

Career Development Handbook



Cloud County
Community College



Career and
Transfer Center

2221 Campus Drive | Concordia, Kansas/ 631 Caroline Avenue, Junction City
www.cloud.edu

The Cloud County Community College Career and Transfer Center provides services for lifelong career planning skills, employability skills, and to assist in the career success of students, alumni, and community members.

The Career and Transfer Center is part of an integrated system of workforce development and employment programs with relevant education, social service, and career planning strategies.

Services include:

- Career assessment
- Individual assistance in planning career goals
- Job Vacancy Bulletin to provide temporary, part-time and full time employment
- Resume assistance and consultation
- Mock interviews and practice skills
- Cooperative Education course for on the job training and work experience
- Career portfolio assistance
- College transfer assistance
- College online courses for credit include Job Search, Dynamics of Career and Life Planning

Career Planning and Exploration

The Career and Transfer Center provides a variety of inventories and assessments designed to assist in career planning. A successful job search includes self-knowledge and self-exploration to determine interests, abilities, and values that provide information during the job search phase. Resumes should be constructed around strengths and skills while interviews are more positive when based on interests, abilities, and values. Therefore, to know oneself is vital to career success.

Various assessment tools are available through the Career and Transfer Center. They are designed to determine traits and abilities related to particular careers, work readiness, and career related skills.

Many online assessments that are self-scoring are available as well. An online website that has self-scoring assessments and career information is available at ACT. This website is www.actprofile.org.

Contact us:

Kelly Cook, Director

kelly.cook@cloud.edu

785-238-8010-, ext 713

Fax: 785-238-2898

www.cloud.edu/About/Career-Center/index

Resumes

Resumes are designed to present your personal and professional qualifications to the employer. Resumes are used to screen candidates for positions in a quick manner and should be created to assist in getting an opportunity for an interview.

There are various formats of resumes one can use, depending on your skills and work experience:

Chronological: This is the most commonly used resume format. Information under each heading is listed in reverse chronological order, meaning most recent information is first. This is an excellent format for entry level workers, recent graduates and those without lots of job change in their history. It shows skill progression.

Combination: Skills are identified with work history presented first without responsibilities listed. Persons who have had similar positions with related work skills often consider this format.

Scanned: No formatting is used and must have key words that electronic technology identifies.

Functional Resumes: The functional resume format may be preferred by job-seekers with a limited job history, a checkered job history of working multiple jobs in a short period of time, or a job history in a different career field than what you are now pursuing.

All resumes should begin with a heading that includes the name, address, and related information about the job seeker. Sub-headings should include information such as education, work experience, activities/memberships, awards, and references. Optional sub-headings might include a career objective, outstanding skills or highlights, leadership experience, hobbies, or knowledge related to the job in which you are applying.

Most resumes should be one page printed on fine quality stationery. In some cases a 2 page resume is necessary. If this is the case, make certain the name is on it in the event pages become separated.

Search for Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn and other social media accounts. These can provide you a great deal of information, much of it unofficial, about the company, its philosophy, corporate culture and the level of satisfaction of both employees and customers.



Sample Chronological Resume

Mary Ann Jones

Temporary address
2069 Cherry Lane
Huntsville, AL 12345

majones@calhoun.edu
774-555-6262

Permanent address
1429 Holyoke Street
Marysville, VA 43569

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a staff nurse position in a community hospital.

EDUCATION

Calhoun Community College, Tanner, AL May 2013

Associate degree in Nursing. GPA: 3.75

Related courses: Basic Pharmacology, Human Anatomy & Physiology I,
Safety Issues for Clinical Practices, Family Centered Nursing

Huntsville High School, Huntsville, AL May 2010

High school diploma, graduated valedictorian

WORK EXPERIENCE

Wayne's Shrimp Shack, Huntsville, AL Oct. 2012-Present

Waitress/Hostess

- * Greet customers
- * Make dinner reservations
- * Provide positive public relations for management
- * Ensure customer satisfaction and timeliness of service and food delivery
- * Train new hostesses and waitresses

Tots-to-Teens Center, Neshoba, AL Sept. 2011-Sept. 2012

Office Assistant

- * Provided administrative support for professional staff
- * Answered phones and referred messages to appropriate personnel
- * Coordinated after school and daycare activities for youth
- * Scheduled appointments for the director
- * Mediated conflicts during day camps

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

County Health Department, Huntsville, AL Dec. 2010-Dec. 2012

Candy Striper/Personal Aid to Head Nurse

- * Assisted nurses with presentation preparation at local high schools and community centers
- * Scheduled client appointments
- * Greeted patients at check-in
- * Performed clerical tasks, including filing
- * Comforted infant patients in distress
- * Assisted with blood pressure screenings

