

Year 12

"Preparing for the World of Work"

Compiled for Toowoomba CATs Pilot
By the
Career and Transition Officer



Australian Government
**Department of Education,
Science and Training**

An Australian Government Initiative

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Career Seekers Unit

WEEK ONE: ABOUT ME

ACTIVITY	RESOURCES
Suggested Time - 3 x 50 mins sessions	
1. Welcome and Introduce self.	
2. Getting to know you. Name tag activity: each student receives a nametag and illustrates it to personalise it. Sharing: students tell the story of their nametag.	Felt pens, stickers, nametags, glitter pens
3. House keeping details	
4. Tell students that this week is about looking at themselves and Employability Skills.	
5. Introduce activity: Sometimes employability comes down to really knowing about your own strengths and weaknesses and capitalising on them. 6. Activity: a) About Me - students to complete activities. b) Colour in strengths. Discussion - how can you capitalise on your strengths.	Handout "About Me"
7. Discussion: What is a skill. Brainstorm for ideas. Come up with group definition. 8. Activity: Colour code skills. 9. Discussion, which are most important to employers. 10. Activity: My Interpersonal skills	Handout "Interpersonal Skills and Qualities for Employment".
11. Sources of Information. Brainstorm activity.	Handout "Sources of Information"
12. For next week bring along information to put together resume/personal portfolio.	
13. Guest speaker Centrelink	Where to start looking? What to do Job Network Places to access information Tips for job seeking.
14. Reflections 15. Reminder for next week: Resumes, Find a career to focus on.	

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About Me

Please tick the box that suits you

	Yes	No	Sometimes	Never	Don't Know
Know what I'm good at					
Know what I'm not so good at					
Know what I need to improve on					
Get information and advice when I need it					
Make decisions					
Plan tasks and use time effectively					
Reliable					
Negotiate with other people					
Talk to people who have power or authority over what I do					
Solve problems					
Handle stress & tension in positive ways					
Talk with people by phone					
Write letters to people					
Find it easy to talk to people face to face					
Know what careers I'm interested in					
Know about different opportunities in education, training and employment					
Know how to get help with career information					
Understand about workplace culture					
Feel prepared to leave school and get a job					

My Personal Strengths - colour yours in.

Honest	Artistic	Dependable	Generous
Good friend	Funny	Athletic	Considerate
Assertive	Organised	Loving	Responsible
Understanding	Strong	Good listener	Good sport
Courteous	Get things done	Appreciative	Cooperative
Accept advice	Hard worker	Healthy	Loyal
Musical	Disciplined	Compassionate	Good sense
Daring	Admire others	Don't give up	Creative
Calm	Supportive	Trustworthy	Smart
Enthusiastic	Polite	Thoughtful	Fun



My Employability Skills

What is a skill?

Read through the list of skills below. How to rate yourself at each of the skills?

Red: very good at
Green: would like to develop

Blue: can do
Yellow: doesn't apply to me

SKILL	COLOUR CODE
Commitment	
Honesty, integrity and trustworthiness	
Communication and interpersonal skills	
Positive self-esteem and attitude	
Initiative	
Following directions and instructions	
Time management	
Personal appearance and presentation	
Motivation	
Enthusiasm	
Reliability	
Sense of humour	
Ability and willingness to learn	
Use of English - spoken and written	

(Employability Skills 2002/Key Work Skills 1998)

Which 10 do you believe are the most important to employers? Rate your top 10 in the margin next to the table.





Sources of Information

CAREER ADVERTISEMENTS

APPLICATION TIPS

SELF ANALYSIS

WHO CAN HELP



My Personal Portfolio

Each career seeker should have a personal portfolio to take to interviews and potential employers.

Your Personal Portfolio should contain:

- Copy of birth certificate
- Tax file number
- Resume
- Personal data sheet
- Certificates etc
- Letter of introduction
- Character references
- Names of referees with addresses, phone numbers

Information to collect to put in your resume:

- Personal details
- Education
- Other Qualifications e.g.. First Aid, TAFE Courses
- Work Experience
- Volunteer Experience
- Technical Skills e.g.. Computing, Video, Photography
- Personal Skills e.g. Leadership - captain of teams, Organisation - social committee
- Hobbies and Interests
- References



WEEK TWO: THE APPLICATION PROCESS

ACTIVITY	RESOURCES
Suggested Time - 3 x 50 mins sessions	
1. Introduction 'Something positive about the last couple of weeks' - stimulate discussion	
2. Writing a resume: Go through notes Check that students have collected their certificates etc. to include.	Handout " Writing your Resume"
3. Practical Activity: Each student to complete own resume. Provide one on one help and direction.	www.careersonline.com.au/smartmoves/generator/resumegenerator.html
4. Writing a cover letter. Discuss theory	
5. Practical Activity: Students to complete own application letter.	
6. Practical Activity: Google search of useful sites.	www.google.com.au
Guest Speaker: Industrial Relations Inspector - DIR	Rights and Responsibilities of Employees WH & S.
HW: Safety Sense Certificate www.whs.qld.gov.au/safetysense/index.htm	Complete for inclusion in personal portfolio



Writing your Resume

A resume sells YOU! It is a personal summary of your experiences and qualifications for the position you are seeking. Often the first contact you have with employers is your resume. It informs them of your accomplishments, educational and personal background, work experience, and interests. Your resume tells an employer:

1. Who you are;
2. What you know;
3. What you have done

Resume Outline

Begin by filling out a resume worksheet. It will help you organise the information you will be using in the resume. A good resume will include:

Education Tertiary:

Include: Area of concentration; major and minor; indicate you are a candidate for a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science; expected date of graduation; academic achievements, awards; extra-curricular activities (sports, clubs, committees).

