JOB SEARCH TIPS & IDEAS

for the

COVID-19 PANDEMIC ERA AND BEYOND

We created this guide to help our employment services clients seeking assistance as they search for work in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic. Much of this advice is useful beyond the time of a pandemic. Explore the content topics and learn from those which you believe are most useful for your own job search needs.

Feel free to contact your local employment service group for further job search advice and counseling.

We wish you the best in your search for new employment opportunities!

Content contributors included employment counselor staff from the following community service organizations:

ICA

Your Local FOOD SHELF
ICA Main: 952.938.0729
icafoodshelf.org/employment-assistance

Interfaith Outreach.
Igniting the power of community

763-489-7500
iocp.org

PROP
FOOD. SUPPORT. COMMUNITY.

propfood.org
952-937-9120
Food. Support. Community.

WeCAN
Western Communities Action Network, Inc.

jobs@wecanmn.org
Phone: (952)472-0742

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Contents

Covid-19 Era Job Search Technology Needed	2
Job Search Strategies	2
Older Worker Job Searching Tips	4
Don't have a computer or internet access – Job Search Tips	6
Networking	8
Top Ten Interview Prep Tips	10
Internet Job Search and Technology Training Resources	12
What Does A Modern Resume Look Like	14
Sample Resume	16
Sample Cover Letter	18
Sample Email Communications with Employers	19
10 Tips for Completing a Job Application to Get an Interview	21
Remote/Virtual Interview Tips	24
Troubleshooting Tips for Video Interviews	25
How to choose the right references for your job search	26
Sample Reference Write-up Form	27

Covid-19 Era Job Search Technology Needed

The Covid-19 era is pushing job searching, job application, job interviewing further into the use of technology. If at all possible, to optimize your job search you need access to the following technology capabilities:

a. a cell phone or a PC
b. access to the internet
    - This can be through your cell phone service provider, but a PC makes it easier to see full screen's worth of information and to type into an on-line application forms
    - PCs require and internet service provider account unless you can get to a friends, a schools, a social service organizations or the public library where such PCs and internet service are available at no charge to those with a library card (also free)
c. an email account – most communication with potential employers will be either through email or their company's web-site
d. ability to use video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Google Duo or Meet, Skype on your cell phone or PC with internet access
e. very useful, but not absolutely required, a job search web site account, e.g., an account at Indeed.com or LinkedIn.com

Job Search Strategies

Starting Your Job Search

- Begin by focusing on what you want/need right now
    - Are you looking full-time, part-time?
    - What location?
    - What pay scale?
    - Certain type of job or skills?
- These pieces will help you focus your search to be the most effective as possible
- Identify your skills and assess career options using the following platforms:
    - O*Net – onetonline.org
    - CareerWise – carerwise.minnstate.edu
- Looking to build new skills? Check out training courses through Coursera: https://www.careerforcemn.com/coursera

Create a Plan for Your Job Search

- Organize your time wisely, give yourself breaks
- Find ways to minimize distractions and focus your work
- Keep records (use job logs, organize postings, save job descriptions of places you've applied)
- Create goals and make yourself accountable for accomplishing them

Identify Places to Job Search

- Some common websites:

- Indeed.com
- MinnesotaWorks.net
- Company websites
- Careerwise.minnstate.edu
- Minnesotajobs.com

Check These Sites for Industry Hiring Trends

- RealTime Talent Workforce Reports: http://www.realtimetalent.org/
- MN Department of Employment and Economic Development: https://mn.gov/deed/
- Bureau of Labor Statistics + Occupational Outlook Handbook: https://www.bls.gov/ooh/
- Reach out to your local Employment Services team

Find Job Descriptions You Are Interested In

- Read job descriptions closely and identify the keywords they use
- Use those SAME keywords in your resume, cover letter, application
- Many applications are sorted by automatic software that look for keywords. If they are not there it will reject your application even if you are qualified.

Remember Self-Care

- Job Searching is hard
- Unfortunately, rejection is a part of the process
- Find people to check in with/offer support
- Patience and Persistence
- There is a fit!

Older Worker Job Searching Tips

Start Early and Stay Strong

The reality is that successful job searches tend to take longer on average for older job seekers. And, during the Covid-19 era this is likely to be worsened. So, begin early to take on some of the ideas below even if

- you're not sure when you want to return to work in this Covid-19 pandemic
- your unemployment benefits haven't run out, or
- you haven't been told whether or not your old job will be coming back due to Covid-19 closures and changes

Manage your expectations. Expect some rejections, but don't give up – there's work out there and your experience is an advantage. Find a cheerleader friend or two whose support will encourage you to keep searching and applying. Yes, the process is tedious, but you know how to stay the course in life and in this job search.

On the bright side, remote work from home opportunities may be greater. And, more flexible work options such as part-time or short-term project participation will likely increase.

Tips for Standing Out in this Job Market

Despite all the skills and experience that you bring to the table, you will still need to convince employers that you are the right person for the job.