Mary Ann Jones

Temporary address
2069 Cherry Lane
Huntsville, AL 12345

majones@calhoun.edu
774-555-6262

Permanent address
1429 Holyoke Street
Marysville, VA 43569

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AWARDS & ACTIVITIES

Who's Who Among America's Community College Students,
Dean's List, Student Government Association, Nursing Club

SKILLS

Proficient in computer office applications, including Microsoft Word, Excel, Adobe suite, and email. Able to read blood pressure and heart rates using medical equipment. Fluent in Spanish and German

REFERENCES

Nancy Smith
Former Nursing instructor
Huntsville Nursing College
4231 Yates Drive
Huntsville, AL 12345
nsmith@huntsville.edu
817-314-9876

Christine Abernathy
Former employer at Tots-to-Teens Center
9547 Ross Street
Neshoba, AL 68327
981-674-3209

Wayne Grant
Employer at Wayne's Shrimp Shack
Huntsville, AL 68540
981-569-2840

Combination Format

Brian Gray

1 Main Street, New City, GA 91010
Home: (555) 322-7337 • Cell: (555) 322-7337
myemail@example.com

Summary of Skills

Dynamic Wind Turbine Technician with an impressive blend of technical expertise and people skills. Committed to providing quality and consistent support, no matter the hour or the weather.

- Lean principles knowledge
- Valid CA driver's license
- Can move up to 100 pounds
- Good at deciphering technical documents
- Proactive
- Disciplined
- Neat and professional
- Self-starter

Experience

Next Gen Energy, Hope Mills, CA

Wind Turbine Technician

July 2009 to present

- Run operational tests on systems and equipment to reinforce proper processes and remedy malfunctions
- Ensure compliance with all legal requirements
- Draft or modify landowner agreements
- Purchase needed parts and materials
- Develop operating procedures
- Oversee outside contractors

Tom's Wind Power, Hope Mills, CA

Wind Turbine Technician

Sept. 2006 to June 2009

- Maintained sub-station equipment
- Thoroughly inspected and repaired program systems components
- Organized, analyzed and prepared technical data reports to ensure proper work flow and productivity
- Applied engineering principles to develop and operate electrical, mechanical and data processing systems
- Produced and maintained accurate design documentation

Education

Cloud County Community College, Concordia, KS

Associate of Applied Science in Wind Energy, 2012. Related coursework included:

- Electrical Theory
- Wind Turbine Siting
- Electronics
- Airfoils & Composite Repair
- Hydraulics
- Transformer Theory
- Employability Skills & Blueprint Reading
- Mechanical Systems
- Motors Generators PLCs

Brian Gray

1 Main Street, New City, GA 91010
Home: (555) 322-7337 • Cell: (555) 322-7337
myemail@example.com

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Education (*continued*)

- Wind Energy Internship, Smoky Hill Wind Farm, Ellsworth, KS, Fall 2011
- OSHA 30 Training completed May 2012
- Rescue Training completed May 2012

References

Daniel Smith, Wind Energy Instructor
Wind Community College
3333 Campus Drive
Albany, KS 66901
785-432-8435, ext. 311
dsmith@wind.edu

John Amos, Former Supervisor
Tom's Wind Power
3306 Curt Lane
Hope Mills, CA 77489
714-827-6693
jamos@tomeypowers.com

Jeffery Kind, Executive Director
Ingen Wind Energy Corporation
4483 Franklin Drive
St. Louis, MO 55441
318-945-0934
jkind@ingen.com

Functional Format

JONATHAN BENTLEY, E.I.T.

100 Central Rd.
Middletown, MT 55555

JBentley@email.com

555-111-1212 (home)
555-222-3434 (cell)

Dedicated civil engineer with experience in structural and transportation design and proven leadership skills

CORE COMPETENCIES

- * Structural Investigation & Design
- * Computer Aided Design (CAD)
- * Conceptual Design & Development
- * Traffic Engineering
- * Construction Drawings
- * Project Management
- * Hydraulics & Hydrology
- * Soils & Earthwork
- * Impact Studies & Specifications
- * Groundwater Monitoring
- * Floodplain Management
- * Construction Drawings

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, emphasis in Structures
Northern State University, Uptown, NY

May 2003

Relevant Projects

Urban Lake and Park Development for City of Centerville, NY

Scope of design included storm water runoff, earthwork, structural analysis of retaining wall, and parking/sidewalk design

- Designated Project Manager of four-member team
- Retained quality control over project scope to preserve manageable size and avoid State violations
- Initiated communication with city engineers and Fish & Game personnel on project-related issues and guidance
- Maintained project schedule and completed on time. Received an "A" grade on project

Highway Design for State of Massachusetts

The project scope included design of one-mile stretch of highway through private and public lands. Design challenges included steep terrain, storm water runoff, super-elevation for curves, and negotiating homes, businesses and cemetery.

