



# Managing the Transition for Market Preparedness

*Workforce Restructuring Transition Information*

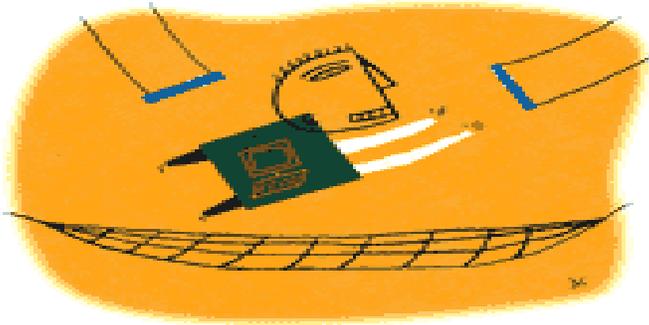
One of the hardest parts of beginning a job search is knowing where to start. This packet provides a foundation of resources to get you going in the right direction. A job search is hard work but your new career situation offers you a unique opportunity to recharge and redirect your career. It can be an exciting journey through unfamiliar territory and your motivation and attitude can be the keys to your success.

Outlined below are the sections included in this packet, as you begin reviewing the material keep in mind everyone's situation is different and as with anything your individual job search strategy needs to be tailored to your individual situation.

### **Outline:**

- I. Moving Forward, Page 3:
  - Dealing with the Transition
  - Job Search Preparation Tips
- II. Skills Identification, Page 7:
  - Taking Inventory of your Skills
- III. Resumes & Cover Letters, Page 13:
  - Writing a Powerful Resume
  - Writing a Powerful Cover Letter
- IV. Job Search Tools, Page 20:
  - Employment Resources & Tips for Internet Research
  - Networking
- V. Interviewing Effectively, Page 33:
  - Interview Tips & Preparation
- VI. The Finishing Touches, Page 37:
  - Thank You Notes
  - Negotiating Skills
- VII. Additional Resources, Page 41:
  - Job Search Engines on the Web
  - Reading Material Suggestions

## What's Next!



**You can't move ahead without letting go...**

**.....being "in between" is uncertain and nowhere....**

**...take hold of new beginnings.**

Four steps that can make a significant difference in dealing with the fallout of traumatic change...

- 1) Acknowledge Fears and move past them
- 2) Relieve Stress and get moving again
- 3) Rebuild Trust and Communication
- 4) Fuel Commitment and Creativity

**"Nothing is Permanent, but Change", *Heraclitus, Greek Philosopher, c. 540-470 BC.***

### **What is change?**

- Change is complex & dynamic
- Change is non-stop
- Change is opportunity
- Change creates uncertainty
- Change is...

Change happens at a point in time...transition is the process of how we get from what was to what will be. The starting point for transition is not the outcome but the ending that you will have to make to leave the old situation behind.

Transition starts with an ending - paradoxical but true.

## I. From the ending comes.....MOVING FORWARD:

### **Tips for Focusing Your Time and Energy**

- Get Real – be realistic about what you can and cannot control. Work out what you need to let go of, and re-direct your energies into things you can actually influence. If you don't start by being real, you're still going to be wasting time and highly stressed.
- Conversely – don't under value what lies in your control.

### **Tips for Taking a Possibility Mindset**

- Eliminate negative interference in your concentration.
- Reflect on when you feel most confident and evaluate the triggers or stimuli.
- How you have managed to quiet the negative self voice in this instance?
- Minimize anxiety; don't blow things out of proportion.
- Once you put things into perspective, it's easier to start to focus on the solution.
- When taking a solution focused approach, find out what is already working and do more of it.
- Stop doing what doesn't work and start doing something else.

### **Tips for Reaching Out to Others**

- Ask for help and help others when they need it.
- Be specific about what you want or need and go to the right person.
- Share the load – don't rely on one person too heavily.
- Seek to understand – ask for information.
- Let others understand you – be honest about your feelings.
- Be open to receiving and acting on feedback you get.
- If you disagree, listen first and then share your point of view.

### **Setting Your Direction - Personal Action Plan**

- Identify some actions that will give you immediate benefit, as well as some that will reward you over time.
- Be specific and avoid any gray areas.
- Make sure that any resources you need to help you achieve your plan are accessible. Check that your objectives are attainable. If not, review your objectives and repeat the process.
- Once complete, your action plan can be used to drive improvement in your personal effectiveness through change.

*“Change can be scary, and is something that naturally we would rather not have to do. Yet, handled well, it can be exciting and successful. Besides, it beats the alternative. If you don’t believe me, go ask a dinosaur”.*

*Steve Mosley*

**Things to do first:**

Adjust to the reality of your situation. Educate yourself about what it means to be ‘laid off’ and finding a new job in 2009. The web is a great source of information. Some ideas on topics to Google:

- Layoff Next Steps
- Unemployment Benefits (your country and state/province)
- Health Insurance (CAN or US and state/province)
- How to find a job?
- Job aggregators
- Job boards
- Blogging
- Recruiting Agencies (Finance, Engineering, Marketing etc)
- Professional Organizations (IEEE, CPA, CA, PMI, etc)
- Social Networking – LinkedIn, Facebook, and MySpace
- Resume Writing
- Salary information (include applicable country)
- Tips for interviewees
- How to become entrepreneur
- Owning a Franchise
- Hoovers (for Corporate information)

Wikipedia may provide general information on some of the above.

Explore and become familiar with the world of job hunting today. It’s not your ‘father’s job search’, it’s a new, fast pace, highly networked world.

Start notifying your network (both family and professional) about your situation. Let people know your job was impacted as a result of the recent filing. It is important to convey this in an upbeat, positive way. Those that follow up or contact you tell them you appreciate their interest and will get back with them when you are ready to actively begin your search.

Think about where you want your career to go next. Consider if you want a similar role to the one you had, work in a small business, middle or large corporation, open a small business/entrepreneur, pursue consulting? Now is the time to consider making a change or expanding your options. Discuss this with your family if appropriate.

**When you are ready to begin looking for a new job:**

Your first new job will be looking for a job. You will need to set short term goals and expectations for yourself and stick to them. For example, reach out to at least ten new contacts a day. Even if you don't hit a home run on a given day, you have met your goal and expanded your network.

Set a daily schedule. Stay active, include regular exercise. This will pay dividends by helping you feel good about yourself. It will help you fight off depression by providing a sense of accomplishment. Part of your schedule should include getting up at your normal time, dressing for work and going to your new office. Follow the schedule you've set!

Setup an office where you can work effectively. Maybe it's your computer room, an extra bedroom, den, attic, basement, or media room. Be sure to choose a location where you can concentrate and focus on the task at hand. Your office will need the appropriate equipment to support you in your new job of looking for a job.

Discipline and focus are critical to your success. A hit or miss approach, will have the same outcome. Start each work day on time, take a coffee break, take lunch, and quit when the work day is over. Tell everyone you live with (family) this is your new job. Let them know you are 'working' and not available for running errands, doing laundry, shoveling snow, etc, until your work day is done.

It's OK to get frustrated. Job hunting is some of the hardest work you will ever do. Stay focused and keep at it!

Make lunch plans regularly to support your networking and renew professional contacts. This will be beneficial to your job hunting efforts as well as give you a needed break from your 'work'.

**Preparation before working on your resume:**

- Make a list of your recent accomplishments; include impact to the corporation/organization, budget impact, scope of the project, result, etc.
- Think about how you will use these accomplishments to articulate why you are a qualified candidate for a role you are interested in.

- Focus on what you've done in the last 10 years of your career (no one will be overly interested in experience past 10 – 15 years).
- Include community work
- Don't include personal information of any kind (no pictures, no graduation dates, or # of children).
- Google yourself! Make sure a perspective employer will only find information that represents you in a positive, professional fashion.
- Ask for input on your resume, but remember there are many different philosophies on how to create a powerful resume. You need to LIKE your resume and have confidence in it to positively present your background and accomplishments.
- Consider creating a professional email address to use just for job hunting.
- Consider what an employer will hear when they leave you a message on your voice mail.

