CAREER GUIDE
FOR EXPERIENCED CSU STUDENTS

WWW.CHARLESTONSOUTHERN.EDU/CAREERS
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1ST FLOOR, STROM THURMOND CENTER

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OFFICE HOURS: Monday through Friday - 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Extended hours are available by appointment.
Table of Contents

Mission ........................................................................................................................................3
Online Assessments ....................................................................................................................4
BucCareer Network – Electronic Job Search and Résumé Critique ........................................5
Interview Stream – Electronic Mock Interviews .......................................................................6
How to Start a Job Search ..........................................................................................................7
Employer Expectations .............................................................................................................8
Marketing Yourself – Résumé Tips for the Experienced Candidate ........................................9
Your Guide to Résumé Writing ................................................................................................10-12
Solving Common Résumé Problems .......................................................................................13-14
Résumé Switchers ..................................................................................................................15
The On-Line Portfolio ................................................................................................................16-17
Powerhouse Buzzwords ...........................................................................................................18
Make Your Résumé “Sizzle” .....................................................................................................19-20
Sample Résumés ....................................................................................................................21-26
Writing Cover Letters .............................................................................................................27-29
Networking ..................................................................................................................................30-32
Interviewing ...............................................................................................................................33-36
Résumés for Career Switchers ...............................................................................................37
Dress for Success ......................................................................................................................38-39
Free Professional Practice Tests ............................................................................................40
CLEP Exams ............................................................................................................................40
Hiring Qualified Teachers .........................................................................................................41-43
Common Interview Questions for Teachers ..........................................................................44
Sample Interview Questions for Teachers ..............................................................................45
Common Teacher Problems: Red Flags ................................................................................46
Welcome to The Career Center at Charleston Southern University. The Career Center operates as a part of the Student Services Division and our mission is:

To provide career services to both students and alumni, and to facilitate the process of connecting God-given passion to skills and abilities through Charleston Southern University majors. We endeavor to increase job placement opportunities for students by partnering with businesses, churches, and the Charleston Southern University community.

Mission Statement
ASSESSMENTS

Self-assessment is a process by which you learn more about yourself -- what you like, what interests you, and how you tend to react to certain situations. Knowing these things can help you identify career direction and determine what occupations might fit you better than others. The assessments listed below are frequently used in our office as an initial step in the career planning process. We recommend scheduling an appointment with a counselor to help interpret your assessment results.

**Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)**
Different combinations of the criteria determine a type (there are 16 possible types). Visit our office to take the MBTI and obtain your type formula, strength of the preferences and type description. This may help you to identify your general life style and your style in certain fields of activity.

**PLACE Assessment**
Through the PLACE process, people discover that God has created and gifted them with a unique capacity to serve others.

- The **P** = **Personality Discovery**
- The **L** = **Learning Spiritual Gifts**
- The **A** = **Abilities Awareness**
- The **C** = **Connecting Passion with Ministry**
- The **E** = **Experiences of Life**

**Strong Interest Inventory**
For over 75 years, the Strong has helped people from high school and college students to mid-career workers seeking change, in their search for a rich and fulfilling career. Newly revised, this authoritative assessment is more powerful than ever before.

The Strong measures your interest in a broad range of occupations, work activities, leisure activities, and school subjects. The questionnaire compares how these interests are similar to the interests of people successfully employed in those occupations. It is used to help you understand work interests and to illustrate the kinds of work in which you might be most satisfied.

**Self Directed Search (SDS) Career Assessment**
The Self Directed Search (SDS) is a CAREER INVENTORY developed by Dr. John L. Holland and it is based on the theory that people are happier and more successful in jobs that match their interest, values, and skills. According to the theory, people can be loosely classified into six personality types:

- **R** = Realistic
- **I** = Investigative
- **A** = Artistic
- **S** = Social
- **E** = Enterprising
- **C** = Conventional
BucCareer Network

Search Positions and Upload Résumés:

- Go to www.csuniv.edu. Select “BucCareer Network Login” on the quick links menu, then “for students/alumni”
- Register for an account completing all the required fields and verify your e-mail address for approval by a Career Center staff member
- Log in to your account

SEARCH FOR POSITIONS:

- Select “Positions” at the top
- Select either “SEARCH JOBS” or “USAJobs” from the drop down box
- Specify your search criteria, and click “Search”
- For information about a position, click on its job title
- Follow the employer’s instructions for applying
- You may check several positions and create a job list by using the favorites feature

TO UPLOAD YOUR RÉSUMÉ:

- Select the tab marked “Professional Portfolio Documents”
- Upload your current résumé by selecting “Add New.” You may also upload other portfolio documents
- Name your résumé, browse for it on your computer or storage device, and submit
- A Career Center staff member will send you any recommendations for changes via your registered e-mail address
- Once your résumé is approved, you may use it to submit to job postings online and it can be included in the next Résumé Book for employers
PRACTICE MOCK INTERVIEWS ONLINE

See & Hear Yourself.
How Self-Produced Mock Interviews Work

Go to the BucCareer Network
At www.csuniv.edu/careers

REGISTER
• Click BucCareer Network Login under Quick Links on the right
• Complete the registration and verify your account as directed
• Your verified registration will be approved within 2 business days

PRACTICE INTERVIEWING
• Click Mock Interviews under the Resources tab
• Choose from the Interview List or Create New Interview by selecting questions from a comprehensive list
• Follow the directions to test your hardware
• Follow the directions to record your interview
• Discuss your interview with a Career Counselor or share your interview for feedback
How to Start a Job Search

1. Establish goals
   - Search jobs on the BucCareer Network at www.csuniv.edu/careers
   - Consider a skills or personality assessment
   - Evaluate job preferences or job type
   - Evaluate geographical location or company size

2. Research the job market
   - Utilize the resources on The Career Center (CPSE) Web site
   - Review publications and materials
   - Schedule an appointment with a career counselor
   - Look through classified ads and online job postings.

3. Prepare a résumé
   - Begin by creating a general draft of your résumé
   - Upload your résumé and other documents on the BucCareer Network for critique by a career counselor

4. Pursue opportunities that will facilitate your passion
   - Send résumé and cover letter with your application
   - When possible, dress to impress and deliver your job application
   - Follow all steps in the application process accurately

5. Practice interviewing skills
   - Conduct a video mock interview through the BucCareer Network
   - Research the company for which you are interviewing
   - Rehearse answers to common interview questions
   - Practice mock interviews using Interview Stream

6. Follow up
   - Send a thank you note as soon as possible (even if you would not accept a job offer from the employer)
   - Prepare for a second interview
   - Start your new career!
Employer Expectations

EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR WORKERS THAT GET STRAIGHT A’s!

- **Attitude** – Ambitious to do a great job, Understands customer service, Knows their role in the company’s success

- **Achievement** – Accomplishes tasks and dedicated to getting the job done, Cares about quality/quantity of work, Pride in overall business production

- **Ability** – Applies basic skills, Able to be a team player, Communicates well

- **Attendance** – Arrives to work on time, Displays responsibility, Reasonable use of leave

- **Appearance** – Appropriate workplace dress/grooming, Gears personal presence to customers, Smiles to make the recipient feel better

- **Adaptable** – Able to take direction and follow through on assignments, Helps co-workers when possible/necessary, Treats employers/customers with respect
Résumé Tips for the Experienced Candidate

Whereas a new grad’s résumé is often more general in nature, your résumé should be a showcase of your track record, demonstrating to a potential employer what you can “bring to the table.” Here are some tips to keep in mind:

Give a summary, not an objective. Specify three or four skills that match the employer’s needs. These highlights can appear in a short paragraph or quick “bullet” formats.

Lead with experience, not education (the exact opposite of what a new graduate should do).

List accomplishments, not just responsibilities. Don’t just tell employers what you did; tell them the outcome. For example: “Proposed and tracked $500,000 annual departmental budget. Only division to meet deadlines and operate within budget during past three years.” Such a statement reveals your problem-solving abilities.

List activities that relate directly to your self-improvement efforts, e.g., continuing education or the position you’re seeking. Don’t include hobbies.

Determine the length of your résumé based on accomplishments. An experienced candidate often has enough relevant accomplishments to expand his or her résumé to a second page. That does not, however, give you license to spell out every award, membership, or accomplishment in your résumé. You don’t want to dilute focus.