- Design included horizontal and vertical design based on minimal earthwork and minimal disturbance to local businesses and public land.
- Maintained project schedule and completed on time. Received an "A" grade on project.

SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

- Earned status of Engine Boss and Incident Commander Type 4 and oversaw wildlife control, including methods of attack, personnel and equipment requirements, and strategic planning; maintained personnel and public safety.
- Supervised up to 150 personnel and all equipment needs, including air tankers, engines, helicopters, and water tenders.
- Used sound judgment and decision-making skills to preserve safety of crew and implement strategic plans of attack against wildfires.
- Developed strong leadership and communication skills as demonstrated by high-level of performance by crew members.
- Implemented training regiments for crew, many members promoted as a result.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Delivery/Yard Crew, Big Tree Lumber Co., Forest, MT

2003-Present

Forestry Technician, Tonto National Forest, Townville, CA

FT Seasonal, 2000-2003

Type 2, 3 and 6 Crew Member, Rural Metro Fire Dept., Townville, CA

FT Seasonal, 1998-1999

TECHNICAL AND RELATED

MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Project/AutoCAD/HEC-HMS/Haestad Methods - WaterCAD, SewerCAD, Flowmaster

Familiarly Codes and Methods: NEPA, UBC, ASD, NDS, LRFD

Montana Commercial Driver's License

Cover Letters

A cover letter is sometimes also called a letter of application. A cover letter is a formal business letter that acts as an introduction to your resume. Since it is a formal business document, it should be in block business letter format. In this format, text is left justified (aligned on the left-hand margin).

Your cover letter must “sell” you as the best candidate for the job. It should highlight your accomplishments and qualifications, as well as explain how you can benefit the company. It should be easy to read and have a positive tone. It is very important that your cover letter be well thought out as it is your first contact with a potential employer.

Each paragraph of your cover letter has a different purpose, and there are strategies you can use to make each paragraph effective.

The first paragraph should be designed to get the attention of the reader. It should indicate why you are writing, what position you are applying for, and how you learned of the job.

The second and possibly the third paragraphs need to increase the reader’s interest further by listing your interests, skills, and how you will benefit the employer. Your remarks should highlight the main points the reader should look for in your resume.

Lastly, always thank the reader for their consideration of you and a request for an interview. You should always indicate how you plan to follow up on this contact. It is wise to have your phone number in this final paragraph as well.

As you can see from the following samples, having a letter that is easy to read is just as important as your resume. Use the same fine quality of paper for the cover letter as the resume. It should all match. Font styles and size should match as well. There should be room for your signature.

There is one sample cover letter known as a memo or broadcast letter. This is used for those times when you’re mainly inquiring about any job openings they may have available. Although it can be used, it is not as effective as when you are applying for a specific position. Given it is a memo, it lacks your hand written signature which also adds a personal touch.

Make sure you follow the directions for applying as outlined in the job you are applying for. If you try to do something differently, it will be a waste of time to apply. For example, if directions say to apply with Human Resources and you send it to the President of the company, your resume may be tossed without any consideration. If the directions indicate to submit a letter of application with your resume, do so. This doesn’t mean you need a job application. Remember this is a different form available through the company. A letter of application is the cover letter.

You only get one chance to make a good first impression! Your cover letter is likely the very first contact with an employer, followed by your resume. It cannot be emphasized enough that you are careful in wording, formatting, and that you show your professionalism.

20 **POWERFUL** WORDS TO USE IN A COVER LETTER

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. SOLVED | 11. INNOVATIVE |
| 2. PROMOTED | 12. TRAINED |
| 3. OVERSAW | 13. BUILT |
| 4. IMPROVED | 14. INTRODUCED |
| 5. ADAPTED | 15. STRENGTHENED |
| 6. POSITIVITY | 16. DIRECTED |
| 7. INITIATED | 17. PERSUADED |
| 8. PLANNED | 18. ORGANIZED |
| 9. MANAGED | 19. PROJECTED |
| 10. LEAD | 20. ASSESSED |

There are several things that job seekers can do in their cover letters that can actually hurt their chances of getting an interview. You will want to avoid these mistakes.

- Don't write "To Whom It May Concern," or "Dear Sir or Madam." If you don't know the person's name, use something generic and gender neutral, like Candidate Selection Team or Dear Hiring Manager. Try to find the contact's name by calling the company if possible. Sometimes you are unable to determine this, but it is in your best interest to find a particular name when possible.
- Don't use slang, like "I crushed the highest sales in my region three years running."
- Don't use correction fluid or make corrections after the letter is printed. Reprint your letter if necessary.
- Don't hand write your letter or address the envelopes in your own handwriting. Microsoft Word's Envelopes and Labels feature can help create professional-looking labels.
- Don't write a letter longer than one page.

