

# Career Development Guide



Northern  
Michigan  
University



## What's the right career move for you?

### Contents include:

- Resume building
- Part-time student employment
- Job search hints for success
- Preparing for a job fair
- Online resume system
- Deciphering the business dress code

### Career Services

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# Northern Michigan University Career Services Career Development Guide

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# Letter from the Director

Dear NMU Students and Alumni:

This *Career Guide* is a service provided by Career Services, one which we're confident will aid you in all facets of your search for part-time work, an internship, and rewarding employment. Designed to guide you through the sometimes puzzling world of part-time employment, through developing a resume, and finally, interviewing for the job you've been working towards, this *Career Guide* will supply all you need to be a success job- and career-wise while here at NMU and after you've left. Please take a few moments to review the material included in this Guide. Then, when you're ready, stop in and visit with the Career Services staff. We're here to help.

Career Services fulfills three main roles for NMU students and alumni: to help them identify and prepare for part-time work while they are attending school; to help explore the possibility of completing an internship or other experiential opportunities while they pursue their degree; and to provide events and programs (e.g., skill development workshops, job fairs, on-campus interviews, etc.) which allow students and alumni to contact employers once they are ready to graduate (or move on in their chosen career). More formally, our mission statement is as follows:

***The mission of Career Services is to assist current students and alumni with career exploration and job placement concerns by providing resources and services which are focused on student employment, internships and full-time careers.***

Focused on your success through the above-listed mission statement, the Career Services staff provides a wealth of resources you can use. We have formed strong partnerships with faculty, alumni, student organizations, and other student service offices in order to make sure we are equipped to help you as best we can. Our bottom line is your success, whether you're looking for part-time work, an internship, career guidance, or the chance to change jobs/careers once you graduate from NMU.

On behalf of the Career Services staff, best of luck in your career endeavors. All of us look forward to helping you.

Sincerely,  
Jim Gadzinski  
Director

**Services Offered:**

- **Web Site** – <http://www.nmu.edu/careers> Contains information on hundreds of job opportunities for after graduation, resume writing and business etiquette tips, part-time job listings and internship opportunities for current students, information on upcoming events, links to dozens of job-related web sites, and much, much more!
- **On- & Off-Campus Job Listings** – Both full- and part-time positions for students, along with on-campus applications, are accessible in the Career Services office and on the web site.
- **Online Resume System** – NMU students and alumni can upload their resume to Career Service's web site. Employers then search the resumes to find candidates for full-time jobs and internships.
- **Internship & Co-op Postings and Information** – Opportunities and counseling are available for students looking for an internship or co-op.
- **Summer Job Listings** – Postings for hundreds of summer jobs, in a variety of fields and locations around the country, are available in the Career Services office or on-line.
- **Job Vacancy Bulletins** – Postings in Teaching, Business and Industry, School Administration/Higher Education, and Health-related occupations are easily accessible on-line.
- **On-Campus Interviews** – Employers visit campus throughout the year to interview students for a variety of full-time positions and internships. A list of organizations is available in the Career Services office or on-line.
- **Staying Connected** – Staff in Career Services work closely with staff in the Academic and Career Advisement Center (ACAC), Orientation and Counseling and Consultation Services in order to assist students with important career decisions.
- **Job Search Workshops** – Throughout the academic year, staff in Career Services hosts workshops for classes, student organizations and residence hall groups. Topics include resume writing, interviewing skills, business etiquette and professional presence, internships and summer employment.
- **Graduate Survey** – Career Services staff collect and compile statistics on recent NMU graduates and post them on the web site.
- **JOBOPPS listserv** – Sign-up on-line to receive e-mail notification of workshops, on-campus interview opportunities, job fairs and other career-related events.

**It's Never Too Early To Start!**

For students just beginning their college career, as well as for those who are graduating and entering the job market, the following job fairs and events are sponsored during the academic year by Career Services:

- ◆ **Fall Job Fair and Career Expo** – Held in early October, hosts various organizations from the Midwest with an assortment of job opportunities.
- ◆ **Construction Management & Technology Career Fair** – Scheduled for early October, geared specifically towards students choosing construction, electronics, technology and related majors.
- ◆ **Summer Employment Job Fair** – Takes place near the end of February, invites local employers, regional companies and on-campus departments with seasonal and part-time openings.
- ◆ **Upper Great Lakes Collegiate Job Fair** – Hosts over 60 employers from around the country, near the end of March.
- ◆ **Teacher Job Fair** – Usually held the second week of April, allows education graduates and alumni to meet and greet with schools and educational organizations.
- ◆ **Orientation Information and Employment Fairs** – Over the summer, on- and off-campus and volunteer opportunities in the Marquette area are shared with visiting students.

**Have your resume reviewed before the fair –  
Contact Career Services to make an appointment!**

Visit [www.nmu.edu/careers](http://www.nmu.edu/careers) for additional information on upcoming NMU job fairs and many others being held throughout the United States.

**The Staff**

**Jim Gadzinski, Director**

Liaison with employment leaders in education, business and industry. Coordinate all functions of Career Services. Employment/employer networks, Academic Affairs liaison, department head.

**Steven LaFond, Assistant Director**

Liaison with School of Technology & Applied Sciences (STAS). Coordinator of internships and cooperative education opportunities, careers in technology and all STAS programs, business education.

**Melissa Sprouse, Senior Secretary**

Employer inquiries, campus interviews, job fairs, recruiting plans and job vacancy bulletins.

**Kara Cox, Senior Secretary**

On- and off-campus part-time job vacancies, internship and summer job postings.

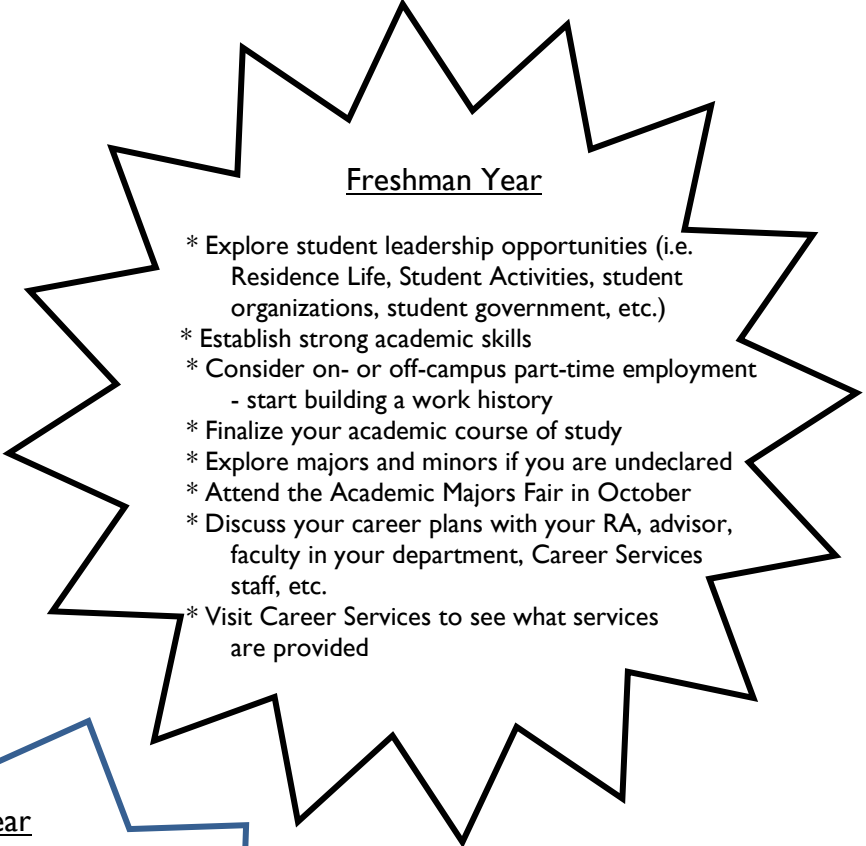
Call our office today to set up a time to visit with one of our advisers, have your resume reviewed, practice your interview skills or discuss any topic related to your career pursuits!

**906-227-2800**

# Job Search Timeline

Finding the job that's right for you is an on-going process - one which takes time and effort. It should begin very early during your first year in college and continue until you are satisfied that you have found the job you're looking for.