Consider listing and describing all of your accomplishments when developing the résumé. Tailor each résumé to include the accomplishments that relate to a particular employer’s needs.
Your Guide to Résumé Writing

How to Prepare an Effective Résumé

1. Résumé Essentials

Before you write, take time to do a self-assessment on paper. Outline your skills and abilities as well as your work experience and extracurricular activities. This will make it easier to prepare a thorough résumé.

2. The Content of Your Résumé

Name, address, telephone, e-mail address, web site address

All your contact information should go at the top of your résumé.

- Avoid nicknames.

- Use a permanent address. Use your parents’ address, a friend’s address, or the address you plan to use after graduation.

- Use a permanent telephone number and include the area code. If you have an answering machine, record a neutral greeting.

- Add your e-mail address. Many employers will find it useful. (Note: Choose an e-mail address that sounds professional.)

- Include your web site address only if the web page reflects your professional ambitions.

Objective or Summary

An objective tells potential employers the sort of work you're hoping to do.

- Be specific about the job you want. For example: To obtain an entry-level position within a financial institution requiring strong analytical and organizational skills.

- Tailor your objective to each employer you target/every job you seek.

Education

New graduates without a lot of work experience should list their educational information first. Alumni can list it after the work experience section.

- Your most recent educational information is listed first.

- Include your degree (A.S., B.S., B.A., etc.), major, institution attended, minor/concentration.

- Add your grade point average (GPA) if it is higher than 3.0.

- Mention academic honors.
Work Experience

Briefly give the employer an overview of work that has taught you skills. Use action words to describe your job duties. Include your work experience in reverse chronological order—that is, put your last job first and work backward to your first, relevant job. Include:

- Title of position,
- Name of organization
- Location of work (town, state)
- Dates of employment
- Describe your work responsibilities with emphasis on specific skills and achievements.

Other information

A staff member at your career services office can advise you on other information to add to your résumé. You may want to add:

- Key or special skills or competencies,
- Leadership experience in volunteer organizations,
- Participation in sports.

References

Ask people if they are willing to serve as references before you give their names to a potential employer.

Do not include your reference information on your résumé.

3. Résumé Checkup

You've written your résumé. It's time to have it reviewed and critiqued by a career counselor. You can also take the following steps to ensure quality:

Content:

- Run a spell check on your computer before anyone sees your résumé.
- Get a friend (an English major would do nicely) to do a grammar review.
- Ask another friend to proofread. The more people who see your résumé, the more likely that misspelled words and awkward phrases will be seen (and corrected).
Design:

These tips will make your résumé easier to read and/or scan into an employer's database.

- Use white or off-white paper.
- Use 8-1/2- x 11-inch paper.
- Print on one side of the paper.
- Use a font size of 10 to 12 points. Heading may be size 14 points.
- Use non-decorative typefaces.
- To be safe, choose one typeface and stick to it. Using a relevant logo is acceptable.
- Do not use too many italics, script, and underlined words.
- When using horizontal or vertical lines, graphics, or shading, be sure that you see the assistance of a career counselor. The résumé should not be too busy, but organized and focused.
- Do not fold or staple your résumé.
- If you must mail your résumé, put it in a large envelope.
Solving Common Résumé Problems

What do you do if you have date gaps?
Stop worrying about date gaps. It's a modern world, and most résumés have gaps of some kind on them. Students, grad or undergrad usually don't list specific months, anyway. Use dates like these:

Summer 1999
Fall-Spring 1999-2000

If an employer wants to know about a specific gap that shows on your résumé, she'll ask. Then you can tell her what you were doing (hopefully in a positive light).

How do you create a résumé when you have the wrong kind of experience?
Tell what you learned in your old experience that might be applicable in your targeted new industry. For example, in the restaurant industry, the standard way to describe a position is to describe the menu, the number of tables, or "covers," and the volume, i.e., gross sales per annum. To interest a corporate recruiter for marketing and sales, though, you would have to use entirely different language. This candidate makes restaurant experience relevant to her future career goals:

Server, Neptune's Sea Palace, Miami, Florida, Summer 2000

- Acted as a "sales representative" for the restaurant, selling add-ons and extras to achieve one of the highest per-ticket and per-night sales averages
- Prioritized and juggled dozens of simultaneous responsibilities
- Built loyal clientele of regulars in addition to tourist trade
- Utilized proprietary software and databases on a daily basis

In short, make your old experience relevant to the newly targeted industry. Ask yourself, "What can I say that will convey to a prospective employer that I gained skills that are relevant to her needs?"

Always use the language and address the concerns of the targeted industry, not the industry you want to leave behind.

What do you do if you have the wrong degree?
TIP: If you got a degree in music history and now want a job in financial services, omit the major:

Stanford University, Stanford, California
Bachelor of Arts, 2000

No matter what your major was, you can feature the coursework that is related to the field you have targeted, as in this example:

Bachelor of Science, Michigan State University, 2001

Coursework included:
- Financial & Management Accounting
- Statistics & Statistical Analysis
- Research Methodologies for Social Scientists
What do you do if you don't have enough experience—or have no experience at all?
If you don't have enough experience, expand your definition of experience to include paid, nonpaid, volunteer, community service, political, tutoring, sports, and church/synagogue/mosque/ashram activities. You can even feature classroom experiences if they support your career goal.

Here's one example:
Office of Admissions/Physical Education Department, Fall 1999 and 2000 Orientation Coordinator (Public Relations)
• Conceived role of public relations representative for the Sports Complex to the orientation process; was appointed by the A.D. as "Czar of PR."
• Won approval for Sports Complex as site of "Bop Tilya Drop" orientation bash.
• Convinced cheerleaders (male and female) to lead Sports Complex tours.
• Increased Sports Complex utilization by over 15% in first year alone. See enclosed letter from A.D. citing my contribution as key to exempting S.C. from budget cuts.

Pay particular attention to this example. This student created this project for a lark. The only pay was a few extra perks around the gym, but look how well it turned out on his résumé. Many students do something for their departments, for some branch of student government, or for some student organization. Sometimes this kind of unstructured "work" can round out the rest of your experience rather nicely.

Also, here's how one student sold her classroom research as experience of interest to business employers:

Sample Projects
• Analyzed all sectors of the Norsk Hydro conglomerate of Norway, including industry and competitive trends, financial and management strengths, corporate infrastructure, and historical performance.
• Prepared comprehensive country profile of Brazil's business climate as part of feasibility analysis of investment and joint-venture potential.
• Developed study of cross-cultural organizational behavior investigating corporate communications protocols using Pakistan as a model.
Résumés for Career Switchers
Changing careers? Learn how to tailor your résumé.
By Marcia Passos Duffy
WetFeet

So you’ve finally decided to leave your accounting job to sell waterfront property. Or maybe you’re an institutional investor with a yen for website design. How can you tailor your résumé for a career change?

Provided you’re not going from mechanic to brain surgeon, many of the skills in your old career are transferable to your new one. The secret is to accentuate them on your résumé. You can learn how to do so from career-transition experts.

Lay It All out on the Table
The first step is to grab a handful of index cards and write down all of your skills and personal attributes, advises Wendy S. Enelow, the author of Résumé Winners from the Pros and president of the Career Master’s Institute, an association of professional résumé writers and career coaches.

Next, list on a sheet of paper all of the jobs you would consider in your new career field. For example, if you are moving in to marketing, your list might include positions in research, brand management or marketing communications. Pull out the index cards with the skills and personal attributes most relevant to these positions.

Start with a Summary
Armed with about a dozen index cards, you now have a strong handle on skills that will make you marketable in your new career. The next step is to write a summary, which will give the reader a clear snapshot of your qualifications.

Fashion your list of skills and attributes into a five-sentence summary or bulleted list. For example, you could highlight a knack for numbers by saying, "Strong quantitative skills and proficiency in statistics."

Writing a summary is not easy, so take your time. "There’s no standardized way to write a résumé," Enelow points out. "It’s a creative process.” Fine-tune your language and make revisions. Keep your index cards handy as a reminder of what skills you need to emphasize.

Back It up
Use the remaining two-thirds of your résumé either to list your experiences in reverse chronological order (with most recent jobs first), or list your previous positions in order, based on relevance to your new career. The second option is best if your most relevant experience is not your most recent.