- Don't provide false information about yourself or your qualifications.
- Don't include erroneous information about the company.
- Don't include personal information (avoid references to religion, family, etc.).
- Don't write poorly (avoid using clichés, exaggeration, typographical or grammatical errors, etc.).
- Don't use form letters and mass mailings. Each letter should be tailored to a specific job.
- Don't include photos unless specifically asked.
- Don't confess weakness or apologize for a lacking qualification.
- Don't use an improper tone (angry, demanding, desperate, confessional, too enthusiastic).
- Don't include salary information unless asked.

5 Things for Recent Grads to Remember When Hunting for Their First Jobs

Get a clue

Nearly 40% of employers are turned off by unprepared students in interviews. Be knowledgeable about the company and have a basic understanding about the position.

Act professionally

Present yourself in the best light possible by using a professional email address, double-checking spelling and grammar in resumes and emails, and watching what you post online.

Don't expect too much

Check your attitude of instant gratification at the door. Two in five recent grads expected to receive a higher starting salary than that which they actually received.

Have a good attitude

Job applicants should strive to be enthusiastic, friendly, and have a positive attitude so they don't come across as duds during interviews.

Brush up on your skills

Recent grads are known for their poor writing and critical thinking skills as well as inexperience. Intern, volunteer and work on your skills to become a more desirable candidate.

Sources: money.usnews.com | finance.yahoo.com | chicagojobresource.com | huffingtonpost.com | venturebeat.com | studentmentor.org | quintcareers.com

Sample Cover Letter for specific position

Sherry Smith
2341 Amos Drive
Central, MO 43298
September 9, 2016

Susan Baker, RT
Central Regional Health Center
719 Crestview Lane
Central, MO 43298

Dear Ms. Baker:

I am inquiring about the Office Assistant position with your company. I learned of the position by visiting with staff in the Career Center at Cloud County Community College.

Enclosed is a copy of my resume for your review. Through my coursework at Cloud County, I completed many classes that relate to office work, such as Introduction to Business and Computer Applications. I have gained skills in several programs, including Microsoft Office, PowerPoint and Excel. In addition to my college degree, I have worked in companies that provided me experience in working in an office setting and with customers. My leadership skills were also advanced by my involvement in sports and several activities.

I am available to work full time, and am confident that I have the education and skills to work in your office. I have always been interested in working as an office assistant, and I look forward to having the opportunity to work with you.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am available at your convenience to visit with you personally. I will contact you next week if I have not heard from you to arrange an interview appointment.

Sincerely,



Sherry Smith

Enclosures

Sample Broadcast Letter

DATE: May 2, 2015

TO: Human Resources Manager
Smithville Chamber of Commerce
228 North 4th Street
Smithville, MO 69438

FROM: Lisa Needy
418 6th Street
Nortonville, IA 54987

I am writing to inquire about career opportunities available in your community. I am interested in positions you might have available in a retail business. I am confident that my education and work experience would prove to be valuable in the retail industry. I would like to work full time, and have enclosed a copy of my resume for your review.

During my time attending Cloud County Community College, I completed many courses that relate to the retail field, including business accounting, salesmanship, and leadership skills. In addition to obtaining my Associate of Science degree, I have many work-related skills, including cash register operation, customer service and computer technology.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to visit with you further regarding any available positions in the community. You may reach me by calling 613-798-5381.

Sincerely,

Lisa Needy

Enclosure

Sample Internship Cover Letter

May 5, 2017

507 Heritage Drive
Smithville, MO 98317

Ms. Cynthia Little
Smithville Realty Inc.
Smithville, MO 98317

Dear Ms. Little,

I am inquiring about a Cooperative Education Internship in business for spring 2017 at your agency. I became aware of this potential opportunity after visiting with staff in the Career and Transfer Center at Cloud County Community College.

I have enclosed my resume, which outlines my completed coursework, as well as work experience. I am working toward completing my associate degree, and then transferring to a university. I plan to become a real estate agent after graduation. My spring class schedule will allow me to work from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

In addition to my coursework, I have been involved in the Business Club, and work as a Student Ambassador at Cloud County Community College. These experiences have broadened my leadership and organizational skills. Through an internship with your agency, I would gain an understanding of a typical day working as a Realtor.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I am available to attend your required orientation. You may contact me at 643-555-0463, and I would be happy to provide you with additional information you might require.

