

Job Search Strategies and Preparation

This lesson will cover the job search process, how to write a cover letter, how to complete a job application, how to interview well, and how to do a follow-up. The lesson contains built in learning activities.

- ☰ The Job Search
- ☰ The Cover Letter and Job Application
- ☰ Writing Your Resume
- ☰ Preparing for the Job Interview
- 🔍 Practice Quiz



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The Job Search

While the specifics of the what and how you look for a job will differ based on your job search technique, personality, and the job market, all job searches share three common characteristics:

1. Job seekers want something (likely more than one thing) in their next job.
2. Job seekers meet with prospective employers who can provide these things.
3. Job seekers and employers decide to work together.

The Six-Step Job Search Process

When we show up to the present moment with all of our senses, we invite the world to fill us with joy. The pains of the past are behind us. The future has yet to unfold. But the now is full of beauty simply waiting for our attention.

- Identify your target.
- Create a powerful marketing campaign.
- Conduct in-depth research (of jobs, companies, and industries).
- Network and interview.
- Stay motivated and organized and troubleshoot your search.

- Negotiate and close the offer.

Step 1 is where you define what you want. Step 2 is where you attract prospective employers. Step 3 is where you learn in detail about prospective employers so you are prepared when you meet. You likely have done some general exploration into industries, companies, or jobs over your lifetime, which gives you a sense of what you want (for step 1). The research in step 3 is about diving deep and gaining specific knowledge and expertise into your short list of targets. Step 4 gives you the technique for networking meetings and interviews. Step 5 keeps you on track. Step 6 gives you the techniques to negotiate and close an offer – that is, finalizing the deal with an employer who wants to work together. Follow the six-step process to ensure you are doing everything you need to do to get the job you want. Having a process keeps you moving forward to your end goal.

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CONTINUE

Where to Search?

When we show up to the present moment with all of our senses, we invite the world to fill us with joy. The pains of the past are behind us. The future has yet to unfold. But the now is full of beauty simply waiting for our attention.

For this portion of the lesson, you will be completing nine [9] tutorials from GCF Learn Free. Link to [GCF Learn Free Job Search and Networking](#) tutorials.

You are to complete all five[5] tutorials:

- 1 Job Search Savvy
- 2 Find a Job Online
- 3 Networking Basics
- 4 Job Hunt with Social Media
- 5 Personal Branding 101

You do not need to make an account or take the quizzes on the GCF Learn Free site. All quizzes will be completed within the course. You may review the extra tutorials available, these are optional but could be beneficial.

You can use a/an _____ to find job listings from multiple online sources.

job search engine

company job board

online resume

CONTINUE

Kentucky Job Boards

Below is a list of job boards found in Kentucky.

- Kentucky Career Center:
<https://kcc.ky.gov/career/If-you-are-Unemployed/Pages/Job-Search.aspx>

- Kentucky Government:
<http://kentucky.gov/employment/Pages/default.aspx>
- Career Builder (search Kentucky):
<https://www.careerbuilder.com/jobs-in-ky>
- USA Teleworks:
<http://www.jobsight.org/jobseeker/teleworks>
- USA Jobs:
<https://www.usajobs.gov/>
- Flex Jobs:
<https://www.flexjobs.com/>
- Louisville Works:
<http://www.louisvilleworks.com/>
- Lexington Herald:
<https://jobs.kentucky.com/>
- The Kentucky Community and Technical College System:
https://systemoffice.kctcs.edu/job_seekers/index.aspx
- University of Kentucky:
<https://www.uky.edu/careercenter/post-job>

IT Specific Job Links

- Google Search of [IT Jobs in Kentucky](#)
- TekSystems, IT Jobs:
<https://www.teksystems.com/en/locations/united-states/kentucky>
- ComputerJobs.com, IT Jobs in Kentucky:
<https://www.computerjobs.com/us/en/search-jobs-in-kentucky,-usa/>
- Career Builder, IT Jobs in Kentucky:
<https://www.careerbuilder.com/jobs-information-technology-in-ky>
- Indeed, IT Jobs in Kentucky:
<https://www.indeed.com/q-Computer-Technician-l-Kentucky-jobs.html>
- Monster.com, IT Jobs in Kentucky:
<https://www.monster.com/jobs/q-it-jobs-l-kentucky.aspx>

Remember, try to think out of the box when doing job searches. Many companies may have IT positions that you may not be thinking of (including education and allied health related

companies).



