

## COMMUNICATING FOR YOUR CAREER & LIFE

Effective communication can enrich your career opportunities and therefore shape your life. Not only is communication a vital part of many occupations – presentations that must be made, reports to be written, and more – but before you ever land your dream job, you'll have to communicate through a resume and interview.

### THE RÉSUMÉ

#### OBJECTIVES:

24. Describe the purpose of a résumé.
25. Identify the major components of a résumé.

*A résumé briefly documents your work history and gives you the opportunity to show what makes you qualified for a job.* That's a lot for a short, one-page document to accomplish. Résumés require lots of editing and review. Let's consider the major parts of the résumé:

**Personal Information.** Always list your name, address, phone number, and email address at the top of the résumé. However, *it is not appropriate to list additional personal information like your age, height and weight, marital status, etc.*

**Objective.** *Some résumé experts suggest you identify your career aspirations and/or immediate objective.* For young adults, these sections can help compensate for your relative lack of experience because it shows the hiring manager that you have clear goals and interests.

**Education.** As a student, *list your highest level of education.* Once you enter the adult workforce, list all college degrees and professional certifications. Again, young adults who need to compensate for their inexperience may want to amplify their educational credentials by including their grade point average and class rank.

**Experience.** Most hiring managers consider this section to be the meat of the résumé. There are two primary ways to complete the experience section. First is *the career chronology method in which you list the various positions you've held and outline the major accomplishments of each.* The career chronology method is the most common résumé style in the adult workforce. Second is *the skills inventory method in which you focus on the work-related skills and abilities you've acquired.* The skills inventory approach is rarely used by adults, but some experts suggest it to students who possess only a modest degree of career experience.

Excerpt from  
Civil Air Patrol, *Learn to Lead*,  
volume 2 (Maxwell AFB, AL: 2010).

Your résumé represents you. Carefully craft your résumé – it's likely to be the determining factor in whether you receive a job interview.



**Awards, Honors & Extra-Curricular Activities.** This is another section whose content and relative importance will vary depending on whether the applicant is a student or an adult with an established career. *Students should list all awards and honors that are relative to the position being sought.* For example, a student applying for a summer job at the airport should mention their CAP experience, but their experience on the chess team can be omitted.

**References.** It is customary to list two or three individuals who can speak to your professionalism, work-related skills, or employment history. However, *before using someone as a reference, be sure to ask their permission and verify that indeed they'll recommend you for the position.*

If your résumé impresses your potential employer, then you can work on the next step: preparing for a job interview.

## JOB INTERVIEWS

### OBJECTIVES:

26. Explain the purpose of a job interview.
27. Describe ways applicants can prepare for interviews.
28. Discuss principles of etiquette for interviews.

The company has “seen” you on paper. Now the employer wants to meet you face-to-face. If you have made it this far, you have a good chance of landing the job. Next, let's consider some principles to guide you during a job interview.

**Make a Good First Impression:** *Make yourself neat and presentable and dress in attire you would wear if selected for the position.* The rule of thumb used to be to wear formal business attire to all interviews, but most career coaches today caution applicants not to overdress. Further, to show you are well-prepared for business, always bring extra copies of your resume, plus a notepad to take notes about your discussion.

**Prepare for the Classic Questions.** It's no secret what questions hiring managers are apt to ask interviewees, so be ready for them. Some classic questions include:

- Why should I hire you?
- Tell me about yourself.
- What experience do you have to prepare you for this job?
- What do you know about our organization?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?

## JOB INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE

**Professionalism is not the job you do but how you do it.** That was this volume's opening line, and it's a truism that applies to interviews. Some tips on interview etiquette:

- ★ Be on time, or better yet, 10 minutes early
- ★ Check your coat, purse, and non-essential belongings
- ★ Turn off your cell phone
- ★ Don't bring food, drink, or gum to the interview
- ★ Shake hands firmly and look them in the eye
- ★ Give the interviewer your complete attention
- ★ Talk about the job and your qualifications first, and save discussion about pay for the end or the second interview
- ★ Don't gripe about your old boss
- ★ Be an adult - your parents have no place in job interviews, negotiations, or your relationship with the boss
- ★ Follow up with a thank you note

The interviewer(s) will use questions to try to get to know you better as person. **They are gauging your communication skills, people skills, self-confidence, and other leadership traits as much as they are discerning whether you're a good match for the job's challenges.** Remember, the interview is not a friendly chit-chat, though it may be cordial. Therefore, try to answer the interviewer's questions in such a way as to highlight your strengths and qualifications.

**Ask Good Questions.** Too many applicants forget that an interview can be a two-way street. That is, **the applicant is interviewing the organization and the boss to see if they match the individual's needs and desires.** Therefore, come prepared to ask questions of your own. Some classic examples include:

- What's the team's culture like, or the boss's leadership style?
- What's the job really like on a day-to-day basis?
- Is this a new position, or would I be replacing someone?
- Is there room for growth in this position?

## SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ

An FBO at the local airport is looking for a part-time lineman, gofer, and receptionist. Cadet John Curry prepares his résumé for the job.

Includes name & contact info

The career goal and immediate objective show why Curry is interested in a job at the local airport

**JOHN CURRY**  
79 Fenton Ave Laconia, NH 03246  
(603) 555-1934 cell  
johncurry@isp.com

**CAREER GOAL**  
Aspiring air traffic controller or meteorologist

**IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE**  
Obtain a summer job that allows me to learn about aviation while saving for college

**EDUCATION**  
**Laconia High School**, junior, 3.8 GPA, (top 10% of class)  
Coursework includes trigonometry, chemistry, & introduction to management.

**WORK EXPERIENCE** *[on a real resume, you'd include dates of service]*  
**Everett's Yard Services**, landscaper (part-time, 24 hrs per week)  
Performed yardwork and landscaping services for residential clients  
Worked independently, often with no direct supervision at the jobsite  
Completed safety training and qualified to operate potentially-dangerous power tools & equipment

**EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

**Civil Air Patrol**, cadet second lieutenant (top 15% nation-wide)  
Successfully completed introductory curriculum in aviation and team leadership  
Served as a flight commander, responsible for the training, discipline, and welfare of fourteen cadets during a 7-day annual encampment  
Participated in three flights in a Cessna 172 and one KC-135 aerial refueling mission

**Laconia High School Chess Team:** co-captain  
Co-organizer for the first annual Lakes Region Chess Academy, a one-day program that introduced 30+ kids aged 9 to 13 to the fundamentals of chess

**Parish Council Youth Representative**, St. Joseph Catholic Church  
Advise the pastor and adult council members on how to better serve teen parishioners  
Served as mentor & role model for 8th grade Confirmation class

**Cycling**  
Participated in dozens of bicycle road races; average 70 miles' training per week

**AWARDS & HONORS**  
**National Honor Society**, Laconia High School  
**General Billy Mitchell Award**, Civil Air Patrol  
**Honor Cadet**, Civil Air Patrol Encampment, Pease International Tradeport

**REFERENCES**  
**Everett Lord**, owner, Everett's Yard Service, 555-7981, everett@isp.com  
**Major Ira Eaker**, Civil Air Patrol squadron commander, 555-1941, eaker@isp.com

Still a student with no real educational credentials, this resume touts Curry's high GPA.

Each description of work experience begins with an action verb

With very little work experience, extra-curriculars are needed to supplement the résumé. Still, Curry keeps the content relevant to his objective. If asked about his chess team experience, he could reply, "I took initiative and honed my project management skills by planning that kids' tournament." If asked how cycling is relevant to his job search he might say, "Cycling shows that I have tenacity."

References include each individual's name, title, and contact info