Welcome to the LA Youth at Work Skills to Succeed in Your Career for Life Workshop!

During this workshop you will be introduced to methods that will help you succeed at finding, acquiring and keeping a job. You will also be asked to consider your own future beyond getting an ordinary job. Life holds many opportunities for those who desire success. Opportunities like a college education, internships and volunteer programs are all available to help you gain greater success in the future.

Because this is a multi part workshop, we will all become familiar with each other, beginning now. After I have introduced myself, I would like each of you to introduce yourselves and explain what you expect to get out of this workshop.

In the space provided, below, please write down what you expect to get out of or gain from this workshop.

What I expect to gain from this workshop:

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________
My Future

By yourself or in groups of 3 or 4 discuss the following questions. Answer each question and write your response in the space provided.

1. What type of job would I like to have in 5 years?

2. What goals do I currently have?

3. I plan to accomplish my goals by:

   A. ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

   B. ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

   C. ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

   D. ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
Self Assessment

Am I ready to go to work?  (Check all that apply to you)

____ I am willing to take the initiative* to go out and find myself a job.
____ I am really ready to do my best if I get the job.
____ I am ready to learn new skills.
____ I am open to meeting new people.
____ I am ready to overcome challenges and solve problems as they come up.
____ I am a complainer.
____ I am someone who interrupts others.
____ I am able to watch what I say.
____ I am able to hold my temper.
____ I am able to listen to another person’s point of view.
____ I am able to take criticism from others.
____ I have a plan.
____ I am searching for jobs everywhere I can.
____ I know what I want in a job.
____ I am talking to everyone I can to find out about job opportunities.
____ I have found a “mentor” who can give me good advice as I continue my search.

* “Initiative”: The ability to begin and follow through with a plan or action on your own.*
Initiative is a characteristic valued by all employers. The first step in demonstrating initiative is going out to look for a job. There are many ways to learn about employment opportunities, but you have to take the first step!

**Ways to learn about job opportunities**

- School Career Counselor
- Friends and Family
- Newspaper Ads in the classified section: Career or Employment section – such as the Los Angeles Times
- Company Literature/Website
- Human Resources or Personnel Departments
- Internships - (volunteer or paid), for example with entertainment studios, hospitals, or other career-focused industries
- Job Listings or Newsletters
- Youth Centers
  - Youth Opportunity Movement (YOM), including Boyle Heights, Valley, Watts - Los Angeles Urban League
- Resource Fairs/Hiring Events
- Job Hotlines - such as: HIRE LA’s Youth - (800) 367-2562 or (800-FOR A JOB)
- Employment Agencies and Magazines - such as:
  - Adecco Staffing
  - Phone Staff
  - Working World
  - Career Builder
- Web Sites/Internet
  Such as:
  - [www.monstertrak.com](http://www.monstertrak.com)
  - [www.jobing.com](http://www.jobing.com)
  - [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)
  - [www.workingworld.com](http://www.workingworld.com)
  - [www.studentjobs.com](http://www.studentjobs.com)
  Or specific stores such as:
  - [www.macys.com](http://www.macys.com)
  - [www.target.com](http://www.target.com)
  - [www.bestbuy.com](http://www.bestbuy.com)
  Remember to Use Internet Keyword Searches: Employment
- City/County Employment Centers
  Such as: One Source Centers; check your local area for the closest center in your area

**TRY THE DIRECT APPROACH**

- Walk in and ask if a position is available, if it is, fill out an application and leave your resume (pg. 9);
- Send a cover letter (pg. 15 & 16) and your resume to a company you are interested in working;
- Call the company directly and ask if they have any open positions;
- Attend career, resource and job fairs;
- Volunteer at a company you wish to work for - it shows that your interest is not just money
Here are a few important suggestions to remember about talking on the telephone when looking for a job. Make sure to use these tips so you don’t lose out on job opportunities!

During your job search, how you answer the telephone and the message you leave on your answering machine or voice mail is very important.

**Telephone/VM Services**

1. If you have an answering machine for your home phone or voicemail set-up on your cell phone, make sure it identifies you by your name clearly;
   - It is okay to identify others who live with you as long as it is done in an appropriate manner.

2. Keep your answering machine/voicemail message short and clear (KISS: Keep It Short and Simple). Searching for a job is like being in business for yourself, so make your message sound professional;
   - **DO NOT** put music or any “cute” messages on your answering machine/voicemail;
   - **DO NOT** “play games” on your answering machine/voicemail; i.e. ‘Hello? I can’t hear you!’
   - **DO NOT** use the song or movie call backs/rings available on many cell phones.

3. If you do not have a home or cell phone, make sure you leave a number where an employer can leave a message with a responsible person.

**Things to remember when making business calls/leaving a message:**

1. **Have a pen and paper ready before making the call.**

2. **Turn off** the radio and/or TV when making the call.

3. Make certain you make the call in **quiet area**, away from friends and background noise.

4. **Avoid using slang** (“yeah”, “what’s up”) and **always speak** with a **positive attitude**.

