

Your Guide to Employment

FROM JOB SEARCH TO JOB SUCCESS

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INTRODUCTION

You need a job or are looking for a new position. You feel that somewhere, some employer has precisely the job you want – one that fully utilizes your knowledge, skills, abilities, and accomplishments and provides challenges and opportunities for advancement.

A well-planned job search can help you find that job. You have a product to sell – your knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience. You need to know how to market yourself effectively. Whether you are just starting a career or looking for a new position, the following topics contained in this guide can benefit you greatly.

- Where to find information about the kinds of jobs for which you are qualified.
- How to write a resume that will land you an interview.
- How to write a cover letter or letter of application that catches an employer's interest.
- Where to go for information on job opportunities in your field.
- How to present your qualifications effectively during a job interview.
- How to plan your time and learn from your job interviews.

Your job search success will depend in part on your attitude and enthusiasm. Give yourself credit for your good qualities and maintain a positive attitude during your job search. Take good care of yourself.

One of the most important decisions employers make is selecting the right person for a job. This decision impacts an employer's profitability, productivity, and customer service quality. They have considerable costs associated with hiring and training new employees. Therefore, they take their time to select the right people and not take chances on marginal applicants. Employers aim to find employees with the maximum number of skills for the wage being paid.

There are often more qualified applicants than there are job openings. This means that you do whatever you can to stand above the competition.

Turn to Job Service North Dakota for online and in-person resources available at no cost to you.

- Veterans' priority of service
- North Dakota's largest job listings database
- Knowledge about area employers
- Career planning
- Information on community resources
- Local, state, and national labor market information
- And more!

PLANNING YOUR STRATEGY

Since finding a job may be the hardest job you will ever have, you must make the best possible use of your time. Your job search is truly a full-time job. Check on job leads immediately- delays may hurt your chances.

The following suggestions will help you plan your time for an effective job search:

- Set goals for today, week, and month. Make a “to-do” list every day
- Allow time for multiple interviews, tests, or other hiring procedures that may be required
- Be on time and prepared for appointments
- Follow up on leads immediately
- Maintain a positive mental attitude during your job search
- Keep a log of completed employer contacts, results and needed follow up. This helps you stay organized and reminds you of loose ends. **Obtain a job search log at any Job Service North Dakota Workforce Center**
- Create a master generic application and resume
- Carry extra pens, maps, and job information at all time
- Apply to several companies in the same area. This saves time and money
- Keep your current job, if you are employed, until you have another job offer
- Set a standard ring-back tone on each telephone number listed on your resume. In addition, ensure your answering machine or voice mail message is appropriate.

YOU ARE THE PRODUCT – COMPLETE A SELF-APPRAISAL

Preparing for work is similar to preparing for a sales campaign. You must know the "product" you're trying to sell (yourself), and market your strengths to the buyers' (employers') needs.

A self-appraisal is an informal inventory to help you get organized for your job search. You do not need a special form for this activity. Simply take a few blank pieces of paper and write down some of these things about yourself:

Knowledge, skills, abilities, hobbies, interests, and community involvement

- List what you have done, and skills learned
- Name the things you can do that may help you get a job
- List things you have done or enjoy doing (ex. repair vehicles, play a musical instrument, speak a foreign language, draw and paint, rebuild computers, etc.)
- List items that show you can lead or work with other people
- Ask yourself if your talents match the kinds of work you are seeking

Work experience

- Begin with most recent job
- Include military experience
- List all previous jobs, including part time, summer and freelance
- List all employer name, address, duties, dates employed, job title, and earnings
- Ensure information is correct by checking your records. Never guess

Accomplishments

- Write what you did, how you did it and the results

Education and Certifications

- Schools you attended, dates, principal course, or degrees earned
- Business, vocational, military, on-the-job training, and other courses
- List current certifications
- Honors, awards and extracurricular activities

Military experience

- Describe your military experience using civilian words

Earnings expectations

- Learn what is realistic for the jobs for which you want to apply

Preferred work environment

- Decide if you like to work indoors or outdoors
- Identify small or large businesses as your targeted employers

Values

- Decide what is important to you

Short- and long-term goals

- Set goals for where you want to work 2 years from today
- Identify what you want to do 10-15 years from today

Take your resume, personal data sheet and generic application with you as you job search. You will have all the necessary information at your fingertips to complete employer applications accurately and without forgetting important details. Depending on the job you are seeking, select the facts that best describe you for the job.

To find a job that leads to a satisfactory career, you have a job to do right now. It may very well be the most important job of your life. Stay positive!

KNOW THE JOB MARKET

Now that you know yourself, you need to know about the jobs that are available, where they are located, and what types of job interest you.

Job Service North Dakota is a reliable source of job information and employment trends, both locally and nationally. You can gather information about wages, career possibilities, growing and declining occupations, and more through the Labor Market Information Center on jobsnd.com.

Use the wage information that you gather from these various sources to get an idea of what your skills are worth in the area that you are seeking work. Your skills may be worth different amounts depending on the job market area. Also looking at the cost of living in a certain area will assist you in determining whether your wages will allow you to sustain basic living needs.

Sources for Job Leads and Labor Market Information

- Job Service North Dakota
- www.jobsnd.com
- www.ndlmi.com
- Newspaper business sections
- Networking
- USA Jobs
- Library reference sections
- College placement offices
- Friends and relatives
- Former employers
- Employers and human resource officers
- Private employment agencies
- Employees of companies that are hiring
- Newspaper advertisements and articles
- Chamber of Commerce offices
- Professional, civic and social organizations
- City, county, and state human resource offices
- Organized labor offices-apprenticeship openings
- Office of Apprenticeship (OA, which is non-union)
- Religious affiliation contacts
- Radio and television ads
- Word of mouth
- National directories
- Teachers at all levels of education
- Advertising yourself in newspapers, etc.
- Professional journals
- Social Media

Note: The majority of jobs aren't posted or advertised publicly – these jobs are commonly referred to as hidden jobs. Two effective methods of finding hidden jobs are networking (getting leads from people you know) and making cold contacts (applying directly to employers even if there is no advertised job opening).

SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUR JOB SEARCH

In 2017 a Career Builder survey found that 70% of employers use social media to screen candidates. This is up 10% from 2016. With technology taking off and no sight of slowing down, social media can either negatively or positively impact your job search.

Advantages of social networking

- Fast, efficient, and easy to use
- Social media can be shared repeatedly with no limit as to where it will end up, meaning, reaching a bigger network of people.
- A great way to market yourself

Disadvantages of social networking

- Lack of control what others say, share, or comment on your postings.
- Personal and professional lives can easily overlap if not careful.
- The chances of hackers or scammers can increase.

Social Media Tips

- **Scrub social media-** Remove yours and other posts that may contain foul language, and or demonstrate poor judgement, or taste. Remove friends, videos, tags, or links that may be related to inappropriate topics.
- **Social vs Professional forums-** Know when and where to post professional or social content. Look for networking or job-related groups or pages to like and join.
- **Monitor comments-** When mixing social and professional social medias, make sure you monitor who is commenting, and what they are commenting.
- **Take it offline-** Once communication is established between a job posting or business, take it to a private message or maybe even a phone call. Networking gives a giant net of opportunity, but everyone else on the internet will also have access to that net.

***Quick Tips**

- Don't spam groups looking for work. Establish a professional look and develop networking relationships from there
- Make a complete professional social media account (LinkedIn)

JOB SCAMS

A Job scam is when a scammer poses as an employer or recruiter and offers attractive employment opportunities to take advantage of the job seeker by gaining your money, personal information.

Be on the lookout for jobs that:

- Are too good to be true
- Willing to pay a lot more than what is common for the market
- List all the great benefits and little on what the job is
- You must pay money to get the job
- Offers job without interview or you never applied for the job
- Have a lot of grammatical or spelling errors in their communication
- Want personal/confidential information before being hired
- Want a quick response from you or you will not get the job
- Wants you to cash checks or send personal money
- They say they have found your resume and want to offer you a job, but don't say where or it is a site you have never posted your resume
- Are using an email address that does not match the company or is from a free email site

CHECK THE EMPLOYER

You should take time to verify employers that you are not familiar with, this will help reduce the chances of falling for an employment scam. Here are a few things that you can use to verify an employer.

- **ND Secretary of State** (<https://apps.nd.gov/sc/busnsrch/busnSearch.htm>) you can check that a company is registered with the state. If it is an out of state company, you can check with the Secretary of State in that state
- **Better Business Bureau** (<https://www.bbb.org/>) check the ratings of an employer and check current employment scams
- **Internet search** Research employers to see what is online about them.
- **Company Website** Check the company website, look through the website to see if there is anything unusual. Make sure that all the sections in the website display and you do not get a lot of error messages
- **Contact the employer** – Look up and check the phone number provided. If it does not match the employer call and verify the individual works there.
- **Workforce Safety & Insurance (WSI)** (<https://www.workforcesafety.com/wsi/wsionlineservices/EmployerSearch.aspx>) you are able to check that a company current with the WSI.
- **Job Service North Dakota** (<http://www.jobsnd.com>) Contact to see if we have verified the company.

TRAITS EMPLOYERS SEEK IN JOB CANDIDATES

Before you begin your Personal Data Record, basic application, and/or resume, visualize how your qualities compare to traits that employers seek in potential employees.

- **Ability to communicate.** If you are unable to express your thoughts simply but precisely, using proper English, you will have a hard time interviewing.
- **Leadership.** Can you guide and direct others? Will others follow your lead? Companies want people with leadership capabilities. Followers are “a dime a dozen,” but true leaders are scarce.
- **Willingness to accept responsibility.** Be willing to do new things and accept responsibility for the results.
- **Self-confidence.** You need to demonstrate a sense of self-confidence and ability to handle all kinds of situations.
- **Initiative.** Do you wait to be told to do things, or do you start new tasks without being asked? If you fall into the latter category, you will be considered a corporate asset.
- **Energy level.** If you are the type of person who will put in whatever time it takes to get the job done, you are an ideal candidate.
- **Imagination.** Can you see inventive solutions to problems? If you can, you will be an asset to any growing company that hopes to dominate its industry.
- **Flexibility.** Can you adapt and adjust to changing situations?
- **Interpersonal skills.** Can you bring out the best in others?
- **Self-knowledge.** Can you assess your skills, strengths, weaknesses, and see yourself as others see you?
- **Ability to handle conflict.** Can you handle stressful, tense situations, and make them turn out well? Can you stay out of interoffice squabbles?
- **Intelligence.** Can you understand the work at hand and can you function as a productive employee? Reading, writing, and math skills are important for many types of job opportunities.
- **Technology-** Do you know current technology; can you make it through the company online application?

EMPLOYER TURNOFFS

Conversely, there are things that can ruin your chances of getting hired:

- Poorly completed application
- Unkempt personal appearance
- Inability to express self clearly and completely
- Poor grammar, slang and profanity
- Judgmental, racial, sexual, religious, or other discriminatory remarks
- Behavior issues: lack of interest or enthusiasm, overbearing, overaggressive, conceited, negative, immature, rude, etc.
- Bad manners: failure to make eye contact, weak handshake, smoking, or chewing gum, tobacco, or fingernails during interview
- Evasiveness
- Past history of job hopping
- Lack of goals and interests
- Unprepared for the interview--no thought or research on the company, limited knowledge of occupations
- Lack of evidence of achievements
- Insincerity – merely shopping around
- Unprepared to ask questions (or asks poor questions) about the job
- Interested only in best offer--unwilling to start at the bottom--expects too much too soon
- Questions about wages/benefits before job offer is made
- Narrow geographic availability--unwillingness to relocate later
- Job seekers stressing their needs rather than their qualifications
- Inappropriate Social Media

THE EMPLOYER APPLICATION

An application is an important screening tool used by employers. They usually read it before they see you, so completing it correctly is critical. It represents you and the tasks and duties you've performed. It gives employers their first snapshot of you and your knowledge, skills and abilities. Your application must make a good first impression.

