

# The Job Search Manual

## **The Job Search Process**

This section discusses a step-by-step process to obtain a job.

## **Networking – The Way to Find and Land a Career**

One of the best ways to land a job is through networking. This section gives you a guide to building and working with your network to help you with your job search process.

## **Informational Interviewing**

Learn how to build your network and gain knowledge about specific careers, companies and industries. This section helps you connect with professionals in your field of interest.

## **Company Research**

Knowing about a company is a necessary part to impressing the interviewer, and it is a good way to narrow down your job search. This section proposes ways to obtain information about your company of choice. If you are unsure about your company of choice, then do not worry; the resources in this section will also help you do research to identify what companies or types of companies you like.

## **Internet Job Search**

The Internet section introduces you to the idea that the Internet is an indispensable tool for the research phase of your job search. This section highlights the ways in which you can utilize it.

## **Resume Guidelines**

This section provides you with information on drafting resumes and provides samples of resumes, action words, and a reference page.

## **Letters**

Letters sent before and after an interview are pertinent. This section provides you with the tools needed to write cover letters, thank you notes, letters of acceptance and more. Samples are provided for each type of letter.

## **Interviewing**

While your resume was key in getting you the interview, the interview itself will be the deciding factor in whether you get the job. This section discusses variables that should not be ignored when going for an interview.

## **Salary**

This section provides you with information on what to consider when discussing, accepting and/or negotiating salary.

## **Career Development Center (CDC)**

The Career Development Center (CDC) section provides you with a list of CDC staff members and contact information.

# The Job Search Process

## Assess

You must understand what matters to you and what you have to offer the employer. To do this, assess your stance on the following:

- Work values
- Career interests
- Personality preferences
- Skills (i.e. work-related, professional knowledge and transferable skills)

## Explore and research

- Use online resources to research occupations, specific jobs, industries and companies.
- Conduct field research by using your network (and their networks) as a resource to gather advice and information.
  - Identify a range of career options.
  - Explore the specifics of each option.
  - Identify what goes on in different industries and positions.
  - Determine which industries, companies and positions interest you.

## Select and prepare

- Focus on what you want to do by narrowing your options to a manageable number.
- Select companies you want to work with and positions in which you want to work.
- Select your geographic search area.
- Create a competitive resume, cover letter and portfolio (when appropriate).
- Develop strong interview skills through preparation and practice.
- Network, and continue to grow and manage your contacts.

## Implement

- Contact prospective employers that you have identified through your network or research.
- Utilize your network to gain entry to interview opportunities with these employers (when possible).
  - Ask your network for leads.
  - Always use the name of your referral source (i.e. your network contact).
- Set objectives and goals:
  - How many calls you will make to your networks to solicit leads.
  - How many leads you will contact in one day.
  - How many company website you will explore and research.
- Be persistent, organized and consistent with your efforts.
- Keep in touch with your network in order to keep the relationship alive.

# Networking – The Way to Find and Land a Career

The prevalence of online and electronic communication may have caused face-to-face interactions to lose significance - at least in the minds of today's college students. Despite all the social networking happening on college campuses, students often fail to understand the importance of professional networking in their selection of and search for a career. The most compelling reason to network is that it is the single best way to find the career you want. Why? It is simple. Most of the best jobs are never advertised; as amazing as it sounds, the evidence has consistently shown that 7 out of 10 jobs are landed through networking. Most organizations look first at people they know, and people who are recommended by someone they know when it is time to hire someone. Many companies report that 40 to 50 percent of open positions are filled by candidates referred by staff members. There is no denying that networking requires more effort and, for many students, a step outside of their comfort zone. It is no doubt easier and less scary, to wait for job offers to pour in from the resume you posted on Monster.com, but the data shows clearly that networking is much more likely to produce the result you want.

## Networking – Exploration then implementation

### Exploration

The best time to develop a network is before you need it. People will be most receptive to your initial outreach when you are still a student, seeking advice and information about what you want to do with your life.

Exploration usually involves two steps:

1. Phase 1 - Specifying a range of career options.
2. Phase 2 - Exploring the specifics of each career option. Do you understand what goes on in different industries or what different career functions entail? Do you have some ideas of the types of companies or positions you are interested in? The work/life experience of others can be tremendously helpful by providing you with information about jobs, industries, companies and the transition from campus to career.

### Implementation

As graduation approaches and your search for that first job begins, the network you have developed and nurtured can provide a referral to someone who has the power to offer you a job.

## Developing and growing your network

Determine who your network is

Everyone has a network – everyone. Your **inner circle** (first level networking) is already willing to help and advocate for you. They care about your success, and most will go out of their way to help you by giving information, advice and names of others who can help. Your **outer circle** (second level networking) includes those people you know by affiliation or reputation. These people probably know you by name or association and are open to a conversation with you. Over time and with appropriate effort on your part, these people can become part of your inner circle. Then, there is the network you never knew you had: the friends and relatives of your friends and relatives. Many people will be willing to meet you based on your mutual connections. It is highly likely that even if your current network does not know someone who can help, someone in this extended network will.

### First level networking (**inner circle**)

- Make a list of everyone you know, and find and write down their telephone numbers.
- Call (do not e-mail) each one and tell them that you are seeking advice about your career.
- Ask the contact what jobs, careers, or organizations he/she thinks you would best fit into.
- Ask for the opportunity to meet in person.
- Ask the contact to refer you to two new contacts who might have information.
- Thank the contact and offer to keep him/her posted on your progress.
- Make a record of when you talked, what advice was given, names and phone numbers of the referrals that were given, and some personal interest or hobby that the contact has.
- Who is in your inner circle?
  - Relatives and in-laws
  - Current and former classmates
  - Current and former roommates
  - Fellow association member
  - Your accountant
  - Current and former bosses
  - Alumni
  - Local business executives
  - Current and former teachers
  - Current and former neighbors
  - Your doctor/dentist
  - Social acquaintances
  - Friends
  - Current and former co-workers
  - Your rabbi, priest or minister
  - Your insurance broker
  - Your banker
  - Your lawyer

### Managing your network

Contacts need to be renewed every month or two, otherwise we forget information. Set up a system to actively manage a network. People are important and they have taken the time to talk with you. Managing the network means making sure that each member is contacted every month or two to bring them up to date on your progress. It also means doing something positive for the contact. This can be a very small gesture at low or no cost. It will show that you are not just interested in what the contact can do for you, but are interested in a relationship that is mutual. Observing and listening when you speak or meet with a contact will usually reveal a way in which you can show that person you value him/her and his/her help. Thank you notes are an important part of this process.

- Write thank you notes
  - During the exploration phase, when using contacts to gather information about possible options.
  - During the job search implementation phase when using contacts to obtain referrals to potential employment situations.
- Instead of generic, traditional thank you note, write a thank you note that is personal to the specific contact. Thank the contact for his/her help, remind him/her what they did to help and imply you will keep the contact informed of your progress.
- Write the note about three to four weeks after your meeting.

### Second level networking (**outer circle**)

- Incorporate each reference into your network contact system (card file, three-ring binder, yellow tablet, or computer system).
- Call each new referral and introduce yourself, referring to your mutual friend or peer.
- Indicate that you are exploring, and ask the contact for information about the job, career, industry or company that they represent.
- \*Ask for the opportunity (when appropriate) to meet face to face.
- Thank the person for the information that he or she has provided, and ask for the names of two referrals who can give you even more information about the job, career, industry or organization.
- Tell the contact that you will keep him/her posted on your progress.
- As with your first level network, make a record of when you talked to your second level network. You can include what advice was given, names and phone numbers of referrals, and some personal interest or hobby the contact has.

\*Since you do not yet know this person well enough, ask if you can meet face-to-face for a few minutes to talk and become acquainted. Ask numerous open-ended questions, and show interest in the person's responses. Ask them for their own career stories and advice. Make sure they know your interests, goals, experience and strengths. It can pay off to create a short (two minute) story featuring you. Not only do you gather information and advice, but you will leave a favorable impression with a potential ally.

These second level contacts may soon become first level ones and should be managed in the same way. Keep relationships alive so when an opportunity arises, your network thinks of you.

### **Networking do's and do not's**

- When you are not sure if you should include a specific individual in your network, include them.
- Ask the contact for only that which he/she has in his/her power to give you.
- Do not ask for a job, unless the person has one to offer.
- Ask questions so that they are open-ended.
- At the end of the interview, ask what other advice the person would like to give you.
- Be professional at all times. It is not Facebook; it is a professional meeting.

# Informational interviewing

<sup>1</sup>The best sources of realistic, factual career information are people who are working in your field of interest. Persons who enjoy their work will be flattered by your desire to learn about their enterprise and receptive to any questions you might ask.

## Step 1 - Identify people to interview

Start with that list you made for first level networking. They, or someone they know, will be in the field in which you are interested. If you cannot obtain the name of a contact in your field of interest, you can always call an organization and ask who is in charge of a particular department.

