CAREER GUIDE
For Experienced Candidates and Non-traditional Students

THE CAREER CENTER
1st Floor, Strom Thurmond Center
www.charlestonsouthern.edu/careers
843-863-8019

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Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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Mission Statement

Welcome to the Career Center at Charleston Southern University. The Career Center operates as a part of the Student Services Division. Our mission is:

Our Mission:

- To provide career services to tradition and non-traditional students, and alumni
- 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.
- To help students develop job skills for future employment.

Charleston Southern University
The Career Center
Personality, Career, Skills, and Ministry 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 Career Center uses the assessments listed in this brochure as an initial step in the career planning process. We recommend scheduling an appointment with a counselor to help interpret your assessment results.

**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

Since it was developed by Dr. John Holland in 1971, the SDS has been used by more than 23 million people throughout the world to help find occupations that suit their interests and skills and to make successful career decisions.

After taking the test, you will be prompted to enter the User ID number and Password, which may be obtained from The Career Center. The user identification number and passwords are required to generate a confidential, eight-to-twelve page interpretive report. The customized report is sent directly to the test taker's computer, where it can be stored or printed for easy reference.

*When you have completed the SDS Inventory, you may call The Career Center at 843-863-8019 to schedule an appointment.*

**Myers-Briggs Type Indicator**

Isabel Briggs Myers and her mother, Katharine Briggs, developed a model of personality development around the ideas and theories of psychologist Carl Jung, a contemporary of Sigmund Freud and a leading exponent of Gestalt personality theory. According to Jung-Myers-Briggs typology, all people can be classified using four criteria:

- **Extroversion** – **Introversion**
- **Sensing** – **Intuition**
- **Thinking** – **Feeling**
- **Judging** – **Perceiving**

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.
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.

Both the Myers-Briggs Assessment and the Strong Interest Inventory are available to Charleston Southern University students online. Visit the following Web site: online.cpp.com, enter the log and password below, and select the desired assessment.

When you have completed an assessment, please call The Career Center at 843-863-8019 to schedule an appointment to obtain your results and interpretation.

Workuno Strengths Test

Workuno is the best way to Unleash your Potential. By taking the step by step guide, you will find your perfect Strengths Combination, and then we will help you to accelerate your Strengths Potential, that you never thought it was possible. The Online Strengths Test will help you identify, develop and find the perfect combination of your Top Strengths. Being passionate about your work is one of the keys to success and happiness.

- Do you know how your Strengths naturally combine?
- At which work or area would you be the most successful?

Many people have never discovered their Strengths and their true interests; others while struggling to get an education, find jobs, raise families, and pay bills have forgotten what they actually wanted to do with their lives. Building your career choices around your Strengths is extremely powerful. Success comes more easily when you are doing work where your Strengths, Passion and Meaning are engaged. All too often, our natural talents go untapped. From the cradle to the cubicle, we devote more time to fixing our shortcomings than to developing our strengths.

This Test will help you find your preferred way of thinking, feeling, and behaving. These questions and results were crafted based on the Personality and Strengths Movements. Once completed, you may print your FULL results to discover how you ranked on all 34 talents.

To take the test, go to http://www.csuniv.edu/careers/assessments.html. You may schedule an appointment with a career counselor to discuss your results at any time.
PLACE Assessment

PLACE is an intentional process to connect students and church members into purpose-driven ministry including self-discovery, individualized ministry coaching and tracking from workshop to ministry placement. 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

Why is it Important?

Today more than any other time in history, people have more choices as to how to give their time. They find themselves asking "Where do I fit in?" "Why am I here?" and "What can I do to make a lasting difference in my life and the lives of others?" God created each of us for a purpose. "For we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:10. Part of his purpose for us is to edify the church and to serve in its ministries. "...to prepare God's people for the works of service, so that the Body of Christ may be built up." Ephesians 4:12.

The PLACE process can help you discover how God has uniquely designed you, and it will help you realize His purpose for your life. You find your life as you give it away...but first you have to know what you have to give!

PLACE Login Procedures

- Go to www.charlestonsouthern.edu/careers
- Select “Students” on the left-hand menu, then “Career Assessments” on the right
- Click the PLACE logo
- Select “A Partner Code was given to me,” enter JAAPPYMEXE
- You will be assigned an ID and Password which can be e-mailed to you
- Print results from each section upon completion
- You may schedule an interpretation appointment with Dr. Hester Young
The Buccareer Network

Your connection to jobs, internships, document critiques, mock interviews, and more!

