

# EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS INFORMATION

SOPHOMORE CAREER UNIT  
& EDP  
(Education Development Plan)

# JOB APPLICATION

## **What is a job application?**

A job application is a form employers ask you to complete when you apply for a job.

## **What is the purpose of a job application?**

Employers use job applications to select applicants for the interview process. In today's job market, your application has to look better than hundreds of others in order to get a job interview. Many times it is the first impression of you. The manner in which you fill out an application form can tell an employer many things about you. Neatness, proper spelling, thoroughness, ability to follow directions, and writing skills are just a few of the things that employers might look for on a completed job application.

## **Do I need to fill out a job application if I am submitting a cover letter and resume?**

Yes, it is very important to submit all the materials an employer requests. Quite often, employers must have completed applications on file for legal purposes.

## **Should I type my application?**

Most often, application forms will instruct you to either type or print your responses. Printing is fine, as long as it is done neatly. Be sure to do your own printing. Unless the form instructs you to use a pencil, print in blue or black ink.

## **How can I make my application stand out from all the rest?**

- Use your resume to complete your job application. It contains a wealth of information you can plug into the application form.
- Ask for two blank applications. Having a spare copy can come in handy if you make mistakes on the first copy. To minimize the potential for mistakes, read over the entire application before you begin completing it.
- Answer every question that applies to you. If a question does not apply, you may write NA (meaning "not applicable") to show that you did not overlook the question.
- Spell correctly. If you aren't sure how to spell a word, and you don't have access to a dictionary, try to use another word with the same meaning.
- Answer a question about job preference (job for which you are applying) with a specific job title or type of work. Don't write "anything." Employers expect you to state clearly what kind of work you are seeking. If appropriate, list more than one position.
- Be as neat as possible. The employer expects that your application will be an example of your best work.
- Dress neatly when you visit an employer to pick up, drop off, or complete a job application. Also,

behave professionally at all times. Don't miss this opportunity to make a good first impression!

### **Sections of a Job Application**

While job applications vary widely in format and organization, most ask for similar types of information. Described below are the sections of the sample application on the following page.

#### **Personal Information**

This section asks for your legal name and your present and permanent address. If both of these are the same, simply complete the "present address" section with your current address information, and write "same" in the permanent address section. Always include a phone number with area code so the employer can contact you. You also need to know your social security number.

#### **Employment Desired**

This is where you indicate the name of the position(s) for which you are applying, the salary you desire, the date you can begin working, etc.

#### **Education**

In this section, you need to provide the names and locations of schools, the diplomas or degrees you have earned, and the subjects you studied. This section also asks you to describe any special skills you have, such as speaking a foreign language.

#### **Activities**

This section provides you the opportunity to list extracurricular activities, such as clubs, athletics, community service involvement and student government.

#### **Work Experience**

In this section, you are asked to provide the following information:

- Names, locations and phone numbers of past employers
  - The names of your supervisors
  - Dates of employment
  - Your starting and ending wages
  - Your job title and responsibilities
  - Your reasons for leaving each job
- Include both full-time, part-time, and volunteer work, as well as military service.

#### **References**

In this section, list the name, address, phone number, and job title of each reference. Start working on your list of references well before you begin applying for a job.

- Former employers
- Teachers
- Ministers
- Club leaders
- School administrators
- Neighbors
- Coaches

Just be sure each person knows you well enough to be able to answer questions about you and is willing to recommend you for a job. Do not use your parents, other relatives, or friends as references.

## Applications

You may not be aware, but the application is your first actual interview with the company. You would never show up to an actual interview unprepared, poorly dressed, or having forgotten half the things you need. Many people do just that when they show up to fill out an application. They dress in jeans or other inappropriate clothing, bring their friends, are eating their lunch or drinking a soda, don't have the information they need to fill out the application, or ask if they can borrow a pen or phone book!!!

Not a good first impression. To take the right first step toward finding the job/career you want be prepared to fill out the application. Complete the following steps and you will be on your way to a rewarding career.