The application tells the employer about your neatness, preparedness and ability to finish a task. It also tells the employer whether or not you can follow instructions.

TAKE A COMPLETED GENERIC APPLICATION WITH YOU to use as a guide as you apply for work.

Points to remember when completing job applications:

- Request two applications from an employer. Do one completely and copy to the other
- Read the form carefully prior to filling it out. Note format and structure
- Take your time. Neatness may determine your fitness for employment
- Be accurate and complete. Answer all questions. Use "NA" or spell out "Not Applicable" rather than leave a blank space
- Account for all periods of time. Do not leave employment gaps. Give yourself credit for part-time, summer, and volunteer work
- Type or use black ink
- Read and re-read your completed application before submitting it. Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation
- Ensure your finished application gets to the right place at the right time. Often employers set deadlines or closing dates after which they do not accept your application
- Do not use "See Resume" on an application

Additional points to remember when completing Online job applications

- Remember your username and passwords, this allows you to go back and check status of application
- Save as you go, this will reduce chances of timing out
- Read each question and instructions carefully
- Fill out all fields that have an asterisk
- Print out a copy of resume to reference while completing application
- After uploading resume, verify information uploaded correctly
- Use appropriate file names when uploading documents
- Make sure what is on your resume is the same as the applications, such as dates of employment
- Check email regularly
- Allow time for assessments that may follow the completion of the application, some may have time limits
- Follow the format example for the fields, such as MM/DD/YYYY means 01/01/9999
- Check for error messages indicated and typically found at the top of page or after the question

Completing an accurate and informative application requires time and effort. Rewriting and making corrections take time but can reward you. People who get jobs are those who take the time to make themselves look like good prospective employees. As your application forms improve, so will your chances of getting the job you want.

Employers make judgments about your attitude, stability, and motivation based on the form. In addition, it reveals communication skills, which are important on any job. The employment application is an opportunity to SELL YOURSELF. It represents you to the employer--make it work.

THE RESUME

This guide is not intended to be a comprehensive, all-inclusive document that addresses all possible variations of resumes. Feel free to modify the examples to meet your needs.

The objective of a resume is not to get a job but to obtain an interview. It can be used in a variety of circumstances:

- Sent in response to classified ads
- Sent or directed to targeted employers
- Circulated to people in your network
- Provided to placement people and agencies
- Attached to employment applications

Any product needs advertising to sell. A good resume is your advertisement to get employers interested in the possibility of interviewing and hiring you. You need to convince employers that you have what it takes to increase their profitability and efficiency.

Large companies may receive hundreds of resumes and / or letters of application each month. What does this mean? Your resume must stand out above the others. It must make employers want to see **you** instead of the other applicants.

Your resume reflects how you think, communicate, and organize. A resume full of petty details or personal opinions will get you nothing in return. On the other hand, a clear, clean, and targeted resume has a good chance landing you an interview. Nearly everything in your resume should tell each employer how you are the perfect match for the posted job opening.

A resume should state only one job objective. If you are applying for three different positions in a company, you need three resumes. The days of making multiple copies of one resume for your job search no longer exist.

Limit your resume to one or two pages depending upon occupation and experience.

An Effective Resume

- Is perfect. Employers make assumptions about job seekers based on how they job hunt. If your resume has typographical errors and misspelled words, employers will assume you do not pay attention to detail and produce low quality work.
- Displays information in a short, concise, and specific manner. Place the most important information at the beginning of your resume because employers tend spend 7-10 seconds in their initial screening out process. Edit, edit, edit! Most people list more information than needed.
- Emphasizes accomplishments, achievements, and benefits to the employer. Employers not only want to know what you have done but how well you did it.
- Highlights knowledge, skills, abilities, accomplishments, and background related to the job target.
- Reads easily and utilizes a layout and format that shows you in the best possible light.

Resumes should be skill based and clearly target a specific occupation.

You may use narrative, bullets, lists of keywords, highlights, or other presentation styles. The resume should have impact and flair. What you say and how you say it are equally important.

An excellent strategy is to use action verbs to accentuate your qualifications. It is one thing to say that you have a particular skill; it is another to proclaim that you have excelled in its performance. Phrases such as, “Successfully increased regional sales by \$1.2 million,” have impact. Notice how the use of numbers and figures add strength to the statement. How can you use this technique in your resume?

The resume is like a preview of coming attractions; you want to save the best for the presentation. Therefore, you want employers to meet you and learn more about you. “Profitably managed up to \$50,000 accounts receivable, reducing delinquent accounts from 22.7 percent to 10.4 percent” is such a statement. It leaves the reader asking the question, “How?” and should prompt an interview to learn more.

The following basic information should always be included. However, the amount of space given to each and the order in which it appears is a matter of choice.

Sample Resume Headings and Titles

Accomplishments	Education and Training	Job History
Activities	Educational Background	Licenses
Additional Experience	Employment	Management
Affiliations	Employment History	Memberships/Activities
Appointments	Experience	Military Experience
Career Skills	Experience Highlights	Military Service
Career History	Extracurricular	Military Training
Career-Related	Involvement	Professional Affiliations
Experience	Foreign Language(s)	Publications
Certificates	Employment	Published Works
Certifications	Highlights of	Qualifications
Community Involvement	Qualifications	Related Course
Computer Knowledge	Honors, Activities,	Student Teaching
Computer Experience	Organizations	Summary of
Computer Languages	Honors/Awards	Qualifications
Computer Skills	Internships	Teaching Experience
Consulting Experience		Volunteer Experience
Experience		Work Experience
Education		Work History

Resume Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- Develop your resume carefully and be ready to revise and improve it continuously.
- Appear neat, well-organized and professional
- Use quantifiable measures, values, percentages, and outcomes to enhance your qualifications
- Leave space between sections of the resume
- Proofread carefully. Have someone else proofread it for accuracy and impact
- Use a common word processing or desktop publishing program to produce your resume
- Print your resume on 8½ by 11-inch paper. White is best.
- Print at least one clean, white, paper copy to use when faxing or scanning your resume
- Ensure that any photocopied resumes are clean
- Use a laser printer whenever possible
- Use size 11-12 font and Arial or Times New Roman style
- Submit your resume with a one-page cover letter to potential employers especially when it is requested
- Have copies of your resume available to give to friends, relatives, references, and business associates
- Keep resume two pages or less
- Print in black ink, other colors are lost when photocopied and are hard to read

Don'ts

- Use abbreviations except for state names (Exceptions include middle initial and the use of standard abbreviations for addresses)
- Use "I" to refer to yourself
- Include salary and wages expectations
- Send a photograph
- Use statements that you cannot document
- Include irrelevant information (age, height, weight or family status, marital status, etc.)
- Staple your resume
- Distribute obvious photocopies
- Print two-page resumes front to back

Name Block

Use your full first name. Avoid using “cutesy” nicknames or pet names. If you have a preference to be called by a shortened version of your full name, it is acceptable to put this name in parentheses. Provide a telephone number, including area code, where you can be reached at all times. Make sure that you have an appropriate ring back and voice mail is set up and professional Use a professional email address. Type your name in bold or capital letters to make it stand out. For safety reasons you do not have to give your street address on the resume.

ELIZABETH (BETTY) APPLICANT

1443 Hire Me Lane
Employability, ND 58XXX
701-XXX-XXXX
bettyapplicant@hire.com
Social Media Link

Targeted Career Objective

The objective is considered an optional part of your resume. It often is taking up space that can be better used to highlight your skills. If you use a targeted objective, include the specific job and company you are pursuing.

For example: “Seeking position as Bookkeeper with M & M Tax Consultants”

Summary of Qualifications Statement

The name of this section is individual preference. Suggested names could be: “Summary of Qualifications,” “Summary,” “Professional Profile,” “Profile,” “Highlights,” “Related Experience,” just to name a few.

- Draw the reader’s attention to specific knowledge, skills, abilities, or accomplishments that relate to each targeted resume for example List any special skills you have including equipment you can operate, languages you can speak, and any computer skills you have.
- Choose other items that are related to the job or demonstrate the additional abilities you will bring to the job. Examples include literary or research accomplishments, volunteer work, and hobbies/interests if they are employment-related and not controversial
- Look for key words (nouns) in the job announcement and write qualification statements that use those key words
- Describe your qualifications using either 3-6 bullet statements or short paragraph
- Start each description with an action verb: “Achieved 100% occupancy in a 72-bed facility through a targeted marketing plan.” Or “Achieved 100% accident free work history for self and employees”

Employment History

In a Master Resume your employment history should include the name and address of each employer, your job title, dates of employment, and your job duties to include knowledge, skills, abilities, and accomplishments during that employment. If you have little or no experience, list part-time, summer, or volunteer jobs.

If you are a college graduate, your work experience should include internships and any other jobs that you had during college. Even if you spent your college career answering phones part-time or working as a clerk at a retail store, all experiences count. Also having a job in college demonstrates several qualities that employers look for in an employee such as responsibility, ambition and dependability.

When responding to an advertisement, your potential employer has helped you with the hardest part of composing a resume – the job description. Most entry level job descriptions will list desirable qualities such as: “top notch organizational skills,” “excellent communication skills,” “ability to work in a fast-paced environment” and “computer skills” Plug these descriptions straight into your resume and cover letter.

For the tailored resume, under each employer or job title, list the three to six most important things you did on the job that will transfer or support the job you are applying for.

- Use the same principles as you did when writing statements for your summary
- Arrange bulleted statements in order of importance – most to least important
- Use present tense action verbs for your current job
- Use past tense action verbs for jobs you previously held

You must place your achievements in context by providing specifics. For example, don't say something vague like “contributed to product design.” This tells the employer nothing about your actual contribution. Instead be specific about what you did: “Conducted market analysis for (name of product) to determine design and mechanics. Led changes to original design specifications despite initial developer objectives. Received critical acclaim and sold over 4 million units.” See how being specific makes a difference? This level of detail shows the reader the contributions you have made in the past (and therefore the contributions you can be expected to make in the future.)

Examples:

Human Resource Manager 6/2015-present
National Company Metropolitan, ND

- Direct personnel programs in support of over 1800 personnel in 84 locations worldwide

Human Resource Assistant 8/2012-5/2005
National Company Metropolitan, ND

- Restructured new hire training program increasing employee retention by 50% within the first year

Education

Here are some common-sense tips to help you decide if and how to list your education:

- If your skills and experience come from employment, list the employment first and education last.
- If your emphasis is on education (ex: a recent graduate) list your education first.
- Carefully consider using school graduation dates. Employers may value recent education but may inadvertently use not-so-recent education in age discrimination.
- Remember to include employer-sponsored training IF it is targeted toward the job for which you are applying. Summarize extensive employer training

What if you dropped out of high school and did not receive any formal training from a school or employer? In that case, do not create an education section in your resume.

