



MINNESOTA STATE
CAREERwise

Career Planning for People with a Criminal Conviction

Workbook



**Your Career Planning Guide
to Help You STEP AHEAD**

Brought to you in partnership by:



MINNESOTA STATE
Career and Technical Education

Career Planning for People with a Criminal Conviction

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How to Use this Workbook

This workbook is designed to help people with criminal convictions succeed in their job search. Use this workbook to develop the skills you need to find, apply for and get hired in the right job for you.

This workbook focuses on four important steps in the career planning process. Start with Assess Yourself, or choose the sections and activities that interest you:

1. Assess Yourself

Understand your skills and interests and learn how to match them to careers.

2. Create a Plan and Set Goals

Find worksheets to help you plan your search and create a schedule of activities.

3. Find a Job

Learn how to write a quality resume, answer interview questions, and fill out a job application. Understand some common job search challenges so that you can better prepare for a job interview. Learn the benefits of networking and find ways to connect with employers.

4. Manage Your Career

Learn how to keep your job once you've found it. Find social media tips, ways to reduce stress, and learn how to leave a job on good terms.

For more information and resources to help with these steps, or to find out how to **Explore Careers**, or **Expand Skills**, go to the Career Planning website (careerwise.minnstate.edu/exoffenders/).

Where to Get Additional Help

Don't be afraid to ask for help during your job search. Whether you need employment services or are looking for help taking care of you and your family there are community resources and programs that can help you. To find help:

United Way

Whether you're in crisis or need help connecting to resources and services, United Way can help.

(phone) 2-1-1

Toll Free: 800-543-7709

Local: 651-291-0211

Text your ZIP Code to 898-211*

Community Resources on the Career Planning Website

Find providers who can help you find employment, housing, transportation, and other transition services. You can also find information on programs to help with healthcare, childcare, and find low cost and free legal help.

careerwise.minnstate.edu/exoffenders/manage-career/community-resources.html

What Can You Do Now?

Employment Preparation for People Who Are Currently Incarcerated

There are things you can do while you are still incarcerated to be more successful in your job search after release.

1. Work with your Case Manager to get your identification documents.

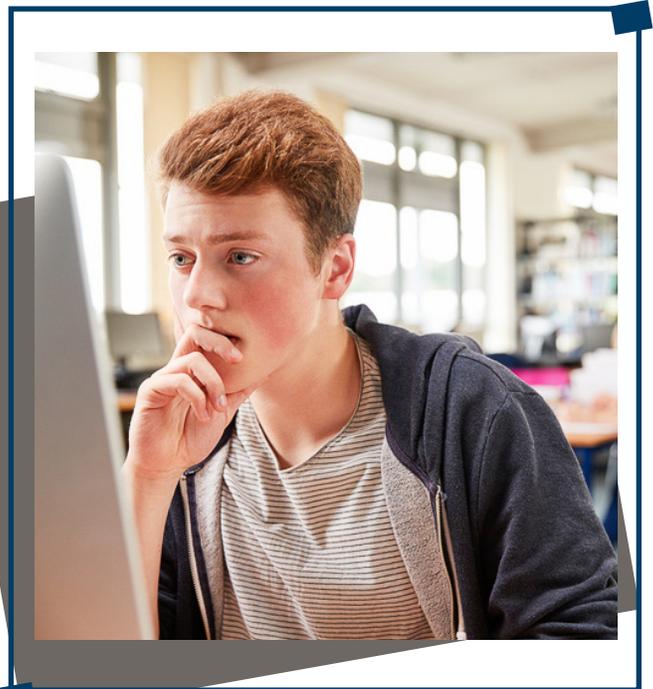
Having the right identification documents will allow you to start applying for jobs as soon as you are released. Talk with your Case Manager about obtaining any ID you need. They can assist you with getting the right forms and documentation.

- **Social Security Card:** You can get a new Social Security card or a replacement card for free from the Social Security Administration. You can mail the application for a Social Security card while you are still in prison. Your Case Manager can help you with the application. If you do not get your card before you leave prison, the application and other information can be found at <https://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber>.
- **Birth certificates** can be ordered while you are in prison from the state where you were born. Your Case Manager can help you find information about where to order a birth certificate. If you do not get your birth certificate before you leave prison, this website shows you where to write for records for each U.S. state: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>.

2. Make a portfolio. Include your classwork and work you completed while you were in prison.

Put together a folder detailing your accomplishments. Include certificates and transcripts to share with employers.

- **GED:** If you earned your GED while incarcerated, make sure to get a copy of your transcript before you are released.
- **Classes or Certifications:** If you completed any classes, gather your certificates or proof of completion. This includes vocational training, academic classes, or employment readiness classes.
- **If you are working** in the facility or with MinnCorr, keep any evaluation forms that are given to you by your supervisor. Think about the skills you learned from your jobs in the facility. Add those skills to your resume. Your transition coordinator can help you.



What Can You Do Now? (continued)

- **If you haven't had the chance** to complete any classes, talk to your Case Manager about opportunities that might be available to you.

3. **Work with your Transitions Coordinator and Tutors.**

- Attend employment readiness classes, mock interview opportunities, or any other groups/classes offered by your transitions center.
- Work with a Transitions Coordinator or transitions center Tutor to complete a resume. You can upload your resume to MCIS. You can access MCIS after you are released. If you do not know how to access MCIS, talk to your Transitions Coordinator.
- Use your transition center library resource area to find out about community programs to help you when you are released. You can write letters to organizations you are interested in working with to find out more about their programming and how to enroll.

4. **Attend Transitions Fairs.**

- If you are able, attend your facility's Transitions Fair to learn more about resources available to you when you are released.
- Make sure that you get business cards so that you know the right people to contact to access resources.

5. **Complete this workbook.**

Completing this workbook will help you obtain the skills needed to gain employment, including resume writing, job search, and interview skills.

In addition to the things listed, it is important to work with your Case Manager to make sure that you have what you need to be prepared for your release.

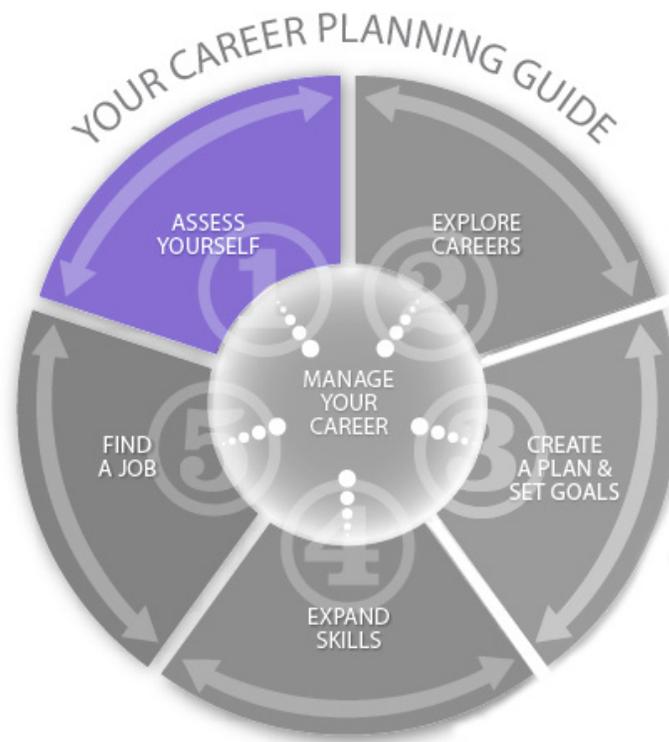
Assess Yourself

People are more successful and satisfied when their interests and skills are a good fit with the job they have.

