

HOW TO GET A JOB

Express[®]
EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS



HOW TO **GET A JOB**

Finding the right job can be a full-time job itself. In today's market, it's more than just posting a résumé and waiting for a call. It's a combination of old-fashioned classified reading, résumé sending, internet searching, networking, and interviewing. There are also many rules to remember when you're looking for a great job.

With so much to keep in mind, Express is happy to provide useful tips to help simplify your job search. If you need information that isn't in this booklet, contact your local Express Employment Professionals office. It's a free, valuable source for career advice and job openings. Best of luck on your job search!



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With more than 600 locations throughout the United States, Canada, and South Africa, Express Employment Professionals focuses on professional/contract, full-time, and temporary jobs.

*For more information, or to find an Express office near you, visit ExpressPros.com. For more advice on the job search, visit our job search blog *Movin' On Up* at Blog.ExpressPros.com.*

CHARTING YOUR SKILLS, LIKES, AND INTERESTS

Whether you're an experienced worker changing careers or looking for your first job, it's vital to know where to start. Determining your talents, passions, and the types of work environments that are best for you is key to finding a job that helps you grow and excel.

By developing these aspects of yourself, you'll be better prepared to tailor your résumé, employment applications, and interview answers to be more effective during your job search.

To make it easier for you, we've provided a sample list of steps you can follow when making your own list.

Assess Your Abilities

First, list all the skills you have used or ones that could be used on the job. This should be the biggest of your three lists, so here are a few examples to help jump-start ideas.

SKILLS – CAN DO		
Administrative	Commercial	Professional
Computer platforms and program use	Assembly, packing, and shipping	College degree, special training certificate, or apprenticeship
Data entry	Electromechanical assembly testing	Accreditation like RN or Certified Public Accountant
Filing, sorting, reviewing, and editing documents	Welding	Java script, CSS, and HTML coding
Customer service	Computer/audio-visual equipment testing	Working knowledge of CAD standard or patent drawings

List Your Likes

Next, list all the job duties you've enjoyed the most. These should be tasks that you would be interested in doing again. If this is your first job, you might not be able to complete this section.

LIKES – WILL DO		
Problem solving	Sales	Multi-step projects
Customer interaction	Machine operation	Creative thinking
Multitasking	Computer programming	Technical writing

In a global study from BlessingWhite, the top reason employees worldwide give for staying with their employer is that they like the work they do.

Plot Your Passions

Here comes the fun part. List activities you want to do, whether you've done them or not. This helps provide you with an idea of where you may want to grow in your job responsibilities.

PASSIONS – WANT TO DO		
Presentation design	Line supervision	Development of policies, strategies, programs, procedures, etc.
Training	Design engineering	Client training
Serve others	Computer programming	Financial planning

ENVIRONMENT

One of the biggest reasons someone leaves a job is the work environment. Before applying for a job, determine the ideal management styles, schedules, work hours, benefits, and anything else you can think of that would ensure job satisfaction. Work environment is also a great topic for questions you can ask in an interview.

If you're seeking full-time work and are asked back for a second interview, take the opportunity to ask specific questions about work schedules.

If you prefer a more flexible work schedule, but it wasn't stated in the job description, you could ask, "I understand the hours for the job were posted as 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. I'm curious, does your company offer flexibility in its traditional work hours?" Here are some work schedule options that could work for you.

A recent Gallup poll shows **71%** of American workers are not engaged or are actively disengaged in their work.

Work Schedule	Definition
Flextime	A 40-hour workweek with flexible starting and quitting times set by management. Employees work an eight-hour day, but hours differ from the traditional 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. shift, like 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. or 1 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Compressed Workweek	A 40-hour workweek condensed to less than five days, like working four 10-hour shifts a week, etc.
Telecommuting	A 40-hour workweek designed so employees can work at home during part or all of their normal workweek. It's mostly for salaried workers who are paid for their work instead of time spent in the office.
Job Share	One full-time job shared by two part-time workers. The workweek and job duties are divided between two workers. Maybe one takes the morning shift and the other takes the evening shift or one works the first half of the week and the other works the last half of the week.