**Final tips:**

Keep your options open! Until an employer makes you an offer, a decision from you is not required. The more you talk with an employer, the more you learn about them and they learn about you.

Practice makes perfect! The more you interview, the better you get. Accept requests to interview even if you aren't sure you're interested in the position being discussed. Many positions have been filled from interviews for a different role. Don't limit yourself!

You are interviewing them as they are interviewing you! Be prepared with questions of your own to ask about the role. You should be gathering information to determine if the company and role are right for you. It's not just about them! Research the company/corporation on the internet before you speak with them. Being knowledgeable about their products, financials, customers, etc, shows you have interest and have done preparation in advance.

Google the name(s) of your interviewer(s) in advance! If you know anyone that works at the company/corporation you are interviewing with or interested in, ask them to put in a good word for you with the manager. Join Social Networks. LinkedIn allows you to search by company name and pull up people linked to that company. You may find someone you know works at the company you are interested in. This can be a great networking tool.

## II. Skills Identification:

Skills are the foundation of an effective job search. Employers do not just want to know where you have been and what job titles you have had. They want to know what you can do!

Now the question is, you have skills but how do you identify and communicate them to potential employers?

The challenging part for most people is changing the job tasks you have performed into skills you have.

**TASK:** A required job function

**SKILL:** An ability that comes from training or practice

A reason some people have trouble finding a job is-- failure to describe skills or abilities clearly. There are many exercises people use to identify skills. Below is a useful exercise, from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), which will help you do just this. Please go through this worksheet and after you have completed use the information to highlight your accomplishments and skills on your resume.

**List your accomplishments on the blanks below.** Include any success in your life. Include some accomplishments from past employment or an employment-related activity. Include ways you improved, met a specific challenge or saved time and money. These may have been from your own effort or as part of a team. When stating an accomplishment, use measures whenever possible (attach a number, percentage, dollar value, or increase/decrease to your job duties).

Examples--

- Successfully managed \$500,000 accounts receivables and reduced delinquent accounts by 15 percent.
- Participated on a fundraising team for the YWCA which raised \$15,000 for youth programs.
- Restored a 1936 Ford to original condition.

The following exercises will help you identify your skills.

## Accomplishments


**Job Skills:** The following is a short list of job skills. (There are literally thousands of job-specific skills.) You will have to research the job skills specific to your occupation.

Accounting	Cooking	Filing	Public Speaking
Auditing	Counseling	Hammering	Scheduling
Brake Alignments	Customer Service	Interviewing	Soldering
Building Maintenance	Desktop Publishing	Keyboarding	Teaching
C++ Programming	Detailing	LAN Administration	Technical Writing
Carpet Laying	Drill Press Operation	Management	Telemarketing
Cleaning	Driving	Mechanical Drafting	Typing
CNC Machine Operation	Editing	Metal Fabrication	Welding
Composite Engineering	Electronic Repair	Payroll Accounting	Writing

**Self-Management Skills:** You use self-management skills every day to survive and get along. Self-management skills are important because employers hire people who will fit in with the work group. Circle the self-management skills you possess right now.

<b>Adaptive Skills</b>	Assertive Assume Responsibility Competitive Complete Assignments Creative Decisive Dependable Detail-Oriented Diplomatic Enthusiastic Flexible	Integrity Integrity Intelligent Inventive Kind Learn Quickly Mature Open-Minded Outgoing Patient Persistent Pleasant Results-Oriented	Self-Motivated Sense of Direction (Purpose) Sense of Humor Sensitive Sincere Sociable Tactful Tolerant Tough Trusting Understanding Willing to Learn New Things
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**Transferable Skills:** Transferable skills can be transferred from one job or even one career to another. Critical Transferable Skills may get you higher levels of responsibility and pay. Emphasize them in an interview as well as on your resume.

<b>Critical Transferable Skills</b>	Accept Responsibility Budgeting Efficiency Meet Deadlines	Project Planning Public Speaking Sales Supervise Others	
<b>Thing Skills</b>	Assembling Balancing, Juggling Counting Drawing, Painting Driving Endurance Finishing, Refinishing Gathering	Grinding Hammering Hand Crafts Keyboarding, Typing Keypunching, Drilling Manual Dexterity Modeling, Remodeling Observing, Inspecting	Operating Machines Physical Agility, Strength Precise, Tolerance, Standards Restoring Sandblasting Sewing Sorting Weaving
<b>People Skills</b>	Caring Comforting Communicating Conflict Management Conflict Resolution Counseling Consulting Developing Rapport Diplomacy Diversity	Empathy Encouraging Group Facilitating Helping Others Inspiring Trust Inquiry Instructing Interviewing Listening Mediating	Mentoring Motivating Negotiating Outgoing Problem Solving Respect Responsive Sensitive Sympathy Tolerance
<b>Dealing with Data</b>	Analyzing Auditing Averaging Budgeting Calculating, Computing Checking for Accuracy Classifying Comparing Compiling	Cost Analysis Counting Detail-Oriented Evaluating Examining Financial or Fiscal Analysis Financial Management Financial Records Following Instructions	Investigating Interrelate Organizing Problem Solving Recording Facts Research Surveying Synthesizing Taking Inventory

<b>Using Words and Ideas</b>	Advertising Articulate Brainstorming Correspondence Design Edit	Imaginative Inventive Logical Promotional Writing Public Speaking Publicity	Quick Thinking Sign Language Speech Writing Telephone Skills Write Clearly, Concisely Verbal Communication
<b>Leadership</b>	Competitive Coordinating Decision Making Decisive Delegate Direct Others Evaluation Goal Setting Influence Others Initiate New Tasks	Integrity Judgment Manage, Direct Others Mediate Problems Motivate People Multitasking Negotiate Agreements Organization Planning Results-Oriented	Risk Taker Run Meetings Self-Confident Self-Directed Self-Motivated Sets an Example, Sets Pace Solve Problems Strategic Planning Supervision Work Schedules
<b>Creative, Artistic</b>	Artistic Designing Drawing Drawing, Painting Expressive	Illustrating, Sketching Mechanical Drawing Model-Making Photography Playing a Instrument	Present Artistic Ideas Rendering Singing Visualize Shapes Visualizing

**Job Skills Identification:** Describe four major tasks that you've performed in previous employment, which you'd like to continue using in your next job. List the skills which were required to perform each task well.

Task	Skill

**Questions to ask yourself:**

How important is this skill for what I am thinking about doing in the future?

If it is important to my goals, what other things can I do to further develop these skills?

How can I use this skill in other job/career situations?

**Values Checklist:** Work-related values are a part of setting job search goals. Decide what working conditions are important to you. **Instructions:** 1. Check the box next to those conditions that you'd like in a job. Add additional values on the blanks. 2. Draw a line through those conditions that you wouldn't like in a job.

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Authority                | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Benefits                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career Enhancement       | <input type="checkbox"/> Pace (Fast, Slow)              | <input type="checkbox"/> Variety               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Casual Environment       | <input type="checkbox"/> Position                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Wage                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Challenge                | <input type="checkbox"/> Power                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Work Indoors/Outdoors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close Supervision        | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Contact                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Work on a Team        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commuting Distance       | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Transportation          | <input type="checkbox"/> Work Alone            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competence               | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Environment            | <input type="checkbox"/> Work Under Pressure   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity               | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition                    | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decision Making          | <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Work Week              | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity                | <input type="checkbox"/> Relocation                     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excitement               | <input type="checkbox"/> Respect                        | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible Schedule        | <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement Benefits            | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal Environment       | <input type="checkbox"/> Security                       | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Benefits          | <input type="checkbox"/> Shift Work                     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Independence             | <input type="checkbox"/> Size of Company (Large, Small) | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Opportunities   | <input type="checkbox"/> Skill Building (Training)      |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Structure | <input type="checkbox"/> Status                         |  |

## Goal Identification Worksheet

### Instructions

1. Write the job goal representing the kind of job you plan to pursue. If you've more than one distinct job goal, complete this exercise for each one. Review the values that you identified as important to your job goals on the Values Checklist. Which conditions do you require in a new opportunity? Which conditions do you desire?
2. Write your required values and desired values from the Values Checklist in the appropriate space below.