Support your summary with specific accomplishments, says Kraft. If you stated: "Keen presentation, contract negotiation, and communication skills," in your summary, back it up with, "translated marketing strategy into tactical market plans to land lucrative contracts from Fortune 500 companies."

"You can take something from a relevant position you had ten years ago either paid or volunteer—and sell your accomplishments rather than your job title," says Cindy Kraft, the owner of Executive Essentials in Tampa, Florida, and a certified professional résumé writer and a job- and career-transition coach. "It's not misleading.”

Enelow agrees: "You are re-weighting your life experiences. . . . You’re changing the emphasis while still remaining in the realm of reality."

Also make sure you "know the jargon of your new career—and use it in your résumé," says Debbie Rollins, who teaches career-development classes at the Art Institute of Atlanta. She suggests checking out professional association websites, where you can pick up industry verbiage, and look at résumés of other professionals in your desired field.

Author Bio
Marcia Passos Duffy is a freelance journalist who writes frequently about business, parenting, health care, and farming. She is a 1997 recipient of a New England Press Association Award.

The On-line Portfolio:
“Show and Tell” Employers You’ve Got What It Takes
By Audrey Rorrer

Instead of presenting hard copies of your work, your portfolio is housed on your personal website. It should include samples of your work that will enable potential employers to evaluate your skills, and it should include other relevant information that will demonstrate to employers you have qualities they prize. (There is an added benefit: By developing a portfolio, you are actively summarizing and reflecting upon skills, thus preparing yourself for an interview. By creating a showcase of work samples and experience, you will be able to talk about yourself and your skills more comfortably and succinctly in a job interview.)

Your Portfolio’s content and look
What should you include in your online portfolio? Keep it relevant and professional: Remember that the reader is evaluating you as a prospective employee. This means that you should keep the content focused on samples, characteristics, and experiences that demonstrate that you fit in a professional environment. Do include samples of the information that you have included on your résumé, along with visual items and reflective commentary to communicate the meaning of your experiences to the employer, i.e., that you have key “soft skills” and qualities (communication, teamwork, work ethic, and so forth). For example, you might include a photograph of yourself at work during a summer internship at a newspaper, insert a PowerPoint presentation that you gave as part of a public speaking course you took, include excerpts of a business plan or marketing plan you developed in a course, place photos of yourself organizing a volunteer project or managing a campus club meeting. The reflective commentary should communicate meaning; for example, commentary about a photograph of your managing a club meeting might read: “I developed leadership and communication skills as the Student Government Chair for Earth Day Celebration.”

Your portfolio is also a chance to showcase your creativity; Video streams, PowerPoint presentations, photographs, documents, and other elements will enhance your portfolio. But don’t overdo it—keep your website simple, organized, and easy to navigate. Use menus and icons. Pick a unifying design theme and be sure the color scheme and design elements are not overwhelming to the observer. (Tip: A good rule of thumb is to limit font and color choices to no more than three.) As with any professional document or correspondence, make sure the content of your online portfolio is error-free and grammatically correct.

Showing your portfolio
If you are not specifically asked to display a portfolio, you may invite the interviewer to view it. Reference your portfolio web address in the cover letter or on your résumé as part of the demographics section, or by a separate section notation. During the interview process, you can also mention that you have an online portfolio that showcases your abilities.

It depends on the organization and on the particular position, of course, but don’t be disappointed if your portfolio isn’t reviewed during the initial interview process. Often, the manager of the position for which you are applying is the first person to actually view the portfolio, not the recruiter or human resources representative who is your first contact with the organization. Assuming you make the cut, your portfolio will help you demonstrate your abilities to the hiring manager.

Manage access to your portfolio to maintain privacy
A word of caution about using an online portfolio: It is not wise to have your portfolio open to all, as your private information is on display. Encode your online portfolio so that it is password protected. Offer the password only to those individuals who are part of your interview process, such as the hiring manager or department manager. By controlling access to your portfolio, you reduce the risk of identity theft while ensuring that appropriate individuals have access.

DON’T BE AFRAID TO TOOT YOUR OWN HORN

If you’re looking for a job, you must become your own salesperson.

A lot of people think salespeople are hucksters. The slick, used-car salesman jumps to mind.

Actually, professional salespeople, the kind that work for big corporations, are nothing like that. They’re honest, caring, and their job is to help the customer solve problems by using their products.

Likewise, you must show employers that you can help them.

This means that you must promote your skills and abilities. If you don’t, no one will ever know what a great catch you are.
Powerhouse Buzzwords

Your résumé is your sales literature. The folks who write professional sales literature know that certain words evoke confidence and authority. When explaining how you used the skills needed for the job you want, be sure to start each sentence with an action verb, such as…

- Achieved…
- Adapted…
- Advised…
- Analyzed…
- Assisted…
- Built…
- Completed…
- Controlled…
- Convinced…
- Coordinated…
- Counseled…
- Created…
- Decided…
- Delivered…
- Designed…
- Developed…
- Directed…
- Employed…
- Equipped…
- Established…
- Evaluated…
- Expanded…
- Experienced…
- Generated…
- Guided…
- Handled…
- Improved…
- Initiated…
- Investigated…
- Learned…
- Led…
- Maintained…
- Managed…
- Operated…
- Organized…
- Performed…
- Persuaded…
- Planned…
- Processed…
- Produced…
- Reduced…
- Repaired…
- Researched…
- Served…
- Set up…
- Sold…
- Supervised…
- Taught…
- Trained…
- Treated…
- Wrote…

For a great résumé – pour on the sizzle!!!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY “SIZZLE?”

“Sizzle” is the sight and sound of a good steak cooking on the grill. It’s irresistible.

Add sizzle to your qualifications and you’ll be irresistible.

In Business, sizzle means “results.”

Show that you can deliver results and your sales message will have the same impact as any corporate information sheet.

Showing that you can deliver results is easy. Take the skills needed for the job you want and add details to show the extent of your accomplishments.

For example, instead of saying that you’re a “good typist,” add some details – “type 65 words per minute with no errors.”

Should I keep it that simple?

Yes. Give only the facts. No fluff. No long explanations.

Limit each statement to one sentence – 10 to 12 words. Short sentences are powerful sentences. They sound confident and authoritative.
Sizzle Sheet

DIRECTIONS:
1. Explain your uses by adding details, explanations or accomplishments.
2. Be Specific. When possible, use numbers to show the extent, the amount, or the increase.
3. Start off each sentence with a powerhouse word.
4. Don’t exaggerate. Someone may check your claims.

EXAMPLE:
Occupation: Sales Clerk
Skill 1: Math
a. Maintained 3-year “B” average in algebra and geometry
b. Computed own 1040EZ tax return, earned $340 rebate
c. Manage $800 investment that earns 9.2% annual return

YOU TRY IT:

Occupation:
Skill 1:

a. ____________________________________________
b. ____________________________________________
c. ____________________________________________

Occupation:
Skill 2:

a. ____________________________________________
b. ____________________________________________
c. ____________________________________________

Occupation:
Skill 3:

a. ____________________________________________
b. ____________________________________________
c. ____________________________________________
Desire the Position of Education Administrator - High School Principal

SUMMARY
Recently licensed school administrator with more than 17 years experience in teaching and high school administration. Possession of in-depth knowledge of policies and procedures that govern schools and districts. Manage 28 staff, including 25 teachers, 2 counselors, and a secretary, daily. Responsible for discipline for 860 students, curriculum and instruction, school-wide program and events; as well as managing several buildings on campus. Observing and supervising teachers and the master schedule. Proven track record of sound budgeting, staff evaluations, and student disciplinary actions. Adept at critical thinking, problem solving, communication skills, listening and articulation of ideas and group interaction.

EDUCATION
PhD Education Administration, University of New York, NY (2000)
A valid Nova Scotia Teacher's License.
M.A Education Administration, University of New York, NY (1993)
B.A English Education, University of New York, NY (1989)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
Assistant Principal, Berk County School District, NY 1999 - Present
- Assist the principal with all certified and non-certified staff.
- Assist the principal in observing, evaluating and working through personnel issues with staff.
- Monitor hallways, lunch times, before and after school times. Supervising out of school activities and rotating with other administrators at school events.
- Promote student involvement in school activities by assisting principal in maintaining student advisors, student council, club and activities, organizing assemblies and special events.
- Receive and assigning in-school suspension write-ups, conducting informal student conferences on conduct reports, and making counselor referrals when appropriate.
- Support school security staff in maintaining a safe and secure school environment.
- Make parent contacts and conducting parent conferences, especially in out of school suspensions.
- Receive parent complaints proceeding to investigate and help resolve the issues.
- Work with school staff to research, plan and implement school reform initiatives.
- Assist staff with instructional techniques, classroom management and curricular issues.
- Help principal with building schedules, teacher assignments and recurring substitute teachers.