## Step 2 - Arranging the interview

Most working people are responsive to requests from students for information and advice, and are usually quite helpful. It is up to you, however, to initiate the contact by telephoning, writing a letter or e-mailing. After the letter or e-mail has been sent, follow it with a phone call, or have someone who knows the contact make an appointment for you. If you were referred to your contact by someone, mention the name of your referral source when introducing yourself.

When arranging your interview, explain your mission and objectives for gathering information. You might say something like, "I am a student at Southern New Hampshire University, and I am considering a career in \_\_\_\_\_. Right now I am basically researching the field, and I would like to request an appointment for some information and advice." Ask your contact for a half-hour to an hour of time at his/her convenience. If the contact is unable to meet with you in person, you may be able to gather your information over the phone.

If you are making a cold call to someone you do not know or have not been referred to, some students find it helpful to say that their college career center advised them to speak to someone who works in their field of interest.

## Step 3 – Preparing for the interview

Prior to the interview, you should develop a firm grasp of your interests, values, and skills, so that your compatibility with the work environment can be discussed and assessed. Prior to conducting the interview, you should also read all you can about the field and know why you were directed to or chose to speak with this particular contact.

## Step 4 – Conducting the interview

Dress neatly, make sure you are on time, and handle yourself in a professional manner. Even though your purpose is only to gather information and advice, this person will be evaluating you. Try to establish a good rapport with your contact and indicate an interest in his/her career. Refer to your list of prepared questions, but allow some spontaneity to occur as well. Prior to leaving, ask your contact to suggest two names of others who might be helpful to you. Bring copies of your resume. Politely ask if the person would take a few minutes to give you some feedback about your resume in regards to catering it to your chosen field. He/she will get to know you better, and you will receive quality feedback.

## Step 5 – Follow up

Immediately following the interview, you should record helpful information in your notebook or file for future reference. This might include the name, address, and phone number of each contact interviewed, the date of the interview, the information gathered, and names of additional referrals. The “Managing Your Network” section describes how to follow up with contacts.

When evaluating a career, remember to differentiate between your interest in the career and the likeability of the person you interviewed. If, in the future, you decide to pursue a career or seek employment as a result of an informational interview, a letter notifying the appropriate individual would be in order. You may even want to call or e-mail the contact indicating your job search intent, and ask if it would be convenient to meet with him/her again. At a minimum, you may want to send a cover letter and resume to this person when you implement your job search.

### <sup>2</sup>Questions for informational interviewing

1. How did you get involved in this type of work?
2. In the position you now hold, what do you do on a typical day?
3. What are the most interesting aspects of your job?
4. What part of your work do you not enjoy?
5. What were the jobs that you had that led up to this one?
6. How long does it usually take to move from one step to the next in a career?
7. What is the step above the one you have now?
8. What is the top job you can have in this career?
9. Are there other areas of this field to which people in it may be transferred?
10. What are the basic prerequisites for the jobs in the field?
11. Are there any courses a student might take that would be beneficial in this field?
12. What entry-level jobs qualify one for this field?
13. What types of training do companies give to persons entering this field?
14. What are the salary ranges for various levels in this field?
15. What aspects of a career in this field do you consider particularly good or bad?
16. What special advice would you give to a young person entering this field?
17. Is there a demand for people in this field?
18. Do you view this field as a growing one?
19. How do you see the jobs in the field changing over the next ten years?
20. What is the best way to obtain a position that will start me on a career in this field?
21. Would you have a few minutes to take a look at my resume and recommend improvements?
22. Could you give me the names of two people that you think may be helpful in my search?

<sup>1</sup>Used with permission from Academic Advising Services, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

<sup>2</sup>From *The College Guide to Career Planning* by Arthur R. Penn and Albert L. Furbay.

# Company Research

Company research is an essential and potentially fruitful part of any good job search. Company research helps the job hunter identify companies of interest, compare opportunities and prepare an applicant for interviews with specific companies. When done in conjunction with networking (see the **Job Search Manual** at [www.snhu.edu/cdc](http://www.snhu.edu/cdc)), company research can lead to direct connections to persons in a company who have the power to hire you.

## What information to research

Good company research includes information on a number of topics.

- Age of company
- Competitors
- Location
- New products or projects
- Reputation
- Services or products
- Number of employees
- Number of locations
- Growth pattern
- Divisions and subsidiaries
- Sales, assets and earnings
- International operations

## Where to look for information

### SNHU Shapiro Library

The library purchases a number of company and industry databases and research products (Reference USA, VAULT, Directory of U.S. Firms Operating in Foreign Countries, etc.), and maintains these in their Electronic Resources section of its website. There are also reference books in Shapiro Library (your local library may also have some good reference sources). Check “Dun & Bradstreet and Standard and Poor’s Register” for company profiles and names of company executives.

### Internet

Almost all companies utilize the Internet to showcase their company. Company demographics, mission/vision, and other valuable information can be located on their website. Most companies also post available positions for hire on their website. Before you begin researching a company, remember these simple rules:

- It is usually easier to find information about publicly owned companies than privately owned ones.
- It is usually easier to find information about corporations as a whole than about their subsidiaries or divisions.
- Large, nationally known corporations are sometimes easier to research than local or regional ones.
- Library information may be somewhat dated. Check the publication date of any source you use.
- No single library may have everything you require. In addition to Shapiro Library, try local libraries, chambers of commerce, trade associations and government offices.

# Internet Job Search

The Internet is an indispensable tool for the research phase of your job search. While it is true that few actual jobs are obtained via Internet postings (see “Networking” section), the gathering of information about jobs, occupations, companies and industries is endless. Also, if you are considering geographic relocation, searching via the Internet offers numerous advantages.

## **SNHU Recruit ([www.snhu.edu/cdc](http://www.snhu.edu/cdc))**

During your Internet search, do not forget about **SNHU Recruit**. SNHU Recruit is superior to typical job boards, because:

- SNHU Recruit provides the name and contact information of an actual person.
- The companies in this database are interested only in college students and graduates.
- These companies are not only local to northern New England but also international.

## **Using keywords**

Using keywords in popular search engines such as Google, Yahoo, or Ask.com can be very beneficial. You can use these search engines to find positions and learn important information about a particular job, company, industry, and salaries. For instance, if you wanted to search for a job in Human Resources, you would type *human resources jobs in NH* into Google, or an entry level title such as, “Human Resources Assistant in Manchester, NH.” In addition if you wanted to find out the typical salary for a Human Resources Assistant in your area (or another area), type “Salaries for Human Resources Assistants in (city, state)”.

## **Professional organizations**

Keywords are helpful in finding professional organizations. Opening one of the search engines listed above and typing in “Human Resources professional organizations,” would generate a list of Human Resources professional organizations. Some of these organizations may also list positions in your geographical area of interest. Some organizations require a fee; it would be wise to research the organization and compare it to the free organizations before joining.

## **Newspapers online**

Many large city newspapers are online. It can be helpful to utilize these websites for local jobs.

## **Sample of helpful job search websites**

- Vault.com
- Usajobs.com (for federal government jobs)
- Hoovers.com
- Reference USA (Shapiro Library)
- Acinet.org
- Online.onetcenter.org

### **Favorites list**

Do not forget to save the websites you have visited by adding them to your favorites list on your web browser.

### **Posting your resume on the Internet**

If you choose the method of posting your resume on a job board please consider the following:

- Your resume can be viewed by the entire World Wide Web. You run the risk of identity theft, spam e-mails, random phone calls, and everyone knowing where you live and how to contact you.
- Your current employer will be able to see that you have posted your resume for a job. There have been cases of people losing their jobs because their employer felt that they were trying to leave the company.
- Remember that posting your resume is different than applying through the job board. Applying directly through the job board does not make your resume public.

# Resume Guidelines

The Career Development Center (CDC) is excited to assist you as you develop your professional resume. This is a process of several steps and drafts, and you should plan on revising the resume a few times before you will have a document with which you are truly happy. You should think of the resume in terms of a fluid, changing document that you will update frequently to include your ongoing training and experiences. The following guidelines are general. We want you to be aware that each individual will have different experiences, needs and goals, and that we are here to provide assistance. The CDC welcomes you to utilize our services in the development of your resume, and at each step of the job search process.

## **What is a resume?**

In general, a resume is a document that is used to market the applicant's knowledge, skills and abilities to potential employers. It is not intended as a biography or list of tasks performed, but illustrates transferable skills and demonstrated abilities. It is not written in a narrative format, but rather in phrases focusing on action verbs (see attached list).

## **What information should be contained in a resume?**

It should be clear, concise and well-organized. It must be free of spelling and typographical errors. It begins with your contact information, and then details your educational background and training, related work experience and volunteerism, leadership and academic honors, activities and marketable skills, technical skills and languages. For students with advanced degrees, research may also be highlighted. The information in the resume should be catered to the specific position for which you are applying. Not only will this highlight your skills further, but it will also show the company that you are truly interested in that specific position.

