

Employment Readiness

Do you want a job or a career?

Let's face it, getting a job is difficult. One must have an edge. The following few handouts will assist you in getting the job you desire to jump start your career.

10 Steps for Writing a Resume

Step 1: Find a Job for Your Resume.

First think about what job you are writing this resume for. Tailor and customize it to the job.

Step 2: Outline and Identity Keywords for Your Resume.

Recruiters and employers search for keywords, so you need to put them in your resume if you want to be found.

Step 3: Choose a Resume Format, Style and Template.

There are many examples if you search the web.

Step 4: Resume Heading

Name, contact information.

Step 5: Resume Job Objective

Customize this to meet the objectives of what the job entails and requires.

Step 6: Summary of Qualifications

Add gifts, talents, education, and experience.

Step 7: Work or Volunteer Experience

Related work or volunteering and what you have done for your school, family, community.

Step 8: Resume Achievement Statements

Achievement statements tell the employer you're worth hiring, or at least interviewing for the job.

Step 9: Listing Education on Your Resume

If you have not completed school yet, list your goals and your timeline to complete your education.

Step 10: Community Service/Civic Engagement/School Involvement and Other Lists on Your Resume

Remember no typos, professional headings and high quality stationery.

How to Write a Resume, Susan Ireland, 2013

Interviewing Skills

(You might want to practice doing these with a friend)

- Giving a firm handshake
- Sitting up straight
- Using eye contact
- Dressing in more formal, clean and ironed apparel
- Engaging in polite conversation
(being more formal than you are with your friends)
- Asking relevant questions
- Answering questions in a complete yet concise manner
- Using specific examples to illustrate points
- Sending a "Thank you" letter or email to the interviewer after your interview
- Not controlling the interview
- Not bringing up salary or benefits
- Not being too serious or nervous
- Not letting your discouragement or disappointment show
- Not looking at your watch or the clock repeatedly

Common Interview Questions

Here are some frequently asked questions and tips on answering them. Remember be prepared!

Practice answering these questions with a friend prior to your interview.

1. **Tell me about yourself.** *Answering this gives the interviewer insight into how you may fit into the organization. Don't talk about personal information. If you are unsure what information the interviewer is interested in, you could ask, "Are there any areas in particular you'd like to know about?" "Could you clarify your question, please?"*
2. **Briefly describe your professional experience and background.** *The interviewer is trying to learn about who you are in the context of work.*
3. **What is your biggest weakness?** *Choose something that is not a major flaw or negative characteristic - you don't want to shock the interviewer or make them think you are not a good candidate for the job. Most importantly, don't say something negative about yourself and leave it at that - turn it into a positive! Describe how you were able to overcome this weakness and a positive way the situation turned out. Show that you have grown as a person, and how a slightly negative characteristic is now a positive attribute that you can bring to this new position. Whenever possible, use specific situations from your life to illustrate your point.*
4. **What is your biggest strength?**
5. **How will your strengths help you do well with this company?** *This is not an opportunity to brag. Instead, you need to describe why you are the best person for the job. Give a specific example of your strength, what it has helped you accomplish in past work roles, and how it will be beneficial to your performance if you get this job.*

Interviewing Skills

6. **Where do you hope to be five years from now?** *Bottom line, the interviewer wants to know that you want to work for them. They don't want to hear that you plan on going to another company or field of work. Even if you do plan on keeping your options open, this may turn the interviewer off. Instead, focus your answer on new skills you hope to learn and master, and how you plan to use them in order to benefit the business' goals. Even if you want to get another job later on, do not say something like, "I want to work here to gain experience to someday open my own business."*
7. **What is your greatest accomplishment?** *Be sure to give specific examples from school and your community including how you overcame obstacles and of leadership opportunities you experienced. This gives the interviewer a better understanding of this accomplishment. If you just graduated from high school, college or tech school, describe an accomplishment from your school work, part-time job, internship or extra-curricular activities.*
8. **Why do you want to work for this company?** *You will always want to do research on the company before the interview. This is where your research on the company will be helpful. Perhaps they are innovative in a specific field and that is what makes you want to join the team? What are their goals, and how can your skills and past experiences help achieve them? Give specific reasons, don't speak in generalities.*