- Your experience is your advantage. Make sure your resume shows the skills and abilities your years of work have gained you. It should be up-to-date, no more than 2 pages, cover work preferably back only 5 and not more than 10 years (if some key jobs in your history relate to the jobs for which you are applying). Do not use an Objective statement. The employer cares more about what you can do for them than knowing more about what your work goals are.
- Identify your transferable skills and be ready to tell an employer how your experiences translate into doing the job they need well. Communication and people skills are almost always valuable; share those experiences that reflect those abilities of yours. Can you handle complaints, show empathy, listen well, motivate co-workers, supervise, handle details, coordinate work or project efforts, operate equipment or computer applications, own and follow-through on problem solving… whatever you have done and learned at past work is your value in future work.
- Have a passion or hobby that you have been engaged with for some time - extract the valuable abilities from that, as well, and aim your job searches in the direction of those interests.
- Many may need to consider a career shift to a new field. If you have the interest and energy (some study/training are likely needed) and tolerance for a probable pay cut, this is a good time to have a wider range of work types to include in your search options.
- Develop some new skills or make some of your skills more current if brushing up is needed. Particularly relevant is learning your way around fundamental computer applications – e.g., Microsoft Word and Excel, Google. It is a 'must' to learn to text and email if you don't already. Check out the free on-line learning sites in that section of this document.
- On-line interviewing has become mainstream. Get proficient on using video teleconferencing tools like Zoom or Google Duo or Skype.

- Establish and polish your LinkedIn profile if you are seeking knowledge-worker, computer, or professional level jobs. Employers will look to find you on LinkedIn and Facebook. Have a professional public presence there. Check to find Facebook posts that may be tagged to you, but you did not create. Untag from anything unseemly or that would put an employer off from considering further your job candidacy.
- Network both virtually on LinkedIn and personally with those you know and have worked with in the past.
- Dress the part and contemporary (mature is OK) for in-person or video conferencing interviews.

Remember What Really Matters to the Employer

- Do you understand what this job is about and does it match with what you have done in the past?
- Does your experience and proven skills show that you really can perform this job?
- Are you a fit with the company – its team and its culture?
- Will you come to work for the desired price?
- Does it show that you have the enthusiasm and want this job and at this company?

Need Additional Help

Get help from your local social service organization's employment counselors.

Contact one of Minnesota's CareerForce centers for employment counseling and older job seeker seminars like 'Job Search Over 40' on YouTube.

How to Respond if an Interviewer Seems Concerned about Your Age?

AARP has teamed up with companies that understand and value the older worker. Over 1000 companies have taken AARP's Employers Pledge Program publicly agreeing to fight age discrimination. Check out AARP's job board (https://jobs.aarp.org) to find these companies and their job openings.

Don’t have a computer or internet access – Job Search Tips

Dropping off a resume in person used to be the norm in job hunting. Job-seekers would drop by, ask for a manager and pitch themselves on-the-spot. Today, online job portals are more popular, both for employers, who can mass-advertise and screen resumes quickly, as well as employees, as it offers a fast and easy way to reach multiple employers simultaneously. However, visiting a potential employer’s location with your resume can be effective provided you approach it in a thoughtful and professional manner.

Choose the Right Time

Every business has a slow time and a busy time, and you are wise to gauge the appropriate window to drop in. Some businesses are easy to figure out, for example, a take-out restaurant could be busy at noon, and you are not likely to get the attention of a manager; in fact, you may be considered someone who has poor judgment if you pick an inappropriate time to pitch your skills.

Be Prepared

Even if you are just dropping off a resume, you are going to interact with someone in the organization, so it’s in your best interest to be well-groomed and professionally dressed. Your resume should also be professional looking. Consider putting it in a folder or envelope. You should also bring along a pen, and sheet that lists your past employment and other questions frequently asked on job applications. You may be surprised how many companies will request you fill out an application in addition to dropping off your resume, so be prepared.

Be Engaging and Professional

Introduce yourself when you walk into the business and keep appropriate social distance. Wear a mask. Mention how you would like to shake hands but can’t, given current circumstances. Don’t make the mistake of only being nice to the manager because front desk clerks, receptionists and even other staffers may weigh in on you as a candidate. Be kind and gracious to everyone you meet.

Examples:

Hi there, my name is Grace, I’m hoping to drop off a resume for the manager. Is she in today by chance?
Hello, my name is Ahmed. I’m a huge fan of this store, and I was wondering if you’re hiring for sales associates?
Hi, my name is Maria, and I’m interested in your open position. Is there an appropriate person I can leave my resume with?

Whenever possible, your objective should be to speak with a decision maker when dropping off your resume. It will allow the person an opportunity to put a face with a name, and if you’re lucky, you may get an interview right then and there.

Be Assertive, But Not Pushy

The objective of dropping off a resume in person, rather than sending it by mail, is that you want to make a personal connection and give yourself an edge. If a manager is not around, dive just a bit deeper for more information.

Examples:
I'm sorry to hear she isn't available. Is there a better time or day for me to come back in when I can give her my resume in person?
Thanks for passing along my resume. Could I get the manager's name and email so I can follow up in a few days?
I really appreciate you taking the time to speak with me and to pass my resume to the right person. It seems like everyone here is incredibly professional. I would love the chance to get an interview.

Follow-up

Whenever possible get the interviewer's business card so you will have the needed follow-up contact information. After you drop off a resume or fill out an application, follow-up to keep your name top-of-mind with the hiring manager. If you are lucky enough to get an interview on-the-spot or have a brief conversation with the manager, send a thank-you note or email right away.

Example:
It was great to meet you today. Thanks for taking time from your busy schedule. I look forward to hearing from you regarding the position.
While technology has revolutionized the way people search for work, taking a tried-and-true approach of reaching out in person has the potential to land you your job of choice.