Education Secondary School:

Include: Name and location of your high school; year of graduation; major programs studied; academic achievements, science/maths/english/drama/art awards; all of your extra-curricular activities. Relevant advanced courses such as School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship, First Aid, computer technology, physics, and/or electronics should also be included.

Computer Background:

List all computer languages you know and computer systems you are familiar with. E.g.. Daily use of Microsoft Word, Microsoft Outlook. Also, add special computer related experiences, i.e. owning a personal computer, writing programs, etc..

Work Experience:

Include all work experiences, full or part-time, paid or volunteer. In reverse chronological order, the most recent being first, list the position you held, specific duties, place of employment and location, and dates of employment. The description of the duties of each job should emphasise the tasks performed, indicating specialties learned, skills developed, scope of responsibility, and results achieved. Of particular importance are experiences illustrating leadership potential, organisational ability, communication skills, ingenuity, and teamwork. Use Action Verbs. Answer the question "What did I do?!"

Interests/Hobbies:

Include all hobbies that you have and are involved in outside of school; dance, chess, auto mechanics, debating, painting, reading, training dogs.

Community and Service Activities:

Include all community and service related activities you were involved with in high school or with which you are presently involved.

References:

Under the heading "References" the statement, "References will be supplied upon request" will suffice. (It is important, however, that you are prepared to give at least three references when filling out your application form).

Writing the Resume

A good resume is brief and concise, typed neatly in block form with no errors. It must be easy to read. When preparing your resume, cover the following points:

1. Limit yourself to one page only. As a rule, two page resumes are acceptable when you have over ten years of experience. Employers prefer to read only one page.
2. Put your resume on a floppy disc and print it on the best letter quality printer available. Photocopy additional copies for interviews as needed.
3. Type or print it on plain white bond paper in block form. Use 2.5cm margins on both sides and 1.5 to 2.5cm margins on the top and bottom of the page. Double space between each section of the resume.
4. Spelling must be accurate. Use your dictionary or your spell check.
5. Use clear and concise statements describing your experiences. Use proper grammar and punctuation.
6. Use a heading at the beginning of each section. Set it off by typing it in all caps or underlining the heading.
7. Under the headings "Education" & "Experience," the most recent should be listed first.
8. Have someone review your resume before you type it in final form.
9. When describing your experiences use action verbs that will stand out and tell the employer that you have really done something.



Action Verbs to use in your Resume

Added	Developed	Investigated	Researched
Administered	Devised	Laid-out	Restored
Analysed	Directed	Leveled	Revised
Applied	Documented	Maintained	Saved
Assembled	Drafted	Measured	Shot
Assisted	Drew	Observed	Sold
Attained	Earned	Operated	Solved
Bought	Edited	Ordered	Sponsored
Built	Established	Organised	Spread
Calculated	Evaluated	Performed	Stapled
Complied	Explored	Planned	Studied
Conducted	Fabricated	Planted	Supervised
Constructed	Filed	Prepared	Taught
Coordinated	Hammered	Produced	Tested
Created	Implemented	Programmed	Traced
Debugged	Improved	Provided	Trained
Delivered	Increased	Purchased	Transmitted
Demonstrated	Initiated	Remodeled	Verified
Designed	Installed	Repaired	Washed
Developed	Invented	Reported	Wrote

Other words I can use:



Resume Worksheet

Personal Details:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Use a permanent address and telephone number.

Career or Work Objectives:

Tailor your objective to each employer you target/ every job you seek.

Education: Secondary School:

School: _____

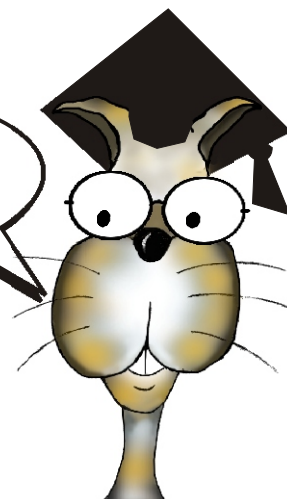
Subjects and Results:

Most recent first. Include subjects studied, academic achievements, extra-curricula activities.

Academic/ Sporting/ Cultural Achievements:

Extra-Curricula Activities:

This is your chance to let people know what you can do!



Technological Background:

Eg. Microsoft Word,
Use of Samsung
telephone system.

Work Experience:

Position Title, Organisation, Location	Dates of Employment	Work Responsibilities, Specific Skills Achievements

Interests and Hobbies

Hobbies and Activities that you are involved in outside of school

Community and Service Activities

Include: past and current experiences, participation in sports, experience in volunteer organisations in and out of school.

Other Information

This may include:
Key or special skills or competencies.
Other information you feel would enhance your credentials.

References

Include:
Name, Position, Telephone

You do not need to include copies in your resume.



The Cover Letter

An individually typed cover letter typically accompanies each resume you send out. Your cover letter may make the difference between obtaining a job interview and having your resume ignored. It makes sense to devote the necessary time and effort to write effective cover letters.

A cover letter should complement, not duplicate your resume. Its purpose is to interpret the data-oriented, factual resume and add a personal touch. A cover letter is often your earliest written contact with a potential employer, creating a critical first impression.

