

CAREER TRANSITION



A WORKBOOK

A.R. Beadle & Associates Ltd.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Section 1 Introduction**
Introduction to Career Transition
- Section 2 Adjusting to Job Loss**
Five Facts to Help You Focus
Coping Skills
10 Steps for Living with Change
Caution List
Your Public Reason for Leaving
- Section 3 Budget Management**
Overview to Budget Management
Your Assets, Income and Expenses
Financial Reality – “The Big Picture”
Controlling Your Spending
- Section 4 Today’s Marketplace**
Skills Employers Want
Transferable Skills
- Section 5 Identifying Your Accomplishments**
Your Personal Story
Skills, Abilities, Personal Characteristics, and values
Your Skills and Abilities
Your personal Characteristics
Your Values
Writing Your Accomplishments
Examples of Accomplishment Statements
Accomplishment Stories
Areas Requiring Improvement
- Section 6 Creating Your Resume**
Types of Resumes
Your Personal Database
Employment Options
Matching Your Resume to Employment Options
Your Cover Letter
Preparing to Write Your Cover letter
Writing the Letter

- Section 7 Job Search Strategies**
Job Search Questions
Your Target Position
Marketing Yourself
Marketing Strategies
Your Personal Network
The Job Search Plan
Looking for Work in Today's Marketplace
Making Cold Calls
- Section 8 The Interview**
Interview Preparation
Interview Questions
Sample Interview Questions
Your Questions
The Interview
Answering Questions
Remain in Control
- Section 9 Negotiating Your Salary**
Guidelines
Research Industry Standards
Single Rate vs Salary Range
Responding to a Low Offer
Accepting the Offer and Job

INTRODUCTION TO CAREER TRANSITION

Welcome to *Career Transition: A Workbook*. This workbook is part of a basic five-step process:

1. Adjusting to your situation
2. Conducting an honest self-evaluation
3. Developing your plan of action
4. Carrying out your plan
5. Mastering the interview

Career transition and job loss is part of today's employment scene. No matter what the reason, a change or loss of employment has a significant impact on individuals and their families.

You may find looking for a job to be the toughest job of your life. Much of the past conventional wisdom on job search doesn't work in today's changing workplace.

Your success will depend on your commitment, effort, self-discipline, attitude and desire. You must work to maintain confidence in your abilities and experience. The time required to secure another position will depend directly on:

- The amount of preparation you put into the effort
- How well you know yourself
- Your willingness to listen and take advice
- Your ability to carry on despite setbacks

You should approach this project with the same determination, drive, imagination and enthusiasm that you approach any important project.

Before you start working, read this whole manual to understand the "BIG PICTURE."

Throughout the next few weeks, you will discover that preparing your resume, creating a personal marketing strategy, and attending networking meetings will move you toward a more positive outlook.

It is generally found that people going through job loss experience five emotional stages. The following diagram illustrates these five stages and the normal emotional reaction people have to job loss. These stages are a natural part of your healing process.

Transition Stages

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Emotions</i>
<i>Denial</i>	<i>Shock</i> <i>Confusion</i> <i>Disbelief</i>
<i>Anger</i>	<i>Frustration</i> <i>Blaming</i> <i>Negativity</i>
<i>Bargaining</i>	<i>Desperation</i> <i>Worry</i> <i>Panic</i>
<i>Depression</i>	<i>Isolation</i> <i>Loss of self-confidence</i> <i>Apathy</i>
<i>Acceptance</i>	<i>Hopefulness</i> <i>Enthusiasm</i> <i>Increased energy</i>

Set aside a regular amount of time each week for your Career Transition. Plan your career transition based on the following order presented in this workbook:

1. Review your budget
2. Identify your accomplishments
3. Write your resume
4. Develop your job search strategies
5. Master the interview process
6. Negotiate your new salary

Within the job search/career transition field there are numerous written and internet resources available to you. The Career Transition Resource Centre is a good place to start. You will find this resource at www.arbeadle.com. This workbook in conjunction with the Career Transition Resource Centre will guide and assist you through your transition process.

ADJUSTING TO JOB LOSS

As with any big change in your life, you will experience a period of uncertainty and anxiety; job loss is no exception. Job loss has been described by many as a period of emotional trauma similar to that experienced with the loss of a loved one.

Five Facts to Help You Focus

1. Your situation is not unique
2. You are not alone
3. Getting a new job is hard work
4. You are unique
5. Attitude is a critical factor in job hunting

Coping Skills

During the transition stages, there are several things you can do to help yourself:

- Get regular rest
- Maintain fitness and proper nutrition
- Associate with positive/upbeat people
- Park your problems
- Vent in a safe place
- Maintain a positive approach with your family

Ten Steps for Living with Changes

1. Be patient with yourself
2. Don't be afraid to reach out
3. Look forward
4. Stay open-minded
5. Be good to yourself
6. Create small successes
7. Take some risks
8. Dream a little
9. See and enjoy humour in life
10. Celebrate

Caution List

- Beware of doing nothing and hoping something good will happen.
- Beware of completely isolating yourself from friends and family.
- Beware of immediately calling friends or family to ask for help in finding a job before you have a plan in place.
- Beware of simply adding a new paragraph to your old resume and circulating it.
- Beware of immediately responding to every job advertisement and internet job posting you find.

Your Public Reason for Leaving

Formulate your public reason for leaving and ensure your former employer will verify your statement. Some examples of reasons for leaving a job include the following:

Business Reasons

- Reorganization
- Reduction in workforce
- Merger - Redundancy
- Projects cancelled
- Headquarters moved

Examples of Business Reasons for Leaving

- *My former Company moved its headquarters to Calgary three months ago and I elected to stay here and explore other opportunities.*
- *My former Company had to restructure and my position is one of many being eliminated.*

Personal Reasons

- My career had reached a plateau
- The culture of the company changed
- Personal situation

Examples of Personal Reasons for Leaving

- *My opportunities for advancement have been significantly reduced due to the limited growth of the company.*
- *I was asked to move to Toronto and my wife and I decided to remain in this area to support our aging parents.*
- *Recent restructuring has reduced the responsibilities of my position and it no longer meets my needs for challenge and growth.*

BUDGET MANAGEMENT

Analyze your personal financial situation before beginning your search. You will be more comfortable if you know exactly where you stand.

Overview to Budget Management

Being unemployed likely means a substantially reduced personal income. Careful planning and money management will help you cope with changes in your financial situation. Limit expenditures until your next job is known. If expenditures are necessary, be conservative.

Apply for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits as soon as possible, even if you're not sure you are eligible. Only EI staff can tell you how many weeks you are qualified to receive benefits.