Job Goal
Required Values
Desired Values
<b>Reality Check</b>
Are these expectations reasonable and attainable?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If you answered no or are unsure, reexamine your values.

3. Evaluate whether your expectations are reasonable and attainable.

## III. Resume and Cover Letters

### **Writing a Powerful Resume**

Your resume is your most effective marketing tool and its goal is to get you through as much of the marketing process as possible. It needs to be brief and concise as studies indicate that a reviewer/manager will only take between 10-20 seconds to scan it. The point is not to present all the facts, but to provide the person reading it with a brief overview of your background and experience to entice them to want to learn more.

Generally speaking, there are two types of resumes: targeted and general. A **targeted** resume is one that is customized to highlight the experience and skills you have that are relevant to a specific job of interest. It takes time to write a 'targeted' resume (vs. the general resume) but is well worth the effort when applying for jobs that are a perfect match for your qualifications, experience and aspirations. A **general** resume is one that outlines a brief, possibly broad, summary of your career highlights and qualifications. It is typically used for networking or shared upon request from a prospective employer who may want an overview of your background and accomplishments, rather than a full length resume.

In either case, taking time and effort to write these will pay off.

#### **Have confidence in your resume.**

Your resume can be your first opportunity to make a good impression on a potential employer, spend time perfecting it. It is meant to be an overview of your qualifications – not your life story. Make every attempt to positively present your background. Place the strongest points at the beginning and at the end of the document; this will grab the reader's attention quickly and leave a great first and last impression.

#### **Ensure your resume has a focus.**

When applying to a specific job opportunity, customize your resume based on the requirements of the job. Read the job description closely and highlight your skills and achievements relevant to the requirements of the employer.

#### **Try to use 'Action-Oriented' words where possible.**

The point of a resume is to summarize market your skills, accomplishments, and experiences. Highlight your strengths with action-oriented words that trigger an employer's interest.

Additional resources for Action-oriented verbs:

[http://www.careerowlresources.ca/Resumes/Res\\_Frame.htm?res\\_power.htm~right](http://www.careerowlresources.ca/Resumes/Res_Frame.htm?res_power.htm~right)

[http://www.jobskills.info/resume\\_edge/power\\_verb.htm](http://www.jobskills.info/resume_edge/power_verb.htm)

### **Ensure you are including the right information.**

There are several different resume styles (outlined below), but mandatory information includes the following:

- **Contact information:** At the top of your resume be sure to include your name, address, phone number(s), and email address.
- **Career objective statement or summary:** Keep in mind that employers read resumes to answer the questions: 'What can this person do for us?' Note that written incorrectly, job objectives can be limiting. Write one or two brief sentences that convey the type of employment you want and what you can offer an employer. If you decide not to include an objective in your resume, you can add it in your cover letter if appropriate.
- **Employment experience:** List positions in reverse chronological order (most recent work first). A general standard is to list the last three jobs, or the last ten years, whichever comes first. Present each entry bulleted lists of responsibilities and accomplishments. If you have a break in employment, consider the value of including a statement of how that time was spent.
- **Education:** List your most recent and highest degree first, followed by other all other degrees and relevant education. Indicate the type of degree or diploma, school attended, and graduation date. Don't forget to include any academic awards and distinctions. If you have not completed a degree, you can include the number of hours/credits you have successfully completed towards the degree. Do not misrepresent your level of education.
- **Use Keywords:** Many employers use software to help them sort through the resumes they receive. To ensure your resume has the best chance of being a 'match', include the industry keywords that are commonly used to describe your skills. Additional resources for industry keywords:  
<http://www.workopolis.com/work.aspx?action=Transfer&View=Content/Common/ResourceCentre/career911/resumes/ResumeKeywordsView&lang=EN>
- **Additional skills:** Include specialized skills that may apply to the type of position being applied to. For example:
  - Have you participated in any workshops or professional development programs?
  - Do you have any designations, licenses, certifications?
  - What industry honors or awards have you earned?
  - Which professional or career-related organizations are you involved in?

- **Volunteer and Community experience:** Present your volunteer experience just as you have your work experience. It is important to include these because volunteer and community experience gives the indication of a well-rounded candidate.
- **Personal hobbies/interests:** A brief list of your personal interests can give an employer a better understanding of what type of individual you are.

**Be sure to review for spelling and grammatical errors.**

Special effort should be taken to avoid misspellings, punctuation errors, and poor grammar. Use spell check multiple times. Ask someone else to review your resume or hire a professional editor.

Some examples of resume 'Don'ts':

- Handwritten information
- Spelling and grammar errors (although complete sentences are not required)
- Inconsistent information
- More than two pages
- Signature or date on resume
- Include personal information (age, height, SIN/SSN, marital status, religious/political affiliations)
- Don't use 'I' pronoun
- Don't include photographs
- Don't list disabilities
- Don't use abbreviations (exceptions include middle initial and directions)
- Don't mention salary expectations or wage history

**Resume Styles**

The most common resume style is the **chronological resume**. In this style of resume education and experience are arranged in chronological order from most to least recent. This style is best suited for candidates whose education and experience is directly related to the position being sought.

A **functional resume** emphasizes skills. Skills related to the position being sought are used as the headings in the resume. Experiences are referenced to illustrate the skills. This style is best suited for candidates who do not have work experience directly related to the position being sought, or for those who are making a career change.

And finally, the **combination resume** brings the best of both the chronological and functional resumes. It features a functional section that highlights skills, accomplishments and experience. It also includes a chronological listing of employment, education and employment-related experiences. The best chronological resume can be enhanced with a section highlighting skills,

accomplishments and experience. The functional resume can be strengthened with a chronological listing of employment experiences.

In addition to the 3 styles listed above, you can include at the beginning of your resume a **Summary** of your background that includes power words that describe your work style and communicate some of your strengths. (Example below)

*Professional with proven ability as an individual contributor and/or able to build and manage teams to accomplish goals. Communicates successfully with all levels of management/clientele/employees anticipating problems and taking initiative to implement solutions. Adept at gaining support/resources through networking and teamwork. Works well under stress, can handle multiple issues in organized fashion, prioritizing as required for win-win conclusions. Instills confidence with clients through attentiveness to needs, flexibility and quick efficient response. Experience in assessing needs, program design and delivery. Creative, resourceful problem solver.*

Below your summary, you can list your most impactful **achievements**. These are not necessarily things that are always relevant to your most current position, but include things that you have done over the course of your entire working career. They are not easy to write, and significant thought should be taken in creating them. Below are some ideas to help you identify those star studded achievements:

- Create, drive, influence what idea to your boss, board, etc
- Completed difficult project within timelines and below budget
- Took over mgmt of a faltering project and turned it around
- Sold/structured the 'unsellable' deal
- Saved a key relationship through innovative customer service approach
- Process Improvement, performance improvement resulted in what?
- Took a team that wasn't producing, and turned them around, include before and after results
- The campaign you created and implemented had what impact on revenue?
- Detail an accomplishment that you derived satisfaction from
- Took existing situation that was going downhill fast, and created new plan, develop, etc
- Your idea, suggestion, process improvement allowed company to save \$\$\$\$?
- The innovative side of you has resulted in what?
- You have track record of managing successful teams. On time, in budget?
- Your negotiations/re-negotiations resulted in ( cost savings, lower rates, better terms, new key relationship, less risk, sold, etc)

- Designed, developed, etc (what)
- Assumed mgmt of (what), charged with (what), inherited (what)
- Include the scenario, what your role was, what was the result, any change in \$\$\$, and the final outcome:
  - Led effort to streamline computerized and manual processes, eliminating redundant work and streamlining workflow patterns, resulting in more efficient processes and overall time saving.