The activities which follow are intended to guide you through this process. Once you've reviewed these steps, consult your career development professional in Career Services - we are here to help YOU.



## Freshman Year

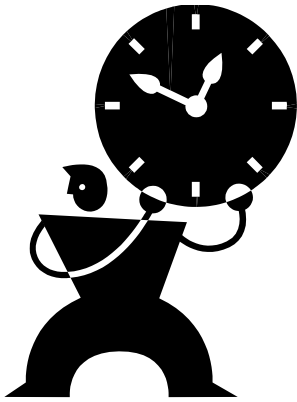
- \* Explore student leadership opportunities (i.e. Residence Life, Student Activities, student organizations, student government, etc.)
- \* Establish strong academic skills
- \* Consider on- or off-campus part-time employment - start building a work history
- \* Finalize your academic course of study
- \* Explore majors and minors if you are undeclared
- \* Attend the Academic Majors Fair in October
- \* Discuss your career plans with your RA, advisor, faculty in your department, Career Services staff, etc.
- \* Visit Career Services to see what services are provided

## Sophomore Year

- \* Visit Career Services
- \* Attend Career Services and Academic and Career Advisement Center skill building workshops
- \* View the Job Vacancy Bulletins posted on the Career Services' web site to see what kind of opportunities are available
- \* Discuss internships and other experiential opportunities with your advisor and Career Services staff
- \* Attend the Fall Job Fair and Career Expo (in October) to visit employers in your field to find out what you can do to make yourself more marketable once you graduate
- \* Declare a major and a minor if you have not done so already
- \* Begin to tailor your part-time employment to the career field in which you are interested
- \* Expand your comfort level and familiarity with computers and technology
- \* Familiarize yourself with all of the services provided by Career Services

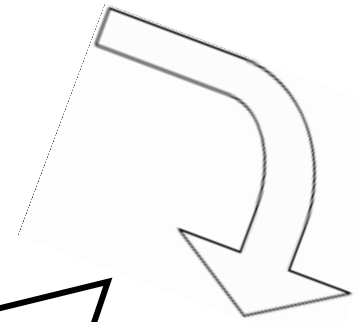
### Junior Year

- \* Visit the Academic and Career Advisement Center and Career Services to discuss the possibility of graduate school
- \* Attend Career Services' skill building workshops, specifically resume development, interviewing, and networking
- \* Attend the Fall Job Fair and Career Expo and other job fairs throughout the year
- \* Begin practicing your interview skills
- \* Familiarize yourself with on-campus interviews sponsored by Career Services
- \* Consider a job shadow opportunity where you can observe someone who works in your chosen career field
- \* Make an appointment with the Career Services staff to review your resume
- \* Finalize your resume and your cover letter
- \* Apply for internships
- \* Develop student leadership skills - seek leadership positions with a group or organization to which you belong
- \* Begin/continue to do research as you decide which companies interest you



### Senior Year

- \* Develop your professional wardrobe
- \* Begin to ease out of your student leadership responsibilities in order to focus on your job search
- \* Attend the Fall Job Fair and Career Expo and other job fairs - hand out resumes and discuss career opportunities with employers
- \* Line up your professional references (at least 3 - not your mother!)

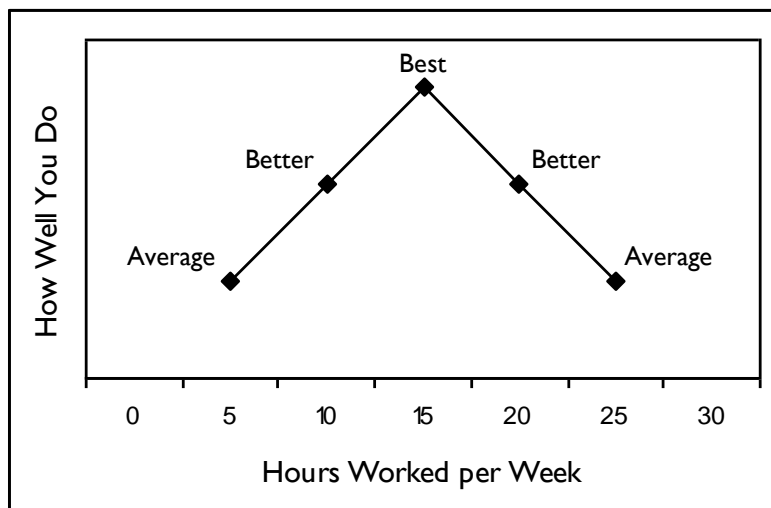


# Part-time Student Employment

## Can a Part-time Job Really Improve My Grades?

Research shows that students who work part-time while going to college tend to get better grades, on average, than students who do not work. There are, however, some important things to keep in mind when considering a part-time job:

- Whether you decide to work on- or off-campus, you should work no more than 20 hours a week. While students who work between 15-20 hours a week do tend to get better grades than students who don't work, your grades will likely suffer if you regularly work more than 20 hours a week.
- Make sure to evaluate how much time you actually have to dedicate to a part-time job. Consider not only your class time, but also your study time, extracurricular involvement, family obligations, etc. Make sure that you also leave "sanity" time for yourself. Then determine how many hours a week you will be available to work.
- Consider your skills, experience, and interests before you apply for a position. There are lots of different types of opportunities both on- and off-campus. Do you like working with children? Are you good with computers? Are you athletic? Do you enjoy helping other people? Do you like preparing meals? Apply for those positions that interest you and for which you have the skills.



Don't be frustrated if you can't find a part-time job related to your major. You can always supplement your employment experience with an internship or summer job that is geared towards your field of study. Regardless of the position you obtain, you will be gaining *valuable job skills*, such as communication, time management, accountability, etc. In addition to these essential qualifications, there are other benefits to having a part-time job, including:

- Establish a work history to include on your resume
- Acquire employment references
- Develop contacts to assist with your full-time job search
- Experience less debt upon graduation
- Become a more integrated member of the on- and/or off-campus community
- Meet new people
- Achieve higher grades in school

During your search for a part-time job, make sure to check out our job lists often! You can visit our web site to view current on- and off-campus opportunities and get on-campus applications. We encourage you to apply for all positions for which you qualify and are of interest to you. You should also follow up with the employer about a week or so after the application is submitted to make sure it has been received and that you are being considered for the job. Make sure to check your Financial Aid statement to see if you have received Work Study – some positions on-campus may require it. For more information on Work Study, review the questions on the next page or contact our office.



Just because you filled out an application, doesn't mean you're guaranteed a job. Finding the right job takes effort and patience. Many departments receive a number of applications for the jobs they advertise. It takes them some time to review the applications, conduct interviews, and select the right person.

The key concept to learn from any job is to make the most of your employment experience. Learn as much as you can, share your thoughts and ideas, seek feedback on your performance, take advantage of leadership opportunities and special projects, and network with the individuals you meet. You may find that your part-time job is one of the most rewarding aspects of your college experience!



# Work Study – Frequently Asked Questions

## ◆ **What is Work Study?**

Work Study refers to either federally funded or state funded programs where the government subsidizes a portion of the student's wages. In order to qualify for Work Study, you must complete and submit the appropriate financial aid forms - available in the Financial Aid Office. Students are considered for Work Study based on financial need. Questions regarding financial aid should be directed to the Financial Aid Office.

## ◆ **I have been awarded Work Study as part of my financial aid package. What do I do now?**

When you apply for a job, make sure that you indicate on your application form that you qualify for Work Study. When an employer enters you into the computer system to get paid, your Work Study Award will be applied.

## ◆ **How do I get my Work Study money?**

Work study funds are intended to help offset your educational and living expenses. You will receive a paycheck each pay period you work and it is up to you on how to spend it. All paychecks are based on your hourly wage and the number of hours you worked during that pay period.

## ◆ **How do I find a Work Study job on campus?**

Career Services posts on- and off-campus Work Study part-time jobs on our web site. If you have Work Study, you can apply for any on-campus jobs, whether they require Work Study or not and specific off-campus positions also.

**\*\* Work Study does not guarantee you a job -You must play an active role in your job hunt! \*\***

## ◆ **How many hours a week can I work?**

Per NMU policy, students are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week on campus during the regular academic year. You may work up to 40 hours per week during holidays and breaks. You should consider the amount of your Work Study award when determining your weekly work schedule if you want to spread your award out over the entire academic year.