Your Assets, Income and Expenses

Review your assets. Make a list of all your assets and their current value. *Use Worksheet #1 as a guide.*

WORKSHEET #1 - ASSETS CHART	
<i>Liquid assets</i>	
<i>Checking/Savings accounts</i>	
<i>Money market funds</i>	
<i>Pension/RRSP</i>	
<i>Cash value of life insurance</i>	
<i>Securities</i>	
<i>Stocks/Bonds/Mutual funds</i>	
<i>Car(s)/Boat, etc.</i>	
<i>Furniture/Appliances</i>	
<i>Art/Antiques/Collectibles</i>	
<i>Jewelry/Clothing</i>	
<i>Real estate</i>	
<i>Home</i>	
<i>Other properties</i>	
<i>Other assets</i>	
	<i>Total Assets</i>

Make a complete accounting of your income and expenses. Gather your bank statements, credit card statements, household bills (don't forget annual bills), and other miscellaneous expenditures. *Use Worksheet #2 as a guide.*

WORKSHEET #2 - YOUR MONTHLY INCOME-EXPENSE CHART

INCOME

- Unemployment Benefits*
- Spouse's Income*
- Severance pay*
- Interest/Dividends*
- Other Income*

Total Income

EXPENSES

- Mortgage/Rent*
- Utilities/Electric*
- Gas/Fuel oil*
- Water*
- Telephone*
- Food/supermarket*
- Eating out*
- Car payment/expenses*
- Gasoline*
- Loan payments*
- Credit card payments*
- Insurance premiums*
- Medical/prescription expenses*
- Child care*
- Tuition/school costs*
- Pet care*
- Clothing*
- Entertainment*
- Taxes*
- Job hunting costs*
- Other monthly expenses*

Total Expenses

Balance (Income – Expenses)

If you're like a lot of people, your expenses exceed your income. You may have to dip into your assets, trim expenses, or both to make up the difference.

Financial Reality – “The Big Picture”

Based on your Monthly Income-Expense chart, see if it will be necessary for you to tap into your assets. Review your Assets chart to see if you have enough to supplement your income for six months? nine months? one year? When you have made this determination you will know how much time you have to look for the job of your choice.

If your assets are being depleted and your ideal job has not yet come along, you may have to re-evaluate your career goals, consider relocating or take a "fill-in" job. Being a contract worker/consultant might be an option for you. You might explore temporary jobs, "typically" easier to obtain, to make money to help tide you over.

Controlling Your Spending

You may find it necessary to reduce your expenses. In general, your strategy for controlling expenses should be to determine what costs you must incur and those you can reduce. If you need to limit expenses, try some of the suggestions below:

- Reduce credit card purchases
- Notify your bank or mortgage holder as soon as possible if you expect to have difficulty making mortgage or loan payments
- Consider cashing in some "luxury" assets
- Review your medical, dental, and extended health coverage

TODAY'S MARKETPLACE

We are in a global economy that is very competitive and fast changing. Two of the major factors contributing to this change are the removal of trade barriers and advancing technology.

Employers are re-engineering their business processes and focusing on core areas of expertise. Consequently, companies are no longer performing certain work functions. Although it results in the loss of jobs with a given company, the good news is that this work still needs to be performed. This has been referred to as “job shift.”

Research indicates that the growth in employment today is self-employment and people working for small companies. These smaller organizations can be more flexible in delivering services.

Some employers may be reluctant to commit themselves to full-time, “permanent” employees and prefer to contract work on a project basis.

Today's employers are looking for workers with specific skills including demonstrated “life-long learning.” In many cases it is your skills and applied expertise that will be most valued by employers.

Skills Employers Want

The skills that employers want have been identified in numerous studies. The most often are:

Knowing the business:

Act with “common sense” in the workplace. This means being sensitive and responsive to customer expectations and needs; dealing effectively with customers; talking and writing in a way that is relevant to the organization through knowledge of the business and its activities; identifying with the company.

Exploiting information technology:

Be willing to learn new uses of information technology.

Behaving appropriately:

Act ethically and with integrity; be productive, cooperative, accountable, responsible, flexible and positive (especially about change).

Speaking and listening:

Receive, comprehend and interpret complex instructions; talk with, provide to and seek and clarify information from co-workers, customers, clients and those in authority, in person and by telephone.

Writing:

Write clearly, concisely and to the point, consistently conforming to grammatical conventions and using correct spelling.

Maintaining personal standards:

Be concerned with personal well-being, maintain standards of hygiene and dress which conform with an organization's expectations.

Handling numbers:

Extract and record numerical data and carry out calculations with high levels of accuracy, involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and the use of percentages.

Responding to problems:

Be alert to what is happening at work and be able to identify, investigate and evaluate potential and actual problems; be able to report them concisely and clearly both orally and in writing.

Learning continually:

Take responsibility for your own learning, learn through working with others, from manuals and from mistakes.

Planning:

Manage the use of time; master, plan and undertake a number of activities that are inter-related or overlap in time.

Working in teams:

Work within and contribute to the effectiveness of a team, respecting differences, take responsibility and be willing to make decisions.

Using equipment:

Set up and operate equipment that can require selection from options or different settings.

Reading:

Read to extract information and to interpret instructions.

Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are the ones that have been learned and developed through a wide variety of experiences. The development of your transferable skills has not been limited to the workplace. However, transferable skills are the base for most work in today's marketplace. These skills are one of your most important assets.

The following list can help you identify **your** transferable skills.

Leading/Directing:	Organizing to get things done; making decisions that affect others.
Appraising/Evaluating:	Assessing other peoples' performance; judging if something needs changing.
Motivating:	Getting people into action encouraging others.
Negotiating:	Helping others settle a disagreement; helping others see all sides of a situation.
Writing:	Correspondence; records; reports; technical writing; specialized documents.
Gathering Information:	Determining where to find an answer; searching for details.
Diagnosing/Analyzing:	Evaluating facts or details.
Checking:	Inspecting errors; details; accuracy; standards.
Calculating/Estimating:	Working with numbers, measurements, predicting outcomes.
Counselling/Coaching:	Helping others when they don't know what to do; caring for others; guiding, advising.
Interpreting:	Making methods fit rules or legislation; using and understanding methods others have developed.
Co-operation:	Getting work done in a group; appreciating the work of others.
Teaching:	Providing formal or informal instruction to others.
Problem Solving:	Determining how to resolve a problem; connecting cause and effect.

Persuading/Advising:	Giving recommendations; getting others to adopt your ideas.
Deciding:	Making decisions based on the facts; ruling on procedures.
Presenting/Training:	Speaking in front of others; showing others how to do things better.
Planning/Organizing:	Setting objectives; organizing schedules.
Discussing/Informing:	Answering questions; providing information, briefing.
Administering:	Following through on plans or instructions; recording and filing information.
Reviewing/Evaluating:	Looking for improvements; alternatives.
Originating:	Finding new ways to do things; suggesting alternatives.
Creating:	Designing products; words; pictures; charts; processes.
Purchasing/Buying:	Selecting and purchasing goods and services.
Inspecting:	Examining physical objects, or financial statements for errors.
Researching:	Obtaining information from libraries; surveys or physical data.
Cataloguing:	Listing or classifying information descriptively.
Designing:	Developing products; systems or work processes.
Displaying:	Showcasing new ideas, products or equipment.
Editing:	Checking newspapers, magazines or journals for content and format.
Planning:	Projecting budgets, goal-setting or Scheduling.