Other popular work arrangements include: **alternate workweek, part-time fixed, and three-day weekends every other week.** Check out the Express Movin' On Up job blog, at Blog.ExpressPros.com for more tips on work schedules.

MONEY

Here comes the fun part – money.

Wanting to make money isn't a bad thing, but a salary isn't about your personal needs. It's all about how much your job is worth, which is generally based on required experience, education, and market conditions. Salaries are not based on personal issues like the number of children you have, how much your rent is, or any loans you may be paying off.

A lot goes into determining salary like your career field, skills, job responsibilities, and experience. By learning to grow and develop your job and human relations skills, you can earn a lot more in the workplace.

Salary Research

When trying to find a first, better, or different job, understand that your value is not only based on your skills, but also on what your market is paying for those talents. Those amounts can vary greatly from location to location depending on economic conditions and talent demand.

The most important step before starting anything is research, so list job titles that best match the position you're applying for and start your investigation.

The quickest and easiest way to research is through the internet. Once you've figured out your angle, it's time to prepare. To get a better idea of how much you should be asking for, research the average wages of those working in your field, at your level, and those in your city or region.

If you don't have internet access at home, the Occupational Outlook Handbook is available at most public libraries, as well as internet access.

Online, there are sites like Salary.com, which gives you the opportunity to review salary and benefit ranges for any job title as well as info on companies and even reviews from previous employees. You'll need backup information when negotiating salary in an interview.

Also, consider talking to a representative from a professional staffing agency like Express. They typically have access to local salary data and are more than willing to help you determine salaries in your field.

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, salaries for recent graduates continue to increase, with the overall average starting salaries for the Class of 2013 increasing from \$43,531 to \$44,259.

Negotiating Salary

Salary isn't usually discussed during a first interview. If asked salary questions early in the process, let them know you'll be taking lots of factors into consideration. The first interview is typically a preliminary screening. A second interview is usually scheduled after the employer has met with all the qualified candidates, checked their references, and verified their education, skills, and abilities.

If you've made it past preliminary interviews and you receive an offer, don't forget to clarify how and when raises are given and determine for yourself if the pay is acceptable according to your research and today's market.

Use data that you have researched to suggest a pay that is justifiable given the market and your experience. The goal is to get paid for what you bring to the table. There's more than salary you can use to negotiate. If your employer isn't willing to increase pay, consider suggesting an increase in benefits, incentives, flexible work hours, or a pay increase after the first six months.

If you do negotiate be sure you have sufficient data and research to support you. You want to appear confident, capable, and worth it, but you don't want to back them against a wall either.

There are several resources out there to research salary negotiation if you need more information. Use your best judgment and determine the amount of risk you're willing to take.

Post-Retirement

If you're retired and looking for a part-time job as an activity or for supplemental income, it's important to document your work experience. It could command a higher salary.

First Job

If you're searching for your first job, you'll need to showcase any skills you have that match specific duties listed in job descriptions. Certifications or degrees or specific training such as typing courses, vocational courses in electronics, CNC or welding, and medical transcription provide valuable knowledge and experience. Also, some employers are willing to pay a higher starting salary if you're bilingual. Emphasizing your sought-after skills can greatly impact the salary you receive.

BUILDING A **RÉSUMÉ**

The most important part of finding a job is a well-written résumé. Employers often screen out or select candidates based on the content of their résumé.

When describing your work experience, use phrases and verbs that are used in the job descriptions of interest to you. In addition, use action verbs. If still employed, use present tense verbs like "maintain," "supervise," and "manage." When referring to previous work, use past tense verbs like "developed," "increased," or "reduced."

Remember, there is no one-size-fits-all résumé. You must keep track of what résumé you send. For more information on why this is so important, see the *Résumé Format* section on page 11.

