
The Complete Job Search Handbook

**Skills Assessment • Résumé Writing • Job Searching
Networking • Interviewing • Salary Negotiation**

**Provided by the
Office of Career Development
Dean of Students Office, LSF 103**

Congratulations on making the choice to attend Purdue University North Central. Whether you are just starting your academic career, are close to finishing your degree, or have already graduated, the PNC Office of Career Development is here to help you prepare to find employment in your chosen field.

The Office of Career Development houses both part- and full-time job openings from hundreds of local employers. Whether you are looking for a job to earn money while going to school, seeking an internship to get some real world experience relating to your major, or needing an entry-level position to launch your new career, be sure to register in the on-line job posting and résumé referral system using the instructions on page 4 of this booklet.

In addition to job postings and résumé referral services, the Office of Career Development also houses current information about every facet of job searching. In addition, this Job Search Handbook has been prepared to help you through the major steps in the job search process – skill assessment, résumé writing, networking, and interviewing.

No amount of general information, however, can match the benefits of one-on-one assistance. After you have read through this material, please feel free to make an appointment to work with the staff individually.

Mark Hannon, Director of Career Development

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PURDUE UNIVERSITY NORTH CENTRAL
Office of Career Development

Dean of Students Office, LSF 103

Job Listings and Résumé Referral

The Office of Career Development posts on its on-line system job openings for many different career fields. Students and alumni can register to view job postings and upload their résumé to the system to respond via e-mail to employers. Go to www.collegecentral.com/pnc to get started.

Internship Program

If you are a current student, we can provide you with the opportunity to participate in our Internship Program which allows students to earn academic credit while working for an area business in a position within their chosen field.

Interviewing at the West Lafayette Campus

In your last year of classes, you can register with the Office of Career Development to be eligible for interviewing with the hundreds of companies that interview at the West Lafayette campus.

Pro-Partners Mentoring Program

This unique program pairs PNC students preparing to graduate with experience professionals working in their chosen career field for the purpose of developing a professional mentoring relationship. The mentor-protégé pairs agree to work together over the course of one academic year, participating in a variety of mentoring activities.

Personalized Assistance

Individualized help with résumé and letter writing, interviewing, job searching skills, or any other area of concern is available by appointment.

DISCOVER Career Exploration Program

This free on-line skill and interest inventory is a valuable tool in guiding you to choose the major and occupation best suited for you. Even if you have already chosen a major and occupation, you won't want to miss the vast amount of information readily available to you. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, contact the Dean of Students Office.

ID: _____

Password: _____

Office of Career Development

CCN Registration for Students and Alumni

All Students and Alumni are eligible to use the Purdue University North Central online job board after completing the following registration process through a site that has been specially designed for the Purdue University North Central Office of Career Development. Follow these simple steps:

- Go to the Office of Career Development home page at www.pnc.edu/careers
- Click on “**Information for Students/Alumni,**” then on “**Part-time and full-time jobs.**”
- Click the **Student** or **Alumni** icon; then **Register Now.**
- Enter “**Purdue University North Central**” (if it’s not already pre-filled), a **unique ID** and a **Password** that you will remember; Confirm your **password**. Write your ID and password at the top of this sheet so you won’t forget it!
- Click “**Continue Registration**”

Now you will be asked to complete the **REGISTRATION** form to search for Jobs. You may upload a **Résumé** at a later date.

REGISTRATION ENTRY

- Enter all demographic information. Fields with an (*) asterisk are required (Name, Current Address, Phone). Answer questions about where you want to work and the kinds of jobs that interest you. Employers will search this information, as well as the degrees you are obtaining. Be as thorough and complete as possible.

RÉSUMÉ ENTRY

- From your homepage, click **Upload a Résumé**. *You should have a résumé completed on disk at this time to upload.* Browse the file, select it, then click **Upload your résumé**.

JOB SEARCH

- From your homepage, click **Search for Jobs Posted to My School**, enter criteria specific to the type of job you are looking for on the search form, click **Begin Search**.
- **To search for on-campus positions (both work study and regular student employment), enter “PNC” in the Company Name field, then click “Begin Search.”**

When conducting a job search using CCN, be aware that by selecting several search criteria, such as Degree, Area of Interest, FT/PT jobs, etc., you are narrowing your search. It is a good idea to conduct a focused search, but you may also want to try searching different criteria. To view all jobs posted, leave all the search fields blank.

From now on you can visit your school’s page: www.collegecentral.com/pnc at anytime, Twenty-four hours a day, Seven days a week, Three hundred and sixty-five days a year. Just click through to Student or Alumni Central and enter Purdue University North Central, your unique ID and Password and you’re there!

FOUR YEAR PLAN FOR SUCCESSFUL CAREER PLANNING AND JOB SEARCHING

Provided by the Purdue University North Central Office of Career Development

Career Exploration and Investigation Activities

Year 1 – Freshman Year (or first semester if in a 2-year program)

Self-Assessment and Career Planning Activities

Register with the Office of Career Development's on-line job posting and résumé referral system.

Collect and analyze information about yourself to help you decide what type of career you would like and be suited for.

Write the answers to the following questions: What are your likes/dislikes and strengths/weaknesses? How do you spend your free time? What motivates and fulfills you? What are your long-term goals, both personal and professional?

Enlist the aid of faculty, advisors, counselors, administrators, and friends. Review various career and business publications. Utilize the career testing and counseling available in the Dean of Students office.

Get a job (or volunteer for an organization you care about) that will give you good experience and allow you to develop a solid work history as well as obtain strong business references.

Join clubs or organizations on campus that interest you.

Begin to develop strong computer skills through class work and on-the-job experiences. Take advantage of training offered at work or take non-credit, continuing education classes.

Year 3 - Junior Year (or third semester if in a 2-year program)

Gaining Career Experiences

Obtain an internship in your chosen field. See the Office of Career Development for details. Apply for the Internship Program as early as possible.

Check with the Office of Career Development for job listings, upcoming job fairs and workshops, and on-campus interview opportunities.

Speak with people working in your chosen field for advice and information about conducting a successful job search.

Review and update your résumé and job-search correspondence.

Practice your interview skills. Plan your job-search campaign.

Take a leadership role in clubs/activities – become an officer or get involved in a large project or event.

Begin researching companies that interest you.

Explore Internet job search sites to determine which ones may be helpful for you.

Year 2 - Sophomore Year (or second semester if in a 2-year program)

Develop an array of information about specific careers. Develop a file of information about specific career alternatives and narrow your potential career options down.

Accumulate and analyze information about the world of work, office politics, corporate culture, and workforce diversity.

Visit the Office of Career Development to gather information about résumé and cover letter writing, networking, interviewing, and effective job search techniques. Write your résumé.

Stay involved in campus activities.

Analyze your current job to determine both what you enjoy about work and what you find unfulfilling about the workplace. Use this information to narrow career choices.

Develop good work habits. Seek out special projects and assignments that will be good résumé builders.

Make a list of your marketable skills and strive to expand it through training and experience.

Year 4 - Senior Year (or fourth semester if in a 2-year program)

Job Search/Transition to Work Activities

Register with the West Lafayette Center for Career Opportunities to interview with companies recruiting from that campus. See the PNC Career Development Office for details.

Schedule interviews with as many employers as possible. Attend as many job fairs as possible.

Discuss career opportunities with faculty and counselors, friends, acquaintances, network contacts, etc.

Keep close track of all job search activities and especially of networking contacts.

Consider and review various job offers.

Make a successful transition when you accept the job that best fits your career and professional needs.

Résumé Writing

What is a Résumé?

Your résumé is a marketing piece, not just a fact sheet. Like other marketing pieces, your résumé can be thought of as a commercial that advertises a product. Like television commercials, your résumé must be persuasive, eye catching, attractive, concise, and informative, and it must present its message in 20-30 seconds. Unlike other commercials, however, the product being sold is YOU. Therefore, your résumé should contain information about you and why the reader should interview you.

Your résumé also serves as an example of your ability to organize and effectively communicate a message. It should convey one very important message to a potential employer-“This is what I can do for you!” Employers are looking out for their own best interests. They will only interview and/or hire people who will accomplish things that contribute to the success of their organization and, in the process, to their own personal success.

How do I Get Started?

Writing a résumé is a difficult task for many people. Oftentimes, job seekers get so caught up in worrying about the mechanics of putting a résumé together that they render themselves helpless and unable to even begin. Below are listed very specific steps and techniques you can use to make the process easier.

Step 1: Determine Your Job Objective

Writing a résumé is somewhat like building a house – you need to build it on a firm foundation. A résumé’s foundation is its job objective. A job objective tells the reader of your résumé what position you are interested in. It should be specific, short, and concise. Job objectives also tell an employer that you have specific career goals and are focused on the type of position you want.

Generic job objectives such as “A challenging position with a growth-oriented company” serve only to irritate employers and make the writer appear unsure of what they want to do. Remember that employers are looking to hire people to fill professional positions who have specific career goals and objectives, not people who will take any position “just to pay the bills.”

To help with this step, you may want to do some research to learn about the job market and the types of jobs you are eligible for and interested in. Reference materials such as the [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#), government publications found on-line or in your local public library, are good places to begin. The OOH defines common

job titles, indicates education requirements, and outlines standard duties, salary information, and future outlook for each job type. Other good sources of information are trade journals, newspapers, and other business-related magazines.

The best way to gain career information, however, is not through any printed materials, but by talking to people currently performing jobs of interest to you. Getting information from people is done through a process known as **Informational Interviewing**, which will be discussed in detail later.

Once you have determined your job objective, it is time to move on to step 2.

Step 2: Define Your Selling Points and Examples

This is the most important and vital step to writing a good résumé, and will determine how you present the information appearing on your résumé.

Your job objective determines what information appears on your résumé, your selling points determine how you organize and present this information.

Imagine you are a copy machine salesperson, and your boss has charged you with the task of designing a sales flyer for the latest model of copy machine you are selling. Before you worry about how the flyer will look, what clip art you will include, and what type of paper you will print it on, you need to determine what it will say.

Most likely, your first step will be to define the features of the copy machine you want to highlight in this flyer. While your copy machine is a state-of-the-art piece of office equipment with lots of good points, your goal is to develop a short, concise marketing piece that customers can quickly read and absorb. Hopefully, upon reading this flyer, your customers will call you to find out more.

This is exactly what your résumé needs to do. Before you can write an effective résumé, you must determine your own “selling points,” or those things about you that will attract an employer’s attention. Unfortunately, while it is necessary to take the step first, most people find it very difficult to determine their selling points. To assist you with this sometimes difficult process, use one of the techniques listed below.

Selling points can be defined and illustrated by all of your life experiences, not just paid work.

Your ability to handle multiple tasks effectively can be illustrated just as clearly in your role as president of the accounting club (or Cub Scout Den Mother) as it can in your job as an office manager. Just because you didn’t get paid for something doesn’t mean it wasn’t a valuable experience that can illustrate a particular characteristic.

TECHNIQUE 1: Why should I hire you?

Imagine yourself at the end of an interview. Things have gone well, and the interviewer begins to wrap things up. She explains when a decision will be made and what you can expect next. Then, she says “Thank you for answering my questions so thoroughly. I have narrowed the pool down to four people – you and three other candidates are being considered for the position. In closing, please answer one final question: Why I should hire you rather than the other people I am considering?”

Write down your answer to this question.

Then, for each of the reasons you have listed, write down a story associated with that reason that proves it to be true. For example, if one of the reasons you think you should be hired is because you are a quick learner, a possible illustration of this is the time you were working as a waitress at a restaurant when the shift supervisor suddenly quit and you had to, with no warning or preparation, fill in for her until they could find a replacement.

TECHNIQUE 2: Hiring Manager

Imagine that you are a hiring manager looking to hire someone to fill a position like the one you are looking for (i.e., if you want to be an accountant, imagine yourself as a CFO who needs to hire an accountant).

Make a list of the characteristics/skills/qualifications you will be looking for in a job candidate.

What are the most important things you will be looking for during the interview?

Make a list of the questions you will ask. Better yet, talk with a person who actually is a hiring manager in your chosen field. Ask what they look for when they are hiring people for your desired position. Once you have gathered all of this information, put your lists away.

A week or so later, look at the things you have written down and begin to determine which of the characteristics listed fits you. These are your selling points. Once again, find a story associated with each characteristic you have chosen.

TECHNIQUE 3: Ask for a Raise

Collect several blank sheets of paper and a pen. At the top of each sheet of paper, write the name of one of the jobs you have held. For each job you have listed, pretend you are writing a letter to your boss (or former boss) asking for a raise. Why do you think you deserve a raise? How have you proven yourself to be a valued employee? How have you helped your company make money or operate more efficiently? What have you done to improve the product or service your company offers? Why do you deserve a raise more than your co-workers?