In this section, you will learn more about your personal skills, interests, strengths, and values so you can choose a job that is a good match for you. Knowing what is important to you will help you find and keep a satisfying job.

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Transferable Skills

Directions: Transferable skills are skills that are used in one job and can also be applied to another job. The following are examples of common transferable skills. Give specific examples of how you have used these skills. Consider how you have used them in previous jobs, volunteer work, hobbies, schools, and more. Don't forget the skills you have gained from work you have done while incarcerated!

People Skills. People skills refer to how one interacts with others. If you have good people skills, you are able to communicate well with others. Give examples of how you have used people skills in the past:

Leadership Skills. Leadership skills involve taking the lead on a task or managing people or things. Give examples of how you have used leadership skills in the past:

Technical Skills. People gain technical skills by working with specific tools, software, or machinery. For example, if you worked with Microsoft Office in a past job or at school, you have gained a technical skill. Give example:

Flexibility skills. Flexibility skills refer to the ability to adjust to diverse situations and environments. Give examples of how you have used flexibility skills in the past:

Problem-solving skills. Problem-solving involves recognizing a problem and finding a solution. Give examples of how you have used problem-solving skills in the past:

Matching Interests to Work Options Exercise

Understanding your interests is one of the first steps toward choosing a career path. Learning what you enjoy, what you're good at, and what you value most is important to choosing a career that would be a good fit for you. An interest assessment can help you better understand your interests and point you toward a career path that is a good fit for you. When you find a job that matches your interests and the things you like to do, you're more likely to enjoy your job.

This assessment is not a test, and there are no right or wrong answers. You can use the activities below to help match your interests to specific occupations. You will use this list to explore careers in another section.

STEP 1: Read each statement in the assessment on the next page. Fill in the square next to the activities that interest you.

STEP 2:

Add the columns at the bottom of the chart on the next page. Write down the number of filled circles for each letter here.

R = Realistic Total: _____

I = Investigative Total: _____

A = Artistic Total: _____

S = Social Total: _____

E = Enterprising Total: _____

C = Conventional Total: _____

STEP 3:

The three letters with the highest scores are your Interest Profile. Record your interest profile below.

Your Interest Profile:

--	--	--

STEP 4: Use the "Matching Your Interests to Work Options" section of the Career Planning website to learn what your interest profile means (careerwise.minnstate.edu/exoffenders/assess-yourself/matching-interests.html).

Then use the table on page 13 to determine which industries would be a good fit for you to work in. On page 14 you can find examples of jobs within the individual industries that may interest you. For example, if you are "Realistic," you may be interested in the agriculture industry.

I Like To	R	I	A	S	E	C
...do puzzles		()				
...work on cars	()					
...attend concerts, theaters, or art exhibits			()			
...work on teams				()		
...organize things like files, offices, or activities						()
...set goals for myself					()	
...build things	()					
...read fiction, poetry, or plays			()			
...have clear instructions to follow						()
...influence or persuade people					()	
...do experiments		()				
...teach or train people				()		
...help people solve their problems				()		
...take care of animals	()					
...have my day structured						()
...sell things					()	
...do creative writing			()			
...work on science projects		()				
...take on new responsibilities					()	
...heal people				()		
...figure out how things work		()				
...put things together or assemble models	()					
...be creative			()			
...pay attention to detail						()
...do filing or typing						()
...learn about other cultures				()		
...analyze things like problems, situations, or trends		()				
...play instruments or sing			()			
...dream about starting my own business					()	
...cook	()					
...act in plays			()			
...think things through before making a decision	()					
...work with numbers or charts		()				
...have discussions about issues like politics or current events				()		
...keep records of my work						()
...be a leader					()	
...work outdoors	()					
...work in an office						()
...work on math problems		()				
...help people				()		
...draw			()			
...give speeches					()	
Total (Count the check marks in each column)						

Match Your Score to Career Cluster

Matching Interests (continued)

Use the top two letters from your interest profile to find career clusters that may be a good fit for you. If the intersection of your top two letters doesn't have any results, use the third letter from your profile instead. On the next page you can find work options in each cluster.

	R	I	A	S	E	C
R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Agriculture •Architecture & Construction •Information Technology •Manufacturing •Science, Technology & Math •Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Agriculture •Information Technology •Science, Technology & Math 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Education & Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Education & Training •Human Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Hospitality & Tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Architecture & Construction •Manufacturing •Transportation
I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Agriculture •Information Technology •Science, Technology & Math 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Education & Training •Information Technology •Science, Technology & Math 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Education & Training •Marketing & Sales 		
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Education & Training 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Education & Training •Hospitality & Tourism •Marketing & Sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Education & Training •Marketing & Sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Marketing & Sales 	
S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Education & Training •Human Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Education & Training •Marketing & Sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Education & Training •Marketing & Sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Education & Training •Hospitality & Tourism •Human Service •Marketing & Sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Business & Management •Marketing & Sales 	
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Hospitality & Tourism 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Marketing & Sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Business & Management •Marketing & Sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arts & Communications •Business & Management •Hospitality & Tourism •Marketing & Sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Business & Management •Information Technology
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Architecture & Construction •Manufacturing •Transportation 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Business & Management •Information Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Architecture & Construction •Business & Management •Manufacturing •Marketing & Sales •Transportation

Work Options in Each Cluster

- **Agriculture:** pest control worker, garbage and recyclable material collectors, farmers, animal caretakers
- **Architecture & Construction:** construction workers, landscaping and groundskeeping, carpenters, plumbers
- **Arts & Communications:** prepress workers, telecommunication equipment installers and repairers, musicians, graphic designers
- **Business & Management:** receptionists, management analysts, supervisor of administrative support workers, customer service representatives
- **Education & Training:** library assistant, interpreters and translators, college teachers, instructional coordinators
- **Hospitality & Tourism:** cooks, counter attendants, janitors, restaurant managers
- **Human Service:** clergy, sociologists, mental health counselors, hairstylists, and barbers
- **Information Technology:** computer support specialists, information security analysts, web developers, database administrators
- **Manufacturing:** precision assemblers, machinists, power plant operators, food batchmakers
- **Marketing & Sales:** telemarketers, salespeople, sales supervisors, real estate agents
- **Science, Technology & Math:** electrical engineers, economists, chemists, industrial engineers, environmental scientists
- **Transportation:** freight handlers, bus and truck mechanics, auto body repairers, dispatchers

You can find more careers in each cluster in the Explore Careers section on the website: careerwise.minnstate.edu/exoffenders/index.html.