Effective cover letters explain the reasons for your interest in the specific organization and identify your most relevant skills or experiences (remember, relevance is determined by the employer's self-interest). They should express a high level of interest and knowledge about the position.

To be effective, your cover letter should follow the basic format of a typical business letter and should address three general issues:

1. First Paragraph - Why you are writing
2. Middle Paragraphs - What you have to offer
3. Concluding Paragraph - How you will follow-up

Why You Are Writing

In some cases, a friend or acquaintance may have referred you to a potential employer. Be sure to mention this mutual contact, by name, up front since it is likely to encourage your reader to keep reading!

If you are writing in response to a job posting, indicate where you learned of the position and the title of the position. More importantly, express your enthusiasm and the likely match between your credentials and the position's qualifications.

If you are writing a prospecting letter - a letter in which you inquire about possible job openings - state your specific job objective. Since this type of letter is unsolicited, it is even more important to capture the reader's attention.

If you are writing a networking letter to approach an individual or information, make your request clear.

What You Have To Offer

In responding to an advertisement, refer specifically to the qualifications listed and illustrate how your particular abilities and experiences relate to the position for which you are applying. In a prospecting letter express your potential to fulfill the employer's needs rather than focus on what the employer can offer you. You can do this by giving evidence that you have researched the organisation thoroughly and that you possess skills used within that organisation.

Emphasise your achievements and problem-solving skills. Show how your education and work skills are transferable, and thus relevant, to the position for which you are applying.

How You Will Follow Up

Bid directly for the job interview or informational interview and indicate that you will follow-up with a telephone call to set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Be sure to make the call within the time frame indicated.

If you are applying from outside the employer's geographic area you may want to indicate if you'll be in town during a certain time frame (this makes it easier for the employer to agree to meet with you).

In conclusion, you may indicate that your references are available on request. Also, if you have a portfolio or writing samples to support your qualifications, state their availability.

Cover Letter Tips:

- Try to keep paragraphs relatively short so they are easy to skim.
- Cover letters should be printed neatly on standard size paper. Make sure there are no spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors and that you have ample margins (2.5cm). Keep your letter to one page, and balance the paragraphs on the page.
- Always address your cover letter to a specific person and include their title. To determine the name of the appropriate party to address, ask a mutual contact, check the company's web page, call the organisation to request the name and title or consult trade publications, industry specific reports, guides and/or directories found in library reference sections or on the Internet.



Sample Cover Letter:

Your name
Mailing address
City, State, and Postcode
Telephone number(s)
Email address

Today's date

Your addressee's name
Professional title
Organisation name
Mailing address
City, State and Postcode

Dear Mr. (or Ms.) last name,

Start your letter with a grabber - a statement that establishes a connection with your reader, a probing question, or a quotable quote. Briefly say what job you are applying for.

The mid-section of your letter should be one or two short paragraphs that make relevant points about your qualifications. You should not summarise your resume! You may incorporate a column or bullet point format here.

Your last paragraph should initiate action by explaining what you will do next (e.g., call the employer) or instigate the reader to contact you to set up an interview. Close by saying "thank you."

Sincerely yours,
Your handwritten signature
Your name (typed)

Enclosure: resume

Sample Cover Letter

Your Name
Your Address
Telephone

Date

Mr/Mrs Last Name
Position
Company or Organisation
Address

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name

I am interested in the assistant position advertised in XXX. I am currently employed as Legislative Director for Assembly woman XXXX, Chairperson of the NYS Assembly XXX. I accepted this position because of the emphasis on the writing and research skills which are applicable to your requirements for an author's assistant. My experience in the NYS Assembly has afforded me the opportunity to become familiar with the consolidated and unconsolidated laws of the State of New York. I also have extensive experience in legal and policy research.

In my position as Legislative Director for Ms. XXX I prepare her personal legislation which deals with issues relative to her position as Senior Member of the NYS Assembly Standing Committee on XXXX. In as much as she is Chairperson of the XXX Committee I am, of course, heavily involved in the current welfare and medicaid reform movement.

In response to your search for a part-time assistant, I believe my experience in the Legislature, and my research and writing skills qualify me for consideration. If you would like, I can provide with current samples with my work.

To further acquaint you with the specifics of my background I am enclosing my resume. I hope you will consider me for this position. I look forward to meeting with you and discussing my qualifications in more detail.

Yours faithfully

Your signature

Your Typed Name



USEFUL WEBSITES

Writing a Resume:

Writing a Cover Letter:

Interview Skills:

WEEK THREE: THE INTERVIEW

ACTIVITY	RESOURCES
Suggested Time - 3 x 50 mins sessions	
1. Introduction 'Something positive about the last couple of weeks' - stimulate discussion	
2. Brainstorm: In small groups (4 groups) - <i>What to look for in an interview.</i> - One member of each group to report back. - Put sheets on wall	White board pens Paper
3. Activity: How do you rate? - In pairs students to complete definitions. Go through. - Individually rate themselves. - Discuss 'What can you do to improve any of these?'	Student notes
4. Guest speaker: - Work history. - What employers see when they interview. - Aims of interviewing. - Tips for going to an interview. - Sample questions 'How would you answer?'	
5. Activity: Role Play 6. Use notes on questioning. - Students select from cards - and take on either an employer or employee role. - The pair - develop a series of 5 questions and answers and develop a role play around their situation. (1 introduction, 3 body, 1 conclusion) - The group acts as critical friends - making comments, both positive & negative and suggestions for improvement.	Possible Questions worksheet. Role Play cards Tweety notes for feedback to each other.
Discuss 'Big Day Out' Introduction: Goals for end of the year. Using Tweety notes - each student to write a message to themselves for the end of the year including goals, hopes, ambitions. Make a list of steps to achieve these.	Student notes
Catch up lesson: Resume Cover Letter If complete: <i>DIR Safety Sense Certificate.</i> <i>Activities from careersonline.com.au</i>	
<i>HW: putting together the personal portfolio.</i>	



The Interview

You're moving right along. You've found the perfect job, you've sent in a truly outstanding resume and cover letter (if you do say so yourself), and all your hard work has finally paid off -- you have been called in for an interview.

