

## PhillyRising Career Boot Camp Overview

This program is designed as a first step toward helping to prepare those seeking entry-level positions in today's workplace. By developing skills and knowledge essential for success in the current job market, the Career Boot Camp is highly beneficial to Philadelphia job seekers. This core soft skills program will enable entry-level job seekers to not only demonstrate their readiness to successfully enter the workplace, but retain and advance in their positions.

There are four sections in this program and each section provides multiple lessons and skills. Each section has exercises and activities to provide real practice for skill development.

## Objectives

- Prepare individuals for work
- Provide jobseekers with the necessary pre-employment skills
- Empower individuals for success
- Promote job retention and advancement



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## Starting with a Goal in Mind

You must know how to set and achieve goals if you are to get to your “ideal future.” As you develop this skill, you will find that your goals are not “set in stone;” they may change as you change and grow. The important thing is that you have a vision for yourself and begin the planning process to make that vision a reality.

Think about what you want to get out of this training, and the type of job or career that you want.

### Goal Setting Step 1: Paint a Mental Picture

It’s not enough just to write your goals in words. Have you set personal or career goals and failed to achieve them? You may have a number of excuses for why, but the answer is simple. Your goals were not strong enough or clear enough to create a burning desire or passion. When you can clearly see and believe it, you are more likely to achieve it!

One way to make a mental picture is by creating a dream board. Cut out pictures from magazines that created a picture of your goal and make a dream board.

Hang your dream board where you can see it every day. As you combine actions with this picture you will be well on your way to making your goal a reality.

## Goals Worksheet: Who Am I and What Do I Want?

### 1. Who am I?

- Subjects I like(d) in school:
  
- Activities that I like:
  
- Things I like to do in my free time:
  
- My strengths are:
  
- My weaknesses are:

### 2. What is my dream?

- What goals do I have for myself?
  
- What would be my ideal job? Why?
  
- What is important for me to be happy?

### 3. How do I see my life in 5 years?

### 4. My goals and dreams for the future are:

## Goal Setting Step 2: Picture Yourself Already There – Think Positive!

Our present attitudes are habits that were formed with messages from parents, friends, society, and self. These messages form our self-image and our image of others.

Our attitudes are reinforced by the conversations we constantly have with ourselves, or “self-talk.” If most of your self-talk is negative, it will be impossible to achieve your goals. You must replace negative self-talk with positive conversations.

### **Steps to Positive Self-Talk**

#### **Step 1: Listen**

Listen to the language in your head. Make a commitment to yourself to replace negative self-talk with positive thoughts. Praise yourself and others. Dream of success. Be enthusiastic.

#### **Step 2: Focus**

Stay focused on your goals, priorities, and positive actions. Concentrate on doing those things. Don't allow yourself to get distracted by negative thoughts, negative people, or old habits.

#### **Step 3: Challenge**

Challenge yourself to change and improve each day. Do your best and don't look back. See learning and change as positive. Try new things. Meet new people. Ask lots of questions. Keep track of your progress. Be optimistic.

## Goal Setting Step 3: Write Your Goal

**Write a S.M.A.R.T. Goal Statement Here:**

*(Specific, Motivational, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-Bound)*

**Write Your Measure of Success Here:**

Outstanding:

Expected:

Could do Better:

Unsatisfactory:

**Write the Actions You Will Take Here:**

**When Will They Be Completed?**

# Goal Setting Step 4: Review Your Progress

Reviewing your progress is a very important part of achieving your goal. Checking your progress allows you to reflect on what is working and what is not, so you can adjust your actions or change a goal if you are not achieving what you want. You may discover that you need to work on more things than you thought or that it is taking longer than expected to reach your goal – that’s okay. Remember we said that your goal should not be etched in stone. Use the form below to check your progress.

What’s Working?	What’s Not?
What Changes?	What Actions?



# What Goes in Your Resume?

## **Address and Contact Information**

This section includes your name, address, city, state, and zip code. In addition, this section should include your phone number and email address. The importance of this section is basically so the employer can contact you if they want to meet with you. Make sure this is a phone number you can be reached at all times and an email you check frequently. *Make sure to use a professional sounding email address.*

## **Statement of Your Objective**

The objective is the focus of the entire document. It briefly states the kind of position you seek, basically why you are applying for the job. (See attached list of sample objective statements.)