The reasons you list here are your selling points. Find a story to illustrate each one.

TECHNIQUE 4: Term Paper

Job seekers who are very good at writing papers may find this technique helpful. Pretend you are writing a paper for an English class entitled “What Makes me a Good Employee,” and you will naturally define your selling points.

After you have defined your selling points with examples, move on to step 3.

Step 3: Gathering Basic Information

There are several types of basic information you will probably want to include on your résumé.

Candidate Information

This section serves as a heading for your résumé, and includes your name, complete address, and telephone number with area code. Provide an alternate address and phone number if necessary. An alternate phone number becomes especially important if you do not have an answering machine. A potential employer may call you once and leave a message to schedule an interview, but rarely will he/she call twice. Potential employers must be able to contact you easily. If you spend the majority of your time at a place other than your home, list that information as well.

Do not include personal information such as weight, height, marital status, age, etc. This information is irrelevant to your ability to do a job, and listing it on your résumé will make you appear old-fashioned and dated.

A note about answering machine messages: if you are actively job searching, make sure the message on your machine is short, concise, and business-like. Don't lose the chance to interview because an employer called you and was forced to listen to an offensive, irritating, or “cutesy” message. Either you or someone in your home should record a clear, no-nonsense message. Store-bought, pre-taped messages are also generally displeasing. Your message should say something like “You have reached the Smith residence. Please leave a message and your call will be returned promptly.” Save your fun messages for after you obtain employment!

Education Information

List in reverse chronological order (most recent first) the degree or degrees you have received with completion dates and names of institutions granting the degree(s). If you have attended or are attending college, eliminate high school information.

Also include special licenses, certificates, or training you have obtained, along with honors or awards received during your schooling (i.e. Dean's List, Semester Honors) if they are appropriate and relate to your job objective.

Work Experience

Your résumé will need to contain some type of information about your work history and/or volunteer activities you have participated in. How this information is presented on your résumé will vary greatly, depending on your job objective and selling points you want to emphasize. In general, you should list, in reverse chronological order, the jobs you have held in the last 10 years with company name, job title, and dates of employment.

Then, for each position listed, talk about the skills you utilized and what you accomplished in order to illustrate your selling points. The information appearing in this section was determined largely by the selling points exercise you did earlier.

Try to stay away from simply providing a "laundry list" of tasks you completed each day. Instead, focus on things like: special training you received, large projects you were involved in, technological innovations you implemented, work processes you developed or improved, ideas you generated, extra responsibilities you took on, and recognition you received.

Employers care less about what you did day-to-day in a particular position than about what skills you used, what you accomplished, and how you contributed to the overall success of the organization.

Affiliations/Interests/Activities

Information of this sort is completely optional, and any information included should be carefully chosen, and only included if it relates to or illustrates any of your selling points. Be aware, though, that your affiliations/interests/activities may be used to eliminate you from, rather than help your chances in, the running for a position. For instance, it is fine to say you are President of the Young Republican Society, but what if the person reading your résumé is a staunch Democrat? You probably just eliminated yourself from consideration before even being given a fair chance.

Generally, it is a good idea to include any memberships or offices held in organizations specifically relating to the position in question. Especially if you lack

practical experience in your desired field, personal interests and/or hobbies may be included in this section along with club affiliations.

Other Pertinent Information

Depending on your life situation and the type of position for which you are applying, you may want to include some or all of the following information as it pertains to you:

Military History
Computer Literacy
Patents/Publications

Foreign Languages Spoken/Travel
Percent of College Education Paid For
By You and How You Earned Money

Now you are ready to put your résumé together.

Putting Your Résumé Together

Many résumé writers fall into the trap of thinking there is one "best" way to write a résumé. While there are definitely some general rules to follow, there really is no "standard" résumé format. Remember, the most important function of a résumé is to convey to the reader the best possible image of the writer.

There are three basic methods to use when formatting your résumé. Your choice depends on what you want to emphasize/de-emphasize and what your personal experiences are.

Chronological Résumé

The chronological résumé emphasizes your dates of employment and titles of positions held. Use this format if you have a solid work history involving upward movement within a company or positions with impressive titles.

A chronological résumé is generally (but not always) best for people with several years of related work experience or for those who have been with the same company for many years with increasing levels of responsibility.

The main difference between this format and the functional résumé (listed below) is it specifically lists skills and accomplishments under each job held.

Functional (or Skills-Based) Résumé

The functional résumé emphasizes specific skills and abilities that have arisen from work experience and de-emphasizes career progression and dates of employment.

A functional résumé should generally be used if you have held many types of positions not related to your current career goals, have a choppy work history with many short-term jobs, or have worked primarily part-time jobs mainly for the money.

In contrast to a chronological résumé, the functional résumé group accomplishments under specific transferable skills which are applicable to the stated job objective or position desired.

Combination Résumé

The combination résumé is, as the name implies, a combination of both the chronological and functional résumés. The majority of résumés fall into this category, utilizing features from both the chronological and functional formats.

Many very effective résumés do not fit clearly into any format. Résumés are, and should be, as unique as the people who write them.

Other Important Tips

- Use phrases beginning with action verbs to describe your skills and accomplishments. Expressing yourself in this way indicates to an employer that you are a person who wants to get things done. Avoid using “I,” and write in short, concise phrases rather than complete sentences. Most readers will scan a résumé for approximately 25 seconds before deciding whether or not to pursue a candidate further. This means each word in a résumé is very important and should be carefully chosen.
- Back up your claims by using numbers, quantities, and specific examples as much as possible. For instance, don’t write “Worked cash register,” but rather “Processed approximately \$5,000 in customer transactions daily.” Also, instead of writing “Bagged groceries,” write “assembled and packed grocery orders, lifted, loaded, organized, delivered, worked as a team, and dealt with the public.”
- Do not include reasons for leaving jobs or salary information. This information is much more likely to be used as a reason to eliminate you from the pool of potential candidates than to help you get an interview. These are topics which should be covered in an interview, not in your résumé.
- You generally should not include specific reference information (names, addresses, phone numbers) on your résumé for two main reasons.

First, the potential employer who receives your résumé will most likely not check references until he/she has interviewed you. Checking references is a very time-consuming and difficult process, and most employers will not take this step until

they know they are interested in hiring, or have actually hired you. Secondly, you probably won’t have room on your résumé for this information. Résumé space is limited, and your pertinent information should be more than enough to fill up this space.

You may include the phrase “References Available Upon Request” at the bottom of your résumé, but this phrase is redundant and not necessary if you don’t have room.

Appearance of Your Résumé

The importance of the appearance of your résumé cannot be overemphasized. It is vital that your résumé appear neat, clean, organized, and easy to read. Remember, your résumé is an example of your ability to organize and communicate.

On average, your résumé is scanned the first time by any given employer for approximately 25 seconds. It is imperative you organize your information so important points are emphasized and easily distinguishable. There are seven general rules to follow regarding résumé layout and appearance:

- **ABSOLUTELY NO typographical or spelling errors are allowed!** Your résumé is an example of your writing ability. If it has errors, your employer can only assume you work in a careless and haphazard manner, and as an employee, your work would need to be checked constantly.
- Use plenty of white space and do not crowd information. Your résumé text should be balanced on the page, top to bottom and side to side. White space should be utilized to emphasize important points and increase the scannability of your résumé.
- Remember people read from top to bottom, left to right. Place your most important information in the upper left-hand corner and down the left margin, decreasing in importance from top to bottom.
- Use good quality white, off-white, or conservatively colored paper with an easy-to-read font type. Putting your résumé on purple or hot pink paper to stand out in a stack of résumés is not advised. Remember, business people are generally conservative (especially in industries such as banking and accounting), so a résumé on hot pink paper will probably produce a negative reaction.
- Emphasize important points through the use of bullets, italics, bolding, and underlining. Along with positioning on the page, utilize the tools available on

your computer to emphasize and organize important information and increase readability.

- Use phrases rather than complete sentences. Phrases are much more scannable and easier to comprehend than complete sentences. In résumé writing, a few carefully chosen words are infinitely more effective than a beautifully written half-page paragraph.
- Try your best to limit your résumé to one page. For new college graduates with limited related experience, one page is usually sufficient. However, if this is not possible without over-crowding, make your résumé two pages but no longer. A two-page résumé definitely has its place and is sometimes absolutely necessary. The rule of thumb on length: if your résumé is two pages long with the second page of text covering less than half of the paper, edit it down to one page.

Scannable Résumés

Many larger companies are now using scanning technology to enter résumés into their databases. Rather than have a person manually enter all pertinent information into a computer, many larger companies have scanners which “take a picture” of résumés and enter their likeness into their database. Therefore, résumés submitted to large companies must be easily readable by the computer and the simpler the better. To achieve a scanner-ready résumé, follow these basic guidelines:

- Use non-decorative fonts without serifs.
- Use a font size of 10 to 14 points.
- Avoid italic scripts, underlining, graphics, shading, and the use of vertical and horizontal lines.
- Don’t compress space between letters. Text too close together is unreadable.
- Use a laser printer rather than a dot matrix whenever possible.
- Send originals rather than copies.
- Minimize the use of abbreviations - spell things out.
- Use black ink on white paper.
- Do not fold your résumé - creases cause difficulties for the scanner.

One final point about this technology is that scanners put résumé information into a database. Companies then search the database based on industry-specific key words often found in résumés. Those résumés that are chosen as a result of the search are considered for the position at hand. Therefore, you must pay attention to the verbiage you use on your résumé, and include key words related to your chosen field. Specific names of hardware and software, position titles, academic majors and degrees, and specific skills are key words which should be used.

A very effective way to ensure you have adequate key words included on your resume is to include a key words inventory, or a block of key words presented in list form. For a person with experience in marketing, sales, and public relations, a key words inventory might look something like this:

Customer Service	Merchandising	Image Campaign
Outside Sales	Retail Management	Public Relations
Marketing Materials	Event Planning	Media Relations
Promotions	Fundraising	

This inventory should appear at the top of your resume, and serve as a snapshot or summary of your experience and skills.

References

Specific reference information (names, addresses, phone numbers of references) need not appear on your résumé. Instead, a separate reference sheet should be prepared and taken to interviews. You will need to provide the following information for 3-5 professional references: name, job title, address, phone number, and relationship to you.

The purpose of a reference is to tell a potential employer what kind of an employee you are; therefore, try to provide names of former supervisors. If this is not possible, the next best references are co-workers or colleagues with whom you worked closely, or professors and/or academic advisors from college. Friends and relatives should not be listed.

Always make sure you receive permission before listing someone as a reference, and keep in touch. If it has been a year or more since you last associated with a particular reference, he or she may not remember you.

List of Action Verbs

accelerated	accomplished	accounted for	accurate	active	alert
achieved	acquired	aided	ambitious	analytical	bold
anticipated	arbitrated	authored	broad-minded	businesslike	capable
awarded	bolstered	briefed	challenging	clever	competent
budgeted	cataloged	chaired	confident	conscientious	consistent
cleared up	composed	conducted	cooperative	courageous	deliberate
coordinated	crafted	defined	determined	discreet	dominant
delegated	demonstrated	devised	eager	efficient	energetic
directed	edited	educated	fair-minded	farsighted	flexible
enlisted	established	executed	forceful	formal	frank
expedited	explored	familiarized	good-natured	helpful	honest
forecast	formulated	fostered	humorous	imaginative	independent
grossed	handled	heightened	individualistic	industrious	intelligent
highlighted	identified	implemented	likable	logical	loyal
improved	incorporated	initiated	mature	methodical	meticulous
innovated	interviewed	jump-started	moderate	modest	motivated
launched	lectured	maintained	natural	obliging	opportunistic
managed	mapped out	maximized	optimistic	organized	original
monitored	motivated	negotiated	outgoing	painstaking	patient
netted	observed	operated	persevering	pleasant	poised
organized	overcame	participated	practical	precise	progressive
perceived	performed	persuaded	prudent	purposeful	quick
pioneered	prepared	presented	rational	realistic	reflective
prevailed	programmed	projected	relaxed	reliable	reserved
qualified	rated	recommended	resourceful	responsible	self-confident
renovated	researched	resulted in	self-controlled	sensible	sensitive
revealed	reviewed	revised	serious	significant	sincere
saved	screened	scrutinized	sociable	spontaneous	stable
sifted	simplified	smoothed	steady	strong-minded	successful
spearheaded	streamlined	strengthened	supportive	tactful	teachable
submitted	suggested	summarized	tenacious	thorough	thoughtful
surmounted	targeted	taught	tolerant	tough	trustworthy
tightened	totaled	toured	unaffected	understanding	unexcitable
tracked	trained	transformed	uninhibited	verbal	versatile
uncovered	updated	welcomed	warm	wise	witty

List of Adjectives/Adverbs

Chronological Résumé

JANE SWIFT
9 Central Avenue
Quincy, MA 02269
(617) 555-1212
swift@abc.net

CAREER SUMMARY

Ten years of increasing responsibilities in the employment services industry with concentration in the high technology markets.