Sincerely,

Rene Baldwin

Rene Baldwin

Sample Thank You for an Interview Letter

Ann E. Job
Campus Apartment 3-18
Concordia, KS 66901
May 25, 2017

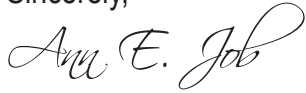
John Smith
Designs by John
428 Rush Street
Denver, CO 83029

Dear Mr. Smith,

I appreciated the opportunity to speak with you on May 24. The information you shared with me about employment at Designs by John and the graphic design industry in general was excellent. I am excited about the possibility of applying my education and experience in a position as a graphic designer.

Thanks again for your time and consideration. If I can provide you with any additional information about my skills, please don't hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Ann E. Job

Sample Letter of Acceptance

Ann E. Job
Campus Apartment 3-18
Concordia, KS 66901
May 25, 2017

John Smith
Designs by John
428 Rush Street
Denver, CO 83029

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am very pleased to accept your offer for the position of graphic designer, as outlined in your letter of May 20. I understand I will begin my duties with an employee orientation session on June 1 at 8 a.m. I am happy to confirm the starting salary of \$48,950, plus health insurance and one week's paid vacation.

Enclosed are my completed health insurance forms, W-4 and parking permit application. I look forward to meeting the challenges of working at Designs by John.

Sincerely,



Sample Letter of Rejection

Ann E. Job
Campus Apartment 3-18
Concordia, KS 66901

May 25, 2017

John Smith
Designs by John
428 Rush Street
Denver, CO 83029

Dear Mr. Smith,

After very serious consideration, I regret to inform you that I have decided to decline your offer of employment as a graphic designer. This has been a very hard decision for me to make, however, my life circumstances have changed, and this position would not be compatible with my career plans.

Thank you very much for you time, consideration and employment offer. Your confidence in me is greatly appreciated. I wish you continued success in your business.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann E. Job".

Ann E. Job

Interviews

An interview is a meeting between an employer and a job applicant. The interview may take place in person, over the phone, through video conferences, or perhaps Skype. The interview may be formal or somewhat casual. It may involve only you and the employer, or it might be a group of people interviewing you. The ultimate purpose of the interview is to determine if you are the right person for the job.

The employer asks questions to see how well you understand the industry, the position, and your ability to perform the job duties. During an interview, you will need to show the employer that you know about and understand the needs of the company. One way to prepare for that is to re-search the company. Typically, you can do this by searching the Internet, requesting information from the company prior to your interview, or visiting with a career center or employment agency.

You will want to know:

- What products or services the company sells
- Who their customers and competitors are
- How the company is doing within the industry
- What the company's culture is like

The company is trying to determine if you will fit in a positive way with the culture of the company. You may not meet every job qualification they are searching for, but if you present yourself well in an interview, there is a good possibility that you could be chosen over other candidates who have similar or better qualifications, but don't communicate them as well.

You will also want to know if you are the right fit for the company. By doing your research, you will be better prepared to ask questions in order to learn if you will fit in with the company. Use this time to decide whether the job is right for you. You'll want to learn if the company is growing, if the position is what you are looking for, and if it will give you the opportunity to use your skills and abilities. Your questions should help you determine if the work atmosphere is one where you will work well, and one that you will enjoy.

Before interviewing, make sure your social networking sites portray you in a professional manner. Many employers check out social networking site, and Google potential candidates. Review what information is available about you, and be prepared to answer questions about what may be found. If you can see it, so can a potential employer.

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

01 Dress professionally and make sure you are well-groomed

02 Prepare your portfolio ahead of time and practice using it so that you know where everything is located

03 Practice your answers, but don't make them sound rehearsed—just focus on hitting the main points

04 Do your research on the company and position that you're interviewing for

05 Bring any materials you may need including business card, resume and portfolio

06 Bring a notebook and a pen or pencil so that you can take notes or jot down questions

07 Be on time—allow for extra travel time in case you get lost or run into traffic



Dressing for the part: What not to wear

An outfit that fit doesn't properly

An outfit that doesn't fit properly might give the interviewer the impression that you aren't used to dressing appropriately, or that you simply don't care enough to dress well. Loose clothing can look sloppy, and the discomfort of tight clothing can be very distracting. Make sure your attire fits you well, especially when you are sitting down. Make sure your clothes are clean and ironed to give a neat, tidy appearance.

Wearing clothing that is too revealing

Skirts that are too short are a common problem for women, and can be deemed unprofessional by an interviewer. Always sit down in your skirt, if you choose to wear one, to make sure it has enough leg coverage, especially if it has a slit. In addition, your top should not be too sheer, low-cut, or sleeveless.