Include three to five of these, not necessarily in chronological order. Put them in order, of strongest first (based on the role), remembering the reviewer will at least scan the first one; if it's powerful, they will move to the next. The goal is to get the attention of the resume reviewer, so they want to learn more about you and your background. Creating 10 or more will allow you to customize your resume with your demonstrated accomplishments describing what you bring to an organization outside of the skills and jobs you've held listed further down on your resume.

### **Resume Checklist**

Some of the items on this checklist were taken from Northern Lights Canada's Job Search Tips document.

#### Overall Appearance and Layout

- Is your resume easy to read with clear sections and ample white space?
- Does your resume provide a visually appealing, polished presentation?
- Can you scan down the pages and see a pattern in the headings and text?
- Is the wording positive and action-oriented throughout?
- Is it free of spelling, grammar and syntax errors?
- At a glance, do key ideas and words pop out to support the job objective?
- Has unrelated information been eliminated, and is the length two pages maximum?

#### Job Objective

- Should a job objective be included?
- If yes, is it directly related to the job being applied for?
- Is it phrased in the appropriate language of the industry?

#### Skills or Background Summary

- Is the Summary included so the reader immediately knows the applicant's value proposition?
- Does the Summary contain skills that are consistent with the Job Objective?

- If a Summary is not included, does the most recent job listed in the resume describe the skills that would like to use in your next job?
- Is the Summary positive, interesting and 'alive'?

#### Achievements

- Did you include 3 to 5 career achievements that showcase your value proposition in real terms?

#### Body of Resume

- Did you use bulleted points rather than long paragraphs?
- Is the content flow logical and easy to understand?
- Is the information relevant to the Job Objective and showing a wide range of experience?
- Can job titles be easily found by someone scanning the resume?
- Are work experiences presented in reverse chronological order (most recent work first)?

#### Volunteer and Community Experience

- Did you include organization names and job titles?
- Are major skills and accomplishments related to the Job Objective highlighted?

#### Hobbies and Interests

- If this section is included, do the activities have some relevance to the job?
- Is it positioned at the end of the resume?

### **Writing a Powerful Cover Letter**

A cover letter is your opportunity to introduce yourself and to demonstrate the match between an employer's job requirements and your skills and qualifications. It should add nuance to your resume, by highlighting specific abilities, experiences and qualifications that make you an ideal candidate for the job. It is also an opportunity for you to demonstrate your ability to write, communicate and articulate your ideas effectively. The main components of a cover letter are:

#### **The Heading**

Be sure to include your full name, address, phone number and email at the top, followed by the date and recipient's contact information. If necessary, include a 'reference line' (i.e. Re: Position) which quotes the job title or the competition number being applied to.

## **The Body**

Indicate how you heard of the position and your interest in applying for it. Use this opportunity to market yourself and explain the benefits you would bring to an employer. Your cover letter should not simply reiterate information from your C.V., but should highlight your most relevant activities and experiences for the position for which you are applying and add detail where appropriate. Here's your chance to highlight your value *over and above* what is provided in your resume. Consider making a list of the job requirements and then customizing your letter based on how your qualifications match the listed requirements.

Tip: Consider writing one standard cover letter and then customizing it based on the job you are applying for. Your standard letter should include a general overview of your qualifications and also effectively market yourself. Try to include something unique about yourself that will benefit the employer. A cover letter should only be included if it provides additional pertinent information that a reviewer/manager will have interest in.

## **The Closing Paragraph**

Conclude your cover letter by mentioning your resume is enclosed and describing if and how you will follow up on your application, whether by telephone or email to schedule an interview or to discuss your background. If you indicate you will follow up, be sure to do so! This relieves the employer of the responsibility. State where and when the employer can reach you and express your willingness to be interviewed. Finally, thank the reader for his/her time and consideration.

## **Cover Letter Checklist**

- Your cover letter should be no more than a page in length.
- You may wish to include a stylized header that matches the one on your resume.
- Proofread for spelling and grammatical errors!
- Is it clear where the employer can reach you during business hours?
- Does the letter tell the employer why you are writing, as well as grab his/her attention in the first paragraph?
- Have you used action-oriented verbs?
- Is the letter concise and to the point? Have you avoided needless detail and autobiographical ramblings?
- Does it avoid clichés and have you minimized the use of phrases such as “I feel” and “I believe,” which tend to weaken and dilute the statements you make about yourself?
- Have you demonstrated your knowledge of the organization you are writing to?

## IV. Job Search Tools:

*"Never assume the way you've always job hunted is a sure thing." From Electronic Job Search Revolution, Joyce Lain Kennedy and Thomas J. Morrow*

The use of technology has also become essential to a successful job search. Provided below are types of employment resources as well as a few tips as you begin your internet research:

- Employer Websites
- Professional Associations
- Research Organizations
- Government Agencies
- Educational Institutions
- Alumni Network

Refer to Section VII, Additional Resources, for links to job search engines.

### Tips for Internet Research:

**Develop a Research Strategy--** Develop a plan before you begin looking for information. Decide in advance how much time you're willing to invest. Your topic will influence where you look. The Internet, newsgroups and email all require a different search strategy. Knowing roughly where your information might be found will help in developing your plan.

**Be Focused--** Using the Internet for research isn't the same as surfing the Internet. Stay focused on your research goal. If you find something interesting en route to your goal, bookmark the site and come back to it.

**Keep Records--** Whether it is websites, computer files or paper files, it's important to keep a record of your research. Keep an easily accessible log of the jobs you apply to and the names of contacts that you collect along the way. It is helpful to save a copy of the job title, job description, and company to which you applied so you can easily pull up such information if you are contacted regarding the position.

**Set Goals--** Goals will help keep you on track. It is easy to get distracted doing an online job search so it is important to set specific goals. "I'm going to spend the next hour researching two potential employers who might need someone with marketing skills," is far better stated than, "I'm going to look for jobs on the Internet."

**Privacy Tips** - Learning to choose a quality job search site and resume database with good privacy practices has become an important part of a job search. If you plan to use the Internet as a job search tool this link provides helpful information to safeguard your privacy:

<http://www.privacyrights.org/fs/fs25-JobSeekerPriv.htm>

## **NETWORKING as a Job Search Tool**

Tapping into social and professional networking sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter can connect you to your next job or connect you to a contact that might be the key to your next job. Also, try blogging; start simple by posting your comments on a few of your favorite blogs. Your blog comments are likely to turn up high in a list of Google hits for your name, and it's a great way to show off your expertise and thought process. In addition to structured networks, individuals are also reaching out to contacts in their informal network as they search for jobs – close friends and family. It may seem like an uninteresting approach in a tech-savvy world, but it capitalizes on the fact that everyone has access to: People.

Networking in the old-fashioned, pre-internet, “Hi, what’s going on” approach may seem outdated, but it’s still a very powerful way to get the word out that you are in the market for a new job. Make friends, build a network and in tough times do not be afraid to ask tactfully for help. Think of the job market as an iceberg. The total percentage of jobs that are ‘published’ is ~30%. You get to the other ~70% (below the waterline) through networking/personal contact and influence.

This section will give you some guidance on building and developing your network. Networking is an integral part of any job search and has been highlighted by many in their success in finding not only a job, but a job they truly enjoy.

