near your home or school
· People in occupations which require them to have a large client base (e.g. hairdresser, insurance agent, real estate agent, etc.)
· Your college alumni association

What If I Don't Know Anyone?

It's not likely that most of your family and friends will be working in your industry. But that doesn't mean you don't have a network. Your networking contacts are not necessarily people you know. They are more likely to be people who are referred to you either by friends and family or by other subsequent contacts. So your friend may not work in your industry but perhaps her neighbour does. Think of that neighbour as a potential contact and try to set up an appointment.

Try attending conferences, trade shows, networking events and info sessions where you can meet people in your industry. Becoming a student or associate member of a professional organization will give you access to information about these types of activities. Contact your Chamber of Commerce for upcoming events. Look out for employer information sessions organized by your college career centre. Get out there!

2. Set up Networking Appointments

Action

It's not always easy to get someone to agree to meet with you. The most common excuses people may have for not seeing you are time constraints and they don't have any jobs to offer you.

Here are some tips to circumvent these objections:

Star Move

· Always use the name of the contact who referred you. Knowing that you have a mutual contact will put the person at ease and may persuade them to agree to meet with you. They may think that if someone they know has referred you then you must be okay. Also, most people would not want to insult a colleague or friend by turning you away.
· Be sure not to pressure your contacts for a job - remember the purpose is to get yourself known by them for future opportunities, not to get a job on the spot.
· If the person tells you they have no job openings tell them you understand that. Explain that you are not asking for a job - you just want to meet for information purposes.
· If your contact tells you they are very busy stress that you only need 20 minutes of their time and that you will be prepared.
· Always suggest a date for the meeting and have alternative dates picked out in case your contact is busy at that time.

3. Have Networking Meetings

Action

The purpose of networking meetings is similar to that of informational interviews - to gather first-hand information about the industry or occupation. See the section on Informational Interviews on page 11. However, there is another very important reason for conducting networking meetings - to lay the groundwork for accessing the hidden job market.

Here are some things you should remember to do:
· Show you are professional - have an agenda and questions prepared
· Ask impressive questions that show you are knowledgeable about your industry/the company
· Be able to speak about your skills and career interests

· Never leave without asking for names of other people who would be able to help you (this is how your network will continue to grow)

In general, you want to leave your contact with the impression that you are keen, smart and would make a good employee. Therefore, you will come to mind should any opportunities arise in the future.

4. Stay in Touch

The biggest mistake job seekers make when networking is to have one meeting with someone, hand over their resume and then lose contact.

Warning

Networking means regular and consistent follow-up (without being a nuisance). Always send a thank you letter after any networking activity. Ask your contact if they would mind if you checked in with them from time to time. If your initial meeting went well, chances are your contact will be interested in your progress. How will he or she be able to inform you of any opportunities if they have forgotten about you, don't know how to reach you or don't know if you are still interested in finding a job?

Through the process of maintaining contact you will collect referrals and expand your contact base while keeping an eye out for opportunities and focussing on securing employment.

5. Using the Internet to Enhance Your Network

Cybersearch

The Internet is a great way to enhance your networking strategy. You can do this by participating in discussion groups which allow you to exchange information with people from many different areas, companies, cities, even countries. The boundaries of time and geography are eliminated so you can contact people from virtually anywhere (from your local area to around the world) at any time. For more information on Cybernetworking, see page 59.

Remember

Networking is the most successful way to find a job!

Researching Potential Openings

Once you have researched your industry or occupation (see Get Informed: Research! Research! Research! page 9) you will have come up with a listing of companies. Narrow that list down to a manageable number of companies that you would really like to work for and seriously target them. A list of 15-20 companies is a good start. Visit their web site, read any company literature you can find, read company profiles and meet with individuals working for that company. Do not forget to ask individuals in your current network if they know someone in that industry or if they have a contact in the companies that you are targeting.

The objective of all this research is to find out:

Research

· How your skills best suit the organization
· The structure of the organization and which department you would best fit into
· Where hiring opportunities may exist in the organization
· Any trends or important changes within the company
· The person who is responsible for hiring within the department/area that interests you, the proper spelling of their name and their title
· Specific job titles that exist within the company

Some Research Tips:

Star Move

· When in doubt, aim high. Targeting a Director or Vice President of a department will get you further than targeting a junior person who may not have any decision-making authority.
· A good place to source names, titles, department or product categories within your target companies is in the press. Newspaper articles found in print or on the Internet, as well as "News" or "Press" sections of corporate web sites, often quote industry experts and company representatives.
· Review past and present job postings from your target companies, often found in the "Careers" Section of their corporate web site. Research these postings and job descriptions even if the job is too senior or is in a city you don't want to relocate to. The postings provide valuable information on the company structure, technologies, processes used and general corporate values. This information will help you to customize your networking cover letter and resume.

You now have the information you need to proceed with your proactive job search strategy.

Targeted Mailing Campaigns

Action

Now that you have gathered valuable company information, including key contacts, you can approach potential employers by mailing, faxing or e-mailing your unsolicited resume and a networking cover letter to the companies that interest you. Networking cover letters for mailing campaigns closely resemble a cover letter that you would include with an application to an advertised position.

In order for this strategy to be successful, there are a few things to remember:

· Always include a networking cover letter addressed to a particular person, making sure the spelling of their name is correct and including their job title (instead of "To whom it may concern")
· Use a referral name in your opening sentence when possible. It can determine whether or not the person continues to read your letter
· Focus your networking cover letter on a specific job or area of work (instead of "any position")
· In your networking cover letter, mention something specific about the company if you can, making your application more personal and showing you are informed about the organization
· Follow-up with a phone call a week later, confirming they have received your resume and requesting an interview

INTRODUCTION: Tell why you are writing. Name the job or area that you are interested in. Include a reference to the person(s) you spoke to about the organization and/or potential upcoming opportunities.

BODY: Based on your research, tell the employer how your skills match those **usually needed for the job in question**. Use resume verbs (e.g. planned, organized, completed) to describe your skills as they relate to the job. This makes it easy to match you to the job.

