

JOB SEARCH GUIDE

Swainsboro

346 Kite Rd
Swainsboro, Georgia 30401
Phone: (478) 289-2200
Fax: (478) 289-2263

Vidalia

3001 East First Street
Vidalia, Georgia 30474
Phone: (912) 538-3100
Fax: (912) 538-3156



STC Job Search Guide

Table of Contents

[STC Job Research Guide](#)

[Research](#)

[Job Searching Techniques](#)

[Networking](#)

[Advertising](#)

[Marketing & Cold Calling](#)

[Employment Organizations](#)

[STC JobLink](#)

[Career Fairs](#)

[Cover Letter](#)

[Resume](#)

[Interview](#)

[Dress for Success](#)

[Following Up](#)

[Salary Negotiation](#)

[The Offer](#)

[Success on the Job](#)

STC Job Search Guide **Job Search Tools**

The purpose of this booklet is to introduce you to a variety of job search tools in order to help you successfully prepare to enter the workforce. These resources provide guidelines for approaching your job search with confidence. You will find these tools helpful throughout your career regardless of your experience!

Cover Letter & Resume Writing

The purpose of the resume is to get the interview! It is your sales pitch – your marketing tool! What sets you apart from other candidates? Structure the resume to focus on your skills and accomplishments as they relate to the desired position. Provide information that demonstrates that you are a good “fit” for the position. The idea is to catch the employer’s attention so that he/she can’t wait to interview you!

Interviewing

The purpose of the interview is to get the job! This is your opportunity to sell yourself! Demonstrate to the employer that your qualifications, skills and accomplishments would make you a good match for the position. Your goal is to project confidence in your abilities as they relate to the position and show enthusiasm for the job! The key is preparation! Know what you want to say and how you want to say it before the interview.

Research

Position, Organization, and Industry

Researching the company is arguably the most important step in preparing for an interview. Knowledge is power and any amount of power and control that you can exercise during an interview will be to your advantage. During the course of an interview, the interviewer will most likely ask what you know about the organization and why you want to work for them. If you do your homework, you will be able to impress the interviewer with your extensive knowledge of the company. If you fail to research the company, you might eliminate yourself from consideration. Most importantly, you want to communicate how your research has led to your desire to work for the organization.

Find Out:

- How long has it been in business?
- Does it have multiple locations?
- Who are its major competitors?
- What are the company's goods and services?
- Has the company grown? Will it grow in the future?
- Who are its major customers/clients?
- What are the company's profit/sales trends?
- What challenges does the company face?
- What are the company's plans for the future?
- Who are the leaders of the company?
- Does the organization have a mission statement? What is it? Do you agree with it? Why do you agree with it?

Sources of Information

1. **Contact the organization.** Call or visit the receptionist or public relations department and ask for information on the company. If you don't know the Web address, ask for it. Most organizations are on the Web and websites can be a wealth of information.
2. **The local Chamber of Commerce** is a good resource for small businesses. They will have information about the company if it is a member.
3. **Web searches** can provide an abundance of company information, including the company's mission, contact person(s), location, service provided, career options and other information of interest.
4. **Library.** Check library databases for articles pertaining to your chosen company and their competition.

Now that you've done your homework, you should know where the company is headed and what type of employees they desire. Think about how your skills, training, experience, accomplishments and activities can fit with the company and the position.

What will set you apart from the competition?

Job Search Techniques

Searching for a job is a job in itself. Experts say that most people will have not only numerous jobs but multiple careers during the course of their working lives. In order to travel the road leading to new opportunities, you will need to prepare for your journey. It is important that you map out a course and plan for your future. At minimum, you should know the following information before you start your search:

- Desired Occupation
- Preferred Industry
- Work Environment
- Salary Range
- Work Location
- Desired Working Hours

Keys to a Successful Job Search

- Develop a list of prospective employers.
- Concentrate your efforts on job openings that are of interest and for which you are qualified.
- Apply good time management and devote a certain number of hours per week to your search.
- Ensure your voicemail or answering machine has a professional sounding message.
- Don't take rejection personally. Move on to the next opportunity.
- Read books/articles or watch videos (youTube, etc) on the job search process – check with the STC Career Center and/or the Web.
- Use non-traditional job search strategies to make your job-hunting more successful (volunteer, etc....)
- Develop a list of places that you might like to work using information from local Chambers of Commerce membership lists, professional trade organization lists and be reading articles of interest in the newspaper.
- Network, Network, Network! Connect with those you know to help you open doors.
- Follow-up and be persistent!

Learning how to find a job will greatly increase your chances of success. This handbook contains information on a wide variety of job search avenues and will help you organize and implement an effective job search. You will learn how to network, where to locate jobs and which organizations may be able to help you in your search.

Finding a job can be very hard work. Getting discouraged and developing a negative attitude only makes things more difficult. Stay positive and leave no stone unturned.

Networking

Networking is one way to obtain employment. Simply put, “networking” means telling people that you are looking for work and asking them if they know of anyone who is hiring. The rationale is that your circle of acquaintances has a circle of acquaintances and so on. This way, scores of people are helping you in your job search. There are many ways to network including informational interviewing and joining associations.

Informational Interview

People like to talk about themselves. Most enjoy sharing their passion for their work with others. Why not tap into this resource in preparation for your job search? By meeting with a variety of potential employers you can create a framework for future networking and determine if you have a preference when it comes to potential employers’ corporate culture and working styles.

There are times that you would like to get to know more about an organization but there are no advertised job openings. Does that mean that no opportunities exist? NO! This is the perfect opportunity to request an informational interview. In an informational interview you are interviewing the company, not the typical, traditional “company is interviewing potential employee” scenario. You are strictly researching industries to determine if this would be a good fit for your career path. Your goals are information, advice and referrals. There is no pressure for the employer to hire you; therefore this type of meeting is much easier to arrange than one in which you are asking for a job. Of course, if you do impress the person you are interviewing, then he/she may indeed want to interview you for a job. What better preparation exists than previous meetings where you are told much of what you need to know for the “real” interview?

Of course, as with any other job search strategy, there are variations in the successfulness of this strategy.

- Narrow your search to a particular department within a given company. For example, interviewing the accounting manager is preferable to the marketing manager if you are hoping to land an accounting position.
- Knowing who to contact is critical, because a traditional gatekeeper may not understand why you want to speak with a manager. Company directories are wonderful tools for finding the right contact person – but confirm if the directory is indeed up to date.

- Briefly describe the purpose of your requested meeting and reassure the manager that you are not asking for a job interview. You want information!
- Promise to make the meeting as brief as possible – and keep your promise. Typically you should request no more than 30 minutes. If this is not possible request a 15 minute meeting – but know that you won't be able to get very far in 15 minutes unless you are very organized and focused.
- Have your list of questions prioritized and prepared. This person is busy and will not have time for you to improvise.
- If you think it is appropriate, you can ask the person you are interviewing if they know of anyone else with whom you should speak. Sometimes during the process you may discover that your contact person might know others within his/her company or beyond that also might be able to help you as you prepare to enter the industry.

If you find that you are indeed interested in working with this company, indicate it at the end of your meeting. Do not ask for a job. Never. Ever. However it is appropriate to inquire how most positions are filled and for any advice on how to go about applying in the future.

Associations/Organizations

Joining civic or professional associations is another great way to network. It is particularly advantageous for you to join associations that are related to your area of expertise and interest. Search the Web for associations in your field. Write or call the association(s) and inquire about membership information and contact person(s) for the local or state chapter. Before you commit to a membership fee, you may be able to attend the meeting as a guest for free or a small fee. After joining, you will be given a membership directory that provides you with networking contacts. Conferences and monthly meetings offer opportunities to get involved in activities and obtain “visibility” among members. In addition, many associations send out newsletters that list job openings. Finally, associations quite often hold seminars or workshops that can enhance your skills.

Civic organizations for different groups such as veterans, minorities, women, etc. may have services to help you network. You might also want to contact or join organizations such as the Rotary Club, Lions Club, etc. They may offer services that can help you find employment. Check the Internet for listings in the area.

Volunteering for organizations may be beneficial in developing your network, especially if you volunteer in an area that is closely related to the type of work you are seeking. And, since employers frown on gaps between employments, volunteering also

shows that you are working. Remember your volunteer job could develop into a paying job.

Social Networking Could Lead to NOT Working

Researching an organization is necessary in order to make a good impression during an interview. Asking the right questions is as important as knowing how to answer the employer's questions. To do research on an organization you may visit their website, use Internet search engines like Google, read literature published by the company or ask others what they think of the company in general terms.