WORK EXPERIENCE

1998 - Present *Howard Systems International, Inc.*

2004 - present Personnel Manager

- Recruit and managed consulting staff of five
- Set up office and organized the recruitment of consultants
- Recruit all levels of MIS staff from financial to manufacturing markets
- Coordinate with outside advertising agencies
- Develop effective referral programs, increasing referrals by 32%

2002 - 2004 Division Manager

- Staffed and trained all offices with appropriate personnel
- Created and implemented all divisional operations policies responsible for P&L
- Increased sales from \$0 to \$20 million in 1978
- Achieved and maintained 30% annual growth over 7 year period
- Maintained sales staff turnover at 14%

2000 -2002 Area Manager

- Opened additional offices, hired staff, and supervised offices
- Developed business relationships with accounts, of which 75% were regular customers
- Increased client base 28% per year
- Generated over \$200,000 worth of free trade journal publicity

1998-2000 Branch Manager

- Hired to establish the new MICRO/TEMPS operation
- Recruited and managed consultants

EDUCATION

Boston University, 1995 BS, Public Relations

References available upon request

Chronological Résumé

John Q. Public

1234 Elm St., Valparaiso, IN 46385
(219) 465-0000 jsmith4545@attbi.com

CAREER SUMMARY

Highly skilled electrical engineer with over 10 years of diversified experience in control engineering; emphasis in development and manufacturing. Experience in specification writing for testing and welding equipment. Strong analytical, planning, and communication skills.

STRENGTHS AND EXPERIENCES

Machine Control Design	Negotiating Cost Issues on Control
Man/Machine Interface	Specifications Development and Application

PROFESSIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Alpha Interior and Lighting Systems, Michigan City, IN **6/99 - present**

Senior Manufacturing Engineer

Appointed expert engineer in problem solving or robots, welding, and programmable controllers, providing successful recommendations and solutions. Responsible for writing specifications regarding manufacturing equipment and process improvements; approve control system selections. Work closely and effectively with company vendors and suppliers to verify and develop operation of manufacturing systems.

- Decreased cycle time of adjuster final assembly machine by 40%, reducing overtime costs
- Supervised new system installations
- Reduced re-work of parts by implementing automatic testing procedures

ABC Corporation, LaPorte, IN **3/94 – 5/99**

Project Engineer

Control systems development for various manufacturing processes including production of specialized machine components. Enhanced output and reduced scrap through process improvements. Debugged and updated various machine control systems.

- Improved productivity by re-programming assembly robots
- Developed and designed experiments to determine optimal machine settings and corrected defects in welding procedures

COMPUTER SKILLS

Allen Bradley 6200/APS AutoCAD MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

EDUCATION

Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
M.S., Electrical Engineering 05/85
B.S., Electrical Engineering 05/80

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Education Resume

SALLY A. BROWN
100 My Street
Anytown, USA 10101
(555) 555-5555
sbrown@abc.net

- EDUCATION** **Purdue University North Central, Westville, IN**
B.A., Elementary Education **May, 2006**
GPA 3.9/4.0
Paid 100% of college expenses through part-time work
- PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE** **Student Teacher**
Cooks Corners Elementary School, Valparaiso, IN
Fourth Grade, January – May 2006
- Utilized innovative teaching techniques such as spatial-visualization activities, hands-on science experiments, literature-based instruction, and the “Newspapers in Education” program
 - Implemented reading response journals
 - Participated in after-school sports program
 - Involved in Performance Based Assessment
 - Attended in-service for communications arts
 - Implemented five senses unit including learning centers
 - Coordinated parent assistants for classroom
 - Organized a field trip
- PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION** **Student Tutor and Student Instructor** Sept – Dec, 2004
Eastport Elementary, Michigan City, IN
- Taught and tutored a variety of ages
 - Tutored in corrective reading, instructed in math and art
 - Administered Flynt-Cooter Reading Inventory
 - Interpreted each student’s strengths and needs
 - Utilized portfolios to document progress
- COMPUTER LITERACY** IBM Macintosh, PC, Microsoft Office Software
- OTHER EXPERIENCE** Town & Country Market, Valparaiso, IN 1/91 – 12/03
United States Air Force, Langley AFB, Virginia 1/86 – 12/91
- ACTIVITIES** Frank Schaffer seminar, Powerful Classroom Strategies, 5/03
Educators Conference, Year-Round Schools, 3/03
Founding member and vice-president of “We Care To Share,” an award-winning community service club, 2002 – 2006

Reference Sheet

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

JOHN SMITH
123 Mockingbird Way
Michigan City, IN 46360
(219) 888-0000

Miss Mary Muffett, Accounting Supervisor
Curds & Whey, International
100 Her Street
Anytown, USA 10101
(555) 555-5555
Former Supervisor

Mr. Peter Piper, Controller
Pickled Peppers of America
9 Picking Way
Anytown, USA 10101
(111) 333-3333
Former Supervisor

Mrs. Mary Littlelamb, Academic Advisor
Purdue University North Central
1401 S. US Hwy 421
Westville, IN 46391
(219) 785-0000
Academic Advisor and Instructor

Dr. Joyce Brothers
Assistant Professor of Psychology
Purdue University North Central
1401 S. US Hwy 421
Westville, IN 46391
(219)785-9999
Professor

Functional Résumé

JANE SWIFT
9 Central Avenue
Quincy, MA 02269
(617) 555-1212
jswift@abc.net

OBJECTIVE: A position in Employment Services where my management, sales and recruiting talents can be effectively utilized to improve operations and contribute to company profits

SALES: Sold high technology consulting services with consistently profitable margins throughout the United States, increasing sales from \$0 to over \$20 million per year

RECRUITING: Developed recruiting sourcing methods for multiple branch offices

MANAGEMENT: Managed up to 40 people in sales, customer service, recruiting, and administration

FINANCIAL: Prepared quarterly and yearly forecasts. Presented, reviewed and defended these forecasts to the board of Directors. Tracked P&L of \$20 million sales operation

PRODUCTION: Responsible for opening multiple offices and accountable for growth and profitability. Maintained 30% growth over 7 year period in 10 offices

WORK EXPERIENCE

1990 - present HOWARD SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL, Boston, MA
National Consulting Firm
Personnel Manager

1981 - 1990 TECHNICAL AID CORPORATION, Needham, MA
National Consulting & Search Firm
Division Manager

EDUCATION: BS, Boston University - 1980

References available upon request

Functional Résumé

Carol J. Stewart
000 Indiana Avenue, Portage, IN 00000
(219) 777-7777
cstewart@abc.net

Goal

Part-time position with a high quality company in customer service, inside sales, or related field. Eventually would like to obtain full-time employment.

Skill Summary

My advancement at Acme illustrates my ability to perform well in the workplace. I have a strong ability to contribute to the success of a company by cooperating in a team environment, seeking ways to work more efficiently, constantly striving to learn new skills, and providing excellent customer service at all times.

Experience

Acme Bank, Inc., Chicago, IL 1980 – 1989
1986 - promoted to branch manager
1985 - promoted to assistant branch manager
1983 – promoted to teller supervisor
1980 – hired as teller

Customer Service – Had daily contact with customers and provided customers a full range of banking services. Presented products in a clear, accurate manner which resulted in significant repeat and referral business for the bank. Customers complemented me often on my friendly and approachable demeanor.

Management/Supervision – As the branch manager, I was responsible for all facets of supervision for a staff of 12. Duties included interviewing, hiring, training, and evaluating employees. Gained employees’ respect and trust by being a tough but fair manager.

Other Skills

Computer Literate – Have taken classes in computer literacy and have a computer at home. Have self-taught several programs including Microsoft Word, Excel, and Publisher.

Event Planning/Fund Raising – Have organized several fund-raising events for non-profit organizations including a “Country Fair,” Market Day events, and bake sales.

Education

Bachelor of Liberal Studies May 2004
Purdue University North Central, Westville, IN
Degree emphasis was in social and behavioral science with classes in the following areas: communication, social ethics, race/ethnic diversity, and gender issues.

Continually seeking to expand my knowledge and skill base by taking adult education classes.

References available upon request

Functional Résumé

SUZANNE CHEW
226 Calamari Court
Concord, CA 94521
(415) 907-0742
schew@abc.net

OBJECTIVE: ENTRY LEVEL POSITION IN AUDIT DEPARTMENT

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Dedicated to professionalism, highly motivated toward goal achievement
- Successful in mastering accounting theory and technical skills
- 3 years demonstrated effectiveness in interpersonal communications
- Experience in coordinating projects involving people and activities

EDUCATION & TRAINING

BS, Accounting - University of California, Berkeley - May 2006
Accounting G.P.A. 4.0 - Overall G.P.A. 3.7

EXPERIENCE & SKILLS

Technical and Business Knowledge

- Developed solid theoretical grounding in financial accounting; able to set up balance sheets and income statements, and analyze clients' assets and liabilities
- Studied laws relevant to accounting and other business applications
- Edited market research interviews; entered coded data into computer and generated reports

Leadership/Coordination

- Developed the confidence of owners of market research firm, and was invited to assume more responsibility through a supervisory position
- Coordinated focus group studies for a market research firm; invited prospective group members by phone; provided refreshments and study materials
- Organized participation in a soccer team: contacted prospective players and got commitment to participate; maintained attendance records, statistics at games, medical/equipment inventory

Communications and Interpersonal Skills

- Persuaded shoppers to volunteer time for in-person market research interviews
- Solicited phone interviews from random samples, consistently convincing participants of the legitimacy of the project and the importance of their opinions
- Gave oral evaluations of market research interviews, to clients from ad agencies
- Currently advise students on problems in accounting classes; grade homework

WORK HISTORY

2005 fall	Reader	UC BERKELEY BUSINESS SCHOOL - Berkeley CA
2004 summer	Sales Clerk	SHOE CITY - Cornwall, CA
6/04 - 8/05	Interviewer	PDQ MARKET RESEARCH - Walnut Creek, CA
4/01 - 3/03	Interviewer	WESTERN QUICK SEARCH - Cornwall, CA

Functional Résumé

MARY P. SMITH

8 Chestnut Lane
Valparaiso, IN 46383

(219) 000-0000
msmith@abc.net

OBJECTIVE

Entry-level accounting position in a manufacturing environment

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Analytical/mathematical skills used in determining work schedules, computing overtime pay, preparing budgets, and ordering supplies.

Quick learner and self-motivated - illustrated by earning **3.8 GPA for Accounting courses** and **3.6 GPA overall** in General Business program.

Leadership skills utilized in supervising 6-8 part-time employees during a shift- determine work assignments, delegate tasks, and train new staff. Also served as **president of the Accounting Club** (2 years).

Interpersonal communication skills used daily in supervising employees, handling customer complaints, and acting as liaison with store management. Was also commended by college professor for writing a paper worthy of publication.

Organizational and time management skills developed by working while attending school and earning 80% of college expenses.

Computer literate - MS Works, MS Office (Word, Access, Excel), Lotus 1-2-3

EDUCATION

Purdue University North Central, Westville, IN		
BS, Business/Accounting		Expected May, 2006
Significant Coursework:	Intermediate Accounting	Microeconomics
	Cost Accounting	Applied Leadership

WORK HISTORY

Big Burger Restaurant , Valparaiso, IN	May, 2002 - present
Shift Supervisor	

Gifts Galore , Valparaiso, IN	June, 2000 - April, 2002
Salesperson	

Combination Résumé

Jason Jones
555 Michigan Street, Apt. 3B
LaPorte, IN 46350
(219) 888-8888 jjones@abcde.com

Objective: PC Support Technician or related field

Skills

Microsoft Windows (3.x, 9x, NT)	Microsoft Visual Basic (v6.0)
Microsoft DOS (all versions)	Microsoft Visual C++
Microsoft Office 97/2000	RPG/400
Database Development	Electrical/Data Wiring
Network Configurations/Protocols (TCP/IP, etc)	HTML
Data Communications (transmissions, standards)	Microsoft Front Page 2000
AS/400	TrellixWeb Publishing Software
Unix/Linux	Paint Shop Pro v5.0
Graphics/Document Importing	Systems Analysis/Design

Education

Purdue University North Central, Westville, IN
A.S., Computer Programming Technology December, 2005

Special Projects

- Database development - Developed, configured, and maintained database for Career Services office used to track job postings, employer contacts and student information (contract position).
- Consulting work (hardware technician) – Various contracts including installation, configuration, and removal of hard drives, memory, CPU’s, motherboards, sound cards, video cards, printers, scanners, modems, monitors, speakers, microphones, disk drives, disk formatting, and packaged computer system installation.
- Web site development – Designed and developed several web sites, including sites for a student club (www.studentclub.edu) and a non-profit organization (www.nonprofit.org).

