

Employability

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Introduction

This Employability© Program was created to reduce recidivism and to help men find meaningful employment upon their re-entry into society. Recidivism is a measurement of the rate at which ex-felons return to prison. This program was written by inmates for inmates, in other words, written by your peers who have a vested interest in reducing recidivism and helping you to gain valuable employment. Successful re-entry into society is dependent on finding productive and suitable employment. The Employability Program will help you to better prepare for your employment opportunity.

Creating the Employability Program would not have been possible without community volunteers, private donations, and Horizon Communities in Prison, and we thank each of them for their encouragement and support.

The Employability Program was authored by your peers in the Florida Department of Corrections. The authors hope you benefit from the program by finding a meaningful career and by staying out of prison.

Best Regards,

Kenneth Blosser
Co-Author

Harris M.. Ambush
Co-Author

Jeff Botsford
Graphic Design and Layout

Employability Grading Rubric

There are 400 total points possible in the Employability Program. You must earn 280 points (70%) to graduate from the program and receive a certificate. The Employability Program Grading Rubric is as follows:

| Grading Rubric | Points |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Personal Introduction | 25 |
| Résumé | 50 |
| Cover Letter | 25 |
| Application | 25 |
| Interview #1 | 100 |
| Interview #2 | 100 |
| Final Exam | 25 |
| Homework | 25 |
| Final Personal Intro | 25 |
| Total Points Possible | 400 |

The assignments (personal introduction(s), application, résumé, and cover letter), interviews, homework, and final exam must be completed at the scheduled time or the student forfeits the applicable points.

Throughout the manual you will find, in the applicable chapters, individual grading rubrics which explain the criteria for assignments and interviews.

Chapter 1

The Meaning of Employment



Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Explain what employment means to you.
- Explain the reason why we need to seek employment.
- Establish the benefits of work and understand what a benefit is and establish the importance of those benefits to you.
- Create a goal for employment.
- Weigh the factors that may influence your employment decisions.
- Find the value or the real meaning of work.
- Understand the difference between the terms job and career.

We all have several motives for gaining employment and going to work. We work in order to provide food, clothing, and shelter. However, psychologists and sociologists tell us that our employment also provides a sense of who we are in and out of the community in which we live. Employment is an activity that uses learned skills in exchange for benefits and may provide something of value for ourselves and others. This definition of employment implies that there is a social purpose to work, as well as a very important part of survival. In human development it is an important achievement to discover that our own approach to a life of employment is simply more than mere survival.

Being meaningfully employed contributes to our self-esteem in two ways. First, we can prove our own competence to ourselves. This ability is essential and provides us with a sense of purpose for both our environment and ourselves. Second, by working, we contribute to others who depend on us in a variety of ways. Humans, as social beings, need this sense of participation. For these reasons, what happens at work becomes a large part of our sense of self-worth.

Employment is an Important Part of Our Education

Education is clearly important and has become essential in most walks of life. Furthermore, there is a clear connection between education, employment, and benefits. Studies have shown that people who continue their education after high school earn much more annually and receive better benefits. This difference is expected to grow as the demand for educated workers continues to increase. Evidence has shown that your commitment to education will pay off in the long run.

We need to understand the concept of retained earnings when relating to our past and present experience and education from employment. Profit in a business is treated in two ways. A portion of the profit is paid out to the owner as a return on their investment. Some of the profit, however, is retained by the business to provide funds for future growth. The portion of profit that is reserved by the company is called retained earnings.

Profiting From Work Experience as Education

The most obvious profit we earn from work is the benefits we receive from our employer. In the early years of our employment, however, there are other kinds of benefits that may be just as, or more, important than income. The key to understanding this statement is the idea of a benefit mix. We will obviously need income over our entire life span, but giving up some income now may gain us better benefits just a few years later. There is a job benefit mix that we should strive for from any job. Knowledge gained today can be traded with an employer for benefits tomorrow. The decision to accept a job that will add to our knowledge is an example of using the concept of retained earnings to our advantage. Many newly released inmates choose their first job on the basis of salary without concern for the potential long-term advantages that one job may offer over another.

Therefore, every job has to be weighed based upon the benefits that job offers. It is not always about the amount of your paycheck. An example of this may be initially taking a part-time job at a retail store because it may pay more, whereas a job washing dishes may lead to more training and/or advancement in your chosen career. However, if you think about the learning portion of the benefit mix and your total income, your decision may, and probably should, be for the job that will add to your professional education.

It is time to complete a couple of exercises that will be helpful to you when considering future employment. **First**, complete the “Importance of Job Benefits” box below. To do so, first rate each benefit using the 1 - 5 scale (1 being of lowest priority, 5 being of highest priority), then, based on your rating, rank the benefits in order using the column of ten boxes.

| Importance of Job Benefits | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Flexible Schedule | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pay/Salary | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Benefits Package | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Fun Working Environment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ability for Promotion | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Work Alone/Individually | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Personal Development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Prestige | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Contributions of Health | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Social Satisfaction | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Second, complete the “Benefit Mix List” based on your results from the “Importance of Job Benefits” list, and any other benefits not included in our list but that are important to you, such as proximity to home or travel et cetera.

| Write Your Benefit Mix List | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| | | |
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There is another important idea to consider about retained earnings and the benefit mix. Upon our release we may need to take a position that may not be what we want to do for the long-term. These jobs may be repetitive, or not pay as much as we would like, but if we think of these jobs in the terms of their total benefits, we may change our perspective. Although these positions may not be the perfect situation, we can improve our total profits from these jobs by resolving to learn all we can about the operations of the company. In this way, we can build our retained earnings.

Throughout this class we are going to follow an ex-inmate named John Jacobs. John went to work release and started working at a Burger King. He started out as a grill operator and continued in that position for the fourteen months he was on work release. His work ethic was so strong that his employer asked him to come to work for him full-time after his release. Some time later he was promoted to shift leader. Again, motivated by his previous accomplishments, he demonstrated his commitment to hard work and proved that he was ready to take on more responsibility, and was in turn promoted to Assistant Store Manager. He is now a Manager at one of their other stores making \$50,000 per year, plus benefits.

Job vs. Career

When we think about the words job and career, at first impression we may think these words are one in the same. In reality these two words carry very different meanings.

To understand the makeup of a career we will use the illustration that is called a career ladder. The career ladder is used to show the sequence of work in a particular career field from entry level to more advanced levels.

No matter what career we choose, being able to advance will require us to learn increasingly more complex tasks and hold greater responsibilities. There is a direct link between the education we have, the education we are willing to achieve, and how quickly we will be able to move up the career ladder. Prospective employers will consider education, skills, and work history in making their hiring decision. This is why it is important for us to achieve the highest level of education available while also gaining valuable experience during our incarceration.

Job

A position where one is employed, and performs the activity in exchange for payment.

Career

A series of jobs where your education and experience allow you to advance in that field.

| Industry | Entry Level Jobs | Jobs | Careers |
|---------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Restaurant | Dishwasher | Waiter | Restaurant Manager |
| Retail | Sales Clerk | Marketing | Store Manager |
| Automotive | Detail Crew | Sales Floor | General Manager |
| General Sales | Salesman | Sales Manager | Retail Manager |

Chapter 1 Summary

I know it!

1. What does employment mean to you?

☐

2. Why do we need to seek employment?

☐

3. What do benefits from work mean to you?

☐

4. How would you construct a goal for work?

☐

5. What are some of your intermediate goals?

☐

6. What influences your work?

☐

7. What do you believe the real meaning is of work?

☐

8. In your own words explain the difference between the terms job and career.

☐

Chapter 2

Developing a Career Plan

Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Be familiar with the meaning of a career plan.
- Recognize what steps are involved in career planning.
- Understand how to make a career plan.
- Set career related goals.
- Develop a personal career plan.

The Importance of Planning

Most of us have planned a vacation the past. Most of us have planned a special night out. Some of us may even be planning for our retirement. If the truth were to be known, most people never plan for their career. You might ask yourself the question, what can I achieve by planning my career? The answer to that question might be to get the right job to start a career. Would you accept just any job? If you want to achieve the highest level of satisfaction, you must plan to be a success in whatever job and career you choose. With a career plan you will create more opportunities to be a success. Your actions and decisions today, even while incarcerated, can help to lay the groundwork for a satisfying post-prison release career. This may sound overwhelming, but with proper application of these steps a successful career plan is within your reach.

Steps to Success

A key part in developing a career plan involves identifying your available resources. A resource is anything a person can use to help reach their goals and accomplish a task. There are many resources available to you while incarcerated. We will start with human resources, some, including people who may know you almost as well as you know yourself. You may be rather surprised to find out that these people actually have a concern for you and want to see you succeed after exiting prison. (These are people who offer positive assistance in reaching these goals.)

Resource

Anything you can use to help you reach your career goals.

We also have many non-human resources available to help us with our career planning. Oftentimes we do not take advantage of the many resources offered in our current environment. Some of these resources include: educational, vocational, and spiritual enlightenment programs available throughout the Florida Prison System. Examples of human resources include: teacher, chaplain, bunkie, family, and friends. Non-human resources include: library, G.E.D. classes, and even "time."

List some of your human and non-human resources in the spaces provided below:

| Human Resources |
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| Non-Human Resources |
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Now that you recognize many of the resources that are available to you, how can you incorporate them into the planning process? Below is a list of steps to successful career planning.

- **Define the issue.** To make an intelligent decision, you must first define or describe the problem or issue. When you are able to describe the problem on paper it breaks it into smaller parts and it will not seem so big.

- **Make a self-inventory of skills and talents.** The first thing we need to do is to figure out our strengths and weaknesses. If we know our strengths, we will be able to determine how we can attack the problem. If we know and acknowledge our weaknesses we will be able to recognize where we either need to improve ourselves or get outside help.

- **List all possible jobs/careers.** Most of the time we fail to think through all of the possible alternatives. Alternatives are choices or options that we can make other than the one we have in mind. As a result, many people get “tunnel-vision” and never consider other solutions to a problem. If we do not know what the choices are, we need to research and list all of the possibilities. Read books on the subject and talk to people in the industry or field. Find all the information you can on each position. The longer your list of alternatives, the better your chances are of making a better choice.

- **What are some possible short and long-term results?** Think through each of your alternatives. Try to figure out what would happen if you chose any one or any combination of those results. Make sure to consider the pros and cons of each choice. Write the short and long-term results of each next to each possibility.

- **Choose the best job/career plan to reach you desired goal.** After you consider each alternative you will have to make a decision. If you spend all of your time trying to figure out what might happen and do not take any action, you will be in a state of stagnation. Choose the desired goal after careful consideration of what will most likely help you to achieve your goals.

- **Develop a job/career plan of action that sets it in motion.** After making a decision as to which is the best possible course of action, make a plan as to how to get there. Set both short-term and long-term goals to have a map to follow for the long-term goals. If you do not set short-term goals you will have nothing to gauge to see if you are on the right path. If you are driving on Interstate 95, the only thing it tells you is that you are on the east coast. We need to use a map that contains mile markers and signs that will tell us where we are at any given time. These mile markers represent our short-term goals.

- **Evaluate the plan, it is a never-ending process.** The final step is one that you will perform all along the path. You will first want to use your plan to make sure you are on the right path to get to your final goal. Secondly, it will allow you to make minor course corrections along the way if you have strayed from the projected path.

The career planning process is a tool that we should use throughout life to make good decisions. These seven steps are a guide for making employment decisions based on careful thinking and planning.

Exploring Career Interests

By talking to people on your human resource team, they may be able to help you sort through your interests and explore possible career options. Have you ever thought about the career that might interest you? If you took the time to think about the potential likes and dislikes of a career, how would these answers influence the career you choose. Your likes and your dislikes will help you sort through potential career possibilities.

By what this person has listed as “dislikes” we can conclude some of the career fields that might not be good fit could include: landscaper, data processor, painter, truck driver, or roofer. Looking at the examples of “likes” we can conclude that this person may have an interest in one of the following careers: teacher, exercise instructor, or salesman.

Your list of likes and dislikes may be much longer than the example shown here. If you are having difficulty creating this list, you may want to take the time to consult a person on your human resource list to help you come up with a snapshot of your likes and dislikes. Make a list of your likes and your dislikes for each career field you are considering. As you do this, you will see a pattern develop. From that pattern you can conclude which career areas may interest you and which ones may not.

| Example Likes | Example Dislikes |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Talking | Traveling |
| Being with people | Driving long distances |
| Exercise | Reading technical materials |
| Leading a group/teaching | Painting |
| Planning activities | Working from a ladder |
| | Cutting grass/yard work |

| Your Likes | Your Dislikes |
|------------|---------------|
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Setting Career Related Goals

Have you ever read about a career field or seen people at work and imagined yourself doing their job? You may not have realized that what you were actually doing is considering yourself in that same career. By doing this you were actually thinking about a career goal. A career goal is that position which someone aims to reach or achieve in their career plan. If you want to be successful you must plan for your success. You must set employment goals for yourself and then follow the path to reach them. For you to succeed in life you cannot just wait for things to happen, you must be proactive in creating the opportunities to make them happen. The only way to make things happen is to set goals.

Career Goal

Is that position which someone aims to reach or achieve in their career plan.

Writing a song is a good example of a short term goal, but making an album and becoming a successful musician is an example of a long term goal. There are personal goals and career related goals. Personal goals relate to your personal life, such as having children or running a marathon. Career related goals should directly influence your career, such as earning a degree, obtaining a management position, or owning a small business.

You should consider your career related goals carefully. Participating in this Employability Program is one step you are taking to achieve your career related goal. Sometimes your personal goals in life can be directly or indirectly tied to your career related goal. Your personal goal may be to become financially independent and your career related goal may be to own your own business. Take the time to think about your personal and career related goals and list them on paper to see where they support each other.

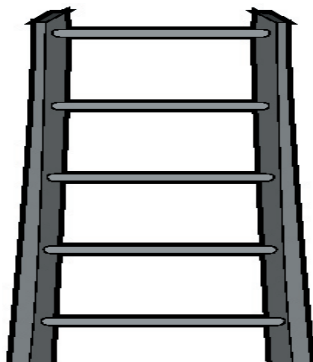
Your Career Plan

Knowing and understanding the resources that are available to you now and utilizing these resources will help you prepare for the next step – creating a career plan. A career plan is a list of steps that you will need to climb in order to reach your career goals. It should include the following:

- Extra-curricular and volunteer activities that will help prepare you for your specific career.
- Entry level jobs that will provide experience in your career choice.
- Any available education or training that you may be able to receive while incarcerated or upon your release.

| Possible Career Plan - Landscape Architect | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| During Incarceration | Upon Release | Education | Experience |
| Small Engine Repair Program | Enroll in school | Obtain Master's Degree | Manager landscape company |
| Drafting Program | Work in a garden center | Earn a Bachelor's Degree | Crew leader landscape company |
| Horticulture Program | Neighborhood cleanup volunteer | Study business models | Work at golf course |
| REEFS Business classes | Ornamental plant grower | Drawing, botany, math classes | Gain landscape experience |
| G.E.D. | Mow neighborhood yards | G.E.D. | Area squad leader |

Career



Ladder

| Your Career Plan - _____ | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| During Incarceration | Upon Release | Education | Experience |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
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You can develop a career plan for any career. If your personal or career related goals change your plan can be adapted. Your career plan is your guide to success; it will help you to keep your focus on your career target and to help you achieve your goals. Your professional goal may be to become a landscape architect designing public outdoor areas so that they are beautiful and useful. A good career plan focuses on successive stages in life. It will also list the activities ranging from easy to advanced.

When developing a new career plan it is important that you are true to yourself. You may know people that entered a career path because their friends were planning to do so. Sometimes people enter careers because they want to fulfill the wishes of their parents. This is not always the best way to approach your career. You are a unique person and your likes and dislikes may not be the same as your friends or parents. You must pick a career that fits who you are or your chances for success will be hindered.

As you accomplish each step of the above career plan you will move closer to achieving your desired career goal.

Career Plan Worksheet

| Talents |
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| Work Expectations |
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| Hobbies |
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| Skills |
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| Work Experience |
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| Education |
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Chapter 2 Summary

I know it!

1. What does creating a career plan entail?

☐

2. Who or what resources do you have available to you in your present environment?

☐

3. What steps are involved in career planning?

☐

4. What are some career related goals that can help you to stay on the path to success?

☐

5. What is your personal career plan?

☐

Chapter 3

Résumé

Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Familiarize yourself with the benefits of having a résumé.
- Understand the contents of a résumé and the two basic formats.
- Create a personal résumé that best highlights your abilities in relation to the job you are seeking.

What is a Résumé?

By definition a résumé is a summary of one's goals, past experience, and skills that may be submitted with a job application and cover letter. It is generally one to two pages and is also used to present potential employers an organized description of your identification, work experience, skills, education, and military service. As a general rule, résumés do not include the following: high school graduation dates, physical attributes such as height/weight/health, marital status, whether or not you have kids, credit rating, arrest/conviction information, religious affiliations, et cetera.

Résumé

A summary of one's goals, past experience, and skills that may be submitted with a job application and cover letter.

A résumé can greatly impact your life. This brief summary can give you the advantage needed to help secure your dream career, or it can relegate you to doing something you hate for a long time, or even worse, keep you amongst the ranks of the unemployed. Many people falsely think that the purpose of a résumé is just to get a job, when in reality the purpose of a résumé is to get a job interview. The résumé is a marketing tool that is used to get your foot in the door. Your future is riding on what you say and how you say it in this summary. First impressions are crucial in the hiring process and this could be a major part of your first impression.

Who Should Write a Résumé?

Everyone! Whether applying at IBM, Publix, or B & G Subs, everyone should have a résumé. The common perception is that only "white-collar" workers should have a résumé. In today's competitive job market this perception is false and the potential employee can get left behind. Both "blue-collar" and "white-collar" workers should have a résumé. Everyday hundreds of thousands of people are applying for jobs and potential employers are swamped with job applications. What can separate you from the rest of the job applicants? The answer could be a well-written and enticing résumé that can give you a competitive advantage and highlight your skills, education, experience, and professionalism. What makes a résumé enticing?

