



SONOMA COUNTY WORK-READY CERTIFICATION

THE "GET HIRED" HANDBOOK: TIPS FOR LANDING THE JOB YOU WANT*

*This handbook was assembled using information from the *Adventures in Education* website (www.adventuresineducation.org)

Job Hunting Techniques

When looking for a job, consider the following tips:

- Involve friends and family in your job search
- Check job listings in the classified advertising sections of our local newspaper
- Know what you want (and make sure the job fits with your skills and interests)
- Find out if local companies offer special summer programs, internships, or part-time opportunities
- Set aside specific time each day or week for job hunting
- Allow a reasonable amount of time to find a job (it doesn't usually happen overnight)
- Be organized (keep a record of all the places to which you applied and with whom you spoke)
- Meet with people in your field of interest to see what you need to do before you can get a job
- Ask people who know you well to write letters of recommendation
- Continue working to find a job even after you apply (you don't want to miss a good opportunity while waiting to hear from the first place you applied)

Job Application Checklist

Before turning in your job application, review the following checklist to make sure you are fully prepared:

- Print (or type) the application neatly using blue OR black ink (not both)
- Make sure you filled out ALL required information
- Make sure you performed a thorough spell and grammar check on your resumé and cover letter
- Make sure that you have documented your specific talents and skill sets
- If you're not sure what to write on the application about salary, simply put "negotiable"
- Make sure you list any honors and awards, as well as volunteer work and internships
- Don't give inaccurate or false information about your credentials or abilities
- Have a list of at least three references (non-family members) and their accurate contact information in case you are asked to list them on your application
- If you have had previous employment, make sure you have the address, phone number, and name of your supervisor(s)

Identifying Your Relevant Skills & Experience

Just because you haven't had a formal job doesn't mean you don't have experience. Think about the following:

- Do you have any volunteer experience?
- Have you ever worked on a team (yearbook staff, literary magazine, athletics, band, etc.)?
- Have you used a computer in your studies (research, writing, website development, presentations, etc.)?
- Did you work on special projects during high school that brought you additional knowledge in an area of your interest (video production, theater production, planning committees, student government, FFA, clubs, etc.)?

Cover Letters

A cover letter should accompany your application every time you apply for a job. The cover letter does all of the following:

- Serves as a formal introduction and briefly reflects why you are qualified for the position
- Gives an employer a snapshot of your personality
- Signals that you pay attention to details
- Conveys professionalism
- Provides an immediate demonstration of your written communication skills
- Gives you an opportunity to highlight your skill sets and experience

Getting started on your cover letter—things to think about:

- Why are you applying for the job? What are your objectives?
- What are your reasons for wanting to work for the particular employer?
- What are your skill sets and how do they fit into the job you are applying for as well as the vision and mission of the employer?

Cover letter guidelines:

- Keep it short (no more than one page and usually less)
- Ask a reliable source to read and edit your cover letter before submitting it
- Customize your letter as much as possible by acknowledging the specific employer
- Focus on what you can offer the employer
- Express your career aspirations and goals IF they relate to the job for which you are applying
- Establish what makes you different from other candidates

Resumés

The resumé (and cover letter) are usually the first impression you make with a potential employer so it is important that your resumé be neat, well-organized, and accurate. Here are some tips for preparing a resumé:

- Keep it to one page
- Be sure to include your name, address, phone, email address at the top of the page
- Be neat—use bullet points to list information rather than complete sentences or paragraphs
- Be honest about your skills and work experience
- Include your education and work experience (most recent first)
- Use action words and phrases when describing your experience (see below)
- Ask someone you trust to check over your resumé before submitting it

100 Great Resumé Words:

Assisted	Able to	Action	Analysis	Achievement	Accomplished
Advanced	Conducted	Consulted	Committed	Conducted	Contributed
Coordinated	Developed	Delivered	Designed	Defined	Diversified
Devoted	Distinguished	Encouraged	Earned	Enhanced	Evaluated
Examined	Extended	Facilitated	Formulated	Fulfilled	Forecasted
Generated	Gained	Gathered	Gave	Headed	Hosted
Identified	Implemented	Improved	Improvised	Influenced	Launched
Lobbied	Maintained	Managed	Marketed	Maximized	Mediated
Modernized	Motivated	Negotiated	Observed	Obtained	Operated
Organized	Originated	Oversaw	Participated	Performed	Pioneered
Planned	Prepared	Presented	Promoted	Provided	Published
Pursued	Quantified	Ranked	Received	Recommended	Redesigned
Reengineered	Reorganized	Represented	Restructured	Revised	Safeguarded
Secured	Selected	Specified	Spearheaded	Standardized	Strengthened
Structured	Suggested	Superseded	Supervised	Targeted	Taught
Tested	Trained	Transformed	Transcended	Unified	Upgraded
Utilized	Validated	Valued	Wrote		

Common Resumé Mistakes:

- Poor spelling/grammar (spell-check helps, but don't solely depend on it)
- Lying about your experience (more often than not, these lies are later exposed and lead to much bigger problems)
- Providing too much information (employers don't want your life history, just the relevant information)
- Improper formatting/paper (a resumé is a professional document so use a simple format that allows the reader to easily scan the information; also, don't use brightly colored paper or graphics—employers view this as unprofessional)

(To view sample resúmes suitable for high school students, go to www.adventuresineducation.org)

Job Interview Tips

Before heading to your next interview, review the following tips:

- Get to the interview at least 10-15 minutes before the scheduled interview time
- Dress in business attire unless the interviewer has specified otherwise
- Never talk negatively about previous work experience (it can give the prospective employer a bad impression of you)
- Be yourself (but avoid using slang and, most definitely, profanity)
- Find out information about the company you are interviewing with prior to your interview (if they have a website, this is a good place to find information)
- Take your time when answering questions (silence isn't necessarily a bad thing)
- Have 3-5 prepared questions for the interviewer (that don't include questions about pay)
- Don't hesitate to ask the interviewer when they will make a hiring decision
- Ask for a business card from the interviewer(s) so you will have their contact information for thank you notes
- Always close the interview by expressing thanks and appreciation for their time
- Send a hand-written thank you note to each of the interviewers as soon after the interview as possible

Interview First Impressions:

To make sure your body language during the interview projects a professional image, consider the following:

- Eye contact (good eye contact conveys confidence and enthusiasm)
- Facial expression (walk in with a friendly and energetic face and smile during the interview)
- Energy level (show enthusiasm for the job and the company to which you are applying)
- Posture (sit up straight, place feet firmly on the ground, and don't rock back in your chair or swivel)
- Don't chew gum

Sample Thank You Note (should be hand-written):

Dear Mr. Smith,

Thank you for the opportunity to interview with your company. I enjoyed learning more about your company and appreciate the time you and the members of your team spent with me.

After interviewing with you, I am even more excited about the possibility of using my skills and experience to further the mission of your organization. If you have any questions, or need more information, please contact me at: 555-555-5555 or jdoe@email.com.

Sincerely,
Jane Doe