Local Newspapers with Jobs Pages

- Laker Pioneer: https://www.hometownsource.com/laker_pioneer/
- Star Tribune: https://jobs.startribune.com/
- Sun Current (Bloomington, Richfield, Edina): https://www.hometownsource.com/sun_current/
- Chanhassen Villager: https://www.swnewsmedia.com/jobs/
- Most of the local newspapers have a direct link to JOBSHUB.biz for their local job opportunities where the Classifieds are limited: https://jobshub.biz/
- The Patch (All cities): https://patch.com/minnesota
- Sun Sailor (Minnetonka, Hopkins, St. Louis Park, Wayzata, Plymouth, Excelsior, Deephaven, Medicine Lake, Tonka Bay, Shorewood, Greenwood): www.hometownsource.com/sun_sailor

Other local job search strategies:

Keep an eye out for signs that an employer is hiring – on the outside of buildings, in shop front windows.

Ask your local employment resource centers (Workforce Center/Employment counselors) for local opportunities that are open for drop-ins e.g. career fairs/ employer hiring events/ on-site recruiters.

Request paper application forms from employers who may direct you to an on-line application and explain your situation in not being able to access the internet.

Networking

What is Networking?

- Networking involves directly communicating with people to build and nurture relationships
- Through networking you can speak to experts in the fields you are interested in
- Networking is not asking for a job, but rather information gathering to learn more and build connections.
- Networking is a two-way street. People may have opportunities and information for you and you should also share opportunities and information with others.
- A great way to connect and also find out who else you should be talking to. At the end of a meeting think about asking - “Do you know of anyone else I should connect with?”

Why is Networking Important?

- Builds relationships
- Learn about job opportunities and careers from the inside
- Build a list of contacts in your field of interest
- Chances of getting the job offer (Source: Arbez):
    - 92% when referred in to the director level or above (iCIMS)
    - 40% when referred in at any level of the organization (JobVite)
    - 21% when applied directly on the company website (JobVite)
    - 19% when worked through an outside recruiter (JobVite)
    - 12% when applied online using a major job board (SilkRoad Technology)
- At least 70% of jobs are not posted, instead they are filled by networking (DEED)

Successful Tools for Networking

- Networking can happen through:
    - Job/Career Fairs (many are currently virtual)
    - Professional/Personal Contacts
    - Informational Interviews
    - Outreach to an individual at the organization through:
        - LinkedIn

        - Email
        - Social Media
    - *Networking is still possible remotely during COVID-19! Many of the above pieces can be done through online platforms such as email, webinars, Zoom meetings, etc.*
- Know what your goals are and be clear about what you are asking for
- *Sample script for an informational outreach:*
    - *"Hello, I am exploring opportunities in [type of organization/role]. My background is in _____. I am reaching out to professionals in the field to hear more about your experience and what you see as important skills to have in the industry.*

      I am hoping you have 15-30 minutes to connect with me in the next couple weeks. Please let me know if this is possible and what times are most convenient for you. I look forward to hearing from you.

      Thank you,

      [Your Name]

Top Ten Interview Prep Tips

1. **Review the job posting & request a job description.** Make note of key job responsibilities. This will help you to prepare how to talk about your experience & education in connection with the job. Reviewing these documents will also give insight into questions the interviewer may ask, and questions you can prepare to ask the interviewer.

2. **Be prepared to talk through your resume.** Prepare a concise (1-2) minute overview of your training, experience and strengths that relate to the position for which you have applied. Anticipate any questions an interviewer may have (i.e. gaps in employment, short stay with employer, level of experience.) Be honest and straightforward, but keep your responses succinct.

3. **Practice.** Arrange a practice interview with someone who can ask you a series of questions that you are not expecting. At a minimum, practice while recording yourself with your phone or standing in front of a mirror. Ask for feedback about your responses, body language, tone & confidence.

4. **Be ready for virtual interviews**—Due to COVID-19, many interviews are taking place by phone or virtually through video calls. Become familiar with common technology, prepare a quiet place in your home and dress professionally. Have a copy of your resume and notes available to refer to if needed (not visible on video screen.) For additional tips, see handout on remote/virtual interviews.

5. **Prepare for common questions:** While it is not possible to anticipate every question, most employers will ask some version of the following list. Write out notes and practice your responses. The goal is not to memorize answers, but to be confident & comfortable talking about your strengths & skills. Sample questions: ◦*Tell me about yourself* ◦*Why are you interested in this position?* ◦*What are your strengths?* ◦*What are your weaknesses?* ◦*Why are you looking to leave your current position?*

6. **Prepare for behavioral interview questions**: These questions often start with a phrase like, "tell me about a time when…" Interviewers are looking for specific examples (or stories) that demonstrate skills that relate to the position. This style of question is popular with all employers. Use the acronym STAR to help guide your responses. Share a Situation, Task, Action, and Result. Example questions: ◦*Tell me about a time you had an upset customer.* ◦*Can you think of a time you disagreed with a colleague or boss, what happened?*

7. **Prepare questions to ask the Interviewer**. Why? Asking questions shows interest, and that you have done your homework by reading the job posting/job description and looked at the company's website. Sample questions: ◦*What do you like about working for this organization.* ◦*For this position, what does success look like after 3 months, 6 months, 1 year?* ◦*What kind of training can I expect?* ◦*What are the next steps in the hiring process or when can I expect to hear from you?*

8. **Avoid bringing up salary and benefits, but be prepared with an answer.** Let the interviewer lead the conversation about salary. If they don't, wait until the end of your final interview or once you've been offered the job. Offer a range. Before the interview, research the typical pay for that position using a site such as http://careerwise.minnstate.edu/ to help you determine a realistic pay range for the job.