Describing job duties can be challenging. When using action verbs, consider using the following words to describe various activities:

Management Skills	Research Skills	Helping Skills	Creative Skills
Arranged Dataloged Compiled Generated Organized Processed Persuaded Systemized	Clarified Evaluated Identified Inspected Organized Summarized Mined	Assessed Coached Counseled Facilitated Represented Assisted	Conceptualized Created Designed Established Fashioned Illustrated Invented Performed
Communication Skills	Financial Skills	Technical Skills	Clerical Skills
Arranged Addressed Authored Drafted Formulated Presented	Administered Analyzed Balanced Budgeted Forecasted Marketed Planned Projected	Assembled Built Calculated Designed Operated Overhauled Remodeled Repaired	Administered Analyzed Coordinated Developed Directed Evaluated Improved Supervised

When creating your résumé, don't just describe your job duties. Employers want to know what you've accomplished and how you've helped your previous employer succeed. Whenever possible, use specific numbers and figures when describing your job. For example, if your current job requires you to answer incoming phone calls, consider quantifying it like this: "Greet and route 700 incoming calls weekly." It's important to include relevant pieces of your work history and training.

Ingredients for Making a Great Résumé

- Name, full mailing address, email, and telephone number with area code. Make sure it's easy to find and read.
- Employment history. Remember to list achievements, key words, and action verbs.
- Education, awards, accomplishments that apply to job descriptions. If you're still in school, list first.
- Volunteer work, military experience, and any internships.
- Additional training and skills.
- Computer hardware and software skills.
- Link to your LinkedIn account.

A study by Capital Community College showed: Employers spend an average of 15 seconds per résumé. On average, employers grant one interview per 245 résumés. Some companies receive over 100,000 résumés a year. Between **85** and **95%** of all résumés end up in the trash.

Proofreading your résumé is just as important as creating it. Misspelled words or improper grammar can often eliminate you from consideration for a job. Have at least two other people carefully review it.

Things to Avoid

- Disclosing information that could be discriminated against like age, marital status or ethnicity.
- Picture of yourself.
- Reason for leaving a previous job.
- Salary requirements.
- Names of references – make their contact information available as a separate page.
- Writing in first person, pronouns like “I” or “me.”

Here are a few more tips to create an eye-catching résumé and minimize your chances of getting overlooked.

1. Have someone with strong grammar skills review your résumé.
2. Be consistent. If you spell out state names, do so throughout the résumé. Also, be consistent with postal codes.

3. Keep indentations and other formatting consistent.
4. Use an easy-to-read font like Times New Roman or Arial. Avoid too much script, bold font, or a font size smaller than nine.
5. Try to keep your résumé on one page. If you need more room to add awards, accomplishments, or community service, consider adding half a page for the information.
6. Don't exaggerate your experience or accomplishments.

Résumé Format

The following pages contain résumé samples to help you with ideas on formatting your content. The most commonly used style is chronological. When writing a **chronological résumé**, begin with the most recent job experience and list backwards. Outline the duties you performed, accomplishments, and the length of time you worked in each position. Include any training and/or education at the end unless your education is more recent than work experience.

Next is the **functional résumé** format. Achievements and skills are emphasized over employment history. It lists a summary of skills, followed by jobs held focusing more on describing the skills than the jobs.

Functional résumés are effective if you are re-entering the workforce after changing careers or being unemployed for a period of time. This format is often used by first-time job seekers like college graduates who want to highlight their skills.

If you're using social media sites to look for work, LinkedIn offers a free program that will convert your LinkedIn profile into a printable résumé. You can find more information at Resume.LinkedInLabs.com.

As before, try to limit your résumé to one page. Two-page résumés won't always get rejected if you have ample experience, but it isn't necessary to list each task in every job you've had. Employers are more interested in transferable skills from your last three to five positions. Remember, it's important to quantify your abilities as much as possible within your résumé.

