



How to Get a Job

CAREER ROAD MAP

This guide will provide you with many ideas to get and keep a job that you like. Use it to help you prepare to look for a job. Then, keep it available as a handy reference guide as you search for and find the right job.



**This roadmap will lead to
YOUR CAREER SUCCESS.**

KEYS TO CAREER SUCCESS

Positive Attitude – Believe you will be a success.

Work Hard – Keep trying until you achieve your goal.

Get Help – Check out the job seeker services available through schools, Office of Rehabilitation Services and netWORKri.

Ask Questions – Ask your family, friends, relatives, teachers, and neighbors about the kinds of jobs they have.

Seek Information – Look over books and magazines at your library or log onto the Internet to learn about different careers.

Road Map Tip . . .

One of the best ways to find out about jobs is by talking to people. Tell everyone you know that you are looking for a job. People are eager to be helpful.



YOUR ROAD TO SUCCESS

JOB INTERESTS

Identify your interests by placing a check in the box for each activity that you would like to do.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> write stories/articles | <input type="checkbox"/> care for animals | <input type="checkbox"/> work as a firefighter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> work outside on the lawn or garden | <input type="checkbox"/> set up budgets | <input type="checkbox"/> work on the police force |
| <input type="checkbox"/> use a computer | <input type="checkbox"/> work with numbers | <input type="checkbox"/> prepare and cook food in a restaurant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> talk on the telephone | <input type="checkbox"/> market products to people | <input type="checkbox"/> work in a factory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> talk to people in person | <input type="checkbox"/> get involved with a community organization | <input type="checkbox"/> perform science lab experiments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> manage others | <input type="checkbox"/> repair a car engine | <input type="checkbox"/> sell real estate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> build furniture or cabinets | <input type="checkbox"/> work in a television station | <input type="checkbox"/> work for the government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> research a law case | <input type="checkbox"/> help people with finances | <input type="checkbox"/> work in a pharmacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> help people who are ill | <input type="checkbox"/> work with seniors | <input type="checkbox"/> work in a retail store |
| <input type="checkbox"/> use tools | <input type="checkbox"/> teach children | <input type="checkbox"/> work in a bank |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sell cars or other products | <input type="checkbox"/> assist a teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> be a member of a hospital staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> help others learn to do things | <input type="checkbox"/> buy merchandise for a store | <input type="checkbox"/> work in an office |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> work with children | <input type="checkbox"/> help people find jobs |

Now, list the three activities you would most like to do from those checked above.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List other job areas that interest you that are not on this list.

What employers would have these kinds of jobs?

Talk to family, friends, teachers, career counselors, reference librarian, etc.



Road Map Tip . . .

Check with your guidance counselor, school to career coordinator, high school or regional transition coordinator or career placement office at school to discuss your interests and see if you can take a more detailed career interest test.

WHAT I LIKE TO DO

BUILD YOUR NETWORK

Think of people you know – family, friends, relatives, neighbors, teachers, coaches, friends' parents, classmates, people you do business with, and let them know that you are looking for a job.

- Ask if they know of any job openings.
- Ask each person for the names of two more people whom you might contact to find out about jobs. They may be able to recommend people in particular jobs that interest you, someone at their company who can interview you, or a friend at a company that is hiring.
- Follow-up with the contacts.
- Extend your thanks to the person who referred you.

CHECK OUT JOB SOURCES

- Look at the classified ads for job openings.
- Check out the many Internet sites that advertise jobs.
- Keep an eye out for news stories about companies that are expanding and hiring.
- Talk to your career counselor.
- Contact someone at the Office of Rehabilitation Services (www.ors.ni.gov), netWORKri (www.networkri.org).
- Watch for local, state and federal offices announcements.
- Check out union apprenticeships/jobs.
- Talk with your reference librarian about books that have information about employers and jobs, e.g., *Occupational Outlook Handbook*.
- Contact private and public employment agencies.
- **Above all . . . be creative in your job search!**

VOLUNTEER

Become a volunteer at a local non-profit organization – hospitals, food banks, churches, etc. This will provide you with some exposure and experience, and will add to your network of contacts. It may even lead to a job.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Meet new people and learn new skills by joining community groups, political or social organizations or sports leagues. Follow your interests.