- It must be visually appealing;
- It should highlight your experiences and skills; and
- It should point to the results of your efforts, not just provide descriptions of the jobs you have held.

This will be accomplished using keywords and well-written descriptions.

Why Should You Write a Résumé?

By writing a résumé, a potential job candidate (you) have the potential to come across as more or less qualified depending on what you say or do not say and how well it is said. Remember, a résumé is not an autobiography, it is a marketing tool. It is not being used to tell a potential employer every little bit of information of every job you have ever held. It should be a brief summary of the highlights of your education, experience, and skills. You are essentially trying to sell yourself to a potential employer. The résumé gives you the ability to shape and form the picture of the experiences and skills that you want a potential employer to see. When a potential employer receives a résumé, they generally give it a quick glance and throw it in a yes or no pile. Usually the yes pile is called in for an interview and the no pile is filed into a black hole somewhere. So with just a quick glance, how do they determine which résumés go into which pile? First, they will have a predetermined set of criteria for work experience, skills, and education. Second, they will look for certain keywords.

Keywords are individual words and word phrases that communicate a variety of descriptive characteristics. An example of a keyword phrase would be "customer relationship management". When those words are a part of your résumé, you are explaining that you are capable of communicating and relating well with customers. Another important reason for keywords is résumé scanning. In the technologically advanced age we live in, many companies are currently scanning résumés into a computer database. The database then scans all of the résumés searching for keywords and phrases that relate to the job opening. If your résumé has the words and phrases that are required you may have a better chance of being called in for an interview. If none of the words or phrases are there you may simply be passed over. This is why it is important to tailor your words and phrases to each job in which you are applying.

An appendix with action verbs, phrases, and personality descriptors is included on page 62 of this manual for your convenience.

Use your résumé to shape yourself into an ideal job candidate. A well-written, enticing résumé can place you ahead of other potential candidates.

Is an Application Enough? Do I Really Need a Résumé?

The best answer to this is, no, an application is not enough. Finding employers that are interested in your qualifications and then convincing them you are the right candidate for a job is not an easy task for anyone regardless of their background. One of the keys to doing this will be your ability to write an effective résumé. For someone with a criminal record, a job search may be filled with some obstacles. By writing a résumé you will take away some of these obstacles by having your facts organized on paper in a way that markets and highlights your abilities before a potential employer ever meets you.

There are a large number of people applying for the open positions available everyday. You will need every weapon in your arsenal to compete in this market. By putting in the time and energy to write a well planned, thought out, and written résumé, you can better present yourself as a qualified and motivated job candidate. This can give you the competitive advantage needed to overcome all obstacles, including your criminal record, and start you along your career path.

Résumé Formats

There are two basic résumé formats that we will use for this class. They are called a chronological and a functional format. They both have their advantages and disadvantages, depending on your background. Which format you use is one of the most important questions that you will answer.

Chronological résumés arrange work experience with your current or most recent job first and work backwards from there. A chronological résumé is easiest to read and preferred by most potential employers. The downside of a chronological résumé is if you have large gaps in your employment history, like almost all of us will, they will be glaringly apparent. If you use your current employment, that gap will not be a problem

If any of these describe you, a chronological résumé will probably be best for you:

- ☐ You have a strong work experience history.
- ☐ You have a strong record of on-the-job achievements and contributions.
- ☐ You have a progressive work history with steady promotion to higher positions.
- ☐ You have current work experience while you are, or were, incarcerated (Yes, you can put your prison job on your résumé without hurting your prospects).

A functional, or targeted résumé, is one that focuses mainly on your skills, qualifications, and education with a minimum focus on your work history. One advantage of this type of résumé is that all of the information may be focused on one specific job. All the information on this résumé should be relevant to the type of job you are seeking. Also this type of résumé will help hide some of the large gaps in your employment history. There are two downsides to this type of résumé. First, if you are applying for a variety of different positions you may have to write several different résumés with the different skills and qualifications you have that are relevant to each position you are seeking. A second downfall may be that a potential employer may focus on the length of employment at your previous job as one of their criteria for hiring for this position. The length of employment is one indicator that can show a potential employer your job stability.

If any of these describe you, a functional résumé may be best for you:

- ☐ Large gaps in your employment history
- ☐ A work history with many short-term jobs
- ☐ Prior work experience has no relation to the job you are currently applying for
- ☐ You have no work history at all

Both résumés have their advantages and disadvantages. Now it is up to you to choose the one that best fits your needs. Which format best suits your skills and education and experience? _____

Why does this format best suit you?



Contents of a Résumé

There are several basic parts of a résumé. They will vary a little depending on what type of résumé you use.

A chronological résumé will have these parts and will usually be organized in this order, highlighting your work history:

- Identification Heading
- Career Objective
- Detailed Work History
- Brief Skills Summary
- Military Service
- Education and Training

A functional résumé will have these parts and will usually be organized in this order, highlighting your skills:

- Identification Heading
- Career Objective
- Detailed Skills Summary
- Education and Training
- Military Service
- Brief Work History

Although there are no “set-in-stone” rules for these two formats these are the guidelines that are generally followed.

Résumé Language Skills

When you write your résumé, make sure to choose your words carefully. You can use your language skills or a thesaurus in order to highlight rather than exaggerate your skills and experience. There is a huge difference between highlighting a skill and exaggerating a skill you do not fully possess. Highlighting ordinary skills or experiences can make you more marketable to a potential employer. Basically, exaggerating on your résumé is lying about your skills and experience. This can get you into trouble with a potential employer and may be the fastest way to be disqualified from potential employment.

Remember, potential employers may be overwhelmed with résumés. When they initially receive a résumé, a potential employer does not have the time to read through your entire résumé. They usually just scan through your résumé and look for key words and phrases. These key words and phrases will effect whether you are put into the “yes” or “no” pile. If you are lucky enough to be put into the “yes” pile, the potential employer may schedule you for an interview and at that point will read through your entire résumé. Remember, a résumé is basically a sales pitch and if the wording is enticing the buyer (a potential employer), is more likely to buy the product (you, the potential employee).

Effective Writing Skills

One of the most important aspects of actually writing a résumé is to be sure you write in the first person, not the third person. Just drop the “I” from the beginning of your sentences and your résumé will read faster and appear to be action-oriented. There are three reasons for dropping the “I”. First, the “I” that was dropped is already understood by the reader. Second, when you repeatedly use “I” it may make you seem self-centered and egotistical. Third, beginning your job duties using action verbs make you look more marketable and action oriented. Most employers are looking for team players even in careers that are individually based.

The next part of writing is to use action verbs properly. When you write using action verbs you will communicate a message of high energy, action, and results. Without using these words your résumé will be passive and low energy which are not traits of a person that a potential employer is looking for. Remember, in the appendix on page 62 is a list of action verbs that should be used on your résumé.

Be careful when using action verbs. They can be used in the past tense (e.g. developed) or the present tense (e.g. develop). If you are currently working at a job, use the present tense of the action verb to describe your job duties. For previous jobs you will want to use the past tense of action verbs. You may also use words ending in “ing” to illustrate a continuation of those duties.

Using these tips and the action verb list may in turn help you to write an effective and enticing résumé. This résumé will give you the best opportunity at securing yourself an interview.

| Example | |
|---|--|
| Without Action Verb | With Action Verb |
| I was in charge of a ten man lawn crew. | Planned, coordinated, and supervised team of ten man lawn crews. |

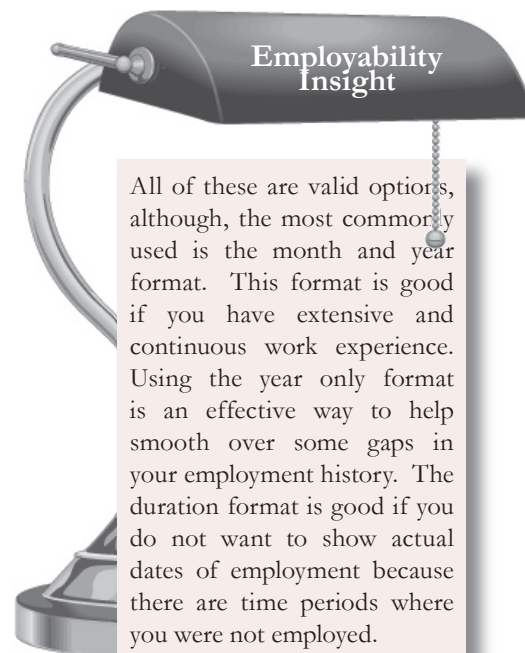
Should I Lie On A Résumé? Isn't Everyone Else Doing It?

You should **not** lie on your résumé! One of the worst possible things you can do is lie on your résumé. It is possible to present yourself as a terrific job candidate without lying. Even if you had ordinary jobs with ordinary experiences you can make them sound extraordinary using the list of words and phrases we have provided for you in the appendix starting on page 62. Make sure you use exact job titles and job duties. For example, if you were a sales clerk in the men's department do not lie by saying you were the sales manager. Instead say that as a sales clerk you helped to manage the men's department. One of the easiest ways of getting caught in a lie is by changing a job title. Bosses at former companies routinely provide a job title to potential employers calling for a reference.

Another way to get caught lying is to change dates of employment. You have your next important decision to make; to include dates of employment on my résumé. There are no strict rules about putting dates on your résumé. If you choose not to, that is fine, but it may raise the eyebrows of some potential employers. If you do choose to put dates on your résumé there are three different options to consider:

- Year Only 2004-2006
- Month and Year December 2004-October 2006
- Duration 2 Years

There are a few other important pieces to consider when creating a résumé. First, if you have had a job while in prison you may want to include that job and the dates. This will show that you have current job experience and have received valuable skills. Second, if you are over 50 years old you must be careful with dates so as not to volunteer your age. A potential employer may think that you are too old to do the job. Finally, do not lie about your capabilities or your skills or experience on your résumé. If you get an interview, the interviewer will more than likely ask you a question about that past experience. If you cannot answer the question, not only will you be extremely embarrassed, but you may also immediately be written off as a fraud. If the lie is found before being hired, you may immediately be written off as a potential job candidate. If it is found after you are hired, it is very likely that you will be fired because your employer will feel like they can not trust you. Integrity is a vital component in an employee-employer relationship. Remember, employers may network with other people in their industry and may simply stumble upon a lie that you told, which may cost you your current job.



Résumé Guidelines

Although there are no “set-in-stone” rules used for writing a résumé, there are some general guidelines that are used. A few we have already discussed, but most are new:

- Your résumé should be 1-2 pages. Anything over 2 pages could be way too much information. A potential employer may easily lose interest if your résumé is too long. Remember, this is not an autobiography. It should simply be the highlights of your work experience, skills, and education.
- Be sure to focus on your goals and strengths. Do not include any negative information on your résumé. Remember that your résumé is essentially a marketing tool. Potential employers do not buy negative. There is no reason to disclose your incarceration (a negative) on your résumé. You can disclose that at the interview after they have already been impressed by your skills and qualifications.
- Be sure to avoid humor or fluff. Not all people have the same sense of humor. What you find funny, a potential employer may find offensive. Stick to the facts.
- Do not include salary information. If you are not in the employer's range you will immediately be disqualified. Salaries should be negotiated after you have been offered the job at an interview. Do not disqualify yourself before you even get an interview.
- Do not include any religious or political information on your résumé. These subjects have nothing to do with job performance and should not be included.

Résumé Layout

This section is about the technical layout of your résumé. By this time you should have your fact sheets completed and a rough draft of your résumé hand written and ready to be typed.

- Use high-quality 8.5" x 11" paper. The paper you choose should be white, off-white, ivory, or light grey. It should be 20 to 25 lb. bond paper with 100% cotton fiber. Using this paper will convey a sense of professionalism to a potential employer. Be sure to use an envelope that matches and is large enough that you do not have to fold the résumé.
- Margins should be one inch on top, bottom, and sides.
- Choose serif typefaces (Times Roman, Palatino, Bookman, Arial, and Garamond), and use between 10-12 font sizes. This will provide for a visually appealing and easy read.
- Do not type "résumé" anywhere as a title. The purpose of the document will be perfectly clear to a potential employer.
- Headings should be easily identifiable. Use bullets or bold print to highlight headings. Be sure that you are consistent with the headings throughout the résumé.

Writing and Production Mistakes to Avoid

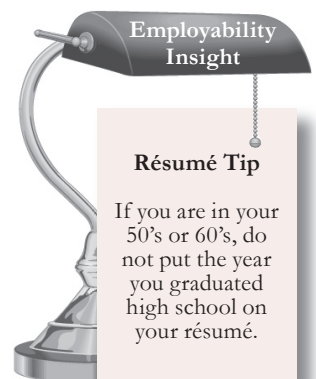
Here is a list of common mistakes to avoid while writing and producing your résumé. The résumé is:

- Unrelated to the position you are seeking
- Too long or short
- Does not look enticing and is poorly formatted
- Does not include contact information
- Contains misspellings, poor grammar, and handwritten corrections
- Wordy and repetitive
- Includes information that seems suspicious and untruthful
- Includes lots of "fluff" and canned résumé language
- Poorly typed and poorly reproduced, making it difficult to read
- Printed on odd-sized, poor quality, or extremely thin or thick paper
- Dirty or stained
- Sent to the wrong person or department
- Sent in a small envelope and requires résumé to be unfolded and flattened
- Unnecessary enclosures (e.g. letter of recommendation, training certificates) that were not requested
- Arrives without proper postage
- Arrives too late for consideration
- Envelope is double sealed with tape
- Back of envelope includes handwritten notes

At this point your résumé should be typed and completed. Be sure to proofread your résumé, even if you use a spell check program. This is too important to leave to a simple grammatical error. After you have proofread the final copy of your résumé, have two other people read it to double check spelling and grammar. There should be absolutely no spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors at all. If there are you will have to make the corrections and print another final copy. A Chronological Résumé Sample and Functional Résumé Sample are included in the appendix on pages 58 and 59 for your review.

References

You should not include a list of references with your résumé. Do not type "References available upon request" on your résumé. If the employer wants references, you should have a reference sheet typed and ready for a potential interview and present it when requested. A reference sheet should include references that can distinguish your character, skills, and abilities, (e.g. past employers, ministers, community leaders, and mentors). Each reference should include: name of the contact, his or her title, phone number, and their address. Make sure you contact your references before you put them on your reference sheet. You want to be sure that they are ready for the call and, of course, going to give you a positive reference.



Fact Sheets

The purpose of fact sheets are to amass and organize the information that you will want to appear on your résumé. This is an important organizational tool to use when writing a résumé.

Career Objective

The first, and probably most important, thing to do when writing a résumé is to develop a career objective. A career objective will be the foundation of your résumé and ultimately helping to shape and structure the rest of your résumé. It will provide focus for your job search so you can target particular jobs or employers. It will also answer a major question that a potential employer will want to know - "What does this person want to do?"

A career objective should be specific, focused, concise, and clear. Potential employers appreciate strong career objectives. It will show them that you are focused and have a plan for your future. Your objective will need to explain what your ultimate career goal is by covering the following areas.

What - title, position

Where - industry, company, or field

How - skills, experience, and/or education

Goal: Burger King Manager

Career Objective: To obtain a management position at Burger King where I can utilize my management degree, leadership qualities, and skills to further promote and expand the store I am assigned to grow.



Identification Fact Sheet

The identification fact sheet will consist of your formal name (no nicknames), address (street number and name, apartment number, city, state, and zip code), phone number including the area code, and your e-mail address (optional). Be sure that the phone number you use is one where you, or someone else that can take a message for you, is available during work hours. You may want to use both a home and a cell phone number.

| Identification Fact Sheet | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Street Address | |
| Phone Number, Cell | |
| Phone Number, Home | |

Work Experience Fact Sheet

These is probably your most important fact sheet. It will include basic information regarding your past employment responsibilities, skills, and achievements. Three work experience fact sheets will be included for your use, if necessary.

| Work Experience Fact Sheet | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Name of Employer | |
| Address of Employer | |
| Phone Number | |
| Dates of Employment | _____ to _____ Month / Year Month / Year |
| Industry | |
| Position Held | |
| Responsibilities | |
| Achievements | |
| Skills/Abilities | |
| Reason for Leaving | |

| Work Experience Fact Sheet | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Name of Employer | |
| Address of Employer | |
| Phone Number | |
| Dates of Employment | _____ to _____ Month / Year Month / Year |
| Industry | |
| Position Held | |
| Responsibilities | |
| Achievements | |
| Skills / Abilities | |
| Reason for Leaving | |

| Work Experience Fact Sheet | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Name of Employer | |
| Address of Employer | |
| Phone Number | |
| Dates of Employment | _____ to _____ Month / Year Month / Year |
| Industry | |
| Position Held | |
| Responsibilities | |
| Achievements | |
| Skills / Abilities | |
| Reason for Leaving | |

Education Fact Sheet

This may include the name of your high school with month and year of graduation. Only state your GPA if it was over 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. If you have attended college or vocational school, list the name, city, and state of school attended. If you have earned a degree, list it by its proper name. Or, if currently a student state, the degree you are seeking. Also, include any certificates gained in prison that may be relevant. Do not write that it was earned in prison. That can be explained during an interview.

| Education Fact Sheet | |
|------------------------|--|
| Name of Institution | |
| Address of Institution | |
| Dates of Attendance | _____ to _____ Month / Year Month / Year |
| Degree Received | |
| Education Highlights | |
| Abilities / Skills | |
| Certifications | |
| Special Training | |

Military Fact Sheet

This will include listing the time you spent in the military. State the branch you served in, rank, dates served, and job held. Try to make your descriptions in civilian terms as much as possible.

| Military Fact Sheet | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Service | |
| Rank | |
| Job Title | |
| Date of Service | _____ to _____ Month / Year Month / Year |
| Responsibilities / Duties | |
| Contributions / Achievements | |
| Skills / Abilities | |

Additional Information Fact Sheet

This will be any other information that may be relevant to the position for which you are applying.

| Additional Information Fact Sheet | |
|--|--|
| Memberships / Licenses / Achievements | |
| Foreign Languages | |
| Interests / Activities | |
| Special Awards / Recognitions | |
| Special Abilities / Skills / Talents / Accomplishments | |

When Do You Submit Your Résumé?