## **Experience**

This section includes your most recent or relevant jobs. Each job should list:

- Position title
- Company name
- City and state where you worked
- Dates you worked there
- Duties/responsibilities

List each job separately beginning with the most relevant (or most recent) position. Make sure you describe the job, show specific duties, scope of responsibility, and accomplishments. Stress the highest level of achievement with each employer.

## **Skills**

This section should include your abilities that are related to the job you are applying for. Include skills relevant to the position or field that you are interested in, such as computer skills, software skills, or language skills.

## Education

This section lists the schools you have attended. List the most recent first. Any professional development courses or certifications, such as a Level 1 Mechanics Certification, should be listed here.

## Additional Information (Optional)

You can include any additional life experiences or accomplishments that are relevant to the position, such as volunteer work.

## Do's and Don'ts

- **DO** include correct contact information
- **DO** have a professional sounding email address (i.e. NOT [Qtpie14@hotmail.com](mailto:Qtpie14@hotmail.com))
- **DO** use bullets
- **DO** begin each phrase with an action word (see list of power words)
- **DO** have people review your resume – spellcheck is not enough
- **DO** personally sign your cover letter
- **DO NOT** use funny fonts
- **DO NOT** include clip art or pictures
- **DO NOT** have spelling or grammar mistakes
- **DO NOT** put a date on your resume
- **DO NOT** list any personal information other than contact information
- **DO NOT** list hobbies
- **DO NOT** include salary information
- **DO NOT** send a resume without a cover letter
- **DO NOT** lie on your resume

## Helpful Action Verbs

Did you observe or pay special attention to something?

addressed	investigated	perceived	studied
examined	inspected	questioned	surveyed
experimented	measured	read	tested
explored	observes	research	weighed

Did you discover something?

ascertained	discovered	perceived	solved
determined	found	pinpointed	uncovered
detected	identified	proved	verified
diagnosed	learned	recognized	

Did you evaluate something?

analyzed	compared	perceived	rated
appraised	evaluated	qualified	reasoned
assessed	judged	quantified	reviewed

Did you understand something?

attributed	grasped	perceived	translated
discerned	interpreted	transcribed	

Did you start something?

activated	formed	initiated	opened
adopted	founded	instituted	originated
began	generated	introduced	started
established	implemented	launched	undertook

Did you finish something?

achieved	concluded	finalized	realized
accomplished	ended	finished	terminated
attained	established	fulfilled	
completed	executed	reached	

Did you document something?

certified	logged	recorded	supported
charted	mapped	researched	tabulated
documented	proved	substantiated	

### Did you supervise employees?

appointed	employed	hired	referred
awarded	enforced	interviewed	selected
enlisted	evaluated	nominated	staffed
elected	fired	recruited	terminated

### Did you operate something?

conducted	handled	performed	repaired
controlled	implemented	troubleshooting	tended
fixed	maintained	ran	used
functioned	operated	rebuilt	worked

### Did you organize something?

arranged	collected	coordinated	prepared
assembled	connected	correlated	structured
categorized	combined	implemented	summarized
compiled	consolidated	organized	systematized

### Did you make decisions?

activated	approved	decided	resolved
adopted	concluded	determined	settled

### Were you responsible?

assured	ensured	protected	secured
confirmed	guaranteed	satisfied	inspected
delivered	guarded	safeguard	

### Did you make changes?

adapted	extended	reorganized	systematized
adopted	extracted	restored	synergized
centralized	implemented	restructured	tailored
combined	improvised	revised	unified
condensed	modified	separated	united
converted	reconstructed	simplified	
edited	redesigned	standardized	
expanded	refined	supplemented	

### Did you improve things?

advanced	enlarged	increased	surpassed
augmented	enriched	modernized	streamlined
corrected	expedited	reduced	treated
cultivated	extended	resolved	updated
developed	implemented	revitalized	upgraded
enhanced	improved	solved	

### Did you think up something new?

conceived	devised	invented	solved
conceptualized	discovered	originated	synergized
created	generated	perceived	synthesized
designed	improvised	pioneered	visualized
developed	innovated	shaped	

### Were you future-oriented?

estimated	deterred	predicted	projected
forecast	hypothesized	prevented	strategized

### Did you manage or lead?

acted	fostered	led	performed
administered	governed	maintained	piloted
advised	handled	managed	processed
conducted	headed	motivated	scheduled
controlled	implemented	navigated	showed
directed	influenced	ordered	supervised
facilitated	integrated	oversaw	used