Strengths

Often an employer will ask you what your strengths are. Some of you may ask yourself, “What are strengths?” Strengths are your positive qualities. Your strengths include your talents and personality traits that come naturally to you, and the skills you have learned. You may feel uncomfortable talking to a potential employer about things that you do well; however, it is important to discuss your strengths in job interviews. Your strengths help you to stand out from other applicants.

Directions: Look at the list of strengths below. Check all the strengths you think apply to you. Include as many as you can. Add any other strengths you think you have.

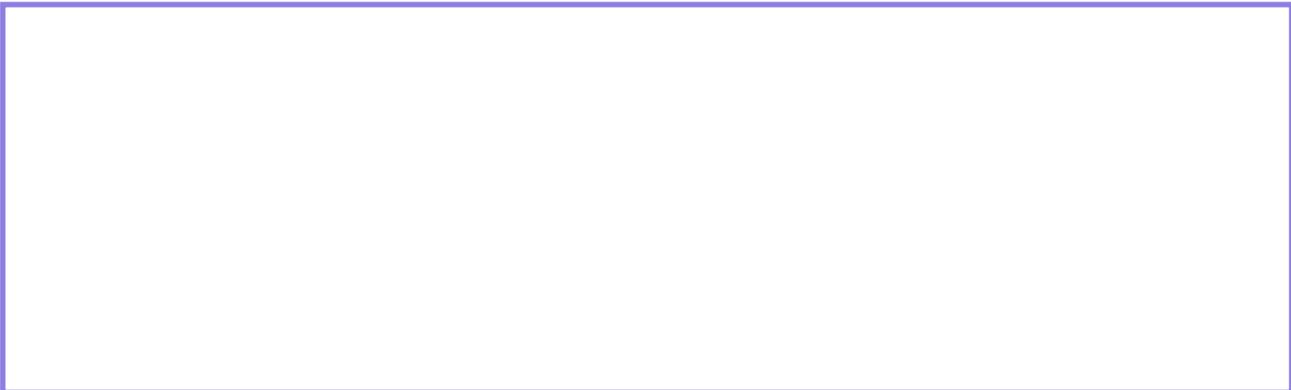
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honest | <input type="checkbox"/> Energetic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> Creative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Punctual | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive Attitude |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependable | <input type="checkbox"/> Can Be Trusted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative | <input type="checkbox"/> Communication Skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Like Responsibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Hard and Fast Worker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neat Appearance | <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate, Quality Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Willing to Learn | <input type="checkbox"/> Willing to Work Overtime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Works Well Under Pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> Organized |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Follows Directions Well | <input type="checkbox"/> Learn Quickly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible | <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely Gets Angry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Can Work Without Constant Supervision | <input type="checkbox"/> Works Well With Others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experience Working with Specific Tools and Equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experience in Specific Service (i.e. Food, Cleaning etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Multicultural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experience Managing Groups, Money, Time, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Works well under pressure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Understands plans and strategies | <input type="checkbox"/> Fluent in more than one Language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to see alternatives | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Can Use Office Software | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Willing to learn | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productive | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Can use office software | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attention to Detail | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving | |

Directions: On the lines provided below write down three strengths from the previous list that you could share during a job interview. Then briefly explain how you have used or demonstrated each quality. Potential employers want to hear how you have applied and succeeded with your strengths. By giving concrete examples you are showing and demonstrating your character.

Example Answer: *One of my greatest strengths is that I am flexible. I adapt quickly to change and like the challenge of learning something new. For example, at my last company, I was working as a material handler during a time when we were short on employees for the shipping and receiving area. I took the initiative to be cross trained in the shipping and receiving area, and would float between positions as needed.*

Your Strengths Examples:

1. 

2. 

3. 

Work Values

Just like skills and interests, knowing your work values will help you find the career that is right for you. A value is something that is of great importance to you. When the work you are doing matches your values, you're more likely to be satisfied and happy in your job.

Directions: Look through the list and check those values you would need to be happy at work. Then circle the three values that are the most important to you. As you set your job goals, keep these values in mind, especially the three you have circled as most important to you. Understanding your values can help you select a job that is a good fit for you.

Job Satisfaction:

- Enjoy and feel good about the work that I do
- Family and friends approve of what I do
- Challenging and interesting work
- Work for a company with a good name
- Able to use talents, skills, and abilities
- Access to the tools, training, and other resources
- Opportunities for advancement within the company
- Be able to direct and supervise others

Money:

- Good wages
- A workers' union
- Chance to advance in my job
- Good benefits (Sick leave, insurance, vacation etc.)
- Job is located in a specific area

Work Environment:

- Safe working conditions
- Clean work area
- Quiet work area
- A lot of activity in work area
- Get along well with everyone
- Work with culturally diverse people

Supervision Style:

- A lot of supervision
- Some supervision
- Little supervision
- Have a supportive and fair supervisor

Time:

- Same hours and days to work
- Opportunity for overtime

Others:

My Top Three Values:

Occupations that Best Match Your Assessments

Directions: Now that you have determined your skills, interests, and values, make a list of the jobs you would want to apply for. Then explain why you think they would be a good fit for you.

Job	Why this job would be a good fit for me

Create a Plan and Set Goals

In this section, you will focus on the important details of what you really want when looking for a job and how to use a schedule to benefit your job search. By using these tools, you will be able to organize your search into a step-by-step process and manage your time wisely.

Although you might not use all the suggestions offered, you will get an idea of how your search can be more concentrated.

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Employment Planning Worksheet

Date available for work: _____

Three jobs I would like to apply for right away:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Cities/locations I am willing to work in:

1. _____
2. _____

I want (check two):

Permanent work Full-time work Temporary work Part-time work

Minimum acceptable pay: ___\$ per hour

Preferred Shifts:

Days (1st shift) Evenings (2nd shift) Overnights (3rd Shift)

Benefits I must have:

Health insurance

Paid time off

Life insurance

Other: _____

Do I have a valid driver's license? Yes No

Do I have transportation to work? Yes No

If not, how will I get to and from work? _____

Physical limitations (as noted by doctor):

Lifting restricted to pounds Limited sitting or standing

Low noise level Wheelchair accessible

Clean air (no dust or fumes) Other: _____

Cultural accommodations needed: _____

I want: Close Supervision Some Supervision Little Supervision To Supervise Others

I prefer to: Work alone Work with others

Job Search Schedule

Directions: Plan your job search schedule. Make sure to include the following:

- Contact your local CareerForce Center
- Search for jobs on the Internet
- Attend Job Club
- Research employers you are interested in
- Read job postings in newspapers like Employment Guide, JobDig or Star Tribune
- Make new contacts (phone or in-person)
- Attend job search or related trainings
- Update your resume
- Write your cover letter
- Attend a job fair
- Follow-up on job leads
- Fill out ___ number of applications
- Follow-up with employer after interview
- Attend job interview
- Practice interview questions
- Ask permission to use employment references
- Reach out to your network
- Attend professional organization meetings

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Job Search Schedule (continued)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Find a Job

In the next section you will learn about and/or improve skills that are important for obtaining a job.