You know you are the best candidate for the position . . . now you just have to convince the employer. It's a great opportunity, and if you do well in the interview, the job could soon be yours.

General Tips:

Going to a job interview can be a stressful situation for many. The best way to help relieve this stress is to maintain a positive attitude and **be prepared**. Here are 10 things you can do to make your job interview a successful one and as stress-free as possible:

1. **Be positive.**
2. Be ready for the questions you will likely be asked. Think of the answers you want to give.
3. Know why you want to work for the firm. Do your best to obtain information about the company before the interview.
4. Know about the job. What likely duties and responsibilities will go with the position?
5. Know what you have to offer -What training you have had and what you have done that make you ideal for this position.
6. Be prepared to give names, addresses and phone numbers of references.
7. Have your resume up to date and take it with you.
8. Make sure you can get there on time. Know where you are going and how long it will take you to get there. Go there once before your interview if possible so you are sure of the route.
9. Allow at least one hour for the interview. Don't make any appointments for right after the interview.
10. Get enough sleep. Be clean and neat. Prepare your clothes the night before.





How do you rate?

Listed below are some general things that an employer might look for in job applicants.

Match the word, with its correct definition?

Rate yourself A - excellent B - very good C - fair D - needs improvement	Applicant Skills	Definition
	Appearance Speech Nervousness Personality Attitudes Enthusiasm Honesty Reliability Confidence Alertness Ambition Interests Skills Work Experience Education Intelligence Character Health Home Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uneasy feeling about a situation - What I feel about certain things - The way I look outwardly - Showing great interest in something - The way in which I speak to others - Things which make me as a person - Having trust or faith in something - Awake, watchful and ready for action - Being sincere, fair and trustworthy - My desire to do well - to achieve - Can do things correctly and quickly - The things I am good at doing - The knowledge and skills I have gained from school, college, etc. - The things I enjoy doing the most - Work I have done which may have taught me skills useful to an employer - My family background and upbringing - The condition of my body - The way in which I use my knowledge and my understanding - My feelings towards right and wrong



Preparing for the Interview

KNOW THE JOB

One of the most important things you can do before your job interview is to find out some information about the company and the particular position for which you are applying.

If you can show the interviewers that you have "done your homework," they will assume that you would show the same kind of dedication and initiative if you were to work for them.

The information you should try to find includes:

- What is the business of the employer?
- What is the nature of the job you are applying for? (possible duties and responsibilities)
- What are the qualifications for the position? What skills might the employer be looking for?
- Who are the customers of the business?
- What is the reputation of the employer?
- What are the physical requirements for the job?
- Who will be interviewing you? How many?



Where do you find this information????:

DRESSING FOR THE INTERVIEW

What you wear to an interview can be as important as what you say.

Clothes may not make the man or woman, but they do say a lot about who you are and how well you will fit into the company.

Tips for all interviewees

- Always wear clean and neat clothing; make sure it is pressed. Nothing will turn an interviewer off more than an outfit that looks like it's been sitting in your laundry hamper since your last job interview.
- Wear deodorant or antiperspirant. 'Nuff said about that?
- Use little or no perfume or cologne. You want to smell good, but not overpowering. Also, more and more people find they are allergic to perfumes and colognes. You don't want to make the interviewer break out in a rash
- Have fresh breath and clean teeth.
- Have clean, recently cut, and neatly brushed hair.
- If possible, before your interview find out how people dress at the place of employment. Dress as well or a little better ("one up"). But be careful, as overdressing may also turn the interviewer off.

Tips for males and females

Males	Females
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- For business, public contact and customer service positions, wear a suit jacket, dress pants, shirt and tie, socks and polished shoes. Avoid loud colours.- For positions with less public contact wear a sports jacket or sweater, a shirts with a collar, dress pants (skip the jeans or sweat pants), and polished shoes.- Facial hair should be clean - shaven or neatly trimmed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Go easy on the makeup and fingernail polish. Avoid unusual colours, too heavy an application and extremely long nails.- Simple clothes and quiet colours are most suitable.- Very tight clothes, see-through tops and short skirts should be avoided.- Stocking and low-heeled shoes are best for professional, office, sales, public contact and customer service jobs.- Clothing and accessories do not have to be expensive to make a good impression, but they should always be in good taste and clean. they should also be toned down rather than wild or extravagant. You want the interviewer's attention to be focused on you, not on your clothes.