All of this is perfectly acceptable. But what if the employer researches YOU?

According to a recent NACE (National Association for Colleges & Employers) survey, nearly 27% of employers visit social networking sites like Facebook, or simply "Google" potential candidates to learn about the candidate. Many people never consider the professional implications of what is posted on personal sites. If it is in the public domain, then it is NO longer private!

While we know that work and personal lives are intertwined, we would like to think that each aspect has its own time and place. What you do away from work shouldn't necessarily matter to an employer. But it does. Employers want a candidate that will fit with the organization's culture.

If potential employer find explicit photos, racist jokes, political rants or other postings that are generally in poor taste, it is likely that you may never get that first interview. But you can protect your image by using some practical and easy steps to ward off "digital dirt".

- Search your name on the Internet, using a common search engine. If your name pops up on a site and you wish it didn't, contact the webmaster of that site and ask that it be removed.
- Make your social networking website profile as private as possible. Some sites will limit access to your profile for only those people that you grant "permission." This adds a layer of protection from all kinds of searches, including employers. Be aware that this will not necessarily keep everything you post private. Others can still share your information.
- If you keep a public profile, keep it clean. Would you want your grandmother to see your site? Anything you consider questionable should be avoided or restricted to private communications.

Beware! Be Positive! Be Professional!

Advertising

Newspapers

Limiting your job search solely to answering newspaper advertisements is not recommended. Your resume could be one among hundreds received. The key is to respond within 24 hours by sending a cover letter and a resume. It is important to read the help-wanted sections in all of the newspapers in your area so you don't miss any job opportunities. If you are seeking work in a new city, check the Internet for online newspapers as well as job boards.

Keep track of who you have contacted while researching, sending resumes or completing applications. Use a simple file card system or spreadsheet listing: company, phone number, contact name and title, referred by, method of contact, result and follow-up date.

Newspapers provide "hidden" job opportunities so you should always be on the lookout. For instance, read business sections to see if companies are expanding, moving, etc. Also, listen to the news to find out if new businesses are opening. While driving, you may see new businesses being built. Don't wait for the ads to hit the newspapers. Check corporate websites, as the listings for new positions may appear there before they are advertised locally. Send corporate headquarters your resume!

The Internet

Using the Internet for job seeking is a popular method for both job seekers and employers. Use search engines (like Google, AltaVista, Yahoo, etc.) to help you locate job sites. It is important to narrow your search to a specific geographic location and/or employment category, such as accounting/finance. If you don't have access to the Internet at home, you can often access the Internet at a public library or STC library.

Web-based job listings are easy to find and respond to. However this easy format should not catch you off guard and allow careless communication. Your online job application or e-mailed resume (attached as a Microsoft Word document) should receive the same care and attention as more traditional formats. Employers may use online tools to screen out applicants that do not follow directions. Errors in submissions are just as damaging online as in person, so pay attention to details.

Internet security is also a concern. If a job listing is too good to be true, it probably is. Anyone can create a website and solicit your information. Use caution when replying to advertisements and unsolicited contacts. While there are employers that may seek you out, there are also dishonest people that might be "phishing" for your personal

information: social security number, employment history and other confidential information.

Marketing & Cold Calling

Broadcasting

Broadcasting is another effective way to increase your network. It simply involves conducting a mass mailing of your cover letter and resume to companies that interest you. Your goal is to intrigue someone enough to give you a call. Your letter should be similar to the cover letter you use when applying for a specific job, except that you are inquiring into possible opportunities. In this letter of inquiry, state what type of employment you are seeking or that you would like to find out about career opportunities in the _____ department. If someone referred you, mention that person's name.

To increase your chances of being hired, write to the person in charge of the department in which you would like to work, rather than a general greeting. To get the name of the department manager, telephone the company and say to the receptionist:

“Good morning, my name is _____. I would like to send some materials to the manager of your marketing department. May I have the manager's name so I could address it to his/her attention? Could you spell it for me? What is his/her official title? What is the complete address?”

There are many places to look for job opportunities besides the yellow pages. The Chamber of Commerce is a good source for new and expanding businesses in the area. Check out the STC Career Center as well. Most of these types of options are online.

Cold Calling

Cold calling requires you to contact prospective employers in person or by telephone to find out if there are any job opportunities. Cold calling can be very discouraging. It is a time consuming process. Some people you contact may also be unfriendly and it may be difficult for you to get past the “gate keeper”. Also, personnel departments of large corporations will usually ask you to leave a resume or simply apply online.

Cold calling is more productive if you find out who heads the department of interest to you. Then, you can contact him/her directly by phone or in person. Know that some managers may not appreciate you stopping by without an appointment. If you do decide to meet face-to-face, dress and act as you would for an interview.

Despite your efforts, you may still be referred to the personnel department. Whoever you talk to, try to find out:

- If they anticipate any future openings
- If any other departments are hiring
- If there are any other locations that may be hiring
- If he/she knows of any related businesses that might be hiring

Develop a telephone script before calling an employer. Say something about yourself that would interest the employer. You might mention an accomplishment, for example: increased sales by 20%, lowered employee turnover rate by 10% or implemented new training program, etc.

A common response that you will have to deal with is: “We don’t have any job openings.” You could respond by saying, “If you do get an opening, I would live to discuss working for your company in the future.” Then offer to send a resume and thank the person for his or her time.

Employment Organizations

Georgia Department of Labor

Locate the state employment agency and inquire about their database of local and national job listings. They may offer other services such as resume assistance and/or career counseling. Most states now commonly call these areas “One Stop Centers”.

Private Employment Agencies/ Temporary Agencies

Private agencies can help you find permanent and/or temporary employment. Some agencies specialize in job placement for certain occupations, so you may want to use those that concentrate on your field of interest. The employer usually pays their fees, but should ask before signing any contracts. Read the contract carefully and make sure you understand what you are signing. If you don’t, ask questions.

Getting job assignments through a temporary agency is a great way to give you some exposure to different industries and working environments while enhancing your current skills or gaining new ones. They can also help you get your “foot in the door” should a permanent job become available. Additionally, temping gives you contacts for new networking opportunities.

List of Private Agencies

Ambassador – 478-275-9041 www.teamambassador.com

Atlanta Staffing Service 404-585-5700 www.staffingnow.com

Express Employment Professionals 912-232-9800 www.expresspros.com

Kelly Services – 912-267-9233 www.kellyservices.com

Remedy Intelligent Staffing- 912-538-4017 www.remedystaff.com

SelecSource Staffing Service – 912-585-3200 www.selecsource.com

Snelling – 912-764-8800 www.snelling.com

STC JobLink

Step 1: Go to <http://www.southeasterntech.edu/student-affairs/STC-JobLink.php>

Step 2: Click on “STC JobLink”

Home > Student Affairs > Career Services > STC JobLink

STC JobLink

Looking for a job? Need a resume? [STC JobLink](#) is your one stop shop to connecting with local employers regarding their employment needs. As an STC student or recent graduate, this system will allow you to view local area jobs and post your resume for employers to view. You will be able to network with these employers, create job notifications when jobs in your area are put into the system. You can also have this services anywhere you go with the mobile app. Set up your account today and begin your job search in a positive way!

[STC JobLink](#)

STC JobLink Features for Job Seekers:

- Create your own resume.
- Get your resume approved by the Career Services Department at STC.
- View Internship Opportunities.
- Network with employers.

Lance Helms
Director of Career Services
Vidalia Campus
Office 158C
3001 East First Street
Vidalia, GA 30474
(912) 538-3207
(912) 538-3156 Fax
[Send Email](#)

Step 3: Enter Username and Password assigned to you. Your password was emailed to your student email account already. If you didn't receive an email, then click on **"Forgot Password"** and a new one will be emailed to your student email account.

Student/Alumni Sign In

Secure | <https://southeasterntech-csm.symphlicity.com/students/>

Southeastern TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Click on "Forgot Password" to have a new password emailed to your STC student email account.

Sign In

Please enter your username and password. Current students already have an account with a password emailed to their STC student email account. (The password isn't your mySTC password)

Username
(your student id)

Password

STUDENT/ALUMNI SIGN IN

[Forgot Password](#)

Alumni Sign Up

If you're a past student and do not already have an account in STC JobLink, you may sign up here. Signing up takes just minutes.