Employment History

2002 – Present	Internet Provider, Inc.	Support Technician
Provided customer support for internet customers.		
2000 – 2002	Phone Sales Corp.	Telecommunications Support Rep.
Phone sales, customer support. Earned Top Salesperson of the Month honors.		
1997 – 2000	Pizza Pizza Company	
Took orders, prepared deliveries.		

Accomplishments/Awards

- Hyde Park Forum Speech Contest – First Place
- Beta Beta Beta Honorary Fraternity

Combination Résumé

Daniel A. Kohl
3606 Roxboro Road (219) 872-9999
Michigan City, IN 46360 dkohl@dkohl.com

JOB OBJECTIVE: Marketing/Sales/Customer Service

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

- Help for You Agency, La Porte, IN Fall ’05 – Spring ’06
- Marketing/Public Relations Intern**
- Designed original marketing and educational materials including brochures, flyers, and pamphlets – handled design work, editing, and off-site printing of materials
 - Created first-ever “Guide to Area Services” for use with new clients
 - Developed and delivered educational presentations for clients on early childhood development and using local service agencies
 - Handled all aspects of planning annual fund-raising dinner/dance, including solicitation of over 100 silent auction items – event raised a record \$38,000

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

- PNC Marketing Club (President – ’05-’06, Vice-President – ’04-’05)
- Ran monthly meetings, determined agendas, scheduled guest speakers
 - Chaired committee which conducted food drive for local food pantries
 - Determined annual budget - submitted proposal for, and was awarded, budget increase through Office of Student Activities
 - Oversaw re-writing of club constitution and by-laws

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Soccer Referee - Valparaiso Parks and Recreation (Summers ’04, ’05)
- Team Member - Rebuilding Together Duneland (Spring, 2005)

EDUCATION

Purdue University North Central, Westville, IN
BS, Business/Marketing Expected December, 2006
GPA 3.2/4.0

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Cool Duds, Michigan City, IN - Sales Associate 03/02 – 08/05
Taco House, Michigan City, IN – Cashier/Food Prep 02/00 – 03/02

JOHN M. SMITH, P.E.

1234 First St. Springfield, MI 01234
Residence (616) 555-1234 Fax (616) 555-01234
jmsmith@netnet.net

CAREER SUMMARY

Highly skilled electrical engineer with over 10 years of diversified experience in control engineering: emphasis in development and manufacturing. Experienced in specification writing for testing and welding equipment and production start-up/process improvements. Possess strong analytical, planning, and communication skills.

STRENGTHS AND EXPERIENCES

Machine Control Design	Negotiating Cost Issues on Control
Man/Machine Interface	Specifications Development and Application
Motion Control Systems	Equipment Troubleshooting

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Delphi Interior & Lighting Systems, Warren, Michigan
(Formerly Inland Fisher Guide) 6/95 – Present

Senior Manufacturing Engineer, Seal Systems Business Unit 4/00 – Present
Appointed expert engineer in problem solving of robots, welding, and programmable controllers, providing successful recommendations and solutions. Responsible for writing specifications regarding manufacturing equipment and process improvements; approve control system selections. Work closely and effectively with company vendors and suppliers to verify and develop operation of manufacturing systems.

- Decreased cycle time of adjuster final assembly machine by 50%, reducing overtime costs; decreased machine cycle time 38%.
- Supervised new conveyor system installations
- Reduced returned/repaired parts per million (R/RPPM) through automatic function testing

Associate/Project Manager, Advanced Development Group (6/95 – 4/00)
Accountable for control systems development for various manufacturing processes including production start-up of doorframe welding line. Processed improvements to enhance machine output and reduce scrap. Debugged and modified numerous machine control systems.

- Programmed welding robots to decrease cycle time and increase quality.
- Developed and designed experiments to determine optional machine settings- correcting welding defects

JOHN M. SMITH, P.E.

Page 2

COMPUTER SKILLS

Allen Bradley 6200/APS, AutoCAD, Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint

EDUCATION

M.S. Systems Engineering <i>Oakland University, 1991</i>	B.S. Electrical Engineering-Summa Cum Laude <i>Michigan Technological University, 1988</i>
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LICENSE

State of Michigan Professional Engineer License, 1994

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- General Motors Corp. General Technical Committee-Robotics Council
- General Motors Corporate Robot Specification Work Group
- Delphi Automotive Systems Wonderware User Group
- Delphi Automotive Systems PC Based Control Systems Work Group
- Delphi Interior & Lighting Systems Control Engineering Center of Expertise
- American Welding Society (AWS)
- The Engineering Society (ESD)
- National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE)

Cover Letters

Cover letters are the most common type of business correspondence written throughout a job search. A cover letter is sent with a copy of your resume to express interest in being interviewed for employment with a particular company. **Never** send your resume without a cover letter.

Cover letters should follow business letter format. All paragraphs should be left-justified, and text should be single-spaced with double-spacing between paragraphs. Always be sure to date and sign your cover letters.

A cover letter is written for two main reasons. First, it can be sent in response to an advertisement for an available position advertised in the newspaper, unemployment office, PNC Career Services, magazine, or any other location listing available jobs.

Most often, you will be given the name and title of the person to whom you need to write, or at least given the name of the company to which you are writing. In these cases, you should always use the person's name and title, or call the company to get the correct person's name and title. Your letter will have much more of an impact if you take the time to address it to the correct person.

Sometimes, however, you cannot find out the name of the person you should write to, or even the company to which you are writing. For instance, an ad may instruct you to "Submit a resume to PO Box 3, Vidette-Messenger." In cases like this, you can only include any information you are given, and may have to write a very generic "Dear Sir or Madam" letter. If this is the case, the company has constructed the advertisement in this way for a reason, and expects to receive generic letters as described above. Writing a generic letter in this case will not hurt your chances of getting an interview.

Second, a cover letter may be sent to a company which, to your knowledge, does not have any available positions in your field, but which you would like to work for. This type of cover letter is referred to as a prospecting or broadcasting letter. This type of cover letter will be discussed in detail in the Networking section of this booklet.

Whether writing in response to an advertisement, or writing to a company without an advertised position, the general rule of cover letters is: if at all possible, address your letters to specific people. Call directory information, do more research, call the company, or talk with people you know to find the information you need. Mass produced letters addressed to "Director of Personnel" will, in all likelihood, not be considered.

No matter how you find out a person's name, always be sure to call the company to verify name spellings and titles of people that you write to. Even if you see a name in print in a magazine or other publication, it may be misspelled or list an incorrect title. In addition, the person listed may have been promoted or left the company since the material was printed.

Also be sure to include your address on the cover letter. If it gets separated from your résumé, you want to make it as easy as possible for an employer to reach you.

GENERAL OUTLINE FOR A COVER LETTER

Your address
Date

If at all possible, write to a person, not a position, and use full name spelled correctly and complete title

Employer's name, Title
Company name
Company address

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr.,

Opening Paragraph: State why you are writing. Mention the name of the position or type of work for which you are applying and how you heard of the opening or organization. Begin with a strong, positive opening statement to catch the reader's attention and peak his/her interest.

Make the reader want to read your resume. Be personable, enthusiastic, and confident.

Middle Paragraph(s): Answer the reader's question "Why should I interview this person?" Include the highlights of your resume, focusing on any aspect of your background which demonstrates 1) your interest or experience in this type of work, 2) your qualities as a worker, 3) how your education/experience will help on this job. Also include examples demonstrating that hiring you will lead to higher production, greater efficiency, and better performance.

Be brief and specific. Your letter should be absolutely no longer than one page!

Closing Paragraph: Suggest alternative dates and/or times which would be convenient for you to interview. If possible, indicate you will follow up on or by a specific date, then remember to do it! Remain positive, and assume that you will get an interview.

Do three things:
1. Say "Thank you."
2. Repeat your phone number.
3. Ask for an interview.

Sincerely,

Always type and sign your name.

Your signature in black ink

Your name typed
enclosure

Indicate your resume or other information is enclosed.

Another very effective way to format the middle paragraph(s) of your cover letter, if applicable, is to clearly show your qualifications for the position in question.

YOU NEED

I HAVE

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Select the key requirements from the advertisement and state you possess these requirements. For instance, you might say, "YOU NEED...5 years of retail experience. I HAVE...7 years of sales experience with the country's largest hardware retailer," etc. The body of such a letter might look something like this:

Dear Ms. Strand:

I am responding to the advertisement for a Management Trainee which was advertised at the Purdue University North Central Career Services Office. Upon review of my qualifications, I am sure you will agree that I have the education and experience you are looking for.

YOU NEED..

A degree in Business, Marketing, or a related field

Proven leadership skills

Customer service experience

Someone who can successfully complete a 16 week training class

I HAVE..

An Associates degree in General Business from Purdue University North Central

One year of experience as the President of the Accounting Club

Two and a half years of experience in serving customers in a retail environment and one year in a restaurant environment

A proven ability to learn, with an overall GPA of 3.8/4.0

I am confident I can perform the job of Management Trainee effectively. I look forward to having the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in person. I can be reached at (219) 643-9999 to schedule a personal interview. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Finally, be sure to keep copies of all correspondence you send out. And most importantly, follow up on résumés and cover letters you mail. Simply sending your résumé is not enough. You will need to follow up with a phone call to the employer (when possible) within 5-7 working days of sending your information.

Cover Letter Responding to an Advertisement

1401 S US Hwy 421
Westville, IN 46391
January 28, 2005

Mr. Joe Sommers, Branch Manager
Hoosier Bank
47 West Michigan Street
Anywhere, Indiana 46210

Dear Mr. Sommers:

I am replying to your job posting posted with the PNC Career Services office dated March 28, 2001, offering a position as a Branch Manager Trainee. My educational background and part-time work experience in banking-related positions uniquely qualify me for your job opening.

As you will note in my enclosed resume, I will graduate in May, 2001, from Purdue University North Central with a degree in Organizational Leadership and Supervision.

In my first three years at Purdue, I worked part-time as a teller at the University Credit Union. During summer vacations, I worked as a clerk/secretary, filling in on a temporary basis in several different departments. In my senior year, I worked in the University Business Office working with cash balances, fee collections, auditing statements, and report writing. I have also taken courses in management and computer science, and two courses in accounting and finance.

I look forward to having the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in person, and can be reached by phone after 3:00 p.m. at (219) 462-0000 or via e-mail at joestudent@internet.net. I appreciate your time and consideration and hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Joe Student

enclosure

Job Searching

Once you have created a wonderful résumé, the next question is “What do I do with it?” Job searching is in itself a full-time job. An effective job search should be an eight hours per day, five days per week commitment. However, most people do not make this type of dedication to their job search. It is very common, especially among recent college graduates, to believe that by answering a few ads in the newspaper they will magically find their dream job within a few weeks. The reality of job searching, however, is that there is no magic formula. Successful job searching is the result of hard work and dedication.

The rule of thumb for job searching is for every \$10,000 in anticipated salary, you should expect to dedicate one month to a full-time, intensive job search.

This rule, of course, depends on many factors: your flexibility regarding salary, location, hours, your degree, and the state of the job market in the particular geographic region in which you are looking.

Preparing to Send Your Résumé

Before you begin deciding which companies you would like to contact to try to find employment, it is important first to do a little bit of self-assessment. Remember that the positions you take upon graduation will determine the path of your career. As such, it is important for you to make sure your personal and professional goals are complimentary.

To ensure this is the case, you should ask yourself questions about your goals - both personal and professional - and be ready to answer such questions and direct your job search around them. A personal assessment consists of questions regarding your private life, such as:

- Are you or do you want to be married? What are your spouse's goals?
- Do you want to have children? If so, when? How many?
- Where do you want to live?
- What are your financial constraints? Desires?
- How much time do you want to have for your family each week, or are you willing to work as many hours as necessary?

Professional questions deal with your career and what types of jobs you want to hold. Some examples are:

- What size of company do you want to work for?
- What are your goals with regard to promotions/moving up within the company?
- Are you willing to travel? For long periods of time or just one or two nights? How far?
- What type of co-workers do you want to work with? Is it important to be friends with them, or just co-workers?
- Do you want to work closely with others or very independently?

As you can see, your personal and professional goals are closely linked and must not be contradictory. For instance, if you only want to work 40 hours per week in order to have lots of family time, but also want to become CEO of your company within two years, your goals are ambitious, yet unrealistic, and most likely not possible to achieve simultaneously. These are the types of conflicts you must be able to solve before you begin your job search.