Do you know how to find a job in the classifieds??

Try this [Interactive Job Classifieds](#) from GCF LearnFree

Next Steps

Before going on to the Cover Letter Section embedded in this lesson, you may want to return to the course and complete the assignments for Job Search and Applications.

The Cover Letter and Job Application

Developing a Cover Letter

Once you have found a job, you will need to apply for the job. In that process you may need to developing a cover letter. A cover letter is a document that introduces you and usually accompanies your resume.

For this portion of the lesson, you will complete the Cover Letter tutorial from GCF Learn Free. Link to [GCF Learn Free Cover Letter](#) tutorial. There is only one tutorial.

You do not need to make an account or take the quizzes on the GCF Learn Free site. All quizzes will be completed within the course. You may review the extra tutorials available, these are optional but could be beneficial.

You should write a cover letter every time you submit a resume for a job.

True

False

CONTINUE

Applying for a Job

For many employers, asking you to complete a job application is the first step in the hiring process. People who make hiring decisions often must read many applications in order to fill a position. Applications that are not filled out correctly and many times are often rejected. Although some companies still use paper applications, most modern businesses require you to complete an application online – including national brands like Walmart, Bank of America,

Ford Motor Co., and millions of others. So you need to be well versed in both paper and online versions.

For this portion of the lesson, you will be completing nine [9] tutorials from GCF Learn Free.

Link to [GCF Learn Free Job Application](#) tutorials.

You are to complete all six [6] tutorials (1,2,3,4,5,7):

- 1 Gathering Your Personal Information
- 2 Obtaining References
- 3 Completing a Job Application
- 4 Dealing with Online Application Headaches
- 5 The Entry-Level Catch-22
- 6 Getting a Job with a Criminal Record

You do not need to make an account or take the quizzes on the GCF Learn Free site. All quizzes will be completed within the course. You may review the extra tutorials available, these are optional but could be beneficial.

Securing references is an important part of the application process. Avoid choosing _____ to make sure potential employers take your references seriously.

-
- family members
 - former coworkers

fellowvolunteers

teachers

SUBMIT

Try this [Interactive Job Application](#) Activity
from GCF LearnFree

Next Steps

Before going on to the Preparing for a Job Interview Section embedded in this lesson, you may want to return to the course and complete the assignments for Job Applications.

Writing Your Resume

Accent Line

Job Search Starts with your Resume

The first step toward a job is your resume. Most employers want to see your resume before they'll even consider you for the job. Your resume is a great way to start planning and collecting the necessary information for a successful job search.

Think of your resume as a work in progress – you can go back and change it to better fit a job match or whenever your situation changes, like completing a training course. Remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression... and that's why your resume needs to be the best it can be.

What is a Resume?

A resume is a way to advertise you. Think of it as a TV ad. When you watch a TV ad and you see a product trying to be sold (or if you have watched Shark Tank), what is the WOW that catches your attention?? Think of this for your resume. What will be the WOW that will make an employer get hooked and what to interview you??

CONTINUE

Resume Writing

For this portion of the lesson you will be completing nine [9] tutorials from GCF Learn Free.

Link to [GCF Learn Free Resume Writing](#) tutorials.

You are to complete all nine [9] tutorials:

1

Why You Need a Resume

2

Resume Formats: Choosing the Right One

3

Resume Tips and Strategies

4

Contact Information

- 5 Objectives, Summaries, or Professional Profiles
- 6 Employment History
- 7 Education Information
- 8 Additional Information and References
- 9 Preparing Your Resume for the Internet

You do not need to make an account or take the quizzes on the GCF Learn Free site. All quizzes will be completed within the course. You may review the extra tutorials available, these are optional but could be beneficial.