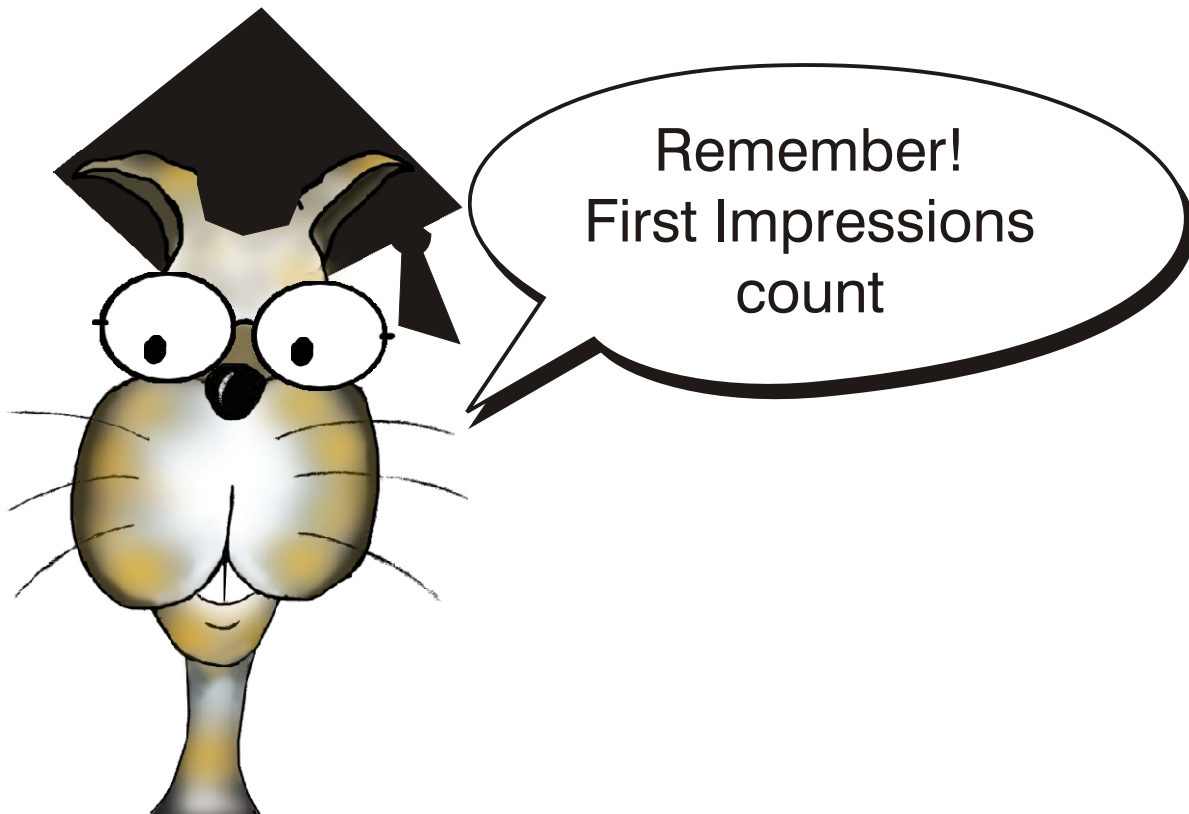
WHAT TO TAKE TO THE INTERVIEW

There are some essential things you will want to take along with you when you go for a job interview. For example, it's just common sense to take a pen and paper with you in case you have to write something down.

But you don't want to take too much along either. The interviewer won't be impressed if you have to rummage through a backpack full of junk for 10 minutes to find that pen and paper. The fewer things you have to set down or move around, the better.

The best advice is to carry with you a small folder that contains:

- Copies of your resume, to give to the interviewer at the start of the interview and for your own reference during the interview;
- Copies of letters of recommendation, and a typed reference sheet to be given to the interviewer;
- Other material relevant to the interview;
- Pen and paper, so that you can note the name of the interviewer, times for future interviews and other pertinent information.





THE INTERVIEW

ARRIVING AT THE INTERVIEW

Remember, your interview really begins as soon as you arrive at the place of the interview, or even before. Who knows, the person you are sitting beside on the bus on the way to the interview might work for the company!

Maintaining a professional attitude even as you leave your house will not only help prevent any potentially embarrassing moments before you get to the interview, it will also keep you in a good frame of mind. Here are some more tips to keep in mind as you head to the interview.

- You may be asked to wait for a little while. Keep calm, and take the opportunity to go over your answers to some of the questions you think you might be asked. Do not listen to your walkman or take the opportunity to do your own manicure.
- The opinions of secretaries, receptionists and other employees often influence an interviewer's judgement. A favourable or unfavourable comment by them can be a critical factor in helping the interviewer make a decision. So be friendly, polite and courteous from the moment you walk in the door until the moment you leave.
- Know who you are going to see. Ask for him or her by name.
- Making a good impression in the waiting room is just as important as when the interview begins. You wouldn't light up a cigarette or chew gum during the interview, so don't do it in the waiting room either.

THE INTERVIEW PERIOD

THE INTRODUCTION:

The first five minutes often sets the tone for the rest of the job interview. If you can make a good impression and maintain a relaxed attitude from the outset, you'll find the rest of the interview will roll right along.

Here are some suggestions to help you make sure the interview gets off on the right foot.