Log on
- Go to The Career Center website at www.csuniv.edu/careers, select BucCareer Network Login on the right hand side of the page. All Enrolled students should have an existing account created by The Career Center.
- Log in, or create a password for your account:
  o Click "Set/Reset Password" below and enter your BucMail [CSU E-mail] address to create your password.
  o If "USERNAME IS NOT FOUND," create an account using your BucMail address.
  o You will receive a message from the BucCareer Network within 1 business day.

Job Search
- Click SEARCH JOBS or other options under the Positions tab
- Enter search criteria in the search box, or use Advanced Search
- With an approved résumé, you can apply directly to positions through the BucCareer Network

Résumé Critiques
- Review guides for creating résumés & other portfolio documents under Resources & Information
- Under Professional Portfolio Documents, upload your current résumé, or use the Résumé Builder

Note: This process may take a few submissions to ensure your document markets you with excellence

Mock Interviews
- Use your own webcam, conduct a practice interview in an undistracted location
- Dress for success – at least from the waist up
- Click Mock Interviews under the Resources tab
- Choose from the Interview List or
- Create New Interview by selecting questions from a comprehensive list
- View your interview and share with your peers, professors, or others for feedback
- You may conduct many mock interviews, practice, practice, practice!
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 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 mock interviews using the BucCareer Network
   - Research the company for which you are interviewing
   - Rehearse answers to common interview questions

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 your second interview by reviewing notes and conducting further research
   - Start your new career!

Employer Expectations

EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR WORKERS WHO 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 or necessary, treats employers/customers with respect
Marketing Yourself

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

What Is a Résumé?
A résumé is a concise written summary of your individual qualifications. Think of your résumé as a personal advertisement….typically a one-page representation of your education, work experience, accomplishments and skills. You will present your achievements and abilities in such a way to generate enough interest for a potential employer to grant you an interview.

Why Do I Need a Cover Letter?
Cover letters introduce your résumé and entice the reader to read it. They are not typically requested by a prospective employer, but should accompany any mailed résumé. The contents will change with each position to which you apply, as you will use the cover letter to show the employer how your skills and experience meet the needs of their position. You will need to show specifics and make that connection each time you apply.

What Are References and Why Are They Important?
References will be requested by potential employers who are serious about your candidacy. List professionals, like clergy, faculty, or managers who will tell the recruiting professional about your character and professional habits, but not managers or supervisors for whom you worked. It is understood that you will have a reference page when applying to jobs, but it is not part of the résumé.

How Do I Begin?
Remember, the goal of your résumé is to gain an interview by matching your qualifications with a company’s needs. To do this, you need to have a clear understanding of yourself. What do you have to offer an employer? What makes you stand out from other applicants?

What Are the Different Kinds of Résumé Formats?
Chronological Format presents work experience and education in reverse order and lists achievements and responsibilities under each category. A chronological résumé highlights career progression and growth through job titles or the names of employers. It is easy to follow and widely used among job seekers.

Functional Format organizes experiences under major skill headings, with degrees, job titles, employers, and dates are listed separately. This format highlights your major areas of accomplishment in ways that best support your objective and is not bound by dates.

Combination Format includes aspects of both the chronological and functional formats and incorporates sections on work experience and your main functional skills. Emphasis is equally distributed among work history, skills, and accomplishments.

When to use a chronological format:
• When work, education or experiences are relevant to your objective
• When previous job titles or company names sound impressive
• When job history shows growth and development
• To emphasize career-related accomplishments

When to use a functional format:
• When you have little work experience
• When you want to draw attention to transferable skills
• When you want to minimize the focus on dates
The Components of a Résumé

Note: Many electronic templates exist for quick résumé preparation, but templates are inflexible and hard to edit. Create your résumé in Microsoft Word after one of the samples provided in this text, and then upload it to the BucCareer Network for critique by one of our career counselors.

Heading
Include your name and contact information, employers will use this information to contact you, so be sure that it is up to date every time you send it your résumé to a potential employer.