5. **State your name clearly** and who (or what) you are calling about.
   - Often we feel rushed or nervous while leaving a message; remember to slowly and clearly state your name and phone number - remember this step when leaving a message for a potential employer

6. When the person you were calling for gets on the phone:
   - **Clearly state the reason for your call**;
   - **If you were referred by someone**, let the person know who that person’s name.

7. At the end of your conversation always ask what you need to do next; be certain to restate what has been said to you to make sure you understand.

8. Before getting off the phone, write down the name of the person you spoke to (ask for the spelling of his/her name) and thank her/him for taking the time to speak to you.
Below is an example of a phone conversation between a job seeker and a potential employer. With a partner, take turns playing each role. You are encouraged to be creative with this script.

Job Seeker: Hello may I speak with (Your Partner’s Name)?

Employer: Speaking, how may I help you?

Job Seeker: Hi, my name is (Your Name) and I am calling regarding your Sales Associate position. I was referred by LA Youth at Work and I wanted to know if you are still interviewing for this position?

Employer: Yes we are. At this time we are doing group interviews on the second and third Wednesday of each month. Just so I can see if you meet the basic requirements, may I ask you a question?

Job Seeker: Yes you may.

Employer: Do you have any sales or customer service experience?

Job Seeker: I have 1 year of customer service experience and 3 months of sales experience.

Employer: Okay, that is really good. What I am going to do is give you the address to where you need to go this Wednesday at 5 p.m. Let me know when you are ready.

Job Seeker: I am ready. Go ahead.

Employer: The address is 123 Center Street. Go to room nine and ask for Ms. Williams.

Job Seeker: So, the address is 123 Center Street, and I am to ask for Ms. Williams?

Employer: That is correct.

Job Seeker: What are the cross streets?

Employer: Broadway and Spring Streets.

Job Seeker: Do I need to bring anything with me?

Employer: Yes, make sure you have your resume, references, identification and social security number.

Job Seeker: Thank you. I appreciate your time.

Employer: No problem, and good luck!
Email Accounts

With technology ever-increasing the rate at which we work, it is imperative that you have an email account by which to communicate with potential employers. There are several free email services you can utilize to obtain an email account. Here are a few helpful hints:

What does your email account say about YOU?

a) Email (addresses) sent to potential employers need to show a level of maturity and suitability; in other words, use an appropriate email address to communicate with an employer, such as your first/last name, first initial/last name, etc;

b) Inappropriate email addresses include using words such as swearing/cuss words, words used in a sexual or vulgar act, or anything else in poor taste or potentially offensive to potential employers;

c) Never include personal information in your email address that potential employers are not allowed to ask, such as your ethnicity, race, religion, sexual preference, or your birth year; (see page 25 for a full list)

d) Always include your name and phone number when sending an email or set-up your default to include your name and phone number on each email you send out. Should something go wrong with your attachments, for instance, the employer can not open your document, they can contact you for more information;

Email attachments including cover letters, resumes, and references, should have appropriate titles. For example, Joe Smith; potential document names are: joesmithresume.doc, js-coverletter.doc, or js–references.doc. Be sure to have an appropriate subject heading or title in your email. This can include the position number or position title. If an employer is receiving 200 resumes by email, more than likely s/he will quickly sort through his/her email and choose the most professional ones first.

Remember, you can have more than one email account. Make certain that you have an appropriate one while job hunting to send to employers.
Do's and Don'ts Million Dollar Tips (con.)

Internet Networking Sites

According to new research, 75% of online adults between the ages of 18 and 24 have a social network profile such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Yahoo, just to name a few. While social networking has often been associated with younger adults or students, new reports reveal a shift. Given the increased popularity of social networks, many more employers are researching forums and viewing profiles of potential candidates to screen job applicants, track their current employees and establish or increase their connections and visibility to the general public.

As social networks’ popularity increase, so does the danger of unwanted social network users viewing your social networking profile. Many internet users are largely unaware of the fact that just about anyone can view their social networking profiles, including non-community members. The reality is, in fact, you never know who is watching you. Many users do not limit, block or activate their private settings. Other social networkers enable their privacy settings but fail to realize that employers might still be able to gain access to their profiles.

Below are a few helpful tips to utilize prior to beginning your job search:

1) A good rule to follow: if you wouldn’t want your parents to see it, you may want to think twice about posting it.

2) Be careful with which picture you post; remember, once you post something on the internet, it’s on the internet forever.

3) Use private profile settings. Although your private settings may prevent other network members from seeing your profile, it will also prevent anyone else from seeing it.

4) Be advised NOT to include too much personal information, including your full name, telephone number, home address, whether you are away on vacation, etc.

5) DO NOT speak negatively about a previous employer, supervisor, or co-workers, as well as your job/place of employment. Again, once you post something on the internet, it’s on the internet forever; and just like any community, people talk and hear things about one another;

6) Take note when you do your profile updates. Each update is time stamped and if your (potential) employer does check your profile, s/he may check to see if those updates took place during business hours;

7) Be aware that it may be quite simple to be caught in a lie with your employer through your personal profile; for example, should you call in sick for work, and your co-workers are discussing pictures from your party the previous evening, your employment could be subject to scrutiny.