- Greet the interviewer. Sounds simple, but many people forget this basic courtesy.
- Smile. A sincere smile can do a lot to put both of you at ease.
- Introduce yourself. Don't assume the interviewer already knows your name.
- Shake hands firmly and warmly.
- Make eye contact when speaking. On the other hand, don't stare the interviewer down either. Maintain eye contact in a way that you would with a friend during a casual conversation.
- Stand until the interviewer asks you to sit down.
- Relax and sit naturally but do not slump in your chair or lean on the interviewer's desk.
- Be prepared to make small talk to put both of you at ease.
- Be prepared to talk about yourself as a person.
- Speak in a firm, clear, confident voice. You may have great answers to all the interviewer's questions, but that won't matter if your responses are so muffled or timidly expressed that the interviewer can't hear you or doesn't believe you.
- Maintain a positive attitude throughout the interview.

THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

For many of us, the first formal contact with an employer can be a scary experience. If you find yourself a little tense and excited, don't worry--you are not alone. Almost everyone experiences some anxiety and feelings of insecurity during an interview.

Some reminders to help you through the interview process:

1. Present your resume. "I've brought my resume along if you would like to see it."
2. Be prepared to tell the interviewer more about your:
 - education, training, and skills
 - desirable personality traits
 - work experience

Use specific examples rather than general statements when giving this information.

3. Look at the interviewer. Do not fidget.
4. Let the employer have control. Answer questions sincerely and completely. Be aware of natural pauses to ask your questions.
5. It's okay to ask for clarification if you don't understand a question. It's better to ask the interviewer to restate or explain a question and give a good answer than to try to guess what the interviewer wants and give an inappropriate one.
6. Don't clam up. For most questions, the interviewer wants more than a simple "yes" or "no."
7. But don't give long-winded monologues that contain little relevant information, either. An average of one to two minutes for an answer is probably about right.
8. Be aware of why you want this job - stress your good points.

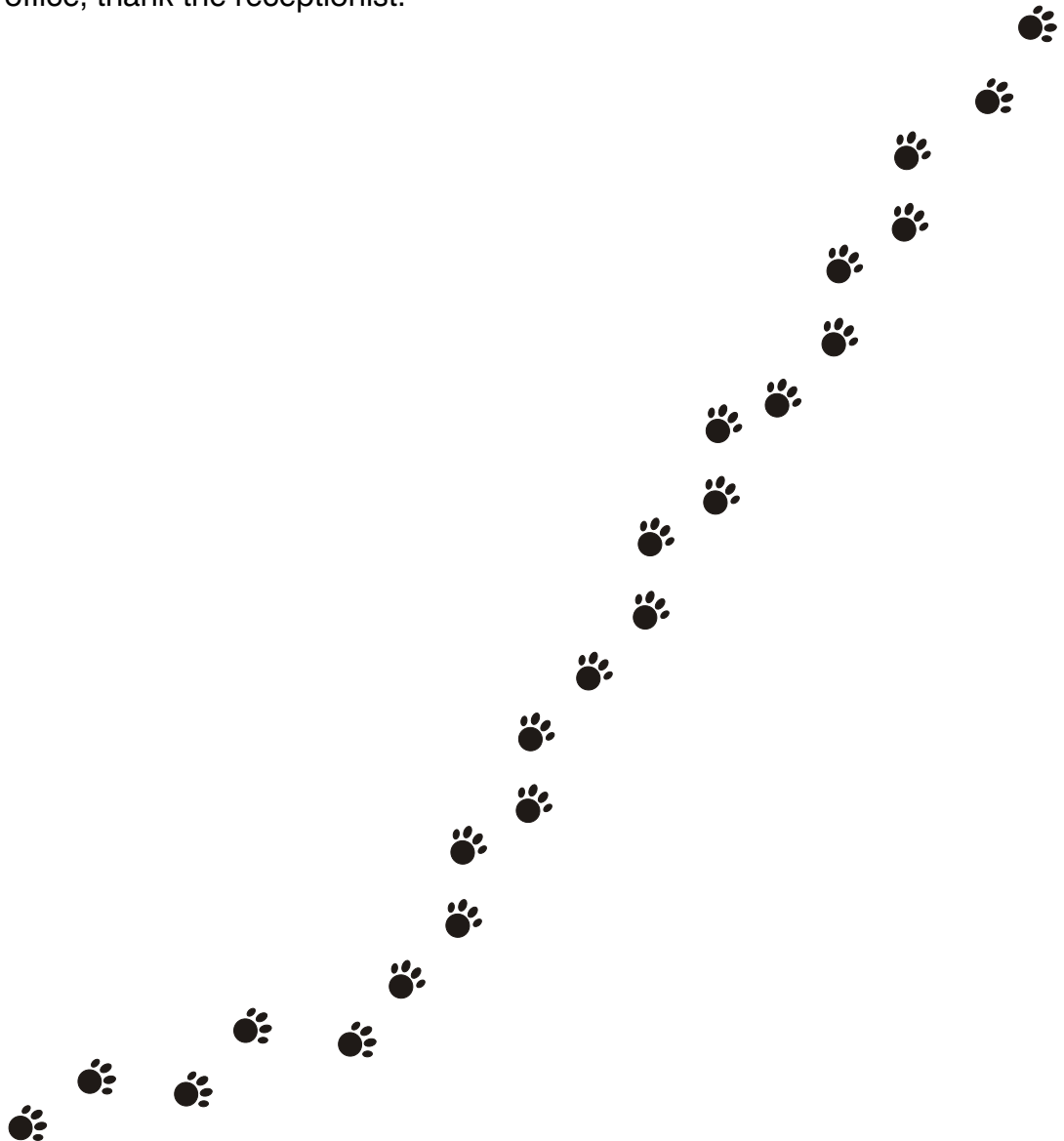
CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

You are almost done the interview. Everything has gone well, you've answered the interviewer's questions well, and you actually felt pretty comfortable throughout the whole thing. Or maybe you feel that things didn't go that well, and you've got this sinking feeling that you won't get the job.