## **How should a resume look?**

Information should be neatly organized, and should create a flow in the resume. The resume should be easy to read and demonstrate your ability to produce an attractive-looking document. There are many formats that are acceptable, and you will need to choose the one that you find the most appealing. The design of the resume should reflect you, so when designing it, choose a few different templates to determine which look fits best. When designing your resume, you will want to balance the importance of each piece of information against the amount of space you have on the page. For most undergraduate students, one page is sufficient space.

## **Things to avoid while writing a resume**

- Typographical errors
- Spelling or grammatical mistakes
- Poor print quality, such as fading in, and poor layout
- Personal pronouns
- Colored, patterned, fancy paper
- Flower, fussy fonts
- Lack of focus

## Ways to submit your resume

Always check the preferred method of your application for the position. This can often be found within the job posting, or you can ask via an e-mail or phone call geared directly to the hiring manager or Human Resources.

### Mail

If you are mailing your resume, be sure to use resume paper for your resume, and complete the addressed envelope neatly. In addition, be sure not to smoke while you are enclosing your resume, as the smoke fumes will be a turn off to the employer.

### Electronic resume

An electronic resume is a resume that is written into the text box on the company website or job board. Often these resumes are scanned by the company's resume database for key words. A sample of an electronic resume is provided in this section, but below is the format for one:

- Left justify the entire document.
- Do not use punctuation (the computer may not recognize “communicated” if it written as “communicated,...”).
- Do not use any lines, graphics, or textboxes.
- Use simple fonts such as Arial or Tahoma.
- No bullets, but you may use asterisks or hyphens.
- Keep the font size between 10 and 12 points.
- It is okay for this type of resume to be over one page.
- **Boldface** and CAPITAL letters are acceptable and may actually help your fields stick out from one another.
- Do not use *italics*, underlining, or shadowing
- Use nouns and not the action verbs that you would in a traditional resume
- Check your spelling. Resume scanners will not pick up on misspelled words; therefore, it is like it was never on your resume.
- Do not use side by side columns, even if you are using two addresses or phone numbers. Place them on their own lines underneath one another.

### E-mail

An e-mailed resume is written in a plain text, and is sent as an attachment to the e-mail recipient.

### Web resume/portfolio

A web resume is published onto a web page using a hypertext. This is submitted to the employer by giving one the link to your resume page. This may or may not be desirable for the employer; perhaps you can send your resume in the preferred method, and provide the link if they would like to view your resume online.

## Sections of a resume

### Your personal/contact information

Be sure to include your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address. Make sure you have a polite and reliable message-taker at the phone number you provide. Also be sure that your

answering machine/voice mail message is appropriate. Your e-mail address should sound conservative and business-like, and you should check it at least twice a day once you begin sending out resumes. Your name should stand out in a nice bold font. You will not include personal information such as your gender, marital status, age or ethnic background.

### The objective

This section of the resume is typically included for those who are new to the job market or changing to a new field. This statement is not all about your needs. Avoid long, flowing objectives. If you are applying for a specific advertised job, then the objective will be clear. It should be simple and concise, and may contain up to three pieces of information:

- 1) The type of organization (or specific organization) for which you wish to work.
- 2) The type of position (or specific position) you would like.
- 3) The skills you are offering or how you can contribute.

Examples: “An elementary education teaching position in a progressive school district where I can utilize my training in general and special education.”

“A position where my process management expertise will contribute to the company’s growth.”

### Educational background

This section of the resume will appear directly after the objective if your education is your most recent achievement. Once you have had your first professional experience in your field, the education section may move further down on the page. Master’s degree work would be listed first, then undergraduate work. You will not need to include high school education on your resume once you have completed two years of college. You may include your grade point average (GPA), but you do not have to do so. As a graduate student, you would exclude the GPA if it is below a 3.5, and for undergraduate you would exclude anything below a 3.0 (Both of these are on a 4.0 scale). Do not forget to include any study abroad experiences.

Another optional inclusion in this section is to list relevant courses. For students with little practical experience, this demonstrates knowledge of specified areas of their field. You will not need to give the actual course number, or indicate qualifiers such as I & II after a course; simply state the subject. Rank the order so that the most relevant courses are listed to the left, starting with the most important and working your way down and across.

For example, for a business administration major seeking a human resources position:

- Human Resource Management
- Information Technology
- Business Communication
- Strategic Management
- Human Behavior in Organizations
- Business Law

### Experience

This section details your work history in terms of demonstrated abilities and transferable skills. Remember that it is not a biography of everything you have ever done, nor is it merely a list of tasks performed at past jobs. Again, if you are using a chronological format, begin with your most recent job and work your way back. Include name and location of each employer, dates of employment, and your job title.

For example:

Pinkerton Academy

Derry, NH

Student Teacher

09/05 – 06/06

- Taught marketing to 35 high school students.
- Participated in team meetings, parent conferences and IEP meetings.

Work experience that is not directly related to your field, but in which you used relevant skills, may also be included.

#### Volunteer

Volunteer work can be just as valuable in terms of demonstrating your skills as a paying job. Examples of relevant volunteer work might include working as a Peer Mentor in the campus Tutoring Center, working at the local Boys and Girls Club, serving as a mentor or Big Brother/Big Sister, teaching religion classes at your church, working with an adult literacy program at the local library, and working at a local human service organization.

#### Leadership / Interests / Activities / Organizational Involvement

This section may also include volunteerism, in which you are demonstrating leadership skills, such as organizing a fundraiser through your sorority or fraternity in which you raised money for a worthy cause. You may have more than one section of this type if you have a great deal of both volunteer work and related activities. You will typically not include hobbies unless they are directly related. For example, a hospitality major might include an interest in studying wines, but might not include skydiving. An international business major might include travel and languages here. Students might include campus leadership such as a club, Orientation Staff, Resident Advisor positions or student government.

#### Professional Associations / Affiliations / Memberships

For those with some professional experience, memberships might appear here. For example, an accountant might belong to the NH Society of CPAs, or an English major might belong to a Writers' Association.

#### Skills (Technical / Language / Industry Specific)

Your skills can be broken down into several areas. Technical or computer skills are important to every industry and job category. You might include operating systems (MS Windows, Mac), software such as MS Word, MS Excel, MS Access, MS PowerPoint, MS Publisher, Adobe Illustrator and industry-specific software and products, as well as the Internet. Pay close attention to the spelling of brand names. If you have the skill, you can begin to demonstrate it by spelling it correctly. When presenting language skills, be careful to include only those you are truly proficient in, and try not to use too many qualifiers that are open to the reader's interpretation. Industry-specific knowledge or machinery should be included.

#### Additional Training / Certifications

Any industry-specific certifications might be listed here. Conferences, workshops and specialized training can be highlighted in this section. Certification can be anything from EMT to a teaching certification to a Series 7 licensure.

## References

They should be stated as, “Available on request”. You will not list your references on the resume document itself, but may want to prepare a separate page of references to provide at interviews or if asked to provide them with the application or resume. There is a sample reference page included in this booklet. You should never use someone’s name as a reference without his/her permission.

Also, whenever you are interviewing and provide someone as a reference, you should contact that person. Let them know the specifics about the job for which you are applying. Your reference can do a much better job for you if he/she has both your resume and a clear understanding of what the employer wants.

## **Other types of resumes**

The functional format/skill-based resume

- Highlights transferable skills for career-changes.
- This format has been used to hide employment gaps, and can be mistrusted by more traditional employers.

The combination format resume

- Combination of the chronological and the functional resumes.
- Preferred by most employers over the pure functional format.