Wearing too much jewelry

Clanking bracelets, multiple rings, and dangling earrings can be distracting to an interviewer. Women should wear two to three minimal, conservative pieces of jewelry. Men might also want to avoid earrings, or other pieces of distracting jewelry.

Ignoring your feet

A great outfit can be ruined by a poor choice of footwear. It can also give the impression that you don't pay attention

to details. Men should wear dressy, dark, polished shoes with matching socks. Women should wear dressy, closed-toe shoes, and avoid high, overly-sexy or strappy heels.

Making risky grooming choices

You can really make a statement with your choice of hairstyle, makeup and fingernails. Just make sure that statement doesn't have the potential to turn off your interviewer. It is best to choose styles that are minimal and professional.

In addition to proper attire, your body language also gives the employer an impression of you. In preparing for an interview, you may think about what you are going to say, but also give thought to what your body, facial expressions and gestures are communicating. Your body language can be just as important as the words you speak during an interview. Do you frown when you are thinking? Do you fidget with your jewelry or nervously bounce your leg? Do you clear your throat or have some other nervous gesture? Body language is a reflection of your true thoughts and attitude. The real secret to portraying good body language is to actually approach an interview with confidence and positive thoughts about your abilities. The more positive you feel toward an interview, the more appealing your body language will appear.

Successful Interview Tips

Arrive early so that you're mentally prepared for this important event. Take an extra resume or two, in case you need to refer to it during the interview. You may also want to have a copy of the job description for the same purpose.

Make sure your cell phone is off. It is disruptive to have it ring during your interview. It shows the employer that the interview is of secondary importance to you.

Many job candidates jingle the change in their pockets or play with their keys if they are nervous. If you keep your pockets empty, you will avoid this nervous behavior.

Never take someone with you when you are interviewing. It is never appropriate to have a friend or family member wait for you inside the building while you are being interviewed.

DO NOT chew gum during the interview. Do not smoke prior to, or during, the interview. The smell will still be on your clothing if you smoke prior. The rest goes without saying.

Avoid speaking negatively about past employers or experiences.

Show motivation to work and have professional goals.

Save salary negotiations until after you have been offered the position.

Practice interview questions so that you are prepared and can be comfortable with your answers. In responding to questions, be sure to stay to the point without belaboring remarks, but also respond so that you are clear and concise.

Common Interview Questions

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself.
2. How did you hear about the position?
3. What do you know about our company?
4. Why do you want this job?
5. Why should we hire you?
6. What are your greatest professional strengths?
7. What do you consider to be your weaknesses?
8. What is your greatest professional achievement?
9. Tell me about a challenge or conflict you've faced at work, and how you dealt with it.
10. Where do you see yourself in five years?
11. What's your dream job?
12. What other companies are you interviewing with?
13. Why are you leaving your current job?
14. Why were you fired (if you were)?
15. What are you looking for in a new position?
16. What is your management style?
17. How would your boss and co-workers describe you?
18. How do you deal with pressure or stressful situations?
19. If you were an animal, which one would you want to be?
20. Do you have any questions?

What You Wish You'd Known Before Your JOB INTERVIEW

Common nonverbal mistakes made at a job interview
From a survey of 2000 bosses

In a survey of 2000 bosses **33%** claimed that they know within the first 90 seconds of an interview whether they will hire someone

The average length of an interview is approximately 40 minutes

Statistics show that when meeting new people the impact is:

- 7% From what we actually say
- 38% The quality of our voice grammar and overall confidence
- 55% The way we dress, act and walk through the door

Clothes

- Bright colors are a turnoff
- 70% Employers claiming they don't want applicants to be fashionable or trendy.
- 65% Of bosses said clothes could be the deciding factor between two similar candidates.

Top Ten Most common mistakes made at a job interview

- 10 Over-Explaining Why You Lost Your Last Job
Conveying That You're Not Over It 9
- 8 Lacking Humor, Warmth, or Personality
Not Showing Enough Interest or Enthusiasm 7
- 6 Inadequate Research About a Potential Employer
Concentrating Too Much on What You Want 5
- 4 Trying to Be All Things to All People
"Winging" the Interview 3
- 2 Failing to Set Yourself Apart From Other Candidates
Failing to Ask For the Job 1

Most common tips about interviewing

- 4 Learn about the organization
- 3 Have a specific job in mind
- 2 Review your qualifications for the job
- 1 Be ready to briefly describe your experience

5 questions most likely to be asked

- 5 Tell me about your experience at _____
- 4 Why do you want to work for us?
- 3 What do you know about our company?
- 2 Why did you leave your last job?
- 1 Tell me about yourself

More common interview questions

The Endicott Survey, published by the Placement Center of Northwestern University, periodically updates its original list of questions most commonly asked of college graduates at interviews.