- Review the Do's and Don'ts handout.
- Be prepared to fill out the application on the spot.
- Have your reference names and numbers complete and ready. Type these so they are always ready to use.
- Notify your references prior to using their name as a reference.
- Bring identification with you.
- Always be dressed professionally (see Module 4)
- Bring a blue or black ink pen (bring an extra in case the pen "dies" on you).
- Be neat and complete
- Make sure you know what you applying for—I will take anything is not an appropriate response on an application—you sound desperate and like you are only there for the paycheck☹

## DO'S AND DON'TS OF JOB APPLICATIONS

- Use Blue or Black ink
- Read the entire application through before filling anything out
- Read the directions
- PRINT
- Answer all questions on the application. If something does not apply to you write N/A
- Under WAGES/SALARY write Open
- LOCATION = City and State Only
- ADDRESS = Street # and Street, City, State and Zip
- ALWAYS include area codes
- ALWAYS list a specific job(s) you are applying for
- PERSONAL REFERENCES are adults who know you well and can talk about your character
- PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES are adults you have worked with or for who can talk about your work ethics
- NEVER use a friend (18 -22) year old as a reference.
- TAKE YOUR TIME
- School = The last school you attended. If you attended more than one junior high school, for example, which one did you attend last?
- WORK EXPERIENCE goes in reverse chronological order. You put the job you have now down first. Always include at least one job even if you have never held a paid position. Have you volunteered anywhere? Mowed lawns, delivered papers, babysat, helped a neighbor or relative?
- If it asks for skills and attributes write some down. Do not put N/A
- Spell correctly
- Be honest!!!
- Be sure to check with former employers prior to filling out the application to get correct dates of employment, address, phone number
- Be prepared to fill out the application on the spot

# RESUMES

## What is a resume?

A resume is a brief summary of your work experience, skills, achievements, and interests. It is submitted to an employer with a cover letter and a job application.

## What is the purpose of a resume?

Your resume is **your advertisement**. It gives employers their first impression of you. It offers a quick snapshot of important facts about you. These facts help employers decide if they want to interview you.

## Why do I need a resume if I am submitting an application?

A resume offers more details than a job application. It also organizes your experiences in an easy-to-read format; most employers are impressed when an applicant has taken the time to prepare a resume.

## Can I use the same resume for more than one job?

Yes, as long as your objective matches the position you are seeking. Resumes need to be updated as your work experience, education, skills, and achievements change.

## How long should my resume be?

One page is typical for high school students. A resume should never exceed two pages.

## Does my resume need to be word-processed?

Yes. Your resume must be pleasing to the eye to be effective. It must also be free of errors and well written.

### Technology Tip

Be sure to save your word-processed resume file on both your computer hard drive and on a

## How do I create an effective resume?

- Find an effective resume to use as a model. This packet includes sample resumes. You can also search for sample resumes on the Internet at career sites like Monster.com.
- Use an easy-to-read font on 8.5 x 11, high quality, white paper. Use only one side of a page, and be sure to include adequate margins, which are typically one inch.
- List what is most important first. For example, if your work history is stronger than your educational background, list your work experience first.
- Do not use pronouns such as I, we, he, and she. When describing your work experience and achievements, most of your sentences should start with verbs like organized, led, performed, and handled.
- Proofread carefully. Ask two other individuals, including an English teacher, to proofread your resume too.

## Designing Your Resume

There are many different types of resumes and resume formats. However, most resumes include the same basic sections.

**Heading** - Include your full name, street address, city, state, zip code, email address, and telephone number. Most often this information is centered at the top of a resume. Do not include additional personal information, such as your age or birthday.

**Career Objective** (optional) - This brief statement lets an employer know what type of work you are seeking.

**Education** - In this section, you can include things like the year you will be graduating or classes that you have taken that may pertain to the position for which you are applying.

**Work Experience** - Include all full-time, part-time, and seasonal work experience in this section. Beginning with the most recent, list the jobs you have held, as well as your responsibilities at each job. When explaining your responsibilities, begin each sentence with an action verb, such as planned, trained, assisted, etc. (For more examples of effective action verbs, see the "additional buzzwords" section later on this page.) Do not include salary information or reasons for leaving jobs.

**Volunteer Work** - Include any long- or short-term commitment to any organization (church, hospital, etc.) or club for which you volunteer. Also list

internships and school-to-work experiences here.

**Special Skills** - List any additional skills you have that might interest a potential employer. For example, you can include computer, foreign language, leadership, and communication skills. If appropriate, change the word "special" to a more descriptive word.

For example, if you are listing a variety of computer software skills in this section, it makes sense to label this section "Computer Skills." (See resume examples.)

**Honors & Awards** - List any academic honors or awards you have received from a high school or post secondary institution; do not list middle school or elementary school awards. Also include non-academic awards here. (See sample resumes for examples.)