## ◆ **What happens if I use all my Work Study funds before the end of the academic year?**

Once you reach your Work Study award level, your employer will be responsible for paying 100% of your wages. Due to budgetary constraints, some departments can't afford to pay full student wages and may release students once their Work Study has been used up, while other departments may not have this problem. If you are concerned about maxing out your funds, you should talk with your employer and develop a schedule that will allow you to spread your Work Study award throughout the entire academic year.

## ◆ **I have two jobs on campus. Do both of them draw from my Work Study funds?**

This actually depends on the employers. Working with your supervisors, you can designate one or both jobs as Work Study positions. Inform both supervisors of your situation so that they can help you monitor how quickly you are using your Work Study award and keep your hours under 20 per week.

## ◆ **Am I guaranteed a Work Study position each year?**

Having a Work Study award does not guarantee you a job on-campus. It does give you the advantage of applying for certain jobs, but employment is not guaranteed. Since Work Study is part of your financial aid package, you will need to submit a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) each year in order to determine your level of financial need. Contact the Financial Aid Office to determine deadlines for submitting your FAFSA.

## ◆ **Can my Work Study funds be applied to an off-campus job?**

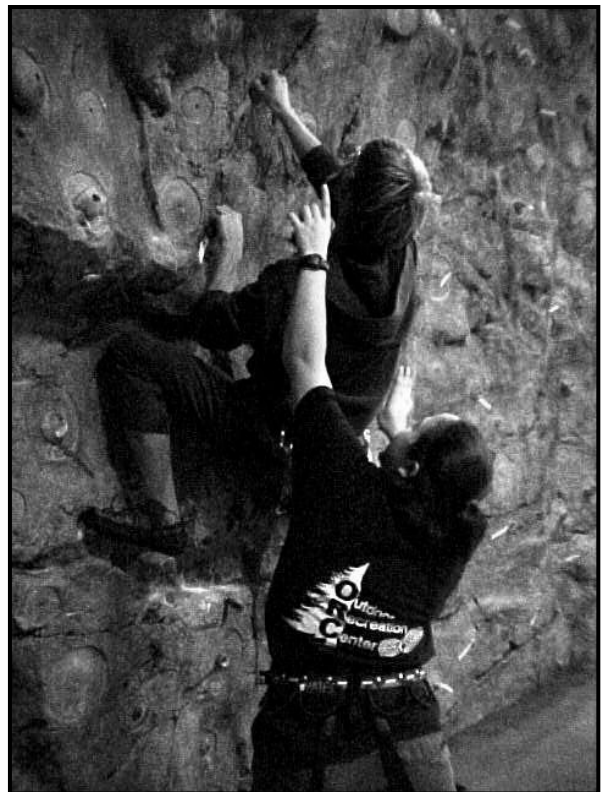
The Off-Campus Work Study program at NMU has provided some students with the opportunity to apply their Work Study awards to off-campus jobs through a limited number of local community service organizations. Check out our web site for available Off-Campus Work Study positions.

## ◆ **Can I still work on campus if I don't qualify for Work Study?**

Absolutely! While some departments require student applicants to have Work Study, many do not. The job listings will indicate whether or not Work Study is required. Off-campus job listings are available on the Career Services web site.

# Job Search Hints for Success

- Be ready to go job hunting at anytime! Circumstances beyond your control can erase the job you're currently in.
- The major difference between successful and unsuccessful job hunters is the way they go about the hunt. It can't usually be blamed on some factor beyond your control, such as a tight labor market.
- Don't expect to find the perfect job right away. You may have to settle for something that's a little less than perfect.
- The more time you spend figuring out what makes you stand out from the rest of the applicants for the job you want, the better your chances are of getting the job.
- Forget "what's available out there." Go after the job you really want the most!
- If a job turns you on, you'll be good at it, and vice versa.
- Figure out if you're better with people or with things or with information - it makes a difference.
- 2/3 of the new jobs today are in smaller companies. When you can, aim for the top dog at these companies. Without being pushy, don't settle for the "personnel department".
- Serious job hunters spend more than five hours a week on their hunt.
- Look as sharp as you can while you're on the hunt. Even if you're not visiting a company or dropping off a resume, you never know who you might run into.
- How you present yourself throughout the job search process will be perceived by employers as how you will present yourself on the job. If you look sloppy, you will be sloppy.
- Go face-to-face with a potential employer, rather than sending out paper, if possible. Try to visit the company and drop off your credentials.
- The major issue you will face with employers is not so much what skills you have, but how you use them. Telling an employer that you have good people skills is not enough. **You need to demonstrate how you would use your people skills in the work you will be doing.**
- Take pride in the product you produce. A study from the University of Michigan shows that 25% of American workers are so ashamed of the quality of the product they produce, that they wouldn't buy it themselves.
- Don't be wearied by rejection. We've all faced it before - take it with stride and keep up the effort.
- The greater number of job-hunting strategies you use, the greater your odds of finding the perfect job!



# Resume Building Tips

There is no one correct way to make a resume.  
What one person likes, another may not.

The only right way for you is to...

**Create a resume you are comfortable with and confident in!**



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**To an employer, your resume should answer the following three questions:**

- ◆ What skills do you have which will benefit the company/organization?
- ◆ From reading your resume, how do they know that you have these skills?
- ◆ What sets you apart/makes you different from the others who have applied for this job?

**A resume serves many purposes, including:**

- ◆ Acts as an initial introduction of your professional credentials when applying for a job
- ◆ Serves as an easy reference when filling out job applications
- ◆ Supports an application for promotion or additional responsibilities in your current position
- ◆ Highlights your professional career

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## **Formatting Guidelines**

- ◆ Avoid using a template, word processing wizard, or other stand-alone resume software programs - create your OWN resume!
- ◆ Try to keep it to one page.
- ◆ Use standard 8½ by 11 inch white or light-colored (ivory is best) good-quality paper. Avoid flashy “look at me” colors and use the same paper for your cover letter.
- ◆ Use 10, 11, or 12 point font. A smaller size is too difficult to read and anything larger than 12 is too big.
- ◆ Limit the number of different fonts you use on your resume and keep them simple. Avoid using more than two fonts, and never use script fonts.
- ◆ Do not use graphics. You want to utilize the space on your resume to present information about yourself!
- ◆ Justify the left margin, but not the right - it makes your document easier to read.

## Handy Tips

- ◆ Highlight numbers and dollar values. Emphasize things like the number of employees you've trained or the amount of money you saved the company.
  - ◆ Demonstrate evidence of developing essential job skills. If you list a skill, be sure you can come up with a way to prove it to employers.
  - ◆ Keep to clear, concise statements when listing credentials. A bulleted list reads better than if it were written in paragraph form.
  - ◆ Use LOTS of action words, like "prepared", "organized", and "excelled" (see the Helpful Action Words page for more).
  - ◆ Avoid slang words or terms employers may not be familiar with.
  - ◆ ALWAYS have an extra copy of your resume saved in another location! You never know what might happen to your computer.
  - ◆ Have multiple versions of your resume handy. Creating 'targeted' resumes allows you to cater to specific positions – then all you have to do is change the objective.
  - ◆ Make sure you know your resume backwards and forwards. Be able to discuss everything you put in your resume without having to refer to notes or ask for time to respond to a question.
  - ◆ Always bring extras, even for an interview where you have already submitted your resume.
  - ◆ Avoid folding your documents into a letter-sized mailing envelope! Use a 9" x 12" mailing envelope, available from the post office, campus bookstore, or an office supply store.
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## Essential Content

When creating a resume, there is certain information that **MUST** be included, regardless of your major or the position for which you are applying, such as education and employment history.

- ◆ Include and highlight contact information, such as your name, phone number, e-mail and mailing address(es) with **boldface type**. If you will be moving soon, use the two-address format to ensure employers will be able to contact you wherever you are!
- ◆ List only colleges or universities from which you have received a degree or are currently attending.
- ◆ Include what kind of degree (e.g., Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science) and the month and year it was earned. If you are still working on your degree, list it as "expected" or "anticipated" along with a date, unless you are within one semester of graduating.
- ◆ If you have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, it is to your advantage to list it. Also a GPA of 3.3 or above qualifies you to be an "Honors Graduate" at NMU, so be sure to denote that if it applies, too.
- ◆ Try to prevent gaps in employment. If it is unavoidable, be prepared to explain your reasoning, such as, "I was concentrating on school full time."
- ◆ Emphasize accomplishments you have earned in your positions as opposed to listing duties. Show the employer what you have **ACHIEVED** at your jobs.