ALUMNI SIGN UP

NACElink
CAREER SERVICES MANAGER

NACElink Network is a collaboration between NACE, Symphlicity, DirectEmployers and your college/university. [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#)

Career Fairs

Career fairs can be networking gold mines because they bring large numbers of employers together in one location. Employers may have immediate vacancies they are looking to fill or they may be gathering resumes for future opportunities. Some even conduct interviews on the spot. STC host large career fairs during the month of April each year. To capitalize on any career fair, be sure to keep in mind:

Before

- Get a list of employers that will be attending.
- Research the companies to determine who you want to contact and prioritize because time may not allow you to speak with everyone.
- Dress the part – look like you are meeting employers for an interview.
- Take copies of your resume (at least one for each company you are interested in – plus extras).
- Bring a notebook and a pen.

During

- Approach employers based upon your prioritized list, ensuring that you will speak with all the ones that you consider important. But speak to as many as you can.
- Consider many types of employers – don't assume that an employer will/won't be interested in your major.
- Introduce yourself, telling the recruiter your name, program of study and what you are interested in – then ask questions, "What are the opportunities for someone like me?"
- Collect literature, business cards and ask, "What's the next step?", if it is not made clear.
- Ask for the contact person's name so that you may direct questions or communicate with him/her in the future.

After

- Follow directions regarding how to apply online, if required.
- Follow up – send e-mails, thank you cards or letters to employers you found to be interesting or helpful. Include another copy of your resume with correspondence.

**Sample Networking
Letter**

Susan Simpson

203 Constant Avenue
Columbia, SC 55555
Simpsons@rr.com
(555) 555-5555

June 10, 2016

Tickle M. Elmo
Director of Human Resources
ABC Firm
1234 Green St.
Vidalia, GA 30474

Dear Mr. Elmo:

I am contacting a select group of firms who may be seeking self-motivated administrative assistant. As a hard-working, dedicated professional, I know the value of teamwork and attention to detail. Furthermore, I believe I could make a strong contribution to ABC Company's well-known commitment to friendly, efficient customer service.

I currently have more than 6 years of experience in proven customer satisfaction. As my resume illustrates, my work history is one of increased responsibility, quick promotions and outstanding performance. In addition, my computer skills are extensive, including proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

I will graduate from Southeastern Technical College with an Associate's Degree in Business Administration in December 2016. I am available to work full-time starting in December. I believe I have the education and skills to meet your needs and the aptitude to grow with the position.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you need any additional information. I would welcome any opportunity to discuss upcoming positions at ABC Company and am available for an interview at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Susan Simpson

**Sample Networking
Letter**

Samuel Jones

1111 Main Street
Vidalia, GA 55555

(555) 555-5555 (cell)
jones@bellsouth.net

June 10, 2016

Mrs. Jane Trapper
Senior Accountant
Toombs Loan Corporation
555 Walter Street, Suite 100A
Statesboro, GA 55555

Dear Mrs. Trapper,

I met Mr. Jim Smith at a recent job fair at Southeastern Technical College. Mr. Smith mentioned that Toombs Loan Corporation was seeking entry-level accountants. He described a challenging, rewarding position in a company built on teamwork and loyalty. Indeed, your reputation for excellence and adherence to the highest ethical standards make me want to join your team.

Highlights of my skills include:

- Associate Degree in Accounting
- Broad knowledge of accounting principles, including but not limited to: accounts payable/receivable, auditing and financial analysis
- 2+ years of experience using Excel and QuickBooks
- Outstanding communication, research and analytical skills
- 5+ years of customer service experience with 2 years of managerial experience

My attached resume offers further details of my qualifications and abilities. Please let me know if you need any additional information. I would greatly appreciate an opportunity to discuss this position with you in person. You can reach me by phone at (555) 555-5555 or by email: jones@bellsouth.net. I assure you that I can hit the ground running to bring tangible results.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Samuel Jones

Cover Letter

General Information: The cover letter or letter of application should highlight your qualifications and call attention to your resume. Be sure to double check your cover letter to avoid any spelling or grammatical errors.

Format: Print your letter on 8 ½ X 11 inch good quality paper and mail it in a business envelope. Proofread for spelling. Address it to specific person by name and title. Identify the specific position for which you are applying, if available.

First Paragraph: In your initial paragraph, state why you are writing, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying and how you learned of the opening (website, career center, classified ad, friend, etc.). Use a compliment or specific knowledge about the company. This creates interest, and the reader is more likely to continue reading your letter. Tailor the letter to the organization. This reflects that you are genuinely interested in the job and you are not sending out generic letters.

Second Paragraph: Briefly explain why you are interested in the position, the organization, its products or services. State how your academic background or experience makes you a qualified candidate for the position. If you have had some practical experience, point out your specific achievements or qualifications.

Third Paragraph: Refer the reader to the enclosed resume or application which summarizes your qualifications, training and experience as it relates to the position for which you are applying.

Fourth Paragraph: Indicate your desire for a personal interview and your flexibility as to the time and place. Repeat your phone number with area code or e-mail address in the cover letter and offer any assistance to help in a speedy response.

**Sample Cover
Letter**

Janet Cole

1600 Novice Road
Columbia, South Carolina 29210
(555) 555-5555

November 10, 2016

Mr. Sam Brunson, President
Skagway Corporation
144 Corporate Blvd.
Columbia, South Carolina 29206

Dear Mr. Brunson:

I learned of Skagway Corporation's need for a computer programmer through the Student Employment services' online job listing at Midlands Technical College. Next month, I will be graduating from Midlands Technical College and would like to pursue a career in data processing with a company like yours.

My education and work experience would be an asset to Skagway Corporation. While reading your listing I was excited to see how closely my course work in data processing and business aligns with your needs. I have a firm grasp of variety of the computer applications needed to make your business run smoothly and I learn quickly.

I am a responsible person who is concerned with performance and accountability. I have enclosed my resume for your consideration. Please note the list of courses that I have taken which directly relate to the position. I also have two years of supervisory experience, gained while working my way through college.

I would welcome an opportunity to discuss with you how I might best meet your needs. I am available to meet with you at your convenience. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Janet Cole
Enclosures

**Sample Cover
Letter**

Ryan Moody
321West 1st Street Uvalda, Georgia 55555
(555) 555-5555 ryan.moody@hotmail.com

June 10, 2016

Mr. Tom Boone
Human Resource Manager
GM Management, LLC
444 Smith Avenue
Augusta, GA 55555

Dear Mr. Boone:

Your listing for a Systems Analyst on Monster.com caught my eye. While reviewing your requirements, I was pleased to find that I meet or exceed all of your needs.

Your Requirements:

Associate Degree in Computer
Technology
2 years of experience

Superior communication and
customer service skills

My Qualifications

- ✓ Associates in Computer Technology
from Midlands Technical College
- ✓ 4 years of systems analyst
experience
- ✓ Consistently given high marks for
customer service and
communication skills in yearly
evaluations
- ✓ Increased client base by 32% at last
position

Please review my resume, where my skills are further illustrated. I look forward to hearing from you regarding an opportunity to discuss your needs and my skills.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ryan Moody

Attachment

Resume

There are two basic resume styles: Chronological and Functional – most others are a combination or hybrid of the two. Each style contains essentially the same information but the order and emphasis varies. Picking the style is your first step to creating a good resume.

Chronological resumes are the most common and list all positions held beginning with most recent and working back in time. This resume is linear in nature and highlights progressive job growth and steady employment. Employers like this style.

Functional resumes highlight skills by “function” and employers/jobs are listed in a simple line item format. This resume is good for someone that is changing careers or someone without a solid progression of professional growth. Some employers are skeptical of this format, because it appears that the writer may be trying to hide something.

Borrow the best from the other two types to combine and create a hybrid resume. This type is preferred when your content is best presented in chronological form but there is also a need to pull out “functions” and highlight skills not easily found in a standard chronological format.

All resumes, regardless of the type, should have the following basic elements:

- Heading(contact info)
- Objective/Professional Summary
- Education
- Experience
- Professional Affiliations, Activities (only if relevant)
- Awards / Recognitions (if recent and relevant)

The One Page Rule

Resumes are often misunderstood. A good resume is brief and every word counts. Its purpose is to peak the reader’s interest and get the job seeker in front of an employer for an interview. The interview will allow you to tell your story in more detail, so not every little thing is included on the resume. It is critical that what is included demonstrates your strengths, accomplishments and is not just a boring list of duties. Be sure your resume is an accurate reflection of your abilities.

Your early resumes will be easy to fit on one page. The challenge is fitting 10+ years of great experience and skills onto one page. The best advice is to use good judgment, a critical eye and creative page design to keep a resume to one page for someone with limited experience. No resume should be more than two pages.

