

**MAKING A GOOD  
IMPRESSION:**  
Resumes, Interviews, and  
Appearance

MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION:  
RESUMES, INTERVIEWS AND APPEARANCE

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TEACHER'S RESOURCE BOOK

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# MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION: RESUMES, INTERVIEWS AND APPEARANCE

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# MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION: RESUMES, INTERVIEWS AND APPEARANCE

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Educators today have many responsibilities toward their students. Not only must they share knowledge and teach thinking skills, they also must prepare students for employment in the real world. In an uncertain economy, teenagers face the added disadvantage of inexperience with work—finding a first job can be especially challenging. In addition, many young people are so accustomed to laid-back speech, informal emails and relaxed text messaging that they do not understand the structured communication style of the working world. Students must be taught how to find and keep a job in order to overcome these difficulties.

Whether students are looking for a part-time job after school, a full-time summer job or the beginning of a career, they must master certain skills in order to be successful. The first step is actually finding a position. To meet that goal, teens must learn how to search for job openings in a variety of sources, from newspaper ads to word-of-mouth. They must also be able to determine what kind of work would be best suited to their interests and abilities.

Once young people locate a potential job, they need a firm grasp of the basics in order to be selected for hire. A student's first chance to make a good impression on a potential employer is through a neat application free of spelling errors, an organized resume and an interesting cover letter. The teenager who learns the art of these fundamentals will already be a step ahead of the competition.

The next opportunity to make a good impression is through an interview—a daunting thought for first-time job-searchers. With experience and practice, teens will lose their nervousness. For this reason, helping students prepare for future interviews should be a priority of educators.

Many teens may find that being hired was the easiest part of the work experience. Even after impressing the employer with a good resume or a strong interview, young people must then understand basic workplace etiquette and proper employee behavior in order to keep the job that they worked so hard to attain. A teenager who lands a job but constantly arrives late, fails to treat his coworker or bosses with respect, or breaks the rules of the company will not last long—and will miss out on an opportunity to gain vital experience and learn career skills.

***Making a Good Impression: Resumes, Interviews and Appearance*** aims to prepare teenagers for the challenging and exciting world of employment by guiding them through the steps of the job search. Students will follow several young people as they start new jobs, from discovering openings to writing resumes and cover letters to interviews and follow-ups. Along the way, important employee skills will be stressed. After viewing the video, students will be prepared to take their first steps into an exciting new phase in their lives.

After watching the video *Making a Good Impression: Resumes, Interviews and Appearance* and participating in the class activities included in this Teacher's Resource Book, your students will be able to:

- understand the basic resume format
- write their own resumes, presenting even minimal experience in an impressive light
- write a specific, personal cover letter
- find job openings suited to their own particular skills and interests
- interview for a job in a self-confident, practiced manner
- understand what is appropriate dress for interviews and the workplace
- project positive body language
- follow up with potential employers by telephone or letter
- cope with workplace difficulties with coworkers or supervisors

The video opens with a montage of young men and women introducing themselves to job interviewers. The narrator says, “Behind the smile of nearly every job-seeker is a jumble of questions: *Who do I contact? How do I look? What do I say?* You may be confident in your abilities, but if you can’t get in front of and impress the right people, your dream job will go to someone else.” The narrator goes on to explain the key to landing a great job is making a great first impression.

The narrator explains that the first step in landing a dream job is deciding what you would like to do. A series of young people share details about their dream positions, from ambassador to masseuse to TV producer or CEO of a major corporation. The biggest problem with such jobs, the narrator reminds viewers, is that many other people want them, too. Several career experts are introduced. As the video progresses, viewers will receive helpful advice from these authorities on career development.

Linda Domenitz, Director of Career Development and Placement at Capitol Community College, tells viewers, “It’s a very competitive job market. What that means is only one thing: that individuals have to become much more persistent and much more skillful in the hunt. They have to become experts at marketing themselves.”

The first tool that young people need to succeed is an attention-getting resume. A good resume is important because it is the first contact a potential employer has with a job seeker, and it provides the opportunity for the employer to find out basic information about the applicant. As Julie Hepburn, Associate Director of Career Services at Manchester Community College, explains, “The resume is going to be the first impression that a prospective employer gets of you.”

The video then outlines the three basic types of resumes. A chronological resume lists all jobs and schooling in order of the most recent to the least recent. A functional resume emphasizes skills over job experience. A combination resume uses elements from the first two types. Viewers are advised that no matter which resume format they use, their resumes should highlight important information about themselves and effectively demonstrate how their skills can meet the employer’s needs.

The program moves on to showing examples of resumes that include sections such as “Awards,” “Associations,” “Activities,” and “Community Service.” Julie Hepburn offers this tip for young job-seekers: “Community service is just as important a section heading as work experience because a lot of young students who don’t have a lot of paid employment experience may have tons of volunteer experience.”