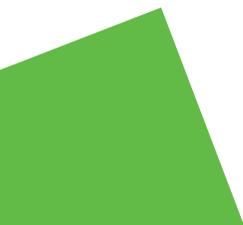
The specific skills that will help you prepare for applying and interviewing for jobs include:

- Completing an application
- Creating a resume and cover letter
- Answering interview questions
- Completing a reference page



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Networking

Networking is important to your job search. Making connections can not only help you find out about job opportunities, but may connect you to people who can help you get the job. You can use relationships you already have to network, such as friends and family. But it is also important to find other opportunities to network, such as local job clubs. Or by volunteering in your community.

Directions: Fill out the following table with as many people you know who may be able to help you with your job search. Then contact your network for help in your job search. Make sure you let them know what type of work you are looking for.

Group	Name	Relation to You	Phone Number	Address	E-mail Address
Family					
Friends					
Volunteer					

Group	Name	Relation to You	Phone Number	Address	E-mail Address
Classmates					
Neighbors					
Coworkers					
Teachers					

Networking (continued)

Group	Name	Relation to You	Phone Number	Address	E-mail Address
Job Clubs					
Past Employers					
Local Businesses					
Support Groups					

Networking (continued)

Group	Name	Relation to You	Phone Number	Address	E-mail Address
Clubs					
Religious Organizations					
Community Organizations					
Other					

Employment References

Employment references are people who can talk about the skills and qualifications that you have for the job you are applying for.

Ideally, employment references should be someone:

1. you have known for at least one year, preferably longer.
2. who is able to objectively discuss your strengths and the quality of your work. A past supervisor is best, but a coworker is also a good option.
3. who is not related to you.
4. you have worked with in a professional setting, whether it was paid work or volunteering.
5. who will say good things about your work skills and qualifications.

Examples of people you can use for references are former job supervisors, coworkers, career counselors, volunteer leaders, and your PO. Only use people you have a good relationship with. Let people know in advance that you would like to use them as a reference so they can be prepared for calls from your potential employers. Most people will be happy to be a reference for you, so don't feel like it will bother them if you ask.

Thinking about the above criteria, think of at least three references you can use when applying for jobs. Write down their name, relationship to you, phone number and email, and years known. You can use this sheet to refer back to when applying for jobs.

Name	Relationship	Phone Number	Email	Years Known

Application with Errors

Directions: The completed job application contains 20 mistakes. Try to find and correct all of them.

Application for Employment

XYZ Company is an equal employment opportunity employer and will not discriminate against any applicant or employee protected under federal or local laws. If you are hired by [COMPANY NAME], you will be employed on an at-will basis. As an at-will employee, you may terminate your employment at any time, for any reason, without notice. Similarly, if you are hired, [COMPANY NAME] will have the right to terminate your employment at any time, for any reason, without further notice. No [COMPANY NAME] supervisor or manager has the authority to offer or promise anything other than at-will employment.

Answer ALL Questions Completely Please Print

Name Paula Anne Stephen Date 5.5.09
First Middle Last

Have you ever been known by another name or by an alias? Yes No

If yes, explain: divorced 2 times

Present Address: 123 3rd St. Mpls. MN 55
City State ZIP Code

Permanent Address: none
City State ZIP Code

Home Phone () 555-6789 Mobile () _____ Other () _____

Social Security Number: 123 4 5678

Are you currently licensed (not suspended) to drive in Minnesota or another state? Yes No

If yes, provide State and license number: _____

Can you furnish proof that you are 18 years of age and eligible to work in the United States?

Yes No If no, explain: _____

Position applied for: anything

Full Time Part Time Temporary Date You Can Start 6.1.09

Days Nights Weekends Desired Wages \$ 20 per hour

Have you applied for employment with [COMPANY NAME] before? Yes No When? can't remember

Have you worked for [COMPANY NAME] before? Yes No If yes, when? _____

Reason for leaving? fired

How did you first learn about employment with [COMPANY NAME]?

- Minneapolis Star Tribune [COMPANY NAME] Employee Name: _____
 St. Paul Pioneer Press / Career Builder Radio Station: _____ Other: (please specify) Goodwill Easter Seals

Have you served in the Military? Yes No

If Yes: Branch _____ Rank _____ Dates of Service _____

Briefly describe your military duties if any may be related to position applied for: _____

Membership in National Guard or Reserves? Yes No

continued on next page

Application with Errors (continued)

Please provide education information if you wish to be considered now or in the future for a supervisory or office position:

Education	Name and Location of School	Years	Graduate?	Major Areas of Study
High School	Beaumont High IL	4	Yes / No	none
College			Yes / No	
Trade			Yes / No	

WORK HISTORY - List employers during last five years in sequential order, with present or last employer first.

Employer Name: Work All Day Inc Supervisor: Tom
 Address: don't know
 Phone #: 601555-5156 Starting Date: 11/2/09 Ending Date: 2/2/09
 Starting Wage: \$ 7.00 per hour Ending Wage: \$ 7.00 per hour
 Describe the work you did: labor, moved stuff around
 Reason for leaving: lets go

Employer Name: Mac Burger Supervisor: no longer there
 Address: St. Paul, MN
 Phone #: () _____ Starting Date: 8/14/08 Ending Date: 11/13/08
 Starting Wage: \$ 6.15 per hour Ending Wage: \$ 6.15 per hour
 Describe the work you did: took orders, cooked
 Reason for leaving: work was too hard

Employer Name: _____ Supervisor: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone #: () _____ Starting Date: ___/___/___ Ending Date: ___/___/___
 Starting Wage: \$ _____ per hour Ending Wage: \$ _____ per hour
 Describe the work you did: _____
 Reason for leaving: _____

May we contact the employers listed above? Yes No If no, please explain. they won't give me a good reference.

Have you ever been discharged by an employer? Yes No If yes, please explain. He was a jerk.

Have you signed any agreements or forms with your previous employer that limits your ability to compete, solicit customers, or use business information? Yes No If yes, please copy and explain.
I don't know what you mean.

List all Periods of Unemployment

From: <u>6/07</u>	To: <u>8/08</u>	How did you spend this time? <u>watching TV during video games</u>
From: _____	To: _____	How did you spend this time? _____
From: _____	To: _____	How did you spend this time? _____

continued on next page

REFERENCES: Give the names of three people not related to you, whom you have known at least one year.

INDIVIDUAL'S NAME	PHONE	OCCUPATION	YEARS ACQUAINTED
1. Joe Brown	555-123	Landlord	6 mos.
2.			
3.			