What if you completed high school or GED and received no further education?
You may list the name of the school or the school district. In many cases, employers accept GEDs as equivalent to high school diplomas.

What if you have taken post-high school classes but did not earn a degree or certificate? You may list your high school information.

What if you are currently taking classes or pursuing a degree related to your job goal?
You may list them in the resume if the projected graduation will be within a year. List the skills acquired and academic accomplishments.

What if you completed college or a technical school?
List the name of the institution, location (city and state), degree/certificate earned and field of study. You do not need to list your high school information. When listing recent education, target specific skills and academic accomplishments.

Example:

Associate of Science – Lab Technology
Community College

5/20xx
This Town, ND

Certifications

Why are certifications important?

- They show skills acquired and knowledge gained
- An advantage over other candidates
- Certifications can increase power of better salary
- Certifications are a great alternative to University education

When should I add Certifications?

- When it translates to an important skill for your next employer
- Value enhancement in your current role

Things to keep in mind while adding Certifications

- Add it in a separate section to catch the readers eye
- Always mention the certifying authority, date, and location
- Reverse chronological order

Certifications/Licenses - List current employment-related certifications and licenses.

Licensed Social Worker NDBSWE Bismarck, ND 12/20XX

Military Record

Include military experience that fills gaps in employment or supports your job goal as part of your work history. Translate military terms and jargon into understandable civilian terms. For example, change “NCOIC” to “Supervisor.” **Speak to the Veteran’s Employment Team at Job Service North Dakota for more information.**

Additional Headings

Examples: Affiliations – Honors – Volunteer Activities

Let the employer know of any awards and recognition you have received if they are timely and appropriate; for example, Employee of the Month.

List organizational memberships related to your job goal that show professional standing. Avoid using non-employment related or controversial organizations. Generally, it is best *not* to mention specific religious or political affiliations or other potentially controversial groups unless they directly relate to the job you want.

References

Do not include references on the resume or use the statement, “References available upon request.” References should be listed on a separate page with the same heading (name block) as your resume with all their current contact information. Most employers expect you to provide them with this information. Be prepared to give them three to five professional sources (no family or friends) who can speak about your work habits and professional qualifications.

Get permission from references prior to including them on your reference page and inform them of the job(s) you are applying for. It may be beneficial to give your references copies of your résumé and remind them of job experiences that relate to the job(s) you applied for. Always take a copy of your references to an interview.

RESUME FORMATS

Create a master resume that contains all your employment knowledge, skills, abilities, and accomplishments, education and training, certifications, and other information. This enables you to create specifically-targeted resumes quickly and easily.

There are three common resume formats: Chronological, Combination, and Functional.
Selecting the Resume Format for Yourself

Chronological Resume (Preferred by Employers)

A Chronological resume lists your employment in reverse chronological order. It highlights your recent employment, while de-emphasizing experiences further back in time. A steady work record with increasing responsibilities can be effectively showcased using this format. List each job separately starting with your most recent. Include name, city of the employer and dates employed by the employer. List your knowledge, skills, abilities, and accomplishments.

A **Chronological** Resume is best used by these job seekers:

- Having a consistent employment history (no gaps)
- Possessing employment experience is directly related to current employment goal
- Entering a traditional field (government, education)
- Having 10 years of employment history or at least 3 jobs

Combination Resume

The Combination resume features a functional section that highlights knowledge, skills, abilities, and accomplishments. It also includes a chronological listing of employment, education, and employment related experiences.

Identify the major categories of work or experience that you want to highlight. For example, management, customer service, computer, sales, writing, etc., in order of pertinence to your job objective. Then show your experience and accomplishments under each of these broad categories.

A **Combination** Resume is best used by these job seekers:

- Having valuable experience beyond 10 years
- Needing to highlight skills
- Changing careers (who should include the last 15 years of employment), new graduates or first-time job seekers

Functional Resume

The Functional resume highlights knowledge, skills, abilities, and accomplishments without identifying specific dates, names, and places. In a true functional resume, there is no chronological listing of employment. Functional resumes have the same format as a combination, but no dates are listed.

A **Functional** Resume is used by job seekers who are doing one or more of the following:

- Changing careers, including military personnel moving into civilian employment
- Re-entering the workforce after a gap in employment
- Searching for their first jobs
- Emphasizing experience that may be viewed as outdated
- Working free-lance or temporary positions
- Working in a variety of different, relatively unconnected work experiences
- De-emphasizing lack of solid career growth

Sample Suggested Skill Areas for a Functional or Combination Resume

- Administration
- Analysis
- Auditing
- Bookkeeping
- Communications
- Community Organizations
- Computer Use
- Consulting
- Coordination
- Counseling
- Curriculum Development
- Customer/Client Relations/Service
- Data Analysis
- Data Collection / Entry
- Designing
- Editing
- Engineering
- Evaluation
- Facilitating
- Financial Research / Planning / Analysis
- Fund Raising
- Human Resource Management
- Interpreting
- Interviewing
- Inventory Control
- Management
- Marketing
- Media Relations
- Merchandising
- Negotiation
- Nursing
- Office Support
- Operations Analysis
- Organizational / Development Planning
- Problem Solving
- Product Presentation / Demonstration
- Program Development / Analysis
- Promotion
- Public Relations
- Public Speaking
- Purchasing
- Quality Control / Assurance
- Record Keeping
- Reporting
- Research
- Sales
- Special Events Planning
- Staff Development
- Supervision
- Systems Analysis / Design
- Training
- Writing

Transferable Skill Identification

A skill is something you do well. Job skills are transferable, it's important that you recognize the skills you have. The two most common categories of skills are Hard Skills and Soft Skills.

Hard Skills can be measured – technical effort, easy to demonstrate

- Adapted (teaching styles/special tools/special diets)
- Administered (Programs/medications)
- Advised (people/peers/job-seekers)
- Analyzed (data/blueprints/schematics/policies)
- Arranged (meetings/events/training programs)
- Handled (detailed work/data/complaints/toxins)
- Initiated (production/changes/improvements)
- Installed (software/bathrooms/electrical systems/parts)
- Measured (boundaries/property lines/bridge clearance/material)
- Questioned (people/survey participants/suspects/witnesses)
- Operated (a piece of equipment/hydraulic test stand/robotics equipment)
- Spoke (a foreign language/in public)

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS OF A SCHOOL LIBRARIAN

This is a list of what some librarians might do:

- Code, classify, and catalog books, publications, films, and visual aids
- Work with teachers, parents, and communities to develop reading programs
- Interpret what the user needs
- Collect overdue books and money
- Conduct research of reference materials
- Design informational storage\retrieval systems
- Review and evaluate reference materials
- Develop databases\provide information to users
- Keep records of circulations and materials
- Master online data resources
- Assemble and arrange display materials

Depending on the size of the library, they also might:

- Supervise
- Public relations to promote the library Budget
- Write proposals for research or grants
- Conduct fundraising activities
- Develop policies and procedures
- Negotiate contracts for library services, materials and equipment

LIBRARIAN TASKS

VS TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

Code, classify, and catalog books, publications, films, and visual aids	→ Analyze information; Prioritize tasks; Critical thinking
Interpret what the user needs	→ Customer service; Listening skills to understand; Interaction; Communication
Conduct research of reference materials	→ Conduct research
Review and evaluate reference materials	→ Identify and present problems and solutions
Keep records of circulations and materials	→ Manage records; Administrative tasks
Work with teachers, parents, and communities to develop reading programs	→ Plan and implement strategies; Plan events and activities; Coordinate programs
Collect overdue books and money	→ Handle difficult situations; Handle complaints; Negotiation skills
Design informational storage and retrieval systems	→ Organized; Critical thinking; Documentation
Develop databases and provide information to users	→ Understands/uses databases; Customer Service; Training
Master online data resources	→ Knows how to search online and find dependable resources
Assemble and arrange display materials	→ Creativity; Organized; Understanding of applicability
Supervise	→ Oversee other's work; Delegate; Counsel others; Motivate; Handle complaints
Budget	→ Financial understanding and ability to develop and interpret a budget
Conduct fundraising activities	→ Perform outreach; Fundraise; Persuade
Write proposals for research or grants	→ Write grants; Influence; Communication skills
Public relations to promote the library	→ Ability to positively influence and impact; Gain public confidence; Public Speaking
Negotiate contracts for library services, materials and equipment	→ Negotiation; Ability to develop relationships with outside suppliers; Build strong relationships
Develop policies and procedures	→ Create and implement policies and procedures

Farm N. Rancher
10 Moved to Town Lane
Bismarck, ND 58501
701-765-4321

SUMMARY OF SKILLS

Physical Operations

- Carpentry, plumbing, and electrical building maintenance
- Operating, maintaining, and repairing agricultural equipment
- Gas, diesel, hydraulic, and air conditioning repair
- Understanding of birth, growth, health, and sale of farm animals and livestock
- Loading and transporting large equipment
- Extensive knowledge of row crop planting, weeding, spraying, and harvesting

Business Operations

- Compiling and recording office and business records both manually and using computer technology
- Payroll preparation and tracking
- Monitoring market prices for sale of goods and services.

Supervisory Operations

- Interviewing, hiring, and supervising employees
- Training employees to use equipment and follow safety regulations
- Conflict resolution between employees

Management Operations

- Budgeting for annual production
- Marketing, purchasing, and sale of goods
- Organizing work schedules and overall farm production
- Creating and maintaining workable timelines

EXPERIENCE

Rancher Farms
Owner/Manager
950-acre farm specializing in cattle and row crops

Near Bismarck
7/1993 – 3/2019

SOFT AND HARD SKILLS

Hard Skills describe your work experience. The following are action verbs that can help you describe your work experience on your resume.