### **What is Networking?:**

Networking is simply “connecting to people.” When people say you should network, they mean you should dialogue with people. Specifically, networking is utilizing an array of contacts to gain information on the job market. It is a great job search tool! Do not underestimate its power.

Adopting a casual, friendly, positive attitude will pay dividends in today’s world of networking! Remember not to ask for anything that is not doable or possible to deliver. The best approach is ‘ask for advice’ and then let them give you whatever suggestions, references, ideas, etc they think will be helpful. Don’t forget to follow up with your contacts regularly, just to check in.

A great example of successful networking is the various pyramid and multi-level marketing organizations that continue to grow and expand. Networking is a building process; one person leads to another, and another. Remember, your goal is to market yourself, and this is a great tool to put in your marketing plan!

### **Why Network?:**

Networking brings with it many advantages such as:

- Building relationships
- Information resource for solving problems and gaining advice
- Expanded job opportunity awareness
- Knowledge gain/sharing
- Increased visibility
- People often do business with people they know
- Transferable skill to use once you land that new job!

### **Your Network::**

It is important to take time to focus, document and determine how your network is comprised. It is usually larger than most people think.

There is a rule of thumb that states the average number of people that an individual has in their network is 250, which means that everyone knows at least 250 other people! Think of the possibilities of tapping into a network of 250 people who knew you and understood what you were looking for in your job search. This could open up many opportunities.

### **Tips for Building a Network:**

#### **Step 1: Research**

The first step in networking is to be clear about who is currently in your network and where there may be gaps. Once you know “who” is in your network --- you want to understand “how” you are going to utilize your network or “why” you are engaging them. Here are some potential categories to get you going: Executives of competing/similar companies, Industry Leaders, Venture capital firms, Realtors, Friends/Relatives, Bankers, Accountants, Consultants, Community/Volunteer Organizations, Stock Brokers, Insurance agents, Politicians, Former employers/co-workers, Alumni/Alumni offices, personal/professional references, church group, former committee members.

## Step 2: Engage Your Network

Once you have done your research, you are now in a position to engage, or contact an individual in your network. Be clear on what the purpose of this relationship and/or meeting will be. Set clear goals around what you want to get out of this relationship. It can be important (particularly with new contacts) to communicate these goals and create an agenda that would help with this interaction. Don't forget to take notes. Start a log of who you called and when for future reference and follow up.

## Step 3: Maintain and Evaluate

You will also want to evaluate the effectiveness of your interaction (and your network overall) on a regular basis. Are you growing your network daily? You should be actively seeking opportunities to expand your network, because then you will be in a position to draw on your network when needed.

### **Virtual Networking:**

Virtual Networking is also a key area to focus on, so here are two key areas that help build effective virtual networks.

#### 1. Technology Tools

In order to be effective when networking virtually, it is important to use technology, including email, phone, VOIP, Instant messenger, internet communities, etc. Consider creating an email address just for job hunting. Are your voice mail messages appropriate for employers to hear?

#### 2. Differentiate Yourself

In a virtual environment, differentiating yourself is important, so others can remember you. You can accomplish this by a few techniques: small-talk (more on this later), sharing personal topics like your hobbies, telling a story about yourself, and/ or sharing a picture (putting a face to the name). Think about how you would differentiate yourself in a Virtual Team.

#### 3. Work the Social Networks

Explore and experiment when choosing your online network platforms. Try a number of online discussion groups, check out multiple blogs in your areas of interest, and join several social networking sites. After a while, if a site isn't working for you, find a more productive alternative. Be active on the sites your ultimately select.

### **Relationship Building:**

Networking is all about relationship building which can be defined as “the ability to create a network of contacts with people who are or who may be useful in information gathering/sharing and/or the accomplishments of work-related goals.” Below is an exercise you can do which looks at relationship building in the context of networking and offers 3 cumulative levels associated with networking. This model builds upon the philosophy of growing and expanding your network.

Take a few minutes to determine the level you are currently working at, which level you need to be working at and review some development suggestions to add to your action plan. After reviewing all 3 levels, complete the final page titled “Action Planning”.

### **3 Levels (Cumulative):**

#### **Level 1: Maintains Effective Relationships**

- Maintains effective working relationships with immediate contacts.
- Participates effectively in informal conversations and interactions with these people

#### **Behaviors Associated with Level 1**

- Initiates or improves relationships with others.
- Joins social networks
- Participates in every day conversations and interactions with members of your network
- Maintains positive working relationships with others (for instance, shows interest in what others are doing)

#### **Development Suggestions Associated with Level 1**

- Ask questions that draw out the needs, interests, concerns and objectives of others. By attempting to understand others you will demonstrate your interest in them and also gain insight into how best to interact with them
- In discussions with others, pay attention to both the words being said and the emotion behind what is said. Concentrate on the other person, not on how you’re going to respond.
- Learn how to interpret nonverbal behavior. During the next week, notice the nonverbal messages being sent by listeners when you are speaking (for example: loss of eye contact, changes in posture, and facial expressions). Use these messages to interpret how your ideas are being received. This should assist you in assessing your effectiveness at interacting with others.

**Level 2: Initiates Relationship Development:**

- Builds formal and informal relationships beyond immediate contacts.
- Builds social network outside immediate contacts

**Behaviors Associated with Level 2**

- Initiates formal or casual contacts to build rapport
- Sets up and maintains a list/database of useful contacts
- Maintains relationships with people

**Development Suggestions Associated with Level 2**

- Make a list of your immediate contacts. Beside each name identify an individual with whom you might usefully build a relationship through your contact. Pick a small number of these potential key contacts and ask your existing contacts to introduce you.
- Initiate a networking meeting (coffee, lunch, etc) with an influential contact. Solicit job hunting advice.

**Level 3: Expands Networking Relationships**

- Initiates and builds effective relationships with influential individuals in other companies / industries.
- Develops a wide network of contacts within and across various networking categories.

**Behaviors Associated with Level 3**

- Develops and maintains a network of influential contacts across multiple companies / industries.
- Works with expanded network to foster transfer of information and contacts which result in expanding network for both parties.
- Shares experience and expertise with influential contacts.
- Initiates “bring a friend” networking meeting (coffee, lunch, etc) to further expand networking contacts.
- Joins blogs and continues to expand social network.

**Development Suggestions Associated with Level 3**

- Involve yourself in committees or organizations which address issues where you believe you can add value. This type of interaction will allow you to develop a vast network which stretches beyond your previous colleagues.
- Meet with influential individuals from other companies in informal settings. Begin to explore on a nondirective basis ideas that will help them better accomplish their goals. By your demonstrating a sincere interest in their affairs, these individuals are likely to be more interested and loyal to you.

<b>Action Planning</b>
<b>My Level:</b>
<b>Strengths/behaviors:</b>
<b>Development activities to move to the next level (or maintain at existing level):</b>
<b>Key Contacts (based on my current network):</b>

**“Small Talk”:**

First, it is important to realize just how important small talk or conversational skills are. What is the difference between schmoozing and small talk? Schmoozing implies someone wants the other person to do something while small talk is ability to carry on a conversation. Mastering small talk is not only essential in forming new relationships, but also in creating lasting impressions. With the right approach and preparation anyone can become a skilled conversationalist.

Effective networking and small talk requires some homework and preparation. Yes, some people are more at ease with this process than others, but everyone can be effective with some effort.

First, keep a personal file on individuals you meet (could be a mental file, but a hard/soft copy works really well). Harvey McKay, a well-known author and speaker, suggests keeping a rolodex/database of everyone you know and putting a little something about that person on each card.