- What are your long-range and short-range goals and objectives? When and why did you establish these goals? How are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
- What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, do you have for yourself for the next 10 years?
- What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
- What do you really want to do in life?
- What are your long-range career objectives?
- How do you plan to achieve your career goals?
- What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
- What do you expect to be earning in five years?
- Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?
- Which is more important to you: The money or the type of job?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- How would you describe yourself?
- How do you think a friend or professor who knows you well would describe you?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- What qualifications do you have that make you think that you will be successful?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in a company like ours?
- In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our company?
- What qualities should a successful manager possess?
- Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor and subordinates.
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- Describe your most rewarding college experience.
- Why did you select your college or university?
- If you were hiring a graduate for this position, what qualities would you look for?
- What led you to choose your major/field of study?
- What academic subjects did you like best? Least?
- Do you enjoy doing independent research?
- If you could, would you plan your academic study differently?
- What changes would you make in your college or university?
- Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?
- What have you learned from participation in extra-curricular activities?
- In what kind of a work environment are you most comfortable?

- Do you have plans for continued study? (Graduate students may be asked: Why did you decide to pursue an advanced degree?)
- How do you work under pressure?
- In what part-time or summer jobs have you been most interested? Why?
- How would you describe the ideal job for you following graduation?
- Why did you decide to seek a position with this company?
- What do you know about our company?
- What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
- Are you seeking employment in a company of a certain size? Why?
- What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for you which you hope to work?
- Do you have a geographical preference?
- Will you relocate? Does relocations bother you?
- Are you willing to travel?
- Are you will to spend at least six months as a trainee?
- Why do you think you might like to live in the community where our company is located?
- What major problems have you encountered and how did you deal with them?
- What have you learned from your mistakes?
- How has your education prepared you for a career?
- Why should I hire you?
- Tell me about the largest sale you have made and how you were able to get it.
- Give me an example of a typical school/work day and how you planned for it.
- Describe a time when you had a disagreement with your boss/teacher/co-worker/peer.
- Tell me about a time you had to organize a project at school/work. How did it turn out?
- Describe how you organized a typical school/work schedule.
- Tell me about a time you disagreed with your professor/boss. How did you handle it?
- Explain how you have used your skills on the job. What were the circumstances and what were the results?
- Describe a situation when you had a conflict with a peer/co-worker. What was it about and how was it resolved?
- Explain how you have used your skills either at school or on the job. What were the circumstances and what were the results?
- Tell me about a situation when your technical skills were needed to solve a problem.
- Tell me how you resolved a problem caused by a lack of communication.
- Tell me about a time when you had to prepare a written report.
- Give me an example of a situation in which you made a commitment you could not keep.
- Describe a project you worked on that was loaded with problems and obstacles.
- Describe a time when you had to persuade a co-worker to another point of view. Results?
- Share a time when you were in a position to influence a decision. What happened?

Behavior Based Questions

- Tell me about a time when you had a deadline to meet, but things did not go as planned.

What to Ask

- Tell me more about how my work would fit into the whole picture.
- Describe the type of person who succeeds in your company.
- What is it that you think this person has to do, right now, to make a contribution?
- Why was this position created - or why did the previous person leave?
- What is the most urgent or difficult part of the job?
- What freedom would I have in getting the job done?
- What is the company's overall management style?
- Can you tell me about your performance appraisal system?
- What do you see as my greatest strengths or weaknesses in terms of this position?
- When will you be making your decision to fill this position?
- How do you train new management employees?
- In what ways is your product different from your competitors?
- What new programs is your department planning for next year?
- What do you want the person in this job to accomplish?
- I don't understand your _____ Can you clarify that for me?
- I am unclear about what you mean by _____
- What other information about my background would you like to know?
- How does what I have said so far fit with what the company needs?

- In what ways does the company anticipate seeking new markets?
- I would like to hear more about the project you described. Can you share a bit more about it?

What NOT to Ask

- Tell me about your medical insurance.
- What about other benefits?
- When could I expect a promotion?
- What happens after my probationary period?
- What will the salary be?
- What are the hours?
- Can I telecommute?
- What happened to the last person who had this job?
- Does the company pay for me to return to graduate school?
- Do you do background checks?
- What is your policy on drug use?
- How did I do?
- Not asking questions at all.
By far the worst question is the one you never ask. Not asking any questions during an interview shows a lack of interest or comprehension, or can make you look desperate, like someone who will take any job under any circumstances.

Illegal interview questions

State and federal laws make discrimination based on certain protected categories, such as national origin, citizenship, age, marital status, disabilities, arrest and conviction records, military discharge status, race, gender, or pregnancy status, illegal.

Examples:

Nationality

Are you a U.S. citizen? What is your native language? Where were you/your parents born?