**Clubs & Activities** - List your involvement with any clubs, teams, or organizations.

**References** - Simply type the phrase "Available upon request" in this section. You should have three references. References are people who know you, can answer questions about you, and are willing to recommend you for a job. Examples include teachers, school administrators, coaches, club leaders, ministers, and former employers. Do not use your parents, other relatives, or friends. List your references on a separate sheet of paper. Include

each reference's name, job title, full address, phone number, and email address.

### **KISS your resume**

- \*Keep It Short and Simple (KISS)
- \*Limit the resume to one page
- \*Use phrases, not sentences
- \*DO NOT use the word "I" in your resume (i.e. I can type, I babysat)
- \*Be specific, give examples
- \*Stress achievements
- \*Be positive and enthusiastic
- \*Be honest
- \***Bold**, Underline, or CAPITALIZE section headings
- \*Single space within sections
- \*Proofread, proofread, proofread
- \*Use quality paper (ivory, gray, white). Avoid flashy paper unless you are going into the arts.

### **How Do I Make My Resume Sizzle?**

"Sizzle" is the sight and sound of a good steak cooking on the grill—it's almost irresistible. Add sizzle to your resume and you will also be irresistible. In the work world "sizzle" = "results". Companies want people who can

deliver results, make their own decisions, and establish great relationships both inside and outside the company. Showing that you can deliver results is easy. Take the skills needed for the job you are applying for and add the detail to show your accomplishments. For example, instead of saying "good typist" on your resume write "can type 60 words per minute".

### **Additional Buzzwords**

Use words like these when describing your work experience and achievements:

Achieved	Employed	Organized
Advised	Equipped	Performed
Analyzed	Established	Persuaded
Built	Evaluated	Prepared
Completed	Experienced	Produced
Controlled	Generated	Reduced
Convinced	Guided	Repaired
Coordinated	Handled	Researched
Counseled	Improved	Served
Created	Initiated	Sold
Decided	Investigated	Supervised
Delivered	Led	Taught
Designed	Maintained	Treated
Developed	Managed	Wrote

# SAMPLE RESUME

## Chris A. Johnson

34250 Day Road  
Davison, MI 48423  
(810) 654-5555  
cajohnson@aol.com

**Career Objective** To obtain a supervisory position in a retail store

### Education

September 2005 – Present  
Davison High School, Davison, MI  
Career Pathway: Business Marketing and Management  
Honor Roll Student

### Work Experience

June 2007 – September 2007  
Home Depot, Lapeer, MI  
Position: Salesperson in Lighting Department  
Responsibilities: Ordered merchandise, organized inventory, assisted with training new employees

June 2006 – September 2006  
Best Buy, Flint, MI  
Position: Salesperson in Electronics  
Responsibilities: Assisted supervisor with department merchandising, responsible for good customer service, assisted in training new employees

November 2004 – September 2005  
Target, Davison, MI  
Position: Shelf Stocker  
Responsibilities: Maintained stock on assigned shelves, assisted with customer service

**Volunteer Work** Monthly Volunteer for Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Flint, MI

**Computer Skills** Experienced with Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

**Honor & Awards** Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Volunteer of the Month, July 2007  
Excellent Attendance Award, Davison High School, 2006

**Clubs & Activities** Varsity Tennis Team, Davison High School, 2007  
Varsity Basketball Team, Davison High School, 2007

**References** Available upon request

## SAMPLE RESUME

### Maryrose Smith

41442 Dover Lane  
Davison, MI 49428  
(810) 555-3434  
msmith@gmail.com

- Career Objective** To secure a clerical position that makes use of my filing, typing, and organizational capabilities
- Related Skills** Type 35 wpm accurately  
File both alphabetically and numerically  
Answer telephone and relay messages in a professional manner  
Maintain confidentiality when appropriate  
Meet deadlines  
Work without supervision
- Work Experience** Davison Developmental Center  
Davison, MI  
Position: **Clerical Assistant**  
Summer 2007  
Responsibilities: Answered phone, typed documents, organized office supplies, operated copy machine, maintained files, and served as a classroom aide
- Education** Junior, Davison High School, Davison, MI  
Expected graduation date: June 2010  
Career Pathway: Business Marketing and Management  
Courses: Typing, Accounting
- Volunteer Work** Genesee County Humane Society, Flint, MI
- Clubs & Activities** Davison High School Band, 2006 - present  
Davison High School Spanish Club, 2007
- Honors & Awards** National Honors Society, April 2007
- References** Available upon request