### Did you save the day?

averted	prevented	succeeded
diverted	salvaged	withstood
prevailed	saved	solved

### Were you part of a team?

advised	conferred	fostered	participated
aided	consulted	helped	served
assisted	cooperated	joined	teamed with
collaborated	facilitated	met with	

### Did you obtain something new?

acquired	expanded	purchased	secured
bought	obtained	raised	solicited
collected	procured	realized	
cultivated	produced	received	

### Did you make something?

assembled	drew	painted	sketched
built	engineered	photographed	worked
composed	fabricated	produced	
draft	formed	programmed	
designed	made	published	

### Did you provide something?

dispensed	installed	offered	submitted
fitted	distributed	presented	
performed	responded	supplied	
furnished	provided	rendered	

### Did you make connections?

connected	matched	merged	network
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### Did you communicate something?

communicated	lectured	related	submitted
demonstrated	modeled	reported	symbolized
displayed	persuaded	represented	verbalized
dramatized	presented	shared	wrote
explained	proposed	showed	defined
illustrated	publicized	spoke	

### Did you explain something?

arbitrated	mediated	reasoned	settled
balanced	moderated	reconciled	solved
intervened	negotiated	resolved	

### Did you work with people?

advised	influenced	prescribed	trained
coached	informed	probed	tutored
convinced	inspired	recommended	mentored
counseled	instructed	reinforced	taught
educated	listened	rehabilitated	persuaded
facilitated	motivated	served	guided

## Writing Tips

- Write down a list of your strengths, accomplishments, experiences, and skills before writing your resume. Then make sure to include them in the resume.
- Stress your success in the job, not just your duties. Show how you have gone above and beyond.
- Do NOT include any personal information or physical descriptions of yourself. Do not list your marital status, religion, political affiliation, age, gender, race, or national origin.
- Start each sentence with a power verb. Avoid long-winded sentences.
- Do not expect to write your resume all at once. Start with a draft, and then have people whose judgment you trust review and proofread it for grammar, punctuation, spelling, and clarity. You will want to have multiple people proofread your resume.
- Use simple, easy-to-read fonts. Calibri, Arial, Times New Roman, and Veranda are commonly used fonts.
- Have a separate list of references ready to provide to potential employers when asked. Do not list them on the resume.
- Do NOT include the reasons you are no longer working at each job. These are negative statements that have no place on your resume.
- Do NOT lie on your resume. You should never misrepresent your skills or experience. One well-meaning exaggeration can ruin your chance to be hired.

## Sample Objective Statements for Your Resume

- Seeking an opportunity to use and expand my knowledge and experience.
- To obtain a position that will allow me to utilize my strong organizational skills, customer service, and sales background.
- To obtain a challenging position that allows for professional growth.
- Obtain a position in an organization where I can maximize my customer service experience and work as a part of a team.

## What Goes in Your Cover Letter?

A cover letter is a letter you send with your resume. It should add a personal touch to your more factual resume. This letter creates the important first impression your potential employer will have of you. It should include the following sections:

### **Contact Information**

Just as in the resume, the cover letter begins with your contact information. It can be identical to your resume header, or aligned with the left-hand margin in this format:

- Name
- Address
- City, State, Zip code
- Phone number
- Email address

### **Date**

Unlike the resume, you will date your cover letter. This is a record of when contact was initiated. Use the following date format:

- January 29, 2013

### **Employer Contact Information**

List this information if it is available to you. Try to find this information when responding to specific job postings. Most job postings will list a contact person. If you have the information, use this format:

- Name
- Title
- Company
- Address
- City, State, Zip code

When you do not have a contact name, just list the last three lines (Company, Address, and City/State/Zip).

## **Salutation**

You want this to be personal, so you should address your salutation directly to the contact person, followed by a colon or comma.

- Dear Mr. (or Ms.) Last Name,

If you don't have a contact name, you can use one of the following examples:

- Dear Hiring Manager,
- Dear Human Resources Manager,
- Dear Sir or Madam,
- To Whom it May Concern:

## **First Paragraph**

The first paragraph of your letter should state why you are writing. Mention the position you are applying for and where you found the job listing. Be clear and concise regarding your purpose for writing.