INTERNSHIPS

Contact companies to see if there are any opportunities to intern. Internships provide direct opportunities to develop skills and learn about an organization. Even if this does not lead to a job, it will enhance your resume and make you a more attractive candidate for employment.

JOB FAIRS . . . Enlightening Opportunities

Job fairs are advertised in the employment section of newspapers and are often publicized through schools. Job fairs bring a number of different employers together, and very frequently these organizations have current job openings.



Don't miss the opportunity to attend a job fair.

Road Map Tip . . .

Make a "to do" list each day of activities you will do in your job search.

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

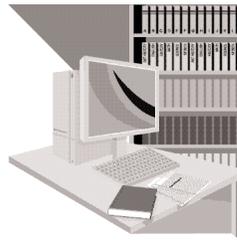
WRITING YOUR RESUME

Your resume is very important because it provides employers with a snapshot of you. Before you begin to write your resume, talk with school or agency counselors for their input, and review books on resume writing and sample resumes available in your library or on the Internet.

A good resume is easy to read, is one typed page (two pages at the most), and provides information about your education, experience and skills. If you were in the military service, include this experience in your resume. If you developed a portfolio in school, it may be used in addition to your resume.

Tips for a Good Resume

- Print your resume on 8 1/2" x 11" quality white paper.
- Do not include personal information, e.g., age, sex, race, religion, weight, height, marital status, disability, etc.
- Do not include salary and wages.
- Use action verbs, such as *achieved*, *managed*, *performed*, etc.
- Make sure your resume is neat and readable.
- Have someone proofread your resume for spelling and grammatical errors.



Search the Internet or ask your librarian for books that have sample resumes.

| | |
|---|--|
| Joan Doe 666 Main Street Any City, Rhode Island 02816 Phone: 401-000-0000 E-mail: xxx@zzz.com | |
| Job Objective | Write a brief statement about the kind of job you are seeking. For example, an objective might be "To obtain an entry position in Marketing." |
| Education | List the high schools and colleges you attended with the diploma/degree you earned and the dates received. List your most recent schooling first. |
| Work/Volunteer Experience | Beginning with your most recent job (include internships and volunteer work), list the employer's name, city and state. Then list the title of the job you held and the dates of your employment. Write a very brief statement of what you did and accomplished. |
| Skills & Achievements | List any special skills you have as well as awards and recognition you have received. For example, you might mention extracurricular activities, clubs, computer skills and language abilities. |

Road Map Tip . . .

Before you use your resume, review it with three friends, relatives, or teachers. Get their feedback and incorporate any changes that improve your resume.

WRITE A GREAT RESUME

A GOOD COVER LETTER

A cover letter introduces you to an employer. Whenever you send your resume, include a one-page cover letter to introduce yourself and to tell an employer why you would be the best person for the job. Your cover letter should include the following components:

HEADING

Provide contact information (your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address), the date you are writing, and the address of the company to which you are applying.

OPENING

Begin with a greeting such as "Dear Ms. Smith," and follow with a statement of who you are and why you are writing . . . "I am very interested in being considered for a position in your Call Center. I will receive my Associate Degree in Business next week." Show an interest in the organization . . . "I admire your organization's reputation for outstanding customer service."

Road Map Tip . . .

Whenever possible, address your cover letter to a specific individual; otherwise, send it to the Human Resources Department.

QUALIFICATIONS

Describe the most important qualifications that demonstrate why they should hire you. If you are responding to an advertisement, mention skills you have that match the job's requirements . . . "The enclosed resume outlines my education and experience. I believe my interpersonal skills and computer knowledge closely match the requirements for your job."

CLOSING

Thank the reader for considering you and indicate your availability for an interview. Conclude with "Sincerely," and your signature.

TELEPHONE CONTACT

Yes, you can call an employer to inquire about job openings. But, you should always try to have the name of a specific person to contact. So, you may want to call the organization and ask for the name of the hiring manager or the recruiter in Human Resources. Your best approach is to have a brief 30-second script ready to use when you get in touch with the right person. Mention your interest in the organization, your skills and experience and ask if it is possible for you to stop in for an interview. Practice your script so that you do not sound as if you are reading it. Get feedback from family members, friends and teachers.