CLOSING: Request a meeting. If you take responsibility for the next action (e.g. I will contact you by _____ to discuss opportunities within your department) you will be more proactive and will avoid the frustration of waiting for a reply.

Warning

Targeted mailing campaigns differ greatly from mass mailings that use a generic broadcast letter. Targeted mailing campaigns are very focused and require thorough research and follow-up procedures. A well-organized targeted mailing campaign focusing on 20 companies can take up to a week or two of your time.

Sample Networking Cover Letter

178 Crest St.
Scarborough, Ontario
M2J 3C5

February 10, 2003

Ms. Jane Johnson
Office Manager
ABC Wireless Inc.
192 Purple Avenue
Pickering, Ontario
L1K 2R9

Dear Ms. Johnson:

I am writing to you with strong interest in contributing to ABC Wireless Inc. in the area of administrative support. Mr. Bob Barker, from your engineering department, is a former neighbour of mine and he suggested I contact you.

I feel that I would be a valuable addition to your administrative team, as my previous work experience has exposed me to all aspects of office administration including customer service, scheduling and compiling of reports and correspondence. My exceptional skills in MS Word, PowerPoint and Excel, together with a typing speed of 60 wpm allow me to effectively respond to deadlines and deliver high-quality results. My academic credentials support this experience as I have recently completed a Diploma in Office Administration from Centennial College.

I understand that ABC Wireless Inc. is growing rapidly and needs a strong administrative team to support that growth. I feel that I would make a great contribution to your organization. I am an enthusiastic person who enjoys working in a team environment.

I have submitted my resume for your perusal. I will call you the week of February 17 to arrange a meeting. If you require any additional information, please contact me at (416)200-0500. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(signature)

Chris Smith

Encl: Resume

Warning

DO NOT copy this sample networking cover letter! It should be a unique letter that YOU write and should be different from other job seeker's letters. It is ok to look at samples to help you with writing style and format but you do not want a prospective employer to be turned off by a letter that shows lack of originality and initiative.

Cold Calling - Yes, In person!

Action

Sometimes a direct approach is more successful. When faced with hundreds of resumes from equally qualified applicants, an employer may be more likely to contact someone he or she has personally met and liked rather than plow through mountains of resumes. Try visiting a company in person, requesting to meet with the hiring manager. Stress that you do not want too much of their time, you just want to introduce yourself and leave a copy of your resume. This technique demonstrates initiative and confidence.

Warning

However, if you decide to take this route, always be prepared to be interviewed on the spot. Have a 30 second verbal resume rehearsed ("I am looking for a position in...**I have skills in...").** See the "Tell Me About Yourself" section on page 66 for advice on what to say.

This technique may work better in certain fields or for certain positions. For example, dropping into a retail store to meet with the Manager may be a lot easier than trying to meet the Technical Project Manager of a large high tech firm. Do not be discouraged if you are refused the opportunity to meet with the hiring manager. Consider instead a telephone follow-up to your company visit.

Star Move

Remember:

· Always have a copy of your resume with you
· Consider creating and using a "**calling card**" or business card
· Dress appropriately
· Ask for a specific person (your earlier research will have uncovered the name of the hiring manager or department head)
· Give a brief overview of your background, related skills , interests etc.
· Be enthusiastic, self-confident, polite and friendly
· Ask to arrange for an interview

Why a Calling Card?

The Basics

A calling card is another great tool that you can use to quickly market your skills and qualifications. It is a brief description of your key skills and experience formatted on a small business card. This tool can easily be distributed to individuals in addition to or in lieu of your resume. You may not always be able to give someone your resume but you can always provide him or her with your calling card.

When should you use a calling card?

· Cold calling visits
· Meetings with friends, previous colleagues or supervisors, teachers, family, etc.
· Career or job fairs
· Interviews
· Attach to cover letter, thank you letter or networking letter

Sample Calling Cards

Telephone Campaigns

Action

Telephoning prospective employers is similar to cold calling only you are not visiting the company in person. As with cold calling, ask for a specific person and have an introduction prepared, outlining your experience and skills. Inquire about any job openings and request to go in for an interview.

A few tips:

Star Move

· Research the company you wish to contact
· Obtain the name, title and telephone number of the person hiring in the department in question
· Always be polite and courteous to receptionists
· Be creative without being dishonest ("I have some correspondence to forward to the Marketing Manager. Can I please have his/her name, title and exact mailing address?")
· Prepare your telephone script (see sample telephone scripts below). You never know when you may be speaking to a manager or supervisor.
· Show enthusiasm
· Be ready for the unexpected
· Avoid distractions (television, stereo, answering call waiting, etc.)
· Have your resume in front of you for reference
· Have a pen and paper ready to take notes
· Practise! Practise! Practise!

Telephone Script for Making a Cold Call

"Hello (name of person you are calling), my name is (your name). I'm calling to follow-up on the letter and resume that I sent to you last week. I am a Human Resources Management graduate with my HRPAO designation and I am now pursuing a position as an Employee Training Coordinator.

Action

"I am aware that your company has recently expanded its training programs and opened an Employee Training Centre, and I would like to gain your perspective on the steps that went into this expansion and hopefully ask you some questions about training as a career.

"My education has given me in-depth knowledge of the principles of training and development including needs assessment, administration and evaluation practices. I have had the opportunity to successfully develop and deliver a training curriculum to a staff of 12 employees. Your feedback on this experience would be really helpful.

"I realize you have a tight schedule, but perhaps we could spend 20 minutes for a meeting next week?

Telephone Script for Someone to Whom You Have Been Referred

"Good morning (name of person you are calling). My name is (your name). (Referral name) recommended that I give you a call.

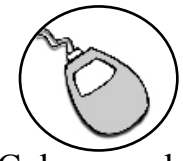
Action

"I am an experienced client support representative and I have recently graduated from a Network Professional program. (Referral name) suggested that you would have some good perspective on the challenges and opportunities of working in a Network Operating Centre.