## **Second Paragraph**

The second paragraph (or paragraphs) should describe what you have to offer to the employer. Mention what specific qualifications you have that match the job description. This is where you interpret your resume, not repeat it. Connect your abilities to their needs, and support each with a piece of evidence. You can split this up into smaller paragraphs or use a bulleted list. Do not just list everything in one large paragraph.

## **Final Paragraph**

The final paragraph includes your thanking the employer for considering you for the position and restates that you are a good fit for the job. It also expresses your desire to hear back from them to set up an interview.

**Close**

End your letter with one of the following options:

- Respectfully yours,
- Sincerely,
- Best regards,
- Thank you,
- Thank you for your consideration,

**Signature**

You will leave enough space for a handwritten signature (two lines is usually enough) followed by your typed signature. Even if you don't turn in a physical copy, it is best to leave at least one line of space before your typed signature.

Your Name  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Phone Number  
Email Address

Month, Day, Year

Employer Contact Name  
Title  
Company  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. Employer Last Name,

I am responding to your job listing on Monster.com for the position of ABC manager. My resume is attached for your review. With my strong background in sales and management, I am the perfect candidate for the position of ABC manager.

You specified that you are looking for someone with a background in management. With three years of management experience at Best Buy and Home Depot, I have learned to manage people, delegate responsibilities, and solve problems that arise. In my time at Home Depot, I successfully implemented a new team sales strategy that improved employee morale in my department. My strong people skills, learned through years of experience in serving customers, makes me a great leader.

I am confident that I would be an excellent fit for the ABC manager position. I look forward to hearing from you soon to arrange a mutually convenient time for us to meet.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name

# John Q. Resume

1401 John F. Kennedy Blvd, Philadelphia, PA | 555-010-2222 | johnresume@email.com

## Objective

Seeking and opportunity to use and expand my knowledge and experience.

## Experience

### **Sales Manager**

*Home Depot*, Philadelphia, PA

9/2011 – 11/2012

- Supervised 20 sales associates in Fixtures and Appliances.
- Scheduled, delegated tasks, and assigned responsibilities to team members.
- Named employee of the month for February 2012.

### **Sales Manager**

*Best Buy*, Philadelphia, PA

6/2010 – 8/2011

- Supervised a team of 8 associates in Home Appliances.
- Trained all new team members.
- Responsible for setting and achieving team sales goals.

### **Sales Associate**

*Best Buy*, Philadelphia, PA

3/2009 – 6/2010

- Interacted with customers on a regular basis.
- Responsible for extensive product knowledge.
- Promoted to Sales Manager in June 2010.

## Related Skills

- Inventory management
- Proficient in scheduling software

## Education

**West Philadelphia High School** (Class of 2010)

Philadelphia, PA

## Additional Information

Participated in the Big Brothers program at West Philadelphia High School, first as a mentee and later as a mentor.

# Your Name

Address, City, State | Phone Number | Email Address

## Objective

Place your career objective here.

## Experience

### **Position Title**

*Company Name, City, State*

Start Date – End Date

- Description of position, responsibilities, or accomplishments
- Description of position, responsibilities, or accomplishments

### **Position Title**

*Company Name, City, State*

Start Date – End Date

- Description of position, responsibilities, or accomplishments
- Description of position, responsibilities, or accomplishments

## Related Skills

- List related skills, abilities, or certifications not previously mentioned
- Example: Proficient in Microsoft Word

## Education

**Certification Name**, Issuing Authority

Year Earned

**School Name** (Year graduated or years attended)

Degree Earned

City, State

## Additional Information

Any additional information you would like to include, such as volunteer work

# Job Search Strategies & Social Media

## Where to Start

- Conduct research on your dream job or dream industry
  - What do you like to do?
  - Is there anything in the industry that is similar, but not exactly what you want?
  - Don't overlook those jobs
- Assess your credentials and experience
  - Schooling?
  - Previous jobs?
- What are your transferrable skills and achievements?