9. **Before you leave, ask about the next steps in the process.** To avoid extra stress over when to follow up, ask the interviewer about the next steps in the process, or inquire about the timeline for a hiring decision.

10. **Send a thank you email.** During the interview ask for business cards (if in person) or ask for the emails of your interviewers, so that you can send a brief thank you for the opportunity to interview. This shows interest and professionalism (and is a step your competitors may not take!)

Internet Job Search and Technology Training Resources

Helpful websites to use when looking for a job	
Indeed	www.indeed.com
Monster	www.monster.com
ZipRecruiter	www.ziprecruiter.com
Minnesota Non-profit	www.minnesotanonprofits.org/jobs
Star Tribune	https://jobs.startribune.com/
St. Paul Press	www.twincities.com/jobs/
KARE11 (companies hiring now during Covid-19)	https://www.kare11.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/companies-that-are-hiring-in-minnesota-amid-coronavirus/89-b7de242e-3e0b-47a4-b176-a53f86b6c1f8
MN Job Bank (all MN Employers)	www.minnesotaworks.net
MN Department of Employment	https://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/find-a-job/
MN State & Local Government Jobs	https://mn.gov/mmb/careers/search-for-jobs/
United States Federal Government	www.usajobs.gov
United States Fed. Government (w/in 25 miles of Mpls.)	https://www.usajobs.gov/Search/?l=Minneapolis%2C%20Minnesota&p=1

Work at home/remote work job search web sites	
Remote work opportunities **[use any of the job websites above and add "remote jobs' or "work from home" to your searches]**	https://remote.co/remote-jobs/ https://dynamitejobs.com/ The Riveter Remote Work sites Flex Jobs Downloadable Guide (subscription required) https://www.ryrob.com/remote-jobs-websites/ (review of "60 BEST REMOTE JOB WEBSITES")
Work from home shopper	Shipt Instacart Bite Squad
ESL teachers for Chinese students	Dada Abc VIPkids
Free on-line computer class training	
Hennepin County Library On-line training for library cardholders – LinkedIn's Lynda.com	Hennepin County Library entry point: https://www.hclib.org/browse/online-resources/online-resources-container/online-resources-section/online-resources-k-n/Lynda-com

Top-quality video tutorials taught by recognized industry experts. Lessons are for all skill levels and include a wide variety of topic areas including business skills and software, web design and development, music, photo, and video editing, and 3D design and animation. You can currently get library cards online if you don't already have one.	Lynda.com Login for Hennepin County Library Patrons: https://www.lynda.com/portal/patron?org=hclib.org&triedlogout=true
Microsoft Products Training	Microsoft training and tutorials. (Find more sites that offer online courses here)
Medicare's guide for senior's Online computer classes range for users of all types. Starting at a basic level for beginners, moving to intermediate and advanced levels. Training classes, software programs, and apps offer free services for anyone trying to navigate through the technology world.	Medicare's guide for senior's technology basic training
Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) Free online courses available for anyone to enroll. MOOCs provide an affordable and flexible way to learn new skills, advance your career and deliver quality educational experiences at scale.	MOOCs
From MIT and Harvard	EdX classes
Not sure where to start…	Check out these classes for digital marketing, coding, and data science

What Does A Modern Resume Look Like

November 13, 2019 by Hannah Morgan (adapted from www.careersherpa.net What Does A Modern Resume Look Like)

Writing a modern resume requires you create one that makes it through an applicant tracking system AND catches the attention of different readers (recruiter and hiring manager).

How well do you understand how applicant tracking systems work and how recruiters review resumes?

This overview of what a modern resume looks like helps you understand the most important aspects of writing a resume today.

Submitting your resume online

When you apply for a job online, you're asked to upload your resume and complete an online application. Every ATS is a little different in how they work but the information you supply determines your success. To learn more about how ATS work, read this **How To Get Past The Applicant Tracking System (ATS)**

In order for your resume to get through the ATS, it has to show you have the qualifications, ie. you may need to tweak your resume to align with the role you are applying for.

Tweaking your resume requires reviewing the job description and highlighting the skills, technology and systems (keywords) requested. Without lying, you want to use those words in your resume. Here's more help dissecting a job posting to uncover keywords – **Applying for a Job? Invest Time Reviewing the Job Posting**.

How long does a recruiter look at your resume?

7.4 seconds

The 7.4 seconds is only ***a first review*** of a resume to see if it looks worth further review. If the resume makes it to the next step, the recruiter will spend as much time as it takes to evaluate the qualifications shown in the resume.

We skim. We look for headlines and things that catch our interest.

Recruiters are no different. They don't have time to figure out what the resume is trying to say. It is your job to clearly convey how you meet the job requirements.

Formatting Takeaway

The layout of a resume can impact where the reader spends more time.

- Titles, headings, job titles and most recent job content all tend to get more attention.

- We read left to right so structure important information to take advantage of this. Put the most relevant information first.
- Pay attention to the information you list in your most recent job as it receives the most attention.
- And don't overlook your contact information. The city and state contact information are important. (You no longer need to include your street address.)

