



# WorkBook 3

# Jump Start for Job Seekers



To a large degree your choice of career determines where you live, who your friends are, and the lifestyle you are able to have. Rather than wait for your parents, teachers, or others, take charge of your own preparation. This workbook will help you jump start your job search.



NAME	TELEPHONE	DATE OF BIRTH
ADDRESS		
SCHOOL	CLASSROOM/CLUB	GRADE

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# activities

Activity 1

## Make a Plan

To take charge of your future, set goals to learn the skills needed for a job search. Set a date by which you plan to complete each one. Read through the sample plan below. Determine additional goals you would like to accomplish, and add these to the list below.

Skills to learn:	Target date to complete by:	Actual date completed:
• recruit a mentor (activity 2)	_____	_____
• complete a job application (activity 3)	_____	_____
• write a resume (activity 4)	_____	_____
• write a letter of application (activity 5)	_____	_____
• evaluate personal appearance (activity 6)	_____	_____
• answer interview questions (activity 7)	_____	_____
• complete interview follow-up (activity 8)	_____	_____
• assemble a portfolio (activity 9)	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____

## Sample Plan

- Research your community. Find out what jobs are there.
- Learn about careers in your field of interest.
- Shadow people working in your field of interest.
- Search the Internet and library for information.
- Get a part-time job while in high school.
- Form a club for teens who are interested in developing career skills.
- Meet one-on-one with high school counselors and college advisors.
- Tour technical schools and colleges you might attend.
- Ask teachers and parents to help you prepare.
- Learn to fill out an application and write a resume.
- Learn to assert yourself in interviews.
- Develop good communication skills.
- Apply for scholarships, grants, and student loans.
- Get involved in everything you can during high school.
- Look at a variety of options.
- Ask school officials to offer a class in selecting a career and job-seeking skills.
- Set up a temporary job service at school. Ask local employers and organizations to post job openings (both paid and volunteer) for which high school students would be qualified.
- Organize a career day where teens can talk to workers about their jobs.

—Issues '96 WorkPrep Teens



# What Does an Employer Look For?

Employers are making a huge investment when they hire an employee. It's not just the salary they plan to pay. It's other "stuff" like the reputation of their company, quality products and service, and assurance that customers get what they expect. It stands to reason that an employer is going to be selective when choosing a worker. It's up to you to become an *extraordinary* worker.

Employers around the United States have identified skills and personal qualities that workers should have. The lists may help you recall and describe skills you have used in previous experiences. You will describe your skills and personal qualities on your resume and application.

## Recruit a Mentor

You can complete this Workbook by yourself; however, you are encouraged to find a mentor—an adult who will provide guidance and advice. A mentor is a trusted friend, coach, advisor, and role model. He or she may be able to help you discover your talents and coach you on how to be successful in a job. Look for a person working in a career in which you are interested, a teacher, a minister, an adult interested in youth, a relative, or a person you admire. If you think no one will want to be your mentor, you might be surprised. Many adults consider it an *honor* to be singled out by a young person for this responsibility.

**Name of Mentor:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Describe this individual:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Basic Skills of a Good Worker

- reading—can read manuals, books, graphs, charts, signs
- writing—can write reports, summaries, letters; can fill out forms
- arithmetic and math—can work with weights and measures, calculate percentages, balance an account
- speaking—can talk to other people one on one and in a small or large group; can teach other team members
- listening—can listen to the boss or a trainer; can listen in order to answer customers' questions
- problem solving—can recognize a problem and come up with a solution or a plan of action; can trouble shoot problems
- reasoning—can understand a principle and apply it to solving a problem; can analyze and think logically; can forecast
- learning—can add information to previous knowledge from books, other people, personal experiences
- creative thinking—can generate new ideas, develop new products, make scientific discoveries
- decision making—can list goals, generate options, consider risks; can evaluate and choose the best option
- using and managing resources (time, money, materials, staff, and space)—can prepare a budget, schedule workers, order supplies
- working with others—can be an effective team member, can serve customers; can motivate, lead, sell, coach, persuade, negotiate
- finding and using information—can research a topic, organize information; can interpret data
- understanding systems—can understand how the company operates, including its production process; can organize data
- using technology—can operate a personal computer and other equipment; can repair equipment