### Resume action verbs by skill categories

#### Communication skills

Addressed  
Arbitrated  
Arranged  
Authored  
Corresponded  
Developed  
Directed  
Drafted  
Edited  
Enlisted  
Formulated  
Interpreted  
Lectured  
Mediated  
Moderated  
Motivated  
Negotiated  
Persuaded  
Promoted  
Publicized  
Reconciled  
Recruited  
Presented  
Translated

#### Clerical (Detail) skills

Approved  
Arranged  
Catalogued  
Classified  
Collected  
Compiled  
Dispatched  
Executed  
Generated  
Implemented  
Inspected  
Operated  
Organized  
Prepared  
Processed  
Purchased  
Recorded  
Retrieved  
Screened  
Specified  
Systematized  
Tabulated  
Validated

#### Creative skills

Acted  
Conceptualized  
Created  
Designed  
Developed  
Directed  
Established  
Fashioned  
Founded  
Illustrated  
Instituted  
Integrated  
Introduced  
Invented  
Originated  
Performed  
Planned  
Revitalized  
Shaped

#### Financial skills

Administered  
Allocated  
Analyzed  
Appraised  
Audited  
Balanced  
Budgeted  
Calculated  
Computed  
Developed  
Forecasted  
Managed  
Marketed  
Planned  
Projected  
Researched

### Resume action verbs by skill categories

<b>Helping skills</b>	<b>Management skills</b>	<b>Research skills</b>	<b>Technical skills</b>	<b>Teaching skills</b>
Assessed	Administered	Clarified	Assembled	Adapted
Assisted	Analyzed	Collected	Built	Advised
Clarified	Assigned	Critiqued	Calculated	Clarified
Coached	Attained	Diagnosed	Computed	Coached
Counseled	Chaired	Evaluated	Designed	Communicated
Demonstrated	Contracted	Examined	Devised	Coordinated
Diagnosed	Consolidated	Extracted	Engineered	Created
Educated	Delegated	Identified	Fabricated	Developed
Encouraged	Developed	Inspected	Maintained	Enabled
Expedited	Directed	Interpreted	Operated	Encouraged
Facilitated	Evaluated	Interviewed	Overhauled	Evaluated
Familiarized	Executed	Investigated	Programmed	Explained
Goal Setting	Improved	Organized	Remodeled	Facilitated
Guided	Increased	Reviewed	Repaired	Guided
Referred	Organized	Summarized	Solved	Informed
Rehabilitated	Oversaw	Surveyed	Trained	Initiated
Represented	Planned	Systematized	Upgraded	Instructed
	Prioritized			Persuaded
	Produced			Set Goals
	Recommended			Stimulated
	Reviewed			
	Scheduled			
	Strengthened			
	Supervised			

# Aidan Jacobs

603.333.2222  
aidenjacob@yahoo.com

12345 Clarke Street  
Plaistow, NH 12345

## EDUCATION

---

**Master of Business Administration** Anticipated May 2008  
*Organizational Leadership* Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, NH

**Bachelor of Arts** May 2005  
*Psychology* University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

## WORK EXPERIENCE

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**Human Resources Assistant** Sept 2006-Present  
The XYZ Company Portsmouth, NH

- Responsible for effectively communicating policies, procedures, and benefits to 2-8 new hires biweekly
- Played a key role in implementing the safety committee for the NH site
- Extensive experience with: employee relations, FMLA/LOA, implementing new policies, new hire & termination paperwork and procedures, and benefit administration
- Responsible for running ADP/Etime payroll software for a biweekly payroll schedule
- Initiated or ran various corporate events including fundraisers, benefit fairs, and flu shot clinics

**Recruiting Coordinator** June 2005-Sept 2006  
ABC Company Billerica, MA

- Skillful evaluation, assessment, and selection of candidates
- Collaborated effectively with management to determine hiring needs
- Created successful recruitment advertisements for various positions
- Screened resumes, prequalified candidates via telephone and selected applicants for interviews
- Trained supervisors and managers on various employment laws and interviewing techniques

**Human Resources Intern** Jan 2005-June 2005  
University of Connecticut HR Office Storrs, CT

- Maintained HR applicant and employee database
- Performed personnel recruitment and coordination
- Updated HR policies and procedures based on extensive research of similar organizations
- Managed administrative support services
- Lead contact for all HR inquiries

## WORKSHOPS

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**HR Professionals & Recruitment** June 2005 & June 2006  
Society of Human Resources Management

## ORGANIZATIONS

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Psi Chi- Psychology National Honors Society Inducted Spring 2005

Kappa Delta Phi (Fraternity) 2001-2005

Business Club Vice President 2004-2005

# Jason Chadwick

603.472.7771  
2500 N. River Road, Box 345  
Manchester, NH 03106  
jason.chadwick@snhu.edu

## OBJECTIVE

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To obtain a position as an Information Technology Specialist

## EDUCATION

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### Bachelors of Science

May 2007

#### Information Technology

Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, NH

- Honors: GPA 3.5/4.0, *Cum Laude*, President's and Dean's List

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

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Certifications: Microsoft Office XP, MS Project 2002; Pending Microsoft Certified Professional

Operating Systems: Microsoft PC and Mac OS

Software: MS Office Suite, Publisher, Project, FrontPage, Oracle 8.0

Programming: SQL+, HTML, DHTML, PHP, CGI, ASP, Perl, VB&B script, Java, and Java script

Systems Analysis and Design: Self-taught in XML and C#; SDLC (waterfall and spiral models) UML Notation, Use-Cases/Class/Sequence/ Statechart/Collaboration Diagrams, ERDs, DFDs, etc.

## RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

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### IT Specialist

2005-present

Worldwide Foundation for Retirement Education

Manchester, NH

- Instrumental in re-engineering online ordering process to reduce confusion and increase efficiency
- Consistently meet and exceed deadlines
- Develop and maintain two company web sites that address online continuing education course offerings, online shopping cart, and electronic payment processing system
- Perform data entry and update database of 1,600+ clients
- Administer computer network, manage e-mail, and maintain domain registration

### Freelance Web Designer

2003-2004

Manchester, NH

- Designed web sites for a day care provider and a motivational speaker promoting their books
- Successfully implemented the sites which resulted in a 30% increase in their sales

## ORGANIZATIONS

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New Hampshire Technology Association

2004-present

National Society of Collegiate Scholars

2003-present

Sample Resume 3

References Available Upon Request

555 Strawberry Hill Road  
Nashua, NH 00000

603-436-2222  
[YTseng@gmail.com](mailto:YTseng@gmail.com)

# Yvonne Tseng

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- OBJECTIVE** To obtain a position within the hospitality industry that will enhance professional growth and utilize strong organizational and interpersonal skills
- SKILLS**
- Experienced traveler who is proficient in English, Chinese, and Russian language
  - Computer skills: Microsoft Office Suite, Sabre, Peachtree and MICROS
- EDUCATION**
- MASTERS OF SCIENCE** May 2007  
*Hospitality Administration*  
Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, NH
- BACHELORS OF APPLIED SCIENCE** May 2005  
*Hospitality Administration*  
Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, NH
- COLLEGE DIPLOMA** May 2003  
*Culinary Administration*  
Canadore College, North Bay, Canada
- EXPERIENCE**
- Food and Beverage Supervisor** Aug. 05 – May 06  
*New Orleans Marriott, New Orleans, LA*
- Developed training manuals and incentive programs
  - Ensured guest satisfaction while supervising busy hotel restaurant
  - Effectively rotated through all restaurant positions: server, host, etc.
- Assistant Manager** Apr. 04 – June 05  
*Capreol Freshmart, Capreol, Canada*
- Supervised a staff member
  - Communicated with a wide variety of customers by responding to inquiries, effectively solving complaints/concerns and taking orders
  - Responsible for the open and close of the facility
  - Counted out floats, balanced cash register slips and operated cash register
  - Ordered shipments, stocked shelves and skids, maintained stock and set up displays
  - Secured deliveries to customers and provided carry-out services
- Front Desk Clerk** Apr. 02-June 03, seasonal  
*Swept Away Negril, Negril, Jamaica*
- Greeted, checked in, and checked out guests, made reservations and answered the switchboard for this five-star property, the largest hotel in Jamaica with 1,250 rooms
  - Managed the cash draw, accepted payments and balanced daily receipts
  - Completed extensive customer service, computer systems and hotel procedures training
  - Operated the hotel's computer systems, including MARSHA and PMS
- AWARDS**
- Hospitality Club Scholarship** - academic achievement 2004
- Aiming for the Top** - pays tuition every year high grades are maintained 2003-2005
- Program Achievement Award** - highest achievement in Culinary Administration Program 2004

# ALANNA R. SMITH

3227 Maple Way  
Manchester, NH 03101  
603.333.3333

Web portfolio: [www.arsmithportfolio.net](http://www.arsmithportfolio.net)  
[alannagd@gmail.net](mailto:alannagd@gmail.net)

## EDUCATION

**Master's of Science, *Sports Management***  
*Southern New Hampshire University*

June 2007  
Manchester, NH

**Bachelor's of Arts, *Communications (Magna Cum Laude)***  
*Notre Dame College*

May 2005  
Manchester, NH

## TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Expert in MS Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and outlook

## WORK EXPERIENCE

**Halloween Parade Coordinator Intern**  
*Manchester Recreation Dept*

Fall 2005  
Manchester, NH

- Planned and directed the first ever town wide Halloween parade with 700 participants
- Coordinated publicity, gift solicitation, committee meetings, and the awards presentation

**Tournament Director**  
*Bedford Annual Town Tennis Tournament*

Fall 2005  
Bedford, NH

- Planned and coordinated annual town athletic event comprised of 110 entrants
- Oversaw publicity, gift solicitation, committee selections and awards party

**Waitress/Hostess**  
*Amy's Restaurant*

2003-2005  
Salem, NH

- Managed wait lists ranging from 10 minutes to a 2 hour wait
- Effectively communicated with customers, kitchen staff, and wait staff to ensure order accuracy and timeliness
- Exercised excellent customer service skills in order to give the guests the best possible dining experience