The answer to this question will depend upon a number of circumstances. If you are responding to a classified advertisement, generally, it will state a time and/or date when your résumé will be accepted. Be sure to turn in your résumé at the earliest date and time possible. If they do not state a date or time, then call the business and find out what time would be appropriate to drop off your résumé. Do not ever try to drop off a résumé during a businesses peak hours. To do so demonstrates that you have no idea about the business and lack the initiative to do the research necessary during their busy seasons.

If you are simply contacting companies to do your research of the company and industry, have an idea of when their heavy period of hiring usually occurs. Different industries may have heavy hiring periods at different times of the year. As an example, retail stores have a heavy hiring period around Thanksgiving for the holiday season, while a landscaping company may need to hire more employees in the spring of the year.

If your job search is on the Internet and it requires you to submit an electronic résumé, you will be given either an e-mail or web site address in which to submit the résumé. If you are applying in person to ask if any job openings are available, it may be best to ask if you could leave a copy of your résumé with a completed job application.

To Whom Do You Submit Your Résumé?

If you are responding to a classified ad it may state the name or title of the person that will be taking applications. If it does not or you are applying in person, then ask for the person who is in charge of hiring. If you can personally give the résumé to the individual in charge of hiring, it may open an opportunity for you to be able to schedule an interview or be interviewed while you are there.

| Résumé Grading Rubric | | |
|-----------------------|--|-----------|
| Graded Areas | Criteria | Points |
| Career Objective | Forward looking, well articulated, attention grabbing | 20 |
| Writing Style | Correct grammar usage, spelling and sentence structure | 15 |
| Skills | Related to job requirements, Well articulated, Use of action verbs, Focus on goals and strengths | 15 |
| Total Points | | 50 |

Chapter 3 Summary

I know it!

1. What are some of the benefits of having a personal résumé?

☐

2. What are the two basic résumé formats and when should each be used?

☐

3. What are the general contents of a résumé?

☐

4. What is a career objective?

☐

5. When is it best to submit a résumé?

☐

Chapter 4

Cover Letter

Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Explain the reasons to use a cover letter.
- Understand the benefits of a cover letter.
- Properly write a cover letter.

Cover letters are an extremely useful tool in your job search; they may help distinguish you from the other job applicants. A cover letter is a brief letter, usually less than one full page, that highlights an individual's special skills, qualifications, and training. Your cover letter is your opportunity to express a bit more personality and character to the potential employer. Your cover letter should be customized each time you write it, allowing you to market the specific skills and experience you possess that are most related to a specific job opening. Every résumé sent via mail, fax, e-mail, or when presented in person should include a cover letter.

The four parts of a cover letter:

1. In the first paragraph, you should explain your reason for writing, and the name the job for which you are applying. Also, tell how you learned about the job.
2. Use the second paragraph to briefly point out your qualifications. Explain the facts, but do not exaggerate or lie.
3. The third paragraph calls attention to the résumé. It may also be wise to give a date when you are available for employment.
4. In the last paragraph you let the potential employer know that you will contact him or her on a specific day and at a specific time. This shows that you are assertive and motivated to be employed by the company. It will also show that you will not be passive, by just waiting for a potential employer to contact you.

There are three basic cover letter formats: Paragraph format, Bullet format, and "T" format. Paragraph format is the most common format used. It is best to use this format when you are telling a story about yourself, your career, and experiences. The second style is the bullet format. This format is best to use when trying to bring attention to a group of skills, experiences, and/or achievements. The last style we will discuss is the "T" format. This is best to use when you want to respond with how your skills and experiences match the potential job requirements. No matter which format you use, there are eight key components to every cover letter:

- **Heading:** The heading of your cover letter should include your proper name, address, phone number, cell phone number, and e-mail address.
- **Date Line:** You should skip a line and then put the current date. It should be written out in full and presented as month, day, and year (e.g. March 20, 2012).
- **Inside Address:** The inside address should be the hiring or contact person's name, job title, company name and company address to where you are sending your letter and résumé.
- **Salutation or Greeting:** The salutation should consist of the greeting "Dear", followed by the proper title (if you do not know if a woman is married or not use, the generic "Ms."), and last name of the person. It should be followed by a colon (:). (E.g. Dear Ms. Jones:)
- **Body of the Letter:** The body of your letter is the most important part of your cover letter. Remember, your résumé is basically a marketing tool and the same thing can be said for your cover letter. It should follow the four rules of advertising:
 - Catch the reader's attention.
 - Clearly establish the value and benefit you can offer the company.
 - Convince the reader that you are the most qualified candidate by promoting your skills and accomplishments.
 - Move the reader to take action. This means making them call you to schedule an interview.

- **Closing:** This is the closing line of your cover letter. It is generally:
 - Sincerely,
 - Cordially,
 - Respectfully,
- **Signature Line:** There will be two separate signature lines. First, your full name should be typed four lines below your closing line. Then, in between the closing line and the typed signature line you should put your handwritten signature in black or blue ink.
- **Enclosure Line:** Since you are enclosing your résumé with your cover letter, explain you are doing so by typing the word “Enclosure”. This is typed two lines below your typed signature line.

| Cover Letter Grading Rubric | | |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------|
| Graded Areas | Criteria | Points |
| Career Objective | Individual skills, qualifications, training, employment history, and/or special skills | 15 |
| Writing Style | Correct grammar usage, spelling and sentence structure. | 5 |
| Skills | Correct heading, date, inside address, greeting, body of letter, closing, signature line, and enclosure line. | 5 |
| Total Points | | 25 |

Paragraph Cover Letter

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State, Zip Code

Long Date

Individual's Name
Job Title
Company Name
Company Address
Company City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. /Ms. /Mrs. _____:

I am submitting this résumé in the hope that you have a position available. I believe my qualifications, experience, and education in _____, _____, and _____ would be beneficial to your company. I believe my motivation, reliability, and loyalty would be an asset to your company.

If any positions are available which could utilize my skills, I would appreciate an interview to discuss my potential contribution to your company. I will call you on DAY, MONTH, DATE at TIME with the hope that we can schedule an interview.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature

Your Name Typed

Enclosure

Bullet Cover Letter

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State, Zip Code

Long Date

Individual's Name
Job Title
Company Name
Company Address
Company City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. /Ms. /Mrs. _____:

I am writing in response to your advertisement for the POSITION and have enclosed my résumé for you review. Some highlights of my experience include:

- Highlight of Experience
- Highlight of Experience
- Highlight of Experience

My work related skills are solid. I can _____, _____, and _____.

To have the opportunity to work for COMPANY NAME would be a great opportunity and I am interested in setting an interview with you at your earliest convenience. I will call you on DAY, MONTH, DATE at TIME so we can coordinate a specific time and date for an interview. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature

Your Name Typed

Enclosure

"T" Format Cover Letter

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State, Zip Code

Long Date

Individual's Name
Job Title
Company Name
Company Address
Company City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. /Ms. /Mrs. _____:

As a PAST POSITION, I have ACCOMPLISHMENT, ACCOMPLISHMENT, and ACCOMPLISHMENT. Here is a list of my qualifications as they relate to your requirements.

Your Requirement

State requirement
State requirement

My Qualifications

State your qualifications
State your qualifications

Enclosed is my résumé that lists other skills, experience, and qualifications.

I look forward to meeting you to discuss the use of my talents to boost the growth of your company. I will call you on DAY, MONTH, DATE, and TIME to schedule an interview at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature

Your Name Typed

Enclosure

Bullet Cover Letter

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State, Zip Code

Long Date

Individual's Name
Job Title
Company Name
Company Address
Company City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. /Ms. /Mrs. Jones:

I would like to convey my interest in a career opportunity with your company. I believe my education and experience in restaurant management will be a benefit to your company.

I would appreciate the opportunity to utilize my leadership experience and past sales growth background. I am a dedicated and professional individual, with a special niche for managing tasks and motivating people to reach desired goals. I am a believer in the fundamental concept known as TEAMWORK.

I feel my education and experience serve as a strong foundation for the discipline necessary to be a part of your management team. With your permission, I will call and schedule an appointment with you to further discuss my qualifications. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature

Your Name Typed

Enclosure

Chapter 4 Summary

I know it!

1. Provide the definition for a cover letter and explain its use.

☐

2. Explain the benefits of a cover letter.

☐

3. What are the three types of cover letters?

☐

4. List the eight components of a cover letter.

☐

Chapter 5

Finding Employment



Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Describe what networking is and how it may help you to get a job.
- Be familiar with the internet and how it can help you to find a job.
- Understand the different types of job advertisements.
- Recognize the different ways to apply to a company.

Congratulations! If you have gotten this far you have successfully put together a résumé and a cover letter. This is a huge step in continuing your life after prison. Now you have another important opportunity to grab hold of; the actual job search. Earlier in this class you learned that potential employers are flooded with résumés from people searching for jobs. In the current market, many industries have more potential employees applying for a particular job than they may have jobs available. So, where do you find the employers that are hiring? First, when searching for a job you need to use a combination of methods. Do not limit yourself to just responding to advertisements or just using the Internet. Although they can be very useful they may also be ineffective. The following is a list of approaches to be used in combination with each other.

Networking

Networking may be the most convenient and effective approach to finding a job. Discuss with your friends, family, neighbors, former employers, and peers to let them know that you are looking for a job, as well as what skills you possess and what you may be interested in doing. Ask them if they know of anyone that is hiring or if they know of any leads that may direct you toward possible employment opportunities. If you are interested in a particular field or company, ask your network of people if they know of someone who works for, or is hiring in that specific area. They may know of unadvertised job opportunities. This is a free resource so be sure to utilize this opportunity to the maximum of your ability.

Networking

A system of communicating with people to find and gain connections and resources.

Website and Internet

The Internet has become one of the primary sources to find information and leads about potential job opportunities. There are two ways that you can use the Internet as a job search tool for your benefit. First, you can perform a job search on the Internet to seek out specific jobs. This search may assist you in finding specific job titles, duties, pay-scales, and preferences such as geographic distances and shift choices. Second, you can post your résumé on a job search bulletin board. Many potential employers view these electronic bulletin boards to find potential employees. By posting your résumé on the Internet you are literally telling hundreds of employers you are available for work. Note of caution – a résumé posted on the Internet becomes public information, so you must take precautions to safeguard your privacy. Omit information such as your home address and the address of your current employer. You can provide this information at an interview later. You should organize your search materials to prevent becoming overwhelmed with responses. Failure to do so will most likely result in countless job offers that do not interest you or that may not be legitimate job opportunities. Websites such as Yahoo, Google, MonitorJobs, and Monster are websites that offer classified style ads free to its browsers and can be a great source of finding out who is hiring locally and out of your area. You may do this type of research on the company website or other public websites that discuss the company or industry. These websites may clarify what jobs are available by industry or by a specific job title.

One-Stop Career Centers

One-Stop Career Centers are a tremendous asset to anyone searching for a job or interested in furthering their career. Their offices are located all over Florida and will help you, the job seeker, with your job search. They may provide job referrals, counseling, and other services valuable in the job search. They may also be able to help you to further improve upon your résumé, cover letter, or speaking and writing skills. Some centers may also offer classes, workshops, or seminars on a number of skills for employability at a discounted rate, or even free of charge.

Employment Agencies

There are two types of employment agencies. These two types are known as private and public. Private employment agencies are businesses that help people find jobs, where the employer or the applicant is responsible for the agency's fees. It is important that you find out the exact cost and who is responsible for paying that cost before contracting with a private employment agency. Private employment agency

fees vary widely. It may be as little as what you will earn in one week on the job, but be aware that these fees can approach thousands of dollars.

In contrast to private employment agencies, public employment services receive no fees. Public employment services will assist you in finding jobs in a variety of industries including: construction, retail, hospitality, clerical, or temporary placement, as well as other areas. Most large metropolitan areas have at least one public employment service agency. To find the office nearest you perform a search online or look in the state government telephone listings under job service or employment.

Classified Advertisements

Classified advertisements appear in the classified section of the newspaper. These advertisements are a common source of information about jobs available generally in the local area. Most classified 'ads' are easy to read and understand, although some ads contain abbreviations. We have provided you with a handy abbreviation key to assist you with the search.

| Common Abbreviation Key | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Asst. – Assistant | Eves. – Evenings | Min. – Minimum |
| Bet. – Between | F/T – Full-Time | Neg. – Negotiable |
| Co. – Company | Hrs. – Hours | P/T – Part Time |
| Comm. – Commission | Mfr. – Manufacturing | Expd. – Experienced |
| Dept. – Department | Mgr. – Manager | Temp. – Temporary |

There are two types of classified ads. The first type is a general ad, which will give you specific information about the job, pay range, and company. The second type of ad is a closed ad and will offer more generalized information about the job. This may include the name of the company, where to send your résumé, and quite possibly a fax number or e-mail address. While classified ads are an easy way to find job openings, they are sometimes competitive because, if you read the advertisement, many other job seekers did as well. Many people will be applying for this position, so it is important to be prepared, provide a solid résumé, and leave a great first impression.

| Classified Section | | |
|---|---|--|
| Employment Opportunities | | |
| Help Wanted | Help Wanted | Help Wanted |
| BOOKKEEPER Expd. Bookkeeper needed for expanding bus. Indep. worker with previous bookkeeping exp. a plus. Send résumés to: Les Irving, 55 Rose Dr., St. Pete, FL 33704 | MANAGER Legal Business. Seeking family oriented and loyal person. F/T. Contact Sandy, Donna or Helen at 555-5271 | EDITOR Editor needed to review manuscripts for textbooks. Strong writing skills req. Teaching exp. a plus. Send résumé, recent writing samples, and salary requirements to: Selena Lynn, 1016 Roebling Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11317 |
| HANDY PERSON Position for expd. & friendly repair person. Opportunity for benefits & advancement. Seeking quality person. Sandy @ 555-8066 | HEAD CHEF Seeking F/T Chef for O-né Cafe. Expd. with food prep & multicultural cuisine. Call Cathy or Rolando 555-1433 bet. 2-4pm. | |
| BILINGUAL TEACHERS Make \$\$\$\$. Flex time. Looking for instructors to help ESL students. Knowledge of other languages a plus. Call Christy or Marc. Ph# 555-1452 | COMPUTER & KEYBOARD REPAIR Store expanding. Good pay and hours. Work on classic typewriters too. Pay. neg. Call Lee or Donovan @ 555-9187 | PHYSICAL & MASSAGE THERAPISTS NEEDED Expd PTs & MTs needed to assist bus. with wellness program. Flex. hrs. Call David or Ali at (813) MAS-SAGE (517-7132) |

Written Application

Every company you come into contact with will require you to neatly and accurately fill out a form known as a job application. This form becomes absolutely necessary because it gives the company information about you and your background. It will help the potential employer to compare your job qualifications to those of other job candidates.

If the potential employer cannot quickly read and understand what you have written, it will be a strike against you. To fully complete the application, it is important to properly fill out each section of the application. Make sure to write and respond to every question on the

application, unless specifically told not to fill out that area. If a question does not apply to you draw a short line in the space or write N/A for Non-Applicable. If you leave a space empty the employer may think that you overlooked it or simply avoided answering the question. Before you put that pen on the application form, read the application thoroughly. If you do not understand something that is on the application form, ask someone to explain it to you. Always print on the application, never use cursive handwriting, except when signing the application. Never use a pencil! Always use a pen consisting of black ink. Make sure to sign your full name, and do not use a nickname or shorthand name. Remember the employer will form an opinion of you from your application. There are no second chances to make a first impression. If your application is sloppy, incomplete, or inaccurate, you may have just guaranteed yourself no chance of having an interview. There is a sample application in the Appendix for you to review.

Electronic Application

In today's society, where electronic information is plentiful and widely used, it is important for you to understand how to fill out an electronic application. Many companies now utilize this form of job application. Therefore a savvy job seeker needs to be equipped for such an experience. You may discover upon arrival at a large retailer that when you inquire for a potential job opening that you are directed to an electronic application kiosk. The kiosk usually encompasses a small screen and a keyboard. The actual screen will look somewhat like an ordinary paper job application, except it will be in electronic format. You will fill it out by utilizing the same information that you would have written on a paper application. The only difference is that you will now type in the information. Do not panic! You may not have a lot of experience with a computer, but if you will follow the step by step instructions on how to fill out the application and take your time, success is well within your reach. You will want to bring your fact sheets (with all of your information), any important documentation (licenses, certificates, or identification cards), and you may also want to bring along a pocket size dictionary.

E-mail and Faxed Résumés

Every job search strategy will be different. In addition to filling out an electronic application or paper application you may also need to mail, fax, or e-mail an electronic résumé. An electronic résumé uses a simplified format because they must be readable to many different types of computers. This format is often called plain text only. By following a few simple rules you will ensure the successful delivery of your electronic résumé. Electronic résumés do not contain columns, indents, bullets, or bold/italic type. Although electronic résumés eliminate normal formatting, some attention getting devices can be used. Utilize capitalization and asterisks wherever possible to bring attention to important information. Use twelve point courier font and make sure no line exceeds 65 characters, therefore hit the enter key to force additional words on to another line. Include strong keywords that apply to you and your qualifications. For example, do not simply write "word processing", instead, list all of the specific computer work related programs that you have mastered. Never e-mail an attachment, send your cover letter and résumé as text in a single message. Close your e-mail message stating that a fully formatted hard copy is available upon request. Before you attempt to send these documents to the potential employer it would be prudent to send it to yourself and to a friend as a test. Check the document to be sure that it appears as planned, and if not, adjust the format appropriately.