- Margins are typically set at 1" but can be reduced slightly.
- 12 point font can be reduced but never smaller than 10 point.
- Eliminate "fluff", fillers that don't really say anything.
- If using tabs and indents do not allow over ¼ of the page to be "white space".
- Your address block in the Heading can be one line instead of two (address, city, state, zip).
- Your e-mail address and phone number can be one line instead of two.

Education

The "Education" section should be placed right after your "Objective", if it is important to the position for which you are applying. Also, if you are a recent college graduate with little work experience, place the "Education" section after your "Objective". "Education" may be placed after the "Experience" section, if it is not required for the position or when you have several years of related work experience. List your highest educational level first. High school can be eliminated, once you have a higher degree or are enrolled in college; unless the coursework is relevant to position you are seeking. In today's high schools there are several excellent vocational programs that a student could highlight, at least until more experience is gained.

Information to include: Example:

Southeastern Technical College, Vidalia, Georgia
Associate in Business, Marketing, December 2012
GPA: 3.2
(If still attending, state anticipated graduation date.)

University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia
General Studies, 2010-2012
(If you did not graduate, list dates of attendance.)

Special Skills and/or Computer Skills: (Optional)

Special skills are personality traits, self-management skills and work skills that you have acquired on the job, through your education or hobbies. Include foreign languages, computer programs, equipment use, etc. You can include your computer skills under the “Special Skills” heading. These sections of your resume may be placed after the “Education” section.

Special Skills

- Type 60 wpm w/ accuracy
- Excellent Customer Service Skills
- Strong Organizational Skills
- Proficient in MS Office Suite
- Fluent in Oral Spanish

Other Training or Professional Development: (Optional)

This heading may come right after the “Education” section, if you have related, additional training. Or you may use it at the end of your resume, should your experience be related to the position for which you are applying. Include the title or topic of relevant seminars and training courses. Don’t forget to include the skills you learned from these experiences. You may also include the date of your seminar and who sponsored the training. List recent, relevant professional development. (Avoid listing outdated software, equipment, or training.)

Professional Development

2017 “Creating a Successful Business Plan” online with Georgia Southern University

Vision, mission and niche market creation

Funding options and resources

Experience

Under this section you may also list your volunteer experience, co-ops, internships and military experience. Another alternative is to set up a section titled, “Other Experience”, and include your military experience and volunteer experience under that heading. Include only those military and volunteer experiences that are related to the job for which you are applying.

You may have a wide array of work and volunteer experiences, etc. Which may not seem relevant to the job for which you are applying. However, employers consider your exposure to any work situation important. There are always skills you learned on your job or volunteering that are transferable to other jobs. Transferable skills, for example, are customer service, communication skills, writing skills, etc.

Information to include when listing work experience:

- Company Name, City, State (not address)
- Dates of Employment
- Position Title
- Relevant Accomplishments/Responsibilities
- Skills and Abilities acquired

When listing your volunteer experience, include:

- Name of organization
- Dates of involvement
- Offices held or nature of involvement
- Contributions, achievements, projects
- Skills and abilities used and acquired

When listing your military experience, include:

- Branch of military (optional)
- Rank (optional)
- Dates of service
- Relevant responsibilities
- Contributions, achievements, projects
- Skills abilities used and acquired

Elaborate on your work experience and emphasize not only your responsibilities but also the outcomes of the responsibilities. Qualify outcomes when possible. Ask yourself *“What was the outcome of performing this task?”*

Example Before: Designed new order form.

Example After: Effectively designed new order form, reducing data entry errors.

When discussing your responsibilities, avoid using “my responsibilities were” or “my duties were”. Be concise. Use action verbs and avoid using the personal pronoun “I”. Use proper tense. If you did the job in the past, use past tense when describing your duties: “sold computer programs.” If you are currently doing the job, use present tense: “sell computer programs.” When possible, quantify your skills and accomplishments by using numbers and percentages to demonstrate your performance on the job. For example, “Increased sales by 20% during the past three years.”

Dates of Employment

January 2015 to April 2015

Use this format (month and year) if you do not have any time gaps between jobs or gaps that are short (less than three months). Also, this format may be used if your jobs lasted more than six months. This will emphasize your steady work history and job stability.

You may also use this format for temporary or seasonal jobs by including “temporary” or “seasonal” in parentheses by your job title.

Another technique you may want to use so you do not call attention to the length of employment is placing the date (month and year) where it is not the first thing the employer sees. You may place your dates of employment after the company’s location or at the end of description of the job.

2011-2012

This format is perfectly acceptable when you have held jobs for a long period of time (more than three years). Some resume writers also recommend that you can help disguise time gaps by using this format. However, some employers may want a more accurate account of your dates of employment, especially on a job application.

Choose the same date format for all your positions so you are consistent.

Multiple Positions with One Company?

If you had more than one position with a company, list the most recent title first under the company name along with dates of that position in parenthesis, followed by your duties for that particular position. Emphasize the time that you have been with the company by putting that date in the margin.

Experience:

DOT Foods – Vidalia, Georgia
Office Manager (July 2010 to June 2012)
(Describe your accomplishments)

May 2005-June 2012

Data Entry Clerk (May 2005 to July 2010)
(Describe your accomplishments)

Professional Affiliations or Activities (Optional)

Include professional affiliations or activities that are related to the job for which you are applying. Include dates of membership, positions held and briefly state any accomplishments or contributions you made. If you are affiliated with a religious group, political party and/or ethnic club or organization, you may not want to include this on your resume. You don't want to give the person reviewing your resume any reason to eliminate you from the candidate pool.

Awards & Recognitions (Optional)

Awards that are relevant to your job objective should be listed first. Awards will reflect that you are a leader and contributor.

References

What are References? Why are they important? Many employers will ask you for references. They want to speak with people that can attest to your skills and abilities. Your references should know who you are, how you perform, what you can accomplish and what makes you special. Having positive references facilitates getting an offer!

References are not part of a resume. Employers usually are not interested in checking your references before they meet you. But once they have met you, they may want to know more. Have a list of references available (3-4) to give the interviewer if you are asked (example below).

Your references are people that can attest to your work ethic or your character. Some people like to “drop names” and list important people (like political leaders, executives or powerful family connections) as references. If you choose to do this, think carefully what this person would say if contacted. Would they know enough about you to give an accurate reflection of your abilities? Ideally your references should be people for whom you have worked, either at a paid position or as a volunteer. Teachers that have mentored you are also good choices. Avoid family members and friends unless you have no one else.

Make sure you have contacted your references and asked permission to use their names. Keep them informed regarding your job search and the type of position for which you are applying. Give them a copy of your resume so that they will know what information the potential employers will see and have something that will refresh their knowledge of your key accomplishments and skills. Remember to always thank your references.

Example:

You may choose your “letterhead” heading block from your resume and paste, creating a seamless look to these two separate documents.

SAMPLE REFERENCES

John Doe

123 First Street, Vidalia, GA 30474

(555) 555-5555

johndoe@hotmail.com

References

Joe Dirt, CPA

Director

ABC Accounting

345 Second Street

Vidalia, GA 30474

(912) 537-1234

jdirty@abcaccounting.com

Sally Jane

Owner

Smart Mart

111 Third Street

Vidalia, GA 30474

(912) 537-0001

Josh Smith

General Manager

USA Services

444 Aimwell Road

Vidalia, GA 30474

(912) 537-0003

smithjosh@hotmail.com

Dynamic Words

***Use action words when describing your experience.**

Able	Converse	Fluent	Monitor	Restructure
Accessible	Convert	Forecast	Motivate	Review
Accommodate	Coordinate	Format	Multiply	Save
Accomplish	Correspond	Formulate	Navigate	Schedule
Account	Create	Gather	Negotiate	Search
Adapt	Critique	Generate	Observe	Seek
Address	Customize	Give	Offer	Select
Administer	Debate	Grow	Operate	Sell
Advertise	Decorate	Guide	Open	Serve
Advise	Dedicated	Handle	Optimum	Sew
Advocate	Deduce	Help	Optimize	Shape
Align	Define	Illustrate	Order	Speak
Allocate	Deliberate	Implement	Organize	Solve
Alter	Deliver	Impressive	Pack	Strategize
Analyze	Demonstrate	Improve	Participate	Strengthen
Apply	Describe	Incorporate	Perform	Successful
Arrange	Design	Increase	Persuade	Supervise
Assemble	Detect	Index	Photograph	Teach
Assign	Determine	Inform	Place	Track
Assist	Develop	Initiate	Plan	Train
Attain	Devise	Innovative	Potential	Transcribe
Audit	Diagnose	Inquire	Prepare	Troubleshoot
Balanced	Different	Inspect	Present	Travel
Bilingual	Direct	Install	Premiere	Update
Broadcast	Discover	Instruct	Promote	Understand
Budget	Dispatch	Integrate	Produce	Upgrade
Build	Display	Intellectual	Project	Unique
Campaign	Discuss	Interactive	Proofread	Utilize
Capable	Draft	Interface	Provide	Validate
Capture	Educate	Interpret	Purchase	Value
Check	Elaborate	Inventoried	Recognize	Vary
Coach	Eliminate	Launch	Recommend	Verify
Collaborate	Engineer	Lead	Reconcile	Write
Compute	Enhance	Learn	Record	
Conceive	Estimate	Lobby	Recruit	
Concern	Establish	Mail	Redefine	
Conduct	Evaluate	Maintain	Regulate	
Connect	Exceptional	Make	Rehearse	
Conserve	Execute	Manage	Renegotiate	
Consider	Expand	Market	Represent	
Consistent	Expedite	Master	Require	
Consolidate	Experience	Manufacture	Respond	
Constant	Expert	Massage	Responsible	
Consult	Explain	Maximize	Report	
Contribute	Facilitate	Minimize	Research	