CHRONOLOGICAL RÉSUMÉ

Shannon Challis

Home Address
City, State/Province, Zip/Area Code
Telephone Number
Email

Personal Objective:

To increase XYZ Company sales by obtaining a position to develop and design state-of-the-art marketing tools and campaigns.

Work Experience and Accomplishments

Marketing Services Specialist

Company Name, City, State/Province 2006 - Present
Develop, distribute and provide training on 15 new multitasking, video and print sales tools annually. These tools are used to assist external sales force in capturing new business, as well as developing existing accounts. Continually organize, present and train sales staff on Integrated Marketing Communications strategy. Other primary responsibilities include developing training workshops and sales materials. Other development responsibilities include:

- Produce corporate and training videos for 600 offices.
- Create and revise communications on CD (client/prospect proposals, articles and press releases, account development tools, electronic visual presentations, etc.).
- Develop multimedia marketing presentations on a monthly basis.

Territory Manager

Company Name, City, State/Province 2000 - 2006
Was responsible for selling supplemental staffing to local businesses. Designed customized employment solutions for new and existing clients.

- Developed new business and successfully increased sales 25% through personal selling to local businesses.
- Worked together with client companies to find solutions for their human resource needs.
- Recruited, tested, interviewed and placed qualified personnel with client companies.

Independent Contractor – Personal Consultant

Company Name, City, State/Province 1997 - 2000
Independent contractor for nine area university Business Research and Consulting Centers. Served as assistant project director for two human resources development projects. Developed strategies that aligned employee development with organizational goals; developed training programs; analyzed, evaluated and classified jobs; revised job descriptions; wrote new policies and procedures.

Education

Master's in Adult Education Bachelor's in Personnel Management
School Name, year graduated School Name, year graduated

Professional Memberships

American Marketing Association
American Society for Training and Development

Text Only Résumé

Since most jobs are now listed online, consider creating a text only résumé. A text only version is stripped of formatting that may be altered between program conversions.

A good way to have your résumé, when you need it is to save it to Google Docs at docs.google.com. By signing up for an account, you can have access, edit, and send a copy wherever you can connect to the internet.

It's best to save a copy of your résumé as a Text Only file to make it easy for online applications to pick up on key words, and send PDF or Word résumés straight to recruiters. To save in a Text Only format, select "Save As" in Microsoft Word, Pages, or any other document software you're using, and change the file format to "Text Only," and the extension will be saved as ".txt." Send a copy to yourself to make sure there isn't any odd spacing or incorrect text.

Tyson K. Jacobs

Permanent Address
City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code
Telephone Number
Email Address

Professional Profile

Administrative support professional with five years experience in the service industry. Dependable and trustworthy. Committed to exceptional customer care. Service-minded and detail oriented with the ability to multitask effectively.

Skills Summary

- Proficient in Microsoft Office 2007
- Strong oral and written communication
- General office skills
- Customer service and relations
- Accounting/Bookkeeping
- Report preparation
- Account billing and collection
- Problem solving

Professional Experience

- Prepare weekly and monthly usage reports for 10 corporate locations.
- Handle monetary transactions.
- Arrange and verify pre-order requests.
- Respond to customer requests for information
- Invoice customer orders. Research and resolve billing discrepancies.
- Collect past-due accounts.
- Assist customers with payment arrangements.
- Provide customer service training to all new hires.
- Assist other team members in immediate and long term assignments.

Software Proficiencies

Microsoft Office Package – Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
Accounting Software – Peachtree and QuickBooks

Work History

Administrative Clerk, Company Name, City, State/Province, 2005 – present
Customer Service Representative, Company Name, City, State/Province, 2003 – 2005

Education

School Name, City, State/Province, Year Graduated
Certified Administrative Assistant

The Electronic Format Battle

Most job seekers save their résumés in either a PDF or a Word file. While the PDF features security and consistent formatting, the Word file is much more widely available and easier to use.