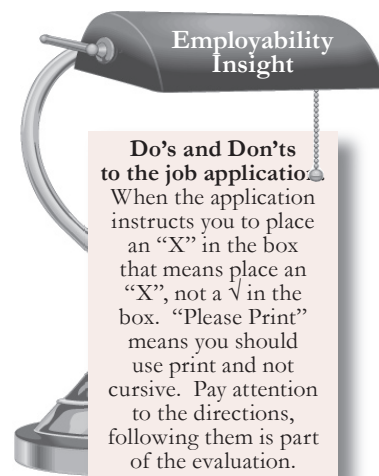
If you are faxing your résumé it would be a good idea to call the employer to let them know in advance. Most, but not all, employers have dedicated fax lines. If the employer does not have a dedicated fax line the employer will need to make the appropriate adjustments to receive your fax. Be sure to include your cover letter as page one, followed by your résumé. It is also a good idea to call about five minutes after sending your fax to verify that your fax was successfully received. Be sure to use proper phone etiquette and to thank whomever you speak with for checking on your faxed résumé. If you do not have a fax machine your local library, career center, or office supply store will generally be able to help you to fax your résumé.

Follow-up

In today's ever changing job market, where the competition is usually rigid, you may want to set yourself apart from other applicants. One way you can set yourself apart from the competition is through proper planning and a well constructed follow-up plan consisting of a phone call, a letter, or a personal visit.

Telephone Calls

The follow-up plan should consist of a variety of steps. The first step is to follow-up the application by calling the business within one week of applying to check in with the hiring personnel, as well as to determine when they may be starting interviews. When you follow-up on the status of your application and résumé, you will more than likely do so by phone. If this is the case, proper phone etiquette is crucial to whether or not your application and résumé will be reviewed, and if so, if you will get an actual interview. Articulate yourself on the phone and say something to the effect that you are very interested in the job and available for an interview at anytime. Be polite and thank the employer for the time it takes to read and consider your résumé. You may even want to ask if there might be an appropriate time to follow-up again. This could lead to the employer requesting an interview with you at a convenient time.



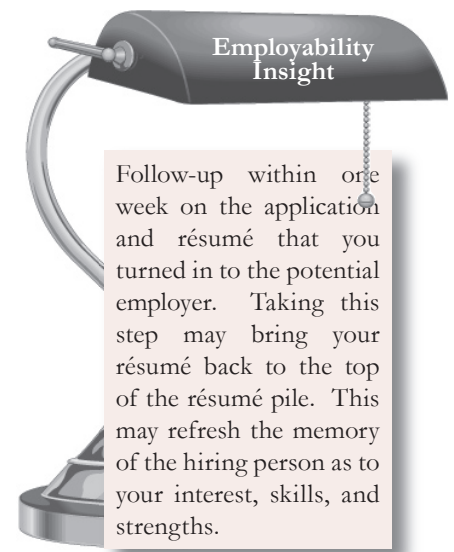
Letters

The second part of the follow-up plan is to send a follow-up letter. A follow-up letter is a brief letter that you will write to the employer in a business letter format. The purpose of the letter is to inquire as to the status of your application for employment. The letter should thank the human resource officer for accepting and reviewing your application and should also include a meaningful statement reiterating your interest in the position available. Be careful not to be overly aggressive and do not sound hopelessly desperate. This will not help you in achieving your goal of employment.

Direct Contact

Once you have made the follow-up phone call and written the follow-up letter, there are two important steps you can take to further improve the odds of your being interviewed. If by this time you have not been granted an interview, you may want to consider directly contacting the employer in person. You will want to pay close attention to your personal hygiene and wear the proper attire to make a good impression. If done well it could lead to an interview, if not, it could eliminate you from any future consideration.

By putting forth the effort to follow-up on your résumé you are actually giving the employer and yourself a second opportunity to think about the possibilities of employment. This also affords you an opportunity to sell yourself one more time. Your success depends on a good follow up plan, which will demonstrate thoroughness and show initiative to the interviewer. Be proactive in your follow-up plan, but not overly aggressive or pushy.



| Application Grading Rubric | | |
|----------------------------|---|--------|
| Graded Areas | Criteria | Points |
| Career Objective | All questions completed accurately | 15 |
| Writing Style | Correct grammar usage, spelling and sentence structure. | 5 |
| Skills | Readable and professional handwriting | 5 |
| Total Points | | 25 |

Chapter 5 Summary

I know it!

1. What is networking?

☐

2. How can networking help you to secure an interview?

☐

3. Other than networking, what methods can be useful for locating job opportunities?

☐

4. Companies offer various ways to complete an application for employment, provide the most common.

☐

5. What are the three parts of a good follow-up plan?

☐

Chapter 6

The Interview

Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Understand what an interview entails
- Understand the three basic approaches to setting an interview
- Explain how your attire, body language, and speaking skills can be a hindrance or an advantage
- Proper interview documentation
- Four characteristics every employer demands
- Prepare to answer an employer's most likely questions
- Prepare to ask an employer meaningful questions

Everything we have learned up to this point is in preparation for the most important step, the interview. An interview is a telephone or face-to-face conversation between the employer and the job applicant. The interview can be a good experience if the applicant is well organized and has taken the proper time to prepare for the opportunity.

An interview is generally the first chance to meet the employer. Remember that your first impression is extremely important, and that this interview is our chance to leave a great lasting impression on the interviewer. There are many things to consider in making a good first impression.

Employers love to hear whether the applicant has actually used their products or services. If you have, in a positive way explain how their product or service has benefited you in the past. Never lie, always be truthful in what you say, yet say it with discretion. Be prepared to tell the interviewer about your specific skills, educational background, and job related history. This may even include skills, education and experience that you have acquired while incarcerated. Think about the questions that the interviewer may inquire of you and be prepared to answer them effectively, using concise and positive words. If the interviewer asks you if you can type, simply state, "Yes, I can type and I am able to type about 35 words per minute," or "No, I am not able to type, but I am willing to learn." Never answer a question by restating the question. This will tell the interviewer that you may have not been listening and may irritate the person. Your goal is to have a natural, yet professional conversation with the interviewer, clarifying all of your qualities and skills that promote you as a perfect candidate for the position.

You will want to be prepared to provide several reasons why you would be a dependable and highly valuable employee asset to the company. To become an asset to the company does not simply mean showing up for work. To turn yourself into an employee asset, you must be that person who is able to add value by bringing quality and positive growth to the company. Find ways to make yourself indispensable and become a necessary part of the company. For example, offer to work overtime or offer to take on the more difficult, less wanted projects. This will help to offset your wages, making you a valued asset to the company.

Setting an Interview

Now that we are adequately prepared for the interview, it is time to think about how we will communicate with the human resource officer when making an appointment. There are certain things that we may be able to control such as the date and time of the interview. This can be done by being proactive in scheduling the interview. The first step is to represent yourself as a respectful and well qualified candidate on the phone. If you are speaking with the human resource officer and you have answered any and all questions the person may have of you, initiate the conversation onto the next proactive step. At this point it would be a good idea to let the human resource officer know that you are available for an interview on Monday at 2:00 p.m. If the human resource officer replies to your response by saying that Monday at 2:00 p.m. is booked, suggest a block of hours that you would be available the same day, such as anytime between 2-5 p.m. If this should fail, ask the human resource officer what day would be the most convenient for him or her and try to negotiate the best possible time for both of you.



The goal that you are trying to accomplish by taking this proactive stance is to:

- Set up the interview as quickly as possible while your name and application are relatively fresh in the human resource officers' mind.
- Avoid any possible conflicts that you may have with other already scheduled interviews.

There are a few other proactive activities that you can do to ensure that you are successful in your interview. Plan to go alone and make sure you have a pen, pencil and some paper to write down any notes the interviewer may give you. You will also want to bring a list of appropriate questions that you may want to ask the employer about the company or position and how you can combine your qualities with the needs of the company. Do not schedule anything else within one hour before or after the interview. The level to which you are prepared will directly impact your chance of being hired.

Three Basic Approaches to Setting an Interview:

- **Instant Interview:** There is a good chance that when you turn in an application for employment the employer may want to interview you on the spot. You should always be prepared for this occasion. These interviews are generally brief and by design they are to gain a first impression of the potential employee. You may not be interviewed by the actual person with the power to hire you. You may be interviewed by a subordinate whose job it is to pre screen applicants to help narrow down the decision of who to hire.
- **Telephone Inquiries:** A telephone inquiry is an initial contact to determine if a company is hiring. You should approach this just like an initial interview. Proper phone etiquette should be followed. Your goal is to set up an immediate interview with the potential employer.

You may quickly discover that the classified ad that you are looking at only has a telephone number. If this is the case you will be required to participate in what is called a telephone interview. This will be a conversation between you and a human resource officer or representative of the company. This initial telephone interview is a determining factor in the human resource officer's decision as to whether or not you will receive a personal interview. If your telephone interview goes well, you will more than likely be invited to participate in a face-to-face interview. Plan ahead and make sure the place you are calling from is quiet. Be sure that there is no background noise when you call the company. This means when you call do not have music playing, babies crying, or people talking in the background. Your telephone conversation should flow naturally and evenly, just as if you are meeting this person face-to-face. You should introduce yourself and state the purpose for your call. You always want to make sure to be courteous, to the point, and factual. When you call, be polite and end the conversation with a request for a definite appointment for an interview. Be ready to accept a specific day and time for the personal interview. When you are concluding the phone call make sure to end with a good impression and thank the phone interviewer for arranging the interview. You simply never know if the person you just spoke with is the actual decision maker.

- **Mail Inquiries:** You may actually make an initial inquiry for a potential job by mail or e-mail. When writing a letter of inquiry, address it to the specific person who is in charge of hiring. This may require some research, so be prepared to put forth some effort to find further information on the company and hiring manager. You may do so by calling the company on the phone or doing research on the internet. Write your letter in a business format (see the cover letter for business format of your letter). Your wording should reflect a person who is positively motivated in becoming employed by this particular company. Present yourself as an asset to this company. Ask for an interview so that you may further discuss your qualifications. Your letter should include your full address, telephone number and an e-mail address if applicable. You must make it as convenient as possible for the employer to make contact with you.

Dressing for Success

How you dress may reflect specific qualities and perspectives to the employer. The first thirty seconds of an interview are very important for the applicant. In this amount of time the interviewer has already observed you and may have already heard you speak. From this, they may have drawn a conclusion based on how you dress, speak, and act. If your hair or facial hair is untidy, you are wearing a black leather jacket, jeans with holes, or worn-out leather shoes, what kind of impression do you think the employer has drawn about you? Now take the other candidate who is neatly groomed, wearing a dress shirt, black or khaki slacks, a belt, and dress shoes, and the potential employer will draw a completely different impression of you. The only thing that has changed is what you are wearing. Do not wear excessive amounts of cologne. Different colognes may be liked or disliked by potential employers. They can discriminate based on the cologne that you are wearing, but that thirty second impression that counts the most. Make sure your fingernails are trimmed and clean. If you wear a beard or mustache or any type of facial hair, groom it appropriately. Be careful not to consume food products before an interview that leave a bad odor on your breath. Before the interview use a breath strip, breath freshener or gum, but do not chew gum while speaking with the employer.

Proper Body Language

Not all messages involve words. Body language, also known as non-verbal communication, is the sending and receiving of messages without the use of words. A single body movement or gesture may have several meanings. This is especially true if the gesture is not accompanied by spoken words. Your body language tells the interviewer a lot about you and a good interviewer will pay attention to eye contact, body movement, gestures, and expressions. After observing your

Body Language
The sending and receiving of messages without the use of words.

body language, a good interviewer can determine many things about you. Body language will often tell the interviewer if you are lying or telling the truth, whether you are interested or disinterested in their question, and it may also communicate your work ethic. Just as important as the clothes you wear is the attitude you radiate. Smile, have a pleasant expression on your face. Be alert and look interested in the interview. Do not have your eyes wandering around the room or away from the interviewer. Look the interviewer in the eye when he or she is speaking. Sit up in the chair and keep your hands in your lap, on a pen and paper, or around the mid-section when speaking. Do not let your hands ‘talk too much’ during the interview. Do not fidget or play with your pen or any other object in your hands. This is important because some interviewers are experts in non-verbal communications.

| Non-verbal Communication | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Type | Possible Meaning |
| Tears | Joy, sorrow, love, pain |
| A Wink | A greeting, a shared secret, a signal, teasing |
| A Fist | Power, defiance, a threat |
| Crossed Fingers | A wish or hope, good luck, a lie |
| Arms folded at chest | Reservation, displeasure, disagreement, defiance, being cold |
| Handshake | A greeting, a farewell, an agreement, peace, sportsmanship |
| Smile | Friendliness, humor, happiness, affection, approval, ridicule |

Slouching during an interview may suggest a lack of interest in the job. It also may present to the interviewer that you are sloppy and quite possibly lazy. Wandering eyes may give the impression that you are bored. You need to always be aware of the message you are sending through the way your body is moving. Proper use of body language can help you clearly communicate your intentions, so be sure that you are sending the signals and messages you want to send. Here are a few tips to help you use positive body language in an interview:

Hands: A firm handshake conveys confidence. Make sure your hands are clean and not sweaty. Do not use a bone-crushing grip. Try to match the pressure extended by the interviewer. Do not touch your face, hair, or clothing.

Seating: Do not take it upon yourself to sit down until the interviewer invites you to be seated. If you are in a conference room do not arbitrarily choose a chair to sit in, but instead wait for the interviewer to point out which chair is appropriate for you to be seated in. If the interviewer does not point out which chair, it is appropriate to ask: “Excuse me, sir, where is the best place for me to sit?”

Eye Contact: Look directly into the eyes of the interviewer but do not stare. Look down at your notes occasionally. This would be a good reason to take notes.

Head Movement: When the interviewer makes an interesting point such as describing the job tasks nod your head in agreement and slightly raise your eyebrows. This conveys that you are interested and the interviewer will receive this as a green light to continue.

Arms: Do not fold your arms, it is a negative communication. It sends the signal that you are closed or disinterested in what the interviewer is saying or presenting. Keep your hands and arms in a relaxed accommodating position. If you do tend to move your hands and arms, keep them in the mid-section range from your waist to your chest area.

Glasses: If you wear glasses, be sure to wear them to the interview. You may choose not to wear them thinking that it will enhance your appearance, but in reality this can cause you to squint your eyes when reading. It may also make it next to impossible to take notes or fill out any possible paperwork that the interviewer may present to you. If you wear lenses that darken in the sunlight and become clear once inside be sure to get to your destination in time for them to clear.

Above all else, keep your shoulders back and put on a smile, sit-up straight and walk tall. A relaxed and unforced smile will convey warmth and confidence. Keep your attention on the interviewer, not on your clothing or your hair. Keep in mind that ‘your actions will speak louder than words’ and that ‘a picture is worth a thousand words’.

Speaking for Success

This type of communication requires the use of words, meanings and sounds. We use words to convey thoughts, opinions, facts, and even emotions to articulate ourselves. We also use words to express ideas, to give information, and to ask questions. Speaking clearly will help express your wants and needs to the interviewer. Failure to communicate clearly can lead to possible confusion between you and the interviewer. If you can speak well you may increase your chances of conducting a stronger interview, and in turn receiving a job offer. Not only are good communication skills required for a successful interview, but many employers require good communication skills as a requirement for employment. Your supervisors, co-workers, and customers must be able to understand what you say and are attempting to communicate. Your speech is part of the image you project and allows people to form an impression about you. If you speak clearly and use proper grammar, people are more likely to form a good impression of you. There are some simple guidelines that you can follow that will help you communicate successfully.

Do not talk too much. No one likes to listen to a person who continually talks without expressing a clear message. Use only enough words to convey your idea clearly. Always pronounce your words clearly and completely. Mispronouncing a word or using poor grammar is very distracting to the listener. Speak clearly and in a normal tone. Make sure not to mumble, which may be very difficult to understand. Poor grammar is often a sign of inadequate education and/or laziness. If you use poor grammar in the interview you may have a more difficult time receiving the job. Pause before answering questions or making statements. This gives you a chance to think about your answer, where you will be able to respond in the best possible way. Avoid using slang, which most employers view as unprofessional. They will be less likely to hire you as an employee. Use complete endings in all of your words and thoughts. For example, pronounce the entire word, such as, 'singing', and do not short the word by saying 'singin'.

While incarcerated it would be a good idea, if available, to take a public speaking class. If this is not possible, you can practice good grammar all the time, whoever you are speaking with and wherever you are at any given time. You can also read books on grammar, learn new words, and study how to use them appropriately. Anything you do to improve your communication skills will not only improve your chances of being hired, but may also improve the compensation you will receive. The bottom line is that if your communication skills are unlimited, your chances for success are also going to be unlimited.

Documentation

There are several documents that are required in order for you to be hired. It would be a good idea to begin the process of obtaining these documents at least six to nine months prior to your release. Most employers will require you to offer proof of your social security number and some form of identification that proves your age. When preparing for an interview you will need to gather all of the official papers the employer may require. Going to the interview prepared communicates to the employer that you are ready to be hired. You will want to create a folder that contains all of the necessary documentation that you may need when going to apply. **Bring this folder with you**

| Documents You May Need During the Hiring Process | | |
|--|---|--|
| You May Need | When Needed | Where To Get It |
| Social Security Card | Before you apply for a job. | Social Security office. Socialsecurity.gov/online |
| Birth Certificate | If required by an employer to prove age or employment eligibility. | Contact the health department of the country where you were born. |
| Driver's License | If your job includes driving. | If you're 16 or over, apply at your local driver's license office. |
| High School Diploma | If required by employer. | Request a transcript from the school board office in the county where you graduated. |
| G.E.D. | If required by employer. | G.E.D. Client Services 325 West Gaines Street, Suite 634 Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400 1-877-352-4331 |
| Training Certificate | If required for the job. | Call your county school board office. Receive when you pass a training course. |
| Union Card | Depends on job; the employer will tell you. Needed to show proof of union membership, training, or payment of union dues. | Receive when you join a union. |

to every place you go to apply for a position. Make sure to also include your résumé, cover letter, and any certifications or licenses in this folder. Make copies of all of these documents so that you can leave a copy with the potential employer. Make sure all documents and copies are clean, neat and organized.