- Collaborated with the social studies teacher to integrate freshmen English and U.S. History.
- Coordinated drama activities.
- Communicated and liaised with fellow team department members on a regular basis with regards to planning, assessment, parent and community contact, subject organization and classroom issues such including discipline, expectations and routines.
Communicated and liaised with other school colleagues to promote and establish integrative links and awareness.
Performed behavioral management and pastoral care of class and homeroom groups.
Attended and constructively contributed in staff meetings.
Assisted in supervising student breaks.
Coordinated class activities.
Maintained up-to-date records of assessment, attendance, planning, reports, conferences, and communication with parents.
Established links with parent community to ensure that parents are kept well informed about student progress.
Assisted, in the development of curricular materials.
Acted as a resource, contact and support for new staff members (i.e. curriculum, schedules, and procedures).
Participate in and assisted with school events.

COMPUTER SKILLS
- Microsoft Office Suite
- Westlaw
- Lexis-Nexis
- Lotus Note
Sample Reverse Chronological Résumé

James R. White
134 Main Street
Yourtown, Virginia 99999
(999) 555-0009

Objective
A sales position which requires excellent communication skills and organizational abilities.

Work History

1993-present  Sales Representative – Harrison Pharmaceutical, Anytown, VA
- Serviced customer accounts in a six-state area
- Responsible for establishing two new accounts per month
- Increased revenues from service area over 120%
- Suggested new products and researched sources for new inventory

1986-1993  Sales Associate – Carson Industries, Yourtown, VA
- Provided service to customers base of 1500 people
- Managed all product requests and orders for the office machine division
- Communicated with store managers to achieve customer satisfaction
- Served as a liaison for customers between sales and service divisions

1982-1986  Assistant Manager – S & O Hardware, Yourtown, VA
- Operated store on a daily basis
- Managed sales, stocking, inventory ordering and closing procedures
- Assisted in the implementation of in-store promotions
- Supervised 3 sales associates

Education
B.S.  Communications and Marketing, Yourtown University, Yourtown, VA
A.S.  Business Administration, Anytown Community College, Anytown, VA

Special Skills and Accomplishments

Received award from Carson Industries for the most increase in sales in a six-month period
Proficient in the use of computerized accounting and inventory-tracking systems
Financed college education through part-time and summer employment
Trained in mediation and conflict resolution skills
Sample Reverse Chronological Résumé

Susan J. Simmons
127 Main Street
Anytown, Virginia 99999
(999) 555-0001

Job Objective
Accountant with a major bank or lending institution
A position utilizing leadership, communication and analytical abilities

Summary of Qualifications
Adept in areas of financial transactions and sales
Skilled in office procedures, bookkeeping, and banking operations
Proficient in the operation of office equipment and computers
Trained in Quicken, Quick Books, Microsoft Office, Excel, Tax Cut, Word and WordPerfect
Excellent oral and written communication skills

Professional Experience
Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant, Henry Construction Company, Anytown, VA, 1993-present
- Maintain all financial records of company
- Manage accounts receivable, payable, employee payroll and customer invoicing
- Produce quarterly and annual financial reports
- Implement and operate computerized bookkeeping system

Sales Associate, Yourtown Department Store, Yourtown, VA, 1989-1993
- Provided customer service to over 250 customers daily
- Received inventory, stocked shelves and maintained records for reorders
- Operated Hewlett Packard 1000 electronic register system
- Organized all daily closing procedures for the department

Newspaper Delivery Person, Yourtown Daily News, Yourtown, VA, 1984-1989
- Increased customer use of route from 65 to 250 people
- Managed all record keeping and accounts for route
- Opened new accounts and provided daily customer service

Education
Associate Degree, Yourtown Business College, Yourtown, VA
Majored in business management and banking procedures
Course work in accounting, customer relations and statistics

Additional Skills and Accomplishments
- Debate champion in high school
- Fluent in French and German
- Earned financing for education through part time and summer work while maintaining 3.50 G.P.A. in school
Mary L. White  
134 Main Street  
Yourtown, Virginia 99999  
(999) 555-1212  

Professional Objective  
An administrative management position with a social services agency that utilizes my excellent organizational and communication skills, and involves budgeting, personnel management and training

Areas of Expertise

Organizational:
- Coordinated a CPS department servicing 475 clients annually
- Implemented an on-line record keeping system which decreased overcharges by 67%
- Managed an annual budget of $350,000.

Communication:
- Presented monthly departmental reports to city council
- Represented CPS department at state and national conventions
- Maintained a counseling practice for over ten years

Leadership and Training:
- Supervised a Staff of fifteen case workers
- Initiated professional development programs which have been utilized by ten departments
- Led workshops in parenting skills, conflict resolution, managing social service programs and others

Experience:
Associate Director, The Family Place, Yourtown, VA, 1994-present  
Assistant Administrator, CPS Department, Yourtown Social Services, Yourtown, VA, 1987-1994  
Counselor, private practice, Yourtown, VA, 1976-1987

Education and Licenses:
M.S. Social Work, Anytown University  
B.S. Psychology, Yourtown Community College  
L.C.S.W. State of Virginia
Objective
Accountant position with a major bank or lending institution. A position that utilizing my expertise in the areas of bookkeeping, banking operations, financial transactions and communication.

Administrative Skills
Composing and typing correspondence, scheduling appointments, word processing (85 wpm) and compiling statistical reports. Adept at operating all office machinery and proficient in the use of office software, including: Word, WordPerfect, Quicken, Quick Books and Microsoft Office.

Bookkeeping Skills
- Maintaining all daily records of financial transactions accounts payable and receivable, invoicing customer accounts.
- Compiling monthly, quarterly and annual statistical reports to indicate profit/loss, and other items pertinent to a business.
- Managing all aspects of payroll including deductions, W-2 forms and quarterly deposits.

Sales and Banking Operations Skills
- Perform all aspects of banking procedures common to general bank tellers, including: receiving checks and cash for deposit, issuing receipts, cashing checks, accepting payments on loans and credit card balances, computing service charges, accepting utility payments, issuing traveler’s checks, opening new accounts and computing interest, principle and discounts.
- Serve customers, price merchandise, stock and organize shelves and perform departmental closing procedures.

Education
A.S. Business Management, Anytown Business College, Yourtown, VA
Concentrations in office procedures, communications and customer relations.

Work Experience
- Administrative Assistant, Henry Construction Company, Yourtown, VA, 1994-Present
- Sales Associate, Yorktown Department Store, Yorktown, VA, 1990-1994

Interests
- Sports, reading and music
- Fluent in French and German
The purpose of a cover letter is to entice potential employers into reading your résumé and inviting you for an interview. Your cover letter should be a one-page business letter explaining your skills and experience as they relate to the specific job for which you are applying. Always include a cover letter with your résumé.

A cover letter gives you the unique opportunity to:
- Demonstrate your knowledge of the organization by referring to the research you have conducted regarding that company.
- Explain what you can do for the company rather than what the company can do for you.
- Relate your skills to the requirements of the job by explaining and highlighting accomplishments mentioned in your résumé.
- Specifically request an interview.

The average length that an employer looks at a cover letter is about eight seconds. Therefore, make sure that your cover letter is brief, yet informative. It should include three recognizable parts: the opening, which explains why you are writing; the main body, which lists two or three of your major accomplishments and gives the reader a good reason to invite you for an interview; and the closing, which expresses a desire for future communication. Make sure that your cover letter draws a connection between the needs of the company you are applying to and the specific skills you can offer.