8) Watch your use of slang and profanity on your profile. If your employers are checking up on you, they may ‘see’ an entirely new side of you that may not reflect well on your overall performance.
A resume (pronounced rez-u-may) is a brief way of presenting yourself on paper.

What is a Resume?
It is a written outline of your education, work experience, skills and accomplishments; in brief it is a summary of your abilities and accomplishments in a “work” environment. There are examples of a good and bad resume on pages 10 – 12.

Why do you need a Resume?
- To answer classified ads for employment
- To leave with an employer when making a personal contact
- To send to a company for employment options
- So that employers can see your work experience and skills when you are not there

What should you include in your Resume?
- Personal Data: Legal Name, address, primary phone number, and e-mail address
- Employment objective (if you’ve had less than three jobs; if more, create/utilize cover letter)
- Education (most recent to least recent)
- Work Experience (most recent to least recent)
- Volunteer Experience (if any; most recent to least recent)
- Extra-curricular Activities (clubs, organizations, etc.)
- Awards (if any)
- Skills (language, computer software, typing speed, other qualifications, etc.)

Things to remember…
- Keep your resume brief, simple and specific (keep it to one page);
- Don’t add any personal information in the resume unless it relates to the job;
- Be clear about your work objective and the skills you possess;
- Experience/dates should be listed from most recent to least recent;
- Use strong, positive action words (pg. 13–14);
- Save your resume, cover letter, and reference page separately and using a set format similar for each;
- **Never** include your Social Security Number or Birth Date on your resume

Your resume is an introduction of who you are and an opportunity to let the business world know what you have to offer. **READ** your resume. Be sure to correct all the spelling errors. **Do not** rely on spell-check to catch everything; you may find you have the correct spelling of a word but the wrong word. In addition, be aware of your past/present tense use; keep previous job responsibilities in past tense and current responsibilities in present tense. Have someone else review it for structure, clarity and grammar. Your resume should be neat, clean, balanced, and organized.

Don’t Forget…
- References should be listed on a separate sheet of paper which should include your personal data
- Use only professionals as references; no family members/best friends/boy or girl friends
- Be sure to ask people if you may use them as references before you list them
- Before submitting your resume, ask yourself this question: “If I were an employer would I call me for an interview?” Be honest.
- Always take extra copies of your resume to an interview; carry them in a folder to keep them neat and clean.
Lisa A. Thomas

1129 W. 71st Street
Los Angeles, CA 90044

(323) 751-8967
lthomas@hotmail.com

Objective
Seeking a position in retail sales

Education
8/2008 – Present  Cal State Dominguez Hills  Carson, California
• Business Administration and Marketing major
• Completing upper division courses
• Expected date of graduation, May 2012
6/2008  Jefferson High School  Carson, California
• High School diploma awarded

Work Experience
9/2007 – Present  Hip Hop Wear  Los Angeles, California
Sales Associate
• Increase sales from $5,000 to $8,000 weekly
• Increase shoe sales per purchasing customer
• Suggest new marketing strategy that continue to increase sales by 20%
6/2008 – 8/2007  McDonald’s  Compton, California
Cashier
• Balanced register
• Provided customer service
• Handled money

Volunteer Experience
6/2008 – 9/2008  Youth Development Summit  Inglewood, California
Youth Ambassador
• Performed youth outreach to various youth serving agencies
• Organized community meetings
• Managed 15 interns every summer
• Responsible for job identification and referrals

Skills/Qualifications
• Computer Literate
  -Type 45 wpm
  -Microsoft Office, including Word, Works, PowerPoint, and Excel
• Excellent communication skills
• Problem solver
• Great interpersonal skills
• Work well with others
Joseph Bautista  
60 Thayer Street, Apt. # 3C  
Los Angeles, CA 90015  
(323) 358-5252  
jbautista46@yahoo.com

EDUCATION:  
09/2008 – Present  
Marshall High School  
Los Angeles, CA  
• Expected date of graduation, June 2012

WORK EXPERIENCE:  
03/2008-07/2009  
Sanchez Family  
Los Angeles, CA  
Child Care Provider  
• Job Responsibility  
• Job Responsibility  
• Job Responsibility  
• Job Responsibility

05/2007-09/2007  
Los Angeles City Parks and Recreation  
Los Angeles, CA  
Clerical Assistant  
• Job Responsibility  
• Job Responsibility  
• Job Responsibility

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE:  
10/2006- 09/2008  
Boyle Heights Tech Center  
Los Angeles, CA  
Volunteer Clerical Assistant  
• Job Responsibility  
• Job Responsibility  
• Job Responsibility  
• Job Responsibility

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:  
10/2008-Present  
Student Council, Marshall High School  
Los Angeles, CA  
• Participated in promotion of school events  
• Organized school events

10/2008-Present  
Men’s Varsity Basketball, Marshall High School  
Los Angeles, CA  
• Member and Co-Captain

AWARDS:  
12/2008- Present  
Principal’s Honor Roll, Marshall High School  
12/2008  
Perfect Attendance Award, Marshall High School

QUALIFICATIONS:  
• Qualities/Skills  
• Qualities/Skills  
• Qualities/Skills  
• Qualities/Skills
Bad, Bad Resume!