When choosing an electronic résumé file format, consider this: More companies are using software called applicant tracking systems that systematize and choose résumés based on key words the company dictates. According to a Bersin & Associates Talent Acquisition Systems report, about 61% of North American companies have some sort of applicant tracking software.

There are about 55 different applicant tracking systems being used. And very few can read all PDF or Word files. While these systems are getting better, it may be some time before the majority of systems can start reading all PDFs and Word files. Your résumés may be safe, secure, and structured, but it won't matter if your content can't be read.

The Video Résumé

With the job market embracing social media, an increasing trend with many job seekers looking for professional jobs is using a video résumé to enhance their text résumé. While it can be a powerful tool to help you stand out, it can just as easily disqualify you if filmed improperly. Always include a written résumé in addition to a video file. For more details on proper video résumé guidelines, check out *Movin' On Up* at Blog.ExpressPros.com.

FINDING **JOB OPENINGS**

It's mind-boggling to think about all the ways to look for a job. To make it easier on you, we've listed the most popular ways to find employment.

Internet

Using the internet is one of the easiest and most widely accessible tools for finding a job. There are websites for job seekers like job search services, professional employment services, companies, state employment services, recruiters, and more.

Since it would be impossible to follow all those sites every day, there are sites you can register to have them do the searching for you. If a job is posted that matches your request, the service will notify you by email.

In most cases, you can also post your résumé, but it does have its risks if you wish to keep your search confidential. If you post your résumé a dozen times, it greatly increases the chance someone from your current employer will see you looking for other job opportunities.

Some of the most popular job search sites are:

- [CareerBuilder.com](https://www.careerbuilder.com)
- [EmploymentGuide.com](https://www.employmentguide.com)
- [Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)
- [Jobster.com](https://www.jobster.com)
- [Monster.com](https://www.monster.com)
- [SimplyHired.com](https://www.simplyhired.com)
- [Workopolis.com](https://www.workopolis.com)

Don't limit your search to just these sites. Check out the local and national websites of professional associations and organizations. They typically have a job board with openings more suited for your skills. You should also look into specific employers you're interested in to see if they have any job listings. If not, consider calling their HR department. Some job openings aren't posted online.

You can also find openings and job fair announcements in the U.S. by going to Dol.gov and your state and city's Department of Labor office. In Canada, visit JobBank.gc.ca to access Service Canada's job posting resource.

Mobile Job Searching

With current hiring trends evolving, technology can give you easy access to social networks, job listings, and powerful tools to help you stay connected to people and opportunities with the push of a button. Smart phones are becoming more common every day and can be a powerful source when looking for a job. Here are some apps on iTunes® or Android™ Market that can help prepare you for your job search and give you the upper hand on the competition.

Résumé Help	Networking Aids	Job Postings	Interview Improvement
Résumé App Pocket Résumé	SnapDat Business Card Reader	JobCompass JobAware Jobs – by CareerBuilder Monster.com Jobs	What Color is Your Parachute? Interview Pro Interview Buzz Pro

Staffing Providers

Employment agencies or temporary help firms employ millions of people each year. The biggest advantage of using a staffing provider is their ease of use. They are already working with companies in your area and can place you in temporary work while you're waiting to find the right job.

Staffing providers help match job seekers with job openings. Most offer both short- and long-term jobs. All you have to do is register with a provider and take a few tests.

Simply contact a staffing provider like Express Employment Professionals for an interview. Go to the interview with your résumé ready, tell them what you're looking for, and let them do the rest.

When setting up an interview at a staffing company, ask who pays the placement fee. Does the company or the applicant? If it varies, inform them that you never want to be sent on interviews where the applicant pays the fee.

Job seekers don't pay fees at Express, so think twice before paying a recruiter to find work for you. Express also offers full-time positions, not just temporary work.

Networking

Networking is still one of the most successful avenues for finding a job. And it's not as scary as it sounds. Start by listing the names of all your friends, colleagues, teachers, relatives, and anyone you can think of who would be willing to talk about or help out with job opportunities.

