



Career and Employment Services

Job Seeking Skills Guidebook



Available Services
Employment Search Techniques
How to Prepare for Interviews
How to Write a Resume
And More

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Gateway Career and Employment Services

The primary mission of the Student Employment Services is to assist students and alumni in attaining their employment objectives.

JOB LISTINGS ON THE INTERNET

Each year thousands of positions are announced to Gateway Technical College by area employers. The job listings are specifically targeted for Technical College program students and graduates.

APPLICATION ASSISTANCE, RESUME, AND LETTER WRITING

While there are numerous styles and types of resumes and other printed material required of job applicants certain basic rules apply. Assistance is provided to candidates who wish to discuss accepted methods and styles of printed material used in the job search.

INTERVIEW SKILLS TRAINING

Common interview situations can be intimidating to the new graduate. Individual and group sessions are available to help the individual get through the interview process.

EMPLOYER ON-CAMPUS RECRUITING

Each semester numerous employers visit the Gateway campuses to recruit employees. Contact Student Employment Services on your campus to learn about upcoming employer visits.

How to Contact Us

Elkhorn

Damira Grady
Student Services
400 County Road H
Elkhorn, WI 53121
262-741-8320
gradyd@gtc.edu

Kenosha

Sheri Eisch
Student Services
3520 30th Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53144
262-564-2720
eischs@gtc.edu

Racine

Kevin McCray
Student Services
1001 S. Main Street
Racine, WI 53403
262-619-6534
mccrayk@gtc.edu

Job Board and Resume Posting

Wisconsin TechConnect = www.wisconsintechconnect.com

Any student enrolled in a technical diploma or associate degree program or graduate of Gateway Technical College may utilize our jobs leads database called Wisconsin TechConnect. All job opportunities known to Gateway Career and Employment staff are posted on TechConnect. TechConnect will list jobs by program area as well as miscellaneous jobs, paid and unpaid internships, and volunteer opportunities.

To register go to:

www.wisconsintechconnect.com and click Students Get Started

Upload your resume to Wisconsin TechConnect. Employers who have posted jobs in your degree area then have access to review your resume.

Consider having your resume reviewed by one of our Career Counselors before posting your resume. Counselor appointments can be made by phone or in person at any Student Services Office.

- ❖ Elkhorn – 262-741-8300
- ❖ Kenosha – 262-564-2300
- ❖ Racine – 262-619-6300

Student Employment Website

www.gtc.edu, Current Students, Student Services, Career & Advising, Student Employment Services

- Wisconsin TechConnect – posts job openings
- Employment Events – lists job fairs and employer recruitments on campus.
- Labor Market Information – use this information when discussing salary
- Resume Templates – Microsoft Templates & Learning Express from our library website
- Employment Links – links to newspaper, government, networking, and resume assistance sites.

Frequently Asked Questions

Regarding Career and Employment Services

Is there a charge for the service?

No, this service is free to all Gateway students and alumni.

Can Adult High School and non-credit Adult Continuing Education students use Career and Employment Services?

Yes

Where are job announcements posted?

On the internet at www.wisconsintechconnect.com. Please email GTCses@gtc.edu to register. Some job listings are also posted on bulletin boards on each campus.

Is there a time limit as to the availability of services?

No, services are always available to you, without regard to enrollment or graduate status.

Will Career and Employment Services prepare my cover letter and resume for me?

No, time constraints and available resources don't allow us to create a cover letter and resume for you. However, tips, samples, ideas, and various formatting examples are available to help you prepare your own resume and cover letters.

Will Career and Employment Services mail out my cover letter and resume for me?

No, again, time constraints and available resources don't allow us to do so.

Does Career and Employment Services work with graduates seeking part-time employment?

Yes, job listings include full and part-time jobs that may be of interest to all types of job seekers, as well as seasonal positions and internships.

What is a Cover Letter?

The following article was written by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D. for Quintessential Careers website at www.quintcareers.com

What is a cover letter? It's a letter of introduction that highlights your key accomplishments and fit for a job opening. A cover letter adds focus to your resume. Few employers seriously consider a resume that is not accompanied by a cover letter; thus, a cover letter needs to be part of your job-search strategy. Each cover letter **must** be tailored to each job, each employer.

Your cover letter can explain things that your resume can't. If you have large gaps in your employment history, reentering the job market or changing the focus of your career, or relocating and conducting a long-distance job-search, a cover letter can explain these circumstances in a positive way.