## Personal Qualities of a Good Worker

- is motivated, likes to work, and wants to succeed
- has personal and career goals
- is loyal, honest, and sincere
- has a positive attitude
- is punctual and reliable—arrives at work on time, stays until the end of the workday
- asks questions when in need of help
- shows initiative; looks for a better way to do the job
- works as a member of a team; accepts differences in people and gets along well with co-workers
- can plan and organize work
- is tactful
- is creative
- accepts authority and supervision
- accepts constructive criticism
- follows directions
- is willing to perform extra work and work overtime when needed
- has self-confidence
- listens
- can reason and make decisions after weighing options
- is conscious of costs in both time and materials and avoids waste
- takes care of tools and materials
- takes pride in work and gains satisfaction from a job well done
- works safely—considers the safety of others and self
- is pleasant, cheerful, and enthusiastic
- dresses appropriately—neat, clean
- keeps physically fit
- wants to do a day's work for a day's pay
- knows the job and completes tasks
- faces personal problems squarely
- is flexible and adapts to change
- is willing to learn



# Get It Together on Paper— Applications and Resumes

Most employers require job seekers to fill out an application or turn in a resume to start the process of getting a job in their company. Think of these two pieces of paper as your personal advertisement. Your objective is to sell yourself through the information you write on the application or resume. Each should tell what you can do for that company.

Whether the employer uses an application or resume, the paper document becomes the first screening device. It takes a busy Human Resource Director only a few minutes to glance through a pile of applications or resumes and screen out all but a few applicants. Something on your documents will have to capture his or her attention. How you fill in this information can make or break your chances of getting that job.

## Tips for Filling Out Applications

- **Be prepared to** fill out an application when you make your first visit or go for an interview. Take a pen with you. You might even invest in a pen with erasable ink.
- **Read and follow** the directions carefully.
- **Print the information** on the form neatly and completely. (The writing skills you demonstrate on the application give the prospective employer an example of what he or she can expect of you on the job.) If the instructions say “print,” do not use cursive writing.
- **Take information such** as telephone numbers and addresses with you. (The receptionist may lend you a telephone book, but you shouldn’t need to ask.)
- **Treat the office** staff with respect. Don’t be surprised if the prospective employer asks his or her opinion of applicants. Consider yourself being sized up from the moment you enter the front door.
- **Don’t be too** quick to write NA or “not applicable” on an application. Think about the question thoroughly.
- **Because many applicants** are contacted for an interview by telephone, providing a telephone number is critical. If you do not have a phone, ask a friend or neighbor for permission to use his or her number. On the application, write “Leave message at \_\_\_-\_\_\_.” Be sure to contact the person whose number you use so he or she is aware you are expecting an important call. Fair or not, how the person you’ve asked to take a message answers the phone also reflects back on you. Make it as easy as possible for a prospective employer to reach you by phone.
- **If the application** asks you to list your “job preference” or the “job for which you are applying,” respond with a specific job title or responsibility. Do *not* write “anything”—employers expect you to state the kind of work you can and want to do. Going to the effort to find out a specific job title shows you are serious about your pursuit.
- **How do you** respond to a question about “expected salary or rate of pay”? You may list an amount, or you may write “negotiable” or “open.”
- **According to laws** relating to employment, you do not legally have to respond to some questions. Generally these questions relate to information that might lead to discrimination in hiring based on age, gender, race, religion, physical appearance, disability, ethnic group, marital status, and family information. (Employers may ask questions regarding age of youth 18 years old and under because specific laws are in place to protect the youth population.) If you choose not to provide information related to an illegal question, you may leave the space blank or write “NA.”
- **The application may** ask if you have been bonded. If you don’t know, the answer is probably “no.” Some employers buy special insurance for employees who handle money or go into people’s homes. Employees for whom this insurance is purchased are referred to as “bonded.”
- **When asked to** describe your responsibilities at previous jobs, be as descriptive as possible. Use action words.



# activities

- **Employers can face** legal charges if they hire persons who are not authorized to work in the United States. If you are not a U.S. citizen, be prepared to show legal papers that allow you to live and work in the United States.
- **Always tell the truth** on an application.
- **Most applications ask** for three references. Choose people who know you well and can speak well of you and your work. References might include a teacher, minister, club leader, or other adult friend who knows you well. Do not list relatives. Contact

these individuals *before* you list them as references and ask for their permission. (A person might not be available or might feel uncomfortable being asked about you even though he or she thinks positively of you.) Describe the position for which you are applying, and give examples of information you would like the person to mention if contacted by a prospective employer. **NOTE:** “Association to you” means “How are you associated with this person?” Examples: teacher, friend, co-worker, previous employer.