Whichever is the case, make sure you leave the interview on a positive note. Many people have left an interview feeling they blew it, only to be surprised by a phone call from the employer a few days later offering them the job. You can never be sure what the other person thought of the interview, so it's a good idea to take every opportunity to leave a positive impression.

Here are a few suggestions of things to do as you leave the interview:

- If the employer asks you to call or return for another interview, make a written note as to date, time and place.
- If the employer does not let you know when a further contact will be made, ask when you may call to learn of his/her decision.
- Thank the interviewer for the interview and his/her time.
- Shake hands when you leave.
- Leave promptly when the interview has ended.
- On leaving the outer office, thank the receptionist.





POSSIBLE QUESTIONS???

Questions will probably be asked in a rapid sequence, and can be designed to put pressure on the applicant.

If you have not got sensible answers prepared which you can present confidently, you will be well on your way to making a poor impression.

Look closely at each of these questions.

Try to work out **what** the interviewer might be looking for, and then **prepare your answers** to the questions.

Practice saying your answers so that you will sound confident when you are with the interviewer.

- What were your best subjects at school?
- What did you like most/least about school? Why?
- Could you have done better at school?
- What hobbies do you enjoy doing?
- What sports?
- Why do you want to do this job?
- How did you decide to pick this type of work?
- What do you know about this job?
- What do you know about our firm?
- What plans do you have for the future?
- What type of work experience have you had?
- Tell me about yourself . . .
- What are your strong/weak points?
- How do you spend your spare time?
- Why did you choose the subjects you did at school?
- Why don't you have a job?
- Why have you no qualifications?
- What do you think of training?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- Have you applied for jobs with other companies?
- How would you behave if you didn't get on with your boss or other workers?
- What do you hope to achieve from this job?
- What do you think success is?
- How well do you carry out instructions?
- What do you see yourself doing in five years time?
- What are you looking for in life?
- Why should we employ you?

WHAT ARE EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR IN THEIR QUESTIONS??

A. Openers

1. *Tell me about yourself...*

The interviewer is asking you to tell them about yourself as a person, not merely about your job skills.

Take your cues from the interviewer as to how formal or informal you should be.

- a. Try to provide information that may indicate something you have in common with the interviewer.
- b. Describe a few personal items, such as hobbies or interests.
- c. Mention work-related factors such as previous work experience, training and education.

Mentioning these topics will help create a friendly atmosphere and put you and the interviewer at ease with each other.

B. Work Experience/Job Performance

1. *Have you ever done this type of work before?*

The interviewer is trying to determine if you are qualified for the job.

If you have completed similar work in the past or have held a job using some of the required skills, examples of skills used in past jobs should be described. If this line of work is new to you and you have never done anything similar in the past, be sure to mention your eagerness and ability to learn.

2. *Why should we hire you instead of someone else? What are your greatest strengths?*

When answering this question, remember to keep the information related to the job you are competing for.

Mention positive traits that give the interviewer a variety of information about you.

Confidently list your skills and your positive characteristics.

3. *What are your weaknesses?*

A tough question. Everyone has weaknesses, but the interviewer wants to know if you have any weaknesses that will prevent you from doing the particular job well. Don't mention weaknesses if they will not interfere with your ability to do the job. If you do have a weakness that will interfere with the job, then perhaps this is not the best position to be applying for. If you feel you can overcome the weaknesses, mention them to the interviewer and explain what you have been doing to overcome the difficulties. Always reassure the employer that you are confident that you can either work with or overcome the weakness.

4. *What kinds of machines/equipment have you worked with.*

Only mention machines or equipment that are related to the job in question. The more equipment you can operate, the more apparent it is that you are capable of learning about other types that might be used on the job. If you have not had experience working with the type of equipment used, describe similar equipment and express your confidence that you can learn quickly.

5. *Give me an example of a time when you worked under pressure.*

Employers want to know how you are able to handle pressure.

Give the interviewer examples of paid or unpaid activities that involved deadlines and pressures and be able to explain how you handled the stress. If you were unable to meet the deadline, explain what you did to compensate, such as working overtime, renegotiating the deadline, etc.

6. *Why have all your jobs been short term?*

The interviewer is trying to find out if you can keep a job.

You should mention any straight forward factors that are responsible for your work history, such as returning to school, summer or temporary employment, travel, etc. If you have no explanation to offer the employer, mention that you were looking for work and assure the employer you plan to stay with this job for some time.

7. *Why did you leave your last job?*

The interviewer is looking to see if there were problems at your last job that may arise again.

Employees usually leave a job for more than one reason and you should mention only those reasons that are favourable to you. If you were fired from your last job and feel you need to mention the position on your resum¹, explain what happened in a positive manner and note that the situation would never occur again. Do not say anything negative about a company or supervisor you used to work for as the interviewer will most likely view you as someone who will do the same thing again.

C. Education/Training/Future Goals

1. *Why aren't you in school/Why haven't you finished school?*

The interviewer may fear that you will leave your job for the same reasons you left school. He/she may also be curious about any ambitions you have to complete your education.

Tell the employer in a positive way why you are not attending school at present. If you do plan to complete high school, let the employer know this.