"I understand that you do not have an open position in your team at this time, but (referral name) felt that you would be a good person for me to make contact with.

"I'd like to set up an appointment for about 20 minutes to ask you some questions and gain your perspective. I can also share a brief overview of my skills and hopefully get your input on what I'm thinking of doing in the future. Would it be possible for us to meet?"

A Few Interesting Links About Job Search Strategies...



Cybersearch

jobstar.org/hidden/index.cfm
www.workopoliscampus.com/ (click on Resource Centre)
content.monstertrak.monster.ca/guide/
www.allbusiness.com/human-resources/careers-job-hunting/1594-1.html
www.careerperfect.com/content/job-search-tips/
www.quintcareers.com/networking.html
www.jobsetc.gc.ca/categories.jsp?crumb=1&category_id=34&lang=e
www.rileyguide.com/execute.html
www.career.und.edu/jobsearch/networking.html
jobsearch.about.com/od/findajob/Job_Search_Advice.htm

Note: Many of the job posting and resume database sites listed on pages 57-58 have resources, links and articles on job search strategies.

Remember

Although all of the techniques in this chapter are valid ways of looking for a job you cannot rely only on one or the other. Develop a strategy that is a combination of all techniques.

As many jobs are not advertised, you should be spending most of your time on proactive job search strategies and NETWORKING.

Cyber Job Search:

Using the Internet

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

Cyber Job Search:

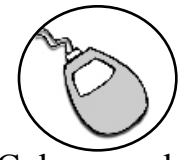
Using the Internet

The Online Job Search

Cybersearch

Everybody's online these days and employers are no exception. As a job seeker you need to stay aware of all methods of looking for employment. Apart from just enabling you to find job postings and send resumes electronically, the Internet is a great resource to enhance all other aspects of the job search.

Researching Online


Cybersearch

This is where the Internet really shines. With the Internet you can acquire an infinite amount of information almost immediately and with ease. Use the Internet to do the following kinds of research:

Research

· Find industry information
· Visit the web site of your Industry or Professional Association
· Go to the web sites of companies you are interested in
· Read company profiles
· Find articles about companies and industries
· Read press releases on specific companies
· Download annual reports of companies you've targeted

See the chapter Research, Research, Research! for some useful links.

Remember

Web sites are only as good as the people who maintain them. Sometimes the information you find may not be up-to-date. You can always call the company to verify information like names, addresses and phone numbers.

Finding Jobs Online

Cybersearch

In addition to looking for printed job ads in newspapers, open positions can also be found online:

1. Company web sites
2. Association web sites
3. Job posting and resume database web sites
4. Online classifieds

Company Web Sites

Cybersearch

Many companies have an online application process. This means that they have a page on their web site where you apply for a job instead of sending your resume. You will be asked to enter your personal contact information and there may be questions you are required to answer by typing in a space provided, by checking boxes or choosing from drop down menus.

You may be given the opportunity to paste your resume in a text box. Remember that in cases like this you should use your "text only" resume which you have formatted for scanning and electronic mail purposes. See the Electronic and Scannable Resumes section on page 30.

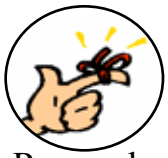
Star Move

Sometimes you will be provided with a text box in which to write any comments you may have. Seize this opportunity to personalize your online application by briefly telling the employer about your skills as they relate to the job and what you can do for them. Think of this section as a type of cover letter. See the section on Cover Letters on page 35 for guidance.

Research

To locate a company's web site, you can conduct a search using **www.google.ca**, **www.yahoo.ca**, **www.sympatico.ca**, etc. You can also attempt to quickly locate the web site by entering the company name followed by .com or .ca in the URL space of your browser.

www.companyname.com or www.companyname.ca


Remember

Web addresses change frequently. Use a search engine to find a site that's moved. If you can't find a particular page on a web site try entering the home page address and start there.

Job Posting and Resume Database Web Sites

Cybersearch

Another method to quickly locate employment opportunities available in your field is to use job posting and resume database web sites. These sites will enable you to access advertised positions for various companies. Some sites may be industry-specific (**www.medhunters.com**) while others will cater to all types of backgrounds (**www.workopolis.com**, **www.jobbank.gc.ca**). You can also access sites that will cater to particular groups or types of employment such as: **www.workopoliscampus.com** for students and graduates, **www.charityvillage.com** for positions in the non-profit area, **www.careeredge.ca** for internship opportunities or **www.summerjobs.com** for summer positions.

Some sites may enable you to post your resume in a database searchable by employers seeking candidates. This type of service provides you with 24-hour exposure to a large number of employers at a local, national or even international level.

When posting your resume on a public access database, remember to:

Star Move

· Read the instructions carefully
· Follow all the guidelines mentioned on the web site. Web forms vary from one job and resume database to the other
· Keep in mind the potential drawbacks to your privacy and confidentiality
  · Only post your resume on established services
  · Read their employer screening policies
  · Consider using code numbers and/or P.O. Box numbers instead of using your name and address

A Few Interesting Links for Job Posting and Resume Databases…

Cybersearch

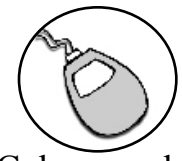
www.workopoliscampus.com/centennial
www.workopolis.com
www.monster.ca
www.working.com
www.charityvillage.com
www.jobshark.com
www.jobbank.gc.ca
www.gojobs.gov.on.ca
www.jobs.gc.ca
www.jobpostings.ca

Cybersearch

www.canadajobs.com
www.careerexchange.com
www.employmentnews.com
www.allstarjobs.ca
www.jobbus.com
www.careeredge.ca
www.careerowl.com
www.canjobs.com
www.jobboom.com

Online Classifieds, Newsgroups, Mailing Lists and Web Forums

Employment and want ads found in local newspapers can sometimes be accessed through the Internet. Visit **www.newspapers24.com/** or **www.onestep.on.ca/findajob/ultimate.html** for a list of newspapers and classified sections available on the World Wide Web.