Resume
Do's & Don'ts

Do's:	Don'ts:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantify and Qualify your descriptors (numbers & adjectives) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be too trendy or cutesy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Account for gaps with skills and accomplishments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be wordy – leave off “responsible for”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customize your objective for each position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a photo
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize positions related to the job objective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include salary history
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain skills and accomplishments in previous jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include supervisor's name
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep resume to one or two pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List references on resume
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave one inch margins all around 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print on both sides of the page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have somebody proofread the final copy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reproduce poor copies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print clean and clear copies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a resume without a cover letter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State facts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State date of availability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress achievements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type “Resume” at the top of the page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 8 ½ by 11 inch paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use dark or neon colored paper
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use white or off-white good quality paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use false information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use dynamic words to explain what you've done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use fancy type or fonts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use proper tense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use “out of date” resume
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use short paragraphs or bullets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use pronouns (I, you, he, she, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use simple, direct language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use an objective different from that of the position for which you are applying
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use abbreviations or acronyms that aren't common knowledge

**Sample Chronological
Resume**

Lance Jones

525 Sandy Club Drive Alston, Georgia 29208
555-555-5555 ljones@yahoo.com

Objective: **Electronics Technician** utilizing 6+ years of effective diagnosis, repair and installation.

Education: Southeastern Technical College, Vidalia, Georgia
Associates Degree, **Electronics Engineering Technology**, 2012
A+, Fiber Optic and ETA Certified
United States Air Force
Seymore Johnson Air Force Base, Goldsboro, North Carolina

- Basic Non-Commissioned Officer Course, 2002
- Advanced Telecommunications and Digital Electronic Logic Circuitry

Experience:

2006–Present Security Assurance, Sarasota, Florida

Service Technician

- Proven ability to read blueprints and schematics
- Effective troubleshooting for quality control and assurance
- Successful data analysis to ensure top performance
- Efficiently service highly sophisticated digital photography equipment

2000 – 2004 United States Air Force, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia/South Korea

Quality Control Specialist (2002 – 2004)

United States Air Force, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

- Provided excellent leadership and supervision for a staff of 15
- Successfully managed maintenance division which performed safety testing on radio systems and associated equipment valued in excess of \$350,000

Assistant Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (2000 - 2002)

- Efficiently repaired, ordered and maintained all communication equipment valued at over \$500,000 for the Asian command Headquarters
- Accurate installation of voice, data and fiber optic cabling

**Sample Chronological
Resume**

Jill Snell

98 Railroad Circle 555-555-5555
Jeff Davis, Georgia 21057 [jsnell@hotmail.com](mailto:jnell@hotmail.com)

Objective: **Dental Hygienist** in a small practice with the opportunity to continue professional development

Education: Southeastern Technical College, Vidalia, Georgia
Associate in Health Science, **Dental Hygiene**, 2008
GPA 3.5

Experience:

2007- Present Darby Dental Center, Vidalia, Georgia

Dental Assistant

- Accurately take histories and report to dentist
 - Effectively perform oral examinations
 - Assist dentist in taking / developing X-rays, making impressions and preparing filling materials
 - Perform office management tasks, including billing, scheduling and follow-ups
-

2005-2007 XYZ Corporation, Lyons, Georgia

Administrative Assistant

- Drafted correspondence for department manager
 - Typed 55 words per minute with accuracy
 - Maintained and ordered all office supplies
 - Distributed large volumes of mail company-wide
-

2003-2005 Suzy's Corner, Macon, Georgia

Wait Staff

- Provided efficient customer service during busy lunch periods
 - Cleaned and prepared wait station for opening / closing of restaurant
 - Inventoried and accounted for all supplies with accuracy
-

Hobbies: STC Dental Hygiene Club, President
Toombs Free Dental Clinic, Volunteer

**Sample Functional
Resume**

JANET BROWN

987 Savannah Street Baxley, Georgia
(555) 555-5555 brownj21@yahoo.com

Objective

Customer Service Representative- utilizing excellent administrative skills to provide professional and innovative assistance in a fast –paced environment.

Skills and Accomplishments

- Selected as “Employee of the Month” twice in 2007
- Received highest rating for customer service on annual evaluation
- Highly skilled in training new employees
- Proven ability to resolve complaints to customer satisfaction
- Effectively processed orders, refunds and returns
- Results driven, highly organized and self-motivated

Computer Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Office 2007 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook) with additional skills in Microsoft Access, Adobe Photoshop and FrontPage
- Extensive experience with Internet research
- Type 55 words per minute with accuracy

Experience

WALGREEN'S	Customer Service Representative	Baxley, Georgia	
2004-Present			
CHICK-FIL-A	Customer Service Manager	Baxley, Georgia	2003-2004

Volunteer Contribution

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Volunteered in the family service department and assisted with entertainment, information and welcoming athletes' families in competition venues and hospitality areas

AMERICAN RED CROSS

Provided customer friendly service, answered phones, assisted in clerical work, helped with mailings, efficiently prepared materials for classes and computer data entry

SAVANNAH HEALTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Assisted patients in arts / crafts projects once a month

Education

Southeastern Technical College, Vidalia, Georgia
Associate of Business Administration Technology, 2008
GPA: 3.70

**Sample Functional
Resume**

Christopher Sampson

1212 West 1st Street, Soperton, Georgia
555-555-5555 – sampsonc@yahoo.com

Objective

Physical Therapist Assistant utilizing 5+ years of exceptional, related experience

Education

Southeastern Technical College Vidalia, Georgia
Associate in Health Science, **Physical Therapist Assistant**, 2005

Skills & Accomplishments

-
- Effectively provide physical therapist assistant services for a 75+ bed rehabilitation hospital, specializing in brain and nerve injuries
 - Coordinate the assessment of therapy, patient history, transportation and rehabilitation under the direction of physical therapist with accuracy
 - Compassionate, caring and approachable professional
 - Experienced in electrical stimulation, massages, exercises, hot and cold packs and ultrasound
 - Excellent communication skills with ability to follow detailed and complex directions
 - Successfully trained and supervised a diverse clientele in nutrition and strength training
 - Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite; extensive Internet research experience

Experience

Physical Therapist Assistant Meadows Regional Medical Center	2005 – Present Vidalia, Georgia
Physical Therapist Aide Memorial Medical Center	2004 – 2005 Savannah, Georgia
Strength Coach Bobby's Gym	2002 – 2004 Vidalia, Georgia

Hobbies

GA Special Olympics, Weight Lifting, Running and Computers

Sample Combination Resume

John Adams

1421 Main Street, Mt. Vernon, Georgia 12345
(555) 555-5555 adamsj202@yahoo.com

Objective: Creative and challenging opportunity to apply innovative skills in computer information systems

Education: *Southeastern Technical College, Vidalia, Georgia*
Associate in Computer Technology, December 2008

University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia
Bachelor of Science, Business Management, 2004

Relevant Technology & Projects:

Software: Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, ACCESS), Awesim, Stat Fit & Minitab

Operating System: Microsoft Windows

Languages: Visual Basic, .NET, COBOL, SQL

Team Member: Gizmo Ball Breakout game: as part of abstract classes calculated pertinent elements to construct ping-pong game; created graphical user interface to mimic ping-pong game