## Complete an Application

Every employer uses an application specific to his or her company, so expect each one to be unique.

Complete the sample application form on the next page. When you go to a prospective employer to fill out an application, take this practice application along. It will provide much of the information needed to fill out the company's application form. Fill it out with a pencil, and you'll be able to make changes in the information as they occur.

### You Do Have Work Experience!

Applications usually include a request for information about work experience. Many first-time job seekers find this frustrating: If you don't have experience, you can't get a job; yet if you can't get a job, how can you get experience?

If you've been turned down for jobs because of lack of experience, maybe you need to do some creative thinking! Are you a volunteer aide in the office at your school? Do you provide child care for your brothers and sisters every day after school? Have you had service learning experience? Are you doing a 4-H project or some other self-directed project on your own? Are you a photographer for your school newspaper? Are you an intern or co-op student or working on an assistantship?

Many volunteer roles are actually work experiences. You may list this type of information under “work experience” or some other question that relates to experience. Describe your responsibilities.

Employers want to see demonstration of personal qualities—punctual, reliable, courteous, resourceful. Review the list of personal qualities on pages 4 and 5. Include several in your application and resume that best describe you. Many volunteer roles, self-directed projects, and household responsibilities require these qualities.

... on the next page



## APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

*Please type or print clearly*

Date Submitted	Social Security No.			
Name <small style="display: inline-block; width: 25%; text-align: center;"><i>Last</i></small> <small style="display: inline-block; width: 30%; text-align: center;"><i>First</i></small> <small style="display: inline-block; width: 45%; text-align: center;"><i>Middle</i></small>	Telephone No.			
Present Address <small style="text-align: center;"><i>Box No. or Street</i></small>	City	State	Zip	
Permanent or Street Address (if different from above) <small style="text-align: center;"><i>Box No. or Street</i></small>	City	State	Zip	
How long have you lived at present address? _____ years				
Person to contact if unable to reach you <small style="text-align: center;"><i>Name</i></small>			Telephone No.	
<small style="text-align: center;"><i>Box No. or Street</i></small>	City	State	Zip	
Are you over 18? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <small>(If no, hire is subject to minimum legal age verification.)</small>				
Are you a U.S. citizen or authorized to work in the United States? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
Have you worked for this company before? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
Where?	How long?			
Previous job title				
Reason for leaving				
Position for which you are applying or type of work in which you are interested:				
You are interested in: <input type="checkbox"/> Non-temporary <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary employment.				
You want to work: <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time <input type="checkbox"/> Summer      Date available to start work: _____				
Specify hours available:      Mon. _____; Tues. _____; Wed. _____; Thurs. _____; Fri. _____;				
Sat. _____; Sun. _____				
Are you willing to relocate? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No      Explain geographic requirements:				
Rate of pay expected:				
State why you would like a position with this company.				





**EDUCATION & EXPERIENCES**

Name and Address of Schools Attended Beginning with High School	From		To		Degree or Years Completed	Did You Graduate?	Course of Study
	Mo.	Yr.	Mo.	Yr.			
						<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
						<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
						<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

High School Grade Point Average \_\_\_\_\_ Points Possible \_\_\_\_\_

University Grade Point Average \_\_\_\_\_ Points Possible \_\_\_\_\_

An official transcript is required. Transcript is  enclosed  will follow

List any special skills you have for position applied for above.

List briefly your student activities and honors including scholarship awards, judging teams, honorary organizations, athletics, dramatics, journalism, military, etc. If you have work experience, list honors or accomplishments associated with your employment.

Describe your leadership roles in professional or other organizations that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.

What experience have you had as a public speaker or teacher before groups?