Next, the narrator tells viewers that even the best resume will not be enough to land an interview without a good cover letter. Sandra Williams-Eskridge, Assistant Director of Career Services at Gateway Community College, explains to viewers, “The cover letter

needs to be developed to tell the reader right off why you're applying for the job, how you think that you qualify for the job, and ask them for an opportunity to come in for an interview." Julie Hepburn advises students to keep their cover letters as concise as possible and to include only information that directly relates to their resumes.

Viewers then see examples of cover letters containing grammatical and spelling errors. The experts stress that the cover letter should never contain such errors because they can eliminate any chance that the job seeker will be called in for an interview. Misspellings and grammatical errors send the unintended message that the potential employee is careless and unconcerned with details—qualities that many employers do not want to see. Sandra Williams Eskridge reminds viewers, "There are lots of words that sound alike, so don't count on your spell check software." The experts suggest that students have as many people as possible proofread their cover letters in order to ensure they do not contain any typos.

Next, the narrator explains how to find suitable job openings. The experts advise that job seekers should look beyond traditional sources like newspaper advertisements when searching for jobs. They should also use online job listings, job boards at college career centers, employment agencies and the Department of Labor. Cynthia Lowman, Career Specialist at the New Haven Board of Education, adds, "You want to network, which means word of mouth. Let people know that you're looking for a job, and what type of position you're looking for."

The video then addresses the topic of interviews. The experts counsel viewers to prepare carefully for an interview by learning as much as possible about the company. The Internet and local newspaper stories are two good sources of information. Knowing about the company is useful because it lets the job seeker know if he or she will like the position, and it will also make him or her more confident during the interview.

Dressing appropriately for an interview is discussed next. The experts point out that the first impression an employer makes is often based on appearance, so job seekers should choose their clothing carefully. Sandra Williams-Eskridge advises viewers to dress formally, even if the other employees are dressed casually. "When you walk in, you want the interviewer to think that you are serious about this particular opportunity." The video suggests that viewers be neat and clean, without inappropriate makeup, jewelry or fragrance. Clothes should be in conservative, professional colors like black, navy and charcoal. Shiny, distracting fabrics and bright colors should be avoided.

Next, the program shows young job seekers practicing their skills by participating in mock interviews. Cynthia Lowman explains that this role-playing "gives them a feel of what they're going to experience when they go to an actual interview. It's a forum where they can exercise and try to relax and experience the process."

The narrator then tells viewers that the chance to make a good impression begins immediately. Julie Hepburn adds, “A strong and firm handshake is one of the best ways that you can make a positive first impression. Maintaining eye contact as much as you can and being an attentive listener is also very important.” Good eye contact helps job seekers because it demonstrates dedication and openness.

The video then covers common interview questions. Viewers should be able to answer questions about their career goals, why they selected that particular field, what they can contribute to the company, when they can work and why they should be hired. Job seekers may also be asked to assess their own weaknesses; viewers are advised to be honest, to show understanding that that trait has been a weakness in the past, but to also emphasize that they are working to improve.

The experts then discuss the importance of asking pertinent questions to the interviewer. Asking questions shows interest and can reveal important information about the company. Good questions also show that the job seeker has researched the company. This demonstrates dedication and effort that impresses most potential employers. In addition, asking questions can help the interviewee decide if the position is truly one that he or she would like. However, the experts caution that job seekers should not ask about salary until they are actually offered the position. Viewers are advised to research common salaries through the Department of Labor website so that they know what range is normal for that particular job.

Next, the video outlines a series of interviewing mistakes that should be avoided. Job seekers should not bring friends to an interview, smoke on the day of the interview, or lie to the employer. Sandra Williams-Eskridge explains, “Lying is a big no-no because if you lie, it constitutes fraud. If you lie on your application, it’s fraud.”

The narrator and the experts suggest that job seekers should tell potential employers why they should be hired. They explain that hiring a new employee is an investment for the company. It makes a positive impression on the employer if a job seeker can discuss how being hired would be a good investment for the company. Finally, job seekers should shake the interviewer’s hand, maintain eye contact and thank the interviewer for the opportunity to be considered for the position. At this point in the video, viewers see several young people going through their mock interviews while the experts comment on their strengths and weaknesses. Then, the narrator reviews the most important things to remember about interviewing.

The program turns to the topic of thank you letters and follow-up calls. Job seekers are advised to send a thank-you note by email or traditional mail within 24 hours of the interview. Then, young people should follow up with a phone call to demonstrate their sincere interest in the job. Cynthia Lowman explains, “By and large, the people that follow up will get hired a lot faster.”

Finally, the narrator goes over all the lessons of the video. To make a good impression, viewers are counseled to write attention-grabbing resumes and cover letters, to use every available resource for job opportunities, to research potential employers, to dress well and to practice their interviewing skills. As the video draws to a close, the narrator leaves viewers with this thought: “The job doesn’t always go to the most qualified person. It goes to the person who makes the best impression.”

# STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Writing a resume for the first time can spark a lot of questions—how do I organize it? What should be included and what should be left out? Why should I even write a resume if I have no experience? Believe it or not, preparing a solid resume is not as hard as it looks. Even if you think you have no experience to include, you probably have done something that would interest an employer and show your good qualities.