SAMPLE PHONE SCRIPTS

"Good Morning Mr. Moore. My name is Joan Doe. May I take just a minute of your time? I have just completed a certificate program in Customer Service and I am very interested in obtaining a job where I can use my strong communication skills."

• **If they ask about your experience . . .**

"For the past two years I have been working part-time as a retail clerk at XYZ."

• **If you have no work experience . . .**

"I have volunteered at ABC Nursing Home and was treasurer of the Student Council."

• **If a job is available . . .**

"May we schedule a time for me to come in for an interview?"

• **If no job is available . . .**

"Would it be possible for me to come in for a short exploratory interview?
Or, perhaps you can recommend someone whom I can talk to."

CONTACTING EMPLOYERS

GET THE FACTS

Before you go to the interview, learn as much as you can about the organization. Research the Internet or ask your librarian for assistance in finding information about the company. If you know someone who works there, ask them to tell you about it.

IDENTIFY YOUR REFERENCES

Identify three people who will provide a reference for you. These might be former employers, teachers, community leaders or neighbors but not your family members. Ask their permission to use their names as references. Type or write this information neatly and bring a copy to your interview.

PRACTICE FOR YOUR INTERVIEW

Ask a friend or family member to act as the interviewer to give you a chance to become comfortable with your responses. Or, simply do this by yourself, responding aloud to typical interview questions.

- Identify your three major strengths and be prepared to discuss them.
- Make a list of questions that may be difficult for you to answer, e.g. *explaining a gap in your work history.*
- Practice your responses . . . you will feel more comfortable in the actual interview.

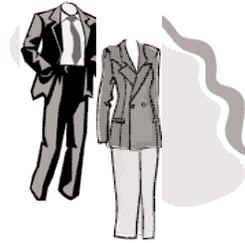
Be Ready for Typical Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- What type of experience do you have?
- How well did you do in school?
- What extracurricular activities did you participate in?
- What are your major strengths? Weaknesses?
- What qualifies you for this job?
- Where do you want to be in three years?
- What would your teachers, former employers say about you?
- Tell me about a time when you did a very good job: *How did you handle a complaint? How did you display leadership?*
- What are your salary requirements?
- Why should we hire you?

LOOK YOUR BEST

You never get a second chance to make a good first impression!

The night before your interview, pick out an outfit that is neat and appropriate for the job for which you are applying. Don't wear jeans, sandals, or tennis shoes.



BRING WITH YOU

- Two copies of your resume
- Names, addresses and phone numbers of three references
- Your social security #
- Any portfolio examples of your work/schooling that you may have
- A pen and a small notebook
- This booklet

BEFORE YOU GO

- Make arrangements for transportation.
- Get good directions to the location.
- Call to find out where you should park, if there are accessible parking spaces and whether the building has an elevator.
- Plan to arrive about 15 minutes early.
- If you need an accommodation for the interview, let the interviewer know beforehand. It is better to request this ahead of time rather than 10 minutes before your interview.

Road Map Tip . . .

Have some questions ready to ask the interviewer, e.g. *What kinds of benefits do you provide? What kind of training is available?*



GREETING

When you arrive at the organization, identify yourself to the receptionist and indicate that you have an appointment with Mr./Ms. Smith or with the Human Resources staff.

COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

Most organizations will ask you to complete an application.

- Take your time and be sure that all of your responses are accurate.
- Review the whole application first and ask if you need assistance.
- Use data from your resume and this booklet as your sources for information.
- Print your answers neatly.
- Check your spelling.
- If a question does not apply, write N/A (Not Applicable).
- Explain time gaps between jobs: "returned to school", "self-employed."
- Don't state a specific salary requirement; just write "Open."

THE INTERVIEW

- Introduce yourself – "Good Morning Mr./Ms. Smith. I am John Doe."
- Take your time answering questions.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Be positive about yourself and be honest.
- Focus on your abilities – emphasize what you can do.
- Indicate your willingness to learn new skills.

ASK QUESTIONS

At any point during the interview it is appropriate to ask a question. Generally, there is a point toward the end of the interview when the interviewer will ask, "Do you have any questions?" You should feel free to ask any questions prompted by your interview; as noted earlier, it is good to have a few questions ready to ask. Asking questions demonstrates your interest in the job.