List of Documents Needed to Prove Identity and Employment Eligibility

You need to provide a document from List A. If you cannot, you must provide one document from both List B and List C as a substitute.

| List A | List B | List C |
|---|---|--|
| Documents that Establish Identity and Employment Eligibility | Documents that Establish Identity | Documents that Establish Employment Eligibility |
| U.S. Passport (unexpired or expired) | Driver's License or ID card issued by a state or outlying possession | U.S. Social Security Card issued by the Social Security Administration (other than a card stating it is not valid for employment) |
| An unexpired foreign passport with an unexpired Arrival-Departure Record, Form I-94, bearing the same name as the passport and containing an endorsement of the alien's non immigrant status, if that status authorizes the alien to work for the employer. | ID card issued by federal, state or local government agencies or entities, provided it contains a photograph or information such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color and address. | Original or certified copy of a Birth Certificate issued by a state, county, municipal authority or outlying possession of the United States bearing an official seal. |
| An unexpired foreign passport with a temporary I-551 stamp. | U.S. Military Card or draft record or military dependant's ID card. | ID Card for use as Resident Citizen in the United States (Form I-179) |
| An unexpired Employment Authorization Document that Contains a photograph. (Form I-766, I-688, I-688A, I-688B) | U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner Card | Certification of Birth Abroad issued by the Department of State (Form FS-545 or Form DS-1350) |
| Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551) | School ID card with a photograph | U.S. Citizen ID Card (Form I-197) |
| | Voter registration card | Native American tribal document |

The Interview

The interview is an opportunity for you to learn more about the company and further promote yourself. If you tend to get nervous during an interview, it is best to practice and be prepared as much as possible. Being prepared will help you to better handle any situation that may come along. Practice answering questions with a friend or family member before the interview. Do your best to relax and breathe normal during the interview. Remember that the interviewer already has an additional interest in you or you would not have gotten to the point of an interview in the first place. Answer all of the questions the interviewer asks honestly. Failure to do so may create problems with your credentials and experience at the present time or in the future.

The interview is also a chance for the company to further get to know you and your capabilities. An experienced interviewer will come to know who you are and your positive attributes when he or she has completed the interview. The interviewer has many different criteria in mind when searching for the ideal candidate such as: competence, reliability, integrity, and a positive attitude.

The Four Characteristics Every Employer Demands

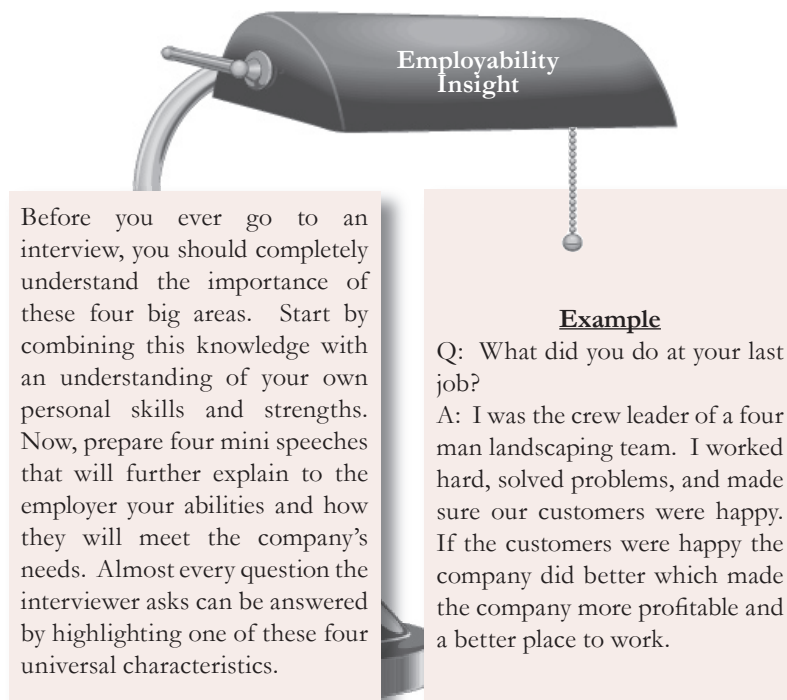
There are certain universal characteristics that virtually every employer is seeking:

Competence. Employers are looking to see if you have the ability to do the job. Do you already possess the requisite skills or do you have the ability to learn and master the job?

Reliability. Once you have demonstrated that you have the required skills, the employer wants to know if you will be dependable and report to work day after day, month after month, and year after year. Your interviewer is looking for clues that may cast light on your dependability.

Integrity. No matter what other great traits you may have to offer, if they can not trust you, they will not hire you.

Attitude. The boss wants you to follow instructions to get the job done well. If you got along well with past bosses, and past co-workers, you will probably do well at your next job. The reverse is also true, if you did not get along with past bosses and co-workers, you may very well have problems with your next company. Attitude goes a long way, especially when working with others. If you are able to maintain a good attitude during the smooth times, and more importantly during the difficult and stressful situations, your possibilities will begin to open further.



What Questions To Expect During an Interview

A proficient interviewer will get to know you by listening to how you answer their specific questions. When an interviewer asks you a question, they do not want to hear a simple yes or no answer. They are trying to discover who you really are; therefore, you will want to answer the questions completely. The following questions may be asked of you and you will want to formulate answers for each if of these questions in advance:

- What are your goals for the future?
- Why should we hire you?
- Are you dependable?
- Tell me about your biggest weakness.
- Why do you want to work for our company?
- What kind of work do you eventually hope to do?
- What did you do at your last job?
- Do you work better alone or in a team environment?
- Tell me about your biggest accomplishment at your last job.
- Tell me about a situation at work where you failed, and what you did about it.

One question the interviewer may ask is, “Will you tell me about yourself?” This is your golden opportunity to summarize your best attributes and emphasize their benefits to the specific job and company. You should already have formulated this answer and be ready to give a brief reply, again concentrating on those four universal characteristics all employers desire.

The interviewer is not the only one who should ask questions. You may also ask questions at the appropriate time(s). Your questions should help you to learn more about the company and the position available. Furthermore, your questions should focus on the company specifically and show the interviewer that you are interested in the job. You will want to ask questions that show the interviewer you are willing to go above and beyond, and will excel at the position, always benefiting the company (e.g. “Do you allow overtime work?”, “Do you offer any training or further educational opportunities?”). Be careful not to ask questions that the interviewer has already answered earlier in the interview.

The following is a list of common questions that job applicants (you) ask:

- Will I have the opportunity to volunteer for overtime hours?
- Does the company look first to promote from within?
- Was the last person in this job that I am applying for promoted?
- What are the job duties?
- What are the usual work hours?
- What can I expect a typical day to be like?
- To be successful, are there any special types of skills or training I will need?
- Will the company provide me with special training and education opportunities?

Good questions let the interviewer know that you are interested in the job and also help you to decide whether the job opening actually fits your wants and needs. It is important for you to inform the interviewer of your special skills or achievements, your work experience, how you may be contacted, your personal references, and any educational or training plans that you may have in the future.

It is a good idea to keep a copy of your résumé in front of you. This will help you to keep your pertinent information and thoughts organized. Remember that no two interviews are ever alike. Do not be surprised if an interviewer asks you a few unexpected questions. Such as, “What can the company do for you?” Look at the following list of common questions and review the positive and negative answers given for each question. This may help prepare you for your interview:

| Questions and Answer Examples | | |
|---|--|---|
| Interview Questions | Positive Applicant Answers | Negative Applicant Answers |
| What job do you want to apply for? | I would like to apply for the shipping clerk position. | Well, I don't know. I guess I'll take anything you have open. |
| Why did you leave your last job? | I felt I would be better suited working in a smaller company. | I had a terrible boss. She couldn't get along with anybody, especially me, so I decided to quit. |
| Have you had any courses or training to prepare you for this job? | Yes. Here is a list of the courses I have taken. I would be glad to explain what each one was about. | I had some night courses. I can't remember the names or exactly what they were about. |
| Do you have any work experience? | Yes. Here is a copy of my résumé. As you can see, I have had experience in shipping and receiving goods with a large department store. | I've done just about every kind of work you can mention. I was a top-notch shipping and receiving clerk on my last job. |
| Why did you choose this company to apply for a job? | I am interested in the work you do here, and the working environment seem very satisfying. | It is a paycheck, and I hear it is easy to work here. |
| Are you satisfied with the salary for this job? | I think the salary will be enough to support me. I would like to find out about company benefits and possibilities for advancement. | Well, it isn't much. How about benefits? Do the employees get a lot of sick leave and holidays? |

| Information the Employer Uses To Hire or Not To Hire | |
|--|---|
| Some People Are Hired Because They: | Some People Are Not Hired Because They: |
| Show interest in the company and the job | Show no interest in the company or the job |
| Know about the company's products or services | Know nothing about the company |
| Have clearly defined career goals | Have no career goals |
| Are qualified for the job | Do not have the knowledge or skills to do the job |
| Express themselves clearly | Communicate poorly |
| Have a record of past accomplishments | Appear lazy |
| Get along well with others | Do not get along with others |
| Have a positive attitude toward life and work | Have a bad attitude |
| Are well groomed | Are poorly groomed |
| Have good manners | Have poor manners |

Give it Your All as an Employee

At the end of the day it all comes down to your attitude. A very successful business owner that actually prefers to hire ex-felons gave this recommendation. "Above all else, bring with you a positive, can do attitude. I want an employee that is fired up to get the job done, not some one playing the charity card or expecting me to say no or not interested."

| Give It Your All | |
|--|--|
| Do's: | Don'ts: |
| Be polite to the secretary or receptionist who greets you. | Walk into an office if the door is closed. |
| Wait for your interviewer to invite you to sit. | Do not answer questions with lies. |
| Be confident; show your potential. | Slouch or sprawl in your chair or fidget restlessly. |
| Sit back and look attentive, but try to be relaxed. | Do not argue or display a negative attitude. |
| Know the interviewer's name and refer to the interviewer by his or her surname. | Smoke during the interview – or before; your clothes will carry the smell. |
| Look at your interviewer when either of you is speaking. | Worry about being nervous. Nervousness is natural. |
| Be polite and respectful. | Chew gum or scratch you head. |
| Listen carefully to the interviewer's questions and answer all aspects of the interviewer's question. | Stare at the floor or ceiling when speaking with the interviewer. |
| Speak clearly; answer "yes" or "no" and expand on your answers for clear understanding. | Interrupt the interviewer to answer a question or answer before you have had time to think. |
| Smile and relax. Thank the interviewer. | Whisper or mumble or nod in response to a question. |
| Have a specific job or type of job in mind. | Say you will take any job. |
| Be prepared with your résumé and references. | Give false information about yourself, your school record, job record, skills, or abilities. |
| Be honest about your application; your interviewer can check on your answers. | Do not be late. |
| Be positive about your past work experience; emphasize the good aspects of the job, and what you were able to learn from it. | Give negative opinions of your previous supervisor or company. |

Figuring It Out For Yourself

Figure it out for yourself, my lad,
You have all that the greatest of people have had;
Two arms, two hands, two legs, two eyes,
And a brain to use if you would be wise,
With this equipment they all began,
So start from the top and say, "I Can!"

Look them over, the wise and the great,
They take their food from a common plate,
And similar knives and forks they use,
With similar laces they tie their shoes,
The world considers them brave and smart,
But you have all they had when they made their start.

You can triumph and come to skill,
You can be great if you only will.
You're well equipped for what fight you choose;
You have arms and legs and a brain to use,
And the person who has risen great deeds to do,
Began life with no more than you.

You are the handicap you must face,
You are the one who must choose your place.
You must say where you want to go,
How much you will study the truth to know;
You have been equipped for life, you see
But you must decide what you want to be.

Courage must come from the soul within,
The person must furnish the will to win.
So figure it out for yourself,
You were born with all that great have had,
With your equipment they all began,
Get hold of yourself and say: "I Can!"

Chapter 6 Summary

I know it!

1. What is a job interview and what does it entail?

☐

2. Name the three basic approaches to setting an interview.

☐

3. What are three important things that will help you in an interview?

☐

4. What are the four characteristics every employer demands, and briefly explain each?

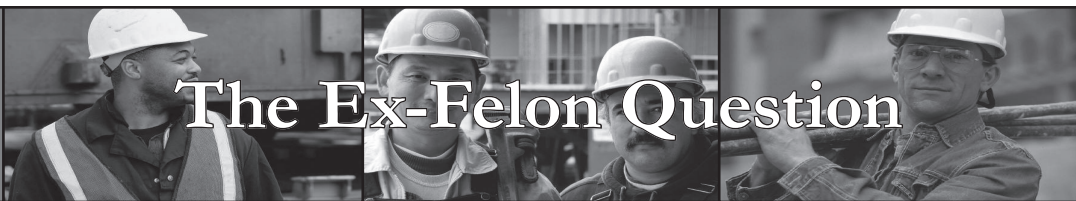
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5. What additional deductions may be taken out of your paycheck?

☐

Chapter 7

The Ex-Felon Question



Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Learn how to handle being an ex-felon while searching for a job.
- Have a specific plan to help answer the ex-felon question.
- Understand how to conduct an interview using these proper techniques and answers to the ex-felon question in a positive manner.
- Understand what federal bonding is and how it can help an ex-felon.
- Be able to explain what federal bonding is to the interviewer in a way that will help make you more marketable.

How to Explain Your Criminal Record

At some point in time we will all have to deal with answering the question about being sentenced to prison. The way this situation is handled will be extremely important and may actually make yourself more marketable to a company. There are ways to actually turn this answer into a positive situation, and in fact, it may help to make you a much better prospect to the company.

The best suggestion we can offer you during an interview is to be up-front and honest about your conviction. Many work places will run a background check on you, which is easier to do with current technology, so do not try to hide the fact that you spent time in a state facility. Once you are honest about the situation, move on to how you bettered yourself during that time and how you continue to do so presently. Explain what you have done to overcome any issues. There is nothing wrong with doing this in the interview. Everyone makes mistakes; it is what makes us human. Those that learn from it, and move on with life in a positive way, stand the best chance of success. The key here is to be open and honest, but you do not need to say more than is necessary or asked.

How Does a Person with a Felony Find a Job?

There are three articles we would like to share with you that directly address the question of finding employment as an ex-felon. The first article appeared on the website washingtonpost.com.

Where You're At: If you are still under a supervised release program, then following the direction and assistance given by a parole officer is most prudent. At this stage, your primary goal is to complete your probation or parole, after which you may begin your new life. If you absolutely need cash, and cannot market your previous skills, then strongly consider a temp agency that will hire you out, and pay you, on a daily basis as a manual laborer. If you are already past the supervised release stage, then it's time to rebuild.

Where You're Not: Although it's disheartening, there are jobs you can't have pretty much without exception, exclude anything and everything that involves firearms, and explosives. Bonded positions, highly regulated and licensed positions, and most government jobs are off the prospective list as well. Positions working around minors are probably out too.

Where You Can Go: You will most likely find your new career home in a small to very small company, where you will work closely with the owner. Most small companies struggle to survive, and rely heavily on each employee they have. You will probably be working with or near the owner, because they are down working in the trenches to keep their company afloat on a daily basis.

Where You Can't Go: Most medium to large companies don't want to be involved with any real or perceived liability in hiring you. If this is the route you really want to pursue, than plan on adding a lot of positive factors to your résumé between the time of your conviction and the time you apply. Do not lie on the application since you will be fired if they discover the lie.

What You Can Do: Unskilled and semi-skilled labor positions are high on a convict's new job list, as most employers need to keep these revolving door type jobs filled. Residential construction labor is a good starter job. You can build your skill level, increase your wages, and maybe find a long-term home with a contractor.

Assume that you will have to discuss your conviction, and that a background investigation will be done. Employers want to know that you have moved on from your experience. **A simple statement is all that's needed!**

“I was convicted of _____, and have fulfilled my obligations to the Court and Society. I know that crime is wrong, and I also know that I have to try harder, and be better than the average person. I am ready to do this.”

The above statement is clear, concise, and accurate. Do not go in to a tirade about how life has done you wrong, or that you are a victim of the system!

What Else Can You Do: You will now need to prove that you are in fact growing and implementing a plan to make yourself a better person.

- Education is a must: If you need a G.E.D., get it. Enroll in Community College classes (instruction) and courses (skills). If you have a skill or specific education, consider teaching adult education classes. Use counselors at your local one stop career center to help develop a new career path.
- Volunteer for community service. This looks good on a résumé, it puts you in a networking position, it exposes you to potential employers, it keeps you away from an unsavory crowd, and it should make you feel better about yourself. Two full days (or the equivalent) per month is the norm. Use peer support to explore new career options.
- Consider church. It has the same exposure as volunteering, and can be a source of support for some. Ask church leaders for career guidance and support.
- Try to expunge your conviction, or apply for a Certificate of Rehabilitation. All felony convictions can be made to go away; some are just harder than others (such as federal convictions requiring a pardon or clemency, or registrant crimes which may require continued registration.)
- Prevent future convictions. This is a no-brainer, but still needs to be said.

The second article appeared on the website eHow.com.

Finding a suitable position of employment in the best of circumstances is a challenging task. If you have a felony conviction on your record, obtaining gainful employment is an even more daunting task. While there are challenges associated with finding a job with a felony on your record, there nevertheless are strategies and tactics that you can employ to better your odds of obtaining a suitable position of employment. Indeed, by taking advantage of all resources available to you, finding a job becomes a manageable endeavor.

1. Schedule an appointment at the job or workforce center in your community. In most communities in the country a resident can find a job center operated by a local employment services agency or by the state department of labor. These centers typically maintain specific programs designed to assist an individual with a felony record in finding suitable employment.
2. Meet with your probation or parole officer (if you are on some type of supervised release) to obtain information and access to additional resources to assist you in your job search. Keep in mind that the probation or parole office serves multiple purposes. In addition to supervising your conduct, these offices also exist to maintain resources to assist you in integrating into the community. One of the primary objectives of integration is obtaining gainful employment.
3. Prepare a résumé. Keep in mind that if you were incarcerated for any period of time, you need to work around the gaps in your résumé. Because your résumé will set the initial impression a potential employer will have of you, it is important that there be no red flags in the document.
4. Submit your résumé to prospective employers. If you are required to complete a job application as well, and if it asks whether you have a felony conviction, do not provide false information. In this day and age it is not only relatively easy but also likely that a prospective employer will undertake some sort of background check. Make a notation next to the question that you desire to discuss your legal status during an interview.
5. Respond to questions about your criminal history during the course of an interview in an honest and straightforward manner. Do not volunteer unnecessary information. Explain to the interviewer what you learned from your experiences.