Database Design: Assisted in developing online class registration system: utilized class diagrams and Microsoft ACCESS to assist in design and development

Capstone Software Design: Assisted in design and development of online pizza video game site: utilized class diagrams, interface and OptimalJ

Experience:

2005 – Present Communication Services for the Deaf, Atlanta, Georgia

Communication Assistant

- Efficiently relay telephone calls between deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired (TTY users) and hearing consumers through telephone network
- Maintain strict consumer confidentiality and ensure a high level of customer service

2005 – 2005 FiberOptic Communications, Macon, Georgia

Customer Service Representative (April – November, Temporary)

- Assisted residential customers with the setup of DSL service using USB, Ethernet modems and routers
- Effectively troubleshoot e-mail and Internet connection issues related to browser and network configurations, including line tests and diagnostics
- Efficiently researched and tracked customer orders

2002 – 2004 Zales Delaware (Piercing pagoda), Savannah, Georgia

Key Sales Associate

- Charged with opening and closing the store including other management duties
- Provided helpful assistance to customers during product selection
- Accurately maintained daily record of business earnings, inventory and bank deposits

Activities & Achievements: Phi Theta kappa Honor society, 2007
United Way of the Toombs-Montgomery, 2000 – Present

**Sample Combination
Resume**

Tracie Wright

320 Center Drive, Vidalia, Georgia 84509
(555) 555-5555
Wrightt@gmail.com

Objective: Staff Nurse in cardiac Care or ER at major research / teaching hospital

Clinical Experience:

- **Cardiac Care:** performed patient assessments and evaluations to establish a plan of care; observed numerous treatments; provided one-on-one patient education regarding medication and exercise
- **Intensive Care:** refined skills in patient care; administered oral medications and feedings via gastrostomy tubes; closely monitored ventilator patients
- **Emergency Room:** provided accurate documentation; effectively balanced several patients at one time; observed and assisted with several treatments
- **General Nursing:** assisted in preparation of shots and distributing medications; took patient histories, assisted with proper maintenance of paperwork and patient files

Education: Southeastern Technical College, Vidalia, GA, Associate Degree, **Nursing**
December 2008, **GPA: 3.8**

Work History:

2007 – Present

St. Meadows Regional Medical Center, Vidalia, GA
Student Nurse

- Carefully prepare patients for testing and surgery
- Accurately monitor and report patient progress
- Patiently educate patients and families in home care

2005 – 2007

Donna's Café, Troy, New York
Server

- Provided efficient customer service for busy lunch periods
- Ensured wait station was cleaned and prepared for opening / closing of restaurant daily
- Effectively maintained and inventoried supplies

Volunteer Activities:

- American Red Cross, Disaster Team
- Special Olympics, Team Captain
- Meadows Senior Care, Companion

Computer Skills: Proficient in MS Word, Access, Excel and PowerPoint

Interview

Congratulations! The employer of your dreams has called to schedule an interview! You are excited and nervous and not necessarily 100% prepared. Remain as calm as possible. After all, you are being judged from the moment you answer the phone.

- ✓ Take a moment to check your calendar before agreeing to a time that you are available
- ✓ Remember to be professional and get the caller's name and number, as well as the exact location of the interview. Avoid asking for directions to the building, which you can locate on your own.
- ✓ However do ask for specific directions to the location of the office where you will be interviewing, especially if you are going to a large organization with multiple buildings.

Before the Interview:

Research the organization/industry.

Use the Internet, Chambers of Commerce, newspapers, etc... to learn as much as you can about:

- Major Competitors
- Services/Products
- Growth – History/Anticipated
- Major Customers/Clients
- Challenges
- Company's Mission
- Facilities
- Profits

Identify skills needed to do the job. Try to get the job description and list the skills it mentions. If you cannot get the job description, find out as much information as you can and anticipate the skills needed.

Identify your skills, accomplishments, training, experience and activities.

Write an explanation of how your skills match those of the position.

Practice interviewing. Have someone ask you typical interview questions. Know how you will respond to the most common questions and anticipate them, but do not memorize your answers.

Make sure you have the correct date, time and place of the interview. Do you know whom to ask for when you get to the interview location? If not, find out.

Make a trial run. Drive by the location a day or so before the interview at the same time of day as the interview to gauge traffic and locate parking. Make sure you arrive with about 15 minutes to spare.

Dress for success. Pick out your outfit well before the interview and make sure it's clean, pressed and well fitted. Consider investing in an interview outfit. Men, wear a suit, unless it's a casual working environment. If so, wear khakis and a button down shirt. Women, wear a conservative suit with a nice blouse. The general rule is, dress one step above the normal attire for that office.

Contact your references. Tell them you are interviewing and ask permission to use them as a reference. Give them a copy of your resume, tell them what type of jobs you are applying for and follow up with them after the interview.

Interview Etiquette & Attitude

- Be punctual. Arrive no more than 10-15 minutes early.
- Greet and introduce yourself to the receptionist and/or interviewer.
- Sit and stand up straight; and it is best to keep your feet flat on the floor.
- Watch your body language, don't cross your arms and remember to smile.
- Don't smoke, chew gum or eat candy, even if the interviewer does. Try not to smoke before the interview so you don't smell of smoke.
- Avoid distracting behavior (swinging/kicking your feet, rocking in your chair, tapping a pen, touching your face, waving your hands).
- Don't bring anyone with you to the interview.

Attitude

- Always be truthful
- Be enthusiastic and positive
- Don't talk about personal problems
- Participate and ask questions
- Be mature, friendly and tactful
- Don't be evasive about negative factors in your past
- Don't be negative about past employers or jobs
- Don't be a know-it-all; show your willingness to learn
- Be polite/nice to all those you meet, including the receptionist
- Show you are goal oriented
- Show your willingness to relocate, if this is true
- Show your interest in the job and the organization
- Don't discuss salary at the interview

Take to the interview:

- Name, address and phone number of the interviewer
- Directions to the interview location
- Extra copies of your resume in a nice folder
- List of references (name, title, company, address and phone number)
- Paper and pen
- Professional Portfolio that includes samples of your work, if applicable
- Information that may be needed to fill out a job application (high school address, previous employers' addresses and phone numbers, etc.)

Be Prepared

Questions Employers May Ask

In simple terms, an interview is compared to a test. You will know the answers to most of the questions if you study and prepare. Of course, like a pop-quiz, there may be some unexpected questions that may surprise you. Common topics like job duties and management styles are to be expected. Be prepared to relate past experience to the position!

1. Tell me a little about yourself.
Do not tell your life story. Highlight what makes you a good fit professionally for this job. Talk about experience, qualifications, accomplishments, etc.
2. What do you know about our company & why do you want to work here?
This is your chance to impress them with all your research.
3. Why did you choose to go into this field?
Money is probably never the correct answer.
4. Describe your ideal job. They are trying to determine how close or far off this job is from what you would love.
5. Why are you changing jobs/careers?
Explain your goals, and your desire for new challenges. Don't ever bad-mouth a current or former employer.
6. What are you looking for in a supervisor?
They are trying to determine if your style would mesh with the boss.
7. How do you feel about working overtime?
Be honest, but if the answer is "no" then be sure to steer your response back to what you do offer.
8. Are you willing to relocate?
Another honest answer – some companies may be looking for managers that can move.
9. What is your greatest strength?
Your strength should be something that can be obviously demonstrated in your past experience.
10. What is your greatest weakness?
Think of the implications – For your weakness, select something that could also be a strength, like "I'm a perfectionist" or a "workaholic".
11. Have you ever been fired?
If "yes", be honest and brief – "I had a difference of opinion with my manager at XYZ Company and was terminated. However, it was the best thing that could have happened to me, because it forced me to evaluate what I want and to research employers, leading me to you."
12. Explain your gaps in employment?
Be prepared to discuss choices (time with family, returning to school, illness) but focus on the growth that occurred during the gap. If the gap

- was due to a personal problem, offer as little explanation as possible and highlight solutions that won't allow the problem to reoccur.
13. How did you contribute to your last job? What were your accomplishments?
Anything "above and beyond" is worth mentioning here.
 14. Which one of your previous jobs did you like most? Least? Why?
Try to match up the good points of an old job to the new opportunities.
 15. How do you make important decisions?
Highlight how you prioritize and problem solve.
 16. Where do you see yourself in five years?
Try to envision a career ladder at the same company. Show realistic ambition.
 17. What makes you feel important?
The underlying question is regarding your values. If there are aspects of the job that make you feel important, you will be happy working in this capacity.
 18. How would your former manager/supervisor describe you?
Be honest, they may call him/her.
 19. What is one thing you would like to improve about yourself?
Again, pick a weakness that isn't so terrible.
 20. Do you prefer working in a team environment or alone?
Know the conditions you will experience. Your answer should not contradict the expected.
 21. What do you expect for a starting salary?
Research the salary ranges and know what your "basement number" is.
 22. Why should I hire you?
Give them good reasons, tied to performance and skill. Not, because "I'll do a good job"!