Now you are ready to start utilizing several methods of job searching to find a job. There are three basic methods most people use when determining where to send their résumé. They are:

1. Answering Newspaper Ads
2. Visiting Personnel Agencies
3. Networking through the use of Prospecting and Informational Interviewing

Two Types of Job Markets

Before discussing each job search technique in detail, it is helpful to understand a little bit about the job market as a whole and when to use each technique. There are actually two types of job markets which together account for all of the jobs filled each day. The first is the advertised job market. This market consists of jobs that are advertised in newspapers, through personnel agencies, and through other sources such as the PNC Career Development Office. This job market, however, only accounts for approximately 20-30% of all the jobs filled every day. Therefore, while the advertised job market is important to your job search, only a small amount of time should be spent job searching in it.

The other type of job market is the hidden job market. This market consists of jobs that are filled but never advertised. This market is best described by the old sayings “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know,” and “I was in the right place at the right time.”

The hidden job market accounts for 70-80%, or even as high as 90% of all of the jobs actually available at any given time.

The key to your job search, then, is to tap into this market by using a process called “Networking,” discussed in detail later.

Job Searching Techniques

Answering Newspaper Ads

Although you should not spend the majority of your time doing so, answering newspaper advertisements, or advertisements from any other source, is an important part of your job search. Overall, the chance for getting a job through an ad is not very great, but there are several rules you can follow to increase your chances.

- Don’t avoid answering an ad because your qualifications don’t exactly match those listed. The advertisement is meant to describe the “ideal” candidate for the position, but this fictional person may not exist, may not answer the ad, or may not be interested in the position even if interviewed and offered the job. If your qualifications are close, answer the ad.
- Always send a cover letter with your resume when responding to an ad.
- Ads that require salary history do so for a reason - to eliminate candidates quickly and easily. This is the first criterion a hiring authority will use to decrease the number of eligible resumes. You don’t want to fall victim to this process of elimination before your qualifications are even considered, so avoid giving specific salary requirements by using one of two techniques:

1. Ignore the request entirely. The person who receives your resume can only assume you forgot to include this piece of information. If you don't feel comfortable with this technique, follow technique 2.
2. State your salary requirements in a large range, neither overstating your requirements nor selling yourself short. For instance, if you want to make \$25,000, indicate your salary range is from \$20,000 - \$30,000.

A word to the wise, don't make the upper end of your range too high - you could eliminate yourself from the running. Along these same lines, however, you don't want to start your range too low, either. Assume you got an interview and were offered a job originally paying \$30,000 to start. Will your potential employer offer you \$30,000? Probably not, since you said that you will work for \$20,000. Businesses are in operation to make money, so the less they have to pay you, the better.

When discussing salary in response to an ad, it is always good to include you are not so much interested in the salary a particular job pays as the opportunities the position holds.

- Always follow up a response to an ad with a phone call when possible. Make the call within 5-10 working days for a local mailing and 10-15 days for an out-of-state location. Following up with a call shows you are serious about the position, and you possess the confidence to make a second contact. Don't always assume that if you don't receive a response you are not being considered for the position. It is likely the potential employer has been busy since receiving your resume (and the resumes of 200 other candidates) to call anyone. By calling, you are drawing attention to yourself and forcing the potential employer to pull your resume out of the stack.
- If you are currently employed, especially by a large company, be very careful when replying to ads that don't list a company name but only a P.O. Box (for instance, an ad may say: "Send your resume to P.O. Box 114, The LaPorte Herald Argus"). This may be your own company! Even if they are not hiring, sometimes companies "go fishing," which

means they put an imaginary job in the paper just to get a supply of resumes to use when they are actually ready to hire.

- Check your local paper for job ads, but don't stop there. Check magazines, trade journals, and the PNC office of Career Development. Also check newspapers from the larger cities in your area. Many companies in small cities will advertise jobs in large city newspapers because their ad will be seen by more people than a smaller newspaper.

The most important thing to remember about answering ads is not to base your entire job search on this one method. The chances of finding the job you really want are small.

Utilizing Personnel Agencies

Utilizing personnel agencies (also called "search firms" and "headhunting firms") is another method of job searching. A typical personnel agency will interview you at their office, then set up interviews for you at the companies actually hiring. Sometimes you must pay for this referral service, but most of the time the hiring companies pay the agency if they hire a person sent to them through the agency.

It is recommended you avoid agencies that require the job seeker to pay fees. The chances of actually getting a position through this method are small, and there are plenty of agencies in operation where the hiring company pays any fees incurred. Either way, if you call an agency, be sure to ask up front about fees, and sign a contract only after you completely understand all of the facts.

Even if the company pays the fee, you should remain cautious. Remember, in this situation, the recruiter sending you on interviews is a commissioned salesperson whose first priority is not to you, but to the company paying their fee. When called for an interview with a company, ask questions! Don't just blindly go on interviews (or temporary assignments if applicable) without knowing exactly what you are interviewing for. You have a right to ask questions and get straight answers. If you can't get answers that are to your satisfaction, refuse to go.

If you do choose to register with an agency, treat your recruiter with respect until he/she illustrates they deserve otherwise. Keep in mind, they only send candidates to interviews who are very professional and come across well in the initial interview with them. Don't be afraid to ask questions,

and most importantly, don't base your entire job search on this one technique.

Now that you know what techniques you should NOT spend the majority of your time on, let's move on to the key to job search success for most job seekers - networking.

Networking

What is Networking?

The first question most people ask regarding networking is, "What is it?" Networking has been around as long as business has, but no one ever gave it a name. Basically, networking is a process of developing relationships with others for the ultimate purpose of finding employment. The key to networking is to have the "right" people in your network - people who can help you with your job search, or can hire you. The main goals of networking are to gather information, advice, and referrals to assist you in finding a job.

Without even trying, everyone already has a network. Your network consists of everyone you know - your doctor, hairdresser, baby-sitter,

Where to Begin Networking

Since everyone already has their own network, beginning the networking process is as easy as picking up the phone and telling everyone in your network you are looking for a job.

As you talk to those in your network and tell them you are seeking employment, always ask these two key questions:

1. Do you know of any jobs currently available in this field?
2. Do you know of anyone else who might be able to help me with my job search?

These two questions are vital to your job search. The first one asks for knowledge of any openings in your field, thereby tapping into the hidden job market as discussed earlier. Even more importantly, the second question attempts to increase your network. It gives you new people you can contact and bring into your network.

family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, classmates, people at your church, etc., etc..... Some job seekers will have more "right" people in their network than others, so their job search will probably require less work. A "right" person can be defined as someone who has the authority and knowledge to significantly help you with your job search, or would be eligible to hire you for your desired position. Those who don't have a network packed with the "right" people will have to work harder at expanding their network.

For instance, a person who has been working in Northwest Indiana for 20 years will probably have a much stronger network than someone who recently relocated to the area. Both people can network effectively, but the person who just relocated to the area will probably have to work harder to increase the number of people in his/her network. The techniques used to increase the number of people in your network are "Prospecting" and "Informational Interviewing." Each of these are discussed in detail in the following pages.

A rule of thumb for networking is 300 contacts = 12 interviews = 1 or 2 job offers. Networking takes time and effort - don't give up!

As you begin to network, it is very important to have a pen and paper handy wherever you go. Get into the habit of carrying something to write with whenever you go out. Networking should be an on-going process, which continues no matter where you are. You may run into a friend at the grocery store or doctor's office who knows of an opening at his/her company in your field. This is vital information, and you don't want to forget it by the time you get home. You need to write it down.

Also, be sure to write all names you are given, even if they do not directly work in your field. For instance, your dentist may know a production supervisor at a large manufacturing company. Even though you are interested in accounting, you should still take that name down. You can contact the production manager and ask him/her who the controller is for the company. Every name, no matter how unimportant or irrelevant it may seem, is an important piece of your networking process.

In addition, make sure that you have plenty of copies of a well-written resume to hand out to anyone willing to take one. Another important part of networking is making sure you are always remembered positively. No one in your network is going to give you names of his/her friends if you are

rude or unprofessional. Besides always doing your best to appear friendly and business-like, one way to make a good impression is to send thank-you notes to anyone who helps you in your job search. This is especially important for those members of your network who are very “high profile.” When in doubt, send a thank-you letter - most people don’t perform this professional courtesy, and doing so could make you stand out above the rest.

If your job search becomes stale and nothing is happening, the reason is most likely you do not have the “right” people in your network, so you need to expand it.

Expanding Your Network

Always strive to expand your network, especially if your job search has come to a stand still. One way to accomplish this is through research. There are many good sources of networking information readily available at your local library. Publications such as [The Indiana Manufacturers Guide](#) and [The Indiana Business Directory](#) list companies with contact names and titles within the state of Indiana. Publications exist for other regions of the country as well. Contact names can also be obtained from magazines such as [The Indiana Business Magazine](#) and trade journals for your particular field. Also, newspapers are a good source of current business information, including promotions and new hires. Read your local paper and other papers in your area for up-to-date information about local companies. Another good source for contact names are membership lists of community groups such as the Chamber of Commerce. You may be charged for such lists, but the investment may be well worth it.

Research is important, but must be accompanied by Prospecting and Informational Interviewing to be effective.

Prospecting

The goal of networking is to gain information and referrals to further your job search. The most effective way of getting such information is through face-to-face meetings. A businessperson is much more likely to refer you to a friend at another company if they have met you in person rather than talked with you over the phone. Referring you to someone else requires a businessperson to put their own reputation on the line. If they refer someone who turns out to be a poor employee, it reflects negatively on

them. Therefore, people with whom you speak will be much more likely to refer you to others if they have met you, and that is your goal.

The act of introducing yourself to someone you would like to bring into your network is prospecting. For instance, imagine that you told your neighbor you are looking for a job in accounting. You ask her the two key questions - do you know of any accounting jobs, to which she answers no, and do you know of anyone who might be able to help me with my job search? She tells you she knows a man who owns a CPA firm named Jim Jones whom she has known through her church for years, and gives you his number. When you contact Jim Jones, you are prospecting.

There are three methods of prospecting. Using the above example, your first choice is to pick up the phone, call Jim Jones and ask him for information. This method is quick and relatively easy, but not extremely effective. You are very likely to be rejected, mainly because you probably will never successfully get through to Jim - Jim’s secretary will prevent it. Jim’s secretary’s job is to take care of as much of his business for him as possible and keep his work load to a manageable level. Since you are an unknown person, Jim’s secretary will most likely screen your call and tell you Jim doesn’t have time to talk to you and you should call the human resources or personnel department. You may be allowed to leave a message for Jim, but the likelihood of him actually calling you back is very small.

The second approach is to write Jim a letter (see examples on page 23). Since the letter will be addressed directly to Jim, Jim’s secretary will probably let the letter go by without pronouncing it “junk mail” and throwing it away. Jim will read the letter and put it aside, either throwing it away himself or forgetting about it. Even if he is well-meaning and intends to call you back, Jim is a very busy man and calling you is at the bottom of his priority list.

Finally, your third approach is to go to Jim’s firm in person and ask to see him. This is a very time consuming process which rarely leads to an actual meeting. Jim spends a lot of his time out of the office or in staff meetings, and probably has a packed schedule. He may not be there, or may be busy. Even if he is not busy, he is not likely to let a total stranger come walking into his office just to talk.

Each of these methods in itself is relatively ineffective. However, by combining all three, you can be an effective networker. The best approach to prospecting is to make an initial contact with a letter or via e-mail, then

follow up with a phone call and attempt to set up a face-to-face meeting. This combined method works on many levels. First, as explained above, the letter or e-mail will probably be read by the target person. Then, when you follow up with a phone call, you have a reason for calling, and can use it to successfully get past the secretary. When you ask for Jim, she will ask who is calling. After you state your name, the secretary will most likely ask for the nature of the call. This is where the plan works. At this point you can say you are following up on some personal correspondence you sent Jim a few days ago. The secretary will probably not be sure whether or not she should screen your call out, and will either take a message or put you through to Jim. Now you have reached your goal. At this point, you should explain your situation and ask to set up a time to meet.

One crucial point to remember regarding networking: never ask anyone directly for a job. This may seem contradictory, but the key to prospecting successfully is using the correct approach. Asking people directly for a job rather than for information or advice will automatically put their defenses up. Approaching a prospecting target and asking, “Does your company have any jobs for someone like me?” will only turn that person off and make them reject you immediately. On the other hand, asking the person, “Do you know of any jobs in this field?” is very different. In the second case, you are asking for advice and information - you are not asking the person directly for a job. In general, businesspeople dislike being asked for jobs, but they like being asked for advice. Humans tend to love talking about themselves and their experiences, and with businesspeople this is especially so. Asking them for advice and information doesn’t put pressure on them, and it allows them to talk about themselves. Asking for a job makes them feel put upon and pressured. It makes them feel as though they must act.