Accomplished	Classified	Designated	Fabricated
Achieved	Cleaned	Designed	Facilitated
Acquired	Coached	Detected	Familiarized
Acted	Collaborated	Determined	Fashioned
Activated	Collected	Developed	Figured
Addressed	Combined	Devised	Filed
Adjusted	Communicated	Diagnosed	Finalized
Advanced	Compared	Directed	Financed
Advertised	Compiled	Discovered	Fitted
Advocated	Completed	Dispensed	Focused
Aided	Composed	Dispatched	Forecasted
Allocated	Compounded	Displayed	Forged
Announced	Computed	Distinguished	Formalized
Answered	Conceived	Distributed	Formed
Anticipated	Condensed	Diversified	Formulated
Applied	Conducted	Documented	Fostered
Appraised	Conferred	Doubled	Founded
Approved	Conserved	Drafted	Fulfilled
Arbitrated	Consolidated	Drew	Furnished
Assembled	Constructed	Earned	Gained
Assessed	Consulted	Edited	Gathered
Assigned	Contacted	Educated	Generated
Assisted	Contained	Effected	Governed
Attained	Continued	Eliminated	Graded
Audited	Contributed	Emphasized	Grossed
Augmented	Controlled	Employed	Guided
Authored	Converted	Enabled	Headed
Automated	Conveyed	Encouraged	Heightened
Authorized	Convinced	Enforced	Helped
Awarded	Coordinated	Engineered	Hired
Balanced	Copied	Enhanced	Honed
Began	Corresponded	Enlarged	Hosted
Boosted	Counseled	Enlisted	Identified
Bought	Created	Ensured	Illustrated
Briefed	Critiqued	Entertained	Implemented
Budgeted	Cultivated	Established	Improved
Built	Customized	Estimated	Incorporated
Calculated	Debugged	Evaluated	Increased
Captured	Decided	Examined	Indexed
Cataloged	Decreased	Executed	Indoctrinated
Centralized	Defined	Expanded	Influenced
Chaired	Delegated	Explained	Informed
Changed	Delivered	Explored	Innovated
Charted	Demonstrated	Expressed	Inspected
Checked	Deposited	Extended	Inspired
Clarified	Described	Extracted	Instituted

Instructed	Overcame	Rehabilitated	Streamlined
Integrated	Overhauled	Related	Stimulated
Interacted	Oversaw	Remodeled	Stocked
Interpreted	Packed	Rendered	Strengthened
Interviewed	Participated	Reorganized	Structured
Introduced	Performed	Repaired	Studied
Invented	Persuaded	Replaced	Suggested
Inventoried	Photographed	Reported	Summarized
Investigated	Pinpointed	Represented	Supervised
Involved	Pioneered	Researched	Supplied
Issued	Placed	Reshaped	Supported
Judged	Planned	Resolved	Surpassed
Kept	Played	Responded	Surveyed
Launched	Prepared	Restored	Sustained
Lectured	Prescribed	Restructured	Synthesized
Led	Presented	Retrieved	Systemized
Lifted	Presided	Reversed	Tabulated
Listened	Prevented	Reviewed	Targeted
Loaded	Printed	Revised	Taught
Located	Prioritized	Revitalized	Terminated
Logged	Processed	Routed	Tested
Made	Produced	Saved	Tightened
Maintained	Programmed	Scanned	Totaled
Managed	Projected	Scheduled	Tracked
Marketed	Promoted	Screened	Traded
Maximized	Proofread	Searched	Trained
Mediated	Proposed	Secured	Transcribed
Mentored	Protected	Selected	Transferred
Merchandised	Proved	Separated	Transformed
Merged	Provided	Served	Transmitted
Minimized	Publicized	Set	Translated
Mobilized	Published	Set Up	Transported
Moderated	Purchased	Shaped	Traveled
Modified	Qualified	Simplified	Trimmed
Monitored	Raised	Simulated	Tutored
Motivated	Ran	Sketched	Typed
Moved	Rated	Skilled	Uncovered
Navigated	Reached	Sold	Undertook
Negotiated	Read	Solidified	Unified
Netted	Realized	Solved	Updated
Observed	Received	Sorted	Upgraded
Obtained	Redesigned	Spearheaded	Used
Opened	Recommended	Specialized	Utilized
Operated	Reconciled	Specified	Validated
Ordered	Recorded	Spoke	Verified
Orchestrated	Recruited	Sponsored	Vitalized
Organized	Reduced	Staffed	Volunteered
Originated	Referred	Standardized	Worked
Outlined	Regulated	Started	Wrote

Soft Skills are people skills – non-technical, intangible, and behaviorally-specific. It is important to quantify these skills whenever possible.

- **Positive Attitude** – Inspired co-workers to participate in an office recycling program reducing office supply costs by 15% in 6 months
- **Get Along with Co-workers** -Used active listening skills and positive feedback
- **Time Management** – Handled 80 incoming calls efficiently per shift either personally or directed them to appropriate staff members
- **Leadership** – Transferred bookkeeping system from paper to computer accounting system while serving as treasurer for service organization

The following list of soft skills can help you describe yourself in cover letters, resumes, interviews, and thank-you notes.

Active	Eager	Meticulous	Reserved
Accurate	Easygoing	Moderate	Resourceful
Adaptable	Efficient	Modest	Responsible
Adventurous	Emotional	Motivated	Self-confident
Alert	Energetic	Natural	Self-controlled
Ambitious	Enterprising	Obliging	Sensible
Artistic	Enthusiastic	Open-minded	Sensitive
Assertive	Firm	Opportunistic	Serious
Bold	Flexible	Organized	Sincere
Broad-minded	Formal	Original	Stable
Business-like	Frank	Outgoing	Steady
Calm	Friendly	Patient	Strong
Capable	Generous	Preserving	Strong-minded
Careful	Good-natured	Pleasant	Sympathetic
Cautious	Helpful	Poised	Tactful
Cheerful	Honest	Polite	Teachable
Clear-thinking	Idealistic	Practical	Thorough
Competent	Imaginative	Precise	Thoughtful
Confident	Independent	Progressive	Tolerant
Conscientious	Individualistic	Prudent	Trusting
Conservative	Industrious	Punctual	Trustworthy
Considerate	Informal	Purposeful	Unaffected
Cooperative	Ingenious	Quick	Unassuming
Creative	Intellectual	Quiet	Understanding
Deliberate	Inventive	Rational	Verbal
Democratic	Kind	Realistic	Versatile
Dependable	Likeable	Reasonable	
Determined	Logical	Reflective	
Dignified	Loyal	Relaxed	
Discreet	Mature	Reliable	

Key Words and Key Phrases

Key words and phrases are a critical component of every successful job seeker's resume. By using one or two words, you can communicate a wealth of information about your knowledge, skills, abilities, and accomplishments. Key words are the basis for resume scanning technology or a visual scan which is critical to any job seeker's campaign. Look for key words - nouns that are posted in the job description that you can incorporate into your resume. See following examples.

Clerical – Office Management, Clerical Support, Time Management

Education – Accreditation, Testing and Evaluation, Student Advisement

Financial – Mergers and Acquisitions, Profits and Loss Analysis, Risk Management

Government – Congressional Affairs, Lobbying, Public Works, Cultural Diversity

Healthcare/Social Service – Chronic Care, Behavior Modification, Human Services

Hospitality – Catering Services, Housekeeping Operations, Labor Cost Controls

Human Resources – Employee Relations, Arbitration, Training and Development

Law Enforcement/Legal – Arrest and Prosecution, Criminal Investigations, Interrogations

Manufacturing – Occupational Health and Safety, Process Automation, Logistics

Sales/Marketing – Brand Development and Launch, E-Commerce, Public Relations

Skilled Trades – Blueprints and Drawings, Preventive Maintenance, Regulatory Compliance

Technology/Science/Engineering – Prototype Testing, Design and Technology

Phrases to Consider in Resumes, Cover Letters or Interviews

Expressions for a resume summary or letter

Extensive experience	Strong background in
Progressive experience	Capable of
Comprehensive experience	Familiarity with
Substantial experience	A proven record in
Increasing responsibility	Key strengths include
Major strength(s)	Successful accomplishments in
Outstanding record in	Areas of expertise
Worked effectively with	Outstanding track record

Phrases for education other than degrees

Additional training in	Business Management Programs
Attended	Continuing Education
In-house training	Studies in
Seminar in	Program in

Phrases that indicate a group effort

Contributed to	Instrumental in
Participant in	As a team member
Key member of task force	

Phrases useful in discussing job change

Career objectives	New position
Career change	New opportunity
New career challenge	Re-evaluation / Reassessment of goals

Phrases for job loss

Acquisition	Reduction in force
Closing	Relocation
Consolidation	Reorganization
Cutback	Resizing
Decentralization	Restructuring
Merger	Streaming

JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND RESUME EXAMPLES

Read Job Descriptions Carefully When applying for employment, review the job description carefully. Your resume and cover letter should include job qualifications and how you meet them. Use key words from the job description.

Example A: Job Description

Auditor I

ABC Corporation

Location: 4567 W. Ave, Any City, ND 58XXX

Salary Range: \$2,200-3,100 per month

Closing Date: December 30, 20XX

Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in Accounting with an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Analytical ability
- Effective oral and written communication skills
- Successful completion of the hiring process, including reference checks, and extensive background and criminal record checks

Preferred Skills/Qualifications

- CPA license or successful completion of one or more sections of the CPA exam
- GPA of 3.25 GPA or higher in accounting courses
- Master's degree or a major or minor in business, management, finance, economics, communications, and/or computers
- Auditing or accounting experience
- Ability to recognize deficiencies and make recommendations for change
- Advanced computer skills with experience in Microsoft Office Suite

Work Activities

- Assist in the performance of the audit of the corporation's financial statements
- Perform audits of subsidiaries
- Assist in the statewide single audit (federal compliance)
- Analyze accounting forms, records, internal controls, and related computer systems
- Provide objective analysis so management can use the information to improve program performance and operations, reduce costs, and facilitate decision-making
- Assist in conducting audits of corporate entities
- Assume broader responsibility as skills and knowledge increase

Application Procedures: Submit a cover letter addressing how qualifications/requirements are met, a current resume, an **official** grade transcript, a complete salary history and a signed application. Applicants must comply with all these requirements or they are not considered for employment.

Chronological Resume Example

MELISSA DOLLARS

3456 Any Street
58XXX
701-555-5555

Somewhere, ND
melissah@myemail.com

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Accounting Professional with a proven record of implementing effective cost-saving initiatives:

- Resolved price discrepancies and past-due balances with up to 700 vendors, including subcontractors
- Oversaw accounts-payable functions for 10 divisions nationwide; set up and maintained new accounts for multiple divisions
- Streamlined procedures to ensure timely production of all accounting reports
- Advanced computer skills in accounting software: Deltek, Peachtree, QuickBooks Pro, Quicken and proficient in MS: Word, Excel, Outlook, Access, and PowerPoint
- Built positive relationships with management, customers, staff and financial institutions employing effective communication skills
- Recognized for leadership and problem-solving strengths, thoroughness and accuracy

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Accountant

The Accounting Firm

April 2008 – Present
Somewhere, ND

- Responsible for accounting and auditing for 6 subsidiary companies with \$163 million in annual revenues
- Recovered \$2.4 million in receipts not posted and saved \$460,000 by eliminating duplicate payments
- Manage multimillion-dollar cash operations for 7 companies statewide
- Consolidated bank accounts, decreasing fees 50%
- Initiated centralized purchasing, saving \$100,000
- Conduct in-depth consultations with prospective clients to assess needs and recommend appropriate financial products, i.e. college funds and retirement

Accountant

The Accounting Firm

April 2007 – March 2008
Somewhere, ND

- Directed accounts payable disbursements totaling more than \$1.7 million annually, accounts receivable processing and over \$1 million in capital assets
- Verified and maintained general ledger system. Developed and implemented accounting policies/procedures
- Instituted internal control procedures including suspense account reconciliations for premium collections. reducing write-offs by \$75,000 annually
- Coordinated audits with internal/external auditors and regulatory agencies and completed internal audit reports
- Analyzed and prepared variance reports for all management business levels

Accounting Technician

July 2004-March 2007

The Accounting Firm

Somewhere, ND

- Detected fraudulent activities that enabled company to recover \$10,000
- Produced financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for the Board of Directors and shareholders and semiannual Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) filings for 6 portfolios totaling \$1+ billion in net assets
- Compiled financial data for auditors
- Communicated with subsidiaries reducing outstanding accounts by 10%

Bookkeeper

July 1997-June 2004

P and Q Manufacturing

Somewhere, ND

- Performed full-charge bookkeeping services using QuickBooks Pro
- Received top ratings on performance evaluations consistently
- Prepared invoices, accounts payable, accounts receivable, bank reconciliations, financial statements and payroll for manufacturing company with 50 employees
- Implemented conversion from manual to computerized bookkeeping system without disrupting normal operations