- Name
- Professional information (like their company, position, responsibilities, etc.)
- Personal information (including their wife and children’s names, hobbies, sports teams, where they are from, etc.)
- Acknowledgements you can give the person (could include promotion, new role, successful project, big customer win, etc.)
- Prepare for the meeting by reviewing their file and looking for connections based on their professional and personal information in the Newspaper, News, etc. Look for

connections based on where they are from including community activities, hobbies, children's activities / sports / etc.

Take note of cultural differences with small talk. It is always easier to interface with people when you feel a connection or they feel a connection with you. An example of this is to make a habit of asking how a colleague's daughter is by using the daughter's name. Some people react very positively when they realize someone remembers their children's names. You can substitute spouse, pet, friends, family members, etc. if they do not have children. Another example is speaking about an upcoming local sporting event to a leader who likes a particular sport (i.e. speaking about the Stanley Cup finals to an avid hockey fan).

Do your homework and prepare for these interactions, it will help if the encounter is a chance meeting or a planned event. It is always harder to interface with people when you are not aware of any connections, because you have not met the person before.

Below are some helpful icebreakers to use when interfacing with people in a business setting.

Examples Include:

- "Where do you work?"
- "What do you do?"
- "So, what is new within your organization?"
- "Bring me up to date on your organization's plans for the coming year (second half of the year, etc.)?"
- "When you are not working, what do you like to do?"

Avoid asking direct personal information like are you married, do you have children, etc., because the person may be uncomfortable sharing this information. Let them first provide some personal information, and then it may be appropriate to use their comments as a spring board to further conversation.

People in general like to speak about themselves; however it is good to prepare a 30 second elevator speech about you. You want to make a lasting impression by creating a positive first impression. Remember the goal is to start communication, not to impress. Your resume can provide the script. It can consist of:

- Career objective / desire
- Significant accomplishment you are proud of
- Key work experience that summarizes what you enjoy

Your 30 seconds should be structured around what you are saying in the beginning portions of the resume. Practice it and you will become very comfortable with the dialogue.

Here are some important tips to ensure your small talk is successful. These tips work if you already know the person or just met. These steps were taken from the book “The Fine Art of Small Talk” by Debra Fine. These steps are meant as guidance and it is important for you to be comfortable with your own approach – it should be genuine and not forced.

- *Don't rush through conversations.* Take your time and be sure to remember names and use them frequently during conversations.
- *Show an interest in every person you meet.* By showing an interest you are creating a favorable impression of yourself.
- *Be prepared.* Before entering an event, take a couple of minutes and think of at least three conversation points or topics or review your people file if you expect to meet with someone. If you happen to encounter an uncomfortable silence, these conversation points will always come in handy.
- *Always maintain eye contact.* Eye contact is an easy way to make others feel comfortable, important, and special.
- *Act confident through your body language, even if you are not.* Nervous body language can make others uncomfortable and anxious. Try to be aware of your body language throughout conversations.
- *Be a careful listener.* By listening intently to what others are saying, you are not only making them feel important, but you can use information you gather to keep the conversation going.
- *Make people feel special.* People, even shy ones, like to talk about themselves, so let them.
- *Don't steal the show, and don't let others steal the show either.* Try to give everyone in an interaction the opportunity to speak and let their opinions be heard. If someone else is monopolizing a conversation, wait until a pause or until that person takes a breath and then make a comment that can steer the conversation in a new direction. Or include someone who has not been heard from or is new to the conversation by asking, “What is your opinion on this?” or “What are your views on this issue?”
- *Be appropriate.* In certain settings some topics may not be suitable. As mentioned earlier be careful when asking about spouses or relationships, you may end up regretting it.
- *Don't interrogate a conversational partner.* This point again goes back to an earlier point - Questions like: “Where are you from?” “Are you married?” and “What do you do for a living?” can stop a conversation before it ever really starts.

- *Be respectful of the opinions of others.* Not everyone agrees on things, and friendly disagreements can be a gateway to a great conversation.
- *Have exit lines prepared.* You will probably want to mingle with several people around the room.

For virtual situations, much of this advice is the same. You may just need to modify a few tips; such as always maintain eye contact. In a virtual discussion, you should always show your interest through tone and inflection of your voice. When using the internet, be sure you follow professional email tips: <http://jerz.setonhill.edu/writing/e-text/e-mail.htm>

You may want to practice these tips, icebreakers, and elevator speeches with people you trust. In other words, use your network to help your networking ability.

### **Nurturing your network:**

It is also important to nurture your network, which means connecting with people even when you do not need anything.

One important step in nurturing your network as you proceed through your job search is to maintain a log of your contacts, notes from the conversation and add a follow-up contact time. Be sure you regularly update your people files. This will not only be valuable when you have a planned meeting, it will also help solidify the information when you happen upon a chance meeting as well.

Here are some practical examples and guidance to nurturing your network. These examples are taken from the “Successful Manager’s Handbook” section entitled “Cultivating Your Network”.

Examples Include:

- Ask a friend or colleague for candid feedback on how well you cultivate.
- When you attend a gathering of people, set a goal of meeting at least one new person
- Identify three people you want to add to your network. Contact them and set up a time to talk.
- Keep records of when you ask people for help and when you help them. Ensure that you do not ask the same people for help all the time, and that you reciprocate.
- Networking is not about ‘asking for a job’. Don’t expect anyone to ‘find you a job’.
- Remember to say ‘Thank You’ when you solicit and receive advice.

**Map your Network:**

Identify who is currently in your network and how you plan to expand your network. Remember, networking is not about asking for a job. It is about making connections and then uncovering opportunities through those connections.

Two tools you may want to add to your toolbox are a list of “Who’s in your network” and “What do you have to offer for networking”? Both exercises are provided below.

First, “Who’s in your network?” – list out names or friends, people with common interests than you, people closest to you, challengers (it is important to have people who will challenge your beliefs and push you), and other acquaintances. Then, note who is missing – this will define your network gaps and finally determine your plan to build your network.

- List everyone you know. Don't leave anyone out. Include friends, relatives, neighbors, friends/neighbors of friends and relatives, former co-workers, former bosses, members of your basketball/tennis/volleyball team, people from church, alumni contacts, etc. You will not need to eliminate them – they will eliminate themselves if they have nothing for you.
- Ask yourself:
  - What do they do and with whom are they connected?
  - What professional organization do you belong to?
  - Who’s missing from your network?
  - Who do you want to include in your Network?

**WHO'S IN YOUR NETWORK?**

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**WORK COLLEAGUES:**

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**WHO IS MISSING (NETWORK GAPS)?**

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**HOW DO YOU PLAN TO BUILD YOUR NETWORK (ACTIONS):**

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Next, “What do you have to offer for networking?” Networking is essentially an exchange of value for value. Recognizing your personal strengths and skills is an important part of networking so that you know what you can offer to others. You can include your skills, interests, talents, expertise, aspirations, and other categories you can think of to capture this information.

### WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO OFFER YOUR NETWORK?

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**INTERESTS:**

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Hopefully this information has provided you the context to move from a good networker to a great networker. Just remember, great networks keep on growing, and relationships can last a lifetime.

## V. Interviewing Effectively

First impressions are everything and success could very well depend on the impression you make during an interview. Below are some practical tips on how you can improve your chances of success.

### **Receiving the Interview Invite:**

**Know how to prepare by getting interview details upfront.** When you get that call requesting your participation in an interview, be prepared to ask the right questions. Keep in mind the person contacting you about the interview could be a possible resource for additional information on what to expect at your interview.

Ask the following questions:

- Where and when will the interview take place – date, time, and location (address)? Note: Do a map search on the internet or ask for directions. If you are unfamiliar with the area, drive to the address prior to the interview so you will know exactly where you need to be.
- What is the expected length of the interview?
- Will you be interviewing with one person or a panel of interviewers?
- What are the names and titles of the interviewer(s)? How do they fit in the organization?
- Caller's contact number? (in case you need to contact them prior to interview)
- What is the job title of the position? (ensure you have the job description)
- Ensure you thank the individual extending the invitation!