Call, email, or connect through social media to all the people on your list. Let them know you're looking for a job and you'd appreciate any advice or leads. If sending emails, attach an electronic version of your résumé so they can see your qualifications.

If your list needs a boost, get involved with local professional organizations, volunteer for local charities, or sign up with your school's professional student organizations. If you're interested in becoming an electrician's apprentice for example, join a local electrician association.

If you're a college graduate, your alumni association can be a great resource for job openings, networking opportunities, and other job searching tips.

Unfortunately, the word networking intimidates many people. If you don't remember anything else from this booklet, remember this: Most people love to give advice and help out. You aren't bothering or pressuring

Since 2011 **54%**
of all job growth has
been in the temporary
help sector.

– *EMSI.*

them. Actually, it's a compliment that you think they have the contacts or resources to help you find a job.

The key to networking is building relationships. It's not about obtaining and spending favors. When meeting others, look for commonalities and similar interests and build a rapport. Find ways you can help them with any challenges or listen to what they have to say. For more networking advice, visit the networking section on Movin' On Up at Blog.ExpressPros.com.

Don't forget to send a thank-you note to everyone you contact. It's important to show your appreciation for their time and help. It'll also help keep you at the top of their minds.

Internships

Internships are great for any industry. Not only will they give you real-world, on-the-job experience, they can also give you a chance to meet

the people who make the hiring decisions. If you prove yourself during an internship, your supervisor could help you find a job or even offer you one.

The Wall Street Journal reports **94%** of successful job hunters claimed that networking had made all the difference for them.

Social Media

Recruiters are relying more heavily on social networking sites like LinkedIn. If you haven't already, consider creating a LinkedIn profile to help open doors to even more opportunities.

Social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, and Google+ have given users the ability to connect with individuals beyond their local community, state, or even country instantly. By creating these profiles, you can showcase your work-related skills and achievements, talk to industry experts, and keep up with the latest news and changes in your job field.

By building a personal brand and professional relationships with a bigger pool of connections, you can greatly increase your chances of finding job openings and other opportunities.

Social Media Danger

There can be a downside to the accessibility of your social media presence. If you use your social media profiles to post hateful words about a previous employer, questionable pictures, or any other unprofessional content, it could influence recruiters' and potential employer's decisions when interviewing and hiring you. Be yourself, but use your best judgment when posting content to your social media sites that could hinder the job search.

Classifieds

Help wanted ads in the newspaper or their online edition are still a solid way to find a job at any level. The Sunday edition of the paper remains the most popular day for postings. If you want to respond to an ad, do so immediately. You should call or submit your cover letter and résumé no later than one day after posting. Consider online classifieds such as Craigslist in the U.S. or Kijiji in Canada.

90% of recruiting firms do a Google search on candidates.

— *New York Daily News*

Job Fairs

Local job fairs offer you the opportunity to speak directly with company representatives. High schools, vocational schools, colleges, technical schools, and your local chamber of commerce usually sponsor job fairs throughout the year.

When you go to a job fair, bring plenty of copies of your résumé. Discuss all your skills, talents, education, and work experience in a confident voice without hesitation. Get a business card from each recruiter or company representative you speak to. When you get home, send a thank-you note to each person along with another copy of your résumé.

To make the most out of job fairs, check out our job fair section on Movin' On Up at Blog.ExpressPros.com.

WRITING COVER LETTERS

Your cover letter should emphasize what you can do for the employer. It also serves as an excellent opportunity to show the employer that you know something about the company or organization, its achievements, and its challenges.

To write a cover letter, you'll need to find out more about the companies where you're interested in working. Visit their websites or search online for published articles on each company. A free resource online is ZoomInfo.com, where you can read a brief profile on a company by name. You can also use the reference section at your local library to find the JobBank book series, Dun & Bradstreet's directories, or trade literature.