**Front End Assistant**  
*Market Basket*

1997-2003  
Methuen, MA

- Managed cashiers and baggers which included delegating tasks, scheduling breaks/lunches, handling register issues, and maintaining all registers cash flow during the shift
- Effectively resolved any customer complaints and handled customer inquiries

**\*References available upon request\***

## Sample Electronic Resume

Jane Smith  
25 North Road  
Manchester NH 03106  
Phone 603 333 3333  
janesmith@yahoo . com

### OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position within the hospitality industry that will enhance professional growth and utilize strong organizational and interpersonal skills

### PROFILE

Extensive background in the international hospitality and tourism industries  
Experienced traveler who is proficient in English Chinese and Russian language  
Effective team player with proven communication and interpersonal skills  
Computer skills Microsoft Office Suite Sabre Peachtree and MICROS

### EDUCATION

#### MASTERS OF SCIENCE

May 2007

Hospitality Administration

Southern New Hampshire University Manchester NH

#### BACHELORS OF APPLIED SCIENCE

May 2005

Hospitality Administration

Southern New Hampshire University Manchester NH

#### COLLEGE DIPLOMA

May 2003

Culinary Administration

Canadore College North Bay Canada

### EXPERIENCE

August 2005 – May 2006

Food and Beverage Supervisor

New Orleans Marriott New Orleans LA

Developed training manuals and incentive programs

Ensured guest satisfaction while supervising busy hotel restaurant

Effectively rotated through all restaurant positions: server, host, etc.

Assistant Manager

April 2004 – June 2005

Capreol Freshmart Capreol Canada

Supervised a staff member

Communicated with a wide variety of customers by responding to inquiries effectively solving complaints/concerns and taking orders

Responsible for the open and close of the facility

### AWARDS

Hospitality Club Scholarship - academic achievement 2004

Aiming for the Top - pays tuition every year high grades are maintained 2003-2005

**Sample Reference Page**

**Susan Jones**

100 Main St. • Manchester, NH 03103  
(603) 555-9999 • [sjones@yahoo.com](mailto:sjones@yahoo.com)

REFERENCES

Dr. Ann Smith, Professor of Psychology  
Southern New Hampshire University  
2500 North River Road  
Manchester, NH 03105  
(603) 645-1212  
[s.smith@snhu.edu](mailto:s.smith@snhu.edu)

Mr. Michael Mills, (formerly Director of Food and Beverage, Marriott, Nashua, NH)  
VP of Operations  
Hyatt Hotels International  
100 Corporate Way  
Anytown, NH 12345  
(603) 555-8888  
[m.mills@marriott.com](mailto:m.mills@marriott.com)

Ms. Paula Pillsbury, Director  
Human Resources Department  
XYZ Company  
3 Uniondale Avenue  
Newtown, ME 98765  
(201) 888-1111

# Letters

You have finally found a job for which you want to apply. Before you send them your resume, however, you will need to create one more document: the cover letter. A cover letter is a formal introductory letter that accompanies your resume. It allows you to briefly explain the information or skills that you want to highlight to the employer; however, it is not a repeat of everything that is on your resume. The cover letter allows you the opportunity to go into more depth or discuss additional relevant qualities that you feel are important for the employer to know.

## Cover letters

### Facts

- The cover letter introduces you to a potential employer and serves as your first impression.
- Each cover letter is individually typed and tailored to the position about which you are inquiring.
- The letter does not repeat what is in the resume. It enhances the content. Your personality can be revealed to an extent through the writing style and content you adopt.

### Layout

Each cover letter should be in standard business form and must be individually typed and signed. The letter should not exceed one page and should average three to five paragraphs in length. Most importantly, your cover letter should be attractive, contain no spelling or grammatical errors and have ample margins.

Your cover letter may be the first meeting a potential employer has with you. It must express a lot about your ability to communicate effectively. The letter actually serves as a sample of your writing skill. Employers will read cover letters first and then decide whether or not to read your resume. You cannot let the resume completely overshadow the cover letter. The cover letter is your chance to expand on information in the resume or to summarize your skills. The two must complement one another to create a consistent and professional impression.

### Content

- How you found the position
  - Reply to a specific job listed in the newspaper or the CDC Job Books

Sample: "I read about your opening for a Sales Representative in the May 1st edition of the Boston Globe, and am writing to apply for the position. My BS in Business Administration and related experience qualify me to fulfill the outlined responsibilities."

- Reply through a publication, like the NACE Annual, to inquire about opportunities

Sample: "This May, following completion of my degree in Business Administration from Southern New Hampshire University, I will pursue a career in sales and management. In the latest NACE Annual, I noted your interest in business majors and am writing to inquire further about career opportunities with IBM Corporation."

- Write to an employer you are targeting (unsolicited):

Sample: "I am writing to inquire about career opportunities with IBM. In May, I will complete my degree in Business Administration at Southern New Hampshire University. I would like to join your corporation and offer my education and work experience to help IBM achieve its competitive goals."

- Use a contact person who suggested you inquire about a potential opening (referral/solicited).

Sample: "I am writing at the suggestion of John Smith to inquire about your opening..."

- What you have to offer

- This is the crucial paragraph where you attempt to parallel what you have to offer (education and relevant experience) with what the employer is seeking. Your achievements are stressed. Be sure not to simply repeat information that will be found in your resume.

Samples:

"As a member of the Student Government Association, I strengthened my communication skills and successfully planned student programs."

"My experience as a Camp Counselor heightened my desire to pursue a career working with underprivileged children."

"Waitressing taught me to work well under pressure and to respond appropriately to people's varying needs."

- Always research the organization to which you are applying. Check the NACE Annuals, company brochures, annual reports, magazines and trade journals. Once you have a sense of what the employer seeks, couple that with what you have to offer. Begin to demonstrate the good fit that you and the company make. Communicate interest, motivation, self-confidence and a willingness to learn.
- Each cover letter is individually designed for the position to which you are applying; the content here will be adjusted slightly for each letter. Saving copies of your letters will help generate ideas when you write each letter.

- What should happen next

- This final paragraph should refer to your enclosed resume and make clear what the next step is. Indicate your desire for a personal interview or a response concerning the status of your application.

Samples:

"I will contact you during the week of June 10th to arrange an interview."

"I will be in Boston from April 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> and would like to meet with you to discuss my qualifications."

- Be sure to include a statement that encourages a response. Saying, "I am available to interview and look forward to hearing from you," does not move the reader to immediate action. Avoid these vague endings that leave the next step solely up to the employer, unless you are applying to a blind newspaper ad and have no way to contact them.
- Include a statement that brings closure to the letter.

Samples:

"Thank you for your consideration."

"I look forward to meeting you."

Reminders

- Type your final letter in proper business form on paper that matches your resume. Be sure it is neat and clean.
- Address your letter to the appropriate person. This may take some research. Include the correctly spelled name and title. Calling the appropriate office to determine whom to write to is acceptable.
- Be sure you and a friend proofread the letter. Errors are unacceptable and inexcusable.
- Sign your letter in black ink. Use an envelope that matches your cover letter and resume, if possible.

## Example Cover Letter Guideline

Your Name  
Street  
City, ST 12345 (zipcode)

Date

Bob Smith, Director  
Human Resources  
XYZ Company  
100 Main Street  
Anytown, NH 01234

Dear Mr. Smith,

This paragraph should explain why you are writing. What is “in it” for you? It should be three to four sentences in length and should tell the employer what you hope to gain from contacting them. If you are responding to a specific advertisement, it should also tell the employer where you learned about their position. Make sure you do not say you heard about the job from “a friend”. If the friend is known to and respected by the employer, then you should use the individual’s name.

This section of the letter can be one or two paragraphs in length. It should explain what you have to offer the employer. If one paragraph, use about four to five sentences, if two paragraphs, use up to a total of eight to nine sentences. Why should they be interested in you? Include information about your education, work experience and skills. What’s “in it” for the employer? Why are you uniquely qualified for the position?

Utilize your research for this middle section of the letter. Make sure you have read as much as you can about the company to determine their values. How does this company or organization set itself apart from competitors? What a company chooses to say about itself in writing is very important. You should try to make a “match” between your background and the company’s values, as well as the job description/qualifications.

This last paragraph closes the letter with three to four sentences. It should state what will happen next. You should indicate your interest in an interview and provide your telephone number (even though it is on the resume). If appropriate, you should indicate that you will be calling to follow up to ensure they received your resume and to discuss the possibility of an interview. If they wish to reach you sooner, your contact information is there.