Which of the following resume components is where you should state your career goal?

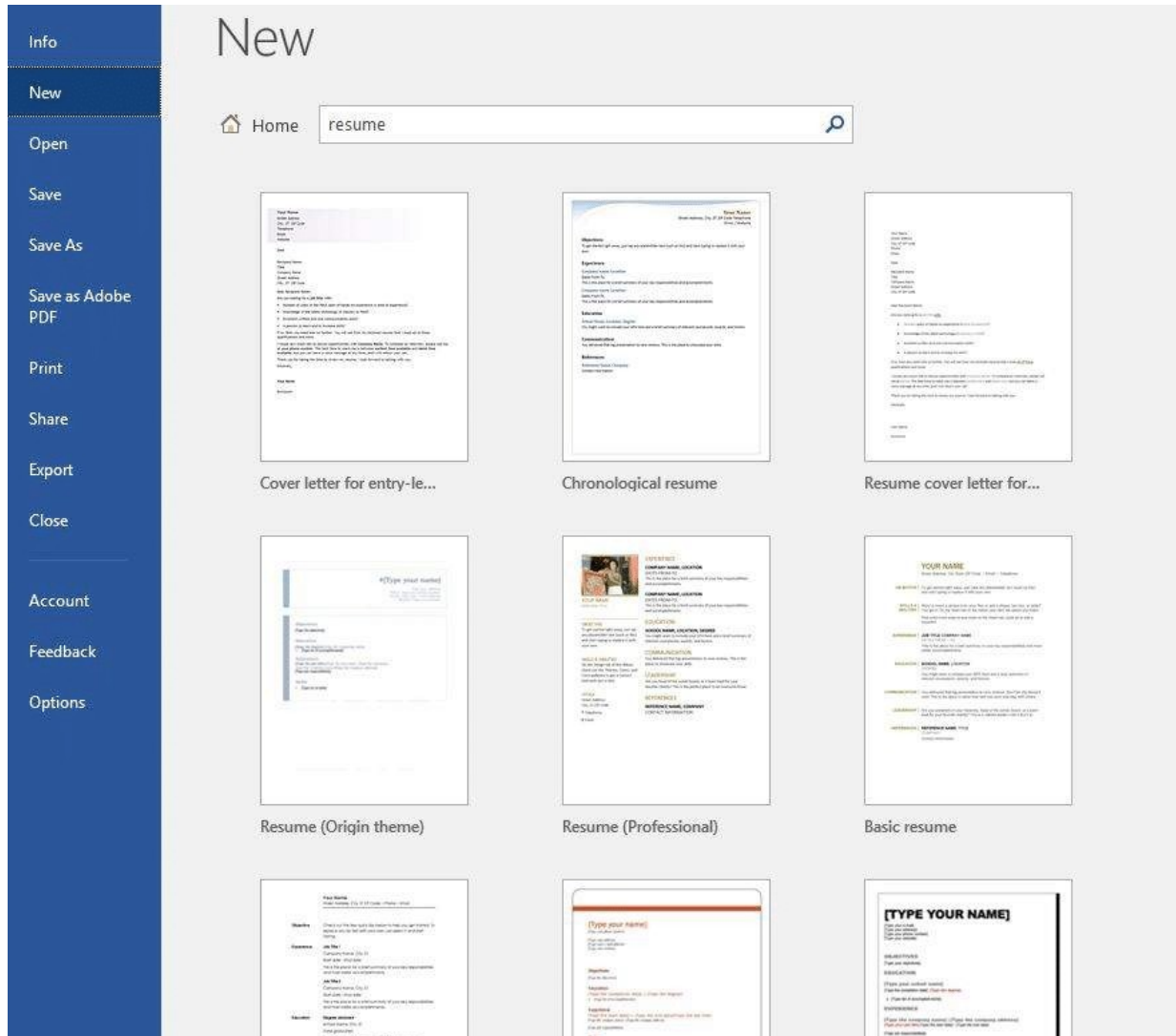
- Profile
- Objective
- Summary

CONTINUE

Templates

There are many different styles and types of templates available to begin creating your resume. You will want to review the different templates to see which one appeals to you most and displays the information you plan to add to your resume.