Family Care and Home Management

May 1994-June 1997

Self Employed

Somewhere, ND

- Cared for two small children
- Handled day-to-day household operations and acted as general contractor for building a home addition
- Managed family finances in Quicken—established budget, paid bills, and balanced bank accounts
- Completed tax returns for three households using TurboTax

CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Public Accountant

February 2007

EDUCATION

M.B.A. Candidate in Finance

Anticipated May 20XX

University of Accounting

Somewhere, ND

Bachelor of Science – Accounting (GPA. 3.5)

May 2004

University of Accounting

Somewhere, ND

AFFILIATIONS

Co-Chair - ND Society of Accountants

Treasurer - ND Young Professionals

State Representative - American Accounting Association

Combination Resume Example

MELISSA DOLLARS

3456 Any Street
58XXX
701-555-5555

Somewhere, ND

melissah@myemail.com

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Accounting Professional with a proven record of implementing effective cost-saving initiatives:

- Resolved price discrepancies and past-due balances with up to 700 vendors, including subcontractors
- Oversaw accounts-payable functions for 10 divisions nationwide; set up and maintained new accounts for multiple divisions
- Streamlined procedures to ensure timely production of all accounting reports
- Advanced computer skills in accounting software: Deltek, Peachtree, QuickBooks Pro, Quicken and proficient in MS Word, Excel, Outlook, Access, and PowerPoint
- Built positive relationships with management, customers, staff and financial institutions, employing effective communication skills
- Recognized for leadership and problem-solving strengths, thoroughness and accuracy

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

AUDITING

- Instituted internal control procedures including account reconciliations for premium collections. reducing write-offs by \$75,000 annually
- Coordinated audits with internal/external auditors and regulatory agencies. Prepared internal audit reports
- Detected fraudulent activities that enabled company to recover \$10,000
- Compiled financial data for auditors

ACCOUNTING

- Consolidated bank accounts, decreasing fees 50%
- Initiated centralized purchasing, saving \$100,000
- Held responsible for accounting and auditing for 6 subsidiary companies with \$163 million in annual revenues
- Managed multimillion-dollar cash operations for seven companies statewide
- Directed accounts payable disbursements totaling more than \$1.7 million annually, accounts receivable processing and over \$1 million in capital assets
- Produced financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for the Board of Directors and shareholders and semiannual Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) filings for 6 portfolios totaling \$1+ billion in net assets

COMMUNICATION

- Conducted in-depth consultations with prospective clients to assess needs and recommend appropriate financial products, i.e. college funds and retirement
- Communicated with subsidiaries reducing outstanding accounts by 10%

ANALYZING

- Recovered \$2.4 million in receipts not posted and saved \$460,000 by eliminating duplicate payments
- Analyzed and prepared variance reports for all management levels throughout business
- Verified and maintained general ledger system. Developed and implemented accounting policies/procedures

BOOKKEEPING

- Performed full-charge bookkeeping services using QuickBooks Pro
- Received top ratings on performance evaluations consistently
- Prepared invoices, accounts payable, accounts receivable, bank reconciliations, financial statements and payroll for manufacturing company with 50 employees
- Implemented conversion from manual to computerized bookkeeping system without disrupting normal operations
- Managed family finances in Quicken—established budget, paid bills, and balanced bank accounts
- Prepared tax returns for three households using TurboTax

WORK HISTORY

Senior Accountant The Accounting Firm	April 2008 – Present Somewhere, ND
Accountant The Accounting Firm	April 2007 – March 2008 Somewhere, ND
Accounting Technician The Accounting Firm	July 2004-March 2007 Somewhere, ND
Bookkeeper P and Q Manufacturing	July 1997-June 2004 Somewhere, ND

CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Public Accountant	February 2007
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EDUCATION

M.B.A. Candidate In Finance University of Accounting	Anticipated May 20XX Somewhere, ND
Bachelor of Science – Accounting (GPA. 3.5) University of Accounting	May 2004 Somewhere, ND

AFFILIATIONS

- Co-Chair** - ND Society of Accountants
- Treasurer** - ND Young Professionals
- State Representative** - American Accounting Association

Functional Resume Example

MELISSA DOLLARS

3456 Any Street
58XXX
701-555-5555

Somewhere, ND

melissah@myemail.com

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Accounting Professional with a proven record of implementing effective cost-saving initiatives:

- Resolved price discrepancies and past-due balances with up to 700 vendors, including subcontractors
- Oversaw accounts-payable functions for 10 divisions nationwide; set up and maintained new accounts for multiple divisions
- Streamlined procedures to ensure timely production of all accounting reports
- Advanced computer skills in accounting software: Deltek, Peachtree, QuickBooks Pro, Quicken and proficient in MS Word, Excel, Outlook, Access, and PowerPoint
- Built positive relationships with management, customers, staff and financial institutions, employing effective communication skills
- Recognized for leadership and problem-solving strengths, thoroughness and accuracy

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

AUDITING

- Instituted internal control procedures including account reconciliations for premium collections. reducing write-offs by \$75,000 annually
- Coordinated audits with internal/external auditors and regulatory agencies. Prepared internal audit reports
- Detected fraudulent activities that enabled company to recover \$10,000
- Compiled financial data for auditors

ACCOUNTING

- Consolidated bank accounts, decreasing fees 50%
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- Held responsible for accounting and auditing for 6 subsidiary companies with \$163 million in annual revenues
- Managed multimillion-dollar cash operations for 7 companies statewide
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ANALYZING

- Recovered \$2.4 million in receipts not posted and saved \$460,000 by eliminating duplicate payments
- Analyzed and prepared variance reports for all management levels throughout business
- Verified and maintained general ledger system. Developed and implemented accounting policies/procedures

COMMUNICATION

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- Communicated with subsidiaries reducing outstanding accounts by 10%

BOOKKEEPING

- Performed full-charge bookkeeping services using QuickBooks Pro
- Received top ratings on performance evaluations consistently
- Prepared invoices, accounts payable, accounts receivable, bank reconciliations, financial statements and payroll for manufacturing company with 50 employees
- Implemented conversion from manual to computerized bookkeeping system without disrupting normal operations
- Managed family finances in Quicken; established budget, paid bills, and balanced accounts
- Prepared tax returns for three households using TurboTax

WORK HISTORY

Senior Accountant	The Accounting Firm	Somewhere, ND
Accountant	The Accounting Firm	Somewhere, ND
Accounting Technician	The Accounting Firm	Somewhere, ND
Bookkeeper	P and Q Manufacturing	Somewhere, ND

EDUCATION and CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Public Accountant
M.B.A. Candidate in Finance Anticipated May 20XX
 University of Accounting Somewhere, ND

Bachelor of Science – Accounting (GPA. 3.5)
 University of Accounting Somewhere, ND

AFFILIATIONS

Co-Chair - ND Society of Accountants
Treasurer - ND Young Professionals
State Representative - American Accounting Association

Example B: Job Description

Job Order Number: 123456

Job Title: Laborers

Employer: XYZ Company, 123 Street, Any City, ND 58XXX

Hiring Requirements: Drug Testing/Screening, Background Checks

Minimum Education Level: No Minimum Education Requirement

Minimum Experience: 0 months

Driver's License Certification Requirement: Yes

Salary Range: \$9.00 - \$10.00 Hour

Job Description: XYZ Company has openings for FT general laborers. Please submit your cover letter and resume in person to Jack Hammer.

O*NET

O*NET online, an excellent career resource, is found at jobsnd.com under Job Seeker Resources that can be accessed for career information describing knowledge, skills, abilities, work activities, tools and technology which are useful in building a resume. (<http://online.onetcenter.org/>)

Chronological Resume Example

JOE HANDYMAN

789 ½ Alley St

My Town, ND

701-XXX-XXXX

handyman4u@nailmail.com

SUMMARY

- Performed all phases of construction from start to finish: carpentry, brick work, concrete finishing, electrical work, plumbing, drywall, painting, roofing, sheet metal work
- Achieved 100% accident free work history for self and employees
- Developed excellent customer service skills by listening and meeting customer needs

WORK HISTORY

Owner/Operator

1/2005-Present

Handyman Business

Big Town, ND

- Schedule work crews of up to five general laborers for demolition, clean up and building projects including framed and roofed houses; sheet rocked interiors; and insulated walls
- Design and renovated kitchens and bathrooms and finish basements in new construction and remodels
- Repair and replace broken windows, make screens, hang doors and jambs, baseboards and moldings, hang and patched drywall, texture and paint walls, install electrical switches and outlets, rewire disconnect and breaker panels, install and repair lighting
- Operate and maintain all types of power and hand tools – saws, drills, nail guns, meters, grinders, levels, blow torches, tape measures, squares, hammers, and chisels

Maintenance

12/2001-12/2006

Regional Hospital

Big Town, ND

- Mowed, watered, maintained lawn and planted and pruned trees and shrubs on 2 acres
- Performed preventive maintenance and repaired HVAC system, chillers, boilers, water softeners, ice machines, grills, ovens, refrigerators, dishwashers, washers, dryers, motors, pumps and other equipment; also troubleshoot elevators
- Operated hand and power tools – saws-all, nail guns, chop saw, drills, chain saw, snow blowers, mowers, trimmers, shampooer, and buffer
- Demolished, repaired, and restored interiors and exteriors of four-story, 125 bed facility

Concrete Laborer

4/2001-11/2001

My Town Concrete Company

My Town, ND

- Assisted in building and positioning concrete forms for building foundations, gutters, and sidewalks according to blueprints
- Poured concrete by pump, bucket, barrow and shovel
- Dug, spread and leveled dirt and gravel using, pick, shovel, and skid steer

EDUCATION

High School Diploma

My Town Public School

My Town, ND

Combination Resume Example

JOE HANDYMAN

789 ½ Alley St
My Town, ND
701-XXX-XXXX
handyman4u@nailmail.com

SUMMARY

- Performed all phases of construction from start to finish: carpentry, brick work, concrete finishing, electrical work, plumbing, drywall, painting, roofing, sheet metal work
- Achieved 100% accident free work history for self and employees
- Developed excellent customer service skills by listening and meeting customer needs

CONSTRUCTION

- Scheduled work crews of up to five general laborers for demolition, clean up and building projects including framed and roofed houses; sheet rocked interiors; and insulated walls
- Designed and renovated kitchens and bathrooms and finished basements in new construction and remodels
- Repaired and replaced broken windows, made screens, hung doors and jambs, baseboards and moldings, hung and patched drywall, textured and painted walls, installed electrical switches and outlets, rewired disconnect and breaker panels, installed and repaired lighting
- Operated and maintained all types of power and hand tools – saws, drills, nail guns, meters, grinders, levels, blow torches, tape measures, squares, hammers, and chisels

MAINTENANCE

- Mowed, watered, maintained lawns and planted and pruned trees and shrubs on two acres
- Performed preventive maintenance and repaired HVAC system, chillers, boilers, water softeners, ice machines, grills, ovens, refrigerators, dishwashers, washers, dryers, motors, pumps and other equipment; also troubleshoot elevators
- Operated hand and power tools – saws-all, nail guns, chop saw, drills, chain saw, snow blowers, mowers, trimmers, shampooer, and buffer

LABOR

- Demolished, repaired, and restored interiors and exteriors of four-story 125 bed facility
- Assisted in building and positioning concrete forms for building foundations, gutters, and sidewalks according to blueprints
- Poured concrete by pump, bucket, barrow and shovel
- Dug, spread and leveled dirt and gravel using pick, shovel, and skid steer