Remember, when networking, always ask for advice, information, and referrals, never for a job directly.

The combination method of prospecting, as explained above, does just that. However, even when using this method, you may still get rejected the majority of the time. In fact, the average job seeker can expect 9 out of every 10 prospecting attempts to fail. While this leaves only one out of 10 actual appointments, one very successful meeting can make all the difference in your job search. The key to prospecting is to be persistent - expect a lot of rejections, don’t take them personally, and DON’T GIVE UP!

Informational Interviewing

Once you have successfully contacted a prospecting target, the face-to-face meeting you attempt to arrange is called an Informational Interview. The purpose of an informational interview is to gain information about job alternatives, learn how to strengthen your job search, and receive referrals to expand your network. Remember, the purpose of an informational interview is NOT to get a job from the interviewee!

As discussed earlier, interviewing people in your network face-to-face is very time consuming and requires great energy on your part. You want to reserve informational interviews for people who are knowledgeable about their organization and your field of work. Also remember, the best way to obtain informational interviews is to first mail a prospecting letter and then follow up with a phone call. Special rules apply when writing prospecting letters and placing prospecting phone calls.

First, never send a resume with your prospecting letter. Remember, you don’t want the recipient of the letter to feel you are asking him/her for a job, but sending a resume will convey that message. Prospecting letters should be short and personable(see examples on page 23).

Your prospecting phone call should follow the same general rule - never ask for a job. In fact, you may want to remind the prospecting target that you are indeed NOT looking for a job, only for advice and information. As stated before, during your phone call attempt to set up an appointment for a face-to-face interview. However, be prepared to conduct the interview at that time over the phone. One common response to your request for a personal meeting is, “Well, I don’t have time to meet with you, but what do you want to know?” Now is your chance for an informational interview - don’t miss out on this opportunity by being unprepared!

When preparing for an informational interview, remember the interviewee is doing you a favor by agreeing to see you. Be gracious by respecting this person’s time. Ideally, an informational interview should last approximately 20 minutes. Prepare 5-6 good questions in advance, and depending on how the interview goes, stick closely to this time limit. Sometimes you will need to eliminate questions depending on how thoroughly the interviewee answers them, but sometimes the interviewee

may give very short answers. During the interview, be very aware of signs indicating it is time to close, and follow your gut instinct. If an interview is going very well, with the interviewee giving long answers and involving you heavily in the conversation, your interview may run longer. Don't be rude by cutting someone off and losing out on a good chance for getting referrals. At the same time, note if the interviewee seems especially tense, looks at his/her watch repeatedly, or shifts around excessively in his/her chair. These signs indicate it is time to end the interview rapidly - obviously, the interviewee has other matters to attend to!

Content of an Informational Interview

Informational interviews are not job interviews. Job interviews occur when a hiring employer invites a candidate to speak with him/her regarding employment with their company. The employer asks the questions and the candidate answers them. The topic of conversation is primarily the candidate's background and how well it would fit into a position. The goal is for the candidate to be hired.

Informational interviews occur when a job seeker requests a personal meeting with a businessperson to get information about and assistance with their job search. The job seeker asks the questions and the businessperson answers them. The questions are geared toward gathering information about the businessperson's field of employment. The goal is for the job seeker to gain information, advice, and referrals.

While informational interviews are not job interviews, they are as important, or even more important, than job interviews. Remember, when the interviewee refers you to someone else, his/her reputation is on the line. Therefore, you must exhibit your utmost in professionalism and confidence during the interview. If the interviewee has any doubts by the end of the interview about your skills or character, he/she will not refer you to anyone. Also, the ultimate goal of networking is to get a job, so obviously at some point your goal is to obtain job interviews. Informational interviews often lead directly to job interviews, sometimes even with the same company. In this manner, informational interviews are like auditions for job interviews - conducting a poor informational interview eliminates the possibility of getting job interviews. The message is clear - you must perform to the absolute best of your ability during informational interviews.

Part of performing at your best is to prepare and practice asking your questions in advance. The informational interview is not the time to be

stumbling over unfamiliar words or phrases. Questions should fall into two types: job and career questions, and job search questions.

Job and career questions relate to the field in question and the interviewee's job in particular. Examples include:

- What are your main duties/responsibilities?
- What knowledge/skills/abilities will make me successful in this field?
- What are the advantages/disadvantages to working in this field?
- What is the future outlook for employment in this field?
- As an entry-level person in this field, what salary can I reasonably expect to make?

Job search questions refer to the job seeker's job search. Examples include:

- How did you get your job?
- How are most entry-level positions in this field filled?
- What is the best way to initiate networking activities with people in this field?

Begin your informational interview with job and career questions and end with job search questions. The job and career questions are easy and enjoyable for the interviewee to answer, and they will help to establish a rapport between you and the interviewee.

After you ask some job search questions, you can use a special strategy to make the interviewee look at your resume. Simply say, "I have my resume done, but I'm not sure it's as good as it could be. Could you take a quick look at it and make any suggestions for improving it?" This technique achieves two goals. First, it gives you excellent advice on how to improve your resume. Second, and most important, it invites the interviewee to look at your resume in a non-aggressive manner that will not offend the interviewee or make him/her believe you want a job from his/her firm. Your resume is now in the interviewee's hands, and you never asked them for a job. This is the ideal way to close an informational interview.

Final Details

Always send a thank-you note after an informational interview, whether it took place by phone or in person. This allows you to be remembered

positively, and increases your chances for getting referrals both immediately and in the future. Not only is it proper business etiquette, it will remind the interviewee of you and leave a final positive impression of you with them.

Overall Job Search Tips

To begin building and utilizing your network, here are a few final tips to keep in mind:

- Stay organized! It is extremely important to keep careful records of all phone calls you make and letters you send. One good way to organize your job search information is to keep an index card for each person in your network, noting on the card information about the person or when you made contact with them.
- Throughout your job search, always complete applications when requested to do so. Whether for a personnel agency or a company, Always answer all application questions completely and **never** write “See Resume” in any of the blanks. The application is a test. It is used as a sample of your ability to follow instructions, a sample of your handwriting, and to judge your thoroughness in completing a task. Applications are also used for data entry purposes. Most often in personnel agencies, the application is used to quickly enter your information into a computer database. Data entry from a resume is extremely difficult, if not impossible, as everyone’s resume is designed differently and contains different information.
- Get plenty of sleep, eat right, and set a schedule for yourself you can stick to. It is very easy after a few weeks or months of unemployment to begin turning into a “couch potato.” It is important to stay on top of your job search and complete positive steps each day. Obviously, the less you do, the longer it will take to get a job. It is important to keep a healthy schedule because when you finally get an informational interview, or a job interview, it will be even more difficult to present a confident, positive image if you have not attempted to keep yourself going. The farther you slide down into the valley of laziness and begin to experience a lack of self confidence, the harder it will be to get yourself mentally ready for an interview.
- Always be positive and remain confident. If an employer perceives you are desperate for a job, you will almost never be seriously considered for a position. Businesspeople don’t hire desperate candidates willing to do anything for a paycheck because they feel these candidates will make poor employees. Businesspeople hire

candidates who are confident in their abilities and have respect for themselves and their potential employers.

- As mentioned earlier, be prepared to accept rejections as part of the game. Don’t take rejections personally and learn from each one. Perseverance is the key.

Finally, always remember the most important rule of networking - NEVER ask directly for a job. Although it sounds contradictory, it is a vital point to remember. Do always ask for information, advice, and referrals.

The Career Services Office is here to help you with all aspects of the job search process and to answer any questions you may have. Take advantage of these services!

Prospecting/Broadcasting Letter

849 Baldwin Avenue
Valparaiso, Indiana 46383
June 10, 2004

Mr. Timothy T. Mellon
Director of College Recruiting
Midwest Mercantile Company
4500 Randolph Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Dear Mr. Mellon:

I read your company's description in the CPC Annual and would like to inquire about employment opportunities in your management training program. I want to work in retail management and would like to relocate to the Chicago area after graduation.

I will receive my B.S. degree this May. My interest in business started in Junior Achievement while in high school and developed further through a variety of sales and retail positions during college. My internship with a large department store convinced me to pursue a career in retail. My research of the top retailers in Chicago revealed Midwest Mercantile as having a strong market position, an excellent training program, and a reputation for excellent customer service. In short, you provide the kind of professional retail environment I seek.

My resume is enclosed for your consideration. My education and experience match the qualifications you seek in your management trainees, but they don't tell the whole story. I know from customer and supervisor feedback that I have the interpersonal skills and motivation needed to build a successful career in retail management. And my relatively extensive experience gives me confidence in my career direction and in my abilities to perform competently.

Could we schedule a personal interview to discuss employment opportunities at Midwest Mercantile? I can be reached at (804) 683-8843. Please leave a message if I'm not in, and I'll return your call the next day. Thank you very much for considering my request. I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Charlie Jones

enclosure

Prospecting/broadcasting letter

567 Lucky Way
LaPorte, Indiana 46350
June 18, 2004

Mr. Joseph Sanchez
Community Representative
Johnson Associates
1042 Main Street
Syracuse, New York 13200

Dear Mr. Sanchez:

I recently graduated from Purdue University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology. My career interests lie in the area of social research and community development. Your organization is recognized by many as a leader in urban development and research. I am interested in being associated with such an organization.

My education concentrated in the areas of ethnic concerns in the community. I have a special interest in the problems culturally mixed neighborhoods present to urban planning. My internship experience was in group work with displaced urban youth. I believe my willingness to learn and sincere interest in people could be an asset to an organization such as yours.

I realize that you may not have an opening within your organization at this time. However, you may be able to offer me guidance in my efforts to secure an entry-level position in the field. Enclosed is my resume for your review. If you are able to help me in my job search, I am available to meet with you at your convenience. I can be reached at (219) 555-1212 to schedule an interview.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Jones

enclosure

Interviewing

Hopefully, your efforts at networking will pay off for you by securing several job interviews. Although getting an interview is one of the two major goals of job searching (the other, of course, getting a job offer), few events in life evoke as much excitement, fear, and sometimes outright terror as a job interview. Interviewing can be very intimidating, especially for someone with little interview experience. This is understandable. It's not easy to sit with a stranger who holds your fate in his or her hands and be asked questions about everything from your childhood to your hobbies to what kind of fruit you would be if you were indeed a fruit! Most often, people think of interviews as interrogations which must be suffered through.

While there are some people who are naturally better at interviewing than others, the fact is effective interviewing is nothing more than a skill, which can be learned. Just like learning to ride a bike, the key to becoming a successful interviewee is to practice.

Five Tips for Successful Interviewing

An interview is a very unique experience, and no two interviews will ever be exactly the same. Just as interviewers are unique people with their own individual style, interviewees respond differently to the same set of questions depending on their own lives and experiences.

An interview should be a reflection of you and the unique person you are. The interviewer must believe you are presenting the “real you” and not an altered version of you who is saying and doing all the right things to get a job. Sincerity and honesty are extremely important. Both you and your employer will be very unhappy should you get a job based on somebody you thought you should be and not the person you truly are.

However, common sense must prevail. There are certain things expected of you in an interview situation and certain things that are not. Failing to meet up to these expectations could most likely cost you a job offer. For instance, you may love to listen to music; however, wearing a Walkman during an interview will obviously not be acceptable to employers.

Along these same lines, you, as the interviewee, have certain expectations of an interviewer. For instance, you would not expect, nor appreciate, an interviewer making you wait an hour for a scheduled interview while he/she has a pizza delivered and eats it. Nor would you expect an interviewer to conduct an interview in the parking lot. In either of these situations, you probably would not gain a very positive impression of the company or the position in question.

While it is important to be yourself during an interview, the following five tips for successful interviewing outline important items which will be expected of you before, during, and after an interview.

Tip 1: Preparation and Practice Make Perfect

As mentioned above, interviewing skills can be improved through practice. There are three areas to concentrate on in preparing and practicing for an interview.

- **Practice answering typically asked interview questions (see page 30 for sample questions)**

While all interviews are unique, there are certain questions typically asked in one form or another in almost all interviews. Most employers want to know certain things about potential employees before they hire them; however, whether the interviewer asks the question directly or indirectly, the basic question they want answered is, “Why should I hire you?” It's important to be able to answer this question if it is directly asked of you; however, if it is not asked directly, it will always be lurking in the background, and all of your answers to other questions should ultimately answer this one.