Below is an example of an LA Youth at Work participant’s resume who didn’t take into consideration the Resume Writing Hints (p. 9).

VICTOR RAMANO
3360 LANCE STREET
LOS ANGELE, C.A (90023)
(323) 263 – 1234 (H)

OBJECTIVE: PERSUE A HIGHER LEARNING

WORK EXPERIENCE:
SUMMER 2008 GENERAL CLERK
SALAZAR PARK
DAY CARE, FIELD MAITNESS, PHONE OPERATOR

EDUCATION: MONTEBELLO HIGH SCHOOL
2100 WEST CLEVELAND AVE.
MONTEBELLO, CA 90640 (323) 728-0121

MISCELLANEOUS: SPANISH SPEAKING, WOOD WORKER, CAREER ACADEMY MEMBER.
The following are some action words to use on your resume or application:

- Administered
- Approved
- Arranged
- Assisted
- Communicated
- Contacted
- Coordinated
- Created
- Designed
- Developed
- Distributed
- Edited
- Examined
- Handled
- Improved
- Increased
- Maintained
- Managed
- Operated
- Organized
- Performed
- Planned
- Prepared
- Presented
- Presided
- Produced
- Promoted
- Promoted
- Reorganized
- Researched
- Scheduled
- Sold
- Sorted
- Straightened
- Supervised
- Supported
- Taught
- Trained
- Wrote

**Critiquing your resume:**

1. **Overall appearance:** Do you want to read it? Would someone else want to?
2. **Layout:** Does it look professional, well-typed, printed, 1-inch margins? Do you have one font style throughout your resume? Did you use bullets to emphasize your job responsibilities?
3. **Length/Relevance:** Can you say the same thing in fewer words? Have you eliminated information that is not important? Did you keep your resume to one page?
4. **Writing style:** Does it give the best/c clearest picture of you?
5. **Action oriented:** Do the paragraphs and sentences begin with action words? Leave out phrases such as “I have”.
6. **Be clear:** Does it avoid generalities and focus on specific information, experiences and projects?
7. **Accomplishments:** Were achievements/awards emphasized? Did you include the dates your awards were issued? Do they relate to academic or leadership roles?
8. **Completeness:** Is all the important information included? Did you include your contact information including an appropriate email address?
9. **Bottom line:** Will your resume get you invited for an interview?

**Always remember:**

**KEEP YOUR RESUME UPDATED!** Adding a bit of new information to your resume as time goes by is not that hard. Putting off gradual updating will cause you more work and annoyance.
The following is a list of qualities that employers will expect you to demonstrate in your resume and during your interview. Choose **four of your strongest qualities** and make a statement demonstrating each one.

**EXAMPLE: Responsible for picking up my five year-old sister from school.**

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<td>Accurate</td>
<td>Efficient</td>
<td>Open-minded</td>
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<td>Ambitious</td>
<td>Energetic</td>
<td>Organized</td>
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<td>Articulate</td>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>Outgoing</td>
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<td>Assertive</td>
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<td>Patient</td>
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<td>Careful</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Positive</td>
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<td>Committed</td>
<td>Goal-Oriented</td>
<td>Productive</td>
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<td>Confident</td>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>Professional</td>
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<td>Conscientious</td>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
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<td>Considerate</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Self-starter</td>
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<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Insightful</td>
<td>Skillful</td>
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<td>Creative</td>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>Team player</td>
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<td>Decisive</td>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>Thorough</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dedicated</td>
<td>Loyal</td>
<td>Tolerant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dependable</td>
<td>Motivated</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Disciplined</td>
<td>Neat</td>
<td></td>
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1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

www.layouthatwork.org, page 14 of 37
Written by Ron Delahoussaye
© Copyright pending
A cover letter is an introduction of your resume to employers to let them know which position you are applying for and a brief summary of your qualifications for that position. Cover letters are important when submitting your resume to an employer because it increases your chances of getting called for an interview; it also allows you the opportunity to present yourself in a professional manner. So, if you want your cover letter to get you called for an interview write a letter that will get read.

When writing your cover letter remember:

- **Seize attention**
  - Tell the employer exactly what you want

- **Get employer interested**
  - Let the employer know how you found out about the position

- **Get to the point**
  - Tell why you chose the company

- **Show your qualifications**
  - Explain why your skills will benefit the company

- **Tell them you are available**
  - Leave a number where the employer can reach you. It is a good idea to follow-up with a phone call or email as well.
Here’s an example of a cover letter:

October 18, 2008

Lisa Davis
Lisa Davis Communication, LLC
6623 Convention Drive East
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Re: Marketing Assistant position (PN#342C)

Dear Ms. Davis:

(This first paragraph is to introduce yourself and the reason for your letter.) My name is Beverly Hamilton and I am submitting my resume in application for the Marketing Assistant position PN#342C that is posted on your website.