Make Your Resume Skimmable

Some of the key recommendations by TheLadders study (TheLadder's full analysis is here) include:

- A simple, uncluttered layout
- Clear fonts (sans serif fonts are easier to read online.)
- An overview, branding statement, value proposition or summary at the top (do not use an objective statement such as "to obtain a challenging, rewarding, full-time job.")
- Use job titles and clear sub-headings
- Use accomplishments in your bullets, not job duties

Emphasize Current Job

Your most recent job will get the most attention because it contains the freshest skills. Pay close attention to this space and help the reader understand how your work relates to the job you are applying for.

1 Page or 2-3 Pages

A general rule of thumb is that five years of experience or less should usually fit on a single page. But if you have more than five years of experience, do not limit your resume to one page. Some senior-level job seekers may even have a three-page resume.

Remember to use a readable font size, no smaller than 10 or 11 point. And be sure your margins are no smaller than a half-inch.

And what about including a headshot? That's still not something recruiters or hiring managers want to see on your resume in the United States. Instead, include the URL (link) to your LinkedIn profile.

ATS Version

You should consider having a separate version of your resume stripped of formatting that will easily upload into an online applicant tracking system (ATS). Save your Word document as a .txt or .rtf _le and _x any visual quirks or inconsistencies. Inconsistencies and fancy formatting often confuse an ATS and can cause your resume to be eliminated for further consideration by the ATS system before it even gets to a recruiter for review.

Sample Resume

Name

name@gmail.com; cell

Nanny Newborn Care Specialist

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Reliable, self-starter who works independently and as a team with over 15 years of child care experience
- Provides individualized direction with patience, compassion, and understanding
- Well-versed in behavior management and child development techniques
- Promotes open and honest communication with parents and families for the good of the child
- Develops rapport easily with others

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Nanny/House Manager **March 2019 – present**
Private Residence, Minneapolis, MN

- Care for three children in their home; ages 10, 8, 5 three days a week
- Laundry, light housework, prepare breakfast
- Transport children to school and activities; facilitate art project and other creative activities; supervise play dates
- Shop for groceries and other household items
- Maintain home while family gone; pick up mail, water plants

Home Health Care Aide (flexible) **July 2011 – present**
Accra Care, Hopkins, MN

- Care for elderly woman in her home
- Provide companionship, escort to doctor appointments, run errands, and monitor safety
- Tidy home and provide assistance with chores as requested

Nanny **April 2016 – November 2018**
Private Residence, Minneapolis, MN

- Care for four children in their home; ages 9, 5, 18 months, and 1 month two days a week
- Manage children's activities, transport to and from events/play dates
- Prepare nutritious breakfast, lunch, and snacks
- Clean kitchen, baths, bedrooms, and living areas; laundry

Extended Teacher **November 2003 – May 2011**
Westminster School District, Westminster, CA

- Assisted students with math, English, ESL, spelling and other homework; instructed children in arts and crafts and group activities
- Taught kindness, manners, problem solving skills; distributed healthy snacks
- Planned, organized, interacted, and supervised groups for both indoor and outdoor activities
- Maintained safety and sanitary procedures for all children; keep classroom areas organized and clean

Preschool Teacher **June 2000 – October 2003**
Somerset Preschool, Westminster, CA

- Engaged children in circle time, reading books, arts and crafts, and physical activities at small preschool
- Created monthly bulletin boards
- Organized sing-alongs, taught classes such as basic Spanish, colors, etc.
- Assisted students with preschool worksheets
- Communicated student academic and social progress with parents
- Supervised meals, snacks, nap time, toilet training, and playtime

Assistant Teacher **June 1999 – June 2000**
YMCA, Huntington Beach, CA

- Supervised homework, arts and crafts, physical activities with different age groups; completed safety checks
- Reported progress of children to parents; completed and filed behavioral reports
- Opened school facility; escorted children from class to class

EDUCATION

Newborn Care Specialist **Anticipated graduation date – September 2020**
Newborn Care Solutions (online), Phoenix, AZ

Childhood Education coursework
Independence University**,** National City, CA

Cosmetology Certification
Golden West College, Huntington Beach, CA

High School Diploma
Fountain Valley High School, Fountain Valley, CA

Sample Cover Letter

Name
Street
City, State, zip
phone
email

Date

Name, Marketing Communications Manager
Dorsey & Whitney
Suite 1500 50 South Sixth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402-1498

Dear Name,

My proficient computer skills, plus my well-honed communication abilities through extensive customer service and educational experiences, make me a strong candidate for the Marketing Assistant position at the highly regarded law firm of Dorsey & Whitney.

With minimal training, I expect to contribute significantly as a part of your team. My strengths lie in my ability to learn quickly, my attention to detail and my strong interest to further my success in a fast-paced office environment. I have developed excellent time management skills and can handle high-stress situations calmly and efficiently. In addition, my multi-cultural background has prepared me to be highly adaptable in diverse work cultures.

Dorsey & Whitney's mission to provide legal services '…that combine the highest levels of excellence, integrity and professionalism with cost-efficiency and a clear understanding of our clients' business goals…', is a work ethic that I share. My strong dedication to achieving excellence and my commitment to continually increasing my knowledge and executing my learning will impact the efficiency of Dorsey's Professional Services Group.

Thank you in advance for reviewing my resume. I am eager to meet you! I welcome the chance to discuss your needs and outline my strengths in person. You may reach me via email, or phone, 999.999.9999, to schedule an interview.

Best regards,

Name

Full name
number
email

Sample Email Communications with Employers

Here you will find examples of email communication to send to employers when you are in a job search. As you read the examples, think of your own situation and change the words to match your experience. General rules for communicating with an employer by email:

1) Use your best English language skills: complete sentences, correct punctuation
2) Be professional (not too familiar): brief, to-the-point, communicate clearly what you want
3) Proofread: have someone read over your email/letter before sending it to check for typos and clarity.