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: PLEASE READ AND SIGN (if you agree)

By my signature below, I promise that the information provided in this employment application (and in any related documentation or interview) is true and complete, and I acknowledge that any false or misleading information or significant omission will disqualify me from further consideration for employment, and will result in my dismissal from employment, if discovered at a later date. I promise to immediately notify [COMPANY NAME] if I should be convicted or plead guilty to any crime during my period of employment if hired.

I authorize any person, school, current employer (except as previously noted), past employer, the State of Minnesota Department of Motor Vehicles, and any other organization named in this application form (or related documentation or interview) to provide [COMPANY NAME] with any information and opinion requested by [COMPANY NAME] in connection with my application, or employment if hired, and I release such persons, schools, current and past employers and organizations and agree to hold them harmless from any legal liability in responding to such requests irrespective of the circumstances or the nature or content of their responses. I understand this application does not create a contract of employment. I understand that, if hired, I will be subject to any and all current and subsequently adopted [COMPANY NAME] policies. I understand and agree, if hired, my employment is for no definite period of time, and may, regardless of the date of payment of wages or salary, be terminated at any time for any reason, with or without notice. I understand that no person is authorized to change any of the terms mentioned in this employment application or in any offer of employment I may receive, except in a written employment agreement signed by:

Applicant's Signature _____

Date _____

Mistakes (see next page for answers):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

Corrections Application with Errors

1. Date – Year not written neatly.
2. Name – Should say “married name” or “maiden name” not “divorced two times.”
3. ZIP Code – Incomplete, did not write in all five digits.
4. Permanent address – If this is the same as your present address, you can write “same.” If you move a lot, list a family member’s address or someone else with stable housing.
5. Phone Number – Should include area code.
6. Social Security Number — Not written clearly.
7. Driver’s license – Did not provide state or license number.
8. Age – Scratched out information.
9. Position Applied For – Should list specific job title or type of position.
10. Available to Work – Indicate as many schedule options as possible, including part time.
11. Wages – Wage listed is too high. The wage should fit the job.
12. Worked for Company Before – Does not use positive terms to explain termination.
13. Education – Did not indicate if graduated high school.
14. Work History – Did not provide enough detail. Also, did not use positive reason for leaving jobs. Use phrases such as “I wanted to explore other opportunities,” “I wanted a more challenging position,” or “I took time off to determine what career I really want, relating to what I do well.”
15. Employer Contacts – Should allow them to contact past employers.
16. Discharged by Employer – Used negative term to describe reason for termination.
17. Signed Agreement Forms from Previous Employers – Ask if you do not understand a question. Do not write that you don’t understand.
18. Periods of Unemployment – Did not give a positive response.
19. References – Did not follow the directions. Also, did not complete the phone number.
20. Acknowledgement – Did not sign.

Application for Employment

Directions: Fill out this application as if you were applying for a job. Bring this application with you to reference when you fill out actual applications.

Ban the Box: Minnesota passed a new law called “Ban the Box” in 2014. This means employers can't ask you about your criminal history on a job application. Because it is a newer law, you might still find these types of questions on some applications. If you come across these types of questions, you can report it. Contact the Minnesota Department of Human Rights at 1-800-657-3704.

Employers can still ask applicants about criminal convictions in the job interview.

There are some types of jobs that “Ban the box” does not apply to. For example, if a job requires a background check, like a Department of Human Services licensed position, “Ban the box” will not apply.

Personal Information

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____
 Date of Birth: _____ U.S. Citizen: Yes No
 ID/Driver's License #: _____ Social Security #: _____
 Current Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Length of Time There: _____
 Telephone #: _____ Cell Phone #: _____
 Permanent Address (if different from present): _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Education

Type of School	Name/ Location	# of Years At- tended	Graduation Date	Degree(s) or Diploma(s)	Major Field(s) of Study
High School					
Business/Tech School					
Graduate School					
College/University Undergraduate					
Other Training (explain)					
Other Training (explain)					

continued on next page

Skills

Languages Spoken/Written: _____

Special Training: _____

Computer Skills: _____

Machines/Equipment You Can Operate: _____

U.S. Military Service

Branch: _____ Date Entered: _____ Date Discharged: _____

Rank: _____

Special Training/Duties: _____

Employment Experience

1. Employer Name/Organization: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone #: _____ Dates Employed (Month/Year): _____ to _____

Job Title: _____

Duties: _____

Starting Salary: _____ Ending Salary: _____ Reasoning For Leaving: _____

Supervisor/Manager Name: _____

Is this your current employer? Yes No May we contact this employer? Yes No

2. Employer Name/Organization: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone #: _____ Dates Employed (Month/Year): _____ to _____

Job Title: _____

Duties: _____

Starting Salary: _____ Ending Salary: _____ Reasoning For Leaving: _____

Supervisor/Manager Name: _____

Is this your current employer? Yes No May we contact this employer? Yes No

continued on next page

3. Employer Name/Organization: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Telephone #: _____ Dates Employed (Month/Year): _____ to _____
 Job Title: _____
 Duties: _____
 Starting Salary: _____ Ending Salary: _____ Reasoning For Leaving: _____
 Supervisor/Manager Name: _____
 Is this your current employer? Yes No May we contact this employer? Yes No

4. Employer Name/Organization: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Telephone #: _____ Dates Employed (Month/Year): _____ to _____
 Job Title: _____
 Duties: _____
 Starting Salary: _____ Ending Salary: _____ Reasoning For Leaving: _____
 Supervisor/Manager Name: _____
 Is this your current employer? Yes No May we contact this employer? Yes No

References

1. Name: _____	Affiliation: _____
Telephone: _____	# Years Known: _____
2. Name: _____	Affiliation: _____
Telephone: _____	# Years Known: _____
3. Name: _____	Affiliation: _____
Telephone: _____	# Years Known: _____

I hereby certify that all of the information provided by me in this application (or any other accompanying or required documents) is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the falsification, misrepresentation, or omission of any facts in said documents will be cause for denial of employment or immediate termination of employment, regardless of the timing or circumstances of discovery.

In consideration for employment with *company,* if employed, I agree to comply with the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of *company* at all times and understand that such obedience is a condition of employment.

I understand that if offered a position with *company,* I will be required to submit to a pre-employment medical examination, drug screening, and background check as a condition of employment. I understand that unsatisfactory results, refusal to cooperate with, or any attempt to affect the results of these pre-employment tests and checks will result in withdrawal of any employment offer or termination of employment if already employed.

BY SIGNING BELOW, I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD, AND AGREE TO THE ABOVE STATEMENTS

Date _____ Signature _____

Resume and Cover Letter Tips

Anytime a resume is sent by mail or email, it must be accompanied by a cover letter. The greatest challenge will not be what to include, but what to leave out.

■ Skills Identification

- ▶ Clearly identify your skills.
- ▶ Employers want to know what you can do, not just where you have worked.
- ▶ Your resume should be an honest presentation of your best qualities.