2. *What are your long range goals?*

The interviewer wants to know whether you are serious about staying with the company and to determine whether you have given some thought to your future.

If your goals are related to the job in question, be certain to make note of this. If the position is not related to your goals, mention the advantages of gaining additional work experience as part of your career planning.

D. Company Research

1. Why do you want to work here?

The interviewer wants to learn what you know about the company and the job for which you are being interviewed. Knowledge about the company and the job shows the interviewer you are interested and demonstrates initiative on your part.

You should mention as many of the positive features as you can about the company and mention why you are a good candidate to fill the job vacancy.

2. What kind of salary do you expect?

Most lines of work have a set salary range and it would be wise to learn what this range is prior to the interview. If you are unable to obtain this information, you may want to tell the interviewer that you would work for whatever the company feels is fair, based on your qualifications and the company's standard salary level for that position. If you want to request a specific salary, be able to back up why you should get that amount (avoid stating personal reasons).

E. Personal

1. How much were you absent from work/school? How is your health?

The interviewer is trying to determine whether they can depend on you to show for work.

If this has not been an area of concern for you, stress your past reliability and give assurance of your future reliability. If you have had difficulties in this area in the past, tell the interviewer what the reason was and why you feel that it will no longer be a problem. If it will continue to be a problem, be up front about this and try to negotiate a schedule that works for both of you.

2. When are you available for work?

If you are presently unemployed, you can most likely respond that you can begin work right away. However, if you are presently employed, you should be aware of how much notice your present employer requires before you are able to leave your present job. If you are going to school, know when you will be finished and what part-time hours you will be prepared to work before the school year ends.

3. Can you explain this gap in your employment?

The employer may be questioning your commitment to employment, thinking that you don't like to work, or wanting to find out what you have been doing with yourself during the gap.

If you have been doing anything constructive during this time, such as dedicating yourself to school, taking courses, performing volunteer work, etc., mention these. Also, mention that you were looking for jobs, and that you enjoy working.

4. Do you have a criminal record?

If you have a criminal record, don't try to hide it from the interviewer. Briefly explain the situation, remembering not to sound like you are making excuses or blaming the incident on someone else. Reassure the interviewer that you have learned from your mistakes and have changed your ways.

5. *Are you willing to cut your hair/take out your earring?*

The interviewer feels that some aspect of your appearance does not "fit" with the business and wants to know if you are willing to change your appearance.

The decision of what you say is yours. However, if you say no, you may not be considered for the job. Saying yes will increase the chances of being seen as a cooperative person and, consequently, of being hired.

F. Closures

1. *Do you have references?*

It is best to provide the interviewer with a neatly typed sheet indicating the name, position, location and telephone number of your references. If you do not have employment references, consider using the names of teachers/instructors or the names of personal references. Personal references should not be the names of friends who are approximately the same age as yourself. Almost all employers will ask for references, so be prepared to provide this information. Also have permission to use someone's name prior to adding it to your reference sheet.

2. *Are there any questions that you have?*

This is often the final question that an employer will ask. It is wise to always ask one or two questions as it shows the interviewer your interest in the position available.

However, the interview is not the time to ask questions about salary, benefits, hours or vacation. This information may be critical for you in making your decision, but wait until you have been offered the job before asking about them.



<p>Manager of Human Resources - My Fashion Toowoomba. Position Vacant: retail assistant</p>	<p>Applicant Retail Assistant at 'My Fashion'</p>
<p>Owner "The Best Cut Ever" hairdressing salon. Position Vacant: Hairdressing Apprenticeship</p>	<p>Applicant Hairdressing Apprenticeship at 'The Best Cut Ever'</p>
<p>Owner 'Pets are Fab' petshop. Position Vacant: daily dog walker and groomer</p>	<p>Applicant daily Dog Walker and Groomer at "Pets are Fab"</p>
<p>Owner 'Flowers are Us' Position Vacant: Florist Assistant, possibly traineeship.</p>	<p>Applicant Florist Assistant, possibly traineeship at 'Flowers are Us'</p>
<p>Manager 'The Best Food' Position Vacant: Hospitality - table service Traineeship.</p>	<p>Applicant Hospitality - Table Service Traineeship at 'The Best Food'</p>

<p>Human Relations Manager 'The Office' Position Vacant: Receptionist</p>	<p>Applicant Receptionist at 'The Office'</p>
<p>Manager 'Pizza On Wheels' Position Vacant: Pizza Delivery Driver</p>	<p>Applicant Pizza Delivery Driver for 'Pizza On Wheels'</p>
<p>Owner 'Toowoomba Park Providers' Position Vacant: Gardener Assistant</p>	<p>Applicant Gardener Assistant for 'Toowoomba Park Providers'</p>
<p>Manager 'Kids for a Day' Childcare Centre Position Vacant: 0-3 year old assistant</p>	<p>Applicant 0-3 year old Assistant at 'Kids for a Day' Childcare Centre</p>

Proposed program for:

BIG DAY OUT

- 8.45am: Depart from school
- 9.00am: Arrive Hair and Beauty SQIT
- 11.30am: Motivational Session SQIT
- 12.00pm: Lunch Future's Restaurant
SQIT
- 1.45pm: Fashion for your figure type, Fashion for job seeking
Consultant from Miss Shop, Myer.

Resources used for

Year 12

"Preparing for the World of Work"

Texts

Employability Skills 2002/ Key Work Skills 1998

Sites

www.google.com.au

www.careersonline.com.au/smartmoves/generator/