PRACTICE APPLICATION

**WORK EXPERIENCE**  
**LIST MOST RECENT FIRST; INCLUDE ANY PAID, UNPAID, OR MILITARY EXPERIENCE**



COMPANY NAME		JOB TITLE		FROM	TO	MAY WE CONTACT THIS EMPLOYER?  Yes, Immediately Yes, At a Later Date No, Do Not Contact
ADDRESS		CITY	STATE	MO. YEAR	MO. YEAR	
SUPERVISOR'S NAME		TELEPHONE AREA CODE	NUMBER	ZIP CODE		
BRIEF JOB DESCRIPTION		REASON FOR LEAVING				
COMPANY NAME		JOB TITLE		FROM	TO	MAY WE CONTACT THIS EMPLOYER?  Yes, Immediately Yes, At a Later Date No, Do Not Contact
ADDRESS		CITY	STATE	MO. YEAR	MO. YEAR	
SUPERVISOR'S NAME		TELEPHONE AREA CODE	NUMBER	ZIP CODE		
BRIEF JOB DESCRIPTION		REASON FOR LEAVING				
COMPANY NAME		JOB TITLE		FROM	TO	MAY WE CONTACT THIS EMPLOYER?  Yes, Immediately Yes, At a Later Date No, Do Not Contact
ADDRESS		CITY	STATE	MO. YEAR	MO. YEAR	
SUPERVISOR'S NAME		TELEPHONE AREA CODE	NUMBER	ZIP CODE		
BRIEF JOB DESCRIPTION		REASON FOR LEAVING				
COMPANY NAME		JOB TITLE		FROM	TO	MAY WE CONTACT THIS EMPLOYER?  Yes, Immediately Yes, At a Later Date No, Do Not Contact
ADDRESS		CITY	STATE	MO. YEAR	MO. YEAR	
SUPERVISOR'S NAME		TELEPHONE AREA CODE	NUMBER	ZIP CODE		
BRIEF JOB DESCRIPTION		REASON FOR LEAVING				

**OTHER INFORMATION**

If presently employed, state why you wish to make a change.

Some positions require the use of an automobile. Do you have a valid driver's license?  Yes  No

Have you ever been convicted of any violation of law including driving under the influence (DUI)?  Yes  No  
 If yes, explain, giving date(s) and location(s) and your complete name at that time.

**REFERENCES**

Please list four individuals, other than relatives, whom we can contact. They should have knowledge of your work experience and/or education (former employers, supervisors, professors, colleagues, etc.).

Name	Business Name, Mailing Address, Zip Code, and Telephone Number	Occupation	Association to You
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

**CERTIFICATE OF APPLICANT**

I certify that all answers to the questions in this application are true, and I further understand that any false statement and/or omission in this application will be sufficient grounds for rejection of the application or termination of employment without notice. I authorize this company to make any and all necessary and appropriate investigations to verify the information contained herein, including criminal records and work experience checks. I also understand prior to employment, I must provide information related to identity and employability. Failure to provide appropriate documentation for verification of employment eligibility shall result in immediate termination of employment and/or offer of employment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date



## Write a Resume

Think of a position you would like. The position may be real or made-up, paid or volunteer, but it must be a position for which you are actually qualified now. Write a resume appropriate to the position.

Use the resume outline below as a guide. For ideas on positions, look at newspaper want ads, talk to employers or friends, or think of services you might offer, such as after-school child care or lawn care.



## Resumes

Part-time jobs held by high school students do not always require a resume; however, having and using a resume might give you an edge over another applicant. After graduation from high school, consider a resume a must.

Much of the same type of information required on a job application is presented through a resume. A resume is a tool job seekers use to introduce themselves to potential employers. It's your advertisement. Employers use resumes to screen potential candidates and determine whom to invite for an interview. The first screening may be done by a person or a computer. When done by computer, the resume is scanned using optical character recognition software. The computer searches for key words that the employer has identified as necessary for the job. Keywords may be specific skills, experience, and education.

Employers seek the best match of the skills and career interests of the individual with the job available. Because employers spend less than four minutes reviewing a resume, something about your resume must capture their attention.

- A resume must be well written, concise, and organized.
- There is no one way to lay out a resume.
- Specific types of information you should include: objective, education, experience (use rather than “work experience” or “employment”), and activities.
- List the most recent information first—this is called reverse chronological order.
- One page is adequate for persons entering the job market; experienced applicants may use one or two pages.
- Use high-quality white or light-colored paper.
- Proofread carefully, and ask others to critique it.
- Type your resume on a computer and save it on a disk. You'll revise your resume many times during your lifetime. Having it in a computer file makes changes easy. If you do not have a computer, ask a teacher or counselor if school equipment may be used. Public and college libraries often have computers for use by the public. Many copy shops provide this service at a reasonable cost.
- Use a quality printer.
- Do not use lines, graphics, or shading.
- Change or rearrange your resume for each job you apply for. Emphasize the skills/qualities you have that are listed in the ad or job description.

## Your name

**Your mailing address**

**City, state, zip code**

**Your telephone number or  
number where you can be reached**

### Objective:

Tell the employer what you want to do. This may include a specific job title or a general description. Examples: "customer service representative"; "Seeking an entry-level position in retail management."