Sending an Email with your resume (Cover letter)

The cover letter is one of the least understood parts of the job application. It is a letter that is typically 3 paragraphs long and may be the employer's first contact with you. The first paragraph states what job you are applying for along with where you saw the posting or heard about the job. The second paragraph (can be a bulleted list) demonstrates how you meet the preferred/required qualifications they are looking for. The third paragraph lets them know how to reach out to you (by phone, text or email).

EXAMPLE of a Cover letter

Dear (Name of person receiving the note):

I am interested in the position of customer sales representative – call center which I read about on Indeed.com. I read about your company and your value of hard work really aligns with my own value of dedication in my work.

My qualifications for this job include:

- 1-year experience in hotel housekeeping
- Ability to work independently and in a fast pace to complete work on a timeline
- Friendly and professional attitude towards customers

I have attached my resume to this note for your review. I may be reached by phone call or text at: 999-888-7777. Thank you for your time. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely, (Your first and last name)

Sending a Thank you email after an interview or job fair meeting

Thank you notes to employers are always recommended, but surprisingly few people take this step. The thank you note serves to not only truly appreciate the time the employer gave to you, but also to remind the employer of your name and qualifications for employment. It is a really important step in the interviewing process. Send this email within a few hours (at most 24 hours) after your interview. Always

ask for the business card of the person you interviewed with – so you'll have correct spelling of their name for this Thank You note.

EXAMPLE of a Thank you note to an employer (for hotel housekeeping)

Dear (Name of person you interviewed with),

Thank you for taking your time today to interview me for the position of housekeeping attendant. I enjoyed talking with you and learning more about your company. Your company values of hard work and honesty are a good match for my personal values. I have a history of being a dedicated employee who is able to meet timelines for having the work completed. I would be a great fit in your organization. I am looking forward to hearing from you about the next steps of employment.

Sincerely,

(your first and last name)

10 Tips for Completing a Job Application to Get an Interview

Applying for a job is an important step in the hiring process. Your application shows your interest in the job and informs the employer of your relevant skills and experience. Knowing how to complete a job application well can have a significant impact on your chances of receiving an invitation to interview. In this article, we explore some steps and suggestions for how to successfully complete and submit a job application.

How to complete a job application

Submitting a job application is often the first contact you have with a potential employer, so you better make a good impression. Knowing what to write and what the hiring manager is looking for will help you to submit an application that gets you an interview. There are several important steps that you should follow when completing your job application. You should:

1. Read over the job application

Reading the job application may seem like an obvious step but people frequently skip it. Even if you scanned the job description before you decided to apply, it is still a good idea to go back and read it a couple of more times to make sure you did not miss any details. Employers typically receive hundreds of applications for a position. One of the most common methods they will use to narrow the applicant pool is to eliminate anyone who they think did not read the job description or requirements.

Many employers also use something known as an applicant tracking system (ATS). This is an automated system that can be fine-tuned to reject applications that are missing information or do not have the right keywords. Even though you may not be able to completely predict what the ATS is looking for, you can still advance your application in the system by making sure to include the correct information.

2. Use a professional name and email address

A professional job application calls for a professional email address. Some employers might disqualify an applicant for having an unprofessional email, even if the rest of their resume shows they are perfect for the job.

If you need to create a professional email address, you may want to use a free email service to create an email account that you will use specifically for your professional life. Use your first and last name or a variant and use it for all your job applications. It is never a bad idea to separate work communication from personal communication. During your job search might be the perfect time to do so.

3. Follow the instructions

Sometimes a field calls for a full paragraph, a couple sentences or just a “yes” or “no”. There are also fields that require you to spend some time answering in-depth questions. Regardless of what the specific questions requires, make sure you are answering it correctly. Read the question a couple times to make sure you understand and take some time to formulate a thorough answer.

There are employers who ask a variety of types of questions, including character, behavioral and hypothetical. If you want to increase your chances of success, you need to respond to these questions effectively and accurately. Not all applications will include long answer questions, but it never hurts to adhere closely to the instructions. Taking care while filling out the information demonstrates to an employer that you are a worthy candidate and invested in the hiring process.

4. Tailor your cover letter to the job

Environments like job fairs require you to repeatedly give the same documents to multiple companies. However, if you are applying for a specific job in person or online, you will want to tailor your cover letter and resume to suit the application. Before writing or editing your cover letter, look through the job description and pay attention to the kind of employee they are looking for. The job description has information that includes required educational background, what type of personality fits the position, and the skill set they would prefer a candidate to possess.

Draw on the information in the job description and write a cover letter that frames you as the perfect candidate. Keep your sentences concise but impactful. Include as much relevant information as you can efficiently fit into a page's worth of paragraphs. If the employer likes what they read, they will use the interview process to learn more about the goals or skills you mentioned in your cover letter.

5. Include keywords in your resume

Review the description and find words that look like they relate to traits, skills or experiences that the company is looking for. Use them tactfully throughout your resume and cover letter. There is no need to be heavy handed with them; a few subtle references are sufficient.

Make sure to include keywords that portray you as capable of fulfilling the job requirements. For example, if the job has any technical specifications, highlight your practical skills, relevant degrees or academic courses. If the job requires you to interact regularly with customers or coworkers, mention your interpersonal and communication skills.