Consider asking the following questions if appropriate:

- Can they tell you anything about the interviewer(s) that might be helpful to you (providing that you are not speaking directly with the interviewer)
- What is the appropriate attire for the interview?
- Is there anything else they can share with you that might be helpful?

A note about **Phone Screening** interviews: Many employers use telephone interviews as a first step in their review process. These discussions are used to further qualify candidates that have the background and skills that are the best match for the position. There may be several of these with various people prior to being invited for a face-to-face interview. Be prepared for phone screens which may be requested with limited notice.

Some tips:

- Prepare for a phone interview just as you would for an in-person interview - keep your resume close by and draft a short summary of your skills and accomplishments to reference.
- Speak clearly and confidently.
- Turn call-waiting off so your call isn't interrupted by pauses and beeps.
- Go to a quiet room- turn off any background noise, close the door - ensure there will be no interruptions.
- Ask for their contact information (email address) and follow up with a Thank You, and offer to provide any additional information that might be helpful. Or, provide additional information that you may have thought of based on the content of the discussion.

**Before the interview:**

**Prepare.** Take time to practice articulating your accomplishments and work experience until you feel ready. The more you prepare outside the interview, the less stressed you'll be on the day.

**Do your Research.** Being knowledgeable about the interviewing company clearly demonstrates your interest in the job. Really try to gain a clear picture of what they do and how they do it. The company's web-based media or products section should bring you right up to date on recent product launches and important customer wins. Google the names of anyone you are expecting to meet to learn more about them and their role in the company.

**Know the position you are interviewing for.** Read the job description carefully. By considering what qualities/education/experience the interviewer will be looking for in their ideal candidate, you can target your skills to the specific needs of the employer. It shows that you're serious about employment.

**Know your resume inside-out.** Memorize the contents of your resume - know your defined goals, strengths AND weaknesses. Be prepared to talk about the work experience and accomplishments listed, as well as why you left each position.

Prepare a list of questions the interviewer may ask and practice your answers:

- Why did you choose to apply to our Company?
- Why did you apply to this position?
- What motivates you?
- What strengths can you bring to this position?

- What are your weaknesses?
- What experience do you have in teamwork?
- Why should we employ you?

The interviewer will likely ask you questions about your qualifications, knowledge of the industry, and specific personality traits that will influence your performance; think about how your skills and experiences correspond to the traits the employer is looking for in a candidate. Make an effort to discuss your suitability to the job using your own previous experience. Generally speaking, the interview will be assessing your technical suitability (skills, education, and training which indicate you CAN do the job) and personal suitability (motivation, work ethic, and people skills which indicate you WILL do the job). Be prepared to answer what are called scenario-based and behavioral questions where you are asked how you would handle certain situations or how you met certain challenges. For example, a question might start: “Tell me about a time when you....” A common technique for answering these types of questions is called CAR - where the interview will look for you to outline the Circumstances, Action, and Results.

**Prepare a list of your own questions.** Ideally, the interviewer will provide you time to ask your questions about the responsibilities, goals, and objectives of the position, as well as general questions about the company. Avoid asking about salary, holidays, benefits, and other perks unless prompted to do so. General questions about compensation can be asked before the interview if you must. But, be careful not to limit yourself solely on salary. The opportunity to meet and discuss your background can lead to other opportunities that may develop later. Ask about the composition of the team you’re hoping to join; how the job is likely to evolve in the months ahead; typical projects you’ll be involved in; opportunities for customer contact and/or travel; training...these are all possibilities.

**On the Day of the interview:**

**Dress accordingly.** You only have one chance to make a first impression. Be conservative in your dress. Assume its “business formal” unless definitely told otherwise. Being well-groomed and well-rested are important.

**Plan to arrive early.** Leave yourself enough time to arrive 10 or 15 minutes early with traffic and parking.

**Bring a positive attitude.** Enter every interview with a great attitude. Speak confidently and enthusiastically during the entire duration. Be sure you are courteous to everyone during your visit, from the time you enter the building, to the time you leave. Remember to ask for business cards or contact information (confirm name, address and title) of interviewer(s).

**After your interview**

Ensure you are aware of when and how you will be notified of the interview results.

However the interview went, send the interviewer a thank-you letter. Doing so can accomplish the following:

- Expresses your continuing interest in the position and the company.
- Refers back to your related qualifications in regards to those being sought in the job
- Volunteer further relevant information you may not have had the opportunity to discuss in the interview.

Should you be advised that you will not be offered the position, be gracious. Send a brief note acknowledging that decision and thanking the interviewer once again for their time and discussing the role with you. You never know - they might keep you in mind for future opportunities.

**Note:** The ideal interview is described above, however keep in mind there are various interview styles, and one can be where the interviewer does all the talking, and the interviewee is expected to listen. One way to deal with this situation is to ensure you have contact information that will allow you to include your questions in a follow up discussion.

## VI. Finishing Touches

### Thank-you Notes

*“Give thanks for a little, and you will find a lot.” ~ The Hausa of Nigeria*

Never underestimate the power of a thank-you note. Aside from it showing great etiquette, it can provide you with one final opportunity to showcase your skills and leave a positive, lasting impression – don’t pass it up! This would include each time you participate in a job or informational interview, when someone gives you a referral or information, or whenever someone takes time out of their schedule to help you. Every person who assists you in your job search effort deserves an expression or note of thanks.

The thank you letter should follow a standard business letter format, using the suggestions below to get started.

Thank-you Note Suggestions:

- In your note, briefly identify the position you interviewed for and the date and time the interview took place.
- Thank the employer for his or her time, letting the interviewer know how much you enjoyed meeting them.
- If you interviewed with multiple people, send a note to each person individually.
- When thanking the interviewer, reiterate your interest and enthusiasm in the position.
- If necessary, briefly include any pertinent information you failed to mention earlier.

### Negotiating Skills

#### **Where to Start?**

Know Yourself

- Evaluate what you want to do with your life:
  - Does a 9-5 job suit you?
  - Do you like to work with people?
  - Do you want to focus on one job or have many responsibilities?
- Understand what you will not do:
  - Commute into the city?
  - Travel?
  - Desk Job?

### **What are you Worth?**

- Research your worth.
- Know where to obtain salary information, and try to be as accurate as possible.
- Use numbers as a general guideline. Keep in mind that salaries are calculated according to a variety of factors, take into account the following factors:
  - Location
  - Benefits Offered
  - Bonuses
  - Commission

### **When Does the Salary Negotiation Begin?**

- Never during the interview process unless you are prompted
- If asked by the Interviewer for Salary Information:
  - Negotiable/Competitive
  - Give a Salary Range
- Start the Negotiation only after you have evaluated the Job Offer

### **Receiving and Evaluating the Offer**

- There is more to any offer than just the base salary. Also consider the whole package this may include:
  - Base Salary
  - Bonuses or Commission Plans
  - Stock Purchase Plans
  - Educational Reimbursement Program
  - Medical/ Dental/ Vision Benefits
  - Long Term Savings Plans (RSP/ Pension Etc)
  - Sick Time and Personal Days
  - Child Care
- Tips:
  - Always measure the offer against other offers in hand
  - Take into consideration the Cost of Living if offers are in different locations
  - Assess what you need and what you want in order to figure out what is acceptable and not acceptable
  - Don't be afraid to accept the offer as is, if it meets all of your requirements don't feel pushed to negotiate
  - Talk to the decision maker

- Be logical in your requests and be able to back up your reasons
- Get everything in writing

### **The Language of Negotiation**

- Avoid Using “but” and “expect” use “however” and “hope”
  - “I liked the offer, however I was hoping for X dollars” vs. “I liked the offer but I was expecting x dollars”
- Use “what” not “why” in your questions
  - What are the alternatives?
  - What is reasonable?
  - What are the next steps and what is the timing?
- Other phrases to consider:
  - I understand your concerns....
  - Are you willing to....
- Do not be confrontational

### **Additional Questions to Ask**

- How many times a year do I get a performance review/ salary review?
- Is there a training budget for professional development?
- How is this position important to the company?
- What career development opportunities exist for this type of role?
- When would you like me to start?