# **KASI COACH**

8569 Your Lane  
Davison, MI 49428  
(810) 667.5555  
kcoach@yahoo.com

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## **EDUCATION**

**Davison High School**, Davison, MI 2004 - Present  
Expected graduation date June 2007

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## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

**Daycare**, St. John's Church, Davison, MI Summer 2007

**Cashier**, Wendy's, Davison, MI September 2006 – June 2007

**Daycare**, Montessori, Davison, MI Summer 2005

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## **RELATED EXPERIENCES**

**Volunteer**, National Honor Society, Davison High School 2007 - 2008

**Tutor**, 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, Hahn Elementary 2007 - 2008

**Member**, Davison Thespian Troupe # 1234 2005 - 2008

**Volunteer**, Muscular Dystrophy Association 2005 - 2007

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## **HOBBIES AND INTERESTS**

Basketball, softball

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## **REFERENCES**

References available upon request

# **KASI COACH**

8569 Your Lane  
Davison, MI 49428  
(810) 667.5555  
kcoach@yahoo.com

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## **EDUCATION**

**Davison High School**, Davison, MI 2006 - Present  
Expected graduation date June 2007

Coursework included: Psychology, Marketing 1 and 2, Business Management, Marketing, Computer Programming

**Early Childhood Careers**, Montessori, Davison MI 2007-2008

Coursework included: teaching strategies for young learners (ages 3-5), safety, childhood development, earned CPR certification, worked in a pre-school at the tech center which required lesson plan development and implementation, snack planning, reading, socializing with children, play activities, record keeping, parent reports, and made observations

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

**Daycare**, Maureen Smith, Davison, MI Summer 2007

Responsibilities included: Caring for 3 children, ages 1-4. Prepared meals, planned activities, cleaned, played with children, developed age appropriate activities

**Cashier**, Wendy's, Flint, MI September 2006 – June 2007

Responsibilities included: Cleaning, food preparation, waited on customers, operated cash registers, answered customer questions, balance drawer at end of shift

**Daycare**, Montessori, Davison, MI Summer 2005

Responsibilities included: Caring for 2 children, ages 7 and 10. Prepared meals, planned activities, took children on outings, played with children

## **HOBBIES AND INTERESTS**

Basketball, softball

## **REFERENCES**

References available upon request

# **KASI COACH**

8569 Your Lane  
Davison, MI 49428  
(810) 667.5555  
kcoach@yahoo.com

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## **REFERENCES**

### **Carrie Smith**

Manager  
Meijer  
2222 Meijer Lane  
Davison, MI 49428  
616.333.4444  
[jjones@meijer.com](mailto:jjones@meijer.com)

### **Jane Smithsonian**

Manager  
The View  
2222 Newspaper Lane  
Davison, MI 48423  
810.222.3333  
[jsmiths@mlive.com](mailto:jsmiths@mlive.com)

### **Fred McCormatch**

Basketball Coach  
Hill Road Hoops  
5678 Ford St.  
Grand Blanc, MI 49509  
810.777.8888  
[fmcormatch@hillroadhoops.com](mailto:fmcormatch@hillroadhoops.com)

# COVER LETTER

## What is a cover letter?

A cover letter, or letter of application, is a letter you submit to an employer with your resume and employment application. In a cover letter, you need to:

- Explain how you learned of the position;
- Briefly describe your education and/or experience;
- Explain why you are a good candidate for the position; and
- Ask for a personal interview.

## What is the purpose of a cover letter?

A cover letter is a quick introduction of yourself and your top qualities. It allows you to sell yourself to a prospective employer. It also gives employers a chance to see how well you express yourself in writing and how much effort you are willing to make to get the job.

## Can I use the same cover letter for more than one job?

You will have to modify portions of your cover letter each time you submit it to a new employer, but there is a good chance that much of it will remain the same.

## How long is a cover letter?

A cover letter should never exceed one page.

## Should my cover letter be word-processed?

Yes. Like your resume, your cover letter must be pleasing to the eye to be effective. It must also be free of errors and well written.

### Technology Tip

Be sure to save your word-processed cover letter file on both your computer hard drive and on a backup disk for future use.