## Job Search Websites

- General
  - [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)
  - [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)
  - [www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com)
  - [www.xamire.com](http://www.xamire.com)
  - [www.jobsonline.net](http://www.jobsonline.net)
  - [www.phila.gov](http://www.phila.gov)
  - [www.ievs.com](http://www.ievs.com)
- Federal Jobs
  - [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)
- For Veterans
  - [www.vetjobs.com](http://www.vetjobs.com)
  - [www.dol.gov/dol/jobs/veterans.htm](http://www.dol.gov/dol/jobs/veterans.htm)
- Industry-Specific Websites
  - Non-Profits/Social Services
    - [www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org)
  - Arts
    - [www.nyfa.org](http://www.nyfa.org)
    - [www.starpolish.com](http://www.starpolish.com)
    - [www.mandy.com](http://www.mandy.com)
  - Publishing/Media
    - [www.journalismjobs.com](http://www.journalismjobs.com)
    - [www.mediabistro.com](http://www.mediabistro.com)

- [www.bookjobs.com](http://www.bookjobs.com)
- [www.publishersmarketplace.com](http://www.publishersmarketplace.com)
- Education
  - [www.higheredjobs.com](http://www.higheredjobs.com)
  - [www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org)
- Food Industry
  - <http://eater.com/marketplace/jobs>
  - [www.goodfoodjobs.com](http://www.goodfoodjobs.com)
- Medical
  - Hospitals or healthcare system website
  - [www.vnsny.org](http://www.vnsny.org)
- IT & Computers
  - [www.dice.com](http://www.dice.com)

### **Keep Track of your Job Search**

- In a word processing or spreadsheet document, keep track of the jobs you've applied to. Include:
  - Company
  - Position
  - Date applied
  - How you applied
  - Date to follow up by
- Name resumes and cover letters appropriately
  - "LastnameFirstname\_Resume\_Jobtitle"
  - "LastnameFirstname\_CoverLetter\_Jobtitle"
- Consider storing resumes and cover letters in different folders labeled for the jobs applied for

### **Online Applications**

Sample 1: <http://www.longhornsteakhouse.com/employment/default.asp>

Team Member Opportunities → Apply Now → Apply Now → Click Here to Create a New Account → Fill out application

Sample 2: [www.petsmart.com](http://www.petsmart.com)

Careers → Apply to US Stores → Select City and State → Select store and job you're interested in → Apply

## **Information Needed to Complete Online Application**

- Resume info/cover letter
- Driver's license info
- School info (high school, college, trade school)
  - Address and city
  - Dates attended
  - Dates graduated
- Employment (start and end date) for the last 10 years starting with the most recent
- Names of supervisor, manager, etc.

## **Social Media/Websites for Employment**

- LinkedIn
  - [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)
  - Create your professional profile with connections to and recommendations from coworkers and supervisors.
- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media
  - Clean up your social media profiles and accounts

## **Avoid Job Scams**

- Beware of Craigslist.
- You should never have to pay a fee in order to be hired.
- Interviews should be conducted at an actual place of business, such as a store or office. Be careful of anyone who asks you to meet them somewhere else, like their home.
- Be VERY careful about "work from home" and postal forwarding jobs. Again, you should never have to pay a fee to begin work.
- Don't accept money orders as paychecks.
- When responding to a job ad that contains a link, type the web address for the company into your address bar to make sure you are giving your information to a real company.
- An ad asking you to transfer money for someone? Definitely a scam.
- Does it sound too good to be true? It is. Run.

## What a New Worker Needs to Know

Before you can convince an employer to hire you, you need to learn how to describe yourself to the employer. You need to be able to describe what skills and talents you bring to the workplace that would make you a better worker than the next person.

Look at the following statements and write *yes*, *no*, or *don't know* next to each to learn the skills and attitudes that you would bring to the workplace. Remember to write the work that best describes your skills and attitudes.

Employability Skills	Yes/No/ Don't Know
<b>Communication</b>	
I can speak and write clearly so that others can understand.	
I can read and understand information in words, charts, or graphs.	
I can listen and ask questions to better understand instructions and others' ideas.	
I am able to share information using voicemail, email, and computers.	
I can figure out when something needs to be measured or calculated.	
<b>Thinking</b>	
I can figure out what's happening in a situation, identify problems and solutions.	
I am not afraid to try new and creative things.	
<b>Learning</b>	
I like to try new things.	
I like to set goals to improve myself.	
I learn from my mistakes and the advice of others	
<b>Attitudes and Behaviors</b>	
I am a confident person.	
I am an honest person.	
I am a responsible person.	
I can adapt to changes and new information.	
I plan and manage my time, money, and other resources.	
I am motivated and have the energy to get the job done.	
I respect the thoughts and ideas of others.	
I do a good job of balancing work and home.	
<b>Working with Others</b>	
I enjoy being on a team.	
I like to contribute to common goals.	
I try to understand the needs and styles of others.	
I value and respect differences.	
I take instructions and follow through.	
I do whatever is needed to get the job done.	