Tips for writing a cover letter:

- Whenever possible, address your cover letter to a named individual
- Highlight your three to four key accomplishments/skills/experiences
- Focus on the fit between your qualifications and the job requirements
- Whenever possible, relate yourself to the company
- End your letter by requesting an interview
- Cover letters should be kept to under one page; electronic versions even shorter
- Avoid all types of mistakes, including typos, misspellings, and grammatical errors

On the next page you will find a Sample Cover Letter.

Sample Cover Letter

18 Apple Court
Kenosha, WI 53144
(262) 555-0000

August 16, 2012

Ms. Smyth
Aurora Hospital
1234 Daley Street
Kenosha, WI 53145

Dear Ms. Smyth, *(If you absolutely cannot find a name, use terms like Dear Human Resources)*

This letter is in response to your advertisement for Medical Assistant at Aurora Hospital found in the Kenosha News dated Sunday, April 15, 2012. With my education and skills as Medical Assistant I am positive that I could make a significant contribution to Aurora Hospital.

(second paragraph for hidden job search)

Please accept this letter and resume as an indication of my interest in working for *(insert company name)* as *(insert job title)*. I understand you may not have an opening at this time, but I want you to know of my interest in your organization.

I recently graduated from Gateway Technical College with a Medical Assistant Technical Diploma. My education has prepared me with the skills necessary to perform a variety of medical assistant duties. I have been trained to interview patients to obtain medical information, measure vital signs, weight and height, and record the information into their medical record. I enjoy working with patients and it is my top priority to give them the best care possible.

I am excited to begin my new career as Medical Assistant. I would appreciate the chance to come in and talk with you about this career opportunity and how my qualifications will be an asset to Aurora Hospital. I can be reached at (262) 321-9876. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Samantha Wise

Resume Guidelines

A resume is **not** meant to be an autobiography but rather a presentation of the highlights of your experience and schooling. **It needs to be updated and rewritten as often as necessary.**

There are three main styles of resumes:

The **chronological resume** is a resume that highlights an applicant's work history starting from the most recent work experience listed in reverse chronological order. It works well for students and new graduates.

The **functional resume** is a resume that highlights an applicant's specific experience and skills rather than a chronological listing of work history experience. Functional resumes are often used to emphasize specific experience or to de-emphasize limited experience. It lists your work competencies in a cluster-type format and is helpful to those making a career change or gaps in work history.

The **combination resume** utilizes both chronological and functional formats.

Recent college graduates often use the Chronological or Chrono-Functional combined formats.

Some basic guidelines are:

Do

- List a job objective or profile summary statement
- TRY to keep the resume to one page, it may need to be two
- Use a reasonable font size (10, 11, or 12)
- Use standard fonts that are easy to read
- Print resume/cover letter on paper designed for resumes/cover letters
- Include your e-mail address (**professional one**)
- Prepare three draft copies, have others review the final draft
- List work history including paid and unpaid internships
- Use reverse chronological order to list education and work history

Don't

- Do NOT include photographs or graphic art
- Do NOT repeat items that may appear in your cover letter
- Do NOT include personal information such as health, age, or marital status
- Do NOT use abbreviations or acronyms
- Do NOT include references on resume

Writing an Objective Statement or Profile Summary

Begin a Resume with an Objective Statement or Profile Summary?

Most employers want to be able to determine in just a few seconds what you want to do for the organization and what you are good at, this is why an objective statement or profile summary are so important.

You may choose either an objective statement or profile summary for your resume. They are equally effective; however, the profile summary is typically used by someone with many years of experience in their field.

OBJECTIVE STATEMENT

Objectives are:

- Easy to write
- Direct and to the point
- Must tell what you want (*position*) and what you can give (*meaning skills or return of investment*).
- Usually have to change with every resumes you send.

Sample:

Recent Mechanical Engineer graduate seeking a Drafting position with an organization that will benefit from a specialist in CAD Solids Works and CATIA programs.

PROFILE SUMMARY

Profiles are:

- Harder to write, takes more time
- More directed at skills and personal traits
- Like a 30 second elevator speech
- Typically does not have to change every time you send out your resume

Sample:

Professional Cosmetologist with over 3 years' experience in providing customer service and skin care treatments to face and body to enhance an individual's appearance. Strong retail and marketing background with knowledge of quality products and services offered. Characterized as a dedicated worker with a keen eye for detail and quality of work. Excellent communicator with the ability to perform well in a fast paced, high volume, and customer friendly environment.