Sincerely,

(4 blank lines for your signature)

Your Typed Name

## Transferable Skills Action Verbs

Achieved	Delivered	Hired	Originated	Reviewed
Acted	Demonstrated	Hypothesized	Oversaw	Revised
Adapted	Designed	Identified	Perceived	Risked
Addressed	Detailed	Illustrated	Performed	Scheduled
Administered	Detected	Imagined	Persuaded	Selected
Advertised	Determined	Implemented	Photographed	Sensed
Analyzed	Devised	Improved	Piloted	Separated
Arbitrated	Diagnosed	Increased	Predicted	Set
Arranged	Directed	Informed	Prepared	Set-up
Ascertained	Discovered	Initiated	Prescribed	Shaped
Assembled	Displayed	Innovated	Presented	Shared
Assessed	Disproved	Inspected	Presided	Showed
Assigned	Dissected	Inspired	Printed	Sketched
Attained	Distributed	Installed	Problem-solved	Sold
Audited	Diverted	Instituted	Processed	Solved
Authored	Dramatized	Instructed	Produced	Sorted
Arranged	Drew	Integrated	Programmed	Spoke
Budgeted	Drive	Interpreted	Projected	Studied
Built	Edited	Interviewed	Promoted	Standardized
Calculated	Eliminated	Invented	Proofread	Stimulated
Charted	Empathized	Inventoried	Protected	Supervised
Checked	Enforced	Investigated	Provided	Supplied
Clarified	Enlarged	Judged	Publicized	Surveyed
Classified	Enlisted	Lectured	Published	Symbolized
Coached	Established	Led	Purchased	Synergized
Consulted	Estimated	Learned	Questioned	Synthesized
Collaborated	Evaluated	Listened	Raised	Systemized
Collected	Examined	Logged	Realized	Taught
Communicated	Executed	Maintained	Reasoned	Team-built
Compared	Explained	Managed	Received	Tested & Proven
Compiled	Expanded	Manipulated	Recognized for	Told
Completed	Expedited	Marketed	Reconciled	Took Instruction
Computed	Expressed	Memorized	Recorded	Transcribed
Conceptualized	Extracted	Mentored	Recruited	Translated
Conducted	Facilitated	Met	Reduced	Traveled
Consolidated	Filed	Modeled	Referred	Trouble-shot
Constructed	Financed	Modified	Rehabilitated	Tutored
Conserved	Fixed	Monitored	Related	Understudied
Controlled	Followed	Motivated	Rendered	Undertook
Cooperated	Forecasted	Navigated	Repaired	Unified
Coordinated	Formulated	Negotiated	Reported	United
Copied	Founded	Observed	Represented	Upgraded
Counseled	Gathered	Obtained	Researched	Updated
Created	Generated	Offered	Resolved	Verbalized
Decided	Guided	Operated	Responded	Weighed
Defined	Headed	Ordered	Restored	Worked
Delegated	Helped	Organized	Retrieved	Wrote

**Sample Solicited Cover Letter**

Debra Poirier  
24 Smith Neck Road  
Fairhaven, MA 02719

August 15, 2006

Mr. Glenn King, CPA  
Triple A Accountants  
440 Lincoln Street  
Worcester, MA 01605

Dear Mr. King:

Your ad in the Sunday Union Leader for an Internal Auditor calls for qualifications that very closely match mine. With thorough academic training and co-operative work experiences in the accounting field, I believe I will be an asset to your firm and would like to be considered for the position.

As a recent graduate of Southern New Hampshire University, I have earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting and have developed experience through the co-operative education program. The attached resume shows that all of my co-operative work experiences were with auditing departments of various sized accounting companies. Because of the large amount of interaction involved in working for a larger company, I was able to develop my interpersonal and communication skills. Working for smaller firms enabled me to learn more about the accounting business and to offer recommendations for improvements along the way. In fact, during my co-op assignment, I suggested automating many aspects of the audit department and these suggestions won immediate management approval and implementation. This conversion process gave me significant related programming and operating experience.

My co-operative work experience matches your requirements so closely that I am sure I would be a strong contributor to your organization. The enclosed resume details my academic and employment experiences, as well as my computer skills. I would appreciate an opportunity to further discuss my qualifications with you and will contact you next Tuesday to arrange a mutually convenient time. You can reach me at (617) 555-1432 if you wish to contact me sooner.

Sincerely,

*(Written signature)*

Debra A. Poirier

**Sample Unsolicited Cover Letter**

Carolyn Carr  
490 Huntington Avenue  
Boston, Massachusetts 00005

August 6, 2006

Mr. Bonnie S. Smith  
Gamble & Proctors Agency  
Human Resources Department  
456 Main Street  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Ms. Smith:

As a recent graduate of Southern New Hampshire University, my plan is to pursue a career in public relations, and I am interested in employment opportunities with your organization. I believe that my educational background and professional employment experience will be of interest to you.

I have worked for the Austin Agency in Sales and also for the Southern New Hampshire University Public Relations Office while participating in the Cooperative Education program at Southern New Hampshire University. In addition, I was an editor for the Concord Monitor in Concord, NH. The enclosed resume details my education and work experience.

I look forward to the opportunity of discussing my qualifications with you in greater detail. I will call you next week to see if we can arrange a brief meeting at your convenience. You can reach me at (617) 555-1234 if you wish to contact me sooner. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*(Written signature)*

Carolyn Carr

Encl: Resume

## **Follow-up letters**

After you send your cover letter and resume, it is important to properly follow through on what you said will happen next.

If you said you will call at a particular time, then call and speak with the same person to whom you addressed your cover letter. Using a professional approach, confirm receipt of your application. Discuss the arrangement for an interview. If you are not granted an interview, you have the right to inquire (gently) about why your qualifications did not seem to match their requirements. Do not be defensive, and use any feedback you receive to your advantage in your job search.

When you are waiting to hear from an employer, allow two weeks before you follow-up. If an application deadline was listed, allow two weeks from that deadline. When calling, ask if your application was received. Restate your interest and ask if any further information is needed. Be polite and inquire about the status of your application.

If you are scheduled to interview, please consult someone in the Career Development Center. The staff can help you research the employer and prepare for the interview.

### **Follow-up letters**

Making the best impression possible does not end when the interview does. Always send a properly business formatted thank you letter after an interview. Notes on personal stationary are not professional, unless you have interviewed with a personal friend. Follow-up letters demonstrate professionalism and confirm information in writing. Saving copies of all your correspondence to employers is recommended.

- **Thank you letter**
  - Convey gratitude for time spent in the interview.
  - Restate your interest and qualifications.
  - Indicate eagerness to hear from them.
  - Impress them by including something you learned during the interview.
- **Letter of acceptance**
  - Accept the offer, formally including the position title.
  - Refer to letter outlining offer or phone call doing the same.
  - State your travel plans and starting date.
  - Repeat conditions of the position: salary and terms of employment.
  - Express your appreciation and enthusiasm about joining the company.
  - Thank them for their time during the hiring process.
- **Letter declining offer**
  - Decline offer.
  - Express your appreciation for the offer and company's interest in you.
  - Thank them for their consideration.
- **Follow-up to a rejection**
  - Acknowledge receipt of employment decision.
  - Express thanks for their consideration.
  - Keep future prospects open by indicating a continued interest in the company.

## Sample Thank You Letter

519 Newbury Street  
Boston, MA 02115

October 3, 2006

Mr. John L. Smith  
College Relations Specialist  
CVS  
1000 Main Street  
Boston, MA 02115

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for conducting my recent interview for the management trainee position with CVS. I enjoyed meeting you and learning about your company and its commitment to customer service.

My enthusiasm for the position and my interest in working for CVS were strengthened as a result of the information I received from you during the interview. It has always been a goal of mine to work for a company that is dedicated to providing excellent service to its customers as CVS does. I think my education and cooperative education experiences fit nicely with the job requirements, and I'm sure that I could make a significant contribution to the company over time.

I would like to reiterate my strong interest in the position and in working with you and your staff. You provide the kind of opportunity I seek and I will prove to be a dynamic member of your team if hired for the position. Please feel free to call me at (508) 555-4567 if I can provide you with any additional information.

Again, thank you for the interview and your consideration.

Sincerely,

*(signature)*

Robert R. Grant

## Sample Letter of Acceptance

507 Shore Drive  
Hampton, NH 03107

April 20, 2006

Ms. Melissa Bliss  
Executive Director  
Data International Corporation  
1001 Corporation Lane  
Hampton, NH 03107

Dear Ms. Bliss:

I am writing to confirm my acceptance of your employment offer of April 17<sup>th</sup> and to tell you how excited I am to be joining Data International Corporation. The work is exactly what my education has well prepared me for and I am certain that I can make significant contributions to the corporation. I am grateful for the opportunity you have given me to do so.

As we discussed, I will report to work at 8:00am on May 25<sup>th</sup> and will have completed the required drug testing and medical examination by that date. I will also make sure that all employment and insurance forms will be completed for the employee orientation on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

I look forward to working with you and joining your team. I appreciate your confidence in me and I am thrilled to be a new addition to your staff. Feel free to contact me before May 25<sup>th</sup> if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

*(signature)*

Heather Jones

**Sample Letter Declining Offer**

2500 North River Road  
Manchester, NH 03106

March 7, 2006

Mr. Kenneth Blaisdell  
Branch Manager  
Bank of Maine  
100 Main Street  
Hartland, ME 01830

Dear Mr. Blaisdell:

Thank you for the recent offer to join your team in the position of Assistant Branch Manager with the Bank of Maine. I appreciate the time you have taken to discuss the details of the position with me and I have given your offer much thought and consideration.