## How do I create an effective cover letter?

Later in this packet, you will find a sample cover letter. Here are some general tips:

- Use a standard font on 8.5 x 11, high quality, white paper. Use only one side of the page. Be sure to use one-inch margins.
- Keep your letter short and to the point. Include only important information.
- Focus on strengths, not weaknesses.
- Call the company and ask for the proper spelling of the name of person to whom the letter will be sent.
- Proofread carefully. Ask two other individuals, including an English teacher, to proofread your cover letter too.
- If you are responding to a newspaper advertisement, mail your response within three days of its listing in the newspaper.

## Cover Letter Format

Use the cover letter format below as a guide for your own cover letter. Pay close attention to the number of spaces between sections and paragraphs.

*Your Street Address  
City, State Zip Code*

**Triple Space**

*Date*

**Triple Space**

*Contact's Name and Title  
Employer's Street Address  
Employer's City, State Zip Code*

**Double Space**

*Contact's Name:*

**Double Space**

*In the first paragraph, tell why you are writing the letter. Also, give the specific name of the position for which you are applying and explain how you became aware of the opening.*

**Double Space**

*In the second paragraph, briefly describe your education and experience. Explain why you would be a good candidate for this position. Sell yourself!*

**Double Space**

*In the third and final paragraph, tell the prospective employer what you have enclosed with the cover letter. Close the letter by thanking the contact for his or her consideration and asking for an interview. Express your desire to hear from the employer soon. Include your phone number so they can call you if they are interested in scheduling an interview.*

**Double Space**

*Sincerely,*

**5 Line Spaces** (*Sign your name in blue or black ink here*)

*Your name typed*

**Double Space**

*Enclosure (Typing this word lets the employer know that other materials, such as a resume and employment application, are also enclosed in the envelope.)*

## Sample Cover Letter Showing Format

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**Stephanie Smith**

3707 Whispering Pines Drive  
Davison, MI 48423

**Triple Space**

April 20, 2015

Ms. Courtney Clark  
Owner  
Sandra Brewer Dance Studio  
2690 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Davison, MI 48423

**Double Space**

Dear Ms. Clark

Given the excellent reputation of your studio, and planned expansion into the Davison area, I am submitting my resume in application for a Marketing Intern position. I am seeking to better utilize my marketing skills in advertising, planning and organizing, and management.

In my current position with Sohi Importers, I have proven my ability to work in a fast paced environment and to quickly handle customer inquiries and issues. In January I received an excellent work evaluation with a recommendation to enter the management training program upon graduation.

My success thus far is a result of my background from the Careerline Tech Center Marketing Program and my internship with the Grand Haven Area Foundation as a marketing intern. This has allowed me to learn from experts in the field of marketing and management.

Enclosed is my resume for your review. I am willing to travel as needed for your organization as you continue to build and expand your franchises and can provide excellent references at your request. Please let me know when we can meet for a personal interview.

Sincerely

**Five spaces and sign**

Stephanie Smith

Enc

## Sample Cover Letter

41442 Dover Lane  
Davison, MI 48423

September 22, 2015

Ms. Julie Atkins  
RP Lewis Accounting Services  
17000 South Main Street  
Grand Blanc, MI 49412

Dear Ms. Atkins:

I am writing this letter in response to your posting in the *Davison Index* for an office assistant. I think you will find that my qualifications match your requirements for this job very closely.

From May to August of 2015, I worked as a clerical assistant for Jenison Development Center. My duties there included answering phones, relaying messages, and maintaining files. I have also successfully completed courses in both typing and accounting. As a result, I am able to type 35 wpm accurately, and I have the basic understanding of business accounting processes that you listed as a desired qualification in your job posting.

Enclosed is my resume for your review. Please feel free to contact me at any time at (810) 112-3434 to schedule an interview. I am looking forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Stephanie Smith*

Stephanie Smith

Enclosure

## Sample Envelope

Be sure to send your cover letter and other enclosures in an envelope that is addressed properly. The name and address of the person sending a letter is placed in the upper, left corner of the envelope. The name and address of the recipient is placed in the center of the envelope. Use the sample envelope below as a guide when preparing your own envelope.

Stephanie Smith  
41442 Dover Lane  
Davison, MI 49423

Ms. Julie Atkins  
RP Lewis Accounting Services  
17000 South Main Street  
Grand Blanc, MI 49412

## Cover Letter Checklist

Use the checklist below to ensure that your cover letter is complete, accurate, and effective.