IDENTIFYING YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The first step to a new work opportunity starts with identifying your accomplishments. Each accomplishment you identify helps you to fully explore and understand who you are, what's important to you, and what you have to offer prospective employers.

Begin by reviewing the people and events that have influenced you the most. Then record your personal story; a history of your work.

Prospective employers are most interested in what you achieved in your previous jobs. One way to identify your achievements is to write short stories about the situations you encountered and analyze them to identify your accomplishments.

An accomplishment is something you did that improved a situation, solved a problem or made a contribution, either qualitatively or quantitatively.

Your accomplishments demonstrate you did more than "just your job." They show how you used your knowledge and skills to contribute to the organization. Accomplishments should cover your entire work history.

Your Personal Story

During our life we encounter people, events, and obstacles that have influenced us. Everything you have experienced has contributed to what you are today.

How you write your story is up to you. Choose an approach that is comfortable for you. Remember, it is confidential. You choose who can read it.

As you start writing your story, remember the following:

- It doesn't have to be chronological
- Start with the first incident that comes to mind
- Write as much as it takes to cover your story
- Concentrate on the people and work that have been most important to you
- Write about your best work and work that could have been done better
- Don't forget your important personal experiences

Now, focus on your accomplishments by responding to the following:

1. Describe a specific situation in which you solved a problem or took charge of an emergency situation.
2. Give an example of something you created or built.
3. Describe an instance in which you developed an idea.
4. Explain how you showed leadership during a challenging situation.
5. Recount a time when you achieved a goal by following instructions.
6. What action did you take or contribution did you make regarding a company decision or change?
7. How have you increased sales or reduced costs for a company?
8. What have you done to help others reach their goals?
9. List ways you have saved time and money.
10. What awards or commendations have you received? Why?
11. Have you been recognized for a good work record?
12. Have you been involved in a team effort that produced a specific result?
13. What on-the-job training programs have you completed?
14. What work-related training courses have you attended?
15. In what way have you influenced the directions, efficiency, or productivity of your immediate work group?
16. What do you do better than your co-workers and why is this an advantage to the company?

Skills, Abilities, Personal Characteristics, and Values

The next step is to assess your skills, abilities, personal characteristics and values. **Use Worksheet #3 to record and prioritize your skills, abilities, characteristics and values.**

Skills and abilities are what usually interest employers most. For example, computer programming, financial planning, supervising, office administration, or managing are examples of skills.

Personal characteristics are how others perceive you. Characteristics such as adaptability, leadership, or dependability are important to an employer.

Values are what guide you through your life. Although your values may not be evident to others they influence what you do and how you do it. Knowing your values will help you understand what you need in a job.

Your Skills and Abilities

Knowing your personal and work related skills is an important part of understanding what you have to offer a prospective employer. Think about the skills you possess, what you have accomplished in your life, and those things you like doing.

What is the difference between abilities and skills?

- Abilities are the “big picture” such as the ability to get along well with people.
- Skills are specific actions like listening and communicating.

At this point, refer back to **Skills Employers Want** and **Transferable Skills in Today’s Marketplace**. List an inventory of your top 10 skills and abilities on Worksheet #3 so that you can highlight them in your accomplishment statements.

Your Personal Characteristics

Read each of the following characteristics. List the ones that best describe you on Worksheet #3.

Proceed carefully. Remember there is no "right" answer. Answer as objectively as you can. Refer to this list when you are writing your accomplishments.

Problem Solving: Thorough; Practical; Analytical; Creative

Motivation: Goal oriented; Persistent; Take initiative; Desire challenges

Leadership: Empathy; Recognition; Delegation; Managing Relationships

Communications: Listening; Writing; Speaking (one-on-one)/verbal skills; Presentation; Reading

Interpersonal: Team work; Getting work done through others; Following; Delegating; Managing your perception; Coaching/mentoring

Organization/Planning: Establish priorities; Meet deadlines; Flexible; Manage change; Organize people; Organize data/information; Future oriented

Work Habits: Self-motivated; Responsible; Resourceful;
Decisive; Energetic

Your Values

The following values describe the satisfaction that most people get from their work. Read the definitions and list your top 10 on Worksheet #3 and then put them in order of importance to you.

Help Society: Do something to contribute to the betterment of the world in which I live.

Help Others: Be involved in helping other people in a direct way, either individually or in small groups.

Public Contact: Have a lot of day-to-day contact with people

Work with Others: Have close relationships with a group; work as a team toward common goals.

Affiliation: Be recognized as a member of a particular organization

Friendships: Develop close personal relationships with people as a result of my work activities.

Competition: Engage in activities that pit my abilities against others where there are clear win-or-lose outcomes.

Make Decisions: Have the power to decide courses of action, policies, etc

Work Under Pressure:	Work in situations where time pressure is prevalent and the quality of my work is judged critically by supervisors, customers, and others.
Power and Authority:	Control the work activities or (partially) the destinies of other people.
Influence People:	Be in a position to change attitudes or opinions of other people.
Work Alone:	Do projects by myself, without any significant amount of contact with others.
Knowledge:	Engage myself in the pursuit of knowledge, truth and understanding.
Intellectual Status:	Be regarded as a person of high intellectual prowess or as one who is an acknowledged “expert” in a given field.
Artistic Creativity:	Engage in creative work in any of several art forms.
Creativity:	Create new ideas, programs, organizational structures or anything else not following a format previously developed by others.
Aesthetics:	Be involved in studying or appreciating the beauty of things, ideas, etc.
Supervision:	Have a job in which I am directly responsible for the work done by others.
Change and Variety:	Have work responsibilities that frequently change in their content and setting.
Precision Work:	Work in situations where there is little tolerance for error.
Stability:	Have a work routine and job duties that are largely predictable and not likely to change over a long period of time.
Security:	Be assured of keeping my job and a reasonable financial reward.

Fast Pace:	Work in circumstances where there is a high pace of activity, or where work must be done rapidly.
Recognition:	Be recognized for the quality of my work in some visible or public way.
Excitement:	Experience a high degree of excitement in the course of my work.
Adventure:	Have work duties that involve frequent risk-taking.
Profit or Gain:	Have a strong likelihood of accumulating large amounts of money or other material gain.
Independence:	Be able to determine the nature of my work without significant direction from others; not have to do what others tell me to.
Moral Fulfillment:	Feel that my work is contributing significantly to a set of moral standards that I feel are very important.
Location:	Find a place to live (town, geographical area) that is conducive to my lifestyle and affords me the opportunity to do the things I enjoy most.
Community:	Work for an organization that supports my desire to get involved in community affairs.
Physical Challenge:	Have a job that makes physical demands which I would find rewarding.
Time Freedom:	Have work responsibilities that I can work at according to my own time schedule; flexibility in working hours.

WORKSHEET #3 – Skills, Abilities, Characteristics, and Values

As you read through the lists write down your top ten and then put them in order of priority; the ones you do best.

Your Top 10 Skills	Your Skills in Order of Competence
Your Top 10 Personal Characteristics	Your Personal Characteristics in Order of Importance
Your Top 10 Values	Your Values in Order of Importance

Writing Your Accomplishments

Referring back to your personal stories, identify the accomplishments that answer all four of the following questions:

1. What was the problem or issue you faced?
2. What did you do in response to the problem or issue?
3. What skills did you use?
4. What was the benefit to the organization?