- Use your full name, not a nickname, bold, and in a larger font. It can be centered, right, or left justified
- You may include both a local and permanent address where you can be reached after graduation.
- Be sure to include the area codes with your telephone numbers
- Add your e-mail address. Choose an e-mail address that sounds professional, e.g., your first initial and last name and numbers if necessary
- Include your Web site address only if the Web page reflects your professional ambitions.
- Be sure that you update this as it changes so it will be accurate

First (M) Last Name
Street Address
City, ST zip
Phone
flast@csustudent.net

FIRST (M) LAST NAME
Street Address
City, ST zip
(h) Phone (m) Phone
Fistlast12@gmail.com

FIRST LAST NAME
Street Address • City, ST zip
Phone • Email address
Website address

Professional Profile; Summary of Qualifications; Skill Summary
More experienced candidates or those who are concentrating their job search to one type of position may elect to use a statement to synopsize their skills in a more elegant and conversational manner instead of using both an objective and a skill section.

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE
Driven individual with 21 years military service, experienced in planning and directing professional development for subordinates. Interfaced with all levels of management to ensure the most accurate and up-to-date training was received. Coordinated travel and training costs for various training opportunities within respective departments, providing input into budget planning. Possess exceptional communication and accurate documentation skills and a strong attention to detail. Capable of effective collaboration and providing support for large, culturally diverse audiences and personnel with varying skill levels
**Top 10 Qualities Employers Seek**

Consider the qualities below when crafting this section, you probably have skills you hadn’t considered:

- Computer skills
- Honesty/integrity
- Interpersonal skills
- Teamwork skills
- Motivation and initiative
- Strong work ethic
- Analytical skills
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Organizational skills
- Verbal and written
- Communication skills

**Education**

- Include your degree, major, minor/concentration, institution, and city, ST of the institution
- **Bachelor of, Master of,** not Bachelor’s/Master’s in...
- Your most recent educational information is listed first
- Add your grade point average (GPA) if it is higher than 3.5, and mention any academic honors
- Do not list high, middle, or elementary schools
- List only schools where you attained or expect a degree, don’t include schools transferred from

**Bachelor of Science in Business Management,** expected graduation date, May 2012
Charleston Southern University, Charleston, South Carolina
GPA 3.7 **(GPA optional unless requested)**

**Associate of Arts Degree, May 2008**
Trident Technical Institute, North Charleston, South Carolina

**Additional Certifications and Training** *(Optional)*

List any certifications or licensure you may have with the certifying agency (if necessary) and year.

**Additional Certifications**
CPR/First Aid/AED, American Red Cross, 2012; Darkness to Light Certification, 2011

**Significant Coursework** *(Optional)*

Listing these courses can help make an employer aware of facets of your education that help qualify you for a position, especially if you do not have experience in your chosen career field.

**Relevant Coursework**

**Experience**

Briefly give the employer an overview of work that has taught you skills. Use ACTION VERBS to describe your job duties.

- Begin with your most recent job and work backwards.
- Provide your title, the employer’s name and location, and the month and year of your employment.
- Briefly describe your major duties and responsibilities using action words – see pages 8 and 9
- If you have experience specifically related to your job objective, you may put these in a separate category (i.e., “Teaching Experience” and “Experience”)
Experience, continued

- Experience is not limited to paid positions. Students often obtain valuable experience by participating in leadership roles, special projects, volunteer work activities, and internships.
- Brainstorm to help include all experience related to your career goals.

**Student Recruiter**  
Lipscomb University, Office of Admissions, Nashville, TN  
- August 2007 - May 2009

- Contacted interested prospects either by phone, e-mail, or social network to answer questions
- Guided students through the admissions process and provided individualized support
- Organized office supplies and submitted order requests as needed

**University Organizations and Professional Associations (Optional)**
List any relevant organizations in which you have actively participated. Be sure to mention if you held an office or leadership position within the group.

**MEMBERSHIPS**
- **Volunteer**, Cooper River Bridge Run, 2008-2011
- **Member**, American Association of University Women (AAUW), 2010- present
- **President**, Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE), 2008

*Note:* Join organizations and professional groups that align with your career interests. It will provide you with valuable information and networking, and show a potential employer that you are serious and intentional about your career.

**Honors or Awards (Optional)**
Mention accomplishments you have been recognized for over the years. Scholarships may be relevant depending on their selection criteria. Be sure to list anything that relates to the position to which you are applying.

**HONORS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**
- **Employee of the Month**, Circuit City, May 2008
- **Scholar Athlete**, Charleston Southern University, 2009-present
- **President**, Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE), 2008

**Activities (Optional)**
Employers like to see that you are active in the community and in pursuits which enhance your development. Include activities and memberships related to your career goals, but exclude any controversial areas like political affiliations unless specifically related.