Cybersearch

Newsgroups are another useful tool to find out about opportunities in particular fields and/or locations. Also known as discussion groups, Usenet or Forums, newsgroups are a collection of places to post messages about particular topics, including employment opportunities. **www.cyberfiber.com/** is an example of usenet and newsgroup directory. You can also try **www.careerkey.com/newsgroups.htm**. Some discussions may take place in real time (a discussion takes place at a specific time - also known as "chats") whereas others are simply message boards that people reply to at their convenience. Either way, you can actively participate or simply choose to observe and acquire new information.

Finally, mailing lists or listservs can also be a great job search tool. You simply subscribe to a particular listserv using your e-mail address and messages and information are sent to you directly. Some sites act as listserv directories such as **www.lsoft.com/lists/listref.html** or **www.ccohs.ca/resources/listserv.html** where you can find listservs on different topics. Or to find a specific listserv, simply do a search on your favourite Internet search engine.

Remember

Don't just send your e-resume into oblivion. Follow-up your online application with a phone call as you would with a traditional resume.

Warning

You may be thinking of the Internet as the answer to all your job search dilemmas. Don't get trapped by cyberspace myths! **Although the Internet is a great job search resource you cannot rely on it alone.** Finding a job is not as easy as clicking a mouse. Even with all the job posting web sites out there, the hidden job market still represents 80% of employment opportunities. So don't give up networking and your traditional job search techniques in favour of an online search. You should take a combined approach to your job search, incorporating the techniques described in the previous chapters of this book.

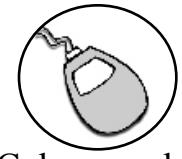
Remember that you are dealing with *people,* not just computers, and you will not likely receive a job offer without first meeting or speaking with an employer. In the end it will be your ability to interact with people, be it in interviews, or while networking, that will make your job search successful.

Online Networking

Star Move

Surfing the various job posting services does not amount to a complete job search campaign. To be a successful job seeker, you must also consider proactive job search techniques such as networking. You can enhance your traditional networking strategy by expanding the process online. You can do this by actively participating in discussion groups, forums, social networks and blogs that allow you to exchange information with people from many different areas, companies, cities, even countries. The boundaries of time and geography are eliminated so you can contact people from virtually anywhere (from your local area to around the world) at any time.

Using Discussion Groups


Cybersearch

As previously mentioned, discussion groups and listservs can be an excellent source of advertised positions. However, they are also a great vehicle to help you meet new individuals with whom you can exchange ideas and information. Joining a discussion group may help you find a person who knows about job opportunities or who can refer you to people who are currently seeking applicants. At the very least they will help you in your research of the industry, as you will hear from people working in your field.

Here are a few more places that you can find discussion groups:

Internet Providers

www.google.ca (click on more and select Groups)
ca.groups.yahoo.com
http://groups.live.com

Search Engines

www.careerkey.com/newsgroups.htm (mentioned previously)
www.searchengineshowdown.com/lists

Topic Specific Discussion Sites

www.canadianbusiness.com (Business)
www.ccohs.ca/hscanada/hscanada.html (Health and Safety)
www.cwhn.ca/cdn_women/index.en.html (Women's Issues)
www.socialpolicy.ca/listserv.htm (Social Studies)
www.journalismnet.com/lists/canada.htm (Journalism)
www.accountantsworld.com/newforums (Accounting)

Action

Follow these basic steps to make your participation in discussion groups successful.

· Find discussion groups using the sites mentioned above.
· If you are new to discussion groups, review their netiquette, FAQs and general guidelines.
· Be a "lurker" for a little while. Monitor discussions to figure out what the group is all about and who its members are.
· Check the archives of previous discussions to find out if your questions have already been answered.
· Post your first message. You may want to start with just one member who seems approachable rather than to the entire group.
· Respond quickly and thank your contacts for any information and help.

Using Blogs

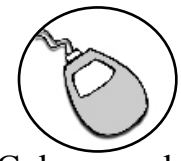
Cybersearch

Blogs are a great vehicle for expressing opinions and ideas. Many professionals and industry experts use blogs to interact and share information. A blog is a web log, an online journal that the author uses to periodically post a commentary on a topic or a description of events. Blogs also encourage online discussions as people can post comments on the blogs they read. Blogs, while they are enjoyable to read or even write as a matter of interest, can assist you in your job search. Read blogs to discover information that can lead you to potential job leads or information

that can help you access the hidden job market. Post comments on a blog to connect to the author or others who have also commented on the blog. You could find yourself exchanging comments and ideas with people working in companies and industries of interest to you and learning more about how to find a job in your field.

You could also consider writing your own blog. If done well a blog could make you stand out in the eyes of employers by showcasing your skills, knowledge, experience, professional attitude and your ability to write.

Using Social Networks


Cybersearch

Social networks are online sites that allow you to stay connected to other people and make new connections. You can complete an online profile and invite other people, commonly referred to as "friends" or "contacts" to join your network. Once someone joins your network you can easily see what they are up to, view their recent activities, learn about their interests, post a message or email them. You can view your friends' contacts and potentially connect to them as well. Specific groups also exist on social networking sites that revolve around common interests, work, locations or schools among others. Basically, the opportunity to connect with other, meet new people and maintain these connections is limitless.

If you are part of the Web 2.0 generation it is highly likely that you already participate in an online social network such as Facebook (www.facebook.com) or MySpace (www.myspace.com). The concept of using social networks as a fun way of sharing information with your friends and family is probably not new. But have you thought about how these sites could help your job search? Apart from the fun and social aspect of these sites, they can serve as excellent sources for employment networking and accessing the hidden job market.