Suggestions for an effective cover letter:

1. Always direct your letter to a specific person, preferably an individual with hiring authority. If you do not know to whom you should write, call the company/school/agency operator for the name of the appropriate person to contact. Be certain to spell his or her name correctly and to use his or her proper title. Also, if the individual is a woman, refer to her as “Ms.” rather than “Mrs.” or “Miss” unless you know her marital status for certain.
2. Tailor your letter for the specific job and organization. Avoid using a non-personalized form letter.
3. Use simple and direct language. Be as concise as possible. Avoid sounding too aggressive, humorous, or informal. Refrain from using slang and abbreviations.
4. Do not exaggerate your accomplishments, but be positive and confident about your qualifications and talents. Provide specific examples to support and illustrate your qualifications.
5. Keep your cover letter to one page of three to five paragraphs.
6. Have several people proofread your letter for grammar, punctuation, spelling, and typographical errors. Your letter must be neat and absolutely error free. Realize that the reader will view the cover letter as an example of your best written communication skills.
7. Do not reproduce your cover letter. Each letter should be uniquely tailored to the employer and typed for every application you submit. An employer wants to think that his or her organization is the most important one in your search.
8. Use traditional business letterform on standard size (8 ½” x 11”) bond paper that matches your résumé. Observe margins and spacing, and always remember to sign your letter. If you can reproduce the same heading (your name, address, and phone number) you used on your résumé as the heading on your cover letter, the two will complement each other and look professional when you hand them out together to potential employers.
9. Edit your cover letter carefully. Is it interesting and persuasive? Does it include important aspects of your college experience, your pertinent qualifications, and a bit of your personality? Read it from the employer’s perspective: “Why should I hire you?”
Guidelines for a Cover Letter

Leave at least a one-inch margin all around; centered from top to bottom on the page. Use a 10-12 point font that is easy to read. Do not use bold.

Here is one format:

Your Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

June 3, 2001
(Insert one line of space)

Mr. or Ms. First Name, Last Name
Title of Employer
Organization
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
(Insert one line of space)

Dear Mr. or Mrs. Employer:
(Insert one line of space)

First paragraph: Your opening should invite and entice the employer. State why you are writing (usually to apply for a position). If you are responding to a known opening, explain how you heard about it (name the publication and date). If it was through a personal reference, tell the employer about it immediately. If you are writing an unsolicited letter to an organization with no announced openings, be as specific as possible about the type of job you are seeking. Tell why you are particularly interested in working for the company.
(Insert one line of space between each paragraph)

Second paragraph: Present your strongest and most relevant qualifications for the job, in decreasing order of importance. Keep the employer’s perspective in mind! Expand on information presented in your résumé; do not merely repeat it. Use specific examples in demonstrating what you can do for the employer instead of merely listing skills you have or relevant courses you have taken. Indicate how your skills tie into the organization. Mention briefly what you know about the company or some aspect of it. Remember that the reader will consider this cover letter to be an example of your writing skills!
(Insert one line of space between each paragraph)

Third paragraph: Close by expressing, once more, your interest in the position and why you feel qualified. Suggest that you would enjoy the opportunity to meet in person and learn more about how you can contribute to that organization. Thank the employer for considering your résumé.
(Insert one line of space between each paragraph)

Sincerely,
(Insert 4 lines of space between ‘Sincerely’ and your typed signature)

(Your Handwritten Signature)
Your Typewritten Signature
(Insert one line of space before ‘enclosure’)
Enclosure (this indicates that a résumé or application is enclosed)
June 1, 2001

Mr. Phillip Johnson
Director of Human Resources
ABC Corporation
123 Main Street
Anywhere, NY 10000

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I am writing to apply for the Communications Assistant position that was recently advertised in *The New York Times*. I graduated from Charleston Southern University in May with a B.S. degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Communications and Marketing.

As you can see from my enclosed résumé, I have worked as a writer for our college newspaper for the past two years. I also received an award for the “Best Human Interest Story” for the year 2001. This article, which I have enclosed, required extensive interviews and in-depth research over a period of several months. In terms of the personal attributes I can offer, I am a self-starter, a focused and dedicated worker, and I set high standards for myself and for my writing. I am attentive to detail and am motivated by excellence and a drive to succeed.

I am eager to begin my career in the Communications field, and would like to relocate to New York. I would enjoy meeting you for a personal interview at your convenience to further explore how I can contribute to your Corporate Communications department. You may contact me at my home phone (111) 111-1234 or via e-mail at johnsonp@aol.com.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Smith

Enclosure: Résumé
NETWORKING

Networking involves developing relationships with various people who can help you in the career search process.

The bottom line is simple:

- Networking is about building and maintaining relationships, as well as sharing valuable resources.
- It involves nothing more than asking the people you already know to help you find out about the job market and meet the people who are actually doing the hiring.
- Your ultimate goal is to be referred to the person who has the power to hire you because direct contact with the hiring authority is by far the most effective job-hunting method.
- Therefore, let your strategy and schedule reflect this fact and devote most of your energy to direct contact.
- By laying the foundation early, you can start a network that you can build on and use to enhance your career or personal goals for many years to come.

Why Network? The Benefits:

Maybe you’re asking yourself, "Do I really have to network? Can’t I just put my résumé online or respond to the help-ads in the newspaper?" It is definitely worth your while to network for two main reasons: first, it can expedite the job search process considerably, and secondly, the best job opportunities are not usually found in the newspaper. Furthermore, networking provides two important things: greater visibility and increased information.

So How Do I Start the Networking Process?

A helpful networking timeline involves three main steps: making new contacts, conducting informational interviews, and nurturing resulting contacts.

A. Making New Contacts

- Developing a List of Possible Networking Contacts

B. Contacting the People on Your List.

- Conducting Informational Interviews

Before the informational interview:

- Research the organization and the industry. You should become familiar with the organization’s products, structure, services, financial status, competitors, reputation and any recent major changes. In addition, try to discover information about the person whom you will meet and interview—background, style, education and their "hot button" issues. This is a critical step! Too many students arrive at their
informational interviews without having done any homework. Of course employers are frustrated when they talk with students who know nothing about their field. Also, the more you know about an area or an organization, the more intelligent and effective your questions can be—plus your interviewees will be impressed by your knowledge and preparation. Because interview preparation cannot be overemphasized, refer to the following sources for research help:

C. Nurturing the Resulting Contacts

The name of the game in networking is regular and consistent follow-up. If the contact welcomes the initial networking meeting and it goes well, they will want to keep in touch. Remember that networking is a give and take process. Be sure to offer any information, help, insight, or contacts you can in return and back up this offer with action.

Maintain contacts with people in your field at all times. Even if there are no openings at a specific company now, there may be one a few months down the road. This way, the hiring agents have a sense of who you are and what you’re about. In addition, keep any contacts aware of your future career moves and ask about their plans as well. This process of nurturing contacts will sustain and enhance your career.

Additional Resources

- Visit a CSU Career Counselor to role-play networking situations with a career and to gain additional information on networking.

- Check out books on the subjects of networking and informational interviewing in the CSU library and online through the BucCareer Network.

- Consider additional information on the subjects of networking and informational interviewing at career sites such as monster.com and jobtrak.com.
Top 10 Suggestions for Networking

Most people learn about job opportunities through people they know! In fact, many of the best jobs are never advertised. So use your contacts to network. You might land the perfect job that way!

- Relatives and friends.
- Parents of friends and friends of your parents. Don’t assume that just because someone knows you have been in school, that they fully realize you have started a job search. They also may not recall what you studied, or what you are looking for at this point!
- Past and present neighbors; former and present co-workers.
- Professors, former teachers, mentors, community leaders, coaches, and advisors many know someone who is seeking to hire an individual with your skills!
- Pastors, doctors, lawyers, dentists, even your hairdresser – or any of the professionals they recommend. Tell everyone you come into contact with.
- Members of professional associations, clubs, religious groups; members of community service organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Lions or Rotary Clubs.
- The Career Center at your alma mater or alumni from your college.
- If you’re new in town, try joining organizations that reflect your interests. Most museums, environmental and healthcare organizations, homeless shelters, and religious organizations offer volunteer opportunities. It’s a great way to meet people and make contacts. Non-profits are a growing sector of the economy. The organization itself may hire from its volunteer pool when an opportunity arises!

TIP: While your job search is underway, always have clean, error-free copies of your résumé with you in case you have a chance to hand-deliver one. Also, consider having inexpensive, personalized business cards printed – usually about $40. Carry them at ALL times!