When you're researching a company, you should uncover what the company produces or provides, their annual revenues, and how they've fared in the past three years. Find out if someone on your networking list knows anyone at the company. If you have time, dig a little deeper and learn about the members of their executive or leadership team.

A cover letter should never be more than two or three brief paragraphs. It should be addressed to a specific individual and printed on good-quality paper that matches your résumé. You'll find an example of a good cover letter on page 24.

Most hiring managers will specify email, upload, or mail. Respond appropriately. If sent as an attachment, it could be deleted by the recruiter's antivirus software. Always follow up to ensure your résumé and cover letter were received.

When writing cover letters, you should:

- Address the letter to someone in authority who has the power to hire you.
- Tell how you became interested in the employer or how you came across the opening.
- Demonstrate that you've researched the company.
- Balance professionalism with warmth and friendliness.
- Provide specific examples of how your past experience relates to some of the job description that doesn't repeat what is in your résumé.
- Convey your enthusiasm and commitment for the line of work.
- Specifically outline what you are asking for and offering.

Christopher Wright

Home Address, City, State/Province Zip/Postal Code

Telephone Number

Email address

Mary Welsh, COO
Name of Company, Association, or Organization
Street Address
City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code

March 30, 2012

Dear Mary,

Your organization's website and philosophy on education have piqued my interest in the possibility of working with your company. As an Educator, I found your site to be a premium resource and guide to information, data, and ideas.

I am interested in exploring employment opportunities with your organization. With a ten-year career surrounding research and program development, I have developed training for small classes and have made presentations to groups as large as 200 attendees. Education, experience, and energy are just three of the things I can offer to your company and teacher communities around the globe.

Enclosed is a copy of my résumé for your review. You can contact me at 555-7777, or send me an email at name@address.com. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Christopher Wright

INTERVIEWING

Interviewing is critical to landing a job. Prepare for the interview by anticipating questions and practicing your answers. Winging it rarely pays off. Making a great first impression is important, so be ready. Appear friendly, yet professional, and show enthusiasm. You don't get a second chance to make a good first impression.

The three most important parts of the interview are:

1. Punctuality

Nothing will destroy your chances of getting the job quicker than being late. If you don't know the location of a company, call for directions the day before and make a trial run that evening. Account for traffic when allotting the amount of time it will take to get to the organization

Try to arrive 15 minutes early. It displays your enthusiasm and makes a good first impression.

2. Appearance

An unprofessional wardrobe can make the difference in an interview. Interviewers won't listen to what you have to say when they're distracted by inappropriate dress, overbearing odors, or overly flashy jewelry.

According to *Inside Indiana Business*, hiring executives say the most common mistake candidates make during job interviews is little or no knowledge of the company.



When in doubt, ask for advice from your networking list or ask the company representative when arranging the interview.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) surveyed 457 employers who recruit new college graduates and an overwhelming **92%** stated, “A candidate’s overall appearance influences their opinion about the candidate.”

Make sure you’re looking your best with appropriate, pressed attire. If you need to drink something before the interview, drink water so your clothes won’t stain if you spill your drink.

3. Interview types

You could encounter many different kinds of job interviews with a variety of interview questions. Understanding them might help you better prepare for those questions. Here are some of the most common types of interviews:

Interview Types	Details
Telephone	This is usually a screening interview. They focus on skills rather than rapport. The goal is to review résumés and eliminate unqualified applicants. The best advice is to answer questions with skill-based responses. Phone interviews are important, so treat them that way. A good phone interview can lead to a face-to-face interview.
Face-To-Face	This type of interview is offered to candidates who, from the screening interviews, meet the job requirements. A face-to-face interview helps determine if you will fit in with the supervisor, department, and company. During this interview, create a rapport with the interviewer and reinforce your abilities.
Committee	This type of interview usually involves several members of a department or company who all have a say in the hiring process. Each person will have an opportunity to ask questions, and you should direct your answers to that person. You may not be able to develop a rapport in this situation, but you should try to be professional and personable.
Lunch	This is often used when choosing high-profile positions, as well as jobs that interact with the public. It’s about more than simply minding your manners. Some tips are to order a light meal, focus on the interview and not the food, be polite to restaurant staff, and let the others in the party be your guide in choosing your price of meal to order.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

It's also important to know how to respond to and ask interview questions. It will be difficult to get a good job if you can't communicate your abilities to the interviewer.