Chronological Resume Sample

JANE A. SMITH

1234 S. 56th Street
Anywhere, WI 53177

(262) 123-4567
smithja@yahoo.com

OBJECTIVE: Administrative Assistant

EDUCATION

Associate of Applied Science Degree - Administrative Assistant

Gateway Technical College, Racine, WI
Expected Graduation: December 2011

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- **Computer Skills:** Microsoft Office 2010 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access), Internet, Outlook
- **Time Management Skills:** Expert in multi-tasking and prioritizing, ability to meet deadlines.
- **Highly Organized:** Organize and coordinate individual calendars with meeting times and appointments.
- **Strong Customer Service Skills:** Well-developed interpersonal/customer relation skills; ability to communicate effectively and offer assistance, handle stressful situations with competence.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Receptionist

WXYZ Corporation, Racine, WI

11/2008 - Present

Answered and directed all phone calls to appropriate people.

Greeted customers and directed them to the correct floor.

Coordinated schedules and confirmed meetings and appointments.

Sales Associate

01/2000 - 10/2008

ABCD Clothing, Kenosha, WI

Assisted customers with clothing choices.

Operated cash register, balanced drawer at closing.

Straightened clothing displays in store.

ASSOCIATIONS

International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP)

2008 - Present

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Chrono/Functional Sample Resume

Shannon Wright

123 North Point St. * Racine, WI 65432 * 262-555-1132 * shayward@gtc.edu

OBJECTIVE: Marketing Communications / Web Page Design

To contribute extensive marketing education, customer service, and events-planning as a Marketing Professional in your organization.

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

- Rising professional with marketing experience, as well as solid interpersonal and communications skills.
- Team player who consistently strives for productive collaboration.
- Creative thinker with knowledge of marketing and promotions through education and work experience.
- Excellent organizer with solid events-planning and problem-solving skills.
- Self-starter who can work independently and handle multiple priorities and deadlines.
- Computer proficient in Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint.

EDUCATION

Associate of Applied Science – Marketing
Gateway Technical College – Racine, WI – May 2011

HIGHLIGHTS OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND EXPERIENCE

Marketing

- Enhanced knowledge of retail and sales as Brand Representative for American Eagle.
- Assisted with Web-page and flier design, e-mail communication, and direct mail as Marketing Director Assistant for American Eagle.
- Participated on team in consumer-behavior class that designed product and logo, identified target market, and developed marketing pitch.
- Contributed to class team that conducted marketing research for local yoga studio by pinpointing target market, suggesting ways to reach untapped market, and increasing community awareness; conducted surveys and focus groups; performed statistical research using SPS program.

Customer Service

- Interacted with customers and answered phones as Brand Representative for American Eagle.
- Communicated with clients as Marketing Director Assistant for Walton Villard, M.D.; contacted all hospitals in Southeast region to discuss services and new policies.

Organizational ~ Events Planning

- Developed spreadsheets to track Walton Villard, M.D., customers.
- Organized retreats and planned Jacksonville University Marketing Department events for upcoming year.

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

Brand Representative – American Eagle, Milwaukee, WI, August 2009 to Present.

Marketing Director Assistant – Walton Villard, M.D., Racine, WI, May 2009 to Dec. 2010.

Office Assistant – Marketing Office, Gateway Technical College, Kenosha, WI, Summer 2010.

Key Resume Words

Managerial Skills	Communication Skills	Research Skills	Technical Skills	Teaching Skills
Administered Analyzed Assigned Attained Chaired Consolidated Coordinated Delegated Developed Directed Evaluated Executed Improved Increased Organized Oversaw Planned Prioritized Produced Recommended Reviewed Scheduled Strengthened Supervised	Addressed Arbitrated Arranged Authored Corresponded Developed Directed Drafted Edited Enlisted Formulated Influenced Interpreted Lectured Mediated Moderated Motivated Negotiated Persuaded Promoted Publicized Reconciled Recruited Spoke Translated Wrote	Clarified Collected Critiqued Diagnosed Evaluated Examined Extracted Identified Inspected Interpreted Interviewed Investigated Organized Reviewed Summarized Surveyed Systematized	Assembled Built Calculated Computed Designed Devised Engineered Fabricated Maintained Operated Overhauled Programmed Remodeled Repaired Solved Trained Upgraded	Adapted Advised Clarified Coached Communicated Coordinated Developed Enabled Encouraged Evaluated Explained Facilitated Guided Informed Initiated Instructed Persuaded Set goals Stimulated
Financial Skills	Creative Skills	Helping Skills	Clerical/Detail Skills	List Any Other Skills You May Have
Administered Allocated Analyzed Audited Balanced Budgeted Calculated Computed Developed Forecast Managed Marketed Planned Projected Researched	Acted Conceptualized Created Designed Developed Directed Established Fashioned Founded Illustrated Instituted Integrated Introduced Invented Originated Performed Planned Revitalized Shaped	Assessed Assisted Clarified Coached Counseled Demonstrated Diagnosed Educated Expedited Facilitated Familiarized Guided Referred Rehabilitated Represented	Approved Arranged Cataloged Classified Collected Complied Dispatched Executed Generated Implemented Inspected Monitored Operated Organized Prepared Processed Purchased Recorded Retrieved Screened Specified Systemized Tabulated Validated	