The following are some additional questions that might come up in an interview

9. **Are you a nice person?**
10. **How would you describe yourself?**
11. **Describe a typical work week for you currently.**
12. **Describe your work style.**
13. **Do you work well with other people?**
14. **Do you take work home with you?**
15. **How many hours do you normally work?**
16. **How would you describe the pace at which you work?**
17. **How do you handle stress and pressure?**
18. **What motivates you?**
19. **Are you a self-motivator?**
20. **What are your salary expectations?**
21. **What do you find are the most difficult decisions to make?**
22. **Why did you choose to interview with this company?**
23. **What has been the greatest disappointment in your life?**
24. **What are you passionate about?**
25. **What are your pet peeves?**
26. **What do people most often criticize about you?**
27. **What is the worst thing that you have ever gotten away with?**
28. **When was the last time you were angry? What happened?**
29. **If you could relive the last 3 years of your life, what would you do differently?**

Interviewing Skills

30. If the people who know you were asked why you should be hired, what would they say?
31. Do you prefer to work independently or on a team?
32. Give some examples of teamwork.
33. What type of work environment do you prefer?
34. How do you evaluate success?
35. If you know your boss is 100% wrong about something, how would you handle it?
36. Describe a difficult work situation/project and how you overcame it.
37. Describe a time when your workload was heavy and how you handled it.
38. What interests you about this job?
39. Why do you want this job?
40. What applicable attributes/experience do you have?
41. Are you under or overqualified for this job?
42. What can you do for this company?
43. Why should we hire you?
44. Why are you the best person for the job?
45. What do you know about this company?
46. Why do you want to work here?
47. What challenges are you looking for in a position?
48. What can you contribute to this company?
49. What do you see yourself doing within the first 30 days on the job?
50. What would you do if you found out the company was doing something illegal?
51. Are you willing to travel?
52. What is good customer service?
53. How long do you expect to remain employed with this company?
54. Please rate me as an interviewer.
55. Is there anything I haven't told you about the job or company that you would like to know?

Common Interview Questions: The Future

56. What are you looking for in your next job? What is important to you?
57. Where do you see yourself 5 years from now?
58. What are your goals for the next five years/ten years?
59. How do you plan to achieve those goals?
60. What are your salary requirements - both short-term and long-term?
61. What are your career goals?
62. What will you do if you don't get this position?
63. Where else are you interviewing?

How to Keep a Job

Once you get the job the next task is to be sure you keep it.

- 1. Be on time.** Be on time for work, returning from breaks, going to meetings, or turning in assignments.
- 2. Dress appropriately.** Always utilize good grooming habits.
- 3. Call and let the boss know if you will be late or absent.**
- 4. Try your best, finish assignments.**
- 5. Anticipate the needs of others.**
- 6. Have a positive attitude and "Can Do" spirit.**
- 7. Ask for help when needed.** Know your limitations.
- 8. Avoid backstabbing or office gossip.** Always be respectful.
- 9. Be a team player.** Look for opportunities to serve customers or co-workers.
- 10. Be a leader.** Look for opportunities to show that you can be trusted.
- 11. Avoid criticizing your boss or the company.** It is easy to find things wrong with others. It is much harder, but more rewarding, to find constructive ways to deal with problems. Employees who are known for their good attitude and helpful suggestions are the ones most often remembered during performance evaluation and raise review time.
- 12. Volunteer for trainings and new assignments.** Take a close look at people in your organization who are "moving up". Chances are, they are the ones who have shown themselves willing to do undesirable assignments or take on new duties.
- 13. Avoid the temptation to criticize** your company, co-workers, or customers on the Internet. Social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and blogs offer many opportunities to share with the world, but what you place on the Internet is public forever.
- 14. Be a good team member.** Put the team and the company first.
- 15. Try to avoid ever saying "that's not my job."** Distinguish yourself. Pick out one or more things in your job to do better than anyone else. Become known as the "go-to" person for such things. That will help managers remember you favorably at times when you really need to be remembered.