Action

Consider how easy it is to make new friends on a site such as Facebook. It can be just as easy to make networking contacts with respect to your job search. In fact it is more than likely that someone in your current list of friends has some relevant information or has a contact themselves that could help you in your job search. Make sure your friends and contacts know you are looking for a job and invite them to share any information with you that might be helpful. Keep abreast of your friends' activities and watch out for anything that could lead to hidden job market information - job leads, company or contact information, insight into industries

and careers, advice of job search strategies, etc. Monitor your friends' lists of contacts and the communication they make with your friends - is there someone who works at a company or industry that you are interested in or knows somebody who does? Invite that person to be part of your contact list or ask your friend to facilitate a connection between the two of you. Seek out and join the specific groups that exist within these social networking sites to connect you with people who share common interests, work and career goals to expand your network of contacts. In the same way that you can find out what the hottest club is or find a new friend who shares your love of reading, so too can you discover job leads or make contact with someone in your industry.

Star Move

And don't forget that there are other social networks besides Facebook. LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) and ysn.com are social networking sites that are focused on business and work connections and allow you to build a professional identity that can show potential employers and business contacts your skills and knowledge.

Think Before you Post: Don't Jeopardize Your Job Search

Warning

The downside to using social networks and blogs is that the lines between personal and professional lives are blurring. Employers are using it to access personal information about potential employees in order to assist them in making hiring decisions. Many employers are checking Facebook profiles of job applicants and have even rescinded job offers due to information they have found online about the candidate. So when you are about to post that hilarious picture of you and your friends getting carried away at last night's party, think twice. Should an employer come across any behaviour or expressed opinions that are offensive or unethical, even if it is not work related, it can seriously jeopardize your job search and career success. Cases have even been reported of employees losing their jobs due to information they have posted online. Remember, what you deem as innocent fun or personal expression can be perceived by an employer as unprofessional.

Star Move

Make use of the privacy settings available to you on social networking sites to restrict access to your profile and to your list of contacts if your friends are posting embarrassing or revealing details about you. The best advice it to try to maintain a professional image at all times and consider the consequences should an employer read your online profile, comments or blogs. Think before your post.

Get the Job:

The Interview

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

Get the Job:

The Interview

Great News...You Have an Interview!

You receive the telephone call you have been anticipating - you are being asked to go in for an interview. While you will obviously be excited and just happy about the opportunity, there are a few things you should remember to ask about to ensure that you are well prepared:

Star Move

· Know the time and date of the interview
· Know the exact location and ask for directions if necessary
· Find out the name(s) and title(s) of your interviewer(s)
· Ask for a telephone number in case of emergency
· Find out if there is anything in particular you need to take with you
· Ask if there will be any special testing
· Ask for any advice on how to prepare

Make note of any information you are given and repeat the details to the caller for verification if necessary. Enthusiastically state that you are looking forward to the interview and thank them for their time.

Be Prepared

All of us, whether it is our first or tenth interview, are a little nervous. Here are a few points that may help to make your interview less stressful and more successful.

Star Move

1. Get plenty of sleep the night before so you will be mentally fresh.
2. Time how long it will take you to get to the interview if necessary so you will be on time.
3. Learn as much as you can about the company and the job. Knowing something about each will help you answer and ask relevant questions. Conduct some research.
4. Examine the job description and identify the skills required for the job and how they match the skills you have to offer.

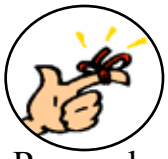
5. Prepare answers to the most common questions, including examples demonstrating that you have the skills required for the job.
6. Practise your responses out loud to a friend or yourself. You'll be surprised at how difficult it can be to verbalize clearly what you are thinking in your head.
7. Prepare a list of questions you want to ask the interviewer.
8. Prepare your wardrobe in advance. The morning of the interview is not the time to discover that you have a stain on your only tie or you forgot to have your suit dry cleaned.

Your Interview Kit...What to Take With You

Action

Take the following items with you to the interview. You will look professional and the employer will be impressed to see you came prepared.

· Additional copies of your resume - the interviewer may have forgotten to bring your resume to the meeting room, Human Resources may not have provided them with a copy or there may be more than one person involved in the interview.
· Copies of your references - they may ask for this or you may offer to provide them with a copy.
· Notebook and pen - you may need to make note of something.
· Letters of recommendation - you may want to leave these with them.
· Copies of transcripts, diplomas, certificates - you may be required to provide these to the interviewer.
· Portfolio/work samples if applicable - you make be asked to show samples of your work. If not you could offer to show them at an appropriate time during the interview.
· Questions for the employer - write down your questions in case you can't remember them all.
· A completed employment application form - if you are asked to complete an application form you can use this as a master copy to make sure you have all the details about your employment history and are able to fully complete the form. CACEE has produced a generic application form which you can access at **www.cacee.com/form.html** or at the college's Cooperative Education and Employment Resources office.
· Briefcase or professional looking folder - to carry the above items. Forgo your favourite knapsack for this occasion.


Remember

Preparation is the secret to interview success!
First Impressions Count

Star Move

Here are some tips for making a professional first impression:

· Be on time. It's a good idea to arrive 10 minutes early.
· Dress should be appropriate to the company's image and the job. For women, a suit is best but a skirt and blouse are also appropriate. Avoid excessive make-up or jewelry. For men, again, a suit is best but trousers and jacket are also acceptable with a shirt and tie. For both men and women, if you mix your clothes, be sure they match. Clothing should be clean and pressed, shoes polished, nails clean and hair neat.
· Enter confidently and with a smile. Shake hands firmly when the interviewer offers to do so. Do not sit until you are asked to.
· Body language speaks loudly. Keep hands relaxed. Avoid excessive hand motions and don't let fidgeting portray nervousness.
· Maintain eye contact and lean slightly forward toward the interviewer.
· Smile, be warm and personable.
· Try not to repeatedly say "um," "uh," or "like."
· Listen attentively and speak clearly.
· Don't use one word answers, use examples to back up your statements See the Behavioural Based Interview section on page 67 to learn how to formulate effective examples.
· Be positive - avoid negative examples and words like hate, dislike, etc.
· Do not chew gum, eat or drink, even when waiting to be called.

Remember

Most interviewers make their mind up about a candidate within the first 5 minutes of the interview. This decision is mostly based on non-verbal cues. Body language, appearance and attitude go a long way!