Resume Worksheet

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Objective _____

Qualifications

Education

School _____

City, State _____

Degree _____

Year _____

Work History

Employer _____

City, State _____

Position Title _____

Start/End Date _____

Job Duties _____

Resume Worksheet Cont.

History – Continued

Employer _____

City, State _____

Position Title _____

Start/End Date _____

Job Duties _____

Employer _____

City, State _____

Position Title _____

Start/End Date _____

Job Duties _____

Employer _____

City, State _____

Position Title _____

Start/End Date _____

Job Duties _____

E-Resumes

Eighty percent of employers of Fortune 500 companies post jobs on their own websites and expect job seekers to respond electronically. They are also placing resumes into searchable databases. There are varying ways to send your e-resume so that the employer is successfully able to open and read the resume or place it in their database.

The following are two types of e-resumes:

1. Formatted Resume

The most common is a formatted or "print" resume. These are resumes we create in programs such as Microsoft Word. The formatted resume is the most attractive visual presentation to the employer. However, sending only a formatted resume as an attachment may lead to such problems as inconsistent formatting from computer to computer and vulnerability to viruses.

2. Text Resume *(also known as plain-text, ASCII, or text-based resume)*

This type of resume is not the most visually pleasing, but is compatible across all computer programs and eliminates worries from employers about Word attachments that may contain viruses. A text resume enables the employer to place your resume in their keyword-searchable database, which a vast majority of employers now use. The text resume is versatile and can be used for:

- Posting in its entirety on many job boards.
- Pasting into the body of an e-mail and sending to employers.
- Converting to a Web-based HTML resume.
- Sending as an attachment to employers, although you'll probably want to send your formatted version also.
- Conversion to a scan able resume. *(Basically a text resume that is sent by fax or postal mail)*

One suggestion to insure your resume reaches the employer in good condition would be to explain to the employer in your email that you have sent your formatted resume as an attachment but have also included a text version in the body of your email to eliminate any software incompatibility problems. Creating a text resume involves taking the Formatted Resume you created in Word, for example, and saving it as a Plain Text or Text file, re-opening it in a text editor program like WordPad or Notepad, then making a few adjustments to it. The text document should be left aligned and NOT contain any Bold, Underlining, Italics or Bulleted words. Tips on how to make the Text Resume look better can be found on the following link:

Sample text resume can be found at:

http://www.quintcareers.com/text_resume_sample.html



Check It Out!

Source: Articles written by Katharine Hansen featured on Quintessential Careers:
www.quintcareers.com

[Your E-Résumé's File Format Aligns with its Delivery Method](#) and [The Top 10 Things You Need to Know about E-Resumes and Posting Your Resume Online.](#)

Sample Reference List

Sabrina Sample
1223 Maple Street
Any Town, WI 53444
(262) 555-5555
jsample@email.com

References

(Past Employment)

Employer Representative's Name
Acme Co.
2222 45th Street
Elkhorn, WI 53121
(262) 741-5555
employer@execpc.com
Relationship: Former Supervisor

(Professional)

Ms. Sally Sample, Human Services Instructor
Gateway Technical College
3520 30th Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53144
(262) 555-5555
instructor@gtc.edu
Relationship: Advisor

(Personal)

Friend's Name
4444 85th Road
Racine, WI 53409
(262) 555-7890
friend@aol.com
Relationship: Personal Reference – Friend

NOTE:

- You do not have to list each type of reference; this is to show that different types of references can be used. Typically employer references are used.
- References should not be placed on the resume. References are separate, but should be printed on the same type of paper as your resume. Hand in only if requested by employer.
- References should be brought with to your interview.

Hidden Job Market

It is estimated that only 20% of available jobs are openly advertised, meaning 80% of jobs are filled by companies who never advertised the position.

Instead these positions are filled by referral, the "who do you know" method of recruitment. So while keeping an eye on newspaper advertisements and internet job search sites is important, the percentages are in your favor if you investigate the hidden job market.