Felony on Your Record? 10 Job Hunting Tips

The following article appeared on the website careerbuilders.com:

If you have a criminal record in your past, are you forever barred from rejoining corporate America and taking advantage of professional opportunities? Not necessarily. It is achievable, but definitely an uphill battle, says Pat Kendall, career coach and author of “Jumpstart Your Online Job Search and eResumes: Everything You Need To Know”.

According to Kendall, an estimated 80 percent of companies perform background checks on job applicants. Today’s terror-aware atmosphere and litigious society makes employers responsible to a greater degree for checking out candidates they hire.

It can be very difficult for most employers to get past a conviction on an applicant’s record, so be prepared for rejection. You also have to realize you are starting over fresh after a conviction and must begin the laborious process of gathering experience and gaining society’s trust. Here are some suggestions for getting back to employment:

First, consult legal council about the possibility of getting your record expunged, sealed or the conviction reduced. These actions may not be available for every case, but it is definitely worth looking into.

Contact local human services organizations in your area to see if they offer programs and support for ex-felons.

“Take whatever job you can to start rebuilding your experience and credibility”, says Quincy Roseborough, case manager for Metropolitan’s Young Fathers Initiative in Chicago, Illinois. Now is not the time to be picky. “Many of our clients start with jobs in manufacturing and fast food. The pay is mostly minimum wage and often the hours are long. But, some have opportunities to go to warehouse jobs where they can learn to drive a fork lift and gain other skills.” Take the job and use it as an opportunity to showcase good job performance and to rebuild your experience and others’ trust in you.

Look to personal contacts and friends to help you get a job.

1. Seek employment with small and local companies. “We promote looking for jobs with small companies and independent businesses and employers, instead of major chains,” Roseborough divulges. Local businesses may have less stringent hiring requirements and are more willing to give you a chance.
2. Consider self-employment. Walt was convicted at age nineteen of drug possession and intent to sell. After serving time in prison, he took odd jobs in various auto shops and car dealerships to learn about car repair. He now works as an independent contractor and operates his own auto repair business.
3. “Don’t put the conviction on your résumé,” Kendall declares. “Consider putting it in your cover letter and enclosing letters of recommendation. Be honest and up-front.” Most applications will require you to indicate if you’ve ever been convicted of a felony. If the question is not on the application, you don’t want to let the process go too long without coming clean. You should let them know early on that you have a past record because it will show up in the background check.
4. Be professional and confident. “Many young men we see lack people skills. We tell them that when they go to an employment office or are in an interview if they are dressed appropriately, speak well, and have confidence it will show,” Roseborough says. “We explain that their résumé is like an ad in the newspaper, but they are the ‘product’; and they have to go in and ‘sell’ themselves. Some employers will take a chance if there is a nice presentation.”
5. Don’t harbor false hope. “It’s going to be hard. Having a felony on your record is a real obstacle, and it is only getting harder,” Roseborough warns. You will be rejected. Just don’t give up.
6. Seek emotional support. Whether it’s family, close friends or a professional counselor, you will need to talk to someone for encouragement. Many ex-convicts experience depression when they meet repeated resistance in trying to once again find employment. Having that support system will help you stay focused and motivated when you feel discouraged.

Three Basic Steps to Cover the Ex-Felon Question

There are three basic steps to help you answer the ex-felon question in a full and positive light:

1. Honesty – Be honest about your conviction. You do not need to give specific details or what you were convicted of doing. Be brief and concise about the situation. “Yes, I was convicted of a felony and paid my debt to society.”
2. Make Use of Time – Explain that during your incarceration you worked hard to grow and better yourself. Show that you spent your time wisely and found a way to use the time in a beneficial manner. “I was able to

use the time wisely. I earned my G.E.D. I was enrolled in classes that helped me with my finances, employment ability, and life skills. I found my sense of spirituality. I become closer to my higher being, my family, and got to know myself in a deeper manner. The time was very beneficial for me and I grew to be a better man everyday.”

3. Felony Bonding – As an ex-felon you are bonded by the federal government in case any irresponsible actions or accidents happen. This means that the company will be covered by the government if the employee damages property or if equipment goes missing under the employees watch. “Mr. Richards, have you heard about the federal bonding program?”

Federal Bonding

There are many ways to present yourself as the best candidate for the position available. You always want to be an asset after you have achieved employment, but you also want to be able to present yourself as an asset prior to becoming employed. The federal bonding program is a unique job placement tool that will help make you that valued asset the company is seeking. The federal bonding program is a vital resource in the provision of offender job placement. Your criminal past may make your transition from release to work difficult, but an employer may be more willing to hire you if you are federally bonded. Below you will find a series of detailed questions and answers about the federal bonding program to assist you with most of your inquiries. It also includes applicable phone numbers and websites that you and your employer will need to use to obtain a successful bonding. Do not neglect this opportunity to set yourself apart from other possible applicants. It is important to study and understand the questions and also be able to justify the program in detail, explaining how it can benefit the company. Your understanding and explanation of this opportunity can be the difference between your being hired, or simply being passed over.

What is Federal Bonding?

Q: What is the Federal Bonding Program?

A: It is a unique tool to help a job applicant get and keep a job. The program issues Fidelity Bonds, and is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Q: What is a Fidelity Bond?

A: It is a business insurance policy that protects the employer in case of loss of money or property due to employee dishonesty. It is like a “guarantee” to the employer that the person hired will be an honest worker. The Fidelity Bonds issued under the Federal Bonding Program are insurance policies issued by the Travelers Casualty and Surety Company of America. The McLaughlin Company in Washington, DC, is the agent for Travelers in managing the program nation wide.

Q: How does the bond help someone get a job?

A: The bond is given to the employer free-of-charge, and serves as an incentive to the company to hire a job applicant who is an ex-offender or has some other “risk” factor in their personal background. The employer is then able to get the worker’s skills without taking any risk of worker dishonesty on the job.

Q: What exactly does the bond insurance cover?

A: It insures the employer for any type of stealing by theft, forgery, larceny or embezzlement. It does not cover liability due to poor workmanship, job injuries or work accidents. It is not a bail bond or court bond for the legal system. It is not a contract bond, performance bond or license bond sometimes needed to be self-employed.

Q: What restrictions exist in the program’s bond coverage?

A: The worker must meet the state’s legal age for working. Workers must be paid wages with Federal taxes automatically deducted from pay; self-employed persons cannot be covered.

Q: Who does the program help?

A: Bond coverage is provided for a person whose background usually leads employers to question his honesty and thus deny him a job. The program will cover a person who is a “risk” due to his being in one or more of the following groups:

- Ex-offender with a record of arrest, conviction or imprisonment; anyone who has ever been on parole or probation, or has any police record;
- Recovering substance abusers; persons rehabilitating through treatments for alcohol or drug abuse;
- Poor credit record or have declared bankruptcy;
- Dishonorably discharged from the military; and
- Persons lacking a work history who are from families with low income

Why is Federal Bonding Needed?

Q: Since employers can purchase a normal Fidelity Bond to protect against employee dishonesty, why is the Federal bonding program needed?

A: Fidelity Bonds that employers purchase commercially do not cover persons that have committed “a fraudulent or dishonest act.” Ex-offenders are not bondable in the commercial market because they are deemed as too risky to insure for job honesty. Only the Federal Bonding Program will issue bonds to employers to cover ex-felons. As a result, bonding is eliminated as a barrier to employment and the program serves as a unique job placement tool.

Q: Is it legal for employers to deny employment to applicants who are not bondable under commercially purchased bonds?

A: Employers fear that applicants who are not bondable will be untrustworthy employees, and companies can require bonding and deny employment on that basis. The Federal Bonding Program can help overcome that employer fear by making the applicant bondable. The program’s bond is like a guarantee of employee job honesty for the hardest-to-place job applicants.

Q: Can the Federal Bonding coverage exist forever?

A: The key purpose of the program’s bond is to help an at-risk applicant get a job. The bond insurance is issued free-of-charge to the employer for a period of six months. If the worker demonstrates job honesty during the six months of Federal Bonding Program coverage, that worker can become bondable for life under commercial bonding made available to the employer for purchase from the Travelers Property Casualty insurance company.

Who is Eligible?

Q: Do you qualify for obtaining bonding services?

A: Anyone who cannot get a job without bonding is eligible for help by the Federal Bonding Program. All individuals who have, in the past, committed a fraudulent or dishonest act, are eligible for bonding services.

Q: What if you have already been told by a company that you are “Not Bondable”?

A: The main reason that the Federal Bonding Program exists is to help get a job for any person who experiences bonding as a barrier to getting a job. The program will bond anyone who has a risk factor in their personal background.

Q: Can the program bond persons who are self-employed?

A: No, the program’s fidelity bond is issued to an employer to cover only a worker who earns wages with federal taxes automatically withheld from the worker’s paycheck.

Q: If an applicant is to be placed in a job where bonding was not previously required, can a bond be issued?

A: Yes, bonding can be provided for any job, if issuance of the bond makes the difference in getting the job. Job placement often occurs simply due to the fact that the bond overcomes an employer’s fear that the job applicant may be dishonest worker.

Q: Can bonding be issued to cover an already employed worker?

A: The main purpose of the Federal Bonding Program is to help secure employment for applicants who are having a hard time getting a job due to their questionable backgrounds. However, a bond can be issued to cover a current employee who is not bondable under the employer’s insurance, and needs the program’s bonding in order to secure a promotion to a new job requiring bonding or to prevent being laid off.

How is a Federal Bond Issued?

Q: Who must request issuance of a Fidelity Bond?

A: Issuance of the bond, for job placement to occur, can be requested by either the employer or the job applicant. This request is to be made to the local agency certified by the Federal Bonding Program. In many cities, agencies are certified to issue bonds to encourage employers to hire. These agencies are “State Job Service” or “One-Stop Career Center”. For further help, call the appropriate phone number shown on the last page.

Q: Can the bond be issued at any time?

A: For the bond to be issued, the employer must make the applicant a job offer and set a date for the individual to start work. The job start date will be the effective date of the bond insurance which will terminate six months later. After the six months, continued coverage will be made available for purchase if the worker has exhibited job honesty under the program’s bond.

Q: How much bond insurance coverage will be issued?

A: A total of \$5,000 bond coverage is usually issued, with no deductible amount of liability for the employer. Larger bond amounts can be issued if the certified agency issuing the bonds has acquired a special bond package and has determined that larger bond amounts are appropriate.

Q: What papers must the employer sign and what other actions must the employer take in order to get the bond?

A: None, once the date is set for the applicant to start work, the bond can be issued instantly. The employer signs no papers, and keeps no special records since the bond is self-terminating. The bond is mailed directly to the employer by The McLaughlin Company in Washington, DC as agent for Travelers.

Does Federal Bonding Work?

Q: How many people have been helped by the program?

A: Many applicants have obtained jobs due to being bonded, and 99% have proven to be honest employees.

Q: What do employers think about bonding as a job-hire incentive?

A: A research study published by a university in Texas surveyed employer attitudes toward hiring ex-offenders. Only 12% said that they were willing to hire these applicants. However, 51% said that they would hire ex-offenders if they were bonded.

Q: Are there other benefits to using bonding services?

A: Yes, a greater variety of jobs can be obtained by applicants, and higher wage jobs can be obtained.

Where Do You Get a Federal Bond?

Q: What do you have to do to get bonding services?

A: The employer or job applicant should contact the nearest State Job Service office or One-Stop Career Center (call 1-877-US2-JOBS). It is necessary for the applicant to first visit and register with one of these offices (sometimes called a Workforce Office). There are no papers to be completed by the job applicant or the employer in order for the bond to be issued to the employer to cover the job honesty of the worker. Before a bond can be issued, the applicant must receive a job offer and the employer must schedule a date to start.

The McLaughlin Company in Washington, DC will then issue, to the employer, a Fidelity Bond insurance policy covering the worker. This policy is underwritten through the Travelers Insurance Company.

Q: How does the employer learn that bonding is available?

A: Workforce Office representatives usually inform employers about the availability of bonding services. Job applicants should also inform employers about bonding in their job search interviews.

Q: Is there a specific phone number to call to get further information on bonding services?

A: Yes, individuals seeking bonding services and a job call toll free: 1-877-US2-JOBS for the location of the Workforce Office/One-Stop Center nearest to your home. Any agency/organization wishing to learn about acquiring bonds to be issued to employers to facilitate job placement call toll free: 1-800-233-2258 ex. 246 or visit The Federal Bonding Program web site bonds4jobs.com

Chapter 7 Summary

I know it!

1. What are the three basic steps to help you explain the ex-felon question?

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2. Write out your own personal ex-felon explanation using the three basic steps.

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3. Explain what federal bonding is, as if you were explaining it to an interviewer.

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Chapter 8

Tests & Taxes

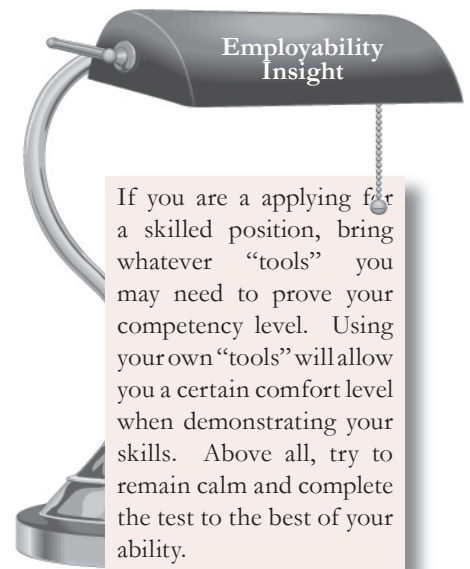
Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Describe the three pre-employment test types most commonly used by employers.
- Understand how background checks are conducted.
- Understand the taxes that may be deducted from your gross pay
- Complete the necessary paperwork required of all new applicants

Some companies may require you to complete a pre-employment test. These tests may vary from measuring the applicant's aptitude, personality, and/or technical skills. There are several things that you can do to help yourself understand what to expect. Get plenty of rest the night before and eat a good breakfast. Before you begin to take a pre-employment test, read and understand the directions thoroughly. Sometimes the person who gives the test may explain the directions verbally. In any case, ask questions if you do not know how to complete the test properly.

On some tests, sample questions and answers are included with the directions. If so, work through them carefully so you will understand how to better complete the test. Certain tests may be timed or have a minimum passing requirement. For written tests, make sure that you bring the necessary supplies such as: a pen, some sharpened No. 2 pencils, an eraser, a watch, and a note pad. You may also be required to take a computer based test. Before you answer any questions, quickly look over the entire test. Some tests may include multiple choice and/or fill-in-the-bank questions. If you have a watch, estimate half of the total time, and mark the approximate halfway point of the test. This will help you pace yourself throughout the test and not waste time on hard questions. Some tests are made so that you can never finish all the items, so do not feel bad if you do not answer every question. If you get stuck on an item, skip it and go on to the next question. You can always go back to any unanswered questions if you finish early.



Aptitude Tests

Many employers use pre-employment tests to find out more about an applicant's ability to perform on the job. For example, an applicant for an equipment assembly job might be asked to take a dexterity test. A dexterity test requires that you show how well you work with your hands. For example, you may be asked to assemble or disassemble different parts of a small engine in an aptitude test. These tests are usually timed and graded for accuracy. If the job is for an administrative assistant, an applicant may be asked to take a typing test. Some of these tests are also timed, and the person giving the test is usually not allowed to give you any assistance. A paper and pencil test is often a standardized test that must be given and taken in a specific manner. Often, answers must be placed on a separate sheet that can be scored by a machine. These two types of tests may be combined into a general skills test which will result in a profile of aptitudes such as general learning, numerical, or verbal aptitude.

Drug Tests

Today's employers are serious about maintaining a drug-free workplace. Although the Drug-Free Work Place Act of 1988 was originally geared toward federal employees, many employers are implementing a workplace substance abuse program. Employers have every right to expect workers to be sober on the job, especially when security and safety are a concern. What types of employment might require a drug test? The answer is: any and all potential employers might request that you take a drug test.

If you are asked to take a drug test, you will be referred to a drug testing center. You will be asked to show identification, fill out a consent form, sign it, and pay a fee (usually around \$25). For employment purposes, the standard procedure will test for alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, opiates, PCP, and amphetamines. In most centers, you may be observed while washing your hands or you may be instructed to not flush the toilet until the test is complete. Normal use of cold medicines that contain alcohol will not affect your results. You should, however, bring in any prescription medications you may be taking. The testing center will keep this information on file.

Could a test return a positive result for someone who has NOT used drugs? The likelihood of this is extremely small. Today’s labs are very accurate and many tests are performed on the sample before a final result is determined. You can forget that old anecdote about the airplane pilot who ate a poppy seed muffin for breakfast and tested positive for opium. This is an urban legend. A person would have to consume ten pounds of poppy seeds every day for a year before a drug test would return a positive result. Ever heard of the effects of second hand cigarette smoke? This goes for marijuana as well. Even if you did not “personally inhale,” if you were around when it was being used, you may have breathed it into your system. With most people, traces of marijuana can stay in your body for three weeks. Remember, your personal reputation, and quite possibly your job opportunity, is on the line.

Personality Tests

Personality tests are sometimes used by a company in the hiring process. These tests are used for a variety of reasons including identifying interpersonal traits that may be needed for certain jobs, estimating the likelihood of job success, and determining how the employee will handle stress. They may also measure characteristics including agreeableness and conscientiousness.

There are many types of personality tests. Some questionnaires use a rating scale such as, Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Often, and Always. Respondents may be asked to respond to statements like: “I consider myself more of a doer than a thinker.” Or “I like to follow schedules.” Other personality inventories request that you finish a sentence such as: “When I am at work, I...” Or you may be shown a photograph and asked to describe what you believe is happening in the picture.

Many employers realize that your experience and attitude toward work will most likely have a greater impact on your ability to do a job than your personality, although, you still want to exemplify yourself as a competent and reliable applicant while answering each question from a professional point of view. Think of your strengths and most outstanding qualities as related to the company and open position.