On-line resources may include professional associations related to the field you wish you enter. Most professions, (healthcare, education, ministry, business, criminal justice/law enforcement, athletics) have professional associations to which members of that industry belong. By typing the name of the industry into most any search engine, you can locate links to those professional association.
Top 10 Interviewing Suggestions

- Research the company, the product or service they sell, their competitors. The Internet makes this easier than ever! If it’s a non-profit organization, what is their mission?


- Give specific examples of accomplishments, strengths, and skills. Repeat your key strengths 3 times. Quantify your results when possible. (Ex: I exceeded sales goals by 25%)

- If asked about weaknesses, be honest. State how you are working to improve in that area. It would be better to state a weakness in a skill area rather than a character flaw.

- Prepare several success stories from your own experience and work those into your interview. Show relevance to the job for which you are applying.

- Pay attention to your non-verbal language. Steady eye contact, firm handshake, no nervous twitching.

- Prepare a few well thought-out questions and write them down in advance. Look for an opportunity to ask them.

- Avoid asking about salary unless the interviewer brings it up. Then, be honest about your expectations. Don’t knock yourself out of the game for a small amount of money, however. Delicate responses to the salary expectation question may include:
  - *I’m flexible; salary is not the most important aspect of the position but only one of many factors that are important to me. Others include the challenge, opportunity for advancement, and the chance to make a contribution*
  - *I am targeting a salary range of between $____ and $_____, but that is only one of many factors that are important to me in making the right career choice.*
  - *I am certain you will offer fair compensation based on my skills and experience.*

- Send a brief thank you letter following the interview and re-state your skills, stressing what you can contribute to the company.
### Interview Q&A

**Following are common interview questions and suggestions on how to respond to them.**

**Tell me a little about yourself.**

This is an open-ended question usually asked to help “break the ice.” The key thing to remember is to keep your response related to the job. Be specific and don’t ramble. Your answer should be about two minutes in length.

**Why are you interested in working for this organization?**

This will show the employer if you have done your homework. Be specific and state what you have learned about the organization through your research as it relates to your career goals.

**Why have you chosen this particular field?**

This allows you to demonstrate your enthusiasm and dedication to your field.

**Describe your best/worst boss.**

Be positive. Speak about your best boss if possible. If pressed to speak about your worst boss, try to put a positive spin on it. For instance, “I had a supervisor who was often very vague. However, because of this, I learned the value of good communication.”

**What is your major strength/weakness?**

Your major strength should be easy, but be sure it is directly related to the position. As for your major weakness, again, put a positive spin on it. For instance, “I tend to be nervous around my supervisors, although I’ve gained more confidence in that area since my last job where my supervisors encouraged me to ask questions.”

**Give me an example of a problem you encountered either in school or at work, and explain how you solved it.**

Be logical. State the problem and then illustrate the step-by-step procedure you used to conquer it.

**Where do you see yourself in three years?**

Tell the interviewer that you hope to be with the company in whatever capacity you make the greatest contribution, based on the skills and experiences you’ve gained over the course of the preceding years.

**Describe an experience, which you worked as a part of a team.**

Being able to both contribute to and lead a team are very important qualities. Give this question serious consideration and develop answers for both situations.

**If you could be an animal, which would it be and why?**

This is not a trick question. You may be asked questions that seem ridiculous or out of place. The interviewer is trying to see if you can think on your feet.

**What was the last book you read?**

This is intended to see if you remain current in your field and/or read for self improvement. Think of (and read) a book that relates to your business or contributes to your personal growth.

**Do you have any questions for me?**

This is a question you can always anticipate. As a result of your research, you should have several good job and/or company specific questions to ask. Again, it shows *you’re prepared.*

### Behavior-Based Interviewing

Among HR professionals across the country, behavior-based interviewing (BBI) is one of the fastest growing interviewing methods. Based on the premise that an applicant’s past behavior will predict how he or she will respond in similar situations in the future.

So, how should you handle the BBI? You will be expected to give detailed, but focused, descriptions of actual circumstances. Expect to think – often in painstaking detail – under pressure.

Take your time in formulating your response. The interviewer will understand and allow you to gather your thoughts. In response, be through, yet direct: Describe an overview of the situation, the action you took, and the results.

Perhaps the best way to prepare for the BBI is to familiarize yourself with the types of questions you may be asked. Following is a list of typical behavior-based questions, courtesy of Lombardi and *The Ultimate Job Search Kit* by Damir Joseph Stimac. Competencies sought by the interviewer are listed in parentheses:

- Describe a situation in which you had to use reference materials to write a research paper. What was the topic? What journals did you read? *(research/written communication)*
- Give me a specific example of a time when a co-worker or classmate criticized your work in front of others. How did you respond? How has that event shaped the way you communicate with others? *(oral communication)*
- Describe an experience, which you worked as a part of a team. How did you contribute? *(teamwork)*
- Describe a time when you had to write a research paper. What was the topic? What journals did you read? *(research/written communication)*
- Describe a time when you encountered a difficult customer. How did you respond? How has that event shaped the way you communicate with others? *(oral communication)*
- Tell me about a time when you faced a difficult problem at work. How did you solve it? *(decision making)*
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- Tell me about a time when you faced a difficult problem at work. How did you solve it? *(decision making)*
- Describe the system you use for keeping track of multiple projects. How do you manage deadlines? *(time management)*
- Tell me about a time when you faced a difficult problem at work. How did you solve it? *(decision making)*
- Describe a specific problem you solved for your employer or professor. How did you approach the problem? What role did others play? *(creative and imagination)*
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Various federal, state, and local laws regulate the questions a prospective employer can ask you, the job candidate. An employer’s questions—whether on the job application, in the interview, or during the testing process—must be related to the job you’re seeking. For the employer, the focus must be: “What do I need to know to decide whether this person can perform the functions of this job?”

If asked an illegal question, you have three options:

- You can answer the question—you’re free to do so, if you wish. However, if you choose to answer an illegal question, remember that you are giving information that isn’t related to the job; in fact, you might be giving the “wrong” answer, which could harm your chances of getting the job.

- You can refuse to answer the question, which is well within your rights. Unfortunately, depending on how you phrase your refusal, you run the risk of coming off as uncooperative or confrontational—hardly words an employer would use to describe the “ideal” candidate.

- You can examine the question for its intent and respond with an answer as it might apply to the job. For example, the interviewer asks, “Are you a U.S. citizen?” or “What country are you from?” You’ve been asked an illegal question. You could respond, however, with “I am authorized to work in the United States.” Similarly, let’s say the interviewer asks, “Who is going to take care of your children when you have to travel for the job?” You might answer, “I can meet the travel and work schedule that this job requires.”

On the following page are examples of some illegal questions and their legal counterparts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inquiry Area</th>
<th>Illegal Questions</th>
<th>Legal Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Origin/</td>
<td>Are you a U.S. citizen?</td>
<td>Are you authorized to work in the US?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>Where were you/your parents born?</td>
<td>What languages do you read/speak/write fluently? (This question is okay only if this ability is relevant to the performance of the job.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>How old are you?</td>
<td>Are you over the age of 18?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marital/Family Status</td>
<td>What’s your marital status? With whom do you live?</td>
<td>Would you be willing to relocate if necessary?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you plan to have a family? When?</td>
<td>Would you be able and willing to travel as needed for the job? (This question is okay if it is asked of all applicants for the job.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How many kids do you have?</td>
<td>Would you be able and willing to work overtime as necessary? (Again, this question is okay assuming it is asked of all applicants for the job.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What are your child-care arrangements?</td>
<td>List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affiliations</td>
<td>What clubs or social organizations do you belong to?</td>
<td>Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of the job?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>How tall are you? How much do you weigh? (Questions about height and weight are not acceptable unless minimum standards are essential for the safe performance of the job.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Disabiliies</td>
<td>Do you have any disabilities? Please complete the following medical history.</td>
<td>Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job? (This question is okay if the interviewer has thoroughly described the job.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list them and give dates when these occurred.</td>
<td>Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job-related functions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What was the date of your last physical exam?</td>
<td>As part of the hiring process, after a job offer has been made, you will be required to undergo a medical exam. (Exam results must be kept strictly confidential, except medical/safety personnel may be informed if emergency medical treatment is required, and supervisors may be informed about necessary job accommodations, based on exam results.)</td>
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<td>How’s your family’s health?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>When did you lose your eyesight? How?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Do you need an accommodation to perform the job? (This question can be asked only after a job offer has been made.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arrest Record</td>
<td>Have you ever been arrested?</td>
<td>Have you ever been convicted of _____? (The crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)</td>
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<td>Military</td>
<td>If you’ve been in the military, were you honorably discharged?</td>
<td>In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve?</td>
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<td>What type of training or education did you receive in the military?</td>
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Résumés for Career Switchers

Changing careers? Learn how to tailor your résumé.