WORK HISTORY

Owner/Operator Handyman Business	1/2005-Present Big Town, ND
Maintenance Regional Hospital	12/2001-12/2006 Big Town, ND
Concrete Laborer My Town Concrete Company	4/2001-11/2001 My Town, ND

EDUCATION

High School Diploma	My Town Public School	My Town, ND
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Functional Resume Example

JOE HANDYMAN

789 ½ Alley St

My Town, ND

701-XXX-XXXX

handyman4u@nailmail.com

SUMMARY

- Performed all phases of construction from start to finish: carpentry, brick work, concrete finishing, electrical work, plumbing, drywall, painting, roofing, sheet metal work
- Achieved 100% accident free work history for self and employees
- Developed excellent customer service skills by listening and meeting customer needs

CONSTRUCTION

- Scheduled work crews of up to five general laborers for demolition, clean up and building projects including framed and roofed houses; sheet rocked interiors; and insulated walls
- Designed and renovated kitchens and bathrooms and finished basements in new construction and remodels
- Repaired and replaced broken windows, made screens, hung doors and jambs, baseboards and moldings, hung and patched drywall, textured and painted walls, installed electrical switches and outlets, rewired disconnect and breaker panels, installed and repaired lighting
- Operated and maintained all types of power and hand tools – saws, drills, nail guns, meters, grinders, levels, blow torches, tape measures, squares, hammers, and chisels

MAINTENANCE

- Mowed, watered, maintained lawns, planted and pruned trees and shrubs on two acres
- Performed preventive maintenance and repaired HVAC system, chillers, boilers, water softeners, ice machines, grills, ovens, refrigerators, dishwashers, washers, dryers, motors, pumps and other equipment; also troubleshoot elevators
- Operated hand and power tools – saws-all, nail guns, chop saw, drills, chain saw, snow blowers, mowers, trimmers, shampooer, and buffer

LABOR

- Demolished, repaired, and restored interiors and exteriors of four-story, 125 bed facility
- Assisted in building and positioning concrete forms for building foundations, gutters, and sidewalks according to blueprints
- Poured concrete by pump, bucket, barrow and shovel
- Dug, spread and leveled dirt and gravel using, pick, shovel, and skid steer

WORK HISTORY

Owner/Operator	Handyman Business	Big Town, ND
Maintenance	Regional Hospital	Big Town, ND
Concrete Laborer	My Town Concrete Company	My Town, ND

EDUCATION

High School Diploma	My Town Public School	My Town, ND
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ADDITIONAL RESUME EXAMPLES

RESUME SAMPLE WITH NO WORK EXPERIENCE

JAMES H. SMITH
121 County Rd S
Ourtown, ND 58501
701-123-4567
jimmys@gmail.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Dedicated pet lover born and raised on the family farm. Comfortable caring for a wide range of domestic pets and farm animals. Seeking an entry level position in retail sales preferably in the Pet Department. Develops lasting ties with pets and pet owners

SKILLS

- Fast learner
- Patient and trustworthy
- Willing to learn new things
- Organized
- Attention to detail
- Highly dependable
- Always on time
- Bathing and grooming of animals

WORK HISTORY

Farm Life – Ourtown, ND

- Bred, raised, and sold Labradors – communicated with buyers and handled paperwork
- Showed various animals at 4-H Achievement Days – Received Best of Show Ribbons
- Fed and exercised animals each day
- Brushed, bathed and conditioned animals'
- Played with, petted and brushed dogs
- Helped maintain a clean and sanitary home with having pets in house

EDUCATION

High School Diploma – 5/2019 Ourtown High School Ourtown, ND
58501

SAMPLE RESUME SHOWING ONLY CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

Carrie I. Wanttowork
2 Riverside Dr
Ourtown, ND 58501
Cell/Text: 701-222-3333
Carrie@mylinkedin.com

Laboratory Technician

Recent college graduate seeks to apply formal training in Biological Sciences to begin a career in a Medical Laboratory performing analysis and critical tests.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Project Management
- Customer Service
- Vertebrate Histology
- Laboratory Equipment
- Research/Analysis/Problem Solving
- Teamwork
- Tissue Slides
- Southern Transfer & Gene Detection

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences (BS)
ND College, Ourtown, ND – May 2019

RELEVANT TRAINING/COURSEWORK

- Microbiology
- Genetics
- Human Parasitology
- Submicroscopic and Macroscopic Chemistry
- Organic Chemistry
- Quantitative Analysis
- Laboratory Medical Microbiology and Immunology

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Participated in a variety of fund-raising and community activities including:

- Organized Campus Blood Drives
- Participated in Relay For Life activities
- Assisted in fund raising events for cancer treatment

Electronic Resumes

Tips for resumes sent as email attachments

- Ensure that they have a professional appearance and are visually appealing.
- Save as PDF so document is secure unless posting suggests otherwise.
- Have the resume saved with a professional name such as "Equipment Operator"

Resume Checklist

This check list can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of your resume.

Y __ N__ APPEARANCE: Does it look good without reading it? (Can employer scan it and locate essential information; font size is not below 11)

Y __ N__ FORMAT: Was the best format used to sell your knowledge, skills, abilities, and accomplishments?

Y __ N__ SKILLS: Does the resume focus on skills and accomplishments that directly relate to the desired position?

Y __ N__ KEYWORDS: Are keywords and phrases easy to identify based on employer's job description?

Y __ N__ ACCURACY: Are employment and education information listed accurately with dates employed, job titles, degrees and dates achieved? Does your resume contain current contact information including name, address, telephone, and e-mail address?

Y __ N__ LENGTH: Is your resume 1-2 full pages and free from lengthy paragraphs?

Y __ N__ HEADINGS: Are section headers identifiable (Bolded for emphasis)? Does resume contain a proper heading on page 2 that lists your name?

Y __ N__ BULLETS: Does your resume contain bulleted phrases that begin with an action verb and are free from "I" statements?

Y __ N__ PROOFING: Is it free from grammar, spelling or typing errors?

COVER LETTERS (LETTERS OF APPLICATION)

While your resume is an impersonal description of your qualifications, your cover letter is a personalized and targeted introduction of yourself. Include the reason you are applying. A cover letter should accompany every resume and application that you submit.

Tips for writing cover letters:

- Write a separate individualized letter for each job application or resume.
- Limit your letter to one page and keep it focused.
- Use proper sentence structure, and correct spelling and punctuation.
- Use the same quality paper that you used for your resume.
- Listing a desired salary in your cover letter weakens your bargaining position. A salary too low devalues your abilities; a salary too high may give the impression that your sights are beyond the company. Both scenarios leave you out of luck.
- If you are asked to state your salary request in your cover letter, state it in ranges to avoid being excluded from consideration for positions for which you are qualified. Include figures slightly above and below the market value for the position to cover all your bases.
- Address any employment gaps

Invited Letter - This letter format is used when employers solicit resumes through any medium such as newspaper, JSND, etc. This style focuses on matching your qualifications to the advertised requirements of the position.

Uninvited or Cold Contact Letter - This format is used to contact employers who have not advertised or published job openings. You need to match your qualifications to the perceived employer needs based on labor market research. This strategy requires that you call or make personal contact with the employer either preceding or following the submission of your resume and cover letter.

Referral Letter - Through networking, informational interviews, and contact with employers, you may receive referrals to potential job opportunities. Remember that these employers may or may not be currently hiring. When sending your resume and cover letter, mention the individual who provided the information about the company or job.

COVER LETTER FORMAT

Your Name (Use same contact information format as resume)
Your Street Address
Your City, State, ZIP Code
Telephone Number
E-mail
Linkedin URL

The Date

Individual to whom you're writing
Individual's Title
Employer/Business Name
Street Address
City, State, ZIP Code

Dear (Name of Individual): (If you don't know the person's name – type, RE: job title)

FIRST PARAGRAPH: (Why you are writing) In your initial paragraph, indicate the reason for writing, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying/inquiring, and how you learned of the opening.

SECOND PARAGRAPH: (Qualifications) If you are a recent or soon-to-be graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for this position. If you have some practical work experience, point out specific achievements or unique qualifications that evolved from this work. Do not copy the same information that is listed in your resume or ask the reader to refer to your resume for details. Mention why you are excited about this position and the organization. **ABOVE ALL, INDICATE WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR THE EMPLOYER.**

THIRD PARAGRAPH: (Qualifications) You may need more than one paragraph to define what you can do for the employer. Do not crowd all your qualifications into one extremely long paragraph.

FOURTH PARAGRAPH: (Wrap-up/Action) In closing, indicate your desire for an opportunity to discuss your qualifications for the position, or define an action for your inquiry. Offer assistance to help generate a speedy response if it is relevant to your action request. Indicate your interest in arranging an interview. State the best way you can be reached via telephone number or email. If possible, suggest a specific date and time for meeting to discuss the company needs and your background in an interview, or state that you will call on a certain date, and then do so. Thank the reader for his/her consideration of your request.

Sincerely or Respectfully,

Your typed name

Enclosure: (Resume, Application, References, Transcripts)

Example of Cover Letter - A

3456 Any Street
701-555-5555

MELISSA DOLLARS

Somewhere, ND 58XXX
melissah@myemail.com

December 10, 20XX

ABC Corporation
4567 W Ave
Any City, ND 58XXX

RE: Auditor I

Please accept this as my application for the Auditor I position with ABC Corporation which I found on the Job Service North Dakota website.

I have had a successful accounting and auditing career during the past fifteen years and feel that I will be able to contribute positively to your business. With my current employer I was able to reduce expenses and increase business income by 20%. I was promoted within the company to take on additional accounting and auditing responsibilities. In addition, I have extensive experience performing audits on a state and national level, recognizing discrepancies and making recommendations that have led to millions of dollars of savings to The Accounting Firm and its subsidiaries.

I am proficient in the use of accounting databases for recording and tracking customer information and in the use of Microsoft Office Suite. During my tenure I was able to increase the client base 10 percent by establishing rapport and building long-term professional relationships through effective oral and written communication.

I believe I am an ideal candidate for the Auditor I position with your corporation and I will call you next Thursday to schedule an interview where we can discuss how I my qualifications can meet your company needs and goals. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Melissa Dollars

Enclosure: Resume, Transcript, Salary History, Application

Example of Cover Letter - B

JOE HANDYMAN
789 ½ Alley St
My Town, ND
701-XXX-XXXX
handyman4u@nailmail.com

December 5, 20XX

Mr. Jack Hammer
XYZ Company
123 St
Any City, ND 58XXX

Dear Mr. Hammer:

I saw your ad for a general laborer in the My Town Gazette on December 4, 20XX and would like to apply for this job.

For the past ten years I worked in construction and maintenance and I have had a handyman business since 2005. Due to the construction slow down nationally, my business has been affected and I am looking for steady work. I have a broad background, so I can work on different types of projects. My reputation as a hard worker who gets the job done on time or early is solid. I'm able to use power and hand tools. My safety and driving record are clean.

I would be happy to meet with you and discuss how I can be an asset to your business.

Sincerely,

Joe Handyman

Enclosure: Resume

Prospecting Letter

A prospecting cover letter is used when you are inquiring about possible position openings.

A letter of interest, also known as a prospecting letter or inquiry letter, is sent to prospective employers that may be hiring, but haven't listed a specific job opening to apply for. Your letter should contain information on why the company interests you and why your skills and experience would be an asset to the company. Also provide information on how you will follow-up and where you can be reached.