Telephone Interviews

Telephone interviews are becoming a common first step for many companies. They are often used as a screening interview to test communication skills. They are also sometimes used when a company is in another city and they do not want to invest in travel costs until they have determined that the candidate has the basic skills they are seeking. Treat a telephone interview with the same importance as an in-person interview.

Tips for Effective Phone Interviews

Star Move

· Schedule a time for the call to avoid an impromptu phone interview
· Confirm who will be calling and the length of the interview
· Ensure you are in a quiet place for the call, as distractions and noise will detract from the quality of the phone conversation
· Try to avoid using your cell phone for the interview; quality of reception can be unpredictable with some cell phones
· Keep a note pad and copy of your resume in front of you during the call
· Turn off or disregard call waiting on your phone
· Use an enthusiastic voice tone; you are unable to make a visual first impression so your voice inflection, tone and clarity are very important
· Think about your answers before responding, but let the interviewer know why there is dead air: "Let me just think about that for a moment."

Preparation Tip: If you are wondering how you sound on the phone, call your own number and leave a long voice message. Play it back and critique the tone and inflection of your voice.

"Tell Me About Yourself"

Action

You know it's coming - the dreaded "So, tell me about yourself" question. So be prepared to answer it. **Prepare a job search statement, or verbal resume, about yourself.** You want to tell the employer who you are in a way that will make sense to them - in other words why they should hire you. **Include the skills you possess which are needed for the job and sell your strong points**. The points in your job search statement will be the basis for the answers to all your interview questions. You may want to include any of the following:

· Your diploma or other training and relevant courses
· Specific skills applicable to the job
· Work experience and accomplishments
· Extracurricular activities, especially those relevant to the job or skills
· Goals (short term and achievable)

Do not pass up this chance to sell yourself! Remember, when you tell the employer about yourself it's like answering the question "**Why should I hire you?**" Your job search statement also works for similar questions:

What can you contribute to this job?
What are your strengths?
What qualities should I know about you?

Remember

Virtually every question in an interview is asking the same thing - why should they hire you? Be sure you know why!

The Behavioural Based Interview

The Basics

A recent trend employers are using for hiring is the behavioural interview. This type of interviewing is based on the belief that the best way to predict how a candidate will perform in the future is by knowing how he or she has performed in the past. Therefore questions run along the lines of "What **did** you do…?" rather than "What would you do..?" This requires you to answer these types of questions with **stories**, citing **specific situations and examples** from the past, what you did and what the outcomes were.

Examples of behavioural questions might be:

· Tell me about a time when you showed
  - initiative
  - leadership
  - adaptability
  - teamwork
· Tell me about a project you've had to complete on your own.
· Tell me about a time when you had to analyze information and make a recommendation.
· Describe a time when you've had to deal with
  - a difficult customer
  - a difficult co-worker

When answering behavioural questions remember to follow these STAR steps:

Star Move

S - Explain the **Situation**
T - Outline the **Task** that needed to be done
A - Describe the **Action**, what you did (focus here on the skills you used)
R - Say what the **Results** were - make sure they're positive (results or outcomes are critical - DO NOT forget to share them!)

If you follow the STAR steps when answering interview questions, **even if you are not asked to give an example**, you will be demonstrating your skills, how you have used them and therefore how you will use them in your new job!
Preparation Tip: Analyze the job description and identify the key skill

Star Move

areas the position requires. If you don't have a description, find one for a similar position by searching job posting sites. See page 57 for a list of these sites. Rank the skill areas in order of importance. Anticipate what the employer may ask, based on the skill areas you have identified, and prepare concise answers that include examples using the STAR methodology. Use examples from work experience, volunteer work, education, sports and extra curricular activities.

Remember

Note which qualifications you have and how you can prove them! Think of specific stories and examples from your background which demonstrate these skills.

"What Are Your Weaknesses?"

Star Move

When answering this question, choose something that wouldn't affect your ability to do the job. Then quickly move on to explain how you are improving in that area and remain positive about the progress.

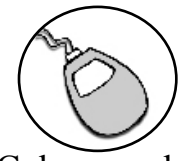
For example: "As you may have noticed, English is my second language. Although I am confident in my language skills, I do need to make additional efforts to ensure that my English writing abilities are above standard. Therefore, when drafting correspondence, I may refer to a dictionary or thesaurus, use standard templates or request a colleague's proofreading skills. I realize that English writing skills are very important, so I try to focus more attention in this area to continuously improve myself."

"What Are Your Salary Expectations?"

Go into the interview informed of what the industry averages are for the position. Professional associations in your field may provide you with access to valuable salary surveys.

The following web sites also provide labour market research on salaries in specific geographic areas:

www.canadiancareers.com/salary.html
www.salaryexpert.com
www.jobfutures.ca/
www.labourmarketinformation.ca


Cybersearch

Try to avoid salary discussions before you receive an offer. Giving a

Warning

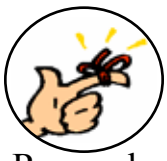
number before you have the leverage of an employment offer can sometimes hurt your chances. If asked about your salary expectations, show interest in the position and mention that you trust that if an offer comes, it will be reasonable. If the interviewer insists, answer the question using a range. **For example:** "Based on my research, I have found that the industry average is $25,000 to $32,000 for this position. I am flexible within that range".

Salary discussions and negotiations involve various factors (base salary, bonuses, benefits, etc.) that are best **entertained** once an offer of employment has been secured.

Other Questions You May Be Asked:

Research

· What is your most memorable accomplishment?
· Why did your choose this company?
· Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
· How has your education prepared you for this job?
· Have you ever had to deal with multiple tasks and deadlines?
· Tell me about a challenge you have faced.
· Tell me about a time when you have worked as part of a team.
· Why did you choose your school and program of study?
· Describe a situation in which you had to lead a group.
· Describe a situation where you had to work under pressure to deliver on a commitment.
· Why do you believe you are qualified for this position?