Writing your accomplishments is difficult but the most important step in developing your resume and interview presentation.

Quantifying results is important. What you did (the action taken) should have accomplished one of the following:

- made money for the organization
- saved money for the organization
- made things easier for the organization
- saved time for the organization

An accomplishment statement is the action you took to solve a company problem, which resulted in a measurable outcome.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENT EQUATION

$$\mathbf{THE\ COMPANY\ NEED\ +\ YOUR\ ACTION\ =\ MEASURABLE\ RESULTS}$$

WORKSHEET #4 – ACCOMPLISHMENT PRESENTATIONS

Accomplishment – “60 Second Presentation”

Accomplishment Statement:

What company problem did you solve?

How did you do it?

What happened?

How was the benefit measured?

In defining the RESULTS or BENEFITS, consider the following:

- Increased sales or profits
- Improved quality
- Reduced costs
- Improved customer service
- Designed a procedure
- Wrote a procedures manual
- Stimulated productivity
- Implemented a marketing plan
- Developed a budget
- Taught a course
- Coordinated a headquarters relocation
- Penetrated a new market
- Supervised staff
- Facilitated change
- Researched and analyzed trends
- Reorganized a system
- Initiated a technical breakthrough
- Presented an innovation
- Negotiated contracts
- Recruited professionals
- Developed a staff training program

A "positive" accomplishment will do one or more of the following:

1. improve performance
2. increase efficiency
3. provide better controls
4. improve working conditions
5. solve problems
6. expand customer base
7. streamline operations
8. improve reliability
9. boost sales
10. cut waste
11. reduce costs
12. reduce time

Power Verbs and Positive Attributes

The lists below contain power verbs and positive attributes pertaining to different types of activities, with information, people or things. Review the list and pick the verbs that best describe you.

Previously, when you worked with information and equipment:

administered	coordinated	modified	refined
analyzed	corrected	organized	reorganized
arranged	defined	planned	reported
assembled	designed	presented	researched
assessed	determined	processed	revised
balanced	developed	promoted	simplified
budgeted	edited	proved	standardized
calculated	evaluated	provided	streamlined
compiled	formulated	publicized	synthesized
completed	integrated	published	updated
composed	interpreted	read	
computed	marketed	reconciled	

Previously, when you worked with people:

administered	enforced	operated	served
advised	established	organized	shared
assisted	expedited	performed	showed
coached	facilitated	persuaded	staffed
communicated	guided	resented	supervised
conducted	headed	produced	taught
consulted	hired	protected	tended
counseled	initiated	provided	tested
delegated	instructed	reconciled	trained
demonstrated	learned	recruited	traveled
determined	managed	reduced	unified
directed	motivated	resolved	
eliminated	negotiated	restructured	

Positive Attributes

active	democratic	honest (truthful)	persistent
adaptable	dependable	imaginative	philosophical
alert	diplomatic	independent	practical
ambitious	disciplined	inspiring	productive
analytical	discreet	intellectual	realistic
artistic	economical	intuitive	reliable
astute	efficient	kind	resourceful
cheerful	energetic	logical	respected
compassionate	enterprising	loyal	self-assured
competitive	enthusiastic	methodical	self-reliant
conscientious	fair	objective	sincere
considerate	forceful	optimistic	sociable
constructive	forward-thinking	organized	sympathetic
cooperative	frank	patient	systematic
courageous	friendly	persuasive	thorough
creative	genuine	perceptive	thoughtful
decisive	goal-oriented		tolerant
	humorous		

Example Accomplishment Statements

- Initiated a customer service department resulting in improved business community relations.
- Supervised the provision of patient care in a clinical setting with a staff of 15 and a total department budget of \$900,000.
- Analyzed accounts payables for accuracy and timeliness resulting in a savings of over \$25,000.

Accomplishment Stories

Now that you have reviewed your accomplishments, you are ready to write your own statements. Study the guidelines and sample accomplishment statements above, then write your statements.

- Write concise statements of what you did and what resulted. Be very specific.
- Use the fewest number of words but make your points stand out.
- When possible, use numbers to quantify the activity or benefits.

Now you will turn your accomplishment into “60 Second Presentations” (see the worksheet below for a recommended format). These are short, structured statements that highlight your positive traits and marketable skills. These scripts must be rehearsed to ensure you are comfortable and relaxed when you give your presentation in interviews or networking meetings.

Employers are looking for accomplishments. They screen and interview candidates to find achievements that mirror their needs. Accomplishments are your most important asset.

Note: A specific accomplishment may not seem important to you because you didn't have to work hard to achieve it. An employer might be looking for this accomplishment. This is not the time to be modest.

When you present your accomplishments, remember results are important. Use numbers, percentages, and statistics to give extra weight to your story.

Write as many accomplishments as you can. Some will be stronger than others. Some will be used more often than others. Some will be appropriate in only a limited number of situations.

Once you have each accomplishment down to a “60 Second Presentation,” put them in order of priority. Your presentations should support the skills they demonstrate, such as managerial, marketing, financial, planning, problem solving, etc. or the personal attributes they reflect, such as energy, innovation, or analytical ability.

Areas Requiring Improvement

Employers are looking for people who understand their skills and abilities, especially those that could be improved. Your self-assessment skills will be measured by how you describe your “gaps” or “weaknesses.”

Describe projects where you would “do things differently” if you were to undertake them again. Describe the obstacles you encountered and how you would approach them. Write “60 Second Presentations” on what and how you would change. Identify your personal skills and abilities that could be improved.

WORKSHEET #5 – ACCOMPLISHMENT PRESENTATIONS

Areas Requiring Improvement – “60 Second Presentation”

What company problem did you address?

What did you do?

What happened?

What would you do differently?

CREATING YOUR RESUME

A resume is a multi-purpose document. It helps to:

- Refine your thinking about your career strengths and objectives.
- Increase your self-confidence.
- Express yourself consistently and effectively.
- Assist prospective employers to understand how your skills and abilities will meet their needs.

Your resume should be a summary of your skills, accomplishments, and experience that pertain to the work you are pursuing. It is the highlights of your career rather than a detailed listing of your history.

There is no one perfect format for resumes. The important thing to remember is that a resume doesn't get you the work. It is a tool that will help prepare you to be articulate and concise when discussing your background.

Your resume should assist an employer to compare your credentials with those of other candidates. In addition, it will be a reminder following your meeting.

Your resume should always be a work in progress. You need to create a “resume information database” that can be organized as required. Your resume must be customized for each specific position.

A covering letter is always attached to your resume. It highlights specific skills and abilities that match the employer's needs identified in their advertisement or position description.

Types of Resumes

In general, there are two major formats used for resumes.

1. Chronological

This is the most commonly used format and highlights your jobs, work history, and accomplishments in each position.

The chronological resume is most effective when your job search is focused on career progression. It is a listing of work experiences that are clear, concise, easily understood, and directly support the work you are pursuing.