Take a moment to think about all your experiences and activities and write them down in the appropriate section below. List everything you can think of, and don't worry about including experiences that you might not think are important enough to mention—you can cut down your list later when you actually write your resume.

**EDUCATION** (any junior high or high schools you have attended):

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**RELEVANT COURSES** (any classes you've taken that could help in a job):

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**WORK EXPERIENCE** (any jobs you have previously held):

*Example: babysitting, gift-wrapping at the mall, mowing neighbor's lawn*

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**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE** (any work you haven't been paid for):

*Example: helping at food pantry, tutoring*

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*This activity is continued on the next page.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**ACTIVITIES** (any clubs or organizations you're involved in):

*Example: Boy Scouts, school paper, soccer team, math club, student council*

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**HONORS/AWARDS** (from school, a job or an activity):

*Example: honor roll, MVP, employee of the month*

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**SPECIAL SKILLS/INTERESTS** (things that set you apart):

*Example: proficient in Spanish, computer skills, sports, poetry, travel*

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

A good resume is an essential tool in the job search. A well-organized, clear resume will catch the eye of potential employers, display your strengths and experiences, and set you apart from other people who are also interested in the job. Using your answers from the *Pre-Resume Worksheet* activity, along with the *Resume Writing* and *Sample Resume* fact sheets to help you, prepare your own resume on a separate sheet of paper. Follow the step-by-step directions below.

1. **CONTACT INFORMATION:** First, type your full name, your address, your phone number and your email address at the top of the page. You can use any format that you wish: centered, at the far right corner or at the far left corner.
2. **OBJECTIVE:** What kind of position are you looking for? Describe it in one sentence, such as “sales position in a clothing store.” Type out “Objective” (you can make it bold or underline it for clarity) and your description, starting on the left side of the page.
3. **EDUCATION:** First, type out the full name and location of your current school and your anticipated graduation date. You can also include your cumulative grade point average (GPA) if you like.
4. **RELEVANT COURSEWORK:** This can be a separate section or a subset of Education, according to your preference. Type out any classes you have already taken or are now enrolled in that are related to the type of job you’d like to have. For example, if you would like to work as an assistant in a local business, listing recent classes like Typing, Computers and Marketing could be useful.
5. **HONORS:** This can also be a subset of Education if you wish. Include honors you have received from school and activities, such as the honor roll, Dean’s list or National Honor Society. Also include the dates for each award.
6. **EXPERIENCE:** This is the section to record your previous employment or volunteer work history. Type out the organization, your job title and the dates you worked. Also describe your duties at each job succinctly, using active verbs like “organized,” “planned,” “supervised,” etc. Look at the *Sample Resume* fact sheet for the format.
7. **ACTIVITIES:** List your extracurricular activities, making sure to note any leadership positions (like team captain or club president). Include the dates you were involved.
8. **SKILLS:** Here is where you add anything else that could impress an employer, like foreign language skills, computer knowledge or typing speed.
9. **INTERESTS:** Employers like to see a bit of your personality. Include a few of your favorite hobbies and interests—anything from pottery to writing poems to NASCAR races can be mentioned.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

|                           |
|---------------------------|
| <b>ACTIVITY 3B</b>        |
| <b>APPLYING FOR A JOB</b> |

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:** List each job held. Start with your present or last job. Include military service assignments and volunteer activities.

**1.**

| <b>Employer Name / Address</b> | <b>Dates</b>  | <b>Work Performed</b> |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
|                                | From      To  |                       |
|                                |               |                       |
| Job Title                      | Hourly/Salary |                       |
|                                |               |                       |
| Reason for Leaving             | Phone         |                       |
|                                |               |                       |
|                                |               |                       |

**2.**

| <b>Employer Name / Address</b> | <b>Dates</b>  | <b>Work Performed</b> |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
|                                | From      To  |                       |
|                                |               |                       |
| Job Title                      | Hourly/Salary |                       |
|                                |               |                       |
| Reason for Leaving             | Phone         |                       |
|                                |               |                       |
|                                |               |                       |

**EDUCATION HISTORY:**

|   | <b>High School</b>  | <b>College</b> |
|---|---------------------|----------------|
| School Name   |                     |                |
| Years Completed (circle)                                | 9    10    11    12 |                |
| Diploma/Degree  |                     |                |
| Describe Course of Study                                |                     |                |
| Describe Specialized Training or Skills                 |                     |                |
| Describe Internships and/or Extra-Curricular Activities |                     |                |
| Honors Received   |                     |                |

If you need additional space, please continue on a separate sheet of paper.

*This activity is continued on the next page.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a veteran of the U.S. military service?  Yes  No

Do you have any physical, mental, or medical impairment or disability that would limit your job performance for the position for which you are applying?  Yes  No

If yes, explain. \_\_\_\_\_

What foreign languages do you speak, read, and/or write? \_\_\_\_\_

List professional, trade, business, or civic activities in which you have been involved.