**ACTIVITIES**
- Charleston Southern University Women’s Basketball Team, 2007-2011
- **Volunteer Coordinator**, YMCA Summerville, 20011
- **Student Government Association**, Trident Technical College, 2006
**Action Verbs**

Carefully chosen action verbs can greatly enhance the way you express your skills and accomplishments. Be sure to use the proper tense for past and present jobs. Following is a list of action verbs you may want to use:

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Résumé Checklist

- Select a format that suits your qualifications
- Use the page well; proceed to a second page only if your résumé cannot fit on at least 1 ½ pages.
- Keep sentences and phrases short. Let your résumé say the most about you, in the fewest words.
- Use action verbs to describe accomplishments and duties.
- Indicate unique responsibilities given; special recognition of ability
- Be honest and accurate.
- Eliminate repetitions. If you did similar tasks in 2 or 3 jobs, highlight differences, and use the current (similar) position to list an overview.
- Highlight skills and capabilities; illustrate unique strengths.
- Cite numbers, dollar figures, and specifics whenever possible.
- Avoid personal evaluations, e.g., Smart, diligent researcher – Completed three major research projects.
- Skip a line or double space when changing to a new section.
- Always include a customized cover letter when sending your résumé to an employer via mail, fax, or e-mail; it is not needed when you are hand delivering it or are at a career fair.

Is There Anything I Should Leave Off of My Résumé?
Yes! While your résumé is a representation of you, it should not include most personal information. Below is a list of things that should not be included in a general résumé:

- Age or date of birth
- Religious affiliation
- Marital status
- Number of children
- Primary/Middle/High schools
- Salary desired
- The pronoun “I”
- Salary history
- Photographs or pictures
- Reasons for leaving
- Height, weight, and other physical descriptions
- Personal comments about failures or problems
- Supervisors’ names or contact information
- References

More Don’ts

- Don’t put your résumé in a fancy binder or folder
- Don’t include street addresses, names of supervisors, or phone numbers - city and state are sufficient
- Don’t include reasons for leaving prior employment
- Don’t include abbreviations, clichés, personal opinions, or highly partisan memberships
- Don’t list sex, weight, height, marital status or other personal irrelevancies
- Don’t mention divorce, hospitalization, handicaps, and illnesses
- Don’t include salary information
- Don’t include pictures (exceptions are made for the fields of ministry or communication)

Final Review

Make a final review of the content to ensure that you have provided the employer with a résumé which shows that you are the ideal candidate for the position. The most important information is prominent and easy to find, and you have taken the job description and requirements into consideration.

- Run a spell check on your computer before anyone sees your résumé
- Check for the proper tenses and consistency in format with dates and bullets
- Get a friend (an English major would do nicely) to do a grammar review
- Ask someone to proofread. The more people who see your résumé, the better it will be!
- Upload your résumé on the BucCareer Network for a professional critique
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:

Food 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
  • Used various computer programs daily to complete orders and process financial transactions

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?"

Use the language and address 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, 2001, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
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:

**Orientation Coordinator, Public Relations**, Fall 1999 and 2000
Office of Athletic Admissions, Charleston Southern University, Charleston, SC

- Conceived role of public relations representative for the Sports Complex to the orientation process; was appointed by the Athletic Director 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 SC from budget cuts.

Pay particular attention to this example. This student created this project on 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 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 to pick up industry verbiage, and look at résumés of other professionals in your desired field.
Instead of presenting hard copies of your work, you 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 web site 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, you can mention you have an online portfolio showcasing 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…
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.

**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.

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**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:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation: Sales Clerk</th>
<th>Skill 1: Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Maintained 3-year “B” average in algebra and geometry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Computed own 1040EZ tax return, earned $340 rebate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Managed $800 investment that earned 9.2% annual return</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Occupation:**

**Skill 1:**

a. 

b. 

c. 

---

**Occupation:**

**Skill 2:**

a. 

b. 

c. 

---

**Occupation:**

**Skill 3:**

a. 

b. 

c. 