Chronological Resume Format			
Name			
Address		Res: () ___-___	
City	Postal Code	Bus: () ___-___	
E-mail:			
CAREER PROFILE			
A _____ with over ___ years of experience in _____ coupled with _____.			
Particular strengths include _____, _____, and _____.			
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY			
Position	_____ - Present		
Organization			
Location			
Reporting to _____ responsible for _____ and _____.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accomplishment #1 • Accomplishment #2 • Accomplishment #3 			
Position	_____ - _____		
Organization			
Location			
Reporting to _____ responsible for _____ and _____.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accomplishment #1 • Accomplishment #2 • Accomplishment #3 			
Position	_____ - _____		
Organization			
Location			
Reporting to _____ responsible for _____ and _____.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accomplishment #1 • Accomplishment #2 • Accomplishment #3 			

	Name
EDUCATIONAL HISTORY	
• Degree or Certificate School/College/University	Date
• Degree or Certificate School/College/University	Date
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
• Course Name	Date
• Course Name	Date
• Course Name	Date
• Course Name	Date
• Course Name	Date
• Course Name	Date
MEMBERSHIPS (optional)	
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (optional)	
INTERESTS/HOBBIES (optional)	
REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST	

2. Functional

This format groups your skills and accomplishments within functional areas of expertise. It is an excellent presentation for individuals with transferable skills developed through experience in a variety of fields.

This format highlights your skills and accomplishments. Less attention is given to where and when these were attained. It is very effective for those

contemplating a career change, or those who wish to emphasize skills rather than job titles.

Functional Resume Format

Name

Address

City Postal Code

E-mail:

Res: () ___-___

Bus: () ___-___

CAREER PROFILE

A _____ with over ___ years of experience in _____ coupled with _____.
Particular strengths include _____, _____, and _____.

SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**Communication Skills**

- Accomplishment #1
- Accomplishment #2
- Accomplishment #3

Administrative Skills

- Accomplishment #1
- Accomplishment #2
- Accomplishment #3

Technical Skills

- Accomplishment #1
- Accomplishment #2
- Accomplishment #3

Computer Skills

- Accomplishment #1
- Accomplishment #2
- Accomplishment #3

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- **Position** _____ - Present
Organization
Location

	Name
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position Organization Location 	_____ - _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position Organization Location 	_____ - _____
EDUCATIONAL HISTORY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree or Certificate School/College/University 	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree or Certificate School/College/University 	Date
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Name • Course Name • Course Name • Course Name • Course Name • Course Name 	Date Date Date Date Date Date
MEMBERSHIPS (optional)	
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (optional)	
INTERESTS/HOBBIES (optional)	
REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST	

Your Personal Database

Your resume is a living, changing document that you tailor to the position being pursued. For this reason, you should collect all pertinent data into a “database” of information that can be drawn upon to create each resume.

When you create your “database,” place each piece of information under one of the following headings:

Name, address and telephone numbers

Consists of your name, address and telephone number(s) and email address. Include postal and area codes.

Personal data

Do not include personal information such as age, gender, weight, height or health. This information is irrelevant.

Career profile

A career profile is a clear, succinct statement of what you do, and what kind of work you are looking for. The value of including a career profile is to help focus the reader's attention on the role you are targeting and the particular strength you could bring to the job.

The profile contains the following information

- A specific or generic job title (titles vary from company to company)
- How many years' experience (without over or under qualifying yourself).
- In what functions or specific industry.

When you have collected all the information for your resume, then complete the Career Profile Worksheet.

Employment History

In the **Chronological** format, this section is the focal point of the resume. Employment history should include:

- Position(s) held
- Name of employer
- Location of employer
- Period of time worked
- Important duties or responsibilities of each position
- Several key accomplishments you have created earlier

When the name/product/service of your previous employer is not easily recognizable, a short description of the company will give some needed information in addition to the titles you held and the scope of your tasks/responsibilities.

Describe your jobs in terms of the functional responsibilities and then list the appropriate accomplishments under these headings.

Utilizing the worksheet below, gather your old resumes, job descriptions and past performance evaluations. Make a listing of the positions, the tasks and/or activities performed, and accomplishments in each position.

In the **Functional Resume** format, the employment history is a separate section and follows the section entitled “Skills and Accomplishments.”

It includes the following:

- Position(s) held
- Name of employer
- Location
- Period of time worked

Skills and Accomplishments

In a **Functional Resume** this section follows your Career Profile. It is a list of your accomplishments (identified earlier), divided into functional headings such as: Communication Skills; Administrative Skills; and, Technical Skills. This section should highlight your transferable skills.

Transferable skills can be applied in various situations or organizations. Examples include organizing, marketing, and designing. Transferable skills should not be restricted to employment situations only.

Ensure that all your accomplishments are included in the appropriate skill group. These accomplishment statements attest to the strength of your transferable skills.

Educational History

This section consists of both formal education and training relevant to your career objective.

List the degrees, certificates or diplomas that you have received. If you did not graduate, indicate the highest level achieved. It is not necessary to detail course work unless directly related to the position.

If you have attended a training institute, university or college, details on high school become less important.

List any awards or honours you received - they are evidence of your diligence, abilities and commitment.

Professional Development

This section consists of professional development courses you have completed which are directly related to your career objective.

The formal education you addressed in the preceding exercise may not cover all of the courses you have taken. These “other” courses may be related to your work or interests

Memberships (*Optional*)

This section is a listing of professional, technical, social or community affiliations that directly relate to your career objective or demonstrate important and desirable attributes for the position you are applying for.

Community Involvement (*Optional*)

This section is a listing of volunteer work - it may demonstrate your leadership skills or your organizational ability. Include only if directly supporting your career objective.

Interests/Hobbies (*Optional*)

Unless your hobbies and other interests are helpful in gaining the interviewer's interest, leave them out. They may well distract the reader from important content.

References

Do not attach a list of references to your resume unless you are asked specifically to do so. Prospective employers will request references once they have determined you are a suitable candidate for the position.

List references on a separate page. Include names, titles, addresses, telephone numbers, email address and a brief statement indicating their working relationship with you.

You will need at least three references for each position you apply for. References can vary from position to position. Choose references that will provide the best perspective on the accomplishments you have highlighted for the prospective employer.

When you select references, contact them and ask them to provide a reference for you. Always keep your references updated regarding your job search and the key responsibilities of the positions you have applied for.

Employment Options

When your accomplishments and chronology of employment are finished, the major parts of the resume are complete.

Before you complete the Career Profile assess the employment options available. The four options identified below will assist you to choose the best resume format. The option you choose will determine the information you will need to highlight in your profile.