The bank has a fine reputation and there are many aspects of the position which I find appealing. However, I believe it is in our mutual interest that I decline your offer. This has been a difficult decision for me but I believe it is the appropriate one for my career.

I want to thank you for the consideration and courtesy you have extended to me. It was a pleasure meeting you and your outstanding staff.

Sincerely,

*(signature)*

Pamela Hicks

## Sample Follow-up to a Rejection

183 Shady Lane  
Berlin NH, 03546

May 14, 2006

Mr. Ronald Cote  
District Manager  
L.L. Bean  
150 Main Street  
Freeport, ME 01830

Dear Mr. Cote:

I was disappointed to recently learn that you have chosen someone else to fill your Store Manager position. I feel that my background closely matches your company's needs and that I possess the education and experience to work in your organization.

If something changes, please do not hesitate to call me. I am certain that I can meet the high standards which L.L. Bean is striving to achieve. I was very excited to learn that the company has expanded its website and will be looking to reach similar goals in the near future.

I know how difficult it is to make a hiring decision when you are faced with a pool of qualified candidates. Please thank your managers for their time and consideration on my behalf.

Sincerely,

*(signature)*

Michael Burns

# Interviewing

## The Interview

The hard work you put into your resume has paid off and you have obtained an interview. The employer was impressed by your credentials on paper, now you will be required to make your first personal appearance. While the resume was key in getting you the interview, the interview will be the deciding factor in getting you the job. Now is your chance to mention all the details you were forced to leave out of your resume. The famous quote, “you never get a second chance to make a positive first impression,” holds true in your interviewing experiences. Before you head off to your interview, there are certain variables you should not ignore.

In arranging the interview with the employer, be sure to get this important information:

- The full names and titles of those who will be interviewing you, with the correct spelling and pronunciation.
- The date, time and location of the interview. (It may be necessary for you to ask for directions and estimated travel time.)
- Any specific items you will need to bring to the interview (license, portfolio, etc.).

If you are unsure of the exact location and travel time for your interview, you may want to do a test run trip. On the day of the interview, keep your stress level down by allowing for plenty of time to get yourself ready. You will want to arrive 15 to 20 minutes early and not appear frazzled when you arrive. Be courteous to everyone with whom you talk. Everyone you come in contact with will be evaluating you. Do your best to remember names of any administrative staff that you may have future phone contact with in checking on the status of the search.

Your style of dress should be neat and professional. Conservative and tasteful is always best. The interview is not the place to be boastful about your individuality. Jewelry should be minimized and appropriate. Do not create distractions with trendy items. Facial piercings, excessive makeup, short skirts, and earrings on gentlemen are not recommended. Thirty percent of job candidates are eliminated due to poor grooming (i.e. unpolished or rundown shoes, white socks for men, unmanageable hair, etc.). Wearing a dark suit is recommended, as well as panty hose for ladies. Men should be clean shaven. If you are unsure about attire, contact the CDC staff for advice.

Greet your interviewer with a smile and a firm handshake. Always address the person formally, “Hello, Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_.” Do not use a first name until you are invited to do so. Be at your best and remember that the employer is picturing you in the role. Impressions formed in the first minutes usually are not changed through the rest of the interview. Seventy-five to ninety-five percent of the time, the interview outcome is determined by those few minutes. This may not be fair or seem justified, but it is so. There can be no excuses. You must be positive and powerful right from the start. Energy and enthusiasm go a long way.

Your body language can support a positive attitude and self-confidence:

- Maintain eye contact. This establishes rapport and conveys trustworthiness. Practice eye contact if you are not comfortable with it now.
- Lean slightly forward as you sit. This communicates your interest. Avoid sinking into your seat and slouching, sit near the front part of the seat if you have a tendency to do so.
- Try to minimize talking with your hands. It is distracting. A good trick to avoid over-gesturing is to bring along a notebook - holding it in your lap will anchor your hands.
- Smile and nod to reinforce your positive image and attentiveness. Statistically, people that smile often are considered to be more intelligent.
- Attend to nervous habits. They are never flattering.
- Speak slowly and clearly enough, nerves tend to increase the pace of your speech.
- Let the employer control the pace of the interview. If you are not sure whether you are being understood, ask politely, “Did that answer your question?”
- Put enthusiasm behind your words. Seventy percent of communication is nonverbal. Actions speak louder than words. The energy behind your words will convince the listener that you mean and can be accountable for what you say.

Practice these techniques every day. If you have not taken advantage of the Career Development Center’s mock interview opportunity, inquire about it. Practice is key - the more familiar you are with interviewing, the easier it will become.

### **Know yourself and your goals**

It is important for you to present a clear idea of your purpose in pursuing the position - the “why you” for this job. You should be prepared to tie this reasoning into your future career goals. There is no way for you to predict the factors that will influence your career decision making in your professional future. If you are unsure about your definite career goals, make sure to give some thought to your short-term and long-term goals that relate to determining your career path.

Recruiters have told us that a student’s awareness of career goals and strong interpersonal skills are the greatest determinants for continuation in a selection process. You should have an idea of two short term and two long-term goals, and should be prepared to explain why they are important to you and how you plan to reach them. If you are unsure of your goals, meet with the CDC to solidify them before your interview. Portray an air of confidence when discussing your goals, but watch out for overconfidence and cockiness.

## Know your resume

When you get to the interview, your resume will be the document used to develop questions relative to your education, work history and personal interests. In preparing for the interview, you need to practice elaborating on the information listed on your resume. If you are not comfortable doing this with certain parts of your resume, then that content should not be included. All content should positively support your goals and interests. It is necessary for you to review your resume again before the interview so that its content will be fresh in your mind.

Questions related to past jobs must be supported with examples. Your examples will uncover the unique contribution you made to past positions while demonstrating your ability to contribute as a new hire. Employers will remember anecdotal information more than a yes/no response.

Weak response:

Interviewer: “Do you work well under pressure?”  
Job Candidate: “Yes. That has never been a problem.”

Strong response:

“Yes. In my last summer job, we constantly had to work with deadlines set by independent contractors. We planned our work according to these deadlines and completed each assignment efficiently. I enjoy being challenged by the pressure to excel and succeed.”

Before an interview, it is natural that you will feel nervous. Harness that energy and make it work for you. Pay attention to your interviewer and what they need to know and learn about you. Also, good preparation will reduce nervousness.

## Know the employer

Know the company, its service and products. Take the time to look up the organization’s web page. Be aware of any mission statements or mottos that will give you a clue about the kind of employees for who they are looking. The more you know about the company the better, but at bare minimum, there is certain information that you should be familiar with before the job interview:

- What is the company’s service or product?
- What is its present financial status?
- Where is it headquartered and how many offices or locations does it have?
- Has it recently merged or been bought out by another company?
- Is it in a growth phase, stable situation or declining position within the particular industry?

See the section on company research in the **Job Search Manual** for detailed information on how to research employers. If the employer does not ask you specific questions about your knowledge of the company, demonstrate your knowledge.

An example of this would be: “I understand that [company] values diversity, having attended Southern New Hampshire University, which has a large international student population, I have become familiar with many different cultures and diversity of backgrounds and enjoy working in

this type of environment.” Information about some companies can be found in the CDC company files or on the web.

### **Know the job**

If at all possible, it is suggested that you obtain a copy of the job description so that you can better understand the position for which you will be interviewing. You will be able to anticipate the types of questions that will be asked; thus, leaving more opportunity to prepare your answers and give the best possible interview. Even more importantly, you will develop a list of questions that you would like to have answered during the interview.

### **Ask questions**

Be prepared for the interview to change pace when you are asked if you have any questions. This may be the first time you are given the chance to control the pace and the direction of the interview. Do not let your energy die at this point. Instead, be prepared with a list of questions (three to five is generally enough) that you will direct at the employer. Use this opportunity to find out information that you are interested to know about the job, company, environment, corporate culture, or search process. Be polite and appropriate in the questions you ask (see sample questions at the end of this section). Do not be demanding or insistent about obtaining information an employer might not have readily available. Questions having to do with salary are often sensitive and need to be handled in a tactful manner. Advice on salary negotiations is provided in the **Job Search Manual**.

### **Benefits**

Think carefully about the benefits package offered by a company. Consider the weight of certain benefits when you are considering salary. For example, if you consider an offer at a pay rate that you think is low, consider the cost of a benefit like tuition reimbursement.