■ Language

- ▶ What you say is important, but how you say it is just as important. To highlight your skills and qualifications, use action verbs.
- ▶ Do not use slang or abbreviations.
- ▶ Have someone proofread it for spelling and grammatical errors.

■ Focus

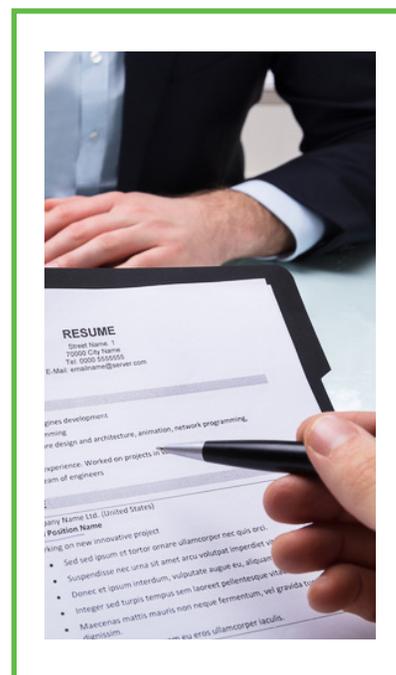
- ▶ Keep it brief.
- ▶ Target your job search and your resume to your specific job goals.
- ▶ Prepare multiple resumes if you are planning to pursue two different occupations.
- ▶ Mention the company to which you are applying in the cover letter. Give specific examples of how your skills match the job they have available.

■ Appearance

- ▶ Should be typed.
- ▶ Should be neat, organized, and easy to read.
- ▶ Do not fold your resume or cover letter.

■ Cover Letter

- ▶ State the date, your name, and your address at the top of the letter.
- ▶ Below your name and address, write the name of the person to whom you are writing. Always address the letter to a specific person by name and title if known. If you do not know the name, simply use a title such as “Office Manager.”
- ▶ State your interest in the job for which you are applying.
- ▶ Mention your skills, education, special training, and work experience that qualify you for this job.
- ▶ Provide a phone number so the employer can reach you.
- ▶ Thank the person for taking the time to read your letter.
- ▶ Use an appropriate closing such as “Sincerely.”
- ▶ Sign the letter; do not just type your name.
- ▶ Avoid starting every sentence with the same word.
- ▶ Reflect your individuality, but do not try to be humorous, familiar, or cute.
- ▶ Use key words from the ad or industry.
- ▶ Show your knowledge of the company.
- ▶ Proofread the letter several times to catch errors. Give it to someone else to double check. Reading it out aloud can help.



How to Describe Gaps in Employment

A gap in employment is a period of months or years in which one was not employed. An employment gap is caused by situations such as the inability to find work, going back to school, or serving a prison sentence. It will appear on your resume when you list your job experience. Employment gaps are red flags for employers. If they see one on your resume, they will most likely ask about it during your interview.

Here are some tips on how to minimize the impact of your employment gap:

- **Use a functional resume.** This type of resume highlights skills and accomplishments rather than chronology of employment. It will help cover up any employment gaps you may have
- **Get creative when you format your resume.** When typing the dates of your past employment, use a smaller font for the dates and do not bold them. Include a summary section or an “other achievements” sections to show what you were doing during your employment gap and to draw attention away from your employment dates.
- **Omit a past job on your resume.** You do not have to include your entire employment history on your resume. If there is a large gap between an old job and more recent work experiences, do not include the old job.
- **Explain in the cover letter.** Doing so will prevent you from being screened out before you receive an interview. Be honest. The employer will probably want you to explain further in an interview.
- **Highlight the positive.** When explaining your employment gap during an interview, make sure you explain all the positive things you did during that gap. For example, if it applies to you, tell the employer that while you were incarcerated you received your GED or learned a trade.

Resume Templates

Directions: This template is a general format. You can change the actual content and layout to fit you. Not all items are required or necessary. The length of the resume depends on your information. Replace the content descriptions with your own information to create your resume. Remember to delete this instruction information.

Functional Resume Template

First and Last Name

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City, State ZIP Code

you@email.com

EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE

Include objective here

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Qualification—

Short summary of skills, accomplishments or responsibilities for this specific qualification.

Qualification—

Short summary of skills, accomplishments or responsibilities for this specific qualification.

Qualification—

Short summary of skills, accomplishments or responsibilities for this specific qualification.

SUMMARY OF EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Job Title (can include employer and/or dates)

- Main responsibilities or accomplishments

Job Title (can include employer and/or dates)

- Main responsibilities or accomplishments

EDUCATION/TRAINING

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

AWARDS OR PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Chronological Resume Template

First and Last Name

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City, State ZIP Code

(555)555-5555

you@email.com

EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY: Include your objective or summary statement here

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Job Title **Dates**
Employer, City, State
• List your responsibilities, accomplishments, and skills

Job Title **Dates**
Employer, City, State
• List your responsibilities, accomplishments, and skills

Job Title **Dates**
Employer, City, State
• List your responsibilities, accomplishments, and skills

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Position or Project **Dates**
Organization, City, State
List your responsibilities, accomplishments, and skills

Position or Project **Dates**
Organization, City, State
List your responsibilities, accomplishments, and skills

EDUCATION/TRAINING:

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS:

AWARDS:

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Combination Resume Template

First and Last Name

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City, State ZIP Code

you@email.com

EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

Include employment objective and/or summary of qualifications here.

SUMMARY OF SKILLS AND/OR EXPERIENCE

Skill or Experience

- Description
- Description

Skill or Experience

- Description
- Description

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Job Title

Employer City, State Dates

Job Title

Employer City, State Dates

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Position or Project

Organization City, State Dates

Position or Project

Organization City, State Dates

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Type of Award or Degree: Degree or Certification Name (GPA if relevant)

Minor if applicable

School Name – City, State

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS OR ORGANIZATION

What to Wear to a Job Interview



What you wear to a job interview is important. While an employer is going to make decisions based on how well you interview, what you wear also plays a role. An employer is going to form a first impression about you based on how you dressed for the interview. That is why it is always important to dress professionally.

Professional business attire is typically your best option for a job interview, especially if you are interviewing for a job in an office setting.

A nice suit with a dress shirt and dress shoes is a great option. If you do not own a suit, nice dress pants, a tucked in dress shirt, and a jacket is a good option.



Depending on the job you are interviewing for, business casual clothing could be an option to wear to an interview. Examples are jobs at a warehouse, construction company, or other places that don't typically require you to dress up for work. Business casual attire still needs to look professional.



An example is a nice polo shirt or button down tucked into khaki pants with dress shoes.

Some clothing should always be avoided when dressing for an interview. This includes hoodies/sweatshirts, jeans (especially jeans with holes), t-shirts, sweatpants, sandals, and tennis shoes. Revealing clothing or clothing that is bright or distracting should also be avoided.