In addition to this necessary information, there may be other things that you might want to include in your resume, but what you want to include is up to you. You may want to include headings such as Certifications/Licenses, Relevant Coursework, Volunteer & Leadership Experience, Computer Skills, and Interests & Activities. Not all of these headings need to be included, but depending on your experiences and space on your resume, you may decide to omit certain headings or add others not listed here. Other things to add to your resume include:

- ◆ A career objective is usually appropriate for entry-level positions and should be as specific as possible. For example, "To obtain the position of software engineer with Microsoft, Inc."
- ◆ Always list any certifications and licenses you hold, but make sure they are current!

- ◆ Relevant coursework, usually 4-6 classes which directly relate to your major, to show employers what skills you have learned throughout your education.
- ◆ Employers look very highly upon membership in an organization and demonstrated leadership skills, as well as civic involvement, community service, and volunteer activities. List all current or recent extracurricular activities in which you have been involved.
- ◆ Technology experience is also something to include. List everything that you have had practice with, like Microsoft Office, Adobe Photoshop, Dreamweaver UltraDev, etc.
- ◆ If there is room on your resume, illustrate that you have interests outside of your classes and work. You never know, maybe you and the interviewer both like snowshoeing!
- ◆ DO NOT list references at the end of your resume! Create a completely separate page for this information (see the References section for more details).

**\* Always remember to proofread your resume! \***

Don't just glance over your finished document to check for errors - have someone like your friend, your mom, or staff in Career Services review your resume also. One mistake generally means you're out the door. The quality of your resume reflects the quality of your work, professionalism, etc. If you make a mistake on your resume, will you do the same at your job?

## **What Employers Are Looking For**

While it is impossible to know what each and every employer is looking for in a candidate, there are some common characteristics and experiences most employers value when evaluating a candidate. Here are a few suggestions:

- ◆ Demonstration of a sense of timeliness, flexibility, adaptability, and dependability.
- ◆ Applicants who are not bound to a specific geographic region.
- ◆ Team orientation skills.
- ◆ A show of initiative or self-starters. If a problem comes up, don't ask how to fix it - just fix it and report the results.
- ◆ Honesty.
- ◆ Good listening skills. Are you able to synthesize the information you are given?
- ◆ Ability to solve conflicts without fighting.
- ◆ Basic math and reading/writing skills.
- ◆ Ability to read for information (one page memos).
- ◆ Ability to prioritize tasks.



## Scanner/Electronic-Friendly Resumes

- ◆ What is an electronic/scanner-friendly resume?
  - It is the same as your formal “presentation” resume, but without the fancy fonts, graphics, lines, shading, etc.
- ◆ Why have one?
  - More and more companies are using resume tracking and “sifting” programs to handle the applications they receive.
  - The resume is scanned into a database, from which the company can search the available resumes for key words.
- ◆ What are key words?
  - They are words which relate directly to the industry in which you may be working.
- ◆ How do I make an electronic/scanner-friendly resume?
  - Use popular sans serif fonts, but keep it simple. Size can range from 10 to 14 pt.
  - Avoid using tabs, graphics, shading, script fonts, italics, underlining, bullets, or bold faced text.
  - Avoid using horizontal or vertical lines.
  - Do not use brackets or parentheses.
  - Use wide margins for your document.
  - Use a laser printer.
  - Use light-colored 8½” x 11” paper printed on one side only.
  - Do not use 11” x 17” paper folded to create a pamphlet-like resume



## Market Yourself!

Now that you have a complete resume, it's time to use it to get your name out there and get hired! A good place to start is at local job fairs and other career events. Career Services hosts multiple job fairs throughout the year, all of which are held here on NMU's campus. Share your resume with friends and colleagues – you never know who they may have connections with. In addition to going out and marketing yourself, post your document on-line with established organizations, such as Northern.

Make an appointment with the  
Career Services staff to have your  
resume reviewed!

**(906) 227-2800**

# Helpful Action Words for your Resume

Employers look for accomplishments. Evidence that you actually ‘did something’ in the jobs you’ve had and the experiences in which you’ve participated. For this reason, it is important that you, whenever possible, begin each line in your resume with an ‘action word’ that describes what you did. For example: “**Supervised** 15 part-time employees.”, “**Allocated** \$10,000 in financial resources across the department.”, and “**Provided** comprehensive customer service throughout work shift.”

Achieved	Coordinated	Generated	Negotiated	Reported
Acquired	Correlated	Guided	Observed	Researched
Acted	Counseled	Handled	Obtained	Responded
Adapted	Created	Headed	Offered	Restored
Addressed	Critiqued	Helped	Operated	Revamped
Administered	Cultivated	Identified	Ordered	Reviewed
Advised	Dealt	Illustrated	Organized	Scanned
Advocated	Defined	Implemented	Originated	Scheduled
Aided	Delegated	Improved	Overcame	Schemed
Allocated	Delivered	Inaugurated	Oversaw	Screened
Analyzed	Designed	Increased	Participated	Set goals
Answered	Detected	Indexed	Perceived	Shaped
Anticipated	Determined	Influenced	Perfected	Skilled
Applied	Developed	Initiated	Performed	Solicited
Appraised	Diagnosed	Inspected	Persuaded	Solved
Approved	Directed	Instituted	Planned	Specialized
Arranged	Discovered	Integrated	Practiced	Spoke
Assembled	Displayed	Interpreted	Predicted	Stimulated
Assessed	Documented	Interviewed	Prepared	Streamlined
Assisted	Drafted	Introduced	Presented	Strengthened
Audited	Edited	Invented	Prioritized	Stressed
Authored	Enabled	Inventoried	Produced	Studied
Briefed	Enforced	Investigated	Programmed	Substantiated
Brought	Enlisted	Judged	Projected	Succeeded
Budgeted	Established	Kept	Promoted	Summarized
Built	Estimated	Launched	Proposed	Synthesized
Calculated	Evaluated	Learned	Protected	Supervised
Charged	Examined	Lectured	Proved	Supported
Checked	Exceeded	Led	Provided	Surveyed
Clarified	Excelled	Lifted	Publicized	Sustained
Classified	Expanded	Located	Published	Symbolized
Coached	Expedited	Logged	Purchased	Tabulated
Collaborated	Explained	Maintained	Queried	Talked
Collected	Explored	Managed	Questioned	Taught
Communicated	Expressed	Manipulated	Raised	Theorized
Compared	Extracted	Mapped	Ran	Trained
Complied	Facilitated	Mastered	Ranked	Translated
Composed	Fashioned	Maximized	Rationalized	Upgraded
Conceived	Financed	Mediated	Read	Utilized
Conducted	Fixed	Memorized	Reasoned	Validated
Conserved	Followed	Mentored	Recorded	Verified
Consulted	Formulated	Minimized	Received	Visualized
Contracted	Founded	Modeled	Reduced	Won
Contributed	Gained	Modified	Referred	Wrote
Converted	Gathered	Monitored	Related	
Cooperated	Gave	Narrated	Relied	

# Sample Resumes

While reviewing the samples below, keep in mind that they are just that, samples. Your resume, depending on your background, experiences, preferences, etc. may look very different.