(This middle paragraph should reflect and summarize your resume and highlight experiences and skills acquired. Make certain you link the qualifications and skills you have acquired in your experience with those requested in the job description and responsibilities.) My previous experience with _____, I have extensive experience working with ____ software and have excellent customer service experience. My work experience with ____ also allowed me to learn and become familiar with office policy and procedures.

(The last paragraph re-enforces your interest in the position, takes the initiative to provide a time frame for follow-up with either a call or email to schedule an interview. Make certain to provide contact information such as your telephone number and email address whichever is the most convenient for the employer to contact you.) My resume outlines my experience and skills in office management and my ability for creativity in a field such as marketing and publicity. I would like the opportunity to meet with you in the near future to discuss how my skills would benefit your company. I can be reached at (323) 777-9311 or email me at bhamilton@aol.com. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Beverly Hamilton
Setting Up Your Reference Page

References are always on a separate sheet of paper. They should also follow the same format as your resume, including font style and size. Below is an example of how to format your reference page.

Dolores Garcia
555 West Main Street
Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 555-1584
dgarcia12@yahoo.com

References

- Shayla Penster
  Assistant Director
  LA Youth at Work
  (212) 485-0415
  spenster@layouthatwork.com

- Gene Saldiano
  Program Director
  People Coordinated Services
  (323) 847-1570
  gsaldiano@pcs.com

- Harold McHawes
  Rent Investigator
  Los Angeles Housing Authority
  (213) 367-3569
  hmchawes@laha.ca.gov
Employment Application

Most, if not all, employers have potential employees fill out an employment application – sometimes online and other times as a hard copy. It is important that you:

1) have a basic understanding of the types of questions you will be asked on an employment application;
2) make certain you complete the application with all of the requested information

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<tr>
<th>Applicant Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Name:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Address</td>
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<tr>
<td>City</td>
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<td>Phone:</td>
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<tr>
<th>Date Available:</th>
<th>Social Security No.: XXX-XX- ___ ___</th>
<th>Desired Salary:</th>
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<td>Position Applied for:</td>
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<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Can you provide written proof of this if hired?</th>
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<th>NO</th>
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<tr>
<th>Have you ever worked for this company?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>If so, when?</th>
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<th>Have you ever been convicted of a juvenile misdemeanor?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>If yes, explain:</th>
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<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>If yes, explain:</th>
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<th>Education</th>
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<td>High School:</td>
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<td>From:</td>
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| College: | Address: | Degree: |
| From: | To: | Did you graduate? | YES | NO |

| Other: | Address: | Degree: |
| From: | To: | Did you graduate? | YES | NO |
### Professional References

*Please list three professional references.*

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<tr>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
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May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference? YES [ ] NO [ ]

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May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference? YES [ ] NO [ ]
Employment Application (cont.)

Many applicants do not take the application process seriously, thinking the employer will bypass the application and go straight to their resume. While some employers may primarily review an applicant’s resume, others may use the application process to weed out applicants, especially if the position is a desirable one. Common mistakes are as follows:

1) Not following directions; for example, references need to be professional – ‘friend’ or ‘relative’ do not count as references unless you worked for/with them, at which point, they should be referred to as your supervisor or your co-worker;
2) Incomplete applications; for example, sections of the application are left blank. If a section does not pertain to you, you need to state as ‘N/A’ or ‘Not Applicable’ once;
3) Information is missing from a section; for example, the city, state, and zip code are important to a complete address, as well as the last name of a reference or a previous supervisor;
4) Misspellings or incorrect information; for example, information you provided on the application does not match the information on your resume;
5) Previous employment should be listed from most recent to least recent;
6) The application is not signed; if an application is not signed, most employers or human resources departments will not accept it as it will be null and void.

www.layouthatwork.org, page 20 of 37
Written by Ron Delahoussaye
© Copyright pending
How you dress is very important when you are looking for a job. You should always try to make a good impression. Put simply, you never get a second chance to make a first impression.

Make sure that clothing, hair and nails are clean and hair is combed and neatly styled. Here are some tips on what you should wear to an interview or when looking for a job:

**WOMEN**
- Dresses or skirts (Hemlines should be no more than an inch and a half above the knee)
- Stockings (natural colors)
- Slacks
- Blouses, Sweaters or other appropriate business shirts
- Heels (no higher than 2 inches)
- Carry a small to medium size purse

**MEN**
- Clean pressed dress shirts and slacks
- Tie (no wide or loud ties)
- Shoes should match suits
- Dress Socks (should match slacks or shoe color)
- If you have long hair, it should be combed back into a neat ponytail or in neat braids (for some jobs you may have to consider a haircut)

### Good Colors to Wear
Solid colors (blues or grays); color suggestions for accessories: burgundy, blue, white, red, or yellow. Try not to wear all black and avoid flashy colors.