Microsoft Word has a variety of templates. Remember you can get Microsoft Word for free with your [KCTCS Account](#) (for Macs or PCs). From within Word, click File > New. In the Search box, type resume and press Enter. You should see a listing of templates (similar to the image below).



Microsoft Word Screen Shot of Resume Templates Search

Next Steps

Before going on to other sections of this lesson, you may want to return to the course and complete the assignments for Build Your Resume.

Preparing for the Job Interview

Interviews

Interviews are your chance to sell your skills and abilities. They also give you a chance to find out if the job and company are right for you. Follow the tips here to ace your interviews.

[Career One Stop](#) and [Kentucky Career Center](#) are great resources in assisting you in preparing for a job search.

For this portion of the lesson you will be completing five [5] tutorials from GCF Learn Free.

Link to [GCF Learn Free Interview Skills](#) tutorials.

You are to complete all five [5] tutorials:

- 1 Types of Interviews
- 2 What to Prepare Before an Interview
- 3 What to do During an Interview
- 4 Following Up After an Interview

You do not need to make an account or take the quizzes on the GCF Learn Free site. All quizzes will be completed within the course. You may review the extra tutorials available, these are optional but could be beneficial.

Which of the following should NOT be brought to an interview?

A pen

Cellphone

Briefcase

Copies of your resume

CONTINUE

Review common interview questions

Practice answering them with someone else or in front of a mirror. Come prepared with stories that relate to the skills that the employer wants, while emphasizing your:

- Strengths
- Willingness to work and flexibility
- Leadership skills
- Ability and willingness to learn new things
- Contributions to the organizations in which you have worked or volunteered
- Creativity in solving problems and working with people

Figure out in advance how well you qualify for the job. For each requirement listed in the job posting, write down your qualifications. This can show you if you lack a particular skill. Plan how you will address this in the interview so you can convince the interviewer that you can learn the skill.



Public Domain Photo [170209-M-ZZ999-353.JPG]

By: Verda L. Parker

Improve interviews by preparing answers to [common interview questions](#) and questions you may want to ask during the interview.

Make a list of questions that you would like to ask during the interview

Pick questions that will demonstrate your interest in the job and the company. This might include commenting on the news you learned from the company website, and then asking a question related to it. Also ask questions about the job you will be expected to perform, like:

- What are the day-to-day responsibilities of this job?
- How will my responsibilities and performance be measured? By whom?

- Could you explain your organizational structure?
- What computer equipment and software do you use?
- What is the organization's plan for the next five years?

Be prepared

Remember to bring important items to the interview:

- Notebook and pens
- Extra copies of your resume and a list of references
- Copies of letter(s) of recommendation, licenses, transcripts, etc.
- Portfolio of work samples

On the day of the interview, remember to:

- Plan your schedule so you arrive 10 to 15 minutes early.
- Go by yourself.
- Look professional. Dress in a manner appropriate to the job.
- Leave your MP3 player, coffee, soda, or backpack at home or in your car.
- Turn off your cell phone.
- Bring your sense of humor and SMILE!

Display confidence during the interview

Let the interviewer start the dialogue. Send a positive message with your body language.

- Shake hands firmly, but only if a hand is offered to you first.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Listen carefully. Welcome all questions, even the difficult ones, with a smile.
- Give honest, direct answers.
- Develop answers in your head before you respond. If you don't understand a question, ask for it to be repeated or clarified. You don't have to rush, but you don't want to appear indecisive.

End the interview with a good impression

A positive end to the interview is another way to ensure your success.

- Be courteous and allow the interview to end on time.
- Restate any strengths and experiences that you might not have emphasized earlier.
- Mention a particular accomplishment or activity that fits the job.
- If you want the job, say so!
- Find out if there will be additional interviews.
- Ask when the employer plans to make a decision.
- Indicate a time when you may contact the employer to learn of the decision.