**Call Career Services to set up an appointment to have your resume critiqued.**

## Typical Chronological Resume

Samantha A. Student	
011 Anystreet • Anytown, Anystate 01000 • (000) 111-2222 • yourid@nmu.edu	
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	
To obtain the position of patrolman with the Anytown Police Department.	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	
<b>Bachelor of Science - Criminal Justice</b> Anticipated May, 2003 Northern Michigan University, Marquette, MI	
<b>Relevant Coursework</b>	
Criminal Law	Criminal Procedures
The Judicial Process	Investigative Process I & II
<b>INTERNSHIP</b>	
<b>Michigan State Police</b>	
Negaunee, MI	Aug. 1998 - Present
Academic internship (credit earning) with Michigan State Police. Duties include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist officers with report writing.</li> <li>Visit local middle and high schools as part of crime prevention outreach program.</li> <li>Assist dispatcher with duties during assigned shift.</li> </ul>	
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	
<b>Student Assistant</b>	
Department of Public Safety Northern Michigan University	Aug. 1997 - Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisted department head with creation of and implementation of crime prevention awareness campaign as part of credit bearing internship.</li> <li>Developed and implemented training for new office workers within the department.</li> <li>Attended annual state-wide criminal justice forum for academic department heads; co-presented paper on topic of sexual assault awareness on a college campus.</li> </ul>	
<b>Student Officer</b>	
Department of Public Safety Northern Michigan University	Aug. 1994 - Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for front desk customer service and dispatch.</li> <li>Generated appropriate reports regarding weapons storage program.</li> <li>Developed and implemented computer data base which tracked vehicle tickets issued</li> </ul>	
<b>LEADERSHIP &amp; VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE</b>	
NMU Criminal Justice Association (Vice President)	1997 - Present
Habitat For Humanity	1995 - 1996
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	1994 - 1995
<b>COMPUTER EXPERIENCE</b>	
Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, SPSS, GradeBook+, & Eudora Email.	
<b>INTERESTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>	
Fly fishing, fly tying, scuba diving, reading, sea kayaking, downhill skiing.	
<b>REFERENCES</b>	
Available Upon Request	

## Typical Functional Resume

Bill M. Student	
500 Anystreet Anytown, Anystate 09999 999-999-9999	
Experienced individual with skills in project management, cross-functional team leadership, and communication.	
<b>Work Experience:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched three new corporate wellness centers and assumed responsibility for management of three established corporate wellness centers. Managed all technical and administrative operations on an on-going basis.</li> <li>Recruited, hired, trained and managed total of 24 full-time staff and numerous part-time and contract staff.</li> <li>Led cross-functional work team consisting of medical, occupational therapy, EAP and wellness professionals.</li> <li>Developed wellness center marketing strategies and collateral.</li> <li>Led wellness center membership drives and awareness campaigns.</li> <li>Designed, developed and delivered numerous end user seminars and training programs.</li> <li>Co-developed two training manuals which were implemented company-wide.</li> <li>Conducted market analyses of wage structures and cost share arrangements.</li> <li>Implemented cost-savings measures. Most notable achievement resulted in annual savings of \$38,000.</li> <li>Re-engineered payroll deduction and invoicing systems resulting in 70% increased revenue.</li> <li>Participated in strategic consulting/solution sales process with seven potential clients resulting in one signed contract and one pending contract to date.</li> </ul>	
<b>Employment History:</b>	
<b>Johnson &amp; Johnson Health Care Systems, Inc.</b>	Nov., 1995 – present
Senior Account Manager, LifeScan	Milpitas, CA
<b>Fitness Systems</b>	
Program Director, Ameritech Hoffman Estates, IL	Oct., 1988 – Aug., 1994
Program Director, Borland International Scotts Valley, CA	
Program Director, Kemper National Insurance Companies Long Grove, IL	
Program Director, General Electric Plastics Mt. Vernon, IN	
Fitness Specialist, The NutraSweet Company Deerfield, IL	
<b>Education:</b>	
<b>Master of Science</b>	GPA 5.0/5.0 Aug., 1988
University of Illinois	Chicago, IL
<b>Bachelor of Science</b>	GPA 3.4/4.0 Dec., 1984
Eastern Illinois University	Charleston, IL
Beta Beta Beta National Biological Honor Society	
Phi Sigma National Biological Honor Society	
<b>Community Service:</b>	
Leukemia Society of America's Team in Training program	San Jose, CA
Chicago Cares	Chicago, IL
World Cup 1994 Ambassador Program	Palo Alto, CA

# Cover Letter/Letter of Application

A cover letter and letter of application are the same thing. It is simply a professional introduction of you and your credentials, and a statement of your professional career interests. Relatively short and to-the-point, a cover letter packages your qualifications, experiences, and strong points into a **one-page** document that serves as a cover for your other material.

**Do not simply copy this sample letter. Use your own words and writing style.**

## Your Address

Should include your complete street address, city, state, and Zip Code, **NOT YOUR NAME**, followed by the date after two blank lines.

## Mailing Address

Should include the complete name, title and address to whom you are sending the letter.

## Salutation

It is key that you address your letter(s) to an individual. Avoid sending "To Whom It May Concern" letters, and make sure to correctly note the person's title (Dr., Mr., Ms., etc.)

## First Paragraph

Simply state the reason you are writing. Name the position (or the type of work) for which you are applying, and mention how you found out about the job for which you are applying.

## Second (and sometimes third) Paragraph

State, in two or three sentences, why you feel you are qualified. Mention (BRIEFLY) relevant work/internship experience, and emphasize skills you possess which will contribute to your effectiveness. Sell yourself. Note your accomplishments and more importantly, state why the employer should hire you. **Do not simply restate information that the employer can get from your resume.**

## Closing Paragraph

Refer the reader to your enclosed resume, and restate your strong interest in the position. Thank them for their consideration, and mention that you hope to hear from them soon.

## Closing

A simple "Sincerely", followed by some blank lines for your signature, followed by your full name

1401 Anystreet.  
Anytown, Anystate 00011

January 1, 2009

Dr. Wonderful Employer  
Assistant Superintendent - Great School District  
111 Street  
AnyTown, AnyState, 11111

Dear Dr. Employer:

Please accept this as my letter of application and supporting material for the position of **Special Education Teacher** with the Great School District. I learned of this position through your advertisement on Northern Michigan University's Career Services' web site, and I believe that my academic preparation and work experiences have prepared me well for the challenges this position offers.

As you will note by my enclosed resume, graduating from Northern Michigan University (with honors) with a **Bachelor of Science degree in Special Education** with a certificate in Learning Disabilities has allowed me to develop the background necessary to be a success in this position. My educational background has been enhanced by my successful student teaching experience with the Marquette Public School District, and my volunteer activities with Big Brothers and Big Sisters of the greater Marquette area. These experiences have allowed me to develop both the technical skills and human relation skills necessary to be a vibrant and consistent contributor to the success of your school district.

I believe a brief review of my resume will highlight the strong match between my qualifications and your position. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my background, education, and experiences with you, and I am available at your convenience to travel to AnyTown, AnyState in order to discuss my candidacy in greater detail. You may contact me at (212) 111-1111. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Marvin A. Student

# Thank You Letter

Thank you letters are documents that express your appreciation to the person/people for the time they took to interview you and consider your candidacy. As is the case with your cover letter, **do not simply copy the wording from the sample below. Use your own words!**

## Hints

- Make it very brief.
- You can send a thank you card if you feel comfortable doing so. Generally, the more personal relationship you have with the interviewer, the more acceptable a thank you card will be.
- They are “required”. If you don’t do one, people will remember.
- Send your thank you letter within 24 hours of your interview.
- Note the date of your interview in your letter. It will help the recipient remember who you are.
- Re-state your strong interest (if you have one) in the position, and highlight your qualifications once again.
- Thank everyone by name with whom you interviewed. Individual letters aren’t necessary, but individual recognition is!
- Despite the popularity of e-mail, sending a thank you via e-mail is inappropriate. Doing so is too impersonal. Take the time to write and mail a letter.

### Your Address

*Should include your complete street address, city, state, and Zip Code, NOT YOUR NAME, followed by the date after two blank lines.*

### Mailing Address

*Should include the complete name, title and address to whom you are sending the letter.*

### Salutation

*Dear Mr./Ms./Dr., etc. and their LAST NAME.*

### First Paragraph

*Express your sincere appreciation; naming all people with whom you interviewed and the position for which you interviewed*

### Second (and sometimes third) Paragraph

*Reemphasize your strongest qualifications and how you meet the requirements of the position. Draw attention to the match between you and the job. Show how your past work experience matches the job for which you are applying.*

### Closing Paragraph

*Reiterate your interest in the position, and offer to provide any additional information if needed. Restate your appreciation.*

### Closing

*A simple “Sincerely”, followed by some blank lines for your signature, followed by your full name*

6000 Anystreet  
Anytown, Anystate 77777

January 21, 2009

Dr. Wonderful Employer  
Assistant Superintendent - Great School District  
111 Street  
Anytown, AnyState, 11111

Dear Dr. Employer

Thank you very much for the opportunity to interview for the **Special Education Teacher** position with your school district on January 15, 2009. I enjoyed meeting you and Ms. Employer#2, and I especially enjoyed learning more about the challenges and opportunities this position has to offer.