To penetrate this "Hidden Job Market" consider following these steps:

1. Define the geographic area where you would accept work.
2. Search for companies that match your focus. Grow your list of employers by researching your career and how it fits into various industries such as:
 - a. Education
 - b. Manufacturing
 - c. Finance
 - d. Healthcare
 - e. Retail
 - f. Utilities
3. Mail, e-mail, or drop off (*cold call*) an unsolicited resume **and** cover letter to the employer indicating that you understand they may not be looking for job candidates at this time, but you want them to know of your interest.
4. Keep accurate records of job search.
5. Follow up with each employer within one to two weeks by mail, e-mail, phone, or even in-person to inquire about job opportunities.

Tap the Hidden Job Market!

Job Search Network

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

List up to five groups you belong to (for example: family, co-workers, friends, church, softball team, neighbors).

Below each group name, list up to 10 people in that group. It is important that these are people you currently have a relationship with AND will be able to contact!

Your "Network" is all the people you know from many different aspects of your life that you can use as a resource for making job search contacts.

People in your network can:

- ❖ Inform you about job openings.
- ❖ Serve as a reference for job applications, resumes, and the job search process.
- ❖ Help evaluate your resume and give you suggestions.
- ❖ Support and encourage you in your job search process.

Job Search & Resume Web Sites

All job openings known to **Career Counselors** are posted on our Internet job board Wisconsin TechConnect. **You must be enrolled in a Technical Diploma or Associate Degree to utilize this resource. Register at www.wisconsintechconnect.com**

Newspaper Websites

Kenosha News – www.kenosha-news.com

Janesville Gazette – www.gazetteextra.com

Racine Journal Times – www.journaltimes.com

Chicago Tribune – www.chicagotribune.com

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel – www.jsonline.com

Government Websites

Wisconsin Civic Service – wiscjobs.state.wi.us

State of Illinois – www.state.il.us

Federal Civic Service – www.usajobs.opm.gov

Job Boards – Networking Links – Resume Posting

jobcenterofwisconsin.com

www.careerbuilder.com

www.jobnoggin.com

www.racinerecruit.com

www.monster.com

www.indeed.com

wisjobs.com

<http://us.jobs>

www.linkedin.com

www.statejobs.com

www.resumematrix.com

Resume Assistance – Job Search Topics – Salary Info

www.salary.com – salary info for interview

www.knockemdead.com – career and job search

www.acinet.org – Career InfoNet (resume tutorial bottom of page)

www.quintcareers.com – job search samples

www.wetfeet.com – employment advice

www.onetonline.org – wording for resumes

Interview

The interview is in fact the **most crucial part** of any job search.

During the interview, you will have a chance to demonstrate your job skills, your personal strengths, and self-confidence. While being interviewed, you'll want to show the employer that you know about their products and/or services, as well as, specific details about their history and organization.

Furthermore, you should take the opportunity to show that you'll fit well with the responsibilities of the job and with the culture of the employer.

In any case the key to success in an interview is **PREPARATION**.

Preparation means you'll be:

- Dressed appropriately (Professional business attire)
- Knowledgeable about the employer's operations (DO YOUR RESEARCH)
- Able to explain and defend your skills
- Prepared to show your enthusiasm for the job/career

What **SKILLS** employers are looking for:

- Communication Skills – listening, verbal, written
- Analytical Skills – able to assess a situation, see multiple perspectives
- Computer/Technical Literacy
- Organizational Skills – able to manage priorities
- Interpersonal Abilities – be able to relate to your co-workers, mitigate conflict
- Problem Solving/Reasoning/Creativity – ability to find solutions to problems
- Adaptability/Flexibility – deals with new ideas, can work in a team or independent

What **VALUES** employers are looking for:

- Honesty/Integrity/Morality – employers are looking for trustworthy employees
- Multicultural Sensitivity/Awareness – must be sensitive and respectful of all cultures
- Excellent Work Ethic/Tenacity – employers love employees who love what they do and will not give up until the problem is solved
- Dependability/Responsibility – arrive at work on time, take responsibility for actions
- Positive Attitude – someone who exudes enthusiasm in their actions and words
- Professionalism – maturity, sense of self confidence

Skills and Values list from Quintessential Careers. www.quintcareers.com

Interview

Interview Arrangements

- *Telephone* (your interview may start when the employer calls you to set up the initial in-person interview)
- *Group interviews* – include 3 to 10 job candidates
- *Panel interview* – more than one interviewer asking questions

Styles of Interviews

- *Traditional Interview* – usually has open-ended questions: “Tell me about yourself...”
- *Performance or Behavioral Based Interview* – employer asks you to “tell a story” about some aspect of your past performance as it relates to an aspect of the new position.