Don't forget to send a thank-you note or letter after the interview.

CONTINUE

What to Wear??

It may seem silly to ask "What should I wear?" After all, what do clothes have to do with your ability to do the job in question? And that's a valid argument. But while your skills, experience and capability will ultimately win you the job, how you present yourself can have a big impact on the hiring manager's impression of you.

Decoding dress codes

What's the different between business professional and business casual? And just how casual is "casual"? Every company is different in what they consider appropriate workplace attire

Business professional

In a business professional atmosphere, suits are the norm. Women might wear a skirt or pant suit with heels, while men may wear a blazer or suit jacket, button down shirt, suit pants, a tie and dress shoes.

Business casual

Forget the suit when interviewing at a business casual company. Men might opt to wear dress slacks or chinos, a button down or polo shirt, a belt and dress shoes. Women might consider wearing a conservative dress, or a blouse (or sweater) with a skirt or dress pants and dress shoes or boots.

Casual

When interviewing at a casual office, it's still important to look polished and professional. (Save the jeans and flip flops for when you actually have the job.) Men might consider wearing

a long-sleeved dress shirt, khaki pants a belt, and dress shoes. Women might wear a collared shirt with pants or a pencil skirt, or a work dress.

There are some general rules to keep in mind for any type of position, at any company, at any level.

- **Do your homework.** Research the company before the interview to get a feel for the culture: Check out the company's website, Facebook page, or other pages. You could even call or email the company's recruiting or HR department and ask them about the appropriate dress code.
- **Err on the side of overdressing.** Even if the company you're interviewing with allows employees to dress in jeans and more casual attire, most experts advise dressing "a step above" the typical daily dress for the company. In other words, wait until you've gotten the job to show off your new J Brand jeans.
- **Pay attention to details.** Make sure you always look polished – in other words, don't show up in wrinkled, stained, ripped or ill-fitting clothing. Comb your hair, and check to make sure none of this morning's spinach omelet ended up in your teeth. Consider keeping a small grooming kit with you for any last-minute touch-ups you may need.
- **Go blue.** In a 2013 CareerBuilder survey, blue topped the list of employer-approved colors to wear in an interview, followed closely by black, brown and gray. In general, neutrals are a safe bet because they go with anything and can be paired with a classic white button-down, or some colors and eye-catching (but not over-the-top) accessories.
- **Put the spray away:** Don't wear perfume, aftershave or cologne. While you may love smelling like the beach after the rain, it can be a distraction during the interview, particularly if the hiring manager has any sensitivity or allergies to fragrances. You want to be remembered for your skill, not your smell.

Taken from [Careerbuilder](#) – "*What to wear for different job interviews based on the company*" by Mary Lopez [March 10, 2016]

What to Wear to an Interview + Business Formal Tips!

My on tips on how you should dress to look appropriate, elegant and to get the job, including three outfit examples featuring my favourite pieces.

[VIEW ON YOUTUBE](#) 

CONTINUE

Interview Do's and Don'ts

A job interview is your opportunity to show a potential employer how you can shine in the role and at the company. Think of the interview as an audition for the job, and also as a “sample” of your work, because that’s how employers often view it. But keep this in mind – you’re interviewing the interviewers too! You need to get a handle on whether or not the job and the company are a good fit for you.

Interview Dos and Don'ts

Watch this video to learn how to ace your next job interview.

[VIEW ON YOUTUBE](#) 

[Job Interviewing Dos and Don'ts for Job-Seekers](#)

Sometimes, it’s the [little things](#) that end up being remembered. For interviews in particular, it can be easy to spend all your energy focusing on the big picture, but it’s equally important to

know the ins and outs of [interviewing etiquette](#).