My enthusiasm for the position has been strengthened considerably as a result of my interview with you, and I am confident my education and experiences continue to match those required of your posted position. As you will recall from my interview, my experiences as a student teacher with the Marquette School District and my volunteer experiences have given me the knowledge necessary to meet the growing demands of this position and your school district, and I am confident I will be able to make significant contributions to your students.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my very strong interest in the position and in working with you and your staff. Please feel free to contact me at (YOUR PHONE NUMBER) if I can provide you with any additional information. Again, thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Marvin A. Student

# References

Every job-seeker, whether they are looking for a full-time job, part-time job, internship, or summer job, should have a group of people lined up who have agreed to speak on the candidate's behalf - in other words, a list of references. Your references serve a number of important functions depending on their relationship to you.

Function	Details
Verify Employment	In many cases, references do little more than verify that you were employed during the months and years listed on your resume.
Comment on Job Performance	More often, a person listed as a reference will be asked to comment on your performance. This could be performance related to a job you have listed, or involvement in a group, organization, club, etc.
Provide Letters of Recommendation	Many times, those listed on your reference page will be asked to provide a letter of recommendation. These letters typically document your job performance and can, at times, comment on your non job-related skills (interpersonal, problem solving, etc.).

## Who Should Be Listed

Many job-seekers frequently struggle with deciding who they should list when providing reference contacts to a prospective employer. While there is no standard format that dictates who should be listed as a reference, job-seekers frequently include the following:

- ◆ Previous employers
- ◆ Current supervisors
- ◆ Faculty
- ◆ Colleagues/co-workers
- ◆ Group or organization president or chairperson

## Who Should Not Be Listed

There are some people you should not include when deciding who to list as a reference. Generally, you should avoid listing:

- ◆ **Family members**
- ◆ **Future family members**, even if you've worked for your fiancé's uncle
- ◆ **Big names**, avoid listing someone in order to show how "important" you are. For example, just because the University president knows your name does not mean you can list his or her name as one of your references.

## **How A Reference Page Should Look**

How you document the contact information for each of your references with potential employers depends on the instructions provided by the employer. Do you have to supply letters of recommendation (also known as letters of reference)? Or, can you simply provide the contact information for each of your references? There is no one correct answer – it really depends on the position. There is, however, one piece of advice that will probably help you – **create a reference page that you can send to a potential employer.**

A reference page simply lists all the contact information for each one of the people who have agreed to speak on your behalf. This usually includes:

- ◆ Their name,
- ◆ Title,
- ◆ Full mailing address,
- ◆ Work telephone number, and
- ◆ Email address for each person.

Should you list their home address or phone number? Probably not. You may list it if your reference person gives you permission to do so, but it's best to list their work contact information only.

Here is a sample of how a reference page can look:

**James A. Smith**  
2600 Garfield St., Apt. 7 • Marquette, MI 49855  
(906) 225-1234  
jsmith@nmu.edu

**References**

<p><b>Dr. Margaret Smith</b> Management Supervisor ABC Company 111 Oak Lane Meadowbrook, IL 00011 (708) 897-00367 msmith@abc.com</p>	<p><b>Mr. James Jones</b> Owner Jones Laundry Services 873 Mulberry Court Oakton, CA 98726 (989) 666-9999 jjones@soapysuds.com</p>
<p><b>Mr. Marvin Melenbacher</b> Owner Melenbacher Confectioners 4623 Las Vegas Way Las Vegas, NV 87125 (435) 900-0065 marvin@sugar.com</p>	<p><b>Ms. Janet Mandleson</b> Supervisor Public Policy Professionals 764 Pennsylvania Ave Washington, D.C. 98765 (800) 762-0982 jm@ppp.com</p>

# Online Resume System

Are you ready for a full-time job or internship? Then direct your computer to [www.nmu.edu/ors-stu](http://www.nmu.edu/ors-stu) to start using Northern Michigan University's Online Resume System – the fastest way to get your resume into the hands of employers! Key features of this service include:

- Keyword Searches - employers can search for your resume by key words as long as you've updated the keywords into your profile.
- User Edits - once you've registered to use the system, you can edit and upload up-to-date versions of your resume anytime.
- Up-To-Date Files - your resume will remain active for 90 days, and longer if you let us know!

The Online Resume System is available for NMU students and alumni. Before progressing further, you may want to view our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page to learn more about this exciting new service.

**Questions?**

**Contact:**  
**Career Services**  
**(906) 227-2800**  
[careers@nmu.edu](mailto:careers@nmu.edu)

Resumes submitted into the Online Resume System must be saved as Portable Document Format (PDF) or Word (.doc) files and can be edited and updated anytime you wish by simply logging into the system with the confirmation code you will receive once you create your user account. Find out more about saving your resume as a PDF file, and then register as a user of the Online Resume System.

## Preparing for a Job Fair

A great place to market yourself as a potential employee is at local job fairs and other career events. However, job fairs are not just for graduating students looking for full-time employment. There are many types of job fairs where employers are looking to fill various kinds of positions. Here on NMU's campus, Career Services hosts events such as the Fall Job Fair and Career Expo, the Upper Great Lakes Collegiate Job Fair, and a summer job fair throughout the year to help you find what you are looking for.

A job fair can be your first exposure to an employer; an employer with whom you may like to work for in the future. For this reason, attending a job fair can be an intimidating experience. But with a little advance preparation, a job fair won't be all that frightening. Here are a few tips:

- Visit the Career Services web site at [www.nmu.edu/careers](http://www.nmu.edu/careers). We post a list of attending companies along with a brief summary about the organization. Be sure to check the web site often because sometimes employers will register last minute.
- Research the companies who will be attending. Almost all businesses have a web page, and it may impress the recruiter if you are knowledgeable about their company.
- Dress professionally. While a job fair isn't exactly an interview, first impressions are lasting ones. A suit is not required, but it gives the employer the sense that you are serious about finding a job, and may be a high-quality employee.





- Bring plenty of resumes. You can leave them with employers to refer to later when they return to the office. If you don't have a completed, error-free resume, call the staff in Career Services to make an appointment to have it reviewed before the job fair.
- Bring a folder or case to carry your resumes and company material you may collect. Many bring loads of information about the organization, the positions they offer, and the products they produce. Also, keep a pad of paper and pencil with you for taking notes.
- Go with a friend, but remember to circulate by yourself.
- Grab every business card you can.
- Always shake hands firmly while maintaining good eye contact and posture. Use body language to convey confidence and interest. Extend your hand and say: "Good morning/afternoon. My name is ...." The employer will usually take it from there.

- After the fair, send a thank you note and your resume to the employers you talked to using the address and other information from each business card you collect during the fair. There is a sample letter in the Resume section and the staff in Career Services are always more than willing to help, too.
- Don't leave early. Many employers stay until the very end in order to meet as many students as possible.
- Always maintain a friendly and positive attitude, even at the end of the day when you're tired.
- Meet everyone. Stop by each employer who is at the job fair. Don't worry if they don't seem to be hiring people with your major. You never know who or what they know! The first question out of your mouth should be: "What kind of employment opportunities does your company offer?"
- Don't waste time standing in lines waiting to visit employers. Those lines may be shorter later in the day. Visit employers with short or no lines, they may take more time to get to know and like you.



For more event preparation tips,  
visit [www.nmu.edu/careers](http://www.nmu.edu/careers)

# Interviews - From A to Z

So you completed your resume, put it onto several hot web sites, e-mailed it to a number of companies, and mailed it to a few others. Now the moment you've been waiting for - the phone call from the organization you would love to work for and they want you to interview with them for your dream job! You feel a sense of panic rush over you. What will they ask? What will you say? How do you know what to ask them? Well, you can relax knowing there are a number of things you can do to help prepare yourself for that big interview. So breathe easy and read on.