Be Prepared

Behavioral Interviewing

An interviewing technique that is widely used is behavioral interviewing. The premise is simple, past performance is the best indicator of future performance. Be prepared for questions that begin with, "Tell me about a time that..." When encountering this type of questions, follow the steps below:

Steps	Description
1. Situation:	Briefly describe the situation
2. Action:	Explain what you did; what actions you took.
3. Result:	What was the outcome? Did your effort yield a successful result?

- Give me an example of how you handled a stressful situation in your last position?

All jobs have stress...be prepared to briefly describe what happened, your reaction and the outcome.

- Tell me about a time when you have learned from a mistake?
Spin a mistake back into a positive – some of the best lessons come from mistakes.
- What was one of the most difficult decisions you have had to make? Why?
This can be personal, but not intimate.

Illegal Questions & How to Answer Them

Most questions in interviews today are open-ended. There is usually no specific answer required and the applicant must decide how to answer the question. Organizations use open-ended questions to learn more about the candidate's personality, job history, education and experience as it relates to the job. Typically questions should be relevant to the position or job performance. Personal or family-related questions should be avoided as they do not have direct bearing on the job.

Employers should not ask questions or make hiring decisions based on characteristics protected by law such as: race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age. Occasionally an interviewer may ask a question that could be discriminatory. This may be unintentional or planned to see how the candidate will react to the question. The reasoning does not matter, but how you respond does. There are three ways you can respond to a bad question.

1. **You may refuse to answer and suggest to the interviewer that the question is illegal.** Of course, this is risky. Avoid sounding offended and alienating the interviewer. You could be tactful and politely ask, "Would you mind telling me how that question relates to the position?"
2. **Answer the question.** If you don't mind answering the question and think you know the "right" answer.
3. **Answer the concern of the question.** The underlying issue of the question may be evident. If so, redirect the question and answer the concern. "How is your health?" is really a question of whether or not you can do the job or will have excessive absences. You could say "I'm capable of meeting all the physical requirements of this job and my prior employers can attest to my attendance records."

Interview Questions that Should NOT Be Asked

The differences are subtle...Can you easily tell which is which?

Proper & Allowable Question	Improper Question
Are you over the age of 18?	How old are you? What is your birth date? When did you graduate?
Can you provide proof of employment eligibility if hired?	What is your race/nationality? Are you a US citizen? O'Malley, is that Irish?
Have you worked under a different last name?	Are you married? Are you divorced? What was your maiden name?
Would you be willing to travel/relocate? Would you be able to work overtime?	Do you have children? Do you plan to have children? Do you have child care established?
Are you able to perform the essential functions of the job?	Are you disabled?
Are you taking any illegal drugs?	Are you taking any medication?
Have you ever been convicted of a crime?	Have you ever been arrested? Have you been charged with a crime?

During the Interview

- Greet the interviewer warmly, with a firm handshake
- Allow them to tell you where to sit.
- Try to connect with the interviewer, he or she may be uncomfortable too.
- Focus and Listen carefully to the question being asked. Ask for clarification if you don't understand the question.
- Think through each question before you answer. Try not to sound like you memorized the answer. Be natural.
- Expand and explain your answers. Don't just respond with a yes or a no. Use examples whenever possible and bring in your accomplishments when appropriate.
- Focus on what you can do for the company, not what they can do for you.
- Don't take control of the interview and don't interrupt the interviewer(s).
- Don't use slang expressions. Always try to use good grammar.
- Speak clearly and don't mumble. Don't use "um" or "ah" when pausing.
- Don't talk too fast or too much. Answer the questions clearly and concisely.
- Show your sense of humor when/if appropriate.

Ending the Interview

- When prompted, ask questions about the organization.
- Summarize your strengths.
- Ask when a decision will be made about the status of the position.
- Thank them for meeting with you.

Telephone & Video Interviews

Telephone or computer based video interviewing is becoming more popular. Once reserved for employees that were geographically distant, this technique is gaining popularity. Sometimes it is a genuine, full-fledged interview, but more likely this interview is a screening mechanism to determine which candidates are worthy of a face-to-face interview. A phone call is often a casual event –BEWARE, this is not your average phone call. Many people are caught off guard and not well-prepared. The telephone interview should be treated just as seriously as any other.

Insist on scheduling a time when you will make or receive the interview call. Be prepared, in a quiet environment that allows for concentration. However tempting, do not just answer a call and allow the interview to happen spontaneously. Preparation is necessary. Gather your materials, a pen & paper to take notes, the job posting and your resume at a minimum. Be sure to get the name and title of your interviewer, and confirm the spelling if necessary. You will need this for a thank you note, just like in a traditional interview. Follow all the guidelines for a “real” interview – because this is real!

Dress for Success

Once you have scheduled an interview you have the opportunity to impress the employer with your skills and personality. However it is critical to note – from the moment you walk in the door you are being evaluated. First impressions are lasting ones and you want your first impression to be positive.

It is always best to dress “one step above” the position that you are trying to get. For example, if you are applying for a general management position, you would want to wear a nice suit. An electrician or a mechanic should wear slacks and a polo or button-up shirt.

Listed below are some tips to help you “dress for success”. These tips are designed to give you some basic guidelines in order to help you make a good appearance and a good first impression.

Men and Women

- Make sure to clean and polish your conservative shoes

- Hair should be neat, clean & well-groomed
- Fingernails should be neat & clean
- Keep your pockets empty—no bulges or jingling coins
- Do not chew gum, candy or smoke cigarettes
- Only carry a portfolio case
- No visible body piercing (nose rings, eyebrow rings, etc.)
- Turn off cell phones, pagers, etc.
- Keep jewelry to a minimum
- Clothes are neat, clean & fit well
- Cover any tattoos

Men

- Wear a conservative suit (dark blue, black or grey is best)
- Wear a conservative long-sleeved shirt
- Neckties with a conservative pattern
- Wear dark, polished shoes
- Wear dark socks, and no holes or worn places
- Make sure to get a haircut
- Beards / Mustaches should be well groomed / trimmed
- Wear no rings other than wedding ring and/or college ring
- No earrings (if you normally wear one, take it out)

Women

- It is best to wear a suit and a neutral blouse with a modest neckline
- Keep your makeup to a minimum
- Have not more than one ring on each hand
- Don't carry purses, small or large; carry a portfolio instead
- If you must wear nail polish, use clear or a very conservative color
- Wear skirts at a conservative length
- No 3 inch high heel shoes; wear classic closed toe pumps (1 – 1 ½ inches)
- Wear conservative hosiery at or near skin color (and no runs!)
- Wear only one set of earrings

Questions to Ask

Most interviews conclude with the interviewer asking, “Do you have any questions?” Remember that not only do you have to sell yourself to the

interviewer; you must be sold on the employer and the position. Asking questions allows you to find out information that you will need to determine whether you really want the job.

You may naturally ask questions during the interview, if permitted. If it makes sense to ask a question at that point, ask it. Asking questions shows that you are interested in the job and gives you a perfect opportunity to show how you “fit” the position. It is also a good time to integrate the knowledge you obtained from your research. Ask useful, well-thought-out questions that are relevant to the job or organization and that reflect your interest in and qualifications for the job.

- Describe your ideal candidate.
- Describe what a typical day would be like.
- In what types of projects would I be involved?
- Who are some of the people I will be working with and what do they do?
- What is the typical career path for someone in this position?
- To whom will I report?
- What are the organization’s plans for the future?
- How long will it take to make a hiring decision?
- What is the most challenging aspect of this job?
- What professional development opportunities are available?
- What is the usual work schedule?
- How will my performance be evaluated?

Following Up

Following up after the interview is very important. Unfortunately, it is the step that most interviewees neglect.

Thank You Letter

Thank the person who interviewed you by sending them a brief letter. If possible, the letter should be mailed the same day as your interview. You may also want to send an e-mail thank you note. Consider how you made the original contact. If via e-mail, then a return e-mail would be appropriate. When in doubt, you could also send both.

Letter contains:

First Paragraph: Thank the interviewer for his or her time and indicate the position for which you were interviewed.