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JOHN OAKLEY  
7 Apple Court • Eugene, OR 97401  
000-000-0303 • someone@yahoo.com  

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS  
Health services professional with effective interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate with a wide variety of audiences; Capable of multitasking and meeting deadlines; Able to independently prioritize and strategize to meet goals and accomplish tasks; In depth knowledge of medical terminology; Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines, Capable of assessing situations and addressing problems and opportunities with informed solutions  

Computer Skills  
- Proficient with computer systems, equipment, and software which include Windows operating systems, Microsoft Office Suite applications  
- Expertise in various office automation software programs, tools, and techniques to support office operations  
- Capable of producing a variety of professional documents, managing databases, and creating informative graphs  

Administrative Skills  
- Ability to answer phones, screening calls and visitors and provide accurate and complete information  
- Extensive experience with maintaining, extracting, compiling, and organizing records  
- Ability to schedule and coordinate appointments and meetings, and assisting in the efficient operations and exceptional service  

Supervision and Leadership  
- Supervised and instructed over 20 military personnel, working in demanding and stressful situations  
- Built employee morale through strategic, goal-based initiatives and incentives, resulting in 50% increased productivity  
- Hand-picked to supervise four airmen in career and life decisions by Senior NCOIC  
- Coordinated large inventory maintenance and introductory supervisory classes and refresher courses which provided 100% increase in knowledge, skills, and abilities of all shop personnel  
- Received the “Below-the-Zone” award which resulted in being promoted within six months  

EDUCATION  
Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology, August 2011  
Charleston Southern University, Charleston SC  
- GPA 3.67  
Associate in Applied Science, December 2007  
Community College of the Air Force, Maxwell, AL  

ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS  
- Completed Reserve Accelerated Officer Training Course, GPA 4.0, May 2011  
- Supervision and Leadership Training, Airman Leadership School, GPA 3.5, Feb 2006  
- Central Carolina Technical College, Microsoft Instructional Courses, 2008  

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE  
Assistant Military Services Coordinator  
Veterans Affairs & Charleston Southern University, Charleston, SC  
January 2010-August 2011  

Assistant Manager of Vehicle Maintenance Shop  
US Air Force, Shaw Air Force Base, SC  
October 2005 - January 2006  

Vehicle and Vehicular Equipment Maintenance Journeyman  
US Air Force, Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany  
March 2002-September 2003  

Sample Résumés
Susan J. Anyone
127 Main Street
Anytown, Virginia 99999
sanyone@csustudent.net
(999) 555-0001

Objective
Seeking a position as an accountant with a major bank or lending institution seeking a position utilizing leadership, communication and analytical abilities

Professional Summary
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, Tax Cut; Excellent oral and written communication skills

Professional Experience
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
Bachelor of Arts, Mytown University, Mytown, VA

Associate of Arts in Business Management, Yourtown Business College, Yourtown, VA
Course Work in Accounting, Customer Relations and Statistics, and Baking Procedures

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 3.5 G.P.A. in school
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. Possess 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. Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite; Westlaw; Lexis-Nexis; and a large variety of classroom technology.

EDUCATION
- **PhD Education Administration**, University of New York, NY (2000)
- Valid Nova Scotia Teacher's License # 87640988
- **M.A Education Administration**, University of New York, NY (1993)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
**Assistant Principal, Berk County School District, NY** 1999 - Present
- Assist the principal with all certified and non-certified staff in observing, evaluating and working through personnel issues
- 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
- 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
- Help principal with building schedules, teacher assignments and recurring substitute teachers

**English Teacher, Sinai Area School District, Uniondale, NY** 1988 - 1999
- Collaborated with the social studies teacher to integrate freshmen English and US History
- 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 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
EXPERIENCED CANDIDATE
Address Drive, Apt #  •  Goose Creek, SC 29445  •  843-000-0000  •  someone@yahoo.com

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS
Proactive, out-going, and hardworking professional seeking a position in a growing and dynamic firm, where my skills in marketing management can be used for the continuous improvement of organizational quality as I contribute to the fulfillment of my employer’s vision. My relationships with people of different backgrounds have equipped me with the necessary skills and ability to listen actively and communicate effectively with others.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
Graduate Assistant, School of Business  •  August 2014-present
Charleston Southern University, Charleston SC
- Prepare teaching materials for various business classes
- Evaluate student quizzes, examinations, and assignments and provided constructive feedback designed to improve classroom performance
- Proctor tests and examinations for the director of the MBA Program according to University code of ethics and standards
- Conduct research for books, papers and studies used in teaching students

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- Created and maintained database for attendance and grades to increase faculty productivity
- Researched materials utilized in courses and created outlines to ensure comprehension