### Heading

- ✍ Your address is complete/correct
- ✍ Date is current
- ✍ Employer's address is complete/correct

### Greeting

- ✍ Contact's name is spelled correctly
- ✍ Greeting is followed by a colon

### First Paragraph - Introduction

- ✍ Explains the purpose of the letter
- ✍ Names the position
- ✍ Explains how you learned of the position
- ✍ Is interest generating

### Second Paragraph – Value & Selling

- ✍ Describes your education and experience
- ✍ Focuses on why you are a good candidate
- ✍ Highlights your key strengths & abilities
- ✍ Demonstrates your ability to be value adding

### Third Paragraph

- ✍ Tells what you have enclosed
- ✍ Thanks the employer
- ✍ Asks for an interview
- ✍ Includes your phone number

### Closing

- ✍ Letter is signed in blue or black ink
- ✍ Enclosure notation is added

### Overall Quality of Letter

- ✍ Proper spacing between sections/lines
- ✍ Paper is 8.5 x 11, high quality, white
- ✍ Easy to understand
- ✍ Short and to the point
- ✍ Neat in appearance
- ✍ Free of errors

# INTERVIEWING SKILLS

Wow! Possibly what many consider the worst part of finding a job—the interview!! Your first real interviews might make you feel like you have been thrown into a lake over your head and you don't know how to swim. However, if you are prepared, you will never leave an interview feeling that way.

## What is an interview?

An interview is a meeting between you and an employer. It usually takes place after an employer has reviewed your job application, resume, and cover letter.

## What is the purpose of an interview?

An interview allows an employer to learn more about your:

- Abilities
- Talents
- Interests
- Personality
- Work experience
- Education
- Motivation

It also allows you to find out more about an employer's:

- Needs
- History
- Work environment
- Business activities
- Plans for the future

## How long does an interview last?

Interview lengths vary widely. In some cases, an interviewer might simply ask you a series of questions. In other cases, you might be asked to demonstrate certain skills. For example, a clerical job might require a typing test as part of the interview process.

## How should I prepare for an interview?

To answer an interviewer's questions effectively, you need to know yourself very well. If you have already completed a job application, cover letter, and resume, you should be quite familiar with things like your interests, goals, skills, education, experience, strengths, and weaknesses.

Knowing yourself, however, is only a starting point in your interview preparation. You should also be able to answer questions about yourself clearly and concisely. In fact, you must behave professionally throughout the entire interview.

In this packet, you will find sample interview questions, as well as information on how to conduct yourself at various stages of an interview. Don't underestimate the importance of practicing behaviors—such as answering questions, introducing yourself, and thanking the interviewer—in front a mirror. You can also hold

practice interviews with friends, teachers, and family members. Practicing will increase your confidence and help you to remain relaxed during the actual interview.

## Before an Interview

Along with practicing, you should prepare for an interview by completing these tasks:

- Figure out how to get to the interview. If the interview is located in an unfamiliar area, ask for directions ahead of time. Drive to the location the day before the interview. Allow yourself plenty of time. In fact, you should plan to arrive five to ten minutes early.
- Familiarize you with the company before the interview. You can do this by picking up materials from the company or by visiting a company's Web site.
- Prepare a few questions to ask.
- Have any materials you plan to bring, such as a resume or list of references, ready the night before the interview.
- Dress properly. Your clothing should be clean and professional. Avoid wearing trendy clothing, flashy jewelry, or strong perfume or shaving lotion.
- Bring a pen and pencil in case you are asked to complete paperwork there.

## During an Interview

- Greet the interviewer by his or her name and introduce yourself. Also, smile and offer a firm handshake. Stand until you are invited to take a seat.
- Be friendly. Treat everyone you talk with in a polite, professional, and kind manner.

- Show your enthusiasm. Express your excitement about the job. Don't act bored.
- Be positive, confident and pleasant. Avoid putting others down to make yourself look good.
- Maintain eye contact. Good eye contact is a key to building trust in a relationship.
- Express yourself clearly and concisely. Use complete sentences, and avoid one-word answers. Don't use slang or mumble.
- Be aware of body language. Your tone of voice, posture, etc., all give clues about your feelings and attitudes. Face the interviewer in an open, relaxed manner, and sit up straight. Avoid negative body language such as folding your arms across your chest or nervously tapping your hands or feet.
- Be a good listener. Look at the interviewer while he or she is speaking. Nod to show understanding, and act interested in what the interviewer is saying. Listen to an entire question before answering. Don't interrupt.
- Ask questions. At the end of the interview, the interviewer will likely ask you if you have any questions about the position. Be sure to ask a few questions, but don't extend the interview needlessly.
- As you exit the interview, thank the interviewer for his or her time and offer a firm handshake. Express your interest in the job and ask permission to call in a few days to inquire about the position. Leave your resume, list of references, etc., if you have not already submitted these.