## What Organizations Want to Know

A mistake that a number of people make in preparing for an interview is they simply review their resume and gather their list of references. What many people don't realize is many organizations today are relying less on questions that come straight from the resume like, "So tell me about your responsibilities as a hotel desk clerk," and more on questions like, "So tell me how you handled a difficult customer when you worked as a desk clerk." This type of question is known as a behavior-based interview question and gives the employer insight into how you might respond in certain situations. The underlying premise of behavior-based interviewing is that your past behavior is the best indicator of your future behavior. Organizations want to know not only that you have the technical knowledge to perform the job but also **how** you will perform on the job. So if you are interviewing for a supervisory role, you might be asked, "Describe how you would handle an employee who comes to you complaining about another coworker," and if you are interviewing for a sales position you might be asked, "Tell me about a time you had to persuade a previous boss or professor to your way of thinking." Anticipating what an organization wants to know about you will help you to prepare yourself for the interview.

## Preparing for the Interview

In order to prepare for an interview and help you feel less anxious about the experience, it's helpful to spend some time thinking about how you would respond to certain questions. To start, consider some of the skills that would be important for the position for which you are interviewing. For example, if you are interviewing for a marketing position, some important skills for the job would be the ability to communicate effectively, project management skills, teamwork, or creativity. With these skills in mind, think about previous work experiences and/or classroom experiences you've had where you demonstrated these skills. (Experiences with a campus or community organization are acceptable, too). Maybe you demonstrated communication skills through the many presentations you were required to give as a part of your coursework, or maybe your professor asked you to speak at a campus-wide event because she was so impressed with your speaking abilities. An example of project management skills might be the time your boss at the restaurant asked you to evaluate the possibility of bringing in live music on weekends. You had to consider the costs, the revenue, the space required, the audience it would attract, the competition in the community, etc., and make a recommendation based on what you learned. Many times, we don't realize the skills we are developing on the job and in the classroom. Don't sell yourself short when you think about your skills and abilities. Chances are you've accomplished more than you think.

It may be helpful for you to write down some of these examples to help clarify them in your mind. You don't want to memorize responses to potential interview questions (you want your responses to be natural), but you will likely feel more comfortable going into the interview if you've considered how you may respond to some of the questions.

If you are about to graduate or have recently graduated, you should also be prepared to speak of your interest in this particular career, what classes you felt benefited you the most and why, what coursework you enjoyed most/least, campus activities, etc. All candidates should be prepared to state why they want the job, why they are interested in the organization, how their knowledge and skills will contribute to the organization, successes/failures, and why the organization should hire them.

## It's All About Attitude

There are many things about an interview that you can't necessarily control. One thing that you can control is the "a" word - **Attitude**. Attitude can have a significant impact on the success of your interview. It's important that you go into an interview feeling confident (not arrogant) about your abilities and what you have to offer an organization. When you meet or are introduced to someone, shake his/her hand firmly. Look the interviewer in the eyes when you respond to questions. Sit straight in your chair. Smile and be friendly during the process. These things project an image of self-confidence and professionalism that interviewers like to see. If you go into an interview with a weak handshake, stare at the floor during the interview, slouch in your chair, or seem bored, tired, irritated, or impersonal, you will come across as someone who isn't sure he/she can do the job - so why would the organization want to hire you? Interviews can be nerve-wracking situations that can shake anyone's confidence, so it's important that you take the time to prepare to make yourself feel comfortable and less anxious. Know that you have a lot of skills and strengths to offer. Focus on these strengths and don't be so concerned about what you can't do. Most organizations are aware that candidates come to them with some expertise that will need to be enhanced through formal and on-the-job training.



### Additional Tips for a Successful Interview

In addition to preparing for an interview, there are a number of other things you can do to make yourself feel more comfortable and confident the day of your interview, and to help ensure a positive interview experience.

- Ask your organization contact for the names and titles of the individuals who will interview you that day. This will help you to understand the roles/perspectives of your interviewers, and may help you determine what types of questions would be appropriate to ask them.
- Make sure you know where you are going before the day of the interview. If you are unfamiliar with the location, drive to it (or take a cab) from where you are staying and time yourself. Allow extra time if you will be traveling in rush hour traffic.
- The night before an interview, do things that help you to relax. Read a book, take a bath, go for a walk, do yoga - whatever helps to relax you. Try to get a good night's rest.
- Bring extra copies of your resume and reference list with you. Bring a padfolio or notepad with your questions so you can make notes.
- Arrive approximately 15-20 minutes early for your interview. Don't be late, but don't arrive too early - it may make you appear too anxious or may inconvenience the staff.
- Be prepared for a meal interview. Some employers will take you to breakfast/lunch/dinner as part of your interview experience. For tips on how to handle a meal interview, see the Dining Etiquette section.
- At the end of your day, be sure to ask what the next steps in the process will be, such as "When can I expect to hear from you?" or "Will there be a second interview process?". This information will give you the organization's decision time frame, so you don't spend weeks wondering what is going on.

## **Do Your Research**

Part of your interview preparation should also include researching the organization you are interviewing with. Visit the organization's web site (if they have one) and learn as much as you can about its products, services, employees, mission, etc. If they don't have a web site, ask the organization for a copy of its annual report, or any general information or marketing materials. You can also check for company information in the Career Services Resource Room located at 3301 C.B. Hedgcock. Reviewing this information will help you demonstrate your knowledge of the organization during the interview. It will also help you to formulate some questions to ask during your interview process.

If you don't have a whole lot of interviewing experience or would like to improve your interviewing skills, contact a member of Career Services for assistance at 906-227-2800. You can discuss interviewing strategies or arrange for a mock interview to get feedback on your strengths and areas for development.

## **What To Ask Employers**

Think of the interview as your opportunity to learn as much about the employer as you can. You can learn a lot of things simply by observing the environment. Are the employees dressed casually or in suits? Do they seem relaxed or stressed? Does the furniture look comfortable and inviting or more stiff and formal? Is it noisy? Is it clean? Did people appear prepared to see you? Before you go to an interview, you need to decide what type of environment you'd like to work in and try to observe those things that will help determine if the organization could be a fit for you.

Asking questions is another way to learn more about the environment and the position. Below are some additional items to consider. Remember, you want to ask those questions that will help you make a decision about whether or not this is the right opportunity for you.

Depending on the job (and the interviewer), an interview can typically take anywhere from 30 to 90 minutes. Most interviewers try to save you at least five-ten minutes to ask questions of them. Be sure you come prepared with a short list of questions to get answered. If you don't ask questions, you may be viewed as not having done your homework or as not really being interested in the job. You want to come up with questions that are important to you.

Stay away from asking questions about salary. Only discuss your salary expectations if the interviewer brings it up first. A human resources person should be able to give you a packet of information regarding employee benefits (this may not be offered to you during a first interview).

## **When All Is Said and Done**

When your interviews are completed, be sure to send a thank you letter to each individual who interviewed you. Even if you don't think you'd accept an offer from the company, it is still a nice and expected touch. Make sure the names and titles of the individuals are accurate and spelled correctly. If you interviewed with more than one person, thank everyone by name with whom you interviewed. Individual letters aren't necessary, but individual recognition is!

## **Dining Etiquette**


During your job search process, don't be surprised if a prospective employer takes you to lunch or dinner as part of your interview process. Employers like to take candidates out of the more standard "office interview" setting to see how you respond in a more social setting. Employers also know that meal interviews tend to make the candidate feel more relaxed, and perhaps more likely to comfortably provide information about himself/herself. Here are some important hints on how to handle a meal interview situation. Bon A petit!

## Do:

- ◆ **Arrive on time.** Treat this breakfast/lunch/dinner interview as you would any other interview. If you are meeting the employer someplace, make sure you know how to get there in advance and arrive 5-10 minutes early. If you beat your host, you will have a few minutes to relax and gather your thoughts before he/she arrives.
- ◆ **Feel free to ask questions during the meal.** Just like a regular interview, take this opportunity to educate yourself about the company, the position, and other areas of interest to you. And if you don't ask any questions, you are in danger of missing the chance to actually eat your meal!
- ◆ **Sit up straight.** The words of your parents continue to echo in your head. Just because a meal interview seems more relaxed than a regular interview does not mean it's okay to let your posture slide. Be aware of your body language and make sure you look professional.
- ◆ **Thank your host.** When the meal is complete, make sure to thank your host for his/her time and the meal. If this is the only interview you have with this individual, make sure to send a thank you letter.