Employment Options	
<p style="text-align: center;">Option 1</p> <p>The same job you currently have within the same industry. Where can I find this type of job? Who can help me? What are the obstacles?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Option 2</p> <p>The same type of job but in a different industry Where can I find this type of job? Who can help me? What are the obstacles?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Option 3</p> <p>A job that will use your abilities and knowledge in a different way, e.g. consulting Why does this option work for me? Where can I find this type of job? Who can help me? What are the obstacles?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Option 4</p> <p>A "new" career path. This could be an independent business venture. Why does this option work for me? Where can I find this type of job? Who can help me? What are the obstacles?</p>

Matching Your Resume to Employment Options

The most widely used format is one that contains both the chronology of your employment plus accomplishments. Both formats presented in this workbook include a work chronology and accomplishments. The recommended format for the four options is set out below:

1. Option #1 – Chronological
2. Option #2 - Functional
3. Option #3 - Functional
4. Option #4 - Functional

Note: Remember, it is your resume and should be tailored to reflect you. Select the resume format that presents the best picture of you.

Your Cover Letter

The purpose of your cover letter is to introduce you to a prospective employer. Your letter should be one page, easy to read, and make the reader want to look at your resume.

Cover letters must be individualized to address skills and experience targeted in the advertisement or position description.

You need to know as much as possible about the company in order to highlight how your skills and experience will meet their needs.

Preparing to Write Your Cover Letter

Read the advertisement, job posting, or position description very carefully. Highlight the skills, experience, key phrases, and terminology identified.

Research the company on the Internet, in business directories, industry journals, and newspapers.

Contact anyone you know that works for or has worked for the organization. Call them to see what additional background about the company or the actual position they might be able to provide.

Decide if this position is suitable for you.

- Do you have the majority of the skills they are seeking?
- Does the background information you have gathered indicate that the company's culture and objectives fit your needs?

If you decide to apply, make a list of questions you need answered and contact the individual specified in the ad.

Questions might relate to job duties, organizational structure, qualifications, and company direction.

Try to obtain the name (correct spelling) of the person making the hiring decision.

Writing the letter

Your letter should be laid out in one of the standard business formats. If all your attempts to find out the name of the hiring decision maker have failed use "Dear Sir or Madam:"

If you spoke to the person who is doing the hiring indicate this in your opening line. If you were unable to make a personal contact, open the letter with a comment on your understanding of the organization.

From your research you will have information on the employer's needs. Make a list of their needs gathered from the advertisement, your research, and phone contact. Utilize the list you have made of your skills, abilities, and experience that relate to the position.

List in point form your skills, abilities, and experience that match what the employer is seeking. Use their terminology.

Use words that emphasize your enthusiasm for the position and mirror the corporate culture conveyed in their advertisement.

In closing you should indicate when you will follow up with them. A week following the closing date is a reasonable time frame.

Restate your interest and thank them for taking the time to speak with you earlier.

SAMPLE - COVER LETTER

Dear: *(Mr/Mrs/Ms (Name of contact))*

Re: Competition (# ????)

Your advertisement on *[insert date]* and the additional research I have undertaken has confirmed I possess many of the key skills and abilities you are seeking. Attached is a copy of my resume, please consider it my application for the position of *[insert title of position]*. My background includes:

- Over *[insert number]* years experience in the *[insert name]* field;
- a BA in Business Administration with studies focused on *[insert study focus]* followed by an MBA in Finance with emphasis in *[insert details]*;
- *in-depth knowledge of [insert details]*;
- administrative experience involving the development and monitoring of policies and strategies in business redesign; and,
- experience developing and providing training to the general public and within the financial community.

Over the years I have demonstrated my strong communications and problem-solving skills, and have been recognized for my achievements in *[insert achievements]*.

I will contact you on *[insert date]* to ensure you have received my resume and to provide any further clarification on my background, which you may require. I look forward to the opportunity of further discussing this position with you.

Yours truly,

(Your Name)

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

Before starting your search, you need to determine your immediate and minimum requirements in a job. Your financial resources may be the deciding factor regarding your short-term job needs.

The Job Search Questions below will assist you to focus your search by taking into consideration the following:

- Values
- Interests
- Occupational sector
- Roles
- Location
- Commuting distance
- Skills and knowledge required
- Skills and knowledge gaps

Answer the Job Search Questions and refer back to your answers during your search. Remember, your situation will not remain static and consequently, over time, your job requirements may need to be amended.

Job Search Questions

1. My work goal/objective is:
2. My ideal job would include the following activities:
3. My target is a "pay the bills" or "satisfying" or "ideal" job
4. In a job I must have: In a job, it would be nice to have:
5. The values I must have fulfilled at work are (prioritize):
6. The values I would like fulfilled at work are:
7. The interests I must have fulfilled at work are (prioritize):
8. The interests I would like fulfilled at work are:
9. The occupational sector(s) I'd like to target is (are):
10. Some types of roles I'd like to focus on include:

11. Work alternatives (i.e. part-time, job share, etc.)
12. The location I want is:
13. The commuting distance I'm willing to travel is:
14. Other things that are important include:
15. Jobs or aspects of jobs I will not consider:
16. I could compromise on the above by:
17. The beliefs I have that will propel me toward success are:
18. The beliefs that may hold me back are:
19. The skills/knowledge I want to use are:
20. The skills/knowledge gaps I have are:
21. My experience includes:
22. My accomplishments include:

Your Target Position

The next step is to review your answers to the job search questions. This process will help you to refine your focus on the type of position that is best for you. When gathering information regarding a position and/or company, consider the following questions.

- What education/training do I need?
- From which education/training programs do employers prefer to hire?
- Are jobs available in the area in which I live?
- How is technological change affecting jobs in this area?
- Is this job vulnerable during economic downturns?
- Does the job offer full-time, part-time, or casual employment?
- Will I earn enough to maintain my current lifestyle?
- What are the working conditions like?
- What skills and knowledge are needed to do the job?
- What skills and knowledge can be learned on the job?
- What does the employer look for in applicants?
- What does the job contribute to the company's bottom line?
- Does this employer consider individuals with transferable skills?
- What are the company's mission, values and business principles?
- What is the company view on learning?
- What specific information will spark the employer's interest in you?

Your Target Position Worksheet

Based on your answers to the Job Search Questions, write a brief description of the required components of your target position.

- The organization will have the following 'cultural' characteristics:
- The geographic location will be:
- My minimum salary and benefits will be:
- Ideally, people there will be:
- I will "fit" into this organization because my working style is:
- I work best with people whose style(s) is/are:
- My key skills with People, Information and Equipment are:
- Physically, my requirements are:
- The position will provide me with future growth potential:

Marketing Yourself

At this point in your job search, you have identified your accomplishments, prepared your resume, written your scripts, and assessed your needs. Now you need to contact the people in your personal network for employment leads and advice.

The key to self-marketing is selling your abilities, special qualities, and your value to the prospective employer. The ultimate goal is to make the employer aware of your value and how, by hiring you, their company can benefit.

Self-marketing helps you to:

- build confidence
- increases flexibility
- adapt to the changing labour market

Self-marketing is an ongoing process that helps to expand your network and keep you visible. If people remember who you are, you are more likely to come to mind when new opportunities emerge.

To be successful in your marketing, you need:

- knowledge of the employer
- clarity of your goals and the employer's
- marketing strategies and tools
- belief in yourself and your efforts
- persistence

If you believe you have barriers (e.g. age, lack of formal education, limited experience), self-marketing is essential. You will need to sell the prospective employer on your strengths.