Other interview tips:

- Make sure your clothes are clean and ironed if possible.
- Plan and layout your interview attire the night before your interview. This will help you to pick the perfect outfit, and you won't be rushing before your interview.
- It is important to have good hygiene for your interview. Make sure your hair is well groomed and your nails are trimmed and clean.
- Avoid wearing strong smelling perfume or cologne. It can be distracting and someone may be allergic.

Job Interview Tips

Tips for before the interview:

- Research the company you are applying for and the people who will be interviewing you, if you know who they will be. Make sure you know what the company does and what their mission is. This will help you feel confident during the interview, and it may come up in a few of the questions. Knowing about the company will give you the opportunity to show you did your homework. You can use the company's website, social media posts, and news articles about them for your research. This information will provide an understanding of what the company's goals are and how your skills and experience make you a great fit.
- Recruit someone to help you practice interviews. You can use the questions in this book on page 45 as a guide. Prepare answers to common questions by using the **STAR** Method:

Situation: What is the context of your story? In setting the situation, you are telling your listener when or where this event took place.

Example: "Our supply room was disorganized. This was resulting in higher costs for the company because duplicate supplies were being ordered."

Task: What was your role in this situation?

Example: "I told my supervisor that I had an idea for organizing the supply room."

Action: What did you do?

Example: "I created a map and labeling system for the supply room. I labeled all of the shelves and created a map to show the staff where to find and return the supplies."

Result: What did your actions lead to?

Example: "My supervisor and co-workers really liked the process. It helped keep the supply room orderly, helped staff find what they were looking for quickly, and saved money by reducing duplicate ordering. The process is still being used."

- Re-read the job description for the position you are interviewing for. You may want to print it out and underline specific skills the employer is looking for. Think about examples from your experience that fit with what they are looking for in the job description
- Plan to arrive 15 minutes early for your interview. This may mean that you drive to the employer a few days before the interview or practice your bus route to make sure you leave yourself enough time to get there.
- Print copies of your resume to bring to the interview.
- Prepare questions to ask the interviewer. Remember, you need to see if this company would be a good fit for you, too. Questions you can ask include:
 - ▶ What do the opportunities for advancement look like for this position?
 - ▶ Do you expect the main responsibilities for this position to change in the next six months to a year?
 - ▶ What are the most important things you'd like to see someone accomplish in the first 90 days on the job?

Tips for during the interview:

- Arrive 15 minutes early.
- Bring copies of your resume.
- Treat everyone you meet with respect. This includes people you might see while walking in to the interview, and the receptionist. Even if they aren't the hiring manager, they may be asked for their feedback about you.
- Do not speak negatively about previous employers.
- Use appropriate body language. Non-verbal communication is an important tool to show that you are interested and engaged in the conversation during a job interview. The acronym **SOLER** can help you remember the different parts of effective body language.

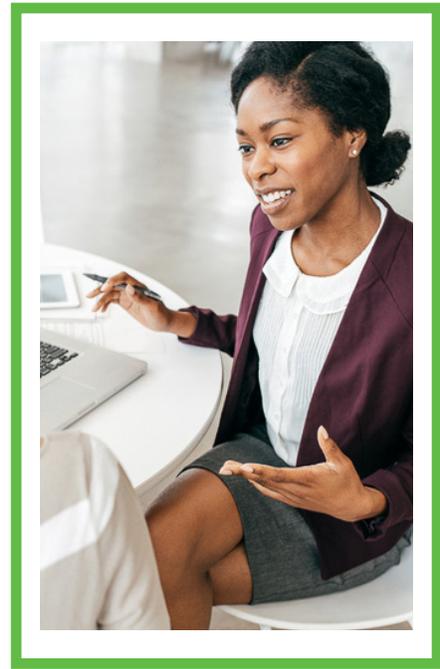
Square: Face the interviewer squarely. This means look straight at them, not to the side. This shows that you are involved and interested in the interview.

Open: Keeping an open posture means not crossing your arms and legs. Open postures make people feel engaged and welcome.

Lean Forward: Leaning forward indicates to the interviewer that you are interested in the conversation and are listening to what they have to say.

Eye contact: Using good eye contact shows that you are listening and are not distracted by other things that might be going on around you.

Relax: It is important to stay calm and relaxed in an interview. Avoid fidgeting. This shows that you are focused.



Tips for after the interview:

- Ask about the next steps. The employer may have other interviews, or they may want you to do a second interview. It's important for you to know about timeframe.
- Write a personalized thank you note for each of your interviewers. If you know who you are interviewing with, you can write these beforehand. If you don't, bring them with you to the interview and make sure you ask for business cards of your interviewers. Then, you can fill out the cards after the interview and leave them with reception. If you plan to email your thank you notes, do so within 24 hours of your interview.

Sample Job Interview Questions

Directions: Answer the following questions as you would answer them during an interview. Then look at the answer key to see how well you answered. Finally practice your corrected answers out loud. Pay attention to your body language while you practice.

1. Tell me about yourself.

You need to mention 2 or 3 skills and include a real-life example of them from a previous job.

2. What kind of job are you interested in?

Be specific so that employer can picture you at the job. Research the job before the interview.

3. Why are you interested in working for this company?

Make sure to research the company before the interview and give specific reasons.

4. What experience or training do you have for this position?

Read the job description prior to the interview. Describe the skills you have that match the job.

5. What are your strengths?

Refer back to your completed "Strengths" worksheet from the Assess Yourself section to answer this question.

6. What are your weaknesses?

Be brief and general. Start by saying something positive, followed by what your weakness is. End your answer by stating what you are doing to correct that weakness and improve yourself. For example, "I am very ambitious, but sometimes I do so much it is hard to stay organized. However, I now keep a planner so all my tasks and goals are in order and get accomplished."

7. What do you like best about your most recent job? Least?

Answer should relate to the job you are interviewing for.

8. How would you handle conflict with your supervisor or co-workers?

You may want to consider delaying your response to the conflict to allow your emotions to calm. Recognize that you are part of the problem. Own your part and seek way to improve your relationship by asking what you can do.

9. What hours do you want to work? Are you willing to work weekends?

Be as flexible as possible. Only express limits when absolutely necessary.

10. Tell me a couple things that are most important to you about a job.

Refer back to the “My Work Values” worksheet from the Assess Yourself section to help answer this question.

11. Tell me how you would handle an angry customer.

Stay calm, listen carefully, and manage the situation with confidence and respect

12. Tell me about an accomplishment you are most proud of.

The answer should be work-related and is an example of going above and beyond what was expected. When you are explaining the story, begin by describing the situation then describe what you personally did. End your answer by explaining what the end result was.

13. Describe your best boss.

Do not use specific names. Instead, describe the positive traits of your best supervisor or your ideal supervisor. For example, you may want a boss who treats his employees fairly.

14. Describe your worst boss.

Do not say anything negative. Pick a work-related characteristic that can be stated in a positive way. For example, "I had a supervisor who was vague when giving assignments. I learned to ask questions so that I knew what was expected".