A list of things to think about before accepting a position might include:

- Life insurance (employee and dependent)
- Health care transportation
- Vacation, holidays and sick time
- Tuition reimbursement
- Adoption benefits
- Physical exams
- Salary(Base)
- Bonuses (sign-on bonus)
- Incentives
- Disability insurance (short and long term)
- HMO/PPO premiums
- Health insurance(Employee & dependent)
- Maternity or paternity leave
- Leave or absence
- Tax deferred plans
- Dental insurance
- Alcohol/Drug treatment
- Gain sharing
- Dependent day/Well baby care
- Therapy/Counseling
- Chiropractic care or acupuncture
- Promotion review policy
- Severance pay
- Relocation expenses
- Stock options
- Vision/hearing care
- Survivor income

If you have detailed questions about a certain company’s benefits, the employer may refer you to the Human Resources Department for more information.

## **Items to bring to an interview**

Besides a great attitude and a winning smile, take along some copies of your resume. In the case that an interviewer does not have a copy readily available, you will impress them with your preparation in having an additional copy with you. It will also be necessary to bring your list of references to present to the employer in the case that he/she asks for names and contact information. Additional items to consider bringing along are a writing utensil, notebook, your interviewer's contact information and samples of your work. It has become increasingly more popular in some professions to prepare a portfolio highlighting your background and accomplishments. The portfolio is a nice way of providing additional information to the employer and can be offered at the end of the interview in the case that the employer would like to see it. More information about portfolios can be obtained from the CDC.

- Copies of your resume on high grade paper
- Copies of your reference list
- Writing utensil
- Notebook/paper
- Interviewer's contact info
- Samples of your work
- Portfolio
- Prepared questions to ask

The secret to successful interviewing is in knowing yourself and your goals, researching your employer and practicing answers to potential questions that will demonstrate your qualifications for the position. Project self-assurance and believe in yourself and the employer will do the same.

## **Questions commonly asked by employers**

### **Personal**

- What do you really want to do in life?
- Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- How would you describe yourself?
- How do you think a friend or professor who knows you would describe you?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest efforts?
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- Why should I hire you?

### **Professional**

- In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable?
- How would you describe the ideal job for you?
- How do you work under pressure?
- Which is more important to you, the money or type of job?
- What qualities should a successful manager possess?
- What are the most important rewards you expect in your business career?

- What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
- Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor and an employee.

#### Career Goals

- What are your long-range and short-range goals and how do you plan to achieve them?
- What specific goals do you have established for yourself for the next ten years?
- What do you see yourself doing professionally five years from now? Ten years?
- How do you plan to achieve your career goals?
- What do you expect to be earning in five years?
- How will a job with us lead you to reaching your goals?

#### Educational

- Why did you select your college or university?
- What led you to choose your field of major study?
- What college subjects did you like best? Least? Why?
- Describe your most rewarding college experience.
- In what internship, part-time or summer jobs have you been most interested? Why?
- What have you learned from participation in extra-curricular activities?
- How has your college experience prepared you for a business career?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in a company like ours?
- If you could do so, would you plan your academic study differently? Why? How?
- Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?
- Do you think that your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?

#### Experience/Job Qualifications

- In what ways do you think you can make contributions to our company?
- If you were hiring a candidate for this position, what qualities would you look for?
- Why did you decide to seek a position with this company?
- What do you know about our company?
- Are you seeking employment in a company of a certain size? Why?
- What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work?
- Do you have a geographical preference? Why?
- Will you relocate? Does relocation bother you?
- Are you willing to travel?
- Are you willing to spend at least six months as a trainee?

#### Behavioral

- Can you tell me about a time when you overcame an obstacle at work?
- Could you describe an instance in which you dealt with a difficult customer/client?
- How have you demonstrated leadership at work? Can you give specific examples?
- Can you recall a time when you were on a team when a member wasn't pulling his or her weight?
- What would you say to a customer if they told you they were unhappy with your service?
- How did you feel when you were forced to multi-task in your past jobs?

### Questions typically asked by interviewee

- What are the opportunities for personal growth?
- Identify typical career paths based on past records. What is the realistic time frame for advancement?
- How is an employee evaluated and promoted?
- What is the retention rate of people in the position for which I am interviewing?
- Can you describe typical first year assignments for this position?
- What would initial and future training programs involve?
- What are the challenging facets of the job?
- What are the company's plans for future growth?
- What is the company's record of employment stability?
- What industry trends will occur in this company?
- How has this company fared during the recent recession?
- What makes your firm different from its competitors?
- What are the company's strengths and weaknesses?
- How would you describe your corporation's personality and management style?
- Is it the company policy to promote from within? Tell me the work history of your top management?
- What kinds of career opportunities are currently available for my degree and skills?
- What are your expectations for new hires?
- How would you describe the work environment/corporate culture of your organization?
- How can you utilize my skills?
- What is the overall structure of the department where the position is located?
- Why do you enjoy working for your firm?
- What qualities are you looking for in your new hires?
- What type of person are you looking for to fill this position?

# Salary

A difficult issue is always the question of salary and benefits. In most cases, salaries are negotiable. Your objective should be to prove your worth to the employer throughout the interview so that when the question of salary is addressed, your value and credibility have been effectively established. Entry level positions may have an established base. Employers do not give away salaries, but if you ask for a certain amount and can justify your request, there is a chance to negotiate in your favor.

Delaying the question of salary can be helpful. Often, an employer will have a dollar figure in mind for the position, but not necessarily for you, the individual. When the question does come up, always quote a salary range or request to know what range is appropriate for this position. To obtain a salary range, do some research on similar positions within the industry in your area. You can obtain salary average information in your state on America's Career Infonet: [www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org). To determine if a salary is one you can live with, have a sense of your financial needs (rent, loans, bills, personal expenses, and savings).

Before a company makes an offer to you, maintain an air of flexibility in discussions pertaining to salary. When the company makes an offer, at that point you have identified that they would like to hire you for the position. Negotiating salary after an offer is made is when you will have the most leverage as you will know they have interest in your abilities.

The salary you accept influences future salaries. Depending on the job market, as you change jobs, you can expect the same salary or up to 10 percent to 15 percent more. Do not forget the value of the benefits package. Normally, this might include medical and dental benefits, sick days, personal days, vacation days, use of sports facilities, tuition reimbursement, etc. If salary is fixed, benefits can sometimes be negotiated: more vacation time, profit sharing, etc. Benefits can be worth \$3000 to \$5000. Take the time to research and understand them.

Walter S. Keller, in his article "The Ten Commandments of Salary Negotiation" in the Wallstreet Journal's Career Journal, 2002, he discusses salary issues and provides strategies for dealing with salary information requests. Here is some of his advice:

- 1) Research your profession's salary range - Check with recruiters in your field (even if you do not pursue their leads), competitors, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook, the Internet, your local chamber of commerce and trade publications.
- 2) Select a target salary or total pay - You may not get the amount you want, but having a specific objective can help you get close.
- 3) Do not initiate salary discussions - Wait for the interviewer to bring the subject up, even if it is postponed to a second interview.
- 4) When asked for your salary requirements, say that they are negotiable - Do the same on applications by writing "negotiable" in any box asking about salary details. If the form asks you to provide current salary, write, "to be covered during interview." This is not

being evasive, because without knowing details about benefits, how could you select a salary figure?

- 5) When asked for your salary requirements, reply by asking the interviewer to share the position's salary range.
- 6) Discuss benefits separately from salary - Your list of benefits can include insurance, tuition reimbursement, relocation payments, stock options, and outplacement upon termination.
- 7) Analyze all benefit packages with a family member or friend, or with an insurance, investment or bank professional. They will provide you with an invaluable second opinion and may look at the offer more objectively.
- 8) Consider the cost of living if you are moving to a new area, and if it is higher, suggest that you be paid a differential.
- 9) In discussing why you deserve a substantial increase, use examples of your accomplishments that prove your value, not merely your experience. Comparisons to your current salary are irrelevant and should be avoided; you are talking about the benefits you will now bring to your employer, not your past salary.
- 10) Always assume a firm's first offer is negotiable and never accept an offer at the interview. Express your strong interest, but state you always discuss decisions of this magnitude with advisors whose judgment you have relied upon for years. Tell your interviewer when you will contact him or her with your decision.

Advertisements often request salary data. You can opt to omit your salary requirements, although if you choose to share the information, it should be referred to in your cover letter and never listed on the resume. Here are some examples of how to address the topic of money in your letters should you feel it is appropriate to do so.

“My salary is in the mid \$---s, with appropriate benefits. I would be willing to relocate for the right opportunity.”

“The salary research that I have done on similar positions in the state identified an average starting salary in the \$-- to \$-- range.”

For more information, such as salary surveys and statistics, please contact the CDC or visit the following websites:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook [www.bls.gov/oco/](http://www.bls.gov/oco/)
- Salary.com [www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com)
- The Riley Guide <http://www.rileyguide.com/offers.html>
- America’s Career Infonet <http://www.acinet.org>

# **Career Development Center (CDC)**

## **Office Hours**

Monday: 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.\*

Wednesday: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.\*

Thursday: 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Friday: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

\* Evening hours by appointment

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