The Interview Process

Step 1: The Greeting

Use this time to breathe deeply, relax and respond to the interviewer’s casual inquiries. Introduce yourself with a smile and a firm handshake. Always maintain good eye contact during the interview.

Step 2: Their Questions and Your Answers

This is your chance to explain your skills and experiences while at the same time showing interest and enthusiasm. Be careful to answer the questions asked and not waste the interviewer’s time by rambling away from the topic. A key goal here is to demonstrate confidently your belief that this is the right position for you.

Step 3: YOUR Questions

Be ready with a minimum of three questions.

Here are some examples:

- Is the position of _____ a newly created one, or will I be filling the position of someone who was promoted or transferred?
- How will I be evaluated at _____ company and how often?
- What do you think would be my biggest challenge in this position?
- What are the skills and attributes you value most for someone being hired for this position?

Step 4: Closing Statement:

Rather than exiting the interview with a simple “thank you”, make a point to reemphasize your top qualifications, confirm your desire to obtain the position by specifically stating you hope you will be the successful candidate. And make sure to ask “What are the next steps in the interview process?”

Interview Etiquette

DO

- ❖ Act assertive, not aggressive
- ❖ Relax and be genuine
- ❖ Use direct eye contact without staring
- ❖ Beware of your body language
- ❖ Turn OFF your cell phone

DO NOT

- ❖ Expect that you have to be perfect
- ❖ Use the interviewer's first name
- ❖ Talk too much or interrupt, or speak too quickly
- ❖ Say negative things about yourself **or others**
- ❖ Take control of the interview (let the interviewer lead)
- ❖ Request information about salary or benefits



Dress for Success

Women's Interview Attire

Solid color, conservative suit
Coordinated blouse
Moderate shoes
Limited jewelry
Neat, professional hairstyle
Tan or light hosiery
Sparse make-up & perfume
Manicured nails

Men's Interview Attire

Solid color, conservative suit
White long sleeve shirt
Conservative tie
Dark socks, professional shoes
Limited jewelry
Neat, professional hairstyle
Go easy on the aftershave
Neatly trimmed nails

Follow up with the Employer

As soon as possible after the interview sit quietly somewhere and review what happened. It may be helpful to make notes about what you feel went well and not so well.

Within 24 hours, but no later than five working days, **send a thank you letter** to everyone who interviewed you. A sample Thank You Letter is included in this guidebook.

After 2 to 3 weeks, if you haven't heard from the employer feel free to contact them renewing your interest in the position. This can be accomplished by phone, mail or e-mail. Should you receive a number of rejections please visit Student Employment Services at Gateway.

Sample Thank You Letter

7 Apple Court
Eugene, OR 97401
503-555-0303

Mr. Archie Weatherby
California Investments, Inc.
25 Sacramento Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Weatherby,

Thank you for taking the time to discuss the insurance broker position at California Investments, Inc., with me. After meeting with you and observing the company's operations, I am further convinced that my background and skills coincide well with your needs.

I really appreciate that you took so much time to acquaint me with the company. It is no wonder that California Investments retains its employees for so long. I feel I could learn a great deal from you and would certainly enjoy working with you.

In addition to my qualifications and experience, I will bring excellent work habits and judgment to this position. With the countless demands on your time, I am sure that you require people who can be trusted to carry out their responsibilities with minimal supervision.

I look forward, Mr. Weatherby, to hearing from you concerning your hiring decision. Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Oakley

General Thank You Letter Sample from Quintessential Careers Website:
www.quintcareers.com

Top 10 Interview Mistakes

Most experts will tell you that the job interview offers you the best opportunity to sell yourself to a company. It's an old adage, but it still rings true:

“You don't get a second chance to make a first impression.”

A candidate can make any number of interview mistakes that can cost them the job, but if you avoid the Top 10 Interview Mistakes listed below, you will likely be on your way to interviews that will yield successful results.