END OF INTERVIEW

- If you still are interested, express your interest in the job.
- Ask when you can expect to hear from the interviewer.
- Thank the interviewer: Use his/her name. Shake hands.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Make some notes about the interview in your notebook: *interviewer's name, phone number, your reactions to the interview.*
- If the interviewer asked for more information, send it immediately.
- Send a brief "thank you" note to the interviewer.

SAMPLE NOTE: "Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you. I am very interested in the Call Center position and believe I can make a good contribution to your organization. I look forward to hearing from you."

JOB OFFER

If you are offered a job, consider all the factors before you accept the job: salary, hours, benefits, location, accommodations, etc. It is normally not a problem to tell an organization that you would like to take a day or two to consider their job offer. If you need more information, do not hesitate to contact the organization and ask your questions. After considering the job offer, indicate your decision to accept or turn it down. Be sure to thank the organization for offering you the job.

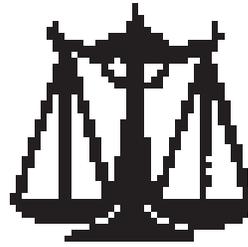
STAY POSITIVE

Don't be discouraged if you do not receive a job offer. Keep up your job search.



Remember . . .
each interview is a learning experience
that will help you get the right job!

**It is very important
for you to
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS
as an applicant
and as an employee.**



DISABILITY QUESTIONS

If you are applying for a job, an employer cannot ask you if you are disabled or ask about the nature or severity of your disability. An employer can ask if you can perform the duties of the job with or without reasonable accommodations. An employer can also ask you to describe or to demonstrate how, with or without reasonable accommodation, you will perform the duties of the job.

DISCUSSING YOUR DISABILITY

If you think you will need a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in the application process or to perform essential job functions, you should inform the employer that an accommodation will be needed.

ACCOMMODATIONS

An employer is required to provide a reasonable accommodation to a qualified applicant or employee with a disability unless the employer can show that the accommodation would be an undue hardship -- that is, that it would require significant difficulty or expense.

ACCESSIBILITY

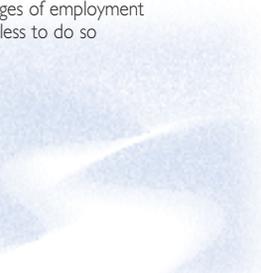
An employer has to make non-work areas used by employees, such as cafeterias, lounges, or employer-provided transportation accessible to people with disabilities. The requirement to provide reasonable accommodation covers all services, programs, and non-work facilities provided by the employer. If making an existing facility accessible would be an undue hardship, the employer must provide a comparable facility that will enable a person with a disability to enjoy benefits and privileges of employment similar to those enjoyed by other employees, unless to do so would be an undue hardship.



YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS

- The laws prohibit an employer from treating you differently, or less favorably, because you have a disability.
- The laws prohibit harassment at work, by managers, co-workers, or others in your workplace, based on a person's disability.
- You have a right to work free of discrimination. This means that your employer cannot make job decisions because of your race, color, religion, gender (including pregnancy), national origin, disability, or age (age 40 or older). This right applies to all types of job decisions, including hiring, firing, promotions, training, wages and benefits.

Source: Job Accommodations Network.
For more information go to: www.jan.wvu.edu
or www.disabilities.ri.gov



Road Map Tip . . .

If you need assistance understanding how your disability may affect your interview or performance on a job, check with your guidance counselor, school-to-career coordinator, the Office of Rehabilitation Services, or the Governor's Commission on Disabilities.



APPLICATION DATA

In completing your application, refer to your resume for most of the data, e.g. *previous employers, schools, dates, etc.* Fill in the data below and use it as needed.

Current Address _____

Emergency Contact & Phone _____

Volunteer Activities _____

Extracurricular Activities _____

Clubs _____

Sports _____

Honors & Awards _____

Special Training _____

WORK EXPERIENCE

Prior Employer _____

Phone _____

Name of Supervisor _____

Start Date _____ End Date _____

Prior Employer _____

Phone _____

Name of Supervisor _____

Start Date _____ End Date _____

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www.rhodestoindependence.org

RHODES to INDEPENDENCE



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