One of the best ways to practice answering questions is to sit in front of a mirror and answer them while watching yourself. You can either pose the questions to yourself or have a trusted friend or relative ask them for you. Arranging a “mock” interview with the Career Development Office is also a good way to practice answering questions.

- **Prepare several questions you will ask the interviewer (see page 30 for sample questions)**

Almost as important as being able to answer questions effectively is having good questions to ask during an interview. Most interviews end with an opportunity for you to ask questions of the interviewer. It is

extremely important for you to be prepared to ask questions which express your interest and enthusiasm about the position and the company as well as questions which show you have researched the company.

Asking appropriate, well-prepared questions is your opportunity to make a lasting, positive impression on the interviewer. The best way to prepare for this part of the interview is to research the company. After all, how can you ask intelligent questions about a company you know nothing about?

The importance of researching a company before interviewing with them cannot be overstated.

In fact, the employer may directly ask you something about his/her company to see if you have done your research. It is not unheard of for an interviewer to open the interview with, "Tell me about my company." This question could be your key to a successful interview, or the beginning of a very long meeting.

Where should you look for information about a company? The best place to start is the company itself. It is perfectly acceptable - and in fact may help you - to call a company with which you have scheduled an interview and say, "I have an interview with Mr. Smith next week, and I was wondering if you could send me some printed materials about your company in order to prepare for the interview." Not only do you get the information you need, you also set yourself apart from other candidates interviewing for the position by requesting the information. In short, you will probably gain a competitive edge.

Other sources for company information, including industry periodicals, business magazines, and trade magazines can be found at your local library. If the company is local, check your local papers. If you are interviewing with a national company, check publications such as the Wall Street Journal and Time magazine. If applicable, ask employees of the company to tell you about the firm. They can provide valuable information and be excellent networking contacts. Finally, the Placement Office has information on hundreds of companies available to you.

- **Prepare yourself psychologically for your interview**

Psychological preparation before an interview is one of the most effective yet underutilized steps in the preparation process. Preparing psychologically means thinking positively and confidently. It means believing you are a strong candidate for the position and you deserve the chance to prove it. It means making a conscience effort to turn your attitude around should you "wake up on the wrong side of the bed" the morning of your interview or have a fight with your significant other or children. It is extremely important to remember that no matter how hard you try to hide what is inside, your inner feelings will come through in your words and actions.

Psychological preparation also means getting rid of, as much as possible, the knot in your stomach. Deep breathing and focusing your mind on the task at hand will help you appear less nervous. But by far, the best cure for nervousness is good preparation.

Tip 2: Dress for Success

Your physical appearance is a reflection of your inner self. It is important you feel comfortable with how you look, and that your style mirrors your personality. Keep in mind the interviewer has certain expectations regarding not only your behavior, but your appearance as well. You have spent many hours and a lot of money developing your skills and earning your college degree - do not let a poor appearance prevent an interviewer from considering you for a position.

There are two basic rules to remember when dressing for an interview - the more conservative the better, and quality is the key.

Like it or not, businesspeople, in general, are conservative, and will most likely hire candidates who they perceive to be conservative also. Unless you have absolutely 100% positive information that the company you are interviewing with does not typically hire conservatively-dressed candidates, assume you need to dress conservatively. You have a much better chance of being right than being wrong. Let your personal style come out little by little once you are an established employee.

Another rule to remember when considering dress is **pay attention to the details**. Your shoes, hair, watch, hands, briefcase, portfolio, and pen are very important to your overall image. A good suit, no matter how pleasing, will probably not make up for badly-styled, unflattering, or dirty hair. Details can make all the difference in the interviewer's opinion of you.

Although men and women share some general rules regarding appropriate interviewing attire, certain rules specific to each sex should be followed.

Men

Men should wear a navy or gray suit that is up-to-date in style and fabric. No huge lapels or bell-bottom pants allowed! Three-piece suits, with a vest, are outdated. Double-breasted suits are acceptable, but single-breasted suits are more classic. With regards to fabric, wool gabardine is the best choice. A coordinating sport coat and pants is more casual, and should be worn only for third or fourth interviews.

White shirts are the best choice, with a small pin stripe being acceptable as well. Shirts should always be long-sleeved, and 100% cotton or cotton blend is a good choice for fabric. The most important feature about a shirt is that it be pressed correctly.

Choose an updated tie, paying close attention to width and length. Your tie should be less than three inches in width and touch the top of your belt buckle. The style of the tie can be your choice (within reason), but remember, the smaller the pattern on the tie the more authority you project.

A leather belt and shoes in black or burgundy portray a good image. Wing-tips are more conservative, while tassel loafers are more casual. Jewelry on men generally does not test well in business with the exception of class rings and wedding bands. You should invest in a good-quality watch, or not wear one at all. Leather bands with black or gold faces are most acceptable, while watches with plastic bands and every gadget imaginable are a poor choice. Your wallet should also be leather and in relatively good condition. You may have to take it out to provide identification to the employer, so be prepared for this possibility!

Women

Suits in navy, gray, taupe, and black in wool or wool blends, cotton or cotton blends, linens or silks are good choices. Skirted suits are the safest choice, but the skirt should be calf-length, even if mini-skirts are in style. Blouses should be solid-colored in a color that flatters your skin tone. Choose blouses that are good quality and conservatively styled (no low necklines!).

Dresses in classic styles are also a good choice. Select colors similar to acceptable suit colors. To be taken seriously, avoid floral designs and other

prints. More “presence” can be added to dresses by adding a coordinating blazer.

Shoes should be leather in classic colors - navy, black, taupe. The classic pump - closed heel and toe - is most appropriate. Briefcases, portfolios, and purses should also be leather and conservatively-colored. It is fine to carry a purse with a briefcase as long as the purse is compact and is functional. Nylons should either match your shoes in color or be neutral. Never wear nylons that are darker than your shoes. Never have runs or snags in your nylons. You may want to take an extra pair with you to an interview so that you can make a quick change in the restroom before your interview if necessary.

Jewelry should also be worn conservatively. Invest in 14-karat gold or sterling silver jewelry if possible, or gold- or silver-toned jewelry if necessary. With jewelry, simplicity is the key. One ring per hand should be the limit, while earrings should be simple yet elegant. Small, non-dangling earrings are best. Your watch should follow the style of the men - leather or gold band with a gold or black face is generally most acceptable.

Your hair should be your natural color, or appear to be. If you color your hair, dark roots are a business fashion faux-pas! Shoulder length or shorter hair tests best in business. If you have long hair, pull it up into a bun or other “chic” style. Avoid too much hair spray or other products that give your hair a “plastic” look, and try to avoid hair disasters such as excessive split ends or “fly-away” hair. Wear your hair in a style that flatters your face.

Make-up should be worn conservatively. It should look natural and complement your face, not detract from it. It should be worn so people don’t even realize you are wearing make-up. Perfume or cologne should be applied very sparingly or not at all. Fingernails should be short and neatly manicured with clear polish.

For both sexes, a business wardrobe should focus on quality, not quantity. Invest in good-quality clothing and accessories. It is much more acceptable to wear the same high-quality suit several times, perhaps with a different blouse/shirt, than to wear several different “cheap” suits. The investment in quality clothing will pay off during your job search, and in your career as well. Don’t sell yourself short!

Tip 3: You Never Get a Second Chance to Make a First Impression

When asked how far into an interview employers make their decision about the person they are interviewing, their answers range from “the minute I meet them” to “within the first 15 seconds.” The ability to make a positive first impression is an invaluable skill during your job search. In an interview situation, your first impression begins earlier than you might think - from the minute you pull into the company’s parking lot.

Let’s suppose, for example, that you normally drive relatively fast with your windows down, arm hanging out the window, and “The Screaming Banshees” CD, with full bass, thumping on your stereo. Now let’s suppose the person you have an interview scheduled with has an office overlooking the parking lot. In response to the strange vibration he/she suddenly feels, your interviewer looks out the window only to see you screeching into the parking lot. Is this a good first impression? - probably not.

First impressions can be overcome, but not easily. Why would you want to enter a competition for a job behind the rest of the pack? It would be like running a race with weights in your shoes - you start with a disadvantage, and you have to work that much harder to make up for it.

It’s also important to remember to make a positive first impression with everyone you meet. You are being watched from the moment you walk through the door by everyone. You never know who may walk by. You may pass right by the CEO of the company without even knowing it. When she is interviewing you during the third round of interviews, do you want her to remember you smiling kindly and saying hello, or rudely pushing past her in the lobby?

Not only are people watching you from the moment you leave your car, but they will talk about you when you leave. After your interview, your interviewer may ask anyone who had contact with you, especially his/her secretary, what they thought of you. Remember, many job offers have been lost after a candidate has left because the secretary reported to his/her boss the candidate acted rudely. Whether positive or negative, other peoples’ first impressions will play some part in the decision of the interviewer whether or not to hire you.

The following are some simple but extremely important things you should do to make a positive first impression.

- **Arrive 10-15 minutes early to the interviewer’s office, and arrive earlier than that to the interview sight.** Never be late for an interview. Even if you get stuck by a train, the interviewer will wonder about your ability to get to work on time. Leave early enough to allow for unforeseeable events. If the area in which the company is located is unfamiliar to you, you may want to make a “practice run” prior to the day of your interview so you will know the amount of travel time needed and not get lost.

If you arrive very early for the interview, drive around or park in a nearby parking lot and wait. Use this time to gather your thoughts and rehearse the answers you have prepared for questions. At about 25 minutes before your interview is scheduled, proceed to the interview sight. Upon your arrival, approach the building confidently. If a restroom is handy, do a final check of your appearance. If not, go straight to the interviewer’s office.

- **Fill out any and all paperwork required of you in its entirety.** If you are given an application, fill it out and DO NOT write “See resume” in any of the blanks. The application is a test. It is a test of your ability to follow directions, your thoroughness in completing a task, and a sample of your handwriting. Also, applications are used for data entry purposes. After your interview, your information may very likely be entered into a computer database designed to match the application. It is nearly impossible to do data entry from a resume as everyone’s resume is designed differently and contains different information. Always carry a black pen with you to interviews to use when filling out forms.
- **If you have to wait, sit patiently and quietly in the lobby.** Do not fidget in your chair, chew your nails, dig around in your purse or briefcase, or get up and leave. If there are reading materials available to you, utilize those to expend some of your nervous energy. If the secretary/receptionist makes conversation, speak with him/her in a friendly manner. If they remain silent, follow suit. Simply sit up straight in your chair and wait quietly.
- **When your interviewer approaches you, stand up, look him/her in the eye, give a firm handshake, use their name, and thank them.** Greeting your interviewer in this way will get your

interview off on the right foot. You portray a feeling of confidence and show the proper amount of respect.

Your greeting may sound like this: “Good morning Mr. Jones. It is a pleasure to meet you,” or “Good Afternoon, Ms. Jackson, I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today.” Remember, no matter what you say, look the person in the eye, smile, and give them a good, firm handshake.

Tip 4: Attitude is Everything

You may say all of the right things when answering questions and have impeccable grooming and dress. However, if you have a bad attitude, it will override all else. A famous quote says: “People will forget what you say, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” In an interviewing situation, this quote embodies the very essence of a successful interview.

Saying you are confident in your abilities means absolutely nothing if your voice, appearance, and body language say something else. If your attitude and your actions contradict each other, attitude predominates every time.

The key to successful interviewing is to believe in yourself and your abilities, then effectively communicate those to the interviewer.

You need to show enthusiasm for yourself, your abilities, and the job as well. No one wants to hire someone who dislikes themselves or their jobs - negativity will get you nowhere.

Attitude is expressed most obviously in body language. Confident people hold their head high, sit still, look people in the eye when they speak, smile, and speak clearly. They do not slouch, mumble, look at the floor, or fidget nervously in their chair.

On the other hand, confident people don't feel the need to appear invincible, to intimidate, belittle, or look down on other people. Confident people know they are not perfect, but focus on their strengths and work on their weaknesses. Over-confident people must believe they are perfect because deep inside they know they are far from it. It is imperative to find a good balance between confidence and cockiness - no one wants to hire an over-confident person. The issue of confidence boils down to one thing - if

you don't believe in yourself, how can you expect an employer to believe in you?

Another common attitude interviewees have is one of bitterness toward past employers. Because of wrongs they feel have been committed against them, many job seekers are angry at past employers. No matter how justified your dislike for your past employers is, the interview is neither the time nor place to air your dirty laundry. If you go into an interview with a “chip on your shoulder” stemming from past work experience, how will an employer believe that if he/she hires you the same negativity won't result?

Tip 5: Think Before you Speak

Practicing how to answer interview questions is very important, but there is no possible way you can rehearse an answer for every question encountered. Questions seeking similar information can be worded differently. Therefore, during an interview it is important to be able to think on your feet to avoid sticking them in your mouth.