Sample Prospecting Letter

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State, Zip Code
Your Phone Number
Your Email
A link to your LinkedIn Profile

Date

Contact Name
Title
Company
Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Contact Person,

I read about Company X's retail management training program in College Graduate Magazine and I would like to inquire about the possibility of openings. I am interested in a career in retail management and am planning to relocate to the Bismarck area in the near future. I would be interested in learning more about the company and about available opportunities.

I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Management and Business, as well as retail experience as a Sales Associate and Key Holder. In addition, I completed two internships focusing on retail management.

My resume, which is enclosed, contains additional information on my experience and skills. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the training program with you and to provide further information on my candidacy. I can be reached anytime via my cell phone, 000-000-0000. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you about this exciting opportunity

Sincerely

Your Signature
Your Typed Name

Networking Letter

The third type of cover letter is used for networking. This is used when you are requesting assistance with your job search.

Sample Networking Letter

Your Name
Your Address
Your City, State, Zip Code
Your Phone Number
Your E-mail
Your Link to LinkedIn

Date

Contact Name
Title
Company
Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Contact Person,

I was referred to you by Diane Smith from XYZ Company in Fargo, ND. She recommended you as an excellent source of information on the communications industry.

My goal is to secure an entry-level position in communications. I would appreciate hearing your advice on career opportunities in the communications industry, on conducting an effective job search, and on how best to uncover job leads.

Thank you, in advance, for any insight and advice you would be willing to share. I look forward to contacting you early next week to set up a telephone informational interview. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Your Signature

Your Typed Name

REFERENCES

List your references on a separate sheet of paper and have them available and only provide them when requested. Make sure that you have permission to use individuals as a reference. Always use professional references or individuals that can talk about and know your work ethic. When references are given out, call your references and let them know who you gave them too and what you applied for. Remind your references of projects they may be able to discuss with the employer.

(References Example - A)

(Use same Name Block as on Resume and Cover Letter)

MELISSA DOLLARS

3456 Any Street
58XXX
701-555-5555

Somewhere, ND

melissah@myemail.com

REFERENCES

Robert Money
Chief Financial Officer
The Accounting Firm
701-XXX-XXX
rmoney@theaccountingfirm.com

George Production
General Manager
P & Q Manufacturing
701-XXX-XXXX ext. XXX
gproduction@p&qmanufacturing.com

Mary Budget
Supervisor
The Accounting Firm
701-XXX-XXX
mdollars@theaccountingfirm.com

Sam Spud
Past Tax Customer
Small Town Grocery
701-XXX-XXXX
sspud@smalltowngrocery.com

(References Example - B)

(Use same Name Block as on Resume and Cover Letter)

JOE HANDYMAN
789 ½ Alley St
My Town, ND 58XXX
701-XXX-XXXX
handyman4u@yahoo.com

REFERENCES

Bob Hammer
Former Employer
701-XXX-XXX
bhammer@myemail.com

Dr. Kim Health
Hospital Administrator
701-XXX-XXXX ext. XXX
khealthmd@regionalhospital.com

Tom Tool
Maintenance Supervisor
Regional Hospital
701-XXX-XXXX ext. XXX
ttool@regionalhospital.com

Sally Homemaker
Past Customer
701-XXX-XXXX
shomemaker@organzied.com

JOB INTERVIEWS

Now that you have completed the preliminaries, the next step is to sell yourself. With many applicants competing for jobs, your level of interviewing skills can make the difference between a rejection and a job offer. During the interview, an employer judges your qualifications, attitude, appearance, and general fitness for the job opening. It is your opportunity to convince the employer that you can make a real contribution. Your performance in the interview is critical to getting the job. Often employers will hire a less experienced person who interviews well, rather than a more experienced person who interviews poorly.

Equally important, you are interviewing the employer to appraise the job and the firm. It enables you to decide if the job meets your career needs and interests, and if the employer is right for you.

We recommend that you view software available at Job Service North Dakota workforce centers for interview practice and information. In addition, a list of typical interview questions is available in hard copy. Job Service North Dakota staff members may be able to conduct mock interviews. Types of Interviews

An **individual** interview is like an in-depth conversation between you and the company hiring authority.

A **panel** interview is frequently used by government agencies and companies filling a professional or managerial position. Usually a panel of three or more people asks each candidate the same questions. The process can be stressful because you must answer questions from several people. Be sure to make eye contact with everyone on the panel.

The **phone** interview is used to make a first round of cuts to the applicant pool. If the employers are interested in you, they will then schedule face-to-face interviews. Remove all distractions. Treat it like a face-to-face interview. A smile on your face puts a smile in your voice and makes a positive first impression.

A **stress** interview is frequently used for protective services and sales positions. Employers want to learn how you handle stress. The rationale behind the tactic is that if you are unable or unwilling to handle conditions of imposed stress, it is unlikely you can maintain your composure under conditions of real stress.

The **observational** interview is used to demonstrate your abilities using some of the skills required for the position.

Recorded/Online Interviews, Employers will conduct the interview through SKYPE or other downloadable platforms or Apps

Interview Guidelines

A successful interview begins with preparation. Your responsibility is to know as much as possible about yourself and the company before you walk into the interview.

Practice, practice, practice your answers to common interview questions. Interviewers judge candidates within the first ninety seconds. This first impression is generally based on nonverbal communication. Following are some interview guidelines.

Be Prepared

- Go alone to the interview
- Anticipate possible questions and practice answers to each of them
- Research the company before the interview
 - Review the company website to learn about product lines and services
 - Know company mission statement and values and about the business' competitors
 - Learn about business physical locations, number of stores, plants, or sales outlets
 - Recall any recent business information in the news
 - Identify people who are current or past employees that you know
 - Learn if business offers formal or on-the-job training
- Prepare questions to ask in the interview
- Do a dry run going to the interview location before the day of your interview
- Prepare your clothes the day before the interview to ensure they are ready
- Get a good night's sleep before the interview. Review your research
- Get up in time to shower and dress carefully
- Know the name(s) of the interviewer(s) and how to pronounce them correctly
- Leave for the interview with plenty of time to spare. Make sure you know how to get there, where to park, and how much time to allow for traffic

Carry a portfolio containing these items:

- Pad
- Pen
- Copies of resume or application prepared for this job
- References
- Letters of recommendation
- Samples of your work when appropriate
- Your questions to ask the interviewer(s)

Make a Good Impression

- Go to the interview neat and clean
- Use minimal perfume/cologne, no strong-smelling deodorant
- Do not smoke or use alcohol before the interview
- Do not have gum, candy, or other object in your mouth

- Remove any other body piercings except one earring per ear and cover tattoos
- Dress conservatively and comfortably. Rule of thumb is dress one step above the employer's normal daily dress code
- Avoid heavy makeup and trendy or flashy clothes and jewelry
- Be polite to everyone at the business
- Be enthusiastic and positive
- Be friendly, but not casual
- Speak positively about former employers and coworkers
- Sell yourself – the difference between bragging and self-confidence is enthusiasm
- Turn off or leave in vehicle any electronic devices (cell phone, etc.)

Be Aware of Body Language

- Offer a firm handshake
- Stand or sit tall but comfortably
- Sit only after offer of a chair
- Lean forward in your chair and relax
- Avoid nervous behavior
- Use eye contact, but do not stare

Say Thank You

- At the end of the interview, ask interviewers for their business cards and thank them for their time and the interview.
- Smile again – Do not grin, but smile as you would in any conversation

Answering Interview Questions

Most interviewers ask similar questions during job interviews. These questions relate to how your knowledge, skills, abilities, accomplishments, training, and work experience fit the job opening in the company. Unfortunately, many job hunters do not expect the questions, and do not practice their answers before an interview. As a result, they may not present their strongest assets. It is difficult to give good answers to questions on the spur of the moment. If unprepared, the simplest question can throw you off balance.

You can improve your chances for success if you practice answering questions. Read common interviewing questions, write your personal answers, and practice your answers out loud. Later, when an interviewer asks one of the questions, you are ready.

As you read the questions and begin to develop your own answers, remember the following basic interviewing concepts:

- Let the employer control the interview
- Keep your answers brief, but be certain you answer the question thoroughly
- Use evidence, examples, data and anecdotes to illustrate your point
- Think about your answer before you speak. It is okay to pause and collect your thoughts before answering. Try to relate your response to the position for which you are applying.
- Remember, most questions have more than one purpose. As you develop your answers, think about the match between your skills and the company's needs.
- Explain how you would go about doing a job rather than just saying you can do it.
- Refrain from volunteering information for which you are not asked, especially personal issues, money matters, or health problems – you might talk yourself out of a job.
- Listen to the interviewer. This is as essential as talking honestly and openly about your knowledge, skills, abilities and accomplishments. Concentrate on what is being said and how it is said, rather than on yourself.
- Clarify questions you do not understand.
- Be prepared to discuss gaps in employment or frequent job changes. If possible, discuss how excited you are about this job or improvements in skills and then go on to relate positive examples of how you applied these skills.

The interviewer will judge your appearance and actions, not just your words. According to researchers, 65 percent of the meaning in an interaction is conveyed nonverbally.

The following are sample interview questions:

“Tell me about yourself.”

- Be thorough, but brief. Talk for no more than two minutes, being logical and positive. Discuss your education and professional achievements and goals. Briefly describe your qualifications for the job and the contributions you could make to the organization. Employers want to more about your professional life, not your personal life.

“Why are you leaving (have you left your last position) your current position?”

- This can be a difficult question. “I achieved my goals in this position (my last position) and I’m now looking for a new challenge.” You could explain your goals, how you met them, and where you see yourself going now. Try to fit it in one of these categories: Location, challenge, or advancement.

You also need to think about “What if...” questions. These can be difficult to answer. These types of questions need answers based on your knowledge, experience, and personal values.

“Tell me about a problem you once had on the job. How did you go about resolving the problem?”

- Be specific. The interviewer could probably want information about the process you use to make decisions.

“How do you handle disagreements with your supervisors?”

- Be honest. Pick a situation, even if it is hypothetical, and describe how you would resolve it.

Based upon your answers to situational questions, an interviewer forms opinion about your maturity, initiative, emotional stability, patience, thoroughness, cooperation, self-confidence, tact, adaptability, assertiveness, conscientiousness, work ethic, self-discipline, honesty, and sincerity.

Salary Information and the Interview

You may be asked your salary expectations. For example, the employer may ask, “What do you want to earn in your next position?” This is different than asking for your salary history. You may have a little latitude in answering so you avoid a figure that is too high or too low. Be prepared for such a question so you are not tongue-tied. You can use a range rather than a specific figure when discussing numbers at this stage. This is not a time to negotiate salary – you are simply answering the interview question. When addressed appropriately, a salary discussion can help lay the foundation for negotiating the best salary later.

Lines to Help Address the Salary Issue Prior to the Interview

Here are some suggestions to address salary issues.

Remember – these statements and others like them will not advance you to the candidate pool unless your cover letter and resume are good. Your self-marketing package must establish you as the right candidate.