15. Give me an example of how you solved a problem in the past.

Be specific. Describe the problem in detail followed by explaining what action you took to solve the problem. Finally, clarify what the outcome of your action was.

16. Where do you see yourself in a year?

The interviewer is checking on your maturity and whether you are someone who likes to grow and learn. Examples might include; learned my job well enough to teach others, looking forward to another year, getting a chance at advancement, etc.

17. Give me an example of a time you showed leadership.

Be specific. Describe the situation, then your action followed by the outcome of your action.

18. Describe a time you had to ask questions and listen carefully to clarify a customer's problem.

Be specific. Describe the situation, then describe your action followed by the outcome.

19. Tell me about a time when your job required high attention to detail.

Think of a specific example that required accuracy, special skills, and failure to use these skills would have led to problems from your employer.

20. Describe a work decision you have made that you wish you could do over.

Be specific, but do not pick anything too negative. Begin by describing something positive you normally do. Then describe a time that you might have done the opposite. Finally, end by saying something positive by explaining what you learned from your mistake.

21. Do you have questions for me?

Always come prepared with at least two questions for the employer. Do not ask questions about salary or benefits. Ask questions such as, "How would you describe a typical day on the job?," "Will there be opportunities for advancement and ongoing trainings?" and "What kind of person are you looking for?"

Discussing Your Conviction Record

Directions: The following steps will help you practice how to disclose your criminal background to a potential employer during an interview.

When talking about your background in an interview, use the PAAR method.

STEP 1: P = Put the employer at ease

STEP 2: A = Accept responsibility for your offense

STEP 3: A = Use action/accomplishment statements

STEP 4: R = Reassure the employer that you are a good person to work with

Practice writing your own PAAR statements in the boxes below. There is an example statement below each box to help you.

Put the employer at ease. When an employer asks about your criminal background during an interview, avoid going into too much depth about your conviction. Be honest and brief, but do not mention specific details of the offense. You could also soften the offense. For example, instead of plainly saying you were convicted of robbery, say something like, "I took something that was not mine to take." Avoid the term "felony." Write down how you will talk about your conviction.

Example: "I understand you will complete a background check and may have some questions about my record. Five years ago, I was involved in a physical altercation that resulted in a conviction. This was a long time ago and I am not that person anymore."

Accept responsibility for your offense. Do not blame others for your actions. Instead, say something such as, "In the past, I made a poor decision." In the space below, write a response for how you will accept responsibility when asked the question, "Have you ever been convicted of a crime? If so, please explain."

Example: "I am not proud of my actions, and I have no one to blame but myself."

Action/Accomplishment statements. Talk about what you've learned since your conviction. Convey regret for your actions and discuss what you have learned from your experience to show that you will not repeat your actions. For example, use phrases like, "I'm not proud of my actions, and..." or "At the time my priorities were not right; however, since then ..." Write down what you have learned since your conviction.

Then, explain what constructive changes you have made in your life since your conviction. It could be something like completing an education program, doing volunteer work, or having more positive relationships. Now, write down all the positive changes you have made. Begin by stating, "Since then, I have ..."

Example: "Since that period in my life, I have learned a lot about the person I want to be and have made many changes in my life. While I was incarcerated, I earned my GED and worked in the kitchen where I gained culinary skills. I am thankful for this because it helped me discover my passion for working with food. I recently completed an Employment Readiness Training at Goodwill-Easter Seals and began volunteering at my church."

Reassure the employer that you are a good person to work with. Clarify your goals for the future, how you are moving forward, and what you are doing to accomplish them. Explain how a position at the company you are interviewing for will help you accomplish your goals. Convince the employer that you would be an asset to the company if hired. Write down how you will encourage the employer to hire you.

Example: I want to assure you that I am hard-working and dedicated, and I have the skills needed for this position. If given the chance, I would be a great asset to your company.

Put it altogether. Combine your responses to steps 1-4 to form a complete response to the question, "Have you been convicted of a crime? If so, please explain."
Practice saying the completed response out loud.

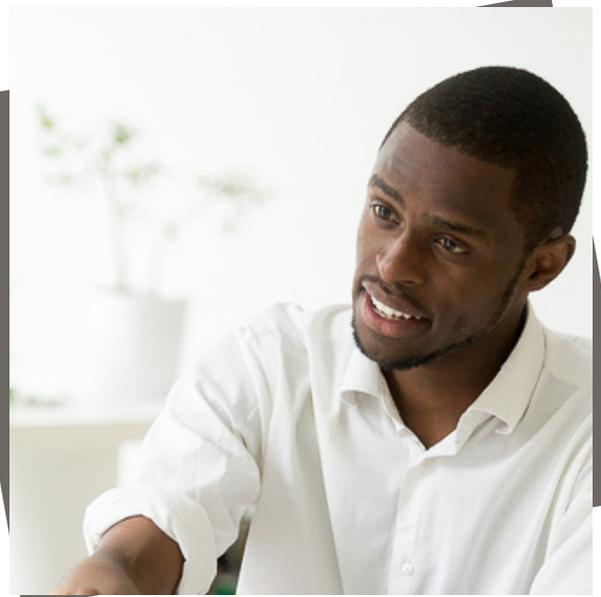
Employer Incentives: Work Opportunity Tax Credit and Minnesota Federal Bonding Program

Did you know that employers can get incentives for hiring you?

One is the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)**. Through this incentive, employers can get an income tax credit when they hire someone convicted of a felony within one year of their release.

The amount of credit the employer will receive depends on the number of hours the new hire works and the wages earned.

The other incentive is the **Minnesota Federal Bonding Program**. Any job seeker with a criminal background may be considered an “at-risk” applicant. Most insurance purchased by employers to protect them against dishonest, harmful employee conduct does not cover “at-risk” employees. As a result, employers may not hire such applicants.



However, the Minnesota Federal Bonding Program is available to all employers who hire “at-risk” applicants. The program issues an insurance bond to employers.^[1] This bond protects them from employee theft of any money or property. The bond lasts for six months. If no claim is made, an employer will be able to purchase a standard commercial policy to cover the no longer “at-risk” employee.^[1]

Only 1% of employers who have used to the Federal Bonding Program have had to make a claim.^[2] This shows that employees with a criminal background may not be as big of a threat to a business as once thought.

Let employers know about these incentives at your job interview. Stress that these are incentives to the employer. Emphasize that you are not a risk to their business. Tell them that only 1% of employers who have used the bonding program have ever had to make a claim.

Make copies of the information on **pages 65 and 67 from the Appendix** to bring with you to the interview. These pages have contact information for these programs that you can point the employer to if they have more questions.

[1] Dept of Employment and Economic Development, “Minnesota Federal Bonding Program,” Positively Minnesota, http://www.positivelyminnesota.com/JobSeekers/Find_a_Job/Targeted_Employment_Services/Workers_With_Difficult_Job_History.aspx.

[2] Dept of Labor, “The Federal Bonding Program,” The Mclaughlin Company, < <http://bonds4jobs.com/