Give name, address, and phone number of three references not related to you.

---

|             |                |                     |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <i>Name</i> | <i>Address</i> | <i>Phone Number</i> |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------|

---

|             |                |                     |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <i>Name</i> | <i>Address</i> | <i>Phone Number</i> |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------|

---

|             |                |                     |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <i>Name</i> | <i>Address</i> | <i>Phone Number</i> |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------|

Summarize below any special skills or qualifications that you have acquired from employment or from other experiences.

State any additional information that you feel may be helpful in considering your application.

---

**Agreement:**

I certify that the answers given herein are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

I authorize investigation of all statements contained in this application for employment, as may be necessary in arriving at an employment decision.

In the event of employment, I understand that false or misleading information given in my application or interview(s) may result in discharge. I also understand that I am required to abide by all rules and regulations of the Company.

---

*Signature of Applicant*

*Date*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The best way to ensure a fun, rewarding working experience is to choose a job you like. The interests, hobbies and skills you have right now can translate into a great job. Use this worksheet to explore your preferences, interests and the things you like to do—then think of a job that involves them. It can be any position, from an after-school job to a future career.

My favorite school subjects are:

---

---

Some related jobs might be:

---

---

My favorite extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, organizations, etc.) are:

---

---

Some related jobs might be:

---

---

I am really good at:

---

---

Some related jobs might be:

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---

Some hobbies I enjoy are:

---

---

Some related jobs might be:

---

---

I like to do these things with my friends:

---

---

Some related jobs might be:

---

---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What do you want to be when you grow up? You’ve probably heard this question a thousand times. What do you answer? A doctor? A chef? The CEO of a huge company? It’s great to have high career goals, but no one lands a dream job right away. Unless you’re very lucky, you’ll have to work your way up to your ideal job.

**PART ONE:**

Do some research to find out ways to achieve your career goals. First, think of your ideal job for the future. Then research what steps you will need to take to get there. For example, if you would like to be a surgeon, first you must go to medical school. Use books, career guides and the Internet. If you can, talk to someone who has the job you’re interested in. Remember, there are often many different ways to reach the same goal, so keep an open mind.

My dream job is: \_\_\_\_\_

Education required to get this job: (*bachelor’s degree in marketing, Ph.D. in biology*)

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible internships related to this job:

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible entry-level positions in the field:

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible higher-level positions in the field:

\_\_\_\_\_

**PART TWO:**

On a separate sheet of paper, draw a “map” of your career path. Look over your answers to Part One, then design a diagram that shows each stepping stone leading to your final goal. Be creative. Your “map” can look like a branching tree, a road map, a web or anything else you can think of.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What qualities do employers look for in the young people they hire? This is your chance to find out by interviewing a local shop owner, business administrator, store manager or even a neighbor or family member—anyone who hires young people as part of his or her job.

**PART ONE:**

Write out the name and company of the person you are interviewing. Then conduct an interview on a separate sheet of paper. You can ask some or all of the suggested questions below, as well as some of your own. Record the employer's answers carefully.

- What are the most important qualities for a young employee to have?
- How important are an applicant's past school grades to you?
- How important are an applicant's extracurricular activities to you?
- Would you hire a teenager who had never had a job before? Why or why not?
- Describe the attitude of an ideal young employee.
- How important is an employee's attitude?
- How important are communication skills to you?
- What really impresses you when you are interviewing a young person?
- What are some mistakes you have seen young people make during interviews?
- How should a prospective employee dress for an interview?
- In your mind, is there anything a young person could do that would automatically disqualify him or herself for the job?

**PART TWO:**

Share your findings with your classmates. Did the employers you interviewed give similar answers? Were there any common themes to your findings?

**PART THREE:**

As a class, compile your results into a job search guide. Include tips for resumes, interviews, and any other insights you found during your research. Keep the guide in the classroom so all students can use it for future reference.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Many young people work after school or on weekends. They may want to make some extra money, obtain valuable experience, make new friends and have fun. The right job can fulfill all of these desires—you just have to find it. Do some research and find five jobs you would really enjoy. Use a variety of sources to find potential jobs: the Internet, the newspaper, your school guidance office and don't forget the "old fashioned" approach—ask local business managers if they need any more employees. You may be interested in interviewing for one or more of these jobs, but even if you do not want a job now, you will know how to find one in the future.

Record your five potential jobs here. Remember, only include a job if you think you would enjoy it and you are qualified for it now.

**JOB ONE:**

Position title: \_\_\_\_\_ Company/business: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you find out about this job? \_\_\_\_\_

Why would you enjoy it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**JOB TWO:**

Position title: \_\_\_\_\_ Company/business: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you find out about this job? \_\_\_\_\_

Why would you enjoy it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**JOB THREE:**

Position title: \_\_\_\_\_ Company/business: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you find out about this job? \_\_\_\_\_

Why would you enjoy it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*This activity is continued on the next page.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**JOB FOUR:**

Position title: \_\_\_\_\_ Company/business: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you find out about this job? \_\_\_\_\_

Why would you enjoy it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**JOB FIVE:**

Position title: \_\_\_\_\_ Company/business: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you find out about this job? \_\_\_\_\_

Why would you enjoy it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

A great way to impress a potential employer is to be knowledgeable about the company. You don't need to study for hours or memorize every fact you find, but a basic grasp of how the company works and its place in the economy will put you at an advantage when you go on an interview—and could make the difference in your being hired or not.