Questions You May Be Asked

If you have little interviewing experience or are just plain nervous, it's always wise to practice. By practicing, you'll feel more prepared, confident, and comfortable in the real situation.

Many interviews involve the same basic kinds of questions. Practice responding to each of those frequently asked questions as you would in a real interview.

- Why did you apply for this job?
- Why do you want to leave your current job?
- Tell me about yourself.
- What did you like most about your last job?
- What did you like least about your last job?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- How do you plan to achieve your career goals?
- How do you work under pressure?
- What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?
- What is your biggest weakness?
- What are your strengths?
- Describe the responsibilities you had at your previous job(s).
- Do you prefer to work by yourself or with others?
- What job do you see yourself doing in five years?
- What salary are you expecting?
- How do you feel about relocation?
- Why should I hire you?

More often than not, interviewers will ask you to tell them a story about how you handled a stressful situation, how you were able to manage a difficult employee, or how you diffused a confrontational situation. These are known as performance-based questions. They determine past actions, which predict future performance. Be ready; performance-based interviews are becoming more and more common. The goal of the interviewer is to see if your work style fits the company's culture.

Questions You Could Ask

Another key to a successful interview is being prepared to ask the interviewer questions. You're also interviewing the company and the interviewer. Find out if your potential supervisor will satisfy your needs and help you grow in your career.

You could ask:

- What are the daily responsibilities of this job?
- What growth opportunities are there in the department and the company?
- How long have you worked here?
- What do you like most about working here?
- If you could change anything about the working environment, what would it be?
- What are your company's greatest challenges?
- How does this department fit into those goals?
- Does your company have a flexible work arrangement policy?
- What has your work history been with this company?
- What's the average tenure of employees?

Your questions should provide you with the answers you need to decide if they meet your personal and professional needs. Feel free to ask these questions after answering similar ones. For example, if asked, "Where will you be in five years?" answer the question honestly and then ask a similar question like, "If I performed well, what opportunities are there for advancement?"

General Interviewing Tips

Now that you have an idea of how to respond to and ask questions, here are a few more interview tips.

- Don't give answers you think the interviewer wants to hear. You could easily lose your job if you can't perform the duties you were given or gave the wrong impression of your skills and abilities.
- Relate your experiences to the job for which you're interviewing. Provide specific examples of tasks you have performed to give the interviewer a better idea of your skills.
- Never complain about past jobs or bosses. Negative comments can give the impression you could be a difficult employee.
- Always ask for a business card from your interviewer(s). This card will help you get all the information correct on your thank-you follow-up letters. Even if you don't get the job, you might be able to add them to your networking list and social media sites.

An average of **36%** of job hunters interviewed regularly send thank-you notes while **75%** of employers appreciate or expect the notes.

– University of Concordia

Following Up and Following Through

If you've gone through the process of developing a résumé, researching the employer, and interviewing, the least you could do is follow up. A written thank-you card or a phone call is ideal, but an email will work.

Within two days of the interview, send a brief thank-you note to your interviewer(s).

Use the information from the business card you obtained during the interview. If you forgot to get one, call and ask the receptionist. Never misspell your interviewer's name.

Following up gives you one more opportunity to get your name in front of the hiring manager. Use this time to clarify information and promote your skills.

CONCLUSION

We hope How to Get a Job has helped you develop a strong, manageable, and effective job search strategy.

If you need more information on guides, tips, and tricks, check out Movin' On Up at Blog.ExpressPros.com. If you can't find what you need there, join the conversation, and share your questions and advice.

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Best of luck!

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