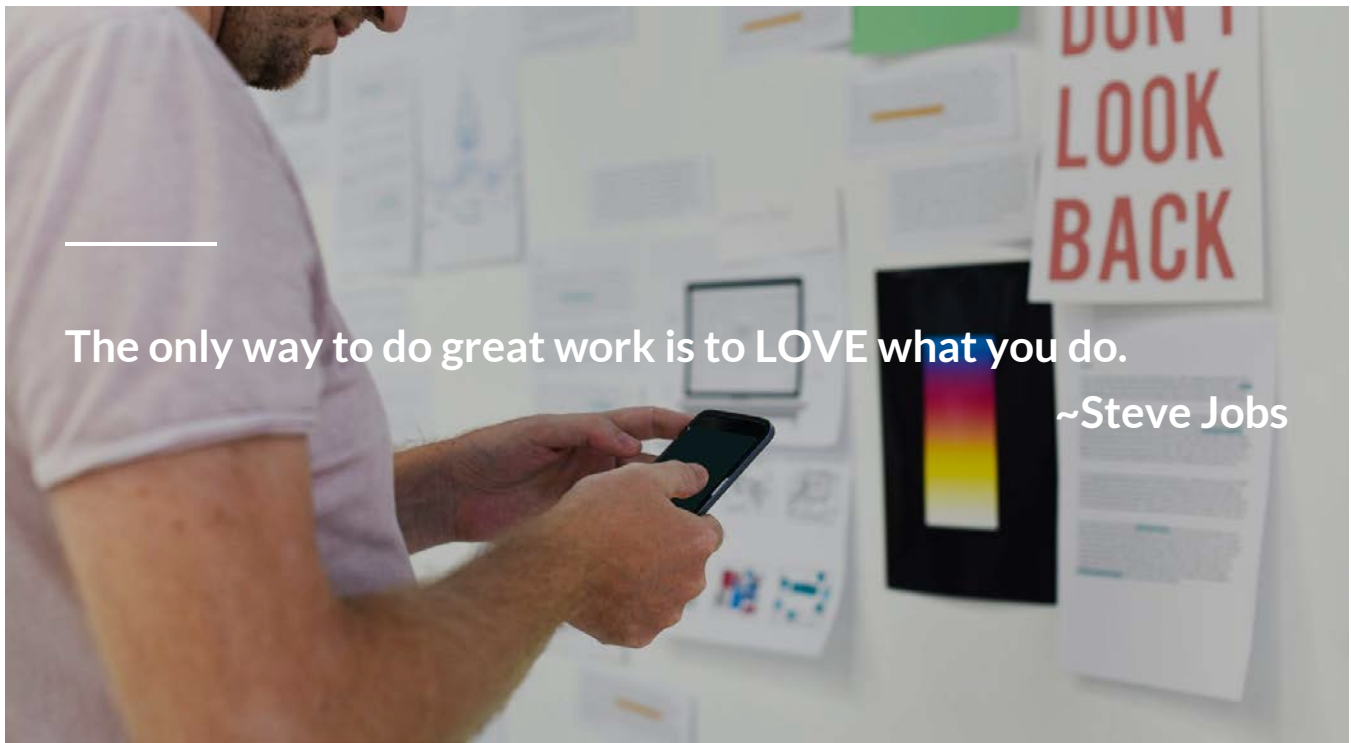
Knowing what to expect during an interview will help you be prepared and less nervous.

Practice on the [My Interview Simulator](#).

CONTINUE

Getting a Job Offer!

Negotiating your salary is a two-way street. When you are offered a job, it's important to come to a win-win solution since it can set the tone for your work life with the future employer. But wait until after you receive a job offer to start talking about salary. Everyone approaches the process differently. Utilize the [Career One Stop tips](#) to assist.



The only way to do great work is to LOVE what you do.

~Steve Jobs

When you get a job offer, take time to think through what's important to you.

To help ensure you make a wise decision when you are offered a job, express your appreciation and strong interest in the job, but request at least 24 hours to consider it, even if you're pretty sure you're going to say "Yes." Ask any immediate questions that you have.

[Career One Stop has many things to consider before you accept that job.](#)

Don't be afraid to ask employers for additional benefits or flexibility that you might require, but avoid submitting a list of demands. An employer may want to meet your needs, but may be limited by budget and policies.