### Education:

Starting with the most recent educational institution you attended, list the school name, city, state, degree completed, major or area of concentration, and graduation date (or expected date of graduation) by month and year. Include information such as courses relevant to the position you seek, individual and team class projects, grade point average (GPA) if greater than 3.0 on a 4.0 scale; academic honors and scholarships; specific training or certifications; international study experiences; computer skills (list specifics); foreign language (indicate skill level); hours worked per week as a student, or percent to which you are self-supporting if you provide income for at least half of your expenses.

### Experience:

Include work-related experience, both paid and volunteer positions. List the employer or organization, job or role title, city and state, and starting and ending dates. Describe your responsibilities in short descriptive statements rather than complete sentences. Use action words.

**Activities:** Include leadership positions you have held, organizations in which you are or have been involved, accomplishments, honors, skills, interests, community service, and other facts that promote you.

## Bea A. Jobseeker

**409 Workforce Ave.**

**Cloverville, KY 40904**

**Telephone: 502-101-2464**

### Objective:

Seeking an entry-level position in a florist shop using my skills in business and floral design.

### Education:

Pursuing associates' degree in business. Big River Community College, Hobson, KY. August 1998 to present. Expected date of graduation—May 2000. Relevant courses completed—speech, business math.

Certificate in floral design completed April 1998. Mountain Area Vocational/Technical School, Cloverville, KY. Skills—corsage, bridal bouquet, basic table arrangements in fresh, dried, and silk flowers.

High school diploma, completed May 1998. Moore High School, Cloverville, KY. GPA: 3.1/4.0. Career major—business management. Relevant courses—accounting, business writing, speech, computer (working knowledge of WordPerfect, Quicken).

### Experience:

4-H Horticulture Project, Warren Road 4-H Club, 1996 - 97.

- Planted and maintained 6 ft x 20 ft annual and perennial flower bed.
- Studied plant care and propagation through library research, field trips to nurseries, university plant lab, and neighborhood gardens.
- Operated within family's budget and kept record of expenses on a computer.
- Mowed family's yard weekly throughout summer.
- Composted yard wastes.

Babysitter for two families, 1995 - present. Salaried position.

- Responsible for care of two children for an average of 6 hours per week.
- Used basic first-aid skills to handle emergency situation.
- Prepared simple meals and performed household chores.
- Taught children simple skills—new games, creative crafts, clean up.

### Activities:

Warren Road 4-H Club—member, 2 years

Organized service learning project—party for children at day-care center. Club members planned and prepared refreshments, games, gifts.

Personal accomplishment—improved school attendance during senior year in high school to only one missed day.



# activities

Activity 5

## Letter of Application

### Write a Letter of Application

Write a letter of application to accompany the resume you wrote for Activity 4.

When sending a resume, be sure to write a letter of application (cover letter) to go with it. This letter introduces you to the reader, explains why you have sent the resume, and asks for an interview. This letter is usually one page, made up of three to five paragraphs and written in a conversational style. Even though you may send letters to several employers when searching for a job, be sure to take the time to write a letter specifically to each prospective employer. Form letters won't do. Call the company to find out the name and title of the person who is recruiting for the position. Compose and sign an original letter. Keep a copy of the original for your files.

Keep in mind that letters demonstrate your ability to communicate in writing. Potential employers notice effective writing skills—neatness, spelling, sentence structure, etc.



#### LETTER OF APPLICATION OUTLINE

Your address  
City, state, zip code  
Date  
Name of individual  
Job title of this individual  
Organization or company name  
Street address or post office box number  
City, state, zip code

Dear Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_:

In the first paragraph, tell why you are writing. Identify the specific position you are interested in, and tell how you learned of the opening. Tell what you can do for the employer in the position you are applying for.

The middle paragraphs should point out the most significant information the employer will find in your resume. This may be your qualifications, experience, interest, education, or a combination of these. You may add information about your personal work habits not listed in the resume. Explain how your qualifications match the position you seek.

In the final paragraph, ask the employer to contact you at (phone number) or state that you will contact him or her to arrange a convenient time to meet. Thank the employer for considering you for the position.

Sincerely,

(Your signature in ink)

Your name (typed)

Enclosure: Resume

# Appearance

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Does appearance make a difference? You better believe it! Chances are this is where you want to fit in rather than emphasize your differences. Guys, consider leaving the earring out of your nose or ear. Girls, save the extremely short skirt for other occasions. (Once you land the job, you may ask your employer if wearing these items is acceptable.) Remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression.