Background Checks



Surveys have shown that approximately 30% of business failures are related to employee theft and that businesses lose approximately 6% of revenue (nearly \$600 billion globally) annually due to corporate fraud. In Florida, all employers have the legal right to contact the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and request a criminal history check of a job applicant without giving notice to the candidate. For some occupations (for example, day care workers, teachers, doctors) a background check is a standard procedure. For other jobs, it is up to the employer if they want to request a background check. Today’s businesses want to make sure they have adequate controls in place to prevent crime in the workplace. Many companies will contract with outside investigative consultants who will prevent and investigate workplace crime.

Paychecks and Taxes

Congratulations, you got the job! You may now ask yourself what is next. One thing you will need to do is prepare to receive your first paycheck. There are several different forms that the employer will require you to fill out to ensure that the company will properly deduct applicable federal, state and local income taxes. We will help you understand your paycheck and standard payroll deductions (what comes out of your paycheck before you even receive it).

Companies pay their employees based on pay periods. These pay periods can be either weekly, bi-weekly, semi-monthly (twice a month) or monthly. Many companies will delay pay day for a full week or a full pay period. For instance, a company pays its employees every Friday, each paycheck covers the pay period that ends the previous Saturday. This delay allows the company to accurately calculate the exact amount of time worked and pay earned by the employee.

A typical paycheck has a stub attached to it. This stub has detailed information about your earnings and deductions. It will show your gross pay (i.e. the total amount of money earned in the pay period) and will list all of your deductions taken from your gross pay. The amount of your paycheck is the amount left over after all deductions have been deducted from your gross pay, this amount is called your net pay.

| Mon | Tue | Wed | Thur | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|--|------------|-----|------|---------|---|-----|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| | | | | |  | |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|  | Pay Period | | | | | |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| | | | | Pay Day | | |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

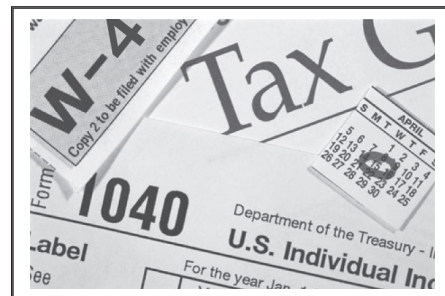
Some companies offer their employees the ability to receive their wages by direct deposit rather than a hard copy check. Advantages of direct deposit include:

- Your paycheck is generally in the bank available for withdraw at 12:01am on payday
- You cannot lose your paycheck before you get it deposited
- You will not have to spend time in a bank line waiting to deposit your check

W-4 Form

The most important form that your employer will have you fill out after being hired is the W-4 Form (Employee Withholding Allowance Certificate). This form determines how much federal income tax will be deducted from your paycheck. The Federal Government allows you to claim certain exemptions for Federal Income Tax purposes. Every legal exemption that you take decreases the amount of Federal Income Tax that you pay. The W-4 is a two-part form. To fill it out follow these simple steps:

- Print or type your name in block one with your address directly below.
- Write your Social Security Number in block two.
- Check your appropriate marital status in block three.
- In block five indicate the number of allowances you are legally claiming.
- Sign your name and write the date on the appropriate spaces.



Paycheck Deductions

Your employer will deduct certain items from your paycheck. These deductions will appear on your paycheck stub.

Income taxes are calculated on all form of earnings. The federal government, as well as, some state and local governments may tax your income. Your employer will withhold these taxes from your paycheck based on the allowances you chose on your W-4 form.

Another type of tax is Social Security Taxes. Social Security taxes are calculated as a percentage of your income. You will pay Social Security taxes in order to receive a monthly payment after you retire from working. As you work throughout your adult life and make contributions you will earn work credits. Later

if you should become disabled or retire you will receive benefits in the form of monthly payments. Medicare is another form of Social Security benefits. It is a government form of hospital and medical insurance.

| Possible Deductions | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Federal Income Taxes | Union Dues | Charitable Contributions |
| State Income Taxes (if applicable) | Savings Plan | 401K Deductions |
| Social Security Taxes | Pensions | Federal or State Unemployment |
| Medicare Taxes | Uniforms | Personal Company Loans/Advances |
| Health Insurance | | |

There are many other types of deductions that may be withheld from your gross pay. Your employer will have you complete forms authorizing them to withhold these deductions on your behalf.



Chapter 8 Summary

I know it!

1. Explain the three types of tests an employer may administer to potential job candidates.

☐

2. List the companies that have a legal right to administer drug tests.

☐

3. What is the purpose of a W-4 form?

☐

4. List some of the main deductions most likely to be subtracted from your gross pay.

☐

Chapter 9

Employability Skills

Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Define the term work ethic
- Understand the expectations of the employer
- Describe what doing your best really means to the employer

Employer Expectations

There is an old adage that claims that you should give “an honest day’s work for an honest days pay”. Your employer will expect good work ethics. To add value to the company you go to work for, you will need to do several things that demonstrate a good work ethic. By meeting their expectations you will become a productive asset for the company. By being a productive asset to your company, your employer will surely recognize your work ethic and you may be rewarded with job security, raises, and promotion. This is a win-win for both you and your employer. Put yourself in the place of your employer. What would you expect of an employee? How would you expect them to behave? What criteria would you expect an employee to fulfill in order to receive a reward or a promotion? If you will take the time to think about these questions and the answers to them, this will help you to understand how employers think and act. Look at the following list of employer expectations and apply them to your work ethic.

Work Ethic

A standard of conduct and values for job performance

Compliance

Your new employer will expect you to observe the company rules and policies. Many companies will explain their guidelines to you at the beginning of your employment. It is your responsibility to make sure you understand the rules and policies of the company. If you do not understand certain rules or policies, be sure to ask your supervisor for clarification.

Punctuality

More than likely one of the foremost company’s policies will involve your working hours. You will be expected to put in a full days work. In order for you to be obedient to this policy you will need to be punctual. This means being on time. Be at work at least five to ten minutes early. You should not leave before the official quitting time. Employers have many ways of checking on the starting and quitting time of employees. No matter what type of system is used to verify your start and stop time you should always be honest about the hours you have worked.

Dependability

Dependable means to be reliable. Being reliable is best described by doing what you say you going to do and by being where you are supposed to be when you are required to be there. There are many people who depend on you everyday. Employers, co-workers, family and friends expect you to be dependable.

Good Work Ethic

Employers expect employees to:

- Comply with company rules and policies
- Come to work every day on time
- Lend a helping hand whenever asked
- Appreciate privileges without abusing them
- Be honest
- Show loyalty
- Get along with coworkers
- Do your best
- Have a good attitude
- Accept responsibility for their work
- Work hard
- Complete work correctly and on time
- Take pride in their work
- Make an effort to improve

You are expected to be a man of your word; not only must you be punctual; you must also stay busy at doing your assignment. To be dependable is not taking time off for non-essential purposes. Your employer will depend on you to do the job you were hired to do. You must complete the tasks as outlined in your job description. You must also complete any task that your supervisor may direct you to do. If you are dependable you will be appreciated. Being appreciated by your employer and co-workers will more than likely lead to job advancement and raises. While you are incarcerated it is a good time to work on being dependable. Learning to be dependable in this environment can translate to being dependable in any environment.

Do Not Abuse Privileges

Your employer may have certain policies that give certain privileges to specific employees. A privilege is a right that is given as a benefit or a favor. You will generally not receive privileges when you first start working for a company. As time goes on and you prove to be a valuable asset to that company your employer may give you specific privilege. Do not take advantage of any privileges that may be given you. Your employer may give you an additional fifteen minute break during your work day. Your employer may allow you to be paid during this break. Do not take advantage by extending your break to twenty minutes. By doing this you are discrediting yourself to your co-workers and your employer which could lead to a loss of privilege or quite possibly termination.

Your employer may allow some personal phone calls. You should keep these calls to a minimum. Do not allow your friends or family to call you just to chat. This will significantly decrease your productivity and cause you to become a liability to the company. Remember you want to be an asset because an asset is a person who is productive and is needed within the framework of the company to be a profitable and thriving company.

We now live in a technologically advanced society. Many companies will allow you to use certain technologies such as computers, fax machines, copy equipment, etc. These technologies can cost a company large sums of money. Ongoing use usually incurs substantial costs. For company e-mail accounts, faxes and Internet connections are not free and are generally substantially more costly than your personal accounts at home. Therefore you do not want to take advantage of an employers fax machine, e-mail, or Internet connection to benefit you personally. To prevent this many companies have strict rules regarding the use of office equipment. When you abuse these privileges you are robbing the company. More importantly your activities may tie up vital communication channels and prevent a paying customer from easily reaching the company. The result of which may be lost sales and reduced customer satisfaction.

Honesty

As the saying goes, “honesty is the best policy.” Your employer expects you to be honest. One type of dishonesty that is a prevalent problem in most workplaces is stealing. Stealing does not always involve taking money from your employer. Stealing also includes taking company supplies, tools or equipment for your personal use. Taking a paper-clip is just as costly to an employer as taking money out of the register. Your employer must replace the stolen paper-clip at a cost to the company. Theft by employees reduces the net profit of the company, resulting in fewer privileges and lower wages.

Being honest with all your dealings as an employee will bring about an employer/employee loyalty that can create longevity, promotions and wages increases. An employer will generally go to great lengths to keep an honest employee.

Loyalty

Depending on how old you are, you or your parents may have been part of a workforce where loyalty between employer and employee was paramount to company stability. In today's society both employer and employee have kicked loyalty to the curb. This essentially is a bad model for company and employee success. There are many different forms of loyalty. One form of loyalty is staying true to the company by not disclosing vital company information or business practices to your friends who may be employed by a direct competitor. Another form of loyalty by an employee is maintaining extended periods of employment with the same employer. This is definitely a lost practice in today's working world. But if employers and employees both would realize the benefits of a long-term relationship they would see the benefits for both equally. The employer would benefit by reduced costs in training and would increase custom satisfaction due to an employee who understands company policy and is loyal to that policy. The employee would benefit through more stable employment, promotions from within the company, privileges not given to newer employees, seniority and incremental wage increases. Company loyalties on both sides of the bench are a win-win for both parties. Being a loyal employee means always working to make the company better.

Getting Along With Others

You will be expected to not only get along with your employer but also with any other employees of the company. If you cannot get along with others you will not get promoted and you will more than likely be fixed within a short time span. All employers are difficult and their personalities differ. How they manage people will be vastly different from one employer to another. The best way to get along with your employer is to do your job well. As a new employee do not try to change the way your employer does things. You need to get to know your employer and the operation before you make suggestions of how things could change to increase better productivity and profitability. Be willing to learn and be sure to ask questions. This will let your employer know that you want to do the job well.

Your employer will expect you to get along with your co-workers. Getting along with co-workers is crucial to increasing productivity. If you interfere with the companies ability to get the job done because you do not work well with others you will be fired. You will also be expected to get along with customers and business contacts. You will

Ways of Getting Along with Others

- Listen to others' suggestions.
- Avoid making excuses for mistakes or blaming others for them.
- Live up to supervisors' and co-workers' expectations.
- Try to see things from the other persons' point of view.
- Respect the opinions of others.

need to deal with people outside the company in a friendly and professional way. If you do not treat the customer with the respect he or she deserves, the customer will form a bad impression of the company and will more than likely tell many other potential customers resulting in a significant loss of potential income.

Do Your Best as an Employee

To be a winner at work you must do your best as an employee. You must give a 120% effort in every activity that relates to work. You must find ways to improve how your work. This may include learning new skills, attending technical schools or even attending a college that offers a 2-, 4-, or 6-year degree program. Doing your best also means to accept responsibility for your work. Being the best is an attitude. The challenge to be the best never ends! If you make every effort to be the best, you cannot lose. Your self esteem will grow experientially when you know that you are doing the job to the best of your ability.

Your attitude towards your job will affect whether or not you are truly the best. You need to develop a can do attitude. This attitude suggests not only that you are willing, but also able to learn and grow. Attitude is a skill set that will put you head and shoulders above the next employee. Having a good attitude is a trait highly sought after by employers everywhere. Many employers prefer employees with positive attitudes, over an employee with a negative attitude with perfect skills. An employee can teach a person the skills needed to do any job but you on the other hand must develop a positive attitude. How will you maintain a positive attitude? Reflect on this question. Remember, people will not forget a person with a positive attitude.

Chapter 9 Summary

I know it!

1. What are three types of tests that an employer may give an employee or potential employee?

☐

2. What companies have the right to give drug tests?

☐

3. For what reason is a W-4 Form used?

☐

4. What main deductions will be taken out of your paycheck?

☐

5. What additional deductions may be taken out of your paycheck?

☐

Appendix

Mock Interview



The mock interviews are an opportunity for you to practice your interviewing skills. You can choose one of the following three jobs to interview for, choose the one that interests you most. Make sure you are fully prepared for your interviews.

Job Opportunity #1: B & G Subs, Inc.

Today you will be applying for a position with B & G Subs (B&G). B & G is a fast food company that was founded in 1989. B & G opened for business with one location and has seen steady growth in sales and profits and has expanded to six locations. B & G is an equal opportunity employer (EOE) whose hiring practices have been consistent with industry standards and a company who shows a propensity to promote from within. When applying for a position with B & G you will be applying with a fast paced, fast growing, well-known sub shop in the Tallahassee area.

Some of the duties you will be performing as a B & G employee will include the following:

- Food preparation
- Cleaning work area
- Greeting customers
- Restocking of sub preparation area
- Cleaning dining area
- Cash-in and cash-out of register paperwork

A B & G employee must be able to work independently and must have excellent customer service skills. At B & G you will have the opportunity to become a valued asset through hard work, a sincere and honest attitude and an aggressive work ethic.

B & G has average daily sales of \$4,000 and serves more than 500 customers per day. In the past three years B & G has expanded its product line to include serving breakfast. This expansion has led to rapid sales growth and has affected hiring practices whereas B & G needs more employees to cover new shifts. Crew chief and management positions are likely to become available in the near future. It seems likely that B & G will further expand its product line that could include a pizza and party catering division.

Job Opportunity #2: Tallahassee Auto Mart

Today you are applying for a sales position with Tallahassee Auto Mart (TAM). Over the past two years TAM has experienced phenomenal growth due to the recent economic downturn. TAM specializes in low cost quality vehicles. These vehicles have undergone a rigorous 98 point inspection process. TAM was founded in 2002 after America had sustained its first significant terrorist attack. Its founder Charles Winchester saw the need for an honest, quality, low-end used car dealership in the Tallahassee area. TAM was opened on January 8, 2002 with 15 quality used vehicles on its lot and has now expanded to three locations with more than 1,000 vehicles available for purchase on any given day. TAM has many positions available at this time; they include lot clean-up, detailing, sales, sales management, general management, and store management.

TAM over its history has been very successful in retaining its valued employees. TAM has an aggressive policy of promoting from within that has seen lot attendants become store managers in less than three years. As you become a valued employee asset through hard work, a sincere and honest attitude and an aggressive work ethic you will begin to experience the same opportunities that have become available to all TAM employees.

TAM's business has proved to be one of the most aggressive plans in the Tallahassee area and there is no signs of change. In the near future TAM is currently looking to expand its dealerships by adding a low cost new car option to its selection. By doing this TAM becomes the largest auto dealership in the local Tallahassee area. This will create an opportunity for you to grow and expand your career with one of the best auto dealerships in the area.

Job Opportunity #3: Green Clean, Inc.

Today you are applying for an environmental specialist position with Green Clean, Inc. (GCI). GCI is a company founded in 1999 by George Benson. Mr. Benson saw the need to establish an office an industrial cleaning service whose quality, integrity and ethics would exceed industry standards. Over the last eleven years GCI has experienced explosive growth in the Tallahassee metropolitan area. GCI over the last year has revised its short term business plan to include a major expansion into several surrounding communities. This has

opened up the possibility for several new technicians, entry level management and foreman positions. GCI is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE) who aggressively promotes from within. Due to the nature of GCI's business, extensive training may be required but candidates with past experience or certification are given preferential treatment. Each candidate must be honest, hardworking, a good communicator and able to work closely with the public. GCI requires its employees to be able to be bonded. GCI also requires intermittent drug and alcohol testing and a psychological evaluation is also likely. A criminal background check is guaranteed. GCI offers a benefit and wage package that exceeds industry standards. Only serious individuals need to apply.

Mock Interview Evaluation Sheet

The following evaluation sheet will be used by the interviewers during your mock interview. Make sure you review the evaluation sheet in advance of your interview, practice answering the related questions and have fine tuned your interview skills. There are 100 points possible on each interview. You will have two mock interviews, the first will be with a REEFS instructor, the second and final interview will be with a member of the Wakulla Faith and Character administration team.

| Mock Interview Grading Rubric | | Name: _____ | Total Score _____ |
|---|----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Evaluation | Interviewer Comments | Score | |
| Did the candidate create a positive initial impression? ✓Appearance, handshake, eye contact, smile ✓Did the candidate wait to be asked to be seated? ✓Positive seating posture | | (Up to 10 pts) | |
| Did the candidate fully engage in the interview? ✓Appropriately talkative ✓Eye contact ✓Positive attitude ✓Demonstrate interest in the company | | (Up to 15 pts) | |
| Did the candidate demonstrate good language skills? ✓Slang usage ✓Sentence structure ✓Double clutch ✓Use of language distracters, "Uh...Um..." | | (Up to 10 pts) | |
| Did the candidate know and show interest in the history of the company? | | (Up to 5 pts) | |
| Did the candidate respond well to questions? ✓Use of "Yes" or "No" answers ✓Use of the Four Characteristics every employer looks for: integrity, responsibility, competence, and attitude. | | (Up to 15 pts) | |
| Did the candidate properly address his felony record? ✓Explanation of felony conviction ✓Felony bonding program | | (Up to 15 pts) | |
| Did the candidate demonstrate knowledge of his résumé? | | (Up to 5 pts) | |
| Did the candidate demonstrate good listening skills? ✓Asked questions that had already been asked? ✓Ask to have a question repeated? ✓Asked for clarification of questions? | | (Up to 10 pts) | |
| Did the candidate ask questions of the interviewer? ✓How are evaluations conducted? ✓Does the company offer benefits? ✓Does the company use a probationary period? ✓Does the company offer continuing education? ✓Does the company promote from within? ✓What hours are required by the company? ✓Is this a new position with the company? ✓If not, was the person being replaced promoted? | | (Up to 10 pts) | |
| Did the candidate ask for the job? | | (Up to 5 pts) | |

Functional Résumé

John Jacobs

110 Melaleuca Drive, Crawfordville, Florida 32327
(H)850-456-4567 (C)850-456-4568

Objective

To obtain a managerial position with Burger King where I can use my skills, knowledge, and experience to help increase the profitability and customer service of the restaurant.