Office Assistant, The Career Center  •  September 2009-May 2013
Charleston Southern University, Charleston SC
- Conducted marketing campaign for career development events
- Prepared informational flyers, brochures, and booklets for students, alumni, and faculty
- Coordinated activities in preparation for career development events
- Interacted with businesses to assist in job posting and student recruitment on campus
- Created a database of career planning related grants, funding and funding sources
- Assisted students, faculty, and staff with career related issues

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- Implemented a system to track department interns working throughout the community which resulted in increased student performance and success
- Develop marketing strategies which have contributed to student awareness and a 25% gain in participation at major recruitment events

Marketing Representative  •  November 2008-January 2009
Zenith Bank PLC, Lagos, Nigeria
- Sustained contact with clients to alert them of the benefits of the bank’s products and services
- Assessed client portfolios to make personalized recommendations and encourage investments
- Generated new leads by networking with various business professionals and providing exceptional service to existing customers
- Supervised teams of advertising professionals to perform outreach marketing in the local and extended community

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- Publicized and promoted new bank products, thereby obtaining a number of accounts from direct and indirect competitors
- Created new organizational system to ensure efficient follow up using MS Access
Account Executive
IMS Marketing Solutions Client Service Department, Lagos, Nigeria

- Served as the interface between clients and agency, communicating clearly the demands
- from clients to the Creative department
- Contributed ideas and worked efficiently toward the execution of advertisements for companies
- with diverse needs
- Resolved customer complaints and restored confidence in our agency

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- Designed new strategies to address individual needs of clients, maintaining satisfaction and
  gaining customer loyalty
- Developed strong relationships with colleagues and clients which led to a more efficient way of addressing
  business-related concerns
- Promoted to Assistant Manager of the Client Service Department

Facilitator
Millennium Developmental Goals, National Youth Service Corps

- Trained secondary school students on the 8 basic Millennium Developmental Goals
- Earned a certificate as a Facilitator

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY
Master of Business Administration, Expected May 2017
Charleston Southern University, Charleston SC
- GPA: 3.93, Summa cum Laude

Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, Minor in English, May 2013
University of Ghana, Legon

ACADEMIC MEMBERSHIPS
- Sigma Beta Delta, International Business Honor Society, inducted 2014

SKILLS AND ABILITIES
- Proficient in MS Suite applications
- Excellent oral, written, and interpersonal communications skills
- Ability to learn fast, work with others, and inspire others to work
- Capable of coordinating and managing multiple tasks in a high volume environment
- Adept at decision-making and problem-solving

Fifty present of a second page must utilized. If you do not have enough significant information for a second page, try adjusting your margins or font size.

View more examples of résumés on the BucCareer Network under Resources.
Writing Cover Letters

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 knowledge of the organization by referring to research 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 a recruiter or search committee. If you do not know to whom you should write, try calling 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 template 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 job description and typed for every application you submit. Employer wants to know that their organization is significantly relevant to your career goal and job 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 professional qualifications, and a bit of your personality? Read it from the employer’s perspective: “Why should I hire you?”
Cover Letter Format

CONTACT HEADER FROM RÉSUMÉ

June 3, 2001

(insert three line of spaces)

Dr., Mr., or Ms. First & Last Name
Title of prospective employer
Organization Name
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)

Sincerely,

(insert three lines of space between ‘Sincerely’ and your typed signature)

(Your Handwritten Signature)

Type your Name (on the 4th line space)

(insert one line of space before enclosure)

Enclosure: résumé (this indicates that a résumé or application is enclosed)
Sample Cover Letter

JOHN OAKLEY
7 Apple Court • Eugene, OR 97401
000-000-0303 • someone@yahoo.com

May 7, 2013

Mr. Archie Weatherby
California Investments, Inc.
25 Sacramento Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Weatherby:

My outgoing personality, sales experience, and education make me a strong candidate for the position as Insurance Broker for California Investments, Inc. Attached is my résumé for this position. Your organization’s mission and community awareness are in agreement with my passion and goals, and I believe that I am an excellent fit for your team.

I have put myself through school by working such jobs as radio advertising sales and newspaper subscription sales, all of which contributed to my formal education. These experiences have enhanced my leadership and customer service skills so important to the industry. I have developed the maturity, skills, and abilities to embark on a career in insurance brokering. My desire is to impact lives of the citizens in my home state of California.