When you go to fill out a job application or to a job interview, consider the appearance of the individuals who already have jobs at the workplace. Do they appear to have a specific dress code?

## Appearance Do's and Don'ts

Your goal is to feel comfortable about your appearance and confident in your looks so you will not fidget or be distracted.

### Do...

- Bathe or shower, and use a deodorant.
- Brush your teeth and tongue, and use mouthwash.
- Wash and style your hair.
- Clean your hands, and trim your fingernails to an even length.
- Clean and press your clothes; polish or brush your shoes.

### Do Not...

- Try out a new hair style or make-up combination that will make you feel self-conscious.
- Wear noisy jewelry or lots of jewelry.
- Start growing a beard or moustache that morning.
- Chew gum or smoke.
- Wear heavy cologne or aftershave.

# The Job Interview

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In the case of the job interview, being a little nervous is probably good—or at least normal. If you are extremely nervous, try taking four or five slow deep breaths before entering the room. This exercise usually has a relaxing effect. Most interviewers expect job applicants to be a little uptight. A skilled interviewer will try to help you feel relaxed and comfortable.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and interpretive guidelines of the 1990s refocused some of the ways interviews are conducted today. Behavioral interviewing focuses the potential employer's attention on the skills an applicant is able to perform. Be prepared to give examples of past experiences when you have demonstrated necessary work skills.

# activities

## Dress for the Workplace

...on page 17





## Interview Tips

- **Be on time** or a few minutes early, even if that means finding the appropriate location a day or so in advance. Call if you will be delayed or cannot make the interview. If someone gives you a ride, ask him or her to wait outside.
- **As you enter** the interviewer's office, extend your hand for a firm handshake. (A limp or "dead fish" handshake sends a negative message.)
- **Be friendly and** courteous.
- **Stand tall and proud.** Slouching makes you look as if you would rather be somewhere else. Stand until the interviewer invites you to be seated. Sit up straight.
- **Look alive and alert.** Pay attention. This is a sign of respect and interest.
- **Do not smoke** or chew gum.
- **Avoid nervous habits,** such as chewing your nails, drumming your fingers, or tapping your feet. If you tend to be nervous, practice keeping your hands folded and in your lap.
- **Think before you speak**—even if that means taking a minute to consider your response.
- **Be sincere and honest** in answering questions.
- **Be positive.** Present an air of confidence. Avoid boasting or exaggerating the facts.
- **Look the interviewer** in the eye.
- **Practice—think through** your response to a variety of standard interview questions. Practice your answers with a friend or family member.
- **Do not complain** about a previous employer or his or her practices. Downplay unfavorable information.
- **Express interest.** Don't be afraid to ask questions. Think through questions you might ask before you arrive for the interview. Do not start off with questions about salary and vacation days.
- **Practice good conversation skills.** Carry on a conversation with the interviewer. Short or yes/no responses make it difficult for the interviewer to learn about you. Speak loudly enough to be heard by the person to whom you are talking. Nod your head, say "I understand," etc.
- **If during the** course of the interview, it becomes apparent that you do not fit the job for which you are being interviewed, tell the interviewer you are not interested in the position. Tell the interviewer why you are not interested in case there has been some confusion about the position. This will allow the interviewer a chance to clear up misconceptions. You may want to seek the employer's advice on other jobs.
- **Properly closing** the interview is important. At the end of your interview, don't hesitate to tell the employer you feel you can do the job described or summarize why you will be a good employee at his or her workplace.
- **Thank the employer** for the interview before you leave. A note or letter of thanks is a good idea and reminds the interviewer of your interest.





## Dress for the Workplace

Visit two workplaces where workers have different styles of dress (business/dressy attire, uniforms, casual clothing). You may talk to the employees about their appearance or just observe the workers.

**Workplace 1:** Name of workplace: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the clothing and general appearance of workers:

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**Workplace 2:** Name of workplace: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the clothing and general appearance of workers:

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Write an analysis of your observations. Compare and contrast the appearance of the workers at the two locations. Here are ideas to get you started:

- What message does color of clothing send about the business and the person?
- Can you get an idea of a worker's attitude by observing appearance?
- How does the appearance vary from worker to worker?
- What image is portrayed through appearance?
- Do you think there is a relationship between appearance and salary?

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Where would you like to fit into the workplace? Describe the image and appearance that best suit you.

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Name a real-life workplace where you would like to work and might fit in. Imagine you are going for an interview at this location. Describe your appearance and clothing choice for the interview.