- 1) **Arriving Late** – Get directions from the interviewer or company website ahead of time and check them with an online map service. Leave home early to give yourself plenty of time to arrive for the interview. Arriving late can show disrespect for the interviewer, lack of preparation, or lack of interest in the position.
- 2) **Dressing Wrong** – Candidates make an impression on the interviewer literally within seconds after meeting him/her. You want to be sure that you make the best impression possible.
- 3) **Bad Mouthing Other Employers** – Even if you can't stand your former boss, a job interview is not the time to “trash talk” or complain about your former employer. Avoid any negative references to your former boss. If you were laid off or fired from a previous position, be prepared to give a simple explanation that puts a positive spin on what happened. A potential new employer may figure that they could be the next target of your negative feedback, if this position doesn't work out!
- 4) **Appearing Disinterested or Arrogant** – Make sure you are familiar with the position that you are interviewing for, and practice talking about your experience, strengths, education, and abilities and how they directly relate to the position and the company. Do not just sit there like a zombie, waiting for the interviewer to draw information out of you. Worse yet, do not brag endlessly about how amazing you are! Smile, sit up straight, answer the questions appropriately and ask your own. Be engaged in the interview and show your enthusiasm for the position. Finally, thank the interviewer for taking time with you.
- 5) **Lack of Research** – Prepare ahead of time for the interview; the interview is NOT the time to do your research on the company. Know about the company's products, services, clients, goals, annual sales, and other important information that you can learn from the company's website, other internet sources, professional organizations and magazines, and current and former employees. By demonstrating knowledge of the company, you show enthusiasm for the position and are more likely to be taken seriously by the interviewer.

Top 10 Interview Mistakes

- 6) **Insufficient Answers/Not Prepared** – PRACTICE for the interview ahead of time; an interview is not the time to “wing” it. Be familiar with the job description of the position and ready to articulate your strengths, abilities, and what you bring to the job. The more you can connect your experience, education, and strengths to the position the more likely you are to land the job by clearly showcasing WHY you should be hired for the position. Don’t ever lie in an interview. If the conversation turns to a topic that you are unfamiliar with, be honest with the interviewer and use the opportunity to show how you would find a solution to a particular problem for example.
- 7) **Failure to Ask Questions** – Use your research to prepare a list of 3 or 4 questions in advance to ask the interviewer. Your questions will help you better understand if this is a company that you are interested in working for. Employers appreciate candidates who ask insightful, intelligent questions since it shows your interest in the company and in the position. Not asking questions can show an interviewer that you don’t care or that you came unprepared.
- 8) **Talking Too Much** – Be careful not to talk too much and about topics that are of no interest to an employer. Do not bring up personal matters about a divorce, family problem, etc. Be careful not to interrupt an interviewer. Listen carefully and thoughtfully answer an interviewer’s questions, feeling free to take a moment to think about your response. Don’t let your nerves cause you to blather endlessly. Instead practice ahead of time so you give well thought out responses, to the point responses to questions.
- 9) **Discussing Salary Too Soon** – Don’t talk about compensation too soon in the interview process. Wait for the interviewer to bring up the topic, after you have already discussed your qualifications and the company’s needs. To focus on benefits, salary, and other employee perks early in the interview, may cause you to lose the position. Salary will certainly come up in time but follow the employer’s lead and let he/she bring it up when ready.
- 10) **Forgetting to Follow Up** – Follow up the interview with a thank you letter expressing your appreciation for the time the interviewer shared with you. Be sure to re-state your interest in the position and why you think you are an excellent candidate for the job. Follow up after that, several days to a week later, with a phone call to the employer to make sure you “stay in front of them.” Do not make a pest of yourself though, by constantly calling and/or emailing the employer.

Job Interview Questions and Best Answers

By Alison Doyle

Job Interview Questions: About the New Job and the Company

- ❖ Why do you want this job?
- ❖ What can you do for this company?
- ❖ Why should we hire you?
- ❖ What do you know about this company?
- ❖ Why do you want to work here?
- ❖ What can you contribute to this company?

Job Interview Questions: The Future

- ❖ What are your goals for the next five years / ten years?
- ❖ What are your salary requirements – both short-term and long-term?
- ❖ What will you do if you don't get this position?

Job Interview Questions: About You

- ❖ What is your greatest weakness?
- ❖ What is your greatest strength?
- ❖ How do you handle stress and pressure?
- ❖ What motivates you?
- ❖ What do you find are the most difficult decisions to make?
- ❖ Tell me about yourself.
- ❖ What are you passionate about?

BEST ANSWERS to these interview questions can be found at <http://jobsearch.about.com> (Click Interview Questions and Answers on the left)

Using the PORTFOLIO as an Interview Aid

A well-prepared portfolio provides "evidence" to an employer of your accomplishments, skills, abilities, and it documents the scope and quality of your experience and training. It is an organized collection of documentation that presents both your personal and professional achievements in a concrete way. **Portfolios become a part of your appearance and helps make a good first impression.**

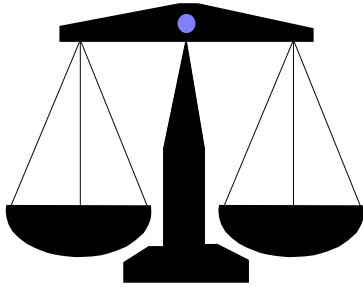
Portfolios can be purchased at any office supplies store.