Do some research on a company that interests you, whether you would like to work there in the near future or later in life. Gather information from a variety of sources: visit the workplace and observe, go to the library and use the Internet to answer the questions below. If you're stuck, try these resources: the company's Web site, local newspaper clippings, the yellow pages, business directories at your library.

Company name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Is it a locally-owned business or part of a national chain?

\_\_\_\_\_

If it is part of a national chain, how many branches are there?

\_\_\_\_\_

Where is the company (or its nearest branch) located?

\_\_\_\_\_

Does the company have headquarters? Where?

\_\_\_\_\_

Who owns the company?

\_\_\_\_\_

How long has the company been in business?

\_\_\_\_\_

How many people does the company employ?

\_\_\_\_\_

What do employees wear?

\_\_\_\_\_

What are some typical employee duties?

\_\_\_\_\_

Who should you contact if you would like to be hired?

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

If you've never had a job, you may be surprised to learn how employers expect their employees to dress. What seems like a perfectly acceptable outfit to you could be seen as sloppy or too casual to your boss. The clothes and accessories you wear send an important message on the job, and it starts with your interview.

Test your knowledge of appropriate workplace attire. First, read through the list below and mark the items you think are appropriate for an interview with an "A" and the items you think are inappropriate with an "I." Then ask two people in charge of hiring at two different local businesses what they think.

|  | <b>My answers</b> | <b>Employer #1</b> | <b>Employer #2</b> |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Khaki pants?                                   |                   |                    |                    |
| One or two earrings (females)?                 |                   |                    |                    |
| One or two earrings (males)?                   |                   |                    |                    |
| Multiple earrings per ear (males and females)? |                   |                    |                    |
| Jeans?   |                   |                    |                    |
| Open-toed shoes?                               |                   |                    |                    |
| Band T-shirts?                                 |                   |                    |                    |
| Tank tops?                                     |                   |                    |                    |
| Sleeveless shirts?                             |                   |                    |                    |
| Necklace?                                      |                   |                    |                    |
| Long hair (males)?                             |                   |                    |                    |
| Visible tattoo?                                |                   |                    |                    |
| Above the knee skirts (females)?               |                   |                    |                    |
| Button-down shirts?                            |                   |                    |                    |
| Tight black pants?                             |                   |                    |                    |
| Pink nail polish (females)?                    |                   |                    |                    |
| Sweaters?                                      |                   |                    |                    |
| Running shoes?                                 |                   |                    |                    |
| Nose rings?                                    |                   |                    |                    |

Did you and the employers agree? Did the two employers' answers differ? Write a brief summary of the results, and explain what you have learned about workplace fashion etiquette.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

An important way to make yourself stand out during an interview is to ask intelligent questions when the employer gives you an opportunity. This is a good idea for several reasons: it lets you find out about the company's specific needs so you can further demonstrate how you can meet them, it makes you look enthusiastic and interested in the job and it can teach you about the culture of the workplace and the company values.

The following are issues that you may want to find out about during an interview. Think up several questions that will lead you to this information and write them below.

What would you like to know about your boss and coworkers?

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What would you like to know about the duties that will be expected of you as an employee (specific tasks, hours, etc.)?

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What would you like to know about employee training?

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What would you like to know about the next step in the hiring process?

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What would you like to know about pay and benefits? (Note: this should always be the LAST thing you ask.)

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Let's say you've found your dream job, turned in your resume and cover letter and had a great interview—it's easy to assume that you're done, right? Not quite. It's a good idea to follow up after an interview with a telephone call or a short letter. By thanking your potential employer for his or her time and asking courteously about your status in the hiring process, you are showing that you are polite, professional and enthusiastic about the job, which all tell the employer that you will make a model employee.

Each situation is different, but it usually does not matter if you follow up with a call or a letter. Practice both below.

### **FOLLOW-UP PHONE CALL**

You should make a thank-you call a few days after your interview. Pair up with a classmate and take turns role-playing the phone call. One of you should play the employer and the other the job-seeker. After you are done, switch places and role-play again.

If you are the job-seeker: after you read the points below, turn this sheet over and role-play without referring back to it. Use your own words, but be polite. Make sure you address the points below.

- you would like to thank the employer for his or her time
- you are interested in the job
- you would like to know if the company has made a hiring decision yet
- you would be happy to provide any other information the employer may want

If you are the employer: listen to what the job-seeker has to say and answer his or her questions. When you are done, give your partner feedback. Think about these points:

- did your partner address all the points above?
- was he or she polite?
- did your partner sound serious, or did he or she giggle?
- did your partner sound enthusiastic?