By Marcia Passos Duffy
WetFeet

So you’ve finally decided to leave your accounting job to sell waterfront property. Or maybe you’re an institutional investor with a yen for website design. How can you tailor your résumé for a career change?

Provided you’re not going from mechanic to brain surgeon, many of the skills in your old career are transferable to your new one. The secret is to accentuate them on your résumé. You can learn how to do so from career-transition experts.

Lay It All out on the Table
The first step is to grab a handful of index cards and write down all of your skills and personal attributes, advises Wendy S. Enelow, the author of Résumé Winners from the Pros and president of the Career Master’s Institute, an association of professional résumé writers and career coaches.

Next, list on a sheet of paper all of the jobs you would consider in your new career field. For example, if you are moving into marketing, your list might include positions in research, brand management or marketing communications. Pull out the index cards with the skills and personal attributes most relevant to these positions.

Start with a Summary
Armed with about a dozen index cards, you now have a strong handle on skills that will make you marketable in your new career. The next step is to write a summary, which will give the reader a clear snapshot of your qualifications.

Fashion your list of skills and attributes into a five-sentence summary or bulleted list. For example, you could highlight a knack for numbers by saying, "Strong quantitative skills and proficiency in statistics."

Writing a summary is not easy, so take your time. "There’s no standardized way to write a résumé," Enelow points out. "It’s a creative process." Fine-tune your language and make revisions. Keep your index cards handy as a reminder of what skills you need to emphasize.

Back It up
Use the remaining two-thirds of your résumé either to list your experiences in reverse chronological order (with most recent jobs first), or list your previous positions in order, based on relevance to your new career. The second option is best if your most relevant experience is not your most recent.

Support your summary with specific accomplishments, says Kraft. If you stated: "Keen presentation, contract negotiation, and communication skills," in your summary, back it up with, "translated marketing strategy into tactical market plans to land lucrative contracts from Fortune 500 companies."

"You can take something from a relevant position you had ten years ago either paid or volunteer—and sell your accomplishments rather than your job title," says Cindy Kraft, the owner of Executive Essentials in Tampa, Florida, and a certified professional résumé writer and a job- and career-transition coach. "It's not misleading."

Enelow agrees: "You are re-weighting your life experiences. . . . You’re changing the emphasis while still remaining in the realm of reality."

Also make sure you "know the jargon of your new career—and use it in your résumé," says Debbie Rollins, who teaches career-development classes at the Art Institute of Atlanta. She suggests checking out professional association websites, where you can pick up industry verbiage, and look at résumés of other professionals in your desired field.

Author Bio
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DRESS FOR SUCCESS

MEN

Suit: Professional slacks and a jacket

*Note: Jacket should be buttoned when standing or walking. When wearing a jacket with three buttons, center button should be buttoned. When wearing a jacket with two buttons, top one should be buttoned*

Pressed Shirt: Long-Sleeved white shirts test best in business settings. Always wear an undershirt, and never wear a short-sleeved shirt under a suit—even during summer.

*Note: Shirt cuffs should extend 1/2 inch below jacket sleeve.*

Tie: Choose an updated silk tie, keeping in mind the importance of width. (Less than three inches in width is considered in fashion)

*Note: the tip of the tie should barely touch the top of your belt buckle. Also, the pattern should be small, subtle and repetitive.*

Dress Shoes: Wear shoes to match your belt, but be sure to never wear casual shoes like hush puppies, penny loafers, or sneakers.

Leather Belt: A black or burgundy belt to match your shoes should always be worn if your pants have belt loops.

Socks: All socks should reach to your mid-calf. A “flash of skin” due to short socks is never professional.

Professional watch: Never wear a watch with a plastic band; a metal or leather band is best.

Close shave or well-groomed facial hair.

Cologne: A small amount goes a long way.

Clean nails: *Complete the grooming process by cleaning your nails.*
**WOMEN**

**Professional skirt suit or pant-suit:** Navy, grey, taupe, and black are all conservative suit colors to invest in when building your career wardrobe.

*Note:* mini-skirts may be in style, but *not* in the workplace. Calf-length skirts are always more appropriate.

**Pressed blouse**

**Closed-toe and closed-heel shoes:** The classic leather pump is ideal in black, navy, or taupe. Also, heels should measure approximately three inches in height.

*Note:* Many individuals look at the condition of other people’s shoes to determine whether they pay attention to detail. Shoes should always be polished and clean.

**Hosiery:** Stockings add a necessary finished look. Go with a skin-toned color or a dark color if your suit is the same dark color.

*Note:* Be sure to take an extra pair of hosiery with you in case you accidentally run the pair you have on.

**Light Jewelry:** Wear no more than one ring on each hand, and wear simple yet elegant earrings (preferably no dangling earrings).

*Note:* Simplicity is the key. If you think you might be wearing too much jewelry, it is probably a good idea to eliminate a piece.

**Light Make-up:** The goal is to look natural

**Neat, clean Hair:**

Shoulder-length or shorter hair tests best in business. If your hair is longer than shoulder length, wear it pulled up or back in a style that will give you a chic look.

*Note:* *Avoid girlish hair bows*
Free Graduate School Professional Practice Tests

You can find preparation tips, practice exams, and helpful hints for graduate and professional school entry exams on the L. Mendel Rivers Library Ferguson’s database.

- Go to The Career Center website at www.csuniv.edu/careers
- Click Student Resources on the top right menu, under Grad & Professional School Exams, Select Ferguson’s Learning Express Library
- Use your library account log in and password, or register for a library account
- Click the arrows to scroll through and find the desired topic. You can select from skills reviews, preparation for graduate school entrance exams and CLEP testing

CLEP Resources

The CPSE Resource Library has been restructured, and we have integrated a selection of CLEP Resource Books to assist you. CLEP examinations test knowledge that you have acquired outside of a college classroom. You may have learned the material through:

- Independent studies
- Advanced high school or other courses
- On-the-job training
- Cultural pursuits

Most candidates study on their own for the exams. You should determine if a quick review of the material provides you with sufficient preparation, or if you need to develop a full study plan for placement exams.
HIRING QUALIFIED TEACHERS

PAST BEHAVIOR IS THE BEST PREDICTOR OF FUTURE PERFORMANCE. WISE EDUCATORS CRAFT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS THAT EXPLORE PAST EXPERIENCES, SKILLS, AND BEHAVIORS OF JOB CANDIDATES.

Competent, caring, qualified teachers are the keys to enhanced student achievement. Employers have generally developed their own interview styles and questions, sometimes relying on how they were interviewed, or perhaps on a standard set of published questions. In today's era of accountability, we have high-stakes hiring, as a weak hire may impact student achievement, lower overall school performance, and lower morale of colleagues. Behavior-based interviewing (BBI) has the potential to improve the teacher hiring process, as questions in this style of interview focus on candidates' past behaviors as the predictor of their future performance.

Used for decades in the business world, behavior-based interviewing depends on creating specific questions to ascertain the past experiences, skills, and behaviors of the candidate. When BBI-style questions are answered, the interviewer has a clearer sense of the candidate's suitability for the position, based on the premise that past behavior is the best predictor of future performance. BBI questions begin with the phrases "tell me about a time when…," "how have you..." or "describe your experience with..." Of course, the questions asked directly relate to the pertinent skills of teaching.

CREATING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Long before the interview begins, the individuals responsible for hiring need to determine the skills for the specific teaching position. While debate continues about the traits of effective teachers, questions about content knowledge, lesson planning, methods of teaching, classroom management, student diversity, motivation, assessment, communication, and professionalism are musts in any interview.