Once you have considered the offer, make a decision and respond to the person making the offer. If you decide to accept, ask for the offer in writing. If you turn it down, do so professionally. You never know when you will cross paths with that employer again.

Next Steps

Before going on to other sections of this lesson, you may want to return to the course and complete the assignments for Preparing for the Job Interview.

Lesson 5 of 5

Practice Quiz

Question

01/25

What should you do if you've been convicted of a violation of law other than a minor traffic violation?

Answer YES, and include a typed explanation of the details of your conviction.

Answer NO on your application; otherwise, you won't get the job.

Ask to see the manager to discuss your rights under Equal Employment Opportunity laws.

Question

02/25

Securing references is an important part of the application process. Avoid choosing _____ to make sure potential employers take your references seriously.

family members

former coworkers

fellow volunteers teachers

Question

03/25

Many applications ask, "Why did you leave your previous position?" Choose the best answer out of the examples below.

Illness

Seeking new opportunities

Personal reasons

Disagreement with supervisor

Question

04/25

When filling out job applications, you'll need to provide a wide range of personal information. This can include your name, phone number, address, and _____.

Birthdate

Religious beliefs

Driver's license number

Marital Status

Question

05/25

The average job seeker should secure at least _____ reference(s).

1

6

2

3

Question

06/25

You can use a/an _____ to find job listings from multiple online sources.

jobsearchengine

company jobboard

online resume

Question

07/25

You should always _____ before applying to any online job posting.

calculate your annual salary

send your credit card information

research the company

Question

08/25

People spend about _____ on average searching for a new job.

three to six months

eight to twelve months

one month

Question

09/25

If you have difficulty finding a job, it's a good idea to_____.

vary your search methods

apply to as many jobs as possible go

back to school

Question

10/25

When meeting people for the first time, you should ask

_____.

if they know of any available jobs

if they can provide a recommendation for

advice about your job search

Question

11/25

Your social media profiles should be _____ if you want to use social media effectively in your job search.

casual

professional

private

Question

12/25

Your _____ is a short personal summary that explains who you are, what you're seeking, and what you can offer.

online resume

elevator pitch

personal brand

Question

13/25

When making connections on LinkedIn, you should _____.

add everyone you meet in a LinkedIn group

add anyone who shares a common professional interest add

people you already know

Question

14/25

You can connect with employers on Facebook by _____.

following influential users

liking a company page

posting a status update

Question

15/25

A personal brand is a/an _____.

authentic expression of who you are

persona you create for better networking

summary of your goals and ambitions

Question

16/25

Creating a personal brand can _____.

influence how you are perceived by others

guarantee that you will find a job

ensure that you will earn a higher salary

Question

17/25

You should write a cover letter every time you submit a resume for a job.

True

False

Question

18/25

Which of the following appears last in a cover letter?

Body paragraphs

Date

Signature line

Enclosure line

Question

19/25

Which of the following appears first in a cover letter?

Body paragraphs

Date

Signature line

Enclosure line

Question

20/25

A cover letter does all of the following EXCEPT:

Introduces you and summarizes your resume

Explains why you are interested in the job

Explains why you don't meet every qualification of the job Sells

you as the best candidate for the job

Question

21/25

Which of the following should NOT be brought to an interview?

A pen

Cellphone

Briefcase

Copies of your resume

Question

22/25

_____ is a good technique for answering interview questions well.

Seeking feedback

Embellishing your accomplishments Using

lots of technical terminology

Question

23/25

Which of the following defines the GOAL interview process?

Greet, Opportunity, Answer, Ask, Learn

Greet, Offer, Answer, Ask, Leave

Give, Offer, Accept, Agree, Leave

Question

24/25

A(n) _____ allows potential employers to see your skills in action before they hire you.

screening interview

audition interview group

interview

performance interview

Question

25/25

Which of the following is NOT a good tip for writing thank-you letters?

Always handwrite a thank-you letter

Send the thank-you letter within 24 hours

Send a thank-you letter via email