### **FOLLOW-UP LETTER**

Your potential employer should receive your letter a few days after the interview. It should be short, polite and enthusiastic. Use your own words, but address the following points on a separate sheet of paper:

- you would like to thank the employer for the interview
- you are excited about working for the employer (be specific—give a reason why)
- the employer should know how to contact you

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Read the following scenarios, and explain how you would handle each situation. Be specific. Your answers should prove that you know what kind of behavior is appropriate for an employee.

**1.**

Roberto spends many afternoons at his desk, listening to a baseball game on his Walkman and pretending to look busy. He has asked you to warn him if you see the boss approaching. What do you tell him?

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**2.**

Jules is your supervisor. He's been with the company for seven years. He likes to gossip about other workers. He tells you stories about promotions, firings, flirtations, and more. How can you make it clear to Jules that you're not interested in hearing his tales?

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**3.**

You and Zora share an office. She shows up for work one day with an electronic voice changer. She spends twenty minutes making prank phone calls to all her friends, disguising her voice. She keeps encouraging you to try her new machine. You've told her that you don't want to try it. She continues to make prank phone calls, which distract you from your own work. How do you deal with her?

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Things will not always go smoothly on the job—sometimes you may have problems or disagreements with your boss or your coworkers. Good communication skills can solve these problems quickly and make your job more enjoyable. Read through the following situations, then practice talking through the difficulties with a partner playing the role of the boss or coworker. Be polite and respectful, but make sure you express your point of view. You may conduct role-plays with your classmates, or you may write your own answers on a separate sheet of paper.

**1.**

You work in an office where you have a cubicle next to several other coworkers. One of them, Suzanne, spends a lot of time talking—to everyone. She carries on loud phone conversations with her friends, which distracts you from your job. She also insists on talking to you throughout the day, telling you about her weekend and her social life. You think Suzanne’s behavior is inappropriate and that it interferes with you doing a good job.

**2.**

You’ve been working at the movie theater for a few months. One of your coworkers, Jim, has been working there for over a year. Jim isn’t really a mean person, but he likes to tease you on the job. He makes fun of your performance, your friends, and many things you say, which really bothers you. You once told him to stop, but he just said, “lighten up, it’s not a big deal,” and continued his teasing.

**3.**

You really like your job at the doctor’s office, but your boss can be very demanding. She expects you to be able to do many tasks around the office very quickly, and she yells at you if you ask her questions. She also gets upset if you don’t know how to do certain things even though you’ve never been taught how to do them. You think she is being unfair to you and her behavior makes you tense and nervous that you will be fired.

*This activity is continued on the next page.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**4.**

You were really excited to land a job at the newspaper because you want to be a writer and it will be great experience for you. Your boss is very friendly, but he doesn't seem to take your position very seriously. He asks you to get him coffee, pick up his dry cleaning, and do very repetitive tasks like stuffing envelopes, and you don't have much time left over to do any newspaper work. You don't mind helping your boss, but you really want to get some experience with writing and reporting and take on more responsibility.

**5.**

You're a day camp counselor and you and Bob are in charge of your own group of children. Bob is a few years older than you. Most of your work is done alone, without your boss around, and Bob likes to slack off and leave you to take care of all activities. He will take a nap, call his friends on his cell phone, or sunbathe when he is supposed to be helping you entertain the children. You don't want to "tattle" on Bob to your boss, but you don't think it's fair that you have to do all the work—plus, it's very difficult to watch all the children by yourself.

# FACT SHEETS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your resume should be divided into clearly defined sections. Most resumes include the following sections: heading (contact information), objective, education, work experience, activities, special skills and interests. Honors and awards are often included as subsets of education and activities. Here are some tips to remember when writing your resume.

**Keep it brief.**

Your resume should be no longer than one typewritten page.

**Keep it clear.**

Your objective should be stated in one concise, specific sentence at the top of your resume.

**Keep it organized.**

The layout of your resume is important. Experiment with different ways of using indents, capitalization, spacing, underlining, and bold print to make it attention-grabbing and easy to read. Good quality paper is important too.

**Make yourself shine.**

If your work experience is minimal, play up your school or extracurricular achievements. Don't forget to highlight good grades, athletic or artistic accomplishments, or volunteer work.

**Don't forget the obvious.**

Always include your correct address, telephone number, and if you have one, email address.

**Work your way backwards.**

It is proper resume style to list your experiences in reverse chronological order. Use the past tense, and include the dates when you worked.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Use action words.**

They grab the reader’s attention and highlight your work qualities. A few examples:

|          |            |           |            |
|----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Taught   | Wrote      | Gathered  | Handled    |
| Achieved | Developed  | Improved  | Organized  |
| Prepared | Researched | Served as | Supervised |

**Read it, re-read it, read it again.**

Check your resume for spelling and punctuation errors, then have at least one other person look it over too. When in doubt, check a style manual.

**Prepare your references.**

But don’t include them on the resume. Most employers understand that you will have references available on request. Make sure you have their permission before you give them to a potential employer.