Your questions should be open-ended ones that require candidates to describe their past experiences, while demonstrating they know what to do when hired. For example, ask, "Describe the grading policy you have used for language arts." If a candidate can describe a total point system that's easy to administer and easy for students to understand, this is presumably the same policy that they'll implement on the first day of school--and that they will explain to parents at the first open house. A candidate who cannot explain a policy to you in the interview won't know how to establish one during the first grading period and will need training in this area. A candidate with a grading policy so complex that the listener needs a Ph.D. in statistics to understand it won't be clear when talking to students or parents, either.
SAMPLE QUESTIONS
1. Describe two important curricular topics that you have taught in this grade/subject area. (curriculum/content knowledge)
2. How have the state standards for this subject guided your teaching? (curriculum/content knowledge)
3. Tell me about a lesson you taught and why it went well. (lesson planning)
4. Name a specific method or strategy you have used to teach in the past and why it is one you will continue to use. (teaching methods)
5. Describe a classroom management plan that you have used and why it worked. (classroom management)
6. What have you done to start and end a class successfully? (management/planning)
7. Describe an approach you have used to differentiate instruction for students. (diversity/motivation)
8. While a lesson is ongoing, how can you tell if students are "getting" the material? (assessment)
9. Describe positive communications with students' families that you have used in the past. (communication)
10. How have you evaluated your own teaching to improve? (professionalism)

MORE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS
While all teachers must possess the general skills of teaching, when a specific position opens, interview questions must be tailored to the position in order to find the most highly qualified applicant. Examples follow:
1. Elementary: What approaches to teaching reading have you used?
2. Elementary: How have you used manipulatives in teaching math?
3. Middle school: How have you worked with a teaching team?
4. Middle school: Tell about integrating the teaching of reading into subjects at the middle-school level.
5. High school: How have you interested your students in the subject and motivated them to learn it?
6. Science: How have you used labs in the classes you have taught?
7. Foreign language: What percentage of a typical lesson do you teach in the target language?
8. Art: What routines for safety and cleanup have you implemented?
9. Music: Describe a successful performance or concert that went well and why it succeeded.
10. Health/physical education: How have you built weight-consciousness topics into your courses?
11. Special education: Describe your experiences working with students in a______setting. (mainstreamed, full inclusion, pull-out, etc.)
12. Special education: Tell us about working with other teachers to help a student in a collaborative consultation.

GUIDES TO HELP YOU EVALUATE ANSWERS
The acronyms PAR and STAR serve as guides to help you evaluate candidate answers.

PAR stands for Problem, Action, and Result.

If you ask a candidate how they have provided remediation for an underachieving student, their answer should tell you about a time when they encountered the problem, took action, and what result occurred. Since no candidate can experience every issue in teaching, new teachers will rely on their student teaching experience and may describe what they saw their cooperating teacher do in the situation. This is still good, as they have learned from observing best practice.

STAR stands for Situation, Task, Action, and Result and is another way to listen to answers systematically.
If you ask, "Describe a classroom management plan that you have used and why it worked," a strong student answer might follow the STAR pattern. "In my student teaching placement in a 5th grade (situation), my teacher used a plan with three to five rules that were observable, enforceable, and in effect at all times. She taught me that having the rules with consequences and positives wouldn't help at all if we didn't teach the rules like part of the curriculum (task). So, every morning the first few weeks of school, we actually taught the plan and the rules (action). The rest of student teaching went well because students knew the rules and the class procedures (result)."

AN EVALUATION INSTRUMENT OR RUBRIC

A cardinal rule of the behavior-based interview is to have a complete list of questions written ahead of time and then to use the same questions with each candidate. Don't ask questions that can't be evaluated. Develop an instrument or rubric for evaluation before the interviews. The instrument does not have to be elaborate. An effective one lists the question, and then has three categories--unacceptable, acceptable, target. A candidate receives an unacceptable evaluation if they say, "I don't know," have no answer, or relate an answer that is not "best practice" in teaching. (Example, when asked about management, a candidate said, "I plan to harshly humiliate the first couple who get out of line, and that should take care of it.") Acceptable answers show experience and knowledge about the question. Target answers wow the interviewer. A target answer may include a visual, as the candidate shows a management plan from a portfolio when asked the management questions. An evaluation instrument adds objectivity to the hiring process, as the candidate with the most target answers should get the job offer.

With high-stakes hiring, interviewers no longer have the luxury of asking candidates to "tell about themselves" or to ask random hypothetical questions. Employers need to determine the skills for the teaching position, write the questions, have an evaluation system, and then ask questions that determine if the candidate has the experience, knowledge, and skills to do the job. Candidates who can explain grading scales, management plans, and effective teaching methods are the ones who can explain things well to their students.

A good interview allows the candidate to teach the interviewer the things they will be teaching students and parents. Those who can't explain basic answers to the interviewer, or who have had no previous experience with the topics, won't be successful with the necessary demands of teaching. Past behavior is the best predictor of future performance, and a behavior-based interview will aid administrators in hiring the best, most highly qualified teachers.

Reference:

Common Interview Questions for Teachers

Practically speaking, the list of common interview questions for teachers is vast. Basically these questions test the confidence level and the communication skills of the interviewee. Here are some important interview questions:

- Why did you decide to be a teacher?
- What do you think is the best way to discipline students?
- Which methods would you adopt to assess a student's IQ?
- How to make teaching more effective?
- What motivation techniques would you adopt for a child who is less inclined towards studies?
- How do you handle notorious students?
- Some concepts are difficult to understand. In such cases, what strategy will you use to explain the concept?
- Which is one book that has made a deep impact on your mind?
- What do you think about new innovative teaching strategies that involve use of PowerPoint presentation?
- Do you face any difficulty in managing a classroom?
- Although it won't be possible to give personal attention to each and every student, what is the best possible way to cater to different needs of students?
- As each and every student possesses different learning skills, how will you identify their weakness and strengths?
- As a teacher what problems you faced when interacting with students?
- Although, you have taught at all grade levels, how comfortable you are in teaching the 9th grade students?
- Why should we hire you as a teacher?
- How can you contribute for the progress of our school?
- Sometimes children may show lack of interest in studying. In such cases, how would you motivate them to learn?
- Which is one topic that you have enjoyed teaching the most?
- How would you convince students the importance of discipline?
- How would you modify your teaching style that works best for each and every student and ensure a better classroom discipline?

Most Common Interview Questions for Teachers

These questions are asked to know the background of the interviewee. Usually, these questions are targeted to extract personal information of the person who is being interviewed. Some of these questions are listed below:

- Can you tell us something about yourself?
- Can you give a brief idea about your teaching experience?
- What is your teaching style?
- What are the important attributes of any high school teacher?
- Apart from teaching what are your hobbies?
- Will you consider yourself a successful teacher?
- What is ideal about an ideal student?
Sample Personal Questions for Teachers

- Please tell me a little bit more about yourself.
- What in life made you decide to become a teacher?
- What do you see yourself to be doing in five years time from now?
- Are you more of a pessimist or optimist? Give at least one example to back your answer.
- Are you a patient of any kind?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- How long do you see yourself working with us if given the opportunity

Sample Professional Questions

- What are all the subjects that you have taught, and what are the subjects you are most comfortable with?
- According to you, which of these is most important and which one is the least, and why? - Discipline, methods, planning, evaluation.
- Could you tell me what you love and hate the most about the teaching profession?
- Do you think building a rapport with students is important, and why?
- What would be your course of action if a particular student does not meet a deadline.
- How would you handle a student who has a discipline problem, but academically is very brilliant.
- What do you feel about the use of computers and technology in the classroom?
- Would you demand respect from the students or earn it, and how?
- How would you handle a noisy classroom?
- How would you go about complaining to a parent about a troublesome kid?
- Do you have any personally devised effective teaching strategies?
- When the principal visits your classroom, what would be the most impressive aspect he/she would find?
- What would be your course of action if one of your students brought in some project that was obviously done by the parent?
- What is the most challenging aspect of teaching according to your personal view?
- If you were given the chance to conduct a workshop, what topic would you choose?
- It's the end of the academic year, how would you determine if you were successful or not, and to what extent?
Common Teacher Problems: Red Flags

1. talking too much or talking too little
2. no eye contact
3. never smiles
4. sloppy or casual appearance
5. late to interview
6. answers to questions not well thought out
7. limp hand shake
8. unprepared to "sell" oneself
9. failure to understand requirements and meaning of teaching
10. lack of an appropriate teaching philosophy
11. poor content area and teacher education grades
12. lack of an outgoing personality
13. inappropriate questions, comment, or actions
14. lack of self-confidence
NOTES