## Don't:

- ◆ **Order the most expensive item on the menu.** Unless your host recommends something to you that is on the expensive side, stick with a meal priced in the more "standard" range. You will feel a little more than awkward if you order the Surf & Turf and your host orders the Caesar salad.
- ◆ **Order something you've never eaten before.** This isn't the time for a great food adventure. Stick with foods you know you like to avoid being served something you're afraid to put in your mouth. Also, stick to ordering foods that are easily eaten with a knife and fork. Pastas and large sandwiches may invite disaster, so try chicken, fish, salads, and meats instead.
- ◆ **Order alcohol.** Your best bet is an iced-tea, water, or soda. Even if your host orders a drink, it is always better to order a nonalcoholic beverage. Alcohol (even a small quantity) can make you less sharp and more apt to do or say something you wouldn't normally do or say. If your host orders a bottle of wine for the two of you or encourages you to order a drink, it's okay - just sip small quantities and make your drink last the whole meal.
- ◆ **Smoke.** If you are a smoker, don't smoke before, during, or after the meal. If you smoke on your way to the meal, you are likely to smell like smoke when you get there, which could be a real turn-off to your host. It's also rude to get up and leave to take a smoking break during the meal. And if you wind up in the smoking section, don't take that as a green light to smoke after your meal either. Pick up another habit for the day - like smiling.
- ◆ **Groom yourself at the table.** Freshening your lipstick or your face powder is a no-no. It's also not okay to put eye drops in your eyes or to comb/brush your hair. Save any grooming for the washroom only.
- ◆ **Lick your utensils or your fingers.** You don't want it to look like you are starving to death (even if this is the best meal you've had in a while). Stay away from foods that might tempt you to lick your fingers (like French fries, chicken wings, mozzarella sticks, etc.).
- ◆ **Feel like you have to clean your plate.** It's probably better to leave a little food on your plate. And don't push it around to make it look like you've eaten more than you have.
- ◆ **Ask for a doggy bag.** Even if you have plenty of food left on your plate, the meal interview is not the time to take care of your meal planning for the week. Save the doggy bag for casual or informal dining.



Call or stop by the **Career Services** office for a list of sample interview questions or to schedule a mock interview appointment.

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# Deciphering Business Dress Code

Did you know that some recruiters actually formulate their first impressions of a job candidate based on the shoes the candidate is wearing? It may seem unfair, but your clothes, including your shoes, say a lot about the person you are. Therefore, understanding what is and isn't appropriate for business dress in today's work world is an important "first step" to landing the job you really want.

You may be saying to yourself, "If an employer doesn't like the clothes I'm wearing then I don't want to work for them anyway." While you may honestly feel that way, that attitude may keep you from getting the opportunity you'd really love. It's important to understand that while some employers have adopted a more casual work environment, most have stuck with the concept of traditional and conservative dress for job fairs and interviews. Depending on the industry, you may have the chance to express yourself more freely once you've actually landed the job.

So how do you know what's appropriate dress for that big interview or the important job fair? Knowing the expectations of the employers is key to understanding what to wear. Many organizations will expect "professional business dress" while others may encourage "business casual." What is the difference and how do you know what shirt to grab with that suit? Just follow the tips below to learn everything you need to know to put your "best shoe" forward.

## Business Casual Attire

There may be times when you are told to dress "business casual" for a specific event. Perhaps you are attending an employer sponsored reception, or you are interviewing at an organization on a Friday, which has become a "casual" day for many industries. The important thing to note is you should never assume it is okay to dress business casual unless you have been told to do so. And if you aren't sure what's appropriate, don't be afraid to ask. While business casual has come to mean a number of different things, below are some general guidelines:

### Women

- Casual pants or skirts are fine. Khakis may be viewed as too casual for women so do some research before wearing them. Your skirt should be knee length - don't wear anything shorter than what you would wear to an interview. No sundresses.
- Long-sleeved shirts or blouses are considered more formal than short sleeves. Knit sweaters or sweater sets are also considered business casual. Make sure shirts are not too tight and don't expose too much skin.
- Wear leather shoes with a low or flat heel. Tennis shoes and sandals are too casual. A nice open-toed shoe may be appropriate in the summer. Pantyhose aren't always necessary for business casual, but should definitely be worn with shorter skirts.
- Jewelry should be conservative. A nice watch, wedding rings and earrings are fine. Additional piercings on your ears and face should be removed.
- Makeup should be natural. Nails should be trimmed and if you wear polish choose a conservative color.
- Avoid perfume or use it **very very** lightly.
- If you need to, carry a small purse that matches your outfit (no backpacks). A briefcase should not be necessary at a business casual event.

### Men

- Neatly pressed khaki pants are a safe choice.
- A long-sleeved shirt is considered more formal than a short sleeve golf shirt. If you aren't sure what is more appropriate, keep in mind it is better to be overdressed than underdressed.
- Ties typically aren't needed for business casual events. If it is likely to be a more formal event, it wouldn't hurt to wear a conservative tie and just remove it if you arrive and most men aren't wearing one.
- Wear leather shoes and dark socks that pull up over the calf. Athletic shoes, hiking boots and sandals are not appropriate (even in the summer). Your belt should match your shoes.
  - Jewelry should be minimal - a conservative watch and wedding rings are okay. Although more men are wearing earrings these days, remove them and any other piercings.
    - Do not bring a backpack.



## Professional Business Attire

Most organizations will expect you to dress in professional business attire for an interview and job fairs, unless you are instructed to do otherwise. It's important to have at least one, and if possible, two interview suits in your closet. While this may cost you a little money, it is an important and wise investment. And by changing blouses or ties, you can make one suit go a long way. Here are some guidelines for professional business attire:

### Women

- A tailored suit in a conservative color such as black, navy blue, brown, beige, or grey. Avoid loud colors or pastels. Pant suits are becoming more acceptable in some environments, particularly in an industrial or manufacturing facility. If you aren't sure what's acceptable in the organization, a traditional skirted suit is a safe bet. Dresses aren't always viewed as "professional."
- Your skirt length should be conservative - nothing above the knee and no high slits. Practice sitting in your skirt and looking in the mirror to see how an interviewer will see you. Too much exposure, regardless of how hard you've worked at the gym, is frowned upon.
- Your blouse should be cotton or silk, and a light color that compliments your suit.
- Wear low-heeled, conservative pumps. No spiked heels, no sandals, and no flashy beading or stitching. And make sure they are comfortable - you don't want to be limping around during your interview process.
- Jewelry should be sparse. A simple watch, wedding rings, small earrings and a necklace are okay. If you have additional visible piercings on your ears or face, they should be removed. A silk scarf can be a nice touch, as long as it matches your suit and isn't too flamboyant.
- Pantyhose should be neutral or skin-tone. It's a good idea to carry a spare pair in your purse in case your hose "runs" during the day.
- Makeup should be natural and subtle. Be sure to visit a mirror to check for lipstick on your teeth.
- Skip the perfume or keep it **very very** light.
- Accessories - you can carry a slim purse, padfolio, or a small briefcase, but not all three because you will look too cluttered. No backpacks!



### Men

- Your business suit should be a two-piece matched suit in a conservative color such as navy, dark grey or black. Solids or subtle weave patterns are best. Stick with wool if possible.
- Long-sleeved shirts are best - even in summer. Wear a white or pale blue dress shirt.
- A tie is a must! 100% silk ties look the most polished. Choose colors that match your suit and aren't too flamboyant. Watch what other men in the industry are wearing to get more ideas on what's appropriate.
- Your shoes should be either brown or black leather and polished. Slip-ons or ones that lace up are fine - just make sure that they are comfortable. You don't want to be limping through interviews.
- Your belt should be simple and should match your shoes.
- Your socks should be blue or black to match your suit and they should pull up over your calves. You don't want baggy or short socks that show skin when you sit down.
- As far as jewelry, wear a conservative watch. Wedding rings are fine. And although more and more men are wearing earrings, they should be removed for interviews and job fairs.
  - Avoid using cologne unless it is **very very** light.
  - Accessories - you should carry a small, leather briefcase or a padfolio. Leave your back pack at home.
    - Do not allow your cell phone to be noticeable.