6. Check your responses for errors

Misspellings and grammar errors show an employer you did not care enough to take the time to proofread or that you are not proficient with written communication. Most jobs require basic communication skills, so not putting in the effort to submit a resume that is free from spelling errors, uses the correct pronouns and follows other grammar rules can hinder your chances of being hired.

Take your time when filling out the application. If you are not sure of how well you have done in terms of error correction, ask someone to look at the application for you and make corrections if they find anything wrong. An error-free application is far more likely to at least be looked at than an application that is full of easily-avoidable mistakes.

7. Track your applications when applying for multiple jobs

Remember to keep careful track all your online job profiles, so you know where you have applied and the roles you have applied to. Keep a spreadsheet or a list of the company names and roles you have applied to, in order to create a quick reference.

Occasionally, you might find that you qualify for multiple roles in one company, and you may decide to apply for several. What you don't want to do is to make a profile for each and every job you apply for. If the application system has a "shopping cart" for job listings you qualify for, put them into the cart for one account. Then, it will be easier to track what you have applied for in the event you get calls about multiple roles by different people. It is always a good idea to know exactly what someone is talking about when they call concerning an interview.

8. Tidy your social media profiles

In the modern era, it is common for employers to look at your social media profiles. They want to know something about the person they are hiring and they feel that Facebook and other social media sites are good sources. Go over your profiles and consider removing anything objectionable. That means deleting posts or comments that

might not reflect well on you or that do not represent your current maturity level. It is always a good idea to be aware of and control the image of yourself online.

It is still advisable to create a social media profile in your name and to share some personal information, even if you do not use it often. Familiarity and proficiency with social media is an important skill in the job market today and employers may check your personal accounts to judge your competency.

9. Upload your resume

It may seem counterintuitive to submit the resume after you have entered all the information it contains into fields on the application. However, the applicant tracking system typically does not collect the information you have provided into a printable document and the employer may want to have a paper copy of your resume for reference. Resumes are also easy for the hiring manager to keep on file in case they decide to contact you about a job opening at a later date.

Make sure to name your resume file concisely and efficiently. Include your first and last name and the keyword "resume" for easy searching.

10. Review before submitting

Even though you have may have already reviewed the application for errors and checked that you followed the instructions, you need a final review of your entries before hitting that submit button. Remember: once you have submitted, you cannot make any changes. Once you are satisfied that you have done your best, click the submit button and leave the rest to the hiring team.

If you want to land a position that reflects your experience, education and skill set, you need to apply widely and often. This said, it is common for all the applications to start to look the same. If you can, ask someone else to proofread your resume and cover letter for each application. A second set of eyes can make a big difference. You always increase your chances of finding employment when you focus on portraying yourself as detail-oriented and capable.

Following these tips can help you complete job applications more effectively. If you present your skills positively and accurately, relate your relevant experience well and proofread all your information, you will show yourself to be a more eligible candidate for any position. Use these tips and other Indeed resources to increase your chances of getting the job you want.

Source: Indeed.com - December 12, 2019

Remote/Virtual Interview Tips

Remote (or virtual) interviewing is a type of interview that takes place using a phone, computer, or smart device. A virtual interview can use both audio and video (for example, using an application like Zoom or Skype) or audio only, like a phone call. When a remote interview or other meeting uses both audio and video, it is called a **virtual video conference.** One of the most common **virtual video conference platforms** is Zoom. When a remote meeting uses audio only, it is called a **teleconference.**

Before your interview:

1. The interviewer will likely send a link to your email, which you will use the day of the interview to connect with the interviewer or manager. Contact your interviewer if you do not receive a link at least the day before the interview. When you click the link, you will be prompted to download the Zoom software, but downloading is not required to join the meeting.
2. Decide where you will be taking the call. It should be in a place that is quiet with few or no distractions. Typically, an interview will last one hour, so prepare for that length of time.
3. If possible, practice using the software that you will be interviewing through. Zoom is the most common, but some employers use different software, such as Skype or Google Meet.
4. If you are familiar with the Zoom application and you do not like the background of the room you are in, you can change it. To do this, click "Settings," then "Virtual Background."
5. Test your audio and camera settings to be sure that you and the interviewer will be able to clearly see and hear each other.
6. Close other programs on your device to avoid a slowdown of either the audio or video, and to avoid being distracted by a pop-up in the middle of the interview.
7. Even though you are on a virtual call, make sure you take it seriously and are still dressed as professionally as possible. If nothing else, this will help you feel more confident.
8. Pay attention to lighting - sit in front of windows to get a clear and detailed look at your face. Don't sit with the window behind you because too many shadows will be cast. Practice seeing how your image looks with a certain lighting and location by using your device as if you were taking a picture of yourself.
9. Wearing headphones or earphones will increase quality and help decrease unwanted noises.
10. Just as in a physical interview, you need to be right on time and even a few minutes early.

During your interview:

11. Look directly at the person or towards your camera; refrain from looking at yourself.
12. Wait until the interviewer is completely done speaking before adding comments. On a virtual call, there may be a lag time between when you speak and when the interviewer hears your voice, which can make adding comments very disruptive.

Note: Sometimes, virtual interviews are **pre-recorded**, which means you will be responding to questions that were set up into a computer in advance. You may see a video recording of the interviewer asking the questions, but the interviewer will not be actually present. Pre-recorded interviews are usually time-limited, and may require a separate software download.