Second Paragraph: You may want to mention something that was discussed during the interview that interested you about the organization or position. In addition, explain how you can meet the qualifications of the job. Also, this is a good time to briefly share anything you forgot to express during the interview.

Third Paragraph: Confirm that you want the job and offer to provide any additional information that may be needed. Explain that you will follow-up to check if a decision has been made, unless they've already told you.

**Sample Thank You
Letter**

Anna Ward

4259 Redwood Street
Vidalia, Georgia 76464
(555) 555-5555
annaward123@gmail.com

December 11, 2008

Mrs. Angie Jones
Marketing Manager
MIK Marketing
555 5th Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 97566

Dear Mrs. Jones:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to interview for the Marketing Assistant position. I really enjoyed meeting with you and your team today. I was truly able to get a sense of the company's mission to provide the highest quality products for its customers. Your opportunity would prove to be challenging and exciting.

After talking with you about the requirements of the position, I am confident that I can contribute to the company's marketing effort in a variety of ways. Courses I have completed at Midlands Technical College in Writing for Public Relations and Principles of Marketing have helped me gain experience in writing promotional campaigns. Additionally, my previous experience in public relations and knowledge of Microsoft Office software allow me to effectively communicate my ideas, which will help to streamline the customer's needs.

I look forward to hearing from you. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (555) 555-5555, or annaward123@gmail.com. Thank you again, for the opportunity to meet you and your staff.

Sincerely,

Anna Ward

**Sample Thank You
Letter**

Sue Johnson, RN

43 Greenwine Road Alston, GA 29210 (555) 555-5555
sjohnson@gmail.com

January 31, 2010

Emily Phillip, CEO Nurses State Staffing
PO Box 223
Macon, GA 21354

Dear Ms. Phillip,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to meet with you and; discuss your company's needs for PRN nurses in a variety of settings.

As we discussed, the ability to work on a temporary basis is ideal for me. As an experienced professional I am comfortable working in a variety of settings. I enjoy the challenges of nursing and the prospect of working with diverse populations. As I mentioned, the flexible scheduling will also allow me to balance my personal passion of exhibiting in antique doll shows a few weeks each year without leaving my employer short-staffed. I forgot to mention during the interview that I am even willing to take on traveling assignments, if they become available.

I sincerely want to express my excitement regarding our potential partnership! If you need any additional information from me or a copy of my current Georgia nursing license, please let me know. I look forward to speaking with you again soon.

Sincerely,

Sue Johnson, RN

Salary Negotiation

Finding the right job on your desired career path meets several personal needs, not the least of which is money. Very few people can afford to work for only personal satisfaction, so it is natural that salary and benefits would be a primary factor when considering the type of job offer you will accept.

Many job-seekers are uncomfortable discussing salary. If you ask for a salary that is too high, you might not be considered. If you ask for too little, you may lose respect of the employer and certainly will lose some income. So how much is enough? Is what the employer offers always a fair wage? These and other questions can be researched and in this case, doing your homework definitely pays!

Research current salary ranges. Many websites, both government and private, provide basic salary information sorted by occupation and geography. Salary **ranges** are likely more useful than one single number. Years of experience, unique characteristics of the job seeker and the available position will all factor into the final equation. When pressed for your desired salary, you have two good options.

1. Ask what the position's salary range. "What would you pay a person with my experience and education?"
2. State a researched market range that you consider fair. "According to the US Department of Labor's website, the average dental assistant is paid \$14 - \$17 per hour. I would consider a figure within this range, if I was also eligible for benefits."

Benefits

Benefits are another component of compensation that you should factor into your decision. Some employers don't offer any. Some offer basic benefits (vacation & insurance). Others allow employees to pick and choose from a "cafeteria" plan. Don't be afraid to ask for details. Benefits can cost the employer upwards of 30% of the salary, so these can be considerable.

What Is Your Current Salary?

There are two critical junctures when you may be asked your current or desired salary. The first is on the application or in response to the job posting. Typically employers want to know how much you are worth so they can determine if they can afford you. If you say your desired salary is \$50,000 a year and the position tops out at \$30,000 then the employer won't waste time considering you. However if the opposite is true (you ask for \$30,000 when the job could pay \$50,000), the employer may think you are not worthy of consideration. Perhaps even worse; they will consider hiring you – but offer less respect than they would if you had named a more appropriate price. If at all possible avoid answering the desired salary question all together or answer "negotiable", since nearly all jobs are negotiable to a degree.

The other risky point is if you are currently employed; employers will likely ask, “What are you making now?” An employer may ask this question for a variety of reasons but the primary reason is to determine what their starting offer should be. If you are working for \$10 per hour, the offer will almost certainly need to exceed that. However the employer will also consider that the offer won’t need to exceed your current salary by much. Why offer you \$18 per hour, if you are used to working for \$10? Wouldn’t \$12 per hour be enough?

Use extreme caution. Whatever you say will be carefully evaluated. Be prepared for this potential minefield. Few jobs are similar enough to make a straight line comparison. Your present salary isn’t necessarily a reflection of what the new job should pay. Also remember that honesty is the best policy. Don’t inflate your current salary, because it is possible that your current pay rate may be verified by the new employer.

If you have done your research you can reply, “I currently make \$10 per hour, but my current position is close to home, has a flexible work schedule and requires far less responsibility than the position at your company, so it is really not a fair comparison. My research indicates that the position we are discussing should pay between \$15 - \$18 per hour.”

Coping with Rejection

Most job seekers encounter rejection – frequently. Remember if an employer receives 25 applicants for one position, only 1 person gets the job – 96% do NOT! The rejected applicant is in good company. Do not allow rejection to damage your ego or discourage you. Rejection is part of the process. Learn from each encounter, develop your interviewing skills with each meeting and refine your technique as you continue the search. If you aren’t getting interviews, improve the resume. If you are being interviewed but not receiving offers, consider your interviewing skills. Possible problem areas include:

- Lack of confidence, competence and enthusiasm
- Poor presentation (appearance, posture, manners)
- Unrealistic expectations – overestimating your value or skills

The Offer

Employers often need to fill vacant positions “yesterday”. When they extend an offer of employment they hope to receive a response quickly. Etiquette allows time for the prospective employee to consider the offer, but requires consideration. When receiving an offer remember to:

- Clarify any terms of employment that are unclear (salary, vacation, duties, location, working schedule, etc...)
- Determine a date by which you will accept or decline the offer
- Thank the employer for the offer.

Accepting the Offer

You have received an offer that you consider fair, for a job that you are really excited about. Of course you want to “take it”.

- Express enthusiasm.
- Call or write the employer within the agreed upon time frame to graciously accept the offer.
- Determine starting date; clarify the location and any directions regarding “new hire” paperwork that needs to be completed.
- Thank the employer again!

Rejecting the Offer

- Express regret.
- Call or write the employer within the agreed upon time frame to graciously decline, explaining briefly why you chose not to accept the offer. Often times this would be a simple statement indicating that another offer better matches your goals.
- Thank the employer again!

Success on the Job

Qualities & Characteristics Desired by Employers

Employers WANT to hire employees. They NEED to hire employees in order to accomplish their mission. But they need GOOD employees. It is always a good idea to put yourself in the place of the employer. Ask yourself the question “**What kind of employee would I want to hire?**” Think about the characteristics and attributes that would be most important to you. You will find this helpful in identifying those qualities many employers desire as well.

During the interview, the employer tries to determine if you can meet their needs, not only with technical skills but with “soft skills” as well. These include the traits that compose your personality: your ability to communicate, attitude, friendliness, self-esteem, honesty and leadership ability. These traits are difficult to quantify, so it is up to you to impress the employer with tangible examples that demonstrate you possess these attributes. Listed below are a number of qualities and characteristics that employers strongly desire.

Leadership	Maturity	Resourcefulness
Initiative	Interpersonal Skills	Enthusiasm
Flexibility	Self-confidence	Intelligence
Integrity	Responsibility	Reliability
Motivation	Dedication	Competence
Listening Skills	Adaptability	Courtesy
Pride in Work	Energy	
Problem Solving Ability		Ability to work well under pressure
Critical Thinking Skills		Ability to follow instructions
Communication Skills		Ability to get along with others

Prove that you are the talented individual that you said you are!

- Be prompt.
- Take initiative.
- Be courteous and respect authority.
- Be flexible and willing to work with your team.
- Respect those with more experience than you.
- Follow procedures and ask for direction if unclear.
- Keep up with work and ask for help or direction if needed.
- Avoid gossip and maintain confidentiality.
- Comply with company policies regarding phone & Internet usage.