I will be in San Francisco at the end of this month, and I would consider it a privilege to interview for the position of Insurance Broker at California Investments. Please call me to arrange a time to meet with you and I can provide you with more information about my unique qualifications. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Oakley

Enc: Résumé
Writing a Reference Page

- Make sure you ask the potential references BEFORE giving their names as references!
- References should not be part of your résumé; use a separate résumé sheet of paper to list references.
- You should have 3-5 professional references available when applying for positions.
- Do not use supervisors from positions listed on your résumé or personal friends.
- Do not list relationships or years that you have known the reference.
- Use the same font size and style of the heading used in your résumé and cover letter. To duplicate this format, copy and paste your header from the résumé.
- Take of list of references to your interview. Leave with interviewer only if you want the position.

Include the following:

- Name
- Professional Title
- Company or Organization
- Professional Address
- Professional Telephone Number
- Professional E-mail address (optional)

John Oakley
7 Apple Court • Eugene, OR 97401
000-000-0303 • someone@yahoo.com

References

Mr. Albert Jones
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XYZ Computers
123 Anyroad Lane, Ste. 456
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Charleston, SC 29406
843-555-1212
GK@BFS.com
Networking

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 you can build on and use to enhance career and goals

Why Network? The Benefits:
Maybe you’re asking yourself, "Do I really have to network? Can’t I just put my résumé on-line 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.

• Make new contacts ~ Develop a list of possible networking contacts
• Contact the people on your list ~ Conduct informational interviews

Before an 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:

Nurture 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 and gain more information on networking.
• Check out books on the subjects of networking and informational interviewing in the online Career Library
• 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
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 associations.
Interviewing

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 bit 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 2 minutes.

**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 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 he 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 or 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 illustrate the procedure used to correct 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 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 think on your feet.

**What was the last book you read?** This is intended to see if you emain 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. 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 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 Stimac. Competencies sought by interviewer 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.)
- **Give me a specific example of a time when you sold your supervisor or professor on an idea or concept.** How did you proceed? What was the result? (assertiveness)
- **Describe the system you use for keeping track of multiple projects.** How do you track your progress so that you can meet deadlines? How do you stay focused? (commitment to task)
- **Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge your company was facing.** What was the challenge? (creativity and imagination)
- **Describe a specific problem you solved for your employer or professor.** How did you approach the problem? What role did others play? What was the outcome? (decision making)
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Handling Illegal Questions

By Rochelle Kaplan

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.
## Examples of Illegal and Legal Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inquiry Area</th>
<th>Illegal Questions</th>
<th>Legal Questions</th>
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| National Origin/Citizenship | Are you a U.S. citizen?  
Where were you/your parents born?  
What is your “native tongue”? | Are you authorized to work in the US?  
What languages do you read/speak/write fluently?  
(This question is okay only if this ability is relevant to the performance of the job.) |
| Age                   | How old are you?  
When did you graduate?  
What’s your birth date? | Are you over the age of 18? |
| Marital/Family Status | What’s your marital status?  
With whom do you live?  
Do you plan to have a family? When?  
How many kids do you have?  
What are your child-care arrangements? | Would you be willing to relocate if necessary?  
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.)  
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.) |
| Affiliations          | What clubs or social organizations do you belong to? | List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job. |
| Personal              | 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.) | Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of the job? |
| Disabilities          | Do you have any disabilities?  
Please complete this medical history.  
Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list them and give dates when these occurred.  
What was the date of your last physical exam?  
How’s your family’s health?  
When did you lose your eyesight? How?  
Do you need an accommodation to perform the job? (This can be asked only after a job offer has been made.) | Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job?  
(This question is okay if the interviewer has thoroughly described the job.)  
Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job-related functions?  
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.) |
| Arrest Record         | Have you ever been arrested? | Have you ever been convicted of _____?  
(The crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.) |
| Military              | If you’ve been in the military, were you honorably discharged? | In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve?  
What type of training or education did you receive in the military? |
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
Interviewing Tips for Educators

Past behavior is the best predictor of future performance.

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. 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.

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 particular setting. (mainstream, full inclusion, pull-out, etc.)
12. Special Education: Tell us about working with other teachers to help a student in collaborative consultation.
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 student possesses different learning skills, how will you identify their weakness and strengths?
- 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 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 modify your teaching style that works best for each and every student and ensure a better classroom discipline?
- 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 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 a student submitted a 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. Arrives late to interview
6. Answers to questions not well thought out
7. Presents a 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
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- 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