- What I've learned so far about the position suggests that it really fits me, so if you pay a fair market value, I don't foresee any problems with salary. Why don't we arrange an interview, and we can discuss salary at that time.
- Assuming your position is appropriately compensated, we'll surely be able to agree on a figure.
- I'll be happy to discuss my salary information when we meet to review my skills and your needs.
- Once we discuss some of the successes I've achieved in handling this sort of position, there should be no problem.
- All I require is a fair market value for the position, and I'm sure that you pay that, so let's meet to discuss the position; salary will take care of itself later.
- When we've had a chance to discuss what I can contribute to your position I'm sure that we'll be able to work out appropriate compensation that we both feel good about.
- After we've taken a look at how closely my skills and experience fit your needs, I'll be glad to provide complete salary information.
- In recent years my total compensation has ranged from (\$) and (\$).
- If your compensation is based on performance, we'll find agreement easy when you see the benefits I bring to the job.

Check Job Service North Dakota Labor Market information for state wage information

Ask Questions During the Interview

An interview is a two-way conversation in which you also ask questions to determine if the job is suitable for you. Be prepared to ask a minimum of two questions during an interview. Take your cue from the employer as to whether you ask questions during the interview or at the end of the employer's questions. Your questions should do two things:

- Answer your questions about the company
- Reflect your knowledge of the company

Examples:

- "How would you describe a typical day on the job?"
- "Is this a new position or would I be replacing someone?"
- "What would be the first project I would be assigned?"

If the employer does not offer you a job or indicate when you will hear about it, ask when you may call to learn the decision. Delay questions about pay and benefits until a job offer is made, or the interviewer brings up the subject.

THANK YOU NOTE

A hand-written thank you note should be written immediately after all interviews and sent the same day. If your main means of communication with the employer was electronic, then email a thank you in addition to the hand-written note. This is your opportunity to make one more impression before the decision is made.

Send a written thank-you even if you are turned down for a job. Let the employer know that you appreciate being considered and would be interested in future opportunities.

If you have an interview with more than one person, send each person a separate thank-you note.

Thank You Note Guidelines

Date

Dear _____: (Make sure you have the correct spelling of the name)

Refer to the date and position you were interviewed for and thank the employer for the time spent with you.

In the second paragraph, state your interest in the position and in working for the company. Remind the reader of what you can do for the company and why they should hire you.

Close with the idea that you will be anxiously waiting to hear from them and state your telephone numbers and the hours you may be reached.

Sincerely,

Sign name

Example of Thank-You Note

Thank You

March 1, 2XXX

Dear Mr. Hammer:

Thank you for the interview this afternoon. I appreciated the time and consideration you gave me.

The laborer position we discussed sounds interesting to me and I feel I can make a valuable contribution to XYZ Company.

I look forward to hearing from you next Thursday.

Sincerely,

Joe Handyman

FOLLOW UP

Follow up is critical. If you have not heard from the employer by the time the decision was to be made, contact the employer to check the status on the decision. Also, be polite. Do not call daily. If a decision has not been made, ask when you can call to follow-up again.

DEALING WITH REJECTION

What if you are not offered the job? You can view the rejection in these ways:

- A “downer” that discourages future searches, or
- A detour to a better job and future

The second view is the more productive one because you continue to direct your time and energy to the job search.

It is only a matter of time before you get a ‘yes’ after an interview. Numerous people experience a ‘no’ in their job search. Learn from your experience; increase your efforts to sell the product you know best – yourself.

Find the courage and correct approach to ask the employer what you could have done differently in the interview to increase your chances of landing future employment.

For additional resources are available at your local Job Service North Dakota Workforce Center from Interview preparation to Mock Interview.

THE JOB OFFER

A job offer may be made by telephone, mail, or electronic communication so you need to check all sources on regular basis. Remember to check spam or junk mail in your e-mail account since some important messages may be found there.

Sometimes you receive an offer that has positives and negatives. Rather than refusing the offer, you may want to consider negotiating the terms of the offer with the employer. Before you negotiate, you may have to make some decisions:

- Be sure that the issue is so serious you would not take the job unless it was changed
- If money is the issue, be sure you know the salary range you will accept

Timing is Essential

The best time to negotiate is at the time of the job offer. The employer has eliminated other applicants and chosen you. The employer is probably reluctant to offer the job to the second or third choice or restart the hiring process. The worst that can happen is accepting the employer's initial offer. The best that can happen is receiving a little or considerably more than the first offer.

Knowing your market value is the centerpiece for negotiating the compensation you deserve. Of course, you know your market value because you did that research when you began your job search.

Understand the value of the fringe benefits included in the offer (or, if not included, what it will cost to purchase them).

Whether you accept or reject the offer, communicate your decision immediately either verbally or in writing. If you need additional time to decide, ask the employer for a specific time extension for your response. If the offer was made verbally, a verbal response is sufficient. If the offer was made in writing, a written response is required.

If you **ACCEPT THE JOB** make sure that you understand job duties and expectations, work hours, salary, benefits, etc. **CONGRATULATIONS!!**

GUARANTEE THE PRODUCT

You have learned how to successfully sell the product (yourself). Now you must guarantee the product to enable yourself to keep your new job.

After successfully selling a product, salespeople make sure the buyer is satisfied. They guarantee the product. In the same way, once you have that job, there are some basic things to keep in mind to guarantee that the employer remains satisfied with you.

Characteristics of a Successful Employee

LISTENING—Listen carefully when instructions are given, remember what to do, and ask questions about instructions if you do not understand them.

ATTENDANCE—Go to work faithfully and be on time.

OPENNESS—Speak tactfully and state what is on your mind without anger and malice.

UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS--Try to understand what others around you feel, think, and want. Accept others for who they are.

LEADERSHIP—Make decisions when needed, help others, and think about the needs of the total operation.

PERSEVERANCE—Stay with a task, even if you are under pressure. Your co-workers are counting on you.

INITIATIVE—Accept responsibility, do more than what is expected of you and take on additional responsibility even if it seems risky.

APPEARANCE—Maintain good personal appearance.

USES FEEDBACK—Accept constructive advice, learn from it, and use it to make improvements.

INVOLVEMENT—Develop a feeling of commitment to your work and involvement with your work group.

COMMUNICATION— Be able to clearly convey information and understand information with your work group or customers.

Job Success-Four Basic Elements

Dependability / Reliability: Employers depend upon you to be on the job and require you to provide an appropriate reason for absences. Frequent absences create problems for employers and co-workers. They are also cause for dismissal. Likewise, reliability is important because you must be able to follow through on a task without continual supervision.

Punctuality: Employers also depend upon you to report for work at the time specified. If you are consistently late for work or meetings, you cause problems for supervisors, co-workers and customers. Tardiness in returning from breaks is also included in punctuality problems.

Quality of Work: Your ability to produce a quality product or service is critical to your employer's survival in your community and in the global marketplace. If your company fails, your job is gone.

Quantity of Work: In addition to doing quality work, you need the ability to produce enough of it to justify the wage you receive. Your employer needs both quality and quantity from you to succeed and thereby continue employing you.

Other Basics for the First Day or First Few Weeks on the Job

Asking Questions and Asking for Help: New employees sometimes hesitate to ask questions, not wanting to appear slow or inexperienced. However, employers expect you to ask questions. If you proceed without help, a mistake could cost the employer time and money; it could also cost your job.

Following Instructions: Following instructions is important as you learn a job and make a favorable impression. Some new employees make suggestions about how to improve the job too soon. Others challenge supervisors and coworkers about how the job is to be done. Delay these kinds of remarks until you have demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the job and gained the respect of supervisors and co-workers.

Getting a Sense of the Big Picture: Sometimes an employer neglects to tell you how your job fits into the overall operation. This knowledge helps you to know the impact of what he or she does or does not do on the job. If this information is not provided, ask about the big picture on your first day or in your first week of work.

Finding Out About the Rules -- Written and Unwritten: Most companies will provide you with an employee handbook or other material containing written policies and procedures. Here you will read about policies regarding vacations, holidays, sick leave, tuition assistance, overtime, safety regulations, and work injury reports. Read these materials carefully because ignorance is not a good excuse for doing something incorrectly when the information has been provided.

Most organizations have unwritten rules that you can learn by listening, observing, and asking questions. These unwritten rules may address personal phone calls, personal belongings (plants, photos) in the work area, break times, and whom to ask for what.

Asking for Feedback: Some supervisors and managers, untrained in new management styles, do a "leave them alone" with their employees. They comment only on performance when a mistake has been made, or when it is too late for change. To prevent "leave them alone" from happening to you, ask for feedback at the end of the first week and fairly often while learning the new job. Ask what you are doing well and what needs improvement. This allows you to change your performance and behavior before the job is beyond salvage.

Having a Positive Attitude and Being Cheerful: You often get what you expect. If you expect to do well and think that learning the job and getting to know co-workers will be a positive experience, it probably will be. Your co-workers will find you easier to be around if you are cheerful rather than critical, complaining, negative, or grumpy.

Keeping—or Losing Your Job

When you get that job, it is going to be great, but remember how hard you worked to find it.

Will you want to go through this again, or do you want to keep your job?

Here are some of the ways you can **lose** your job. It's up to you.

- **Be late for work.** Employers have heard a lot of excuses, so put them away. Plan carefully so you are on the job and ready to work on time.
- **Do not call when you are sick.** Always notify your supervisor if you cannot get to your job. Arrangements must be made for someone else to do your work.
- **Call in sick when you are not.** Remember that sick leave is a benefit given to you by the employer. Use it sparingly and only when you are really too sick to work.
- **Take time off without permission.** If you absolutely have to conduct personal business during working hours, always talk to your supervisor beforehand and arrange to make up the time.
- **Stretch your lunch and coffee breaks.** Always return from your breaks on time because you inconvenience others by being late. Be on time and show your employer that you are dependable.
- **Tell your boss off or fight with other workers.** Be cooperative and friendly with other workers. Even if someone is not friendly toward you, it is possible to get along during the working day.
- **Just do your assigned job and no more.** When you finish one task, ask your supervisor what else needs to be done, or offer to help someone else. Help with the grubby tasks, too.

- **Do not bother to learn more.** Be aware of advancement opportunities in your company and prepare yourself to apply for those jobs. Go to school during your time off to increase your knowledge.
- **Act as if you do not like your job.** Be energetic and willing to show that you are glad to be working. Avoid looking bored or grumpy.

Hints Employers Give for Dissatisfaction of Your Work

- Cutback in hours without co-workers getting similar reductions
- Tension with supervisor
- Conflicts with co-workers
- Poor evaluations

Caution: Employers dislike liars. If you tell the employer you are dependable, your attendance and reliability must be good. If you tell the employer you have a specific skill, you must be able to do the job well.

CONCLUSION

You have **started** the process of selling a product--**you**--to a specific market--**the employer**. Notice that you have only started this process. You must learn your strengths and weaknesses as you continue to improve marketing yourself. Continue the search for employers that would benefit if they hired you. Continue to improve marketing yourself in order to get your foot in the door, reach the right person, and convince that employer that YOU are the best individual for that job.

Remember, employers hire people for their benefit, not yours. No one is required to hire you. Convince the employer that by hiring you, the company benefits. You can do it!

Is a job worth keeping? Do you want a paycheck and a chance to be somebody? If these are important to you, hold on to your job. Remember, it's up to **you**.

No one can lose your job for you. Not your family, relatives, friends, or fellow workers. Only **you** can lose or keep your job.

Good luck with your job search. Remember, don't give up. Sooner or later, everyone finds a job. It's the waiting that's tough. **When you do find a job, please let us know.**

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