Troubleshooting Tips for Video Interviews

1. Turning audio and video on and off

Sometimes, when joining a Zoom call, you will be **muted** when you first enter the call. For the interviewer to hear you, you will need to un-mute yourself. You can do this by clicking on the button in the lower left corner that looks like a microphone. **When it has a red line through it, your audio is off. When there is no red line, your audio is on.**

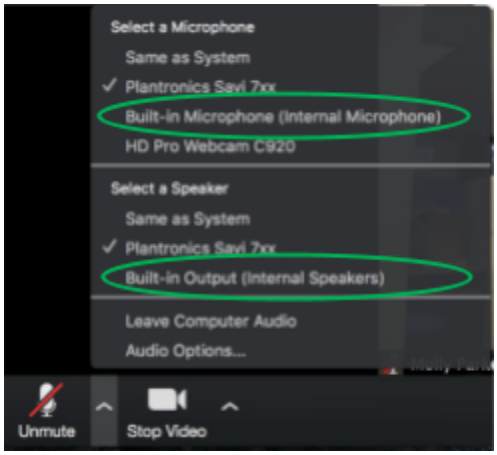
Similarly, you may have to turn on your video for the interviewer to see you. The video on/off button is next to the microphone button in the lower left corner of the Zoom window.

Audio On Audio Off Video On Video Off

If you cannot hear the interviewer, your computer or smartphone speakers may be turned off. On a computer, you can change the computer volume by clicking the volume button in the lower right corner (Windows) or the toolbar at the top (Mac). On a smartphone, use the volume buttons (+) and (-) on the side of your phone to adjust the volume.

2. Checking your audio source

If you or the interviewer still cannot hear each other, you may have to change your audio source settings. To do this, click the up arrow (^) button to the right of the microphone button in the lower left corner. You will see a list of audio options to choose from. Unless you are using headphones, you will want to pick Internal Microphone and Internal Speakers.



3. <u>The audio / video still isn't working. Now what?</u>

Try exiting the meeting and rejoining. If this fails, you may have poor Internet strength. You can check your Internet strength by clicking the Wi-Fi button on your device.

If you are using an older desktop computer, your computer may not have a built-in camera, speaker, or microphone. In Zoom, you have the option to connect to the interviewer using a telephone. The phone number to call will be in the email that contains your Zoom link. If you plan on using a telephone, be sure to contact the interviewer in advance to let them know how you will be joining the meeting.

4. <u>Other common interview software</u>

Instead of Zoom, your interviewer may be using **Skype**, **Google Meet**, **Google Duo**, **VidCruiter**, or a different application. Audio and video settings are very similar across platforms. Be sure to try using the software in advance of your interview to learn where the audio and video controls are.

How to choose the right references for your job search

What every job seeker should do when identifying and prepping job references.

Q: *How can you ask your immediate supervisor or manager (who knows the most about your work and skills) to be your reference when you are secretly looking for another job? Thanks. – K.T.*

A: In a perfect world, we would all have very good relationships with our bosses, openly communicate with one another and be able to let that person know we're looking for work while still employed at the company.

Unfortunately, not everyone works in a place where they could tell their boss they're looking for new work, and still maintain that job during the search. The reality is that if you're conducting a confidential job search while employed, you most likely won't be able to use your immediate supervisor as a reference.

So let's talk about what any job seeker – regardless of their current employment status – should do when identifying and prepping references for the job search.

Target three solid references from people you currently work with (if you have a close relationship with that person and you trust them to keep your search confidential) or have worked with in the past.

This can include: (1) former bosses or people to whom you had a dotted-line reporting relationship, (2) peers, (3) clients or vendors and (4) people you've successfully supervised or mentored.

If you are new to the workforce, consider asking for references from college mentors, professors who taught courses relevant to your job goals, fellow students who headed up organizations with which you were actively involved or those who managed you during internships.

Only include references who have insight into your work and capabilities and those you trust to say good things about you and your performance. Remember you don't need these people to write out letters of recommendation – you need someone who could field a phone call or email from a prospective employer and advocate on your behalf.

Once your contact has agreed to be a reference, you want to do three things:

1. Find out what email address and phone number they'd prefer the recruiters use when contacting them.
2. Make sure they have the most up-to-date copy of your resume.
3. Go through your career history and current goals with them so they understand what you're targeting and what skill sets you're most eager to pitch to employers.

If your contact is willing, it doesn't hurt to have a written reference on file. This can be in the form of a LinkedIn Recommendation, or a written document that appears on the company letterhead where the person works.

Unprepared references can unknowingly hurt your chances of landing the job. Once you have an interview scheduled, make sure you alert your references. Tell them the name of the company, supply them with a copy of the job description (when possible) and explain to them how you meet the core must-haves for the role – this will

be good practice for answering the "Tell me about yourself" interview question. When a contact understands what skills or experience you want to highlight, they'll be in a better position to support you as a reference.

Sample Reference Write-up Form

Name

email; cell phone

REFERENCES

Name
Title
Company, City, State
Phone
Email
Relationship, for example - Jody is the principal in the school where I currently work.

Name
Title
Company, City, State
Phone
Email
Relationship, for example - Jody is the principal in the school where I currently work.

Name
Title
Company, City, State
Phone
Email
Relationship, for example - Jody is the principal in the school where I currently work.

Name
Title
Company, City, State
Phone
Email
Relationship, for example - Jody is the principal in the school where I currently work.

At least 4 professional references:

1. Someone who managed you
2. Someone you managed
3. Co-worker

4. Client (be aware of confidentiality)