There are three basic steps in self-marketing:

1. Defining the product - you
2. Defining the market - employers
3. Developing a marketing strategy

Marketing Strategies

You have already defined the product and the market. Now you need to focus on marketing strategies.

The basis of a good marketing strategy is to focus on your transferable skills and special qualities. When either face to face or on the phone to employers, you will need to be clear and concise in defining yourself and making a positive impression.

You have to present the information in a manner that catches the person's attention and makes an impression. In today's workplace, you may only get one chance to market yourself. The speech may vary in content or length depending on who you are addressing. The description should not sound rehearsed.

This outline helps you organize your thoughts. The content of your profile varies in length and detail depending on who is listening and their need for information.

Practice this with a friend or in front of a mirror. Remember, the emphasis must be on your experience and accomplishments.

Your Personal Network

Networking is making and maintaining contact with people we know. One of the best ways to begin generating employment ideas is to brainstorm with friends, relatives, professional contacts, etc.

- Prepare a list of contacts for brainstorming. “Your Personal Network” will assist you in generating this list.
- Join support groups such as job clubs where you can meet other job-seekers on a regular basis and share ideas. Consider forming your own job club.

<i>Group</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Names & Contact Numbers</i>
Family & Close Friends	Parents Siblings Neighbours	
Work & Business Associates	Co-workers Customers Suppliers Consultants	
Social Contacts	Sports teams Associations Service Clubs Church members	
Casual Contacts	Physician Dentist Banker Accountant Store owners	

NETWORKING WORKSHEET

My objective:

Skills and qualifications I possess:

My work chronology:

A story that describes an important accomplishment:

My qualifications that set me apart from the competition:

Organizations and positions that match my values and skills:

Your “60 Second Networking Presentation”

Your “60 Second Networking Presentation” is a script of the story you want to tell prospective employers. Make contact by telephone and follow your script.

1. Their name - get it right.
2. Your name - say it slowly and clearly.
3. Who you are - briefly state background, skills.
4. What you are doing - exploring new career opportunities.
5. Why you are calling - would like to get their advice, information.
6. Ask: “Can we meet?” - set a date and time for a 30 minute appointment.

The Job Search Plan

A multi-level approach to job search and self-marketing is best. Consider adding some of the following ideas to your job search plan.

- Take out ads in newspapers, magazines or association publications stating what you have to offer.
- Advertise as part of a group of professionals offering a variety of services.
- Use employment agencies.

- Send personalized letters that offer a service and/or solution to a problem the employer may have.
- Post brochures or signs on bulletin boards.
- Have business cards printed that summarize your qualifications and special talents.
- Write an article or get an article written about you.
- Volunteer to work or present at conferences, fairs or trade shows.
- Volunteer for projects an employer is sponsoring.
- Develop and deliver free workshops.
- Get an article into (or start) a newsletter.
- Use the media (i.e., TV, radio).

The bottom line is to catch the employer's attention and communicate your interest in working for them.

Ultimately, to be effective in self-marketing you will need to:

- focus on your strengths and downplay your weaknesses
- be aware of what's working and what isn't
- if it isn't working, change it
- try everything that might work
- practice, practice, practice

Unfortunately, when you implement every strategy possible and don't see results as quickly as you would like, or don't have success with a particular employer, it is easy to get discouraged. As with any type of marketing, timing can be everything.

Looking for Work in Today's Marketplace

It is widely agreed that in today's workplace over 80 % of work opportunities are not publicly advertised. In other words, classified ads and employment agencies account for less than 20% of the job market. Many of the "hidden" jobs remain open due to the employer's inability to identify a suitable candidate.

To find one of the hidden positions, you have to identify and uncover the potential employer's needs. Generally there will be limited competition for these positions.

Publicly advertised positions, however, are readily identifiable and subject to intense competition.

The following marketing channels are available to the job seeker.

The Internet

The Internet is the primary source of work and job opportunities in today's marketplace. There are hundreds of websites that offer excellent information and advice on career transition. A good place to start is the Career Transition Resource Centre at www.arbeadle.com.

Mailing resumes to a wide spectrum of employers

Mailing unsolicited resumes is the least effective method of job search. It can be effective in cases where an applicant's skills match an industry's needs in periods of rapid growth.

Targeted Mail

Identify companies or industries that are particularly well suited for your skills and objectives. Investigate these target employers and identify information that can help you present your skills as a solution to their needs. Research can include meeting with individuals, reference books, and the internet.

Advertisements/Job Postings

Classified ads and job postings on the Internet can attract large numbers of resumes, although many of the respondents will be unqualified. Unfortunately, qualified individuals can be overlooked in the screening process because of the volume. This is where your cover letter and resume can make an immediate connection with the reader.

Employment Agencies

Employment agencies represent a good source of opportunities. Whenever you are discussing a position with an agency determine if the search is exclusive to their firm. Many firms work on a contingency basis; only paid if they make the placement. These firms tend to consider your credentials for more than one company. However, these firms may send your resume to companies without your knowledge.

Job Fairs

Job fairs are popular recruiting venues. This is a way for you to see several potential employers at one time and for them to save recruiting costs. In general, they are advertised in the local newspapers.

Spot Opportunities

When reading articles in newspapers, magazines, and professional journals, or other media always be alert to situations that could use your skills. When you identify a potential opportunity, research the employer and their needs.

Making Cold Calls

Cold calls are similar to networking except that, generally, you do not know, nor do you have any mutual contacts with the person you are calling.

Tips on cold calling:

1. Obtain the contact person's name in advance.
2. Be polite but persistent. In busy offices, there is usually some type of call screening in place. Often the receptionist or secretary does the screening.
Note: Never assume that the person answering the phone can't answer your question. In a small business you may be speaking to the owner!
3. When you get a name, thank the secretary, hang up and call back later asking directly for the person you wish to speak to.
4. Always ask when the best time is to call back if the contact is not available, rather than leaving a message. Early morning or late afternoon can often be times you can catch people in their offices.
5. Developing scripts in advance makes you appear more focused and prepared, and the employer is more likely to show interest and listen.
6. Script writing should be done before every contact. However, the script is designed to guide you and keep you focused, not to be read aloud on the phone.

7. The more attention, time, and detail you give to the development of your scripts and questions, the more valuable and useful the information you will receive and the better chance of being asked to come in for a meeting.
8. Comfort with the process takes time and practice. Don't become frustrated if a few employers turn you down; they just may be very busy, be persistent.
9. Each person you speak to tells you a bit more about the labour market and helps you to determine what may and may not fit your interests and abilities.
10. Emphasize and highlight your skills, experience and training. This information, if presented well and in a style appropriate to the situation, can lure the employer into listening. This is again why it is essential you research and have some idea of what employers want.
11. Be clear and concise regarding the purpose of your call.
 - Are you responding to an ad and need more information?
 - Are you exploring the industry and need to know the types of roles you may be able to fill?
 - Do you have an idea or know the job you want?
 - Are you trying to find out if they have specific job openings?
12. Remember, during the telephone interview:
 - Listen
 - Make notes
 - Obtain additional contact names
 - Acknowledge their assistance
 - Explain your interest in their organization
 - Ask them about the company
 - Ask about what they like about their job
 - Treat it like an interview
 - Present your experience in a positive light.
13. Send a thank you note

THE INTERVIEW

The purpose of everything you have done to this point has been to get an interview. The important thing now is how to turn that interview into a job offer.

Potential employers will be most interested in how you will “fit” within their organization than why you left a previous employer.

The purpose of the interview is to explore a fit between your experience and abilities and the needs of the company.

The company must answer the following question:

“If we hire this candidate, what are the benefits for our company?”

The Company Interviewer wants to:

- Obtain a clear picture of the candidate's experience, strengths, and any areas needing development
- Define accurately the usefulness of this candidate against the company needs
- Evaluate this candidate against others with similar backgrounds

You want to:

- Present your experience and abilities in the most relevant and effective manner
- Get the company excited about hiring you
- Assess if you want to work for this company

Interview Preparation

Anticipate the company’s needs - what can you expect?

- Refer to your research covered earlier in this workbook.
- Obtain a copy of the job description, annual report and business plan, if available.
- Ask for the interviewers’ names and titles.
- Find out the culture of the organization by visiting the office.
- Observe the workplace, look at how people interact and how they dress, etc.

Practice Describing Your Skills

- Rehearse your scripts and “60 Second Presentations”
- Mirror the environment and culture you observed.
- Communicate your assets
- Communicate the positive impact you will have on the company

Interview preparation checklist

1. What impression do you want to make?
2. What do you plan to cover in terms of experience and accomplishments?
3. Which examples will you use to validate these accomplishments?
4. How will you add colour to your examples?
5. What are you looking for?
6. Why did you leave your former positions?
7. How will you handle the salary negotiation?
8. How will you describe your future aspirations?
9. How will you speak to the content of your resume?

Interview Questions

Common interview Questions

The following questions are some of the most often asked. You must plan your answers before your interview. Some tips are included with each question.

- ***Briefly summarize your previous experience that is directly related to the position you are applying for.***
 - describe your applicable experience to the position
 - keep to the point
 - give examples
- ***What do you consider to be your strengths and weaknesses?***
 - state your strengths applicable to the job
 - relate “weaknesses” to something you have improved upon in a constructive fashion.

- ***Tell us about a project you worked on. What went right? What went wrong?***
 - state what you learned and what you did about it.
 - state how you might improve what you did.

- ***Assuming you are the successful candidate, tell me what would be your main focus for the next 3 - 6 - 12 months?***
 - relate to the current issues/problems facing the organization - use specific examples
 - outline, in reasonable detail, your short and long term plans and the steps you would take in building a plan
 - show sensitivity/respect for existing culture

Sample Interview Questions

Planning your answers to the following questions will prepare you for interviews.

1. Why are you considering relocation?
2. What type of opportunity are you seeking?
3. What job did you find most/least satisfying in the past?
4. What type of person did you most/least enjoy working for in the past?
5. How would you characterize your management work style?
6. Do you think you were a valuable employee in the past? Why?
7. What are your greatest strengths/weaknesses?
8. What has been your greatest achievement/failure?
9. What specifically do you have to offer us?
10. What do superiors criticize you for?
11. What do you criticize subordinates for?
12. How do you react when people disagree with you?
13. Would you accept a job requiring travel?
14. What type of books do you read?
15. How do you think your previous employers treated you?
16. How do you see your career progressing?
17. What questions do you have of me?

Your Questions

Asking questions about the position and the company is an excellent way to demonstrate your values and interest in joining the organization. It will also demonstrate the research and planning you have put into your job search.

Some questions to consider are:

1. What are the key responsibilities of this position?
2. Why is this position vacant?
3. What are the critical success factor for this position?
4. What do you see as the greatest challenges facing this position?
5. What is the potential for advancement or growth within the company?

The Interview

- Arrive 10 to 15 minutes prior to the meeting time
- Wear appropriate clothes
- Do not wear heavy perfume or cologne
- Think Positive
- Smile
- Be confident
- Bring
 - Pen and paper
 - Extra copy of resume
 - References
 - Work portfolio

Answering Questions

- Listen. The biggest mistake during interviews is not listening or reading carefully enough.
- Pay attention to the two and three part questions. Listen for key words such as:
 - WHAT ?
 - HOW ?
 - WHEN ?
- Write down the key words to ensure you cover everything.

- Do not hesitate to take a few moments to think through your answer. You might say "If you don't mind, I'll just take a few moments to organize my thoughts."

Remain in Control

- Ask for explanations/clarifications when you are unclear about the question
- Ask to have the question repeated
- Ask if you are on the right track
- Ask to come back to a question if you feel you have missed something
- Ask if you have covered everything
- Use ' I '
- Reference previous related experiences.

*Note: Send a Thank You Card.
 When you leave the interview, immediately prepare and
 send a thank you note or card.*

NEGOTIATING YOUR SALARY

Your objective should be to maximize compensation at the start. Compensation packages generally include salary and benefits.

Typical benefits include:

- Medical
- Dental
- Extended health
- Life Insurance
- Pension
- Vacation

Extras that might be included are:

- Education and professional development
- Bonus
- Flextime - job sharing
- Shares/profit sharing
- Pension portability

- Vacation (additional)
- Relocation (moving expenses)
- Spousal job search counselling
- Maternity top-up benefits
- Overtime pay or time-off in lieu
- Discount privileges

Guidelines

Avoid salary discussion, if possible, until after you have a job offer:

- A potential employer will not know how good you are until after you complete the interview.
- You deal from strength when the employer has decided to make you an offer.
- You need to know everything possible about the position before establishing your value.
- When discussing salary, let the employer take the lead. If asked: *“What salary do you have in mind?”* consider one of the following replies:
 - *I am seeking a compensation package that is competitive with industry standards.*
 - *I will leave that to you as you will be better able to establish my value to the organization after our interview.*
 - *I do not have a definite salary figure in mind. However, after we discuss the requirements of the job, I am certain we can arrive at a mutually acceptable figure.*
 - *I would like to find out about your organization and how I can contribute before discussing salary.*

Note: *Remember, what you are currently earning may be irrelevant to a prospective employer*

Research Industry Standards

- Salary surveys in libraries
- Personal contacts
- Professional associations
- Human Resources Managers
- Trade journals
- Internet sites

Single Rate vs. Salary Range

- Avoid mentioning a "single" salary amount - suggest a "range".
- If you give a range:
 - Top amount should be reasonable for the position and an excellent candidate
 - Bottom amount should be minimum you would accept

Responding to a Low Offer

- Try to make up difference by increasing “fringes” above the standard package offered. For example:
 - Bonus
 - Stock
 - Vacation (additional)
 - Relocation assistance (real estate)
 - Waive benefit waiting period
- Another option is to request an increase in six months - after you have proven your value.

Accepting the Offer and Job

- Meet with the employer to discuss the offer, ask questions, and confirm agreements.

Note: *The employer has spent considerable time on this selection and has an investment in your accepting the job. This increases his/her flexibility regarding the final details.*