**Don’t be afraid to get personal.**

Include a short section describing your interests. Many employers like hearing about you as a person, and it will set you apart from the rest.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Samantha Duffy**  
**1031 Daley Road, Chicago, IL 60609**  
**(601) 555-4545**  
**Samd@core.net**

**Objective: To work as a lab assistant in a scientific firm.**

**Education:**

Midland High School, Chicago, IL      Graduation date: June 2004      GPA: 3.85

**Relevant Coursework:** Biology  
Chemistry—General and Organic  
Math—Algebra I, II; Trigonometry  
English Honors  
Earth Science

**Honors:** Dean’s List 2001, 2002, 2003  
Bausch & Lomb Award for Science  
Member, National Honor Society

**Experience:**

**Student Tutor,** Midlands High School      Fall 2002  
Assisted students with science coursework  
Created filing system for biology lab  
Graded worksheets for chemistry, biology

**Lab Assistant,** Midlands High School      2000-2002  
Maintained lab equipment and supplies  
Worked independently setting up daily lab

**Volunteer,** Helping Hands Soup Kitchen, Chicago, IL      1999  
Organized weekend lunches

**Activities:**

Varsity volleyball team      2000-2003  
Girl Scouts—Assistant Leader      2001-2002  
Science Club      2000

**Skills:**

Familiar with typing, computer word processing programs  
Working knowledge of Spanish

**Interests:**

Horseback riding, gardening, 1950s French cinema

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Once you find a position that sounds promising, you should be ready to apply for it. Some ads might ask you to call for an appointment. More often, the ad will instruct you to submit a written resume. Always include a cover letter when you send your resume to a company.

While you may send the same resume to several different companies, you must write a new cover letter each time to show your interest in working for a particular company.

As you prepare your cover letter, follow these tips:

- Identify the position for which you are applying.
- Mention how you found out about the position.
- Include all information requested in the ad.
- Tell the employer why you would be the right person for the job. Expand on your resume, highlight your best qualities and tell why you are interested in the position. Make sure to specifically explain your ability to meet the employer's requirements.
- If you can, give examples of past behavior that prove your claim that you can fulfill the employer's needs.
- Close your letter by expressing your interest in an interview.
- Keep it short and neat—under one page.
- Don't write "enclosed is my resume." The employer can already see that, and it wastes valuable space.
- Use simple language.
- Check your spelling and grammar.
- If possible, address your letter to a specific person, not "To Whom It May Concern."
- Make sure your envelope is addressed properly and has enough postage.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**SAMPLE COVER LETTER**

413 Wyoming Street  
New Orleans, LA 55501  
(123) 555-3456

January 16, 2003

Mr. Tom Heatherton  
Human Resources  
Sky Land Skydiving, Inc  
1215 Nova Rd  
New Orleans, LA 55501

Dear Mr. Heatherton,

I am writing to express my interest in joining the Sky Land Skydiving team as a skydiving instructor. I learned of your need for a beginning-level skydiving instructor through the Bayou Bay University career services Web site, and I am very excited about the opportunity to add to my skydiving skills with the number one company in the state.

Your advertisement states that you are looking for an experienced, charismatic person to teach skydiving to beginners. I believe I would be perfect for the position. I have been skydiving since I was twelve years old and I recently acquired the rank of "Advanced" from the American Skydiving Association. In addition, I have experience instructing adults in all aspects of the art of skydiving. As the President and Founder of the Bayou Bay University Skydiving Club, I organized outings, taught beginning students and supervised all activities related to our excursions. All this, plus the fact that I was voted "MVP" of the Southern Louisiana Skydiving League demonstrates my ability, enthusiasm and passion for this art.

I believe that I would exceed your expectations as the newest Sky Land instructor, and I am excited about the possibility of taking my skills to the next level. I would welcome the chance to meet with you in person and further discuss the position. Please feel free to contact me at any time. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Jensen Jones

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

You may be a super worker, but how do others see you? As we all know, dress and personal grooming are important factors in how you are judged by others. In some workplaces there are specific dress codes. It is your responsibility to make sure that you understand and follow the dress code for your job. In most workplaces, however, there are more subtle forces at work. It is not always so easy to know how to fit in.