Portfolio Contents

- Extra copies of your Resume
- Reference list
- Letters of reference
- Transcript
- Samples work and/or projects
- Curriculum sheet (for the program you are enrolled in)
- Map (check out location prior to interview if possible)
- Black ink ballpoint pen
- Notepad (with your 3 questions listed)



Legal and Illegal Job Interview Questions



Much as they might like to, interviewers are not allowed to ask such questions as “Do you plan to start a family soon?” or even “How old are you?” Only questions dealing with the actual requirements of the job may be asked.

Here’s a rundown of what can and what can’t be asked, based upon current laws. Of course, you may volunteer any of this information if you think it is in your interest to do so.

	These questions are Legal:	You are not required to answer these:
Birthplace/ Citizenship	“If hired, can you show evidence of being legally allowed to work in the U.S.? ”	“Where were you born?” or “What is your mother tongue?”
Sex/Family Status	May ask for name and address of parent, if candidate is a minor.	“With whom do you live?” or any questions which would indicate whether the candidate is male or female.
Race	Almost nothing is legal, until after the candidate is hired.	“What is your racial/ethnic group?” or anything dealing with color.
Age	May verify that candidate meets minimum requirement such as, “Are you 18 or older?”	“How old are you?” or “When did you finish high school?”
Military Service	May ask about job-related skills acquired during military service.	Questions dealing with dates of military service and type of discharge.
Names	“To help check prior employment, list any other names you used.”	“What was your maiden name?”
National Origin	“These positions require language skills. What languages do you speak?”	“How did you acquire your language skills?” or “What did your family speak?”
Physical Characteristics	May require a photo only after hiring.	“Please submit a recent photo with your application.”
Religion	May tell the candidate the hours when they would be required to work.	“Do you belong to a church?” or “What is your religion?”
Criminal Record	“Have you ever been convicted of a felony?”	“Have you ever been arrested?” or “Have you ever been in trouble with the law?”
Physical Condition	“If hired, you will have to pass a physical exam based on actual job requirements.”	“What is your physical condition?” or “Do you have any disabilities?”
Memberships	“Please list all job-related organizations to which you belong. You do not need to list any which indicate your race, religion, sex, or other personal characteristics.”	“Please list all the organizations to which you belong.”

Student Recommendation Form Directions

The Student Recommendation Form is used for employment references. Students can submit the form to their teacher to be sent to the employer.

Note: It is the Instructor's choice to agree/disagree to complete this form.

The student must provide the **form with their signature** and an **addressed envelope** with the **employers name on it** to the instructor. If the student would like to have a copy of the completed Student Recommendation Form, the student should also provide a self-addressed envelope. Forms will be completed and sent directly to the employer/student. Forms will not be handed back to the student.

If the employer requests the form back immediately, the student can provide the teacher with the employer's fax number and request that the form be faxed.

Summary:

1. Print out form (www.gtc.edu) and sign it
2. Submit signed form and employer-addressed envelope to your teacher
3. If you want a copy, include a self-addressed envelope
4. If needed by the employer ASAP, provide fax number to the teacher

Please find the form, which can be printed for use, on the next page.

Student Recommendation Form

GATEWAY TECHNICAL COLLEGE Career and Employment Services

Student Name _____ Date _____

Program _____

Instructor Name (Please Print) _____

Please List the class or classes you have taken with this Instructor: _____

Release of Information:

I do hereby give my permission to Gateway Technical College to forward or release information about me which may include instructor evaluations and personal student directory data. I understand this directory data will be released only to prospective employers.

Date _____ Student Signature _____

Instructor:

Please rate the student in terms of the following characteristics by circling the appropriate number and/or write a description narrative which states the student's abilities below.

	Needs Improvement	Average	Average	Excellent	Excellent
PROGRESS <i>Has student advanced in skill & knowledge during the past period?</i>	1	2	3	4	5
INITIATIVE <i>Does the student exhibit creativity and problem solving capabilities?</i>	1	2	3	4	5
RELIABILITY <i>Does the student exhibit personal integrity and a sense of responsibility?</i>	1	2	3	4	5
WORK ATTITUDE <i>Does the student have a good attitude toward work?</i>	1	2	3	4	5
COOPERATION <i>Does the student work well with others?</i>	1	2	3	4	5

Attendance: (Circle One) Excellent Good Fair

Comments: _____

Narrative Statement: (Optional) _____

Instructors Signature _____ Date _____

PLEASE NOTE: Student Employment Services does not maintain credential files for students. 09/07