Skills

Highly competent in all areas of a kitchen environment.
Utilized critical thinking and problem resolution skills in order to overcome all challenges.
Worked well as a team player and independently with very little supervision.

Education**100 Hour Culinary Arts Certificate**

2005 State of Florida Crawfordville, Florida

High School Diploma

2005 State of Florida Crawfordville, Florida

Work Experience**Kitchen Worker**

2004 – present State of Florida Crawfordville, Florida

- Cleaned the grill, food preparation surfaces, counters, and floors.
- Prepared meals including entrees, vegetables, and desserts.
- Met high quality standards for all food preparation.

Line Cook

2002 – 2004 State of Florida Crawfordville, Florida

- Contributed valuable skills to most profitable Applebee's in the state of Florida.
- Trained in all areas of kitchen including prep, grill, sauté, fryer, and window.
- Skilled in putting together high-quality, appealing food in a high-volume kitchen.

Sauté Cook

1998 – 2002 State of Florida Crawfordville, Florida

- Managed eight burner sauté station while ensuring corporate quality standards.
- Trained new hires on all sauté station operations.

Military Experience**Mess Specialist**

1994 – 1998 United States Navy

- Integral part of team responsible for preparation and service of meals for 6,000 crew members.
- Graduated in top five of class for mess specialist "A" school.
- Promoted to Petty Officer Third Class

Chronological Résumé

John Jacobs

110 Melaleuca Drive, Crawfordville, Florida 32327
(H)850-456-4567 (C)850-456-4568

Objective

To obtain a managerial position with Burger King where I can use my skills, knowledge, and experience to help increase the profitability and customer service of the restaurant.

Skills

Highly competent in all areas of a kitchen environment.
Utilized critical thinking and problem resolution skills in order to overcome all challenges.
Worked well as a team player and independently with very little supervision.

Work Experience

Kitchen Worker

2004 – present State of Florida Crawfordville, Florida

- Cleaned the grill, food preparation surfaces, counters, and floors.
- Prepared meals including entrees, vegetables, and desserts.
- Met high quality standards for all food preparation.

Line Cook

2002 – 2004 State of Florida Crawfordville, Florida

- Contributed valuable skills to most profitable Applebee's in the state of Florida.
- Trained in all areas of kitchen including prep, grill, sauté, fryer, and window.
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Military Experience

Mess Specialist

1994 – 1998 United States Navy

- Integral part of team responsible for preparation and service of meals for 6,000 crew members.
- Graduated in top five of class for mess specialist "A" school.
- Promoted to Petty Officer Third Class

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT - AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER M/F/H/V

TO APPLICANT: You must personally complete the application for it to be considered. Applications are considered active for only 60 days. If you wish to be considered for employment after that time, you must submit a new application. Any omissions or falsifications will result in ineligibility for employment or immediate dismissal if employed. All applicants for employment are given a urinalysis drug screening test as part of the pre-employment requirements. Any applicant found to have identifiable traces of narcotics or other prohibited drugs or substances in his or her system would no longer be a candidate for hire. INCOMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

PERSONAL INFORMATION: Date: _____ Social Security Number: _____

Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Current Address: _____

Previous Address: _____

How long at current address? _____ How long at previous address? _____

Are you 18 or older? _____ Yes _____ No

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? _____ Yes _____ No If yes, give details: _____

(Conviction of a crime is not an automatic disqualification for employment. All relevant facts will be considered.)

EDUCATION: (Circle the highest grade completed.)

| | | Name of School | City, State | Graduate |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------|----------|
| Grade School | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 | | | Yes No |
| High School | 9 10 11 12 | | | Yes No |
| College | 1 2 3 4 | | | Yes No |
| Trade School | 1 2 3 4 | | | Yes No |

MILITARY SERVICE: Branch of Service: _____ Rank: _____

Date of Entry: _____ Date of Discharge: _____

POSITION APPLYING FOR: _____ Wage/Salary Desired: _____

Date You Can Start: _____ Are You Employed Now? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, where? _____ May We Inquire? _____ Yes _____ No

PERSONAL REFERENCES:

| | Name | Address | Phone | Years Known |
|----|------|---------|-------|-------------|
| 1. | | | | |
| 2. | | | | |
| 3. | | | | |

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY: Please list below your previous employment. Account for all your time including periods of unemployment. Begin with your current or most recent job and work back.

1.) Company _____ Date Started _____ Date Left _____ Pay Rate _____

Position Held _____ Supervisor's Name _____ Reason for Leaving _____

Describe your duties in as much detail as possible: _____

2.) Company _____ Date Started _____ Date Left _____ Pay Rate _____

Position Held _____ Supervisor's Name _____ Reason for Leaving _____

Describe your duties in as much detail as possible: _____

3.) Company _____ Date Started _____ Date Left _____ Pay Rate _____

Position Held _____ Supervisor's Name _____ Reason for Leaving _____

Describe your duties in as much detail as possible: _____

IMPORTANT: READ THIS CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING & DATING APPLICATION

I certify that the answers given by me on this application are true and correct, and complete. I agree that any misstatements or pertinent omission made by me in this application may be cause for my rejection, or if hired, may subsequently subject me to dismissal. Moreover, I understand that all offers of employment are conditioned upon passing the company's prescribed physical medical examination and drug test. I authorize any company, school, police or security personnel, or other person to give any information regarding my employment, habits, ability, or any other characteristics whatsoever, together with any information they may have regarding me whether or not it is in their records. I hereby release all persons from liability and agree to hold harmless any person(s) for such testing, or issuing this information.

If employed, I agree, as conditions of my continued employment, to submit to a urinalysis test as requested and paid for by the company. I further agree to the search or examination of any personal property I may have on myself while on the company's premises or while conducting business elsewhere. It is agreed and understood that completion of this application does not mean a job opening exists and in no way obligates the company to employ me.

In the event of employment, I will comply with all company rules, regulations, and directives as may be established or given from time to time. I am willing and agree to work all assigned overtime or other special work assignments as requested by the company. I understand the company does not offer contracts of employment (unless signed by the President). I also understand that nothing contained in this application form or any other company document or statement is intended to create a contract for employment, nor does it create a contract between the company and me for either employment or the provisions of any compensation or benefits. I understand that, if employed, I have the right to terminate my employment at any time, for any reason or no reason, and likewise the company has the same right.

I assign all my rights in and to any invention of patents which, during my employment I may make or conceive. Regardless of whether these were made alone or with others, in the course of employment or with the use of the time, material, or facilities and relating to the company's operations, processes, services, or business.

_____, 20____
Date

Signature of Applicant

WE ARE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER. All applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, color, sex, age (40 and over), religion, national origin, qualified handicap or disability, veteran, or other protected status where otherwise qualified.

Appendix

Action Verbs & Phrases



Action Verbs

| | | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| Accelerated | Coached | Distributed | Hired | Perpetuated | Saved |
| Accepted | Collaborated | Documented | Identified | Pinpointed | Scheduled |
| Accomplished | Collected | Doubled | Implemented | Pioneered | Secured |
| Achieved | Combined | Drafted | Impressed | Planned | Served |
| Acquired | Commanded | Earned | Improved | Possessed | Settled |
| Acted | Communicated | Edited | Improvised | Practiced | Shared |
| Activated | Compiled | Effected | Increased | Prepared | Showed |
| Actuated | Completed | Elicited | Influenced | Prevented | Simplified |
| Adapted | Complied | Eliminated | Informed | Processed | Solved |
| Adhered | Composed | Emphasized | Initiated | Procured | Sorted |
| Adjusted | Comprehended | Employed | Inspected | Produced | Sought |
| Administered | Computed | Encompasses | Inspired | Programmed | Sparked |
| Adopted | Conceived | Encouraged | Installed | Projected | Specified |
| Advanced | Concentrated | Enforced | Instigated | Promoted | Sponsored |
| Advised | Concluded | Engineered | Instituted | Proposed | Staffed |
| Allocated | Condensed | Enhanced | Instructed | Proved | Standardized |
| Analyzed | Conducted | Enlightened | Integrated | Provided | Started |
| Anticipated | Conformed | Enriched | Interpreted | Published | Stimulated |
| Applied | Considered | Ensured | Interviewed | Purchased | Streamlined |
| Appointed | Consolidated | Established | Introduced | Pursued | Strengthened |
| Appraised | Consulted | Estimated | Invested | Realized | Stretched |
| Appropriated | Consummated | Evaluated | Investigated | Received | Structured |
| Approved | Contemplated | Evoked | Issued | Recognized | Studied |
| Arranged | Continued | Examined | Launched | Recommended | Submitted |
| Articulated | Contributed | Exceeded | Lectured | Reconciled | Suggested |
| Ascended | Controlled | Excelled | Located | Recorded | Summarized |
| Ascertained | Converted | Executed | Maintained | Recruited | Supervised |
| Assembled | Conveyed | Exercised | Managed | Redesigned | Supported |
| Asserted | Cooperated | Exhibited | Marketed | Reduced | Surpassed |
| Assessed | Coordinated | Expanded | Mediated | Re-established | Surveyed |
| Assigned | Corrected | Expected | Minimized | Reflected | Sustained |
| Assimilated | Crated | Expedited | Mobilized | Regulated | Tailored |
| Assisted | Cultivated | Explored | Modernized | Reinforced | Taught |
| Assumed | Decentralized | Expressed | Modified | Rejected | Terminated |
| Assured | Decreased | Extended | Monitored | Related | Tested |
| Attained | Dedicated | Extracted | Motivated | Released | Tightened |
| Attended | Defined | Facilitated | Necessitated | Re-negotiated | Traded |
| Audited | Delegated | Financed | Negotiated | Reorganized | Trained |
| Augmented | Delivered | Focused | Notified | Reported | Transacted |
| Authorized | Demonstrated | Forecasted | Observed | Represented | Transferred |
| Averted | Designated | Formed | Obtained | Required | Transformed |
| Avoided | Designed | Formulated | Operated | Researched | Translated |
| Broadened | Determined | Fostered | Optimized | Reshaped | Treated |
| Built | Developed | Founded | Orchestrated | Resolved | Trimmed |
| Capitalized | Devised | Fulfilled | Ordered | Respected | Tripled |
| Centralized | Devoted | Furnished | Organized | Responded | Uncovered |
| Challenged | Directed | Gained | Originated | Restored | Undertook |
| Checked | Discharged | Generated | Overcame | Revamped | Unified |
| Circulated | Discovered | Guided | Overhauled | Reviewed | Used |
| Clarified | Displayed | Handled | Oversaw | Revised | Utilized |
| Cleared | Disseminated | Headed | Participated | Revitalized | Verified |
| | Distinguished | Helped | Performed | Revived | Wrote |

Two Word Phrases

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Accelerating changes | Efficient Manner | Meeting Deadlines | Professional Effectiveness |
| Accepting responsibility | Eliminated Waste | Multiple Superiors | Professional Excellence |
| Accomplishing results | Emerging Trends | Negotiating Skills | Professional Expertise |
| Achieving results | Energy Drive | New Approaches | Professional Ethics |
| Action plans | Effective Systems | New Concepts | Professional Horizons |
| Administrative efficiency | Enthusiastic Spirit | New Customers | Professional Participation |
| Administrative strategies | Exciting Challenge | New Perspectives | Professional Skills |
| Analytical qualities | Extremely Industrious | New Strategies | Professional Trends |
| Analytical reasoning | Extremely Resourceful | New Technologies | Profit Oriented |
| Analytical techniques | Favorable Impression | Operating Knowledge | Promoting Teamwork |
| Anticipating Needs | Fresh Enthusiasm | Operating Skills | Proper Perspective |
| Audit Controls | Fresh Ideas | Optional Solutions | Quality Enhancement |
| Available Resources | Fresh Insights | Organizational Effectiveness | Realistic Objectives |
| Basic Strengths | Fresh Perspective | Organizational Expectations | Resourceful Solutions |
| Broadest Discretion | Fresh Thinking | Organizational Goals | Safety Conscious |
| Effective Systems | Fully Prepared | Organizational Resources | Sales Opportunities |
| Career Development | Genuine Interest | Peak Efficiency | Sales Producer |
| Changing Assignments | Goal Achiever | Peak Performance | Satisfying Solutions |
| Changing Conditions | Goal Seeker | Peak Times | Secretarial Support |
| Changing Priorities | Greater Contribution | Performance Conscious | Self Starter |
| Changing Situations | Greatest Return | Personal Accountability | Selling Skills |
| Communicative Skills | Hands-on | Personal Commitment | Simplifying Systems |
| Competent Communication | High Achiever | Personal Effectiveness | Solution Seeker |
| Competent Performer | High Output | Personal Integrity | Sound Controls |
| Competitive Edge | High Payoff | Specialized Skills | Sound Decisions |
| Computer Application | High Potential | Strategic Aims | Special Assignments |
| Computer Technologies | High Profile | Strategic Plans | Speech Proficiency |
| Concentrated Effort | High Quality | Strategic Vision | Supportive Skills |
| Concurrent Assignments | Highly Articulate | Stressful Solutions | Systematic Results |
| Confident Speaker | Highly Committed | Strong Effort | Team Effort |
| Considerable Flexibility | Highly Competent | Strong Impact | Team Motivator |
| Consistently High | Imaginative Thinking | Strong Performer | Team Performance |
| Constructive Actions | Important Contributor | Strong Perseverance | Team Spirit |
| Constructive Ideas | Improving Quality | Strong Potential | Technical Competence |
| Contemporary Management | Improving Techniques | Strongly Qualified | Thinks Futuristically |
| Contingency Plans | Increasing Efficiency | Success-oriented | Total Involvement |
| Controlling Expenses | Independent Decisions | Support Services | Trouble- Shooting |
| Conveying Professionalism | Information Source | Supportive Relationships | Ultimate Responsibility |
| Corrective Actions | Initiating Solutions | Personal Traits | Well-Informed |
| Cost Control | Inner Drive | Persuasive Ability | Works Effectively |
| Cost Effectiveness | Innovative Insight | Planning Solutions | |
| Cost Priorities | Innovative Planning | Planning Techniques | |
| Cost Reductions | Innovative Possibilities | Planning Approaches | |
| Creative Alternatives | Inspiring Subordinates | Pleasing Personality | |
| Creative Excellence | Intense Desire | Positive Attitude | |
| Creative Solutions | Learning Opportunities | Positive Expectations | |
| Creative Strategies | Leadership Qualities | Positive Image | |
| Creative Strengths | Leadership Role | Practical Applications | |
| Crisis Situations | Maintaining Momentum | Practical Solutions | |
| Customer Demands | Maintaining Control | Presentation Skills | |
| Customer Needs | Management Effectiveness | Prime Mover | |
| Customer Satisfaction | Management Principles | Priority Determinations | |
| Developing Solutions | Management Support | Problem Solving | |
| Diversified Skills | Maximum Effort | Productive Impact | |
| Driving Force | Maximum Efficiency | Professional Competence | |
| Effective Presentations | Maximum Return | Personal Strengths | |

Personality Descriptors

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Abstract | Helpful | Practical |
| Accurate | Heroic | Pragmatic |
| Action-Driven | High-Impact | Precise |
| Adaptable | High-Potential | Prepared |
| Adventuresome | Honest | Proactive |
| Aggressive | Honorable | Problem-Solver |
| Amenable | Humanistic | Productive |
| Analytical | Humanitarian | Professional |
| Assertive | Humorous | Proficient |
| Believable | Immediate | Progressive |
| Bilingual | Impactful | Prominent |
| Bold | Important | Prudent |
| Brave | Impressive | Punctual |
| Communicate | Incomparable | Quality-Driven |
| Competent | Independent | Reactive |
| Competitive | Individualistic | Reliable |
| Conceptual | Industrious | Reputable |
| Confident | Ingenious | Resilient |
| Conscientious | Innovative | Resourceful |
| Conservative | Insightful | Results-Driven |
| Cooperative | Intelligent | Results-Oriented |
| Courageous | Intense | Savvy |
| Creative | Intuitive | Sensitive |
| Credible | Judicious | Sharp |
| Cross-Cultural | Keen | Skilled |
| Culturally Sensitive | Leader | Skillful |
| Customer Driven | Loyal | Sophisticated |
| Decisive | Managerial | Spirited |
| Dedicated | Market-Driven | Strategic |
| Dependable | Mature | Strong |
| Determined | Mechanical | Subjective |
| Devoted | Methodical | Successful |
| Diligent | Modern | Tactful |
| Diplomatic | Moral | Talented |
| Direct | Motivated | Team Builder |
| Driven | Motivational | Team Leader |
| Dynamic | Multilingual | Team Player |
| Eager | Notable | Technical |
| Earnest | Noteworthy | Tenacious |
| Effective | Objective | Thorough |
| Efficient | Observant | Tolerant |
| Eloquent | Opportunistic | Traditional |
| Employee-Driven | Orderly | Trouble Shooter |
| Empowered | Organized | Trustworthy |
| Encouraging | Outstanding | Truthful |
| Energetic | Perfectionist | Understanding |
| Energized | Performance-Driven | Unrelenting |
| Enterprising | Persevering | Upbeat |
| Enthusiastic | Persistent | Valuable |
| Entrepreneurial | Personable | Verbal |
| Ethical | Persuasive | Virtuous |
| Experienced | Philosophical | Visionary |
| Expert | Photogenic | Vital |
| Expressive | Pioneering | Well-Balanced |
| Forward-Thinking | Poised | |
| Global | Polished | |
| Hardworking | Popular | |
| Healthy | Positive | |