## Developing a 30-Second Commercial

This commercial is a thirty-second chance for you to sell yourself! Your commercial will help the listener become aware – very quickly – of the specific and unique talents you can bring to the job.

### **Tips for developing your commercial:**

- Use crisp, clear language – don't ramble!
- Say what position you are seeking
- Talk about your abilities and experience
- Emphasize your individual strengths
- Use good eye contact and body posture
- Make a good first impression!

### **Samples of sentences to help you write your commercial:**

- Hello, my name is...
- I am a...
- I do several things well, but I am best at...
- My strongest skills are...

Write Your Commercial Here

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page below the text. It is intended for the user to write their commercial script.

## Dressing for the Interview: Tips for Women

- Choose a conservative skirt, suit, pantsuit, or dress that draws the attention to your face.
- Skirts should be knee-length or longer to allow you to sit modestly and comfortably.
- Avoid blouses or sweaters that are transparent, tight-fitting, or have low necklines, revealing waistlines, or details that detract from your face as a focal point. Typically, arms are covered.
- Always wear hose to interviews. Wear plain-style, non-patterned hosiery. Carry an extra pair in case of runs
- Perfume should never be strong. A fragrance can cause an allergic reaction or offend the interviewer. When in doubt, do not wear perfume.
- Use natural-looking makeup. Nails should be neatly polished. This keeps the focus on the interview.
- Wear comfortable shoes, flat or low pumps in colors that avoid making your feet a focal point. Be sure that they are clean and polished.
- Keep accessories simple. Avoid large, dangling earrings and other accessories that would distract from the interview.

## Dressing for the Interview: Tips for Men

- If you have a suit, wear a suit in navy, black, or gray.
- Wear a white or light blue dress shirt that contrasts with the jacket and/or tie.
- Socks should be colors such as dark blue, black, or gray.
- Wear conservative, clean, and polished shoes.
- Wear a belt that holds your pants on your waist. Your belt should match your shoes.
- Your hair should be newly cut or combed.
- Cologne should never be strong. A fragrance can cause an allergic reaction or offend the interviewer. When in doubt, do not wear cologne.

## Dressing on a Tight Budget

- There are a number of organizations that provide clothing to individuals in need for job interviews, including:
  - Dress for Success [www.dressforsuccess.org](http://www.dressforsuccess.org)
  - Dress for Success for Men [www.quintcareers.com](http://www.quintcareers.com)
  - Career wardrobe [www.careerwardrobe.com](http://www.careerwardrobe.com)
- Remember that self-confidence is your primary goal when selecting your interview clothing. Choose clothing with multi-use potential.
- Get durable, classic, well-made items that can be combined for a professional or “casual Friday” look.
- Colors like black, dark gray, and navy are standards.
- Purchase matching components. Having options such as wearing a skirt or pant with jacket multiplies possible combinations.
- Use shirts/blouses/sweaters to create a variety of visual effects.
- Check thrift stores for bargains on professional clothes.

# Executing a Great Interview

## **Purpose of an Interview**

An interview provides the opportunity for a company and the applicant to trade information and determine if they are a good fit for each other.

## **The interview is your best opportunity to:**

- Explain your resume information
- Demonstrate that you have the skills and desire to do the job
- Make a good impression

## **Preparing for the Interview**

Before you interview for a position, whether on the phone or in person, you should do the following:

- Research the company and the job
- Know what position you have applied for; know why you are interested
- Review your resume
- Prepare your responses to common interview questions
- Practice, practice, practice!
- Prepare questions you want to ask
- Print extra copies of your resume
- Dress for success

## **During the Interview**

- First impressions count
- Be on time
- Greet each person with respect and professionalism
- Shake hands firmly
- Smile
- Make eye contact
- Express yourself clearly; stay calm
- Take a breath when needed; it is okay to pause for thought
- Give honest and concise answers
- Project a positive attitude
- Listen carefully
- Ask questions

## **Answering Questions**

- Listen carefully
- If you feel the question is unclear, politely ask for clarification
- Consider all the details needed for a good response
- Give specifics that are relevant to the question, job, etc.
- Avoid negative information at all times
- Avoid rambling

## **Behavioral-Based Interviews**

Behavioral questions ask for specific examples of your behavior from past experiences and focus on skills needed for the job. Here are some examples:

- Give me an example of when you've led or been part of a successful team.
- Give me an example of when you've gone the extra mile to get a job done.
- Tell me about a time when you overcame a great challenge.
- Give an example of when you've dealt with conflict.