### Interview Fashion Don’ts
- Jeans or baggy oversized pants with cuffs/bottoms that come below your shoe soles
- Clothes that give the appearance of being dirty, torn or worn previous to your purchase
- Flip-flops, excessively high stilettos, wedged heels, boots (unless covered by pants or a long skirt) or open-toe shoes
- See-through blouses, visible bra straps or cleavage, excessively tight skirts or pants, pants that reveal your underwear or midriff baring tops
- Shorts, sport jerseys, undershirts (“wife beaters”) or tank tops
- Sunglasses, Hats, Doo-Rags or Wave Caps
- Exotic hair colors, barrettes, beads or designed braids
- Evening clothes (shiny materials)
- Too much perfume, after shave or cologne
- Extra long nails, or nails painted in black, purple or other extreme colors with artistic designs
- Heavy makeup
- Excessive Jewelry (no more than one ring on each hand, one bracelet, one set of earrings and one modest neck chain)
- Unusual body piercing: This includes facial piercing. The recent ‘plug’ trend may decrease your chances of employment. If you are thinking about getting plugs, you may want to take a look at your future potential employment opportunities.

*Make sure that you cover all tattoos and body brandings.*
You never get a second chance to make a good first impression!
To present the best impression of yourself, you must take three things into consideration: 1) your appearance, 2) your attitude and 3) your manners. You have a better chance at getting a job if the employer likes the way you present yourself. Try to keep your mode of dress simple. Do not be trendy and wear designs that clash. If you see a “Now Hiring” sign, it is okay to stop in and take an application to fill it out at home. When you return the application, remember to dress appropriately (pg. 21). **Good Luck!!!!**

Create a list of behaviors or manners that will make a positive impression:

**Positive Impression**

Example: *Arrive on time*

a.  
b.  
c.  
d.  
e.  
f.  
g.

Create a list of behaviors or manners that will make a negative impression

**Negative Impression**

Example: *Dress inappropriately*

h.  
i.  
j.  
k.  
l.  
m.  
n.
Interviewing Hints

General Tips for a Successful Interview

- Be early!
  - Arrive at least 15 minutes early (but not more than 15)
  - Showing up on time indicates whether you are reliable

- Stand up when approached
  - Offer a firm handshake – this goes for women, too!
  - Smile and look the person in the eye (this shows sincerity)

- Repeat out loud the name of the person(s) conducting the interview
  - Address the interviewer(s) as Mr. or Ms., unless they tell you to do otherwise

- Maintain eye contact throughout the interview
  - Sit up straight at all times (this shows that you are alert and interested)

- Talk about yourself relating your experiences to the position for which you are applying
  - If you are applying for a job at a day care center then it would be appropriate to state that you watch your brothers and sisters

- Ask questions that show genuine interest in the position and the company

- Go to interviews by yourself
  - If the person is giving you a ride, have them wait outside

- Thank the interviewer after the interview is over

- Write a follow-up letter thanking the interviewer for his or her time

Remember…

- Take off your coat and set down your purse or briefcase before the interview starts
  - Leaving these items on makes you look eager to leave

- Prepare possible answers to questions before the interview (p. 24)
  - Practice mock interviews with family, friends, your case manager or classmates

- Have a reliable ride or form of transportation

- Do your research about the company before your interview

- Spit out gum or candy before going into the interview

- Avoid nervous tendencies
  - Touching your face, tapping your pen, drumming your fingers, swinging your foot or rocking in the chair
The purpose of an interview is to determine whether or not you are the type of person a company is looking to add to their team. During your interview your goal is to sell yourself by relating your experiences and skills relevant to the position.

Below is a list of interview questions. With a partner, practice answering the questions. Make the mock interview as real as possible. Start by walking up, offering a firm handshake and making eye contact (remember the interview hints on pg. 23). At the end of the mock interview, share the positives and negatives of your partner’s interview, then discuss which questions were most difficult.

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Tell me about yourself.
   - *Talk about accomplishments, skills and abilities. NOT your childhood, family or hobbies*

2. What do you consider to be your strength(s)?
   - *Remember the activity on pg. 14*

3. What is your greatest weakness?
   - *The answer should be work related. Make sure your weakness can be turned into a positive*

4. Why do you want to work for us?
   - *Talk about the things that made you interested in the position or company*

5. Why should we hire you?
   - *Talk about the skills that make you qualified for the job*

6. What qualifications do you possess that make you feel you would be successful at this job?

7. What has been your greatest accomplishment while working or while in school?

8. What classes do you or did you like most? Least? Why?

9. Do you plan to continue your education?
   - *Continuing your education shows that you want to grow. It may also qualify you for tuition assistance.*

10. What would you like to be doing 5 years from now?

11. Are you looking for permanent or temporary work?
   - *Be honest. You may sell yourself short by stating you are looking for temporary.*

12. Why did you leave your last job? (or) Why do you wish to change your present job (if you have one)?
Many questions regarding personal topics such as marital status, race and health are illegal under federal and some state/local laws. These questions can be used to discriminate against applicants, and it is your right not to answer them. They are as follows:

1. **How old are you?**
The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) protects individuals from being discriminated against in the workplace in favor of younger employees. There is no federal protection in place to protect workers younger than 40 from age discrimination, however, often to determine if you are legally eligible to perform a job, employers are allowed to ask if you are over the age of 18.