## After an Interview

- Send a thank you note.
- Make a follow-up call.
- Reflect on what you did well and on what you could improve upon next time.

## Common Interview Mistakes to Avoid

By now, you have learned a lot about what to do and not do in an interview. Here are a few more behaviors to avoid.

- Showing up late.
- Chewing gum, eating, or smoking.
- Bringing friends or family members.
- Arguing or getting defensive.
- Discussing personal problems.
- Asking about pay (this is acceptable at a first interview only if you are actually offered the job).
- Inflating the truth.

## Common Interview Questions

- Why don't you tell me something about yourself?
- What do you know about this company and/or job?
- How is your attendance in school?
- What are some of your strengths? What are some of your weaknesses?
- What do you hope to be doing in five years?
- Why should I hire you?
- What do you enjoy in school?
- What courses do you like best/least? Why?
- Do you plan to continue your education?
- Have you ever had trouble getting along with people?
- What are your hobbies?
- What are your career plans and goals?
- What is your idea of a good worker?
- Do you like working by yourself or with others?

- Do you like routine work?
- What jobs have you enjoyed the most/least? Why?
- Do you have any questions for me?
- What do you expect as a starting salary?

## Questions You Can Ask the Employer

- What qualities are you looking for in your new hires?
- Can you describe your training programs?
- What are your expectations for new hires?
- What would a typical day be like for someone doing my job?
- How many hours will be available?
- What shifts would I be expected to work?
- How is an employee evaluated and promoted?
- What would be a realistic time frame for advancement?

## Questions You Can Ask Yourself after the Interview. Did I....

- Practice before I went to the interview?
- Use the interviewer's name during the interview?
- Use good eye contact?
- Smile?
- Show enthusiasm?
- Appear confident and relaxed?
- Answer their questions without talking too much?
- Know my skills and express them so they understood what I had to offer?
- Convince them I would be punctual and reliable?
- Convince them I really wanted to work for them, without begging for the job?

- Remember to keep family matters and personal problems out of the discussion?
- Ask them the questions I had prepared?
- Ask permission to call after the interview?
- Send a thank you letter?

GREAT RESOURCES:

<http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/interview>

[http://jobsearchtech.about.com/od/interviewquestion1//aa031201\\_2.htm](http://jobsearchtech.about.com/od/interviewquestion1//aa031201_2.htm)

<http://www.monster.com/>

## Ace The Interview Tips

11 impressions are made within the first seven seconds. This means that before you even begin the interview it will be an uphill or downhill battle. Put your best foot forward before you enter the business.

When called for an interview, be flexible regarding the time of the appointment.

Rearrange your schedule, don't ask the interviewer to rearrange his or hers.

Be on time

Dress conservatively

DO NOT bring friends/family with you

THINK before you answer the questions.

Do your best to answer questions SINCERELY  
Give concrete reasons and examples when answering questions.

Practice a one minute monologue about yourself  
Shake hands with the employer—make it a firm handshake.

Maintain direct eye contact.

Speak clearly and directly

Do not use slang words

Do not use yeah, yup, uh-ha-SAY "YES"

If you don't have a lot of related experience, sell yourself in other ways

Express your attributes

Use key words: on time, conscientious, hard working

Give concrete examples: volunteer for MDA, odd jobs, helped a neighbor

Don't "down play" your experience

## The Job Interview—Are You Prepared?

Use reference books or the internet as needed to help you answer the following questions. **Type the questions and your responses.** Use correct grammar and punctuation. Make sure to use complete sentences. Never answer “Yes” or “No”.

**Every response MUST be at least two sentences in length.**

1. Tell me about yourself. *This should be at least 8-10 sentences in length. Make it chronological. Start with your earlier years (high school) and continue forward. Make sure to organize your thoughts.*
2. What are your strengths?
3. What are your weaknesses?
4. What was your favorite class in school?
5. What activities did you participate in?
6. If you have held a job, what did you like best about the job? Least? If you have not held a job, what chores do you like best? Least? **DO NOT SAY “PAYCHECK”.**
7. What are you most proud of?
8. Tell me about a time in your life when you took charge? What did you do?
9. What skills do you have?
10. Why should I hire you?
11. Share an example of your determination.
12. Give an example of how you saw a project through.
13. What motivates or excites you?
14. Describe a time when you had to assist a coworker or another student.
15. How do you usually go about solving a problem?
16. Talk about a contribution you have made to a team.
17. What do you do to relax?
18. Tell me about your favorite boss or teacher. What made that person your favorite?
19. Describe a time when you had to handle a conflict. What did you do to resolve the conflict?
20. Describe to me your personal management style.