Remember

While it is important to practise, it is impossible to predict every question you will be asked. Instead of just memorizing stock answers make sure you have a good understanding of your skills and how they match the requirements for the job.

They Can't Ask That, Can They?

Warning

An employer may want to know as much about you as possible but there are some things that they do not need to know and which may in fact be illegal for them to ask whether in person, on the phone or on an application form.

In Ontario, **inappropriate questions** include those asking about your:

· Heritage - nationality, ethnic origin, birthplace, proof of citizenship
· Race or colour - including eyes, skin, hair, etc.
· Religion or creed
· Age - including birth certificates, baptismal records etc.
· Sex - male or female, including pregnancy, childbirth
· Marital or family status - children, married, divorced, single, etc.
· Handicap or disability
· Language - mother tongue, language training (unless it is a requirement of the job)
· Pardoned convictions - criminal record, arrests
· Sexual orientation
· Affiliations - clubs or organizations (unless related to the nature of the position)

If you are asked any of these questions the best thing to do is to avoid answering the question directly. Try not to get defensive which would only make the situation worse. Simply state in a professional manner that the details they have asked for would in no way affect your ability to do the job and restate your relevant skills. For example, if asked if you are going to have children you could say, "I plan to pursue a career and commit to my job whether or not I have a family."

Cybersearch

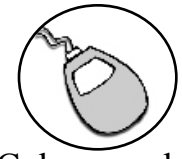
Please note that some specific exceptions do apply. To learn more about Employment and Human Rights go to this site:

www.ohrc.on.ca/en

Accommodation

If you have a disability that requires accommodation during the interview process, you may want to disclose your disability to the employer. This is to ensure that you are able to not only attend the interview but also be able to answer questions or perform tests in a fair and equitable manner. It is the employer's legal responsibility to accommodate your disability both during the interview and on the job should you be hired.

Be sure to find out if there are any special tests that you will have to perform at the interview. If you have any accommodation requirements you need let your interviewer know. Explain that with your usual accommodations your ability to do the job will be unaffected.


Cybersearch

To get tips on whether to disclose a disability go to the Workink site at **www.workink.com/** and look for "Articles For Work Seekers With A Disability".

Testing

The Basics

Many organizations and employers are turning to preemployment tests as a way of determining which candidates are best suited for the job. They use these tests to measure a number of traits and qualities. The most common types of tests are:

1. Personality tests - measure you personality traits
2. Integrity tests - also a type of personality test that rates your honesty and reliability
3. Skills tests - job specific tests that assess your ability to perform a relevant task (e.g. typing test)
4. Aptitude tests - measure your general intellectual ability and often include comprehension, logic and math items
5. Work samples and simulations - an enactment of what you would do in the job
6. Work styles or traits tests - involves asking questions that get at how you like to work
7. Specific knowledge tests - helps to find out how much you know about your subject area

Warning

You may believe tests cannot truly measure your skills or whether you are a good fit for the job. You may be right. **However, keep in mind that if you do not take a test you are basically turning down the job.**

Try not to think of the test as a trap or a way to detect your shortcomings. With an increased focus on Human Rights and equality, employers are more often using tests to ensure fair and equitable hiring practices. Think of the test as something that gives you as fair a chance of getting the job as the next person.

Tips For Taking Tests

We all hate tests and an interview is stressful enough without one. Here are a few tips to help you get through it with success.

· Make sure you have made arrangements for any accommodations you require. See page 70 for more information on accommodations.

Star Move

· Listen to and read ALL instructions carefully before starting.
· Know what the rules of the testing platform are. Will you be penalized for wrong answers more than if you left the question unanswered? Are you allowed to go back to a previous question and change your answer or do you have just one shot at it (for computerized tests)?
· Do the easy questions first - when you have a time limit it's best to get easy questions out of the way and then come back to the harder ones.
· Try to choose answers that show you have positive attributes and avoid those that may make you seem like a negative person.
· Don't appear inflexible - watch out for words like "always" and "never".
· Answer as the ideal candidate would - based on your research of the company and the job, how would the person they want for the job answer?
· Watch for repeated questions - some tests will ask the same question or a variation of it several times. If you answer differently each time you will look inconsistent.

Some Sample Test Questions

To help you know what you might face, here are some sample test questions and in brackets what trait they are testing.

· When purchasing something the cashier accidentally charges you less than the actual cost of the item. Do you tell him/her? (honesty)
· Do you always believe that family is more important than work? (commitment to the job)
· A healthy co-worker calls in sick to make up for unpaid overtime. Do you consider this person honest? (honesty, integrity)
· What would be the next 3 numbers in this sequence - 1,3,5,7,9,11? (logic)

"Do You Have Any Questions For Us?"

Star Move

Close to the end of the interview you will be asked if you have any questions for your interviewers. Your answer should always be yes! Never go into an interview without questions - you will appear uninterested in the position and company. But make sure your questions are informed ones - they should not be ones that could have easily been answered with a little research. Nothing turns an employer off more than a question like "What does the company do?" Your questions should fill in the gaps that are left after you have done your research into the company and the job.

Ask questions that show you have interest in the success of the business and that inquire about how you can contribute to that success.

Some Sample Questions To Ask The Employer

· I am aware that _____ are your direct competitors. How does the company plan to remain competitive in the market?
· I understand you have just closed a deal with Johnson Co. Would this be one of the projects I will be working on?
· What qualities do successful employees possess at this company?
· How does the company feel about professional development?
· How will my performance be evaluated?

Questions NOT To Ask

Warning

You should avoid asking questions about salary, benefits and vacation entitlement. Asking these questions may make you appear more interested in money and time off than the job itself. Save these questions until after you have been given the job offer. Once the employer has decided that you are the person for the job you are in a much better position to negotiate these things and decide if they meet your requirements.

Closing the Deal

Star Move

As the interview comes to a close you may be tempted to run for the door. Don't! Close the interview as if you were closing a sale. Take the opportunity to wrap it up with a final recap of the job's description and requirements and how your skills match them directly. Establish what the next step is in the decision making process and when you can expect to hear from them. Thank them for their time and make a confident exit.