Age

How old are you? What is your birth date? When did you graduate?

Marital/Family Status

Are you married? Who do you live with? Do you plan to have a family? When? How many children do you have? What are your childcare arrangements?

Religion

What religion are you? What church do you belong to?

Disabilities

Do you have any disabilities? Have you ever filed a worker's compensation form? Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations?

Medical History

What current or past problems might limit your ability to do this job? Do you smoke? Have you had a history of mental illness?

Arrest Record

Have you ever been arrested? Have you ever pleaded guilty to a crime?

Military Service

Were you honorably discharged? Tell me about your military record. Have you served in the military of other countries outside the United States?

Credit

Do you have any credit problems? Have you recently filed for bankruptcy? Is your salary presently subject to legal attachment or wage garnishment?

4 TRICKY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Tell me about yourself.

The interviewee is looking for how you will benefit their company.

Tip!

- 1) Keep your answers short & simple.
- 2) Elaborate on experiences & goals relating to the applied position.
- 3) Summarize your resume & talk about transitions in employment.

Why did you leave your previous job?

Understanding how & why you decided to move on from the previous company.

Tip!

- 1) If you have a job, say you're "seeking greater opportunity."
- 2) Got fired? Say that you "parted ways" & change the topic to your accomplishments.
- 3) Laid off? Then it's okay to say it's recession related.

What is your range of salary?

Making sure if you are selling yourself too high or selling yourself too short.

Tip!

- 1) **ALWAYS SAY NEGOTIABLE!**
- 2) Find out what others are making w/ the same position in the area at www.salary.com
- 3) Research, Research, Research!

What are your goals for the future?

Allows the interviewee to determine if you are a fit for their company.

Tip!

- 1) Explain that you want to excel and be known for your skills.
- 2) Mention how you see yourself having more responsibilities w/in the company.
- 3) Give examples of positive results that you will make.

How to be successful in your job

Adopt the right attitude

The number one complaint of employers is the attitude new graduates bring to the workplace. Look around and find those people in the organization who seem successful and who are respected by others. Model your attitude and behavior after theirs. Humility, readiness to learn, readiness to change, respect, confidence, having an open mind, and positive work ethics are all attributes to take to work every day.

Adjust your expectations

A major cause of frustration many new graduates experience is their expectations. Frustration is nothing more than the difference between expectations and reality. If you work at keeping your expectations realistic, you won't be disappointed.

Manage the impressions you make

You must place a premium on impression management in your first year. Whenever you start any job, there are many people watching you and trying to assess your ability to succeed. You are an outsider until you prove otherwise. Just because you are an employee does not mean that the people in the organization have accepted you.

Build effective relationships

It is people who shape an organization. Determine how things are done, decide your future, and guide the success of the organization. Every job, no matter how technical, will require you to be successful at working with people.

Become a good follower

Employers don't want to see your leadership skills in

the beginning – they want to see your “followship” skills. There is no more important person than your boss on your first job. You must give top priority to learning how to build a positive and mutually productive relationship.

Understand the organization's culture

Organizations want employees who “fit” their culture and enthusiastically embrace it. You aren't allowed to deviate from the culture until you are first accepted as part of the “team,” and have a track record of proven performance. That won't happen in your first year, so focus on “fitting in.”

Develop work savvy

Most new graduates find that they have to learn how to apply their knowledge in a job setting. Book knowledge is fine, but what can you do with it? How does it fit the tasks you have to do? How can you use it to get results?

Acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities you need

Employers expect you to need development. Take advantage of it and don't be embarrassed to ask for training or help. Listen to your performance reviews. Then develop a plan to guide your development. If you have spare time, which often happens in the beginning, use it to learn something new.

Once you accept the unique nature of the transition from college to work, it can be a great deal of fun, very exciting, and a terrific start to a successful career.

Take responsibility

Remember that it is your responsibility to make your transition to work a success, not your employer's. The good ones will help you, but it is your career.

Helpful resources

Cloud County Community College Career & Transfer Center:
www.cloud.edu/About/Career-Center/index

Career planning guide: www.actstudent.org/career

Online career assessments and information: www.careeroverview.com

Occupational outlook: www.bls.gov/ooh

Career paths: www.whodoyouwant2b.com

Real life students talking about their majors, colleges and career paths in video format based on more than 15 career industries and pathways. Click on the appropriate heading, such as “college student,” then click on interested pathway.

Build a resume online: www.myfuture.com

Find out about college finance options, roommate stories, the military as a career, and some career and college information.

Career planning websites: www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sp/resources

Career advice, tutorials, references: www.careers.org/advice

College and career life planning: www.collegecareerlifeplanning.com

Department of Labor: www.careeronestop.org