# FOLLOW UP LETTER/THANK YOU

The interview is finally over! Whew. You are done—right? Wrong. It's time to head home, write a follow up letter, and get it in the mail today. The follow up letter might be the one thing that gets you a second interview and a job. The letter can 'tip the scales' in your favor if you and another candidate have similar skills and talents.

The key to a follow up letter is to be sincere in thanking the employer for his/her time and to restate the strongest qualifications you have and why you should get the job.

Use the attached handout to help you write your own follow up letter. It's amazing that people have forgotten how to say 'Thank You'. Don't be one of them.

A follow-up letter should be followed up by a phone call. Don't wait by the phone as if you are desperate for a date. Call the employer, express your interest in the job, and ask when a decision will be made. **S/He who waits, loses.**

## **Follow up after the interview**

Thank you letters are critical to your job search success, and interviews are not the only occasions to send thank-you and follow-up letters. If you've ever experienced helping or doing something for someone, and not receiving a thank-you, you understand how employers view this lack of courtesy on the part of job seekers.

A thank-you letter should be written after: An interview; A contact is helpful to you in a telephone conversation or e-mail; Someone provides / sends information to you at your request; A contact was particularly helpful to you at a career fair; You visit a contact at their work site; and Any other contact for which you want to express thanks and develop a good relationship.

Following an interview, promptly (within 2 business days) write the interviewer a letter expressing appreciation and thanks for the interview. The purpose of this letter is to:

- Show appreciation for the employer's interest in you.
- Reiterate your interest in the position and in the organization.
- Review or remind the employer about your qualifications for the position. If you thought of something you forgot to mention in the interview, mention it in your follow-up / thank-you letter.
- Demonstrate that you have good manners and know to write a thank-you letter.
- Follow up with any information the employer may have asked you to provide after the interview.

Sample - Thank you for initial interview

400C Blacken Ridge  
Davison, MI 49423  
(616) 555-1111  
james@smith.com

Double Space

October 26, 2015

Ms. Kelsey McPher  
Human Resources Manager  
Today's Department Store  
2000 Line Drive  
Davison, MI 49423

Double Space

Dear Ms. McPher:

I enjoyed interviewing with you on October 25. The cashier and closer position you outlined sounds both challenging and rewarding and I look forward to your decision concerning a second interview.

As mentioned during the interview, I will be graduating in June from Davison High School. Through my education and experience I've gained many skills, as well as an understanding of retailing concepts and dealing with the general public. I have worked three years in the retail industry in various positions from Salesclerk to Stockperson. I think my education and work experience would complement Today's management trainee program.

I have enclosed a copy of my current high school transcript and a list of references that you requested.

Thank you again for the opportunity to interview with Fashion Department Store. The interview served to reinforce my strong interest in becoming a part of your team. I can be reached at (810) 555-1111 or by email at james@smith.edu should you need additional information.

Sincerely,

FIVE Spaces

James Smith

Enclosures

Sample - Thank you for on-site interview

170 Roanoke Street  
Saginaw MI  
(222) 555-6241  
JRicardo@yahoo.com

March 3, 2007

Mr. Bob Cameron  
Personnel Manager  
Karpon Computers and Electronics  
1212 Laney Lane  
Flint, MI 33333

Dear Mr. Cameron:

Thank you for the opportunity to visit with you and see your facilities last Tuesday. Both the interview and the tour made for an exciting and complete day. I was very impressed with each of the staff members I met.

I was particularly impressed with your warehousing procedures. Mr. Price was thorough in explaining your process to me. I will be corresponding directly with him to express my appreciation. Incidentally, the process you use is quite similar to one I have been researching through an independent study this term. I would be interested in sharing the findings of my research at a second interview.

Again, thank you for your hospitality during my visit and for all your efforts to arrange my visit. Having seen your operation, I am all the more enthused about the career opportunity that Karpon Computers and Electronics offers. I look forward to your decision.

Sincerely,

Jenny Ricardo

Enclosure