### **Closing the Deal**

- Always be prepared that the original offer may stand
- Decline other offers as soon as you make a decision-don't delay your response unless absolutely necessary
- Be polite and respectful when declining a position
- When accepting an offer, accept verbally and send in your paperwork as soon as possible
- Always insist on a written offer letter that includes pertinent information; salary, start date, benefits, vacation allowance, etc. Ideally it will be customized to include any verbal agreements you and your perspective manager have made. If the company has an offer template that does not allow for customizations, ask the manager to provide you with an email that states those agreements for your records. The offer letter can be part of your negotiations, but be sure you consider that if it's not in writing, it may not happen. You

will need to take this into consideration as you make your decision to accept or decline the offer.

### **Closing Remarks**

- Don't just apply to the internet and posted positions, 70% of positions are part of the "hidden job market"
- Understand the importance the job search that takes place OUTSIDE of your resume
- You are always looking for a job, you never know when an opportunity may present itself
- Use your strengths to your advantage
- Know your weaknesses
- Stay positive and see every position as a learning experience

## **VII. Additional Resources:**

\*Nortel is not endorsing the links provided below, but including them simply for informational/reference material.

### **Career Planning:**

[http://www.quintcareers.com/interview\\_question\\_database/](http://www.quintcareers.com/interview_question_database/)

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/interviewquestionsanswers/a/interviewquest.htm>

<http://www.iseek.org/sv/41315.jsp>

[http://careerplanning.about.com/od/jobinterviews/a/dress\\_questions.htm](http://careerplanning.about.com/od/jobinterviews/a/dress_questions.htm)

<http://get2work.borderlink.org/page.php?book=htu>

[http://interview.monster.ca/11777\\_en-CA\\_p1.asp](http://interview.monster.ca/11777_en-CA_p1.asp)

<http://careeronestop.org/>

<http://www.jibberjobber.com/> (Career Management Tool to organize your job hunt)

<http://www.dol.gov/dol/location.htm> (link to US - State Unemployment Agencies)

[www.employmentottawa.ca](http://www.employmentottawa.ca) (for Ottawa area employees)

[www.employmentresources.ca](http://www.employmentresources.ca) (for Belleville area employees)

[http://ottawa.ca/residents/efa/employment/workshops\\_en.html](http://ottawa.ca/residents/efa/employment/workshops_en.html)

<http://www.iwin.on.ca/english/index.cfm?fuseaction=showCat&catID=1>

<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/subjects/employment/index.shtml>

<http://www.jobsetc.gc.ca/eng/>

### **French language sites:**

[http://ottawa.ca/residents/efa/employment/workshops\\_fr.html](http://ottawa.ca/residents/efa/employment/workshops_fr.html)

<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/fra/sujets/emploi/index.shtml>

<http://www.emploisetc.gc.ca/fra/>

### **Resumes:**

[http://www.mahalo.com/How\\_to\\_write\\_a\\_resume](http://www.mahalo.com/How_to_write_a_resume)

<http://www.dailywritingtips.com/resume-writing-tips/>

<http://www.rockportinstitute.com/resumes.html>

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/career/resume.html>

<http://www.nextsteps.org/resume/index.html>

### **French language sites:**

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/fre/carrieres/resume.html>

[http://emploiquebec.net/guide/fr/e3\\_cv.htm](http://emploiquebec.net/guide/fr/e3_cv.htm)

**Cover Letters:**

[http://www.quintcareers.com/cover\\_letter\\_samples.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/cover_letter_samples.html)

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverlettersamples/a/coverlettsample.htm>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Cover-Letter>

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/career/cover-le.html>

**French language sites:**

[http://emploiQuebec.net/guide/fr/e3\\_lettre.htm](http://emploiQuebec.net/guide/fr/e3_lettre.htm)

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/fre/carrieres/cover-le.html>

**Job Interview:**

[http://www.quintcareers.com/interview\\_question\\_database/](http://www.quintcareers.com/interview_question_database/)

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/interviewquestionsanswers/a/interviewquest.htm>

<http://www.iseek.org/sv/41315.jsp>

[http://careerplanning.about.com/od/jobinterviews/a/dress\\_questions.htm](http://careerplanning.about.com/od/jobinterviews/a/dress_questions.htm)

<http://get2work.borderlink.org/page.php?book=htu>

[http://ottawa.ca/residents/efa/employment/help/interview/index\\_en.html](http://ottawa.ca/residents/efa/employment/help/interview/index_en.html)

**French language sites:**

[http://ottawa.ca/residents/efa/employment/help/interview/index\\_fr.html](http://ottawa.ca/residents/efa/employment/help/interview/index_fr.html)

<http://emploiQuebec.net/guide/fr/e5.htm>

**Job Search Engines on the Web:**

[www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)

[www.workopolis.ca](http://www.workopolis.ca)

[www.cwjjobs.co.uk](http://www.cwjjobs.co.uk)

[www.4icj.com](http://www.4icj.com)

[www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)

[www.Indeed.com](http://www.Indeed.com)

<http://usajobs.opm.gov/>

<http://www.dice.com/> (Technology Job Search Engine)

<http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/>

<http://www.simplyhired.com/>

<http://www.job-hunt.org/jobs/states.shtml> (Job Resources in the US by State)

<http://www.jobpostcanada.com/quebec.htm>

<http://jobs-emplois.gc.ca/index-eng.htm>  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/employmentontario/jobs/>  
<http://www.gojobs.gov.on.ca/>  
<http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>  
<http://www.nextsteps.org/jobsearch/index.html>

**French language sites:**

<http://emploiquebec.net/anglais/individus/recherche.htm>  
<http://actijob.beljob.ca/>  
<http://emploiquebec.net/francais/index.htm>  
<http://jobs-emplois.gc.ca/index-fra.htm>

**Online Social Networking Tools:**

[www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)  
[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)  
[www.viadeo.com](http://www.viadeo.com)  
<http://www.experts-exchange.com/>  
<http://www.tomshardware.com/>  
<http://www.ittoolbox.com/>  
[www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com)  
[www.technorati.com](http://www.technorati.com)  
<http://www.brightfuse.com/>  
<http://www.myspace.com/>  
[www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)

**Reading Materials:**

- “Who Moved my Cheese” by Spencer Johnson
- "Seven Days to Online Networking: Make Connections to Advance Your Career and Business Quickly" by Ellen Sautter and Diane Crompton
- Link to Amazon.com where you can find books on Job Hunting & Careers:  
[http://www.amazon.com/Careers-Business-Investing-Books/b/ref=bw\\_ab\\_3\\_10?ie=UTF8&node=2572&pf\\_rd\\_p=236877501&pf\\_rd\\_s=browse&pf\\_rd\\_t=101&pf\\_rd\\_i=3&pf\\_rd\\_m=ATVPDKIKX0DER&pf\\_rd\\_r=0SE3BAM2340YYJME0CJD](http://www.amazon.com/Careers-Business-Investing-Books/b/ref=bw_ab_3_10?ie=UTF8&node=2572&pf_rd_p=236877501&pf_rd_s=browse&pf_rd_t=101&pf_rd_i=3&pf_rd_m=ATVPDKIKX0DER&pf_rd_r=0SE3BAM2340YYJME0CJD)
- “Get the Right Job Right Now!” by Alan Kearns
- “The Success Principles: How to Get from Where you Are to Where You Want to Be” by Jack Canfield

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