Here are ten ways you can dress for success:

- 1.** Be scrupulous about personal cleanliness. Bathe daily, and keep hair and fingernails clean and conservatively trimmed.
- 2.** Be extremely sparing with perfumes and colognes. Many people are allergic to scents and others find them inappropriate for business.
- 3.** Be sure that your clothes are clean and pressed and your shoes are in good condition.
- 4.** Wear clothing that fits comfortably. Tight-fitting clothes are distracting, and overlarge clothes that hang sloppily are unattractive.
- 5.** Observe the way other people on the job dress. If no one is wearing sneakers, don't be the first. If it is customary to wear neckties or jackets, do so. If no one wears short skirts, watch your hemline.
- 6.** Although you may want to follow fashion trends, be conservative. Save the more extreme fads for social occasions. At work, wear simple, unobtrusive jewelry—nothing that jingles.
- 7.** In selecting work clothes, choose colors that are not loud or garish.
- 8.** Women should wear makeup sparingly. Men should be clean-shaven.
- 9.** Although you have the right to unusual hairstyles and unconventional piercings (nose, lips, etc.), many prospective employers may be turned off by them. You may have to choose between a nose ring and a job situation you really want.
- 10.** You don't need a lot of clothes—just the right ones. Whatever your personal style, select some simple, conservative separates that you can combine into several different outfits.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Body language is a language we all speak, whether we know it or not. Good communicators understand the importance of body language. They take care to project a positive image with their bodies as well as with their words. Good body language is especially important when interviewing for a job because the physical impression you make on your potential employer can make the difference between being hired or not.

Remember that the person meeting you for the first time is reading your body language to make judgments about you. Are you presenting a neatly dressed, well-poised person? Are you someone who demonstrates and deserves respect? Are you ready to meet new situations with self-confidence? Pay attention to the following aspects of body language as you interact with others:

## **Smile**

Approach new situations with a pleasant facial expression. A friendly smile is the best introduction you can give yourself when meeting someone new. Plus, smiling increases the flow of blood to the brain and has a calming effect on the body—which can certainly help in a nerve-wracking situation like an interview.

## **Posture**

Practice good posture until it comes naturally to you. Your back should be straight, and your head held up. Entering a room in this straightforward manner says that you are an able person, unafraid to meet new challenges. Conversely, a bent back or drooped head suggests depression and lack of self-confidence. Make sure to sit up straight in your chair, not slouching or leaning, even if you are nervous.

## **Eye Contact**

Make eye contact with the other person. You don't have to stare, but your eyes should meet often during the interview. Shifty eyes that avoid contact with others suggest self-consciousness and stress.

## **Hands**

Sit comfortably without fidgeting. Arms should be at your sides or in your lap, not folded across your chest—this tells another person that you are blocking him or her out. When standing, keep your hands at your sides, not in your pockets. Keep your hands away from your face and head, and avoid scratching or covering any part of your face. These gestures make you look as if you are not being straightforward. Most important: be honest in what you say, and your body will not give you away.

## **Grooming**

Let your personal grooming convey an “I care” attitude. If you are careless about your appearance, a potential employer may be concerned that you will be careless about your job duties. Keep your hair clean and trimmed, bathe daily and use deodorant, keep your clothes neat and pressed, trim and clean your fingernails and choose an appropriate outfit.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewing successfully requires a combination of skills. You have one critical goal: to convince the potential employer that you are the right person for the job. You'll have to use all the communication skills you've learned and rehearsed. These suggestions for how to be a winning job candidate come from college placement specialists, business personnel managers and career counselors around the country.

- 1.** Arrive early. Be certain you know how to get there. If necessary, find the place the day before.
- 2.** Allow enough time. When you make the appointment, find out how much time it is likely to take. Don't seem rushed.
- 3.** Know the correct spelling and pronunciation of the name of the company and the person you will meet.
- 4.** Dress conservatively and neatly. Be well groomed. Your skin, teeth, hair and nails must all be faultless. Avoid heavy colognes as well as distracting jewelry.
- 5.** Arrive prepared. Be ready to talk about your strengths without shyness or bragging. Be aware that you will be asked about your background, education and career goals. Also, do some research about the business and its products.
- 6.** Introduce yourself by name, smile, and shake hands. Your posture should be erect. Maintain good eye contact. Keep your voice strong and confident.
- 7.** It is a good idea to have a pad and pencil ready to jot down points that you want to remember.
- 8.** Be prepared to ask questions. You will probably be given a chance at the end of the interview. (Avoid questions about raises and vacations at the first interview. There will be time for those issues when you are offered the job.)
- 9.** Be honest. Your eyes, hands and face will give you away if you're not. If there is a negative point that can't be avoided, think ahead about how you will handle it.
- 10.** End the interview properly: thank the interviewer, and ask when you might expect to hear from the company.
- 11.** Within two days after the interview, write a thank-you letter to the interviewer. The letter should thank the interviewer for the time and opportunity he or she gave you. Remind the interviewer of your eagerness to work for the company. It should be a short, courteous letter.

**Great workers...**

Are open to new ideas.

Have the initiative to put new ideas into action.

Show an interest in learning how to do the job the right way.

Are flexible and ready to do anything that the employer needs done.

Care about what customers, clients, and coworkers find important.

Pay attention when they are customers and notice how others provide good service.

Know how to work well with a team.

Know when to take a break.

Volunteer to help others if they see a need.

**Great workers do not...**

Blame others for their mistakes.

Get discouraged when others disagree with their ideas.

Assume anything negative about anyone or any situation.

Gossip about their coworkers or supervisors.

Talk to their friends on the job.

Put off things that can be done now.

Complain helplessly; rather, they work to find solutions.

Support an idea simply because others agree with it.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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