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## Preparation for Interview Questions

Below are questions interviewers typically ask job applicants. Think about your response; then write out your answer to at least six questions. Ask your mentor (or teacher/adult friend) to review your responses and make suggestions.

Why would you like to work at \_\_\_\_\_?

What do you know about our organization?

What do you see as the major trends in our business?

What skills or qualifications will you bring to this job?

How have your previous experiences prepared you for this position?

Where in your career would you like to be in five years?

Describe what you are doing now to prepare yourself for a career.

Describe a situation in your experience that required decision-making skills, and tell how you handled it.

Describe a situation in which you accomplished a task by functioning as a member of a team.

All of us have positives and negatives in our performance; what are some of your positives?

If you had your education to do over, what would you do differently?

Describe a time when you were really motivated to do your best.

## Interview Follow-Up

Following an interview with a thank you letter is considered proper business etiquette. Write an original letter to the individual who conducted your interview. If several people were involved, you may write a letter specifically to each, or you may write to the key contact and state that you appreciated meeting him or her and the other members of the staff.

Because decisions concerning who is hired are often made within a few days of an interview, send your thank you letter within 24 hours of the interview. This reminds the employer of your interest, demonstrates your promptness, and conveys your appreciation. Be sincere and positive. Keep a copy for your records.

Activity 8

# activities

## Write a Thank You Letter

Imagine you have just participated in a job interview for the position you are pursuing. Write a thank you letter to the interviewer. Follow the outline below.

### THANK YOU LETTER OUTLINE

Your address  
City, state, zip code  
Date

Name of individual  
Job title of this individual  
Organization or company name  
Street address or post office box number  
City, state, zip code

Dear Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_:

In the first paragraph thank the employer for the interview. State the date of your interview and position for which you were interviewed. Restate your interest in the position. Highlight your most impressive qualifications in one or two sentences.

In the last paragraph close with a suggestion of the action you would like to happen next.

Sincerely,

(Your signature in ink)

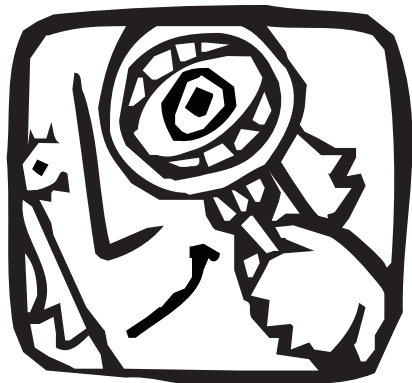
Your name (typed)



# The Job Search

Looking for a job shows that you desire to be a productive and contributing member of society. Where do you begin?

- Begin with personal networking. Tell your friends, relatives, and persons you know in the workplace that you are looking for a job. They might be aware of available jobs or mention your search to others they know. Networking seems to be an effective means of finding a job, since positive information about you is often passed along with your name.
- Talk to your school counselor.
- Check public bulletin boards, especially those at schools, colleges, placement offices, and libraries.
- Watch for notices at the entrances of businesses.
- Read the want ads in your local newspaper.
- Register at the state employment services office nearest you (look in the telephone book white pages under “Kentucky,” then “Cabinet for Human Resources”).
- Talk to local librarians about computer listings of jobs available.
- Employment agencies assist people in finding jobs, but some charge for their services.
- Take advantage of opportunities your school offers—career fairs, internships, co-ops, shadowing, service learning.
- Introduce yourself to adults at church, sports events, and other places in your community. Ask if they know of jobs available where they work.



Once you learn of a job opening that interests you or a company for which you would like to work, learn as much as you can about the company.

- Talk to someone who currently works there.
- Research the company at a library—public, high school, community college, or university or a career placement library at a local college.
- Ask a librarian where to find career reference books and computer databases.

How do you apply? Basically there are three ways—by telephone, by letter, and in person. To apply by phone, explain your objective and the type of work you like to do and ask for an interview. To apply by letter, write a letter of application and resume. Through the letter, strive to focus the prospective employer’s attention on you and your abilities as listed on the resume. To apply in person, go to the prospective employer armed with your resume and ready to fill out an application and be interviewed. All employers may not complete all of these in one visit, but you won’t know that until you arrive on the scene, so be prepared.

## Things to Take Along During the Job Search

When you visit a potential employer to apply for a job or complete an interview, take a portfolio of information with you. Having this information with you will make paperwork much easier to complete. Place each of the following items in a folder, binder, briefcase, or large envelope.