A Word About References

The Basics

Always ask the person you would like to use as a reference for permission to do so, and discuss what that individual will say about you if contacted by a prospective employer. Do they see your strengths and weaknesses as you see them? Choose someone who has witnessed your work, your skills and your knowledge for the job for which you are applying. Once you have selected and informed your references prepare a Reference List (separate from resume) with the name, title, business address, telephone number and descriptive line about your relationship, include two or three references. You can provide this list to employers when requested.

For Example:

John Henry
Customer Service Manager
XYZ Inc.
123 Portland Rd.
Toronto, ON
M2L 1K7
w) 416-020-0030
jhenry@xyz.com

Relationship: John was the Manager of the Customer Service Department and was my supervisor for 2 years.

Star Move

It's a good idea to give your references a copy of your resume and make sure they are aware of the position you are looking for and which of your skills the job requires. This way they will be prepared for most questions and will know how best to represent your skills to prospective employers.

Warning

Although it is common to do so, you do not necessarily need to use your immediate supervisor. In fact this may be a bad idea should you and your boss not see eye to eye. Select someone who you KNOW is going to speak favourably of you. Even one negative comment can cost you the job. Consider another person in the company who you performed duties for or helped with a project, college instructors, clients, co-workers etc. Avoid using family members as references.

Remember

Always get permission from your references before providing their names and contact information to an employer.

A Few Interesting Links About Interviews...

Cybersearch

www.job-interview.net
www.quintcareers.com/intvres.html
www.collegegrad.com/intv
www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/step4_4.asp
www.best-interview-strategies.com/
interview.monster.ca/
www.interviewcoach.com
www.northeastern.edu/lifescicoop/students/documents/interviews.pdf

Interview Follow-Up

Star Move

After an interview (employment or informational) always follow-up 24 to 48 hours later with a thank you letter. The thank you letter is another marketing piece you can use to sell your skills. It shows the employer you are courteous, organized and serious about obtaining a job with them.

Sample Thank You Letter

Action

140 Berton St.
Pickering, ON
L1H 2N4

September 18, 2003

Ms. Joanne Smith
Human Resources Manager
XYZ Inc.
185 Downey St.
Toronto, ON
M2L 1K7

Dear Ms. Smith:

Paragraph 1. Thank the individual for the interview. State the date of your meeting and the position (if it was a job interview). Mention one or two things that the interviewer and you discussed during the interview.
It was a pleasure to meet with you on Tuesday to discuss the Customer Service Representative position. I enjoyed learning more about the ABC Company's mission, products and services and clientele. I was particularly interested in your training philosophy for new hires.

Paragraph 2. Briefly state something about your unique qualifications that will provide a good match and benefit the company. You may also provide any relevant information, which was not mentioned in the interview.
My prior sales and customer service experience along with my leadership and organization skills will enable me to be a successful manager at ABC Company. I am also a resourceful problem solver and would enjoy the many challenges that the position offers.

Paragraph 3. Reaffirm your interest in the position and the company and restate your appreciation for the interview.
Thank you again for taking the time to talk to me. I look forward to hearing from you with respect to an employment offer. I can be reached at (416) 555-5555 or by e-mail at (e-mail address).

Sincerely,

(remember to sign your letter)
Your first and last name

The Job Offer

Congratulations! All your hard work has paid off - you've received a job offer! It's time to consider a few things. Is this job going to help you achieve your career and personal goals? Does it meet your basic financial requirements?

Warning

As a recent grad you may be tempted to take any job you are offered. But even though you are anxious to start earning a living **you should not blindly accept a job without having all the information you need in order to make a sound decision.**

Some Important Things To Consider

Research

· Start date
· Job title and responsibilities
· Work hours and days/overtime
· Opportunities for promotion
· Salary, compensation, bonus structure and earning potential
· Benefits package (life, medical and dental insurance coverage)
· Training/professional development
· Vacation/sick days
· Location/travel required
· Working conditions and culture of the company

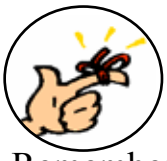
Don't just assume that these areas will be to your satisfaction. Confirm all this information with the employer and negotiate if necessary.

Making Rejection A Positive Experience

Star Move

Rejection happens to everybody. The trick is to not get discouraged but try to turn rejection into a positive experience. Thank the employer for considering you and ask for feedback so you can improve your resume or interview performance. Ask for any suggestions he or she has and the names of people or organizations who might require your skills.

Realize that you have gained valuable practice in selling your skills to potential employers. You are one step closer to polishing your interview technique!


Remember

Think of every interview as a learning experience. Stay positive, motivated and enthusiastic. Success is right around the corner!

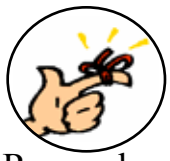
Summary:

Things to Remember

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

Summary:

Things to Remember


Remember

Research

Warning

The Basics

Action

Star Move

1. **Know yourself!** You are selling a product - you and your skills. Make sure you know the product well.

2. **Know your industry and job!** Research! The more you know the better prepared you will be for all aspects of the job search, especially where the opportunities are and how you can position your strengths.

3. **Know how your skills match those required for the job!**

4. **Be your own publicist!** Remember, you are marketing yourself.

5. **Be proactive!** Do not rely only on the advertised job market.

6. **Network!** Networking is your way into the hidden job market which represents 80% of job opportunities.

7. **Personalize your job search!** Do in-depth research on companies, allowing you to target a specific company, departments or hiring manager and tailor your job search to meet their needs.

8. **Follow-up!** Maintain consistent contact with the people in your network. Place a phone call confirming receipt of your resume and requesting a meeting when applying for a job. Always follow-up offers of assistance and interviews with a thank you letter.

9. **Have a good attitude!** Remain positive, show interest, enthusiasm and initiative.

10. **Always be prepared!** Preparation gives you the confidence you need to succeed.