2. **Are you married?**
Marital status questions are prohibited. For example, if you are married you might be more likely to leave the company if your spouse gets a job transferred to a different city. A question as innocent as "Do you wish to be addressed as Mrs., Miss, or Ms.?" is not allowed.

3. **Are you a U.S. citizen?**
Citizenship/immigration status cannot be used against a potential employee during the hiring process according to The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA). Employers must wait until after a job offer had been extended to require a worker to complete the Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9) Form and submit documentation that proves identity and employment authorization. It is lawful, however, for an employer to ask an interviewee if they are authorized to work in the US.

4. **Do you have any disabilities?**
This question might seem necessary to determine if a job applicant can perform the required duties, but it is illegal to ask under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Employers cannot discount anyone from a job because of a physical or mental disability. In fact, the law requires that they accommodate disabilities unless they can prove it would cause significant difficulty or expense to do so. Employers also cannot ask you if you have had any past illnesses or operations.

5. **Do you take drugs, smoke or drink?**
Companies are often concerned about drug, alcohol or nicotine addictions as they can impact an employee's quality of work and the rates of a company's health insurance coverage. However, an employer will find themselves in legal trouble if the questions are not framed in a careful manner. They are allowed to ask if you have ever been disciplined for violating company policies about the use of alcohol and tobacco products, however, an employer cannot inquire about your use of prescription medications.

6. **What religion do you practice?**
An employer might be curious for scheduling reasons such as holidays that an employee might need off, or if the candidate will be unavailable to work on weekends because of religious obligations, however, as interviewer, it is illegal to intentionally discriminate against a potential employee based on their religious beliefs. Once hired, employers are required to accommodate an employee's religious beliefs/practices such as dress and grooming policy and flexible scheduling.
7. What is your race?
There is no situation in which questions about an employee's race or skin color should be used to determine their eligibility for a job. This protection is granted under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Employers are permitted to ask an employee to reveal their race on a voluntary basis for affirmative action purposes.

8. Are you pregnant?
Questions about family status tend to affect women more than men; however they can also pertain to men in certain situations. Often there are concerns regarding an employee taking time off work for pregnancy leave or not having child care arrangements during work hours. The Pregnancy Discrimination Act states that an employer cannot refuse to hire a pregnant woman because of her pregnancy, because of a pregnancy-related condition, or because of the prejudices of co-workers, clients or customers.

It is, however, lawful for employers to ease their nerves about an employee's availability or commitment to a position by asking about long-term career goals or the ability for an employee to work overtime and travel.

The Bottom Line

It is very important for young adults to know your rights as an employee. Unlawful questions are not acceptable on applications, during the interview process, or in the workplace. Although improper questions by employers might be simple mistakes, they could also be intentional cases of discrimination that should be reported.

*From Porcshe Moran, Yahoo article, September 8, 2010*
During some interviews you will be invited to ask questions. This will serve as a perfect opportunity to show your genuine interest in the company and position. Remember that the questions you ask say a lot about you and may be why the employer hires-or does not hire you!

Here are some questions to get you started:

1. Would you describe a typical workday for someone in this position?
2. How does the position contribute to the company?
3. Can someone in this position be promoted? If so to what position?
4. How would I be trained or introduced to this position?

Continue this list by adding questions you would ask during your interview

5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
A follow-up letter or email should be sent out after an interview to thank the interviewer for his/her time and to show a genuine interest in the position. Below is an example of a follow-up letter:

June 10, 2009

Ms. Deborah Greer
New Designs
1234 S. 6th Street
Los Angeles, California 90014

Dear Ms. Greer:

Thank you for taking the time to interview me on June 7th for the Sales Associate position. Based on my interview I would like to confirm that I am definitely interested in filling the position. Taking into consideration my two years of customer service experience I know I will be beneficial to your company.

I am available to answer any additional questions you may have for me at (323) 777-9311. I look forward to hearing from you.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jason Yamana
There are a number of reasons as to why an employer does not choose to hire you. Below are a few reasons why an employer may choose to hire another applicant.

- Too many applicants
- An employee changed his or her mind and decided not to leave
- Internal promotion
- Your skills are more than needed for the position
- Cannot pay you what you want to be paid
- Looking for someone with more experience
- Looking for a certain “type” of person
- You didn’t pass drug or assessment tests
- Only accepting applications for a future position
- Lack of experience on the part of the interviewer
- Poor personal appearance
- You were overbearing, overaggressive, had a “know it all” attitude
- Inability to express your self clearly: Poor voice or poor diction
- Lack of maturity
- You did not look the interviewer in the eye
- You said bad things about previous employers or current employers
- You were late to the interview
- Poor grades and/or poor attendance in school
- Lack of vitality and enthusiasm
- You never heard of the company or know nothing about the company
In groups, add two or three more ideas about behaviors or characteristics that employers look for from their employees. What makes it likely that you will be successful on the job?

1. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

List and discuss things that would make you unsuccessful on the job…maybe even get you fired!

1. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
Practice good work habits:

- Work hard at your new job
- Ask for more work when one job is done: SHOW INITIATIVE!
- Get to work on time every day!
- Be enthusiastic-willing to learn
- Double-check your work so that you know that it is well done
- Be aware of productivity-this means the amount of time it takes to complete a task well
- Don’t be afraid to ask questions (employers expect you to ask and learn)
- If you have an attitude, cool it!
- If you are quiet-learn to speak up
- Accept supervision and constructive criticism, gracefully
- Be courteous-make friends
- Remember, being accepted on the job takes time
- Show respect for everyone-you can learn a lot from your co-workers
- Establish yourself as a good worker before expressing new ideas
- Be open, honest, and follow rules
- Be aware of your own goals
- Continue your education with classes and trainings to help attain your goals
1. Before you report to work, you should have the answers to the following questions:
   A. When do I start work each day?
   B. To what person should I report?
   C. What are the work days and hours?
   D. What is the dress code for work?

2. After you begin work, you should become familiar with both the formal and informal company policies.
   A. Formal policies are those explained in a “policies and procedures” manual. Examples of policies written down are:
      a. Salary information
      b. Vacation policy
      c. Sick leave policies
      d. Group insurance and hospital plans
   B. Informal policies are those that are not written down but are observed by the employees. Informal policies are usually concerned with such things as:
      a. When to take coffee breaks/lunch
      b. No eating in the office
      c. Telephones are not for personal use

3. You should become familiar with the history of the company.

4. You should become familiar with the organization of the company—how the company is set up and the name of the person or persons to whom you and your supervisor report.

5. You will be evaluated informally on your job. This informal evaluation is conducted as your supervisor observes and checks your work, your behavior, and your dress.

6. You will be evaluated formally on your job. This formal evaluation is conducted by means of a rating blank. Your supervisor will usually evaluate you based on performance and personality factors. This evaluation is usually discussed with you.
Step #1: Thoroughly review the information in this Student Guide.

Step #2: Continue to search for job opportunities on your own (p. 4).

Step #3: Gather information to create or update your resume (pg. 9). Also begin to think about the companies you want to submit an application to.

Step #4: Contact your local Employment Development Department or the agency that referred you. At this time you can set up your appointment to start your employment search. Also ask any additional questions you may have about the job search.

Step #5: Prepare for the actual interview:
  - Complete an application, submit your cover letter (p. 15) and resume.
  - If you are under 18, be sure to fill out a “request for work permit” form. You can get the form from your high school counselor.
  - Make certain you have the correct name of the person who is interviewing you, the interview date and time.
  - You may also want to check on parking and confirm driving directions in order to plan ahead for your drive/transportation time.
  - Be sure to have your reference(s) information complete on a separate sheet.

Step #6 Go to the interview:
  - Dress Appropriately (p. 21)
  - Make sure you have a black or blue ink pen and an extra copy of your resume
  - Arrive 5 – 15 minutes early (p. 23)

Step #7 After the interview:
  - Write an email or follow-up letter to the person(s) who interviewed you (p. 28)
  - If you have a case manager, be sure to call them and let them know the results of your interview

Step #8 Keep all your options open:
Take initiative and continue your job search on your own. If you are not hired, do not become discouraged, call your case manager and ask to be referred to another job. Sometimes it takes several interviews before you land a job.

Good Luck!!!
COLLEGE

There is more to life than finishing high school and getting a job. Research has proven that the average college graduate will earn at least $1,000,000.00 (one million dollars) more in their life than someone without a college degree. That is the same as $25,000.00 a year for 40 years. When you consider what minimum wage is, another $25,000.00 sounds really good.

So let’s talk about college for a little while.

Some of you think that you are not college material or that you aren’t good enough to go to college. There are dozens of Community Colleges that only require that you have a high school diploma or GED to get in. You can go to any of these Community Colleges and complete your general education requirements for college, at a fraction of the cost of a regular four year University and then transfer to a University as a better prepared individual who has some college experience. The best part about it is you can get an Associates degree in 2 years at the Community College, take the credit from the courses you took at the community college and apply them to the four year University and get a Bachelors degree in another 2 or 3 years and your Bachelors degree will only have the name of the University you attended.

Some of you are thinking that you can’t afford to go to college because it is too expensive. College is very expensive, but there are millions of dollars available to help you get through college, there are grants, scholarships, loans and many schools have on campus employment that can pay for your tuition. The best thing that you could do before giving up is schedule an appointment with financial aide advisor at one of the colleges or universities and find out what is available for you.

The biggest mistake that you can make is to do nothing at all.

INTERNSHIPS

Another common mistake that people make is not taking advantage of advancement opportunities that exist all around them. Internships are an excellent way to gain valuable experience without years and years of struggle in low paying jobs. In an internship you have the incredible opportunity to learn first hand what it takes to do the high paying jobs. Every high paying job requires experience, and you have just been told the secret of how to get the experience necessary to land a high paying job early in life. Unfortunately there is one catch to internships, they usually are unpaid positions that companies make available to people so that they can get more people to work for them without paying for it. But don’t make the mistake of believing that you are not benefiting. It is a job, and you are getting valuable experience that will yield far more money in the long run.