- practice application from this Workbook. (Update the information if anything has changed.)
- resume



# activities

- transcript from the schools you have attended
- attendance record from your school
- Social Security card (place in the portfolio unless you always carry it in your wallet)
- work permit (if applicable)
- driver's license (keep in your wallet)
- birth certificate
- student or photo ID (if you have one)
- pen (may be an erasable ink type)
- passport, visa, and other official papers (for persons from other countries only)
- samples of your work

## Make the Most of Your First Job(s)

Once you land the job, make the most of it. The work habits you form early will set the stage for years to come.

- Link up with someone within the company whom you respect. Talk about career goals and employer expectations. Get an idea of how you and your work responsibilities contribute to the overall goals of the organization.
- Ask your supervisor or mentor to tell you the things that you are doing well and what you can do to improve your performance.
- Listen even when it hurts. Constructive criticism is often hard to take. It may mean keeping your emotions under control when you'd really like to blow up.
- When you see something that needs to be done, do it. Beware of phrases like, "It's not my job" or "I don't want to." Your initiative will be noticed.
- When you mess up, admit it, apologize, and move on. Blaming others makes a bad impression.
- Don't be afraid to say "I don't know" and "I need help." Bluffs and lies eventually lead to trouble.
- Keep confidential information confidential.
- Avoid gossip. Gossip hurts two people—the person being talked about and the one doing the talking.
- Respect time. Being absent or late, wasting time, or using company time for personal matters is unfair to others.
- Regardless of your justification, remember that taking company equipment, supplies, or merchandise is stealing.
- If you do not like someone, don't let it show. The person you offend today might be your boss tomorrow!
- It's one thing to be proud of yourself but quite another to be boastful. Bragging is a major turn-off.
- Be open to learning new things. Offer to tackle a sticky problem or volunteer for additional training. It may mean additional work now but could pay off in the future.
- Share credit with others. No one is successful all by themselves.

### Assemble a Portfolio

Collect the items you need to take on a job search. Place all items in a folder or a carrier of some type (binder, briefcase, large envelope).



### Put Things in Perspective

Reflection by the student:

1. Tell how taking charge of your preparation for the workplace has affected you.

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Reflection by the mentor (if student chose one):

1. How has completion of this workbook affected the life of this young person?

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2. What has the experience of being a mentor meant to you?

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# Conclusion

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If you have completed all the activities in this workbook, you are well on your way to an employable future. You have some of the basic skills. As with any skill, practice refines the skill and increases your knowledge base. Challenge yourself to complete the following additional activities.

- **Visit a library** and look up “application,” “etiquette,” “interview,” and related terms. Scan the sources to find those of interest to you.
- **Visit your county** Extension office to see if resources, such as video tapes, are available on loan to individuals, a club, or a group of friends who get permission to meet after school.
- **Form a club** to learn from each other. Visit your county Extension agent to discuss the possibilities. You’ll need an adult volunteer willing to meet with you.
- **Get to know** your school counselor. Learn about educational opportunities after high school.
- **Talk to your** counselor about real-work experiences offered through your school—shadowing, work-study, internships, apprenticeships, co-op education.
- **Talk to an** individual who works in a human resources or personnel office at a local business.
- **Interview people in** the workplace. Learn about their jobs.
- **Learn to plan** and conduct an effective meeting. Ask your Extension agent about the 4-H Citizenship Project.
- **High school juniors** and seniors may participate in the American Private Enterprise Seminar (APES) to learn how Americans do business. Check with your county Extension agent.
- **Learn the steps** involved in making a decision.
- **Learn to start** your own business. Talk to adults who started a business. Research “entrepreneur” at the library. Check out the business and self-help sections at the bookstore.
- **Enroll in a** self-study project at your county Extension office. Ask about one of these: “Fashion Magic” to learn how to dress and look your best, “Learn and Earn for Fun and Profit” to learn to set up your own business, “Public Speaking” and “Demonstrations” to learn how to speak in front of people and teach others how to do or make something, or a project related to your specific interest—everything from child care to woodworking.
- **Become a “mentor”** to a younger student.



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4-H is the youth development phase of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. The Extension service *extends* the University of Kentucky and Kentucky State University to citizens throughout the Commonwealth. 4-H involves youth through individual self-study at home, organized clubs in communities and schools, special interest groups, camp, television, after-school child care programs, or as part of the school curriculum. Contact your county Extension office for more information.