Business people tend to like facts. “Hard” facts like quantities, percentages, and specific examples are much more likely to persuade your interviewer to believe something about you than simply saying something is true about yourself. For instance, it's fine to say you are a good leader, but backing your statement up with examples such as: “I was the President of the Accounting Club for one year. During my term, I increased membership by 22 members, raised \$5,000 through coordinating fundraising activities, and conducted one meeting every month for the 12 months I was in office” will add credibility to what you are saying and make it far more persuasive.

Don't, however, get too carried away with examples. Remember, the person you are interviewing with is a very busy individual. You should never take advantage of this person's time by rambling on about your experiences. Your answers to the questions posed to you should illustrate you can effectively summarize large amounts of information by selecting the most important and pertinent points and discussing them in a brief, concise, and pointed manner. When answering questions in an interview, keep in mind, quality is infinitely better than quantity.

The manner in which you speak is also important. You are in a formal business situation, so speak accordingly. Words such as “yeah” and “gonna” instead of “yes” and “going to” are simply not acceptable in an

interview situation. Obviously, foul and offensive language should be avoided at all cost, even if the interviewer uses it.

Another thing to remember about interviewing is that silence is golden. In a tense situation like an interview, people tend to fill silences by clearing their throat, shifting nervously in their chair, giggling, playing with an object such as a pencil or pen, or just talking nonsensically. All of these behaviors are a sign of nervousness and a lack of poise. Sometimes an interviewer will purposely create a silence just to see how the interviewee reacts.

Don't fall into these bad habits! Simply sit quietly in your seat and wait. If you finish answering a question to your own satisfaction and the interviewer simply looks at you without saying anything, politely ask, "Would you like me to expand on that point further?" and see what he/she says. This response shows you are confident in your answer and politely puts the ball back in the interviewer's court.

Another important point to remember during an interview is to put as much effort into listening as you do to speaking. There is nothing more embarrassing or potentially damaging as an interviewee asking the interviewer to repeat a question because he/she wasn't listening, or an interviewee failing to laugh at an interviewer's joke because he/she didn't hear it.

It is very easy in an interview to worry so much about what you are going to say next that you stop listening to the interviewer. Being able to listen effectively and react appropriately is another sign of poise and confidence. Make sure you are listening at least as much as you are talking.

Following these five tips for successful interviewing will help you increase your chances of making a great impression and getting a job offer. To increase your chances even more, complete one final step in the interview process - send a thank you letter.

A thank you letter should be sent without fail within 24-48 hours after every interview. This step in the interview process can truly mean the difference between getting and not getting a job offer.

Since most people do not complete this final step, you set yourself apart from your competition by following through. Your letter should be short and personable, and handwritten if feasible.

Portfolios

Professional portfolios are a very helpful job search tool which can give you a distinct advantage over your competition. According to The College Portfolio Series, by Rebecca Anthony, “A portfolio is an organized, thoughtful and customized collection of evidence used by a job seeker to promote knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities.” Your portfolio serves as a visual aid for your interview, or sales presentation.

A portfolio lends visual evidence to support the claims you make in your interview regarding skills you possess and experiences you’ve had.

Assembling Your Portfolio

A portfolio is inexpensive to assemble. Simply buy a three-ring binder and a box of clear plastic protective sleeves. Slip your items, or artifacts, into the plastic sleeves, and put them into the binder. Make sure that you have multiple copies of items the employer may want to keep (i.e., resume, reference sheet, transcripts, etc.). This technique not only protects your artifacts, but makes them easily removable for closer inspection by your interviewer. It also makes it possible for you to customize your portfolio for each interview, as some artifacts may be relevant for certain positions but not for others.

Your artifacts should be carefully chosen and thoughtfully presented. In fact, how you assemble your portfolio and use it in the interview are as important, if not more important, than the artifacts themselves.

When deciding whether to include an artifact in your portfolio, ask yourself these questions:

- Does this item illustrate a specific skill or ability I possess?
- Can I tell a story that relates this item to the position for which I am interviewing?
- Will the interviewer be interested in this particular item for this particular position?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, don’t include the artifact in question for that particular interview. Do not treat your portfolio like a scrapbook of personal memorabilia! Always remember that it is a business document assembled with a specific purpose in mind.

Your portfolio not only provides visual evidence to support your claims, but also serves as a sample of your ability to effectively organize and present information. Make sure your artifacts are organized in a logical manner, and you can find each artifact as you need it. A table of contents is a good idea, as are colored tabs or dividers. Make sure that you can quickly and easily flip to each artifact when you need to. If you have to fumble around and flip through each page to find what you’re looking for, your portfolio may become a liability rather than an asset to your interview.

Using Your Portfolio in the Interview

Some interviewers you encounter will love the fact that you have a portfolio, and be very interested in looking through it and hearing about the artifacts you have included. Others, though, may not be at all interested in your portfolio or what it contains. It is important to be sensitive to how you introduce your portfolio into the discussion, and how much you refer to it and utilize it.

In an interview, DO NOT:

- Begin the interview by pushing the portfolio toward the interviewer and saying “Here’s my portfolio.”
- Force the portfolio on an uninterested employer.
- Use your portfolio as an excuse not to talk.
- Fail to clearly demonstrate the relevance of your artifacts to the position in question.
- Fidget with it and the items in it.
- Attempt to narrate your portfolio page-by-page or “ramble” on about its contents and bore the interviewer.

Instead, you SHOULD:

- Identify the skill/ability/accomplishment each artifact demonstrates – if you can’t identify this, don’t include it!
- Limit your portfolio to 10-15 relevant artifacts. You don’t want to overwhelm the interviewer!
- When appropriate, label items or include short narratives to explain an artifact’s purpose or relevance.
- Introduce the portfolio in the discussion at the first appropriate opportunity while answering an interview question (i.e., “Yes, I do have strong written communication skills. As you can see here in my portfolio, I have done quite a bit of writing, not only in the classroom, but on the job as well, including this paper I did for a class.....”)

- PRACTICE physically using and referring to your portfolio while asking typically asked interview questions.
- Organize your portfolio so you can easily find things. Remember, you will be nervous during the interview and may forget where you put things.
- If the employer has shown interest in your portfolio, offer to leave it behind at the end of the interview and return to pick it up the next day and deliver your thank-you letter! Be careful, though, not to leave behind original documents (i.e., diplomas) that you can't obtain again!

Once you have developed your portfolio, continue to update it throughout your career. You never know when you'll be job hunting again! Keep copies of your work and important documents at home so you can update your portfolio whenever you need to. Always be in the mindset of skill acquisition and documentation – it'll do wonders for your career!

Portfolio Ideas and Items

- Resume – multiple copies
- Academic transcripts
- Professional Reference list
- Letters of Recommendation
- Performance Evaluations from work
- Certificates of Achievement
- Writing Samples – can be from classes or work (i.e., training materials, reports, newsletters)
- Brochures, flyers, and other marketing materials you've developed
- Computer Programs you've written or output of those programs
- Grading sheets with faculty comments and photos of class projects
- Photos of table displays
- Items from volunteer experiences
- Thank-you notes from grateful customers or colleagues
- Professional certifications
- Web-sites you've developed
- Strategic planning materials or business plans
- Published work
- Internship materials
- Materials dealing with campus involvement (clubs and activities)
- Job descriptions from previous jobs
- Charts, graphs, or other visual evidence you've used in presentations
- Photos of you teaching or presenting
- Newspaper clippings or articles
- Desktop publishing examples
- Committee work and output
- Documentation of special training or certification
- Awards and other special recognition
- Skill inventory
- Proof of citizenship or work eligibility in the US
- Proof of military service
- Case studies
- Organizational charts
- Survey instruments
- Assessment and evaluation materials
- Evidence of proficiency in a second language
- Lab/technical reports
- Innovative projects
- Professional Development Documentation

Typically Asked Interview Questions

Tell me about yourself.

What are your strengths/weaknesses?

Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

What motivates you?

What would your previous boss say about you?

Why are you leaving/did you leave your last job?

What led you to your chosen college/field of study?

When have you acted as a leader?

What qualities should a successful manager possess?
Why should I hire you?

Give me an example of a time when you had a large problem to solve at work.
What did you do to resolve the problem, and what were the results of your actions?

Give me an example of when you worked successfully in a team.

How do you work under pressure?

Describe the ideal job for you.

What do you know about our company?

What do you know about the position you're being interviewed for?

What skills, experience, and training do you have to make you qualified for this job?

What has been your biggest regret?

What mistakes have you made, and how have you learned from them?

What are your hobbies?

If your career demanded it, would you be willing to relocate for advancement purposes?

Questions You May Want to Ask an Interviewer

Describe a typical day for the person in this position.

What personal qualities are most important to succeed in this job?

Did my resume generate any questions I can answer?

What is your performance evaluation procedure?

Describe the management style of this company.

In what ways is a career with your company better than a career with your competitors?

Do you have plans for expansion?

What products (or services) are in the development stage right now?

Do you fill positions from the outside or promote from within first?

How do you feel about creativity and individuality?

What characteristics do the achievers in this company seem to share?

In this position, is there frequent team/project work?

If at all possible, ask questions involving current events relating to the company. For instance, if you read an article in the Wall Street Journal about a merger the company was involved in, you might ask, "How will the recent merger with ABC Company effect your current operations?"

Salary Questions

In the job search process, the topic of salary is often one of the most confusing. Negotiating a salary can be a very intimidating issue. Listed below are some tips which simplify the salary question. They should be followed throughout your job search.

- **Never include salary information in your resume or cover letter.** Unless specifically asked for salary information, do not offer it to a potential employer. Should the question arise, give a salary range large enough to accommodate most possibilities for the position. The reason is simple - salary information is used most often to eliminate applicants for a position. Don't eliminate yourself from the pool of candidates simply because you indicated a \$28,000 preference for a \$25,000 position.
- **Never mention salary in an interview situation until a job offer is made.** Then and only then, is it acceptable for you to bring up the subject. After all, if the company wants you to work for them, you need to know how much they pay. In most cases, the interviewer will introduce the issue when the offer is made.
- **If directly asked in an interview for your salary requirements, indicate you are very flexible with regards to salary.** You may want to mention you are more concerned with the opportunities a position provides than with what the position pays, or that you are also concerned with benefits. Sometimes an employer will be adamant about getting an answer from you - even a specific number. If this happens, try to give a realistic range. If pressed for one amount, be as realistic and honest as possible, and state a number close to but slightly below what you really want to earn.
- **If an offer is made with a specific salary quoted, don't be quick to accept it - 8 out of 10 salaries are negotiable.** Even though the employer probably will not indicate a salary is negotiable (he/she wants to pay you as little as is reasonably possible), most salaries can be negotiated within a certain range.

Negotiating salary must be done carefully - many job offers have fallen apart over the salary issue. Each case is unique, making it impossible to give an exact "script" for salary negotiations. Listed below are a few tips to follow.

- **Do your research and know what a reasonable salary is for the position.** In most cases, companies will offer to pay a salary

comparable to the market in general. However, beware of the possibility you may be offered a salary totally unrealistic in comparison to wages paid for similar jobs at other companies. Also, a company may offer you, in good faith, a position at an unrealistic salary because they lack current market information. Be sure to do your research! Call recruiters in the area, research Bureau of Labor Statistics reports at the library, and call the PNC Career Development Office to get current salary information. Know what a "fair" offer is before you begin negotiations; you will be happier with the result.

- **Consider benefits as part of the total package.** If you have ever priced insurance through an independent dealer, you know how valuable group insurance can be. Other perks such as vacation, sick time, retirement, commuting distance, and expense accounts should be weighed as well when considering a job offer. Only you know what is most valuable and important to you. View the offer as a whole, and do not focus solely on salary.
- **When considering salary, a 20-30% increase over your last job held is a reasonable goal.** However, there are many factors which must be considered. For instance, your last job may have required you supervise 10 people, put in 60 hours per week on the average, and be on call every other weekend. On the other hand, the job just offered may require you supervise only your assistant, be on a strict 40 hours per week schedule, and never work evenings or weekends. Obviously, in most cases, your first job probably paid more than the current position, so expecting a 20%, or even 10%, increase in pay may be unreasonable. Once again, your values and preferences with regard to your job must be considered. Use the 20-30% rule only as a guideline for similar job descriptions.
- **Never come across as being cocky, arrogant, or inflexible during salary negotiations.** This attitude will only make the employer more inflexible. An employer will see this phase of the hiring process as a true reflection of your personality. If your arrogance wasn't recognized during the interview, it will be now. Remember, a job offer can be withdrawn quicker and easier than it can be made!

Additional information and personal assistance with salary negotiation techniques are available in the Office of Career Development.