## STAR Technique

One way of preparing for behavioral interviews is to use the STAR Technique, as outlined below:

<p><b>Situation</b> or <b>Task</b></p>	<p>Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish.</p> <p>Describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past.</p> <p>Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand.</p>
<p><b>Action(s)</b> you took</p>	<p>Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you.</p> <p>Even if you are discussing a group or project effort, describe what you did – not the efforts of the team.</p> <p>Don't tell what you might do, tell what you did.</p>
<p><b>Result(s)</b> you achieved</p>	<p>What happened?</p> <p>What did you accomplish?</p> <p>What did you learn?</p>

## **After the Interview**

As the interview is wrapping up, try to do the following things:

- Show appreciation for the employer's interest in you.
- If you want the job, say so (just don't overdo it).
- Ask what the next steps are (additional interviews, etc.).
- Ask when the employer plans to make a decision.
- Inquire when you may contact the employer to learn of the decision.

## **Always Follow Up with a Thank You Note**

- Reiterate your interest in the position and the company.
- Review or remind the employer about your qualifications for the position.
- Follow up with any information the employer may have asked you to provide after the interview.

If you are not granted another interview or extended a job offer, do not give up! Keep refining your story and practicing. All interviews are good practice.

## Interview Do's and Don'ts

- Do arrive 10-15 minutes early to show eagerness and have a chance to get a feel for the environment
- Do leave your cell phone in the car.
- Do greet the interviewer with a smile and a handshake.
- Do answer a question thoroughly, but don't ramble on.
- Do maintain good eye contact.
- Do ask questions about the job and organization to show your interest.
- Do show some knowledge of the company, position, and career field.
- Do write a thank you note within 48 hours of the interview.
- Don't chew gum.
- Don't smoke prior to your interview.
- Don't give just two-word answers. The interviewer is trying to get to know you; talk with him/her.
- Don't interrupt the interviewer.
- Don't be afraid to pause and think about an answer before you begin speaking.
- Don't look at your watch during the interview. This tends to hurry things along. Let the interviewer set the pace.
- Don't talk negatively about former employers, coworkers, or professors.

## Conducting a Mock Interview

You will have the opportunity to practice using interviewing skills in the mock interviews. You may choose from the following questions to complete the mock interview.

### **You are the interviewer:**

- Tell me about yourself. What are your career goals?
- Why are you interested in our company/organization/position?
- What are your major strengths/weaknesses?
- What qualifies you for this position?
- Tell me about a time when you had to go the extra mile.
- Describe a situation where a misunderstanding occurred; how did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you made a mistake; what did you learn from it?
- Take me through a situation where you had to get more information to solve a problem.
- How do you determine success?
- Why should I hire you?
- Do you think your grades are a good indicator of your academic abilities? Why/why not?
- Why did you choose this career field?
- You have an employee who makes too many personal phone calls on company time. How do you handle this situation?
- What salary do you expect?
- What kinds of people do you find difficult to work with?

**You are the interviewee:**

Be ready with some questions to ask the interviewer. Here are some suggestions:

- How would you describe the duties of the job?
- How will my performance be supervised and evaluated?
- What are the opportunities for advancement?
- Is there a formal training period and if so, how long does it last?
- What is your company's policy on promoting from within?
- When can I expect to hear from you?
- Are there any additional qualifications you are looking for that we did not cover?
- Is there anything else I can tell you about my qualifications?

# Mock Interview Evaluation Form

Participant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

KEY            4 = Excellent  
                  3 = Very Good  
                  2 = Good  
                  1 = Needs Improvement

Greeted interviewer with smile and handshake	4	3	2	1
Able to explain purpose of the interview	4	3	2	1
Able to discuss personal strengths and areas for improvement	4	3	2	1
Demonstrated appropriate enthusiasm throughout interview	4	3	2	1
Avoided using slang/street expressions and other inappropriate speech mannerisms	4	3	2	1
Maintained eye contact throughout interview	4	3	2	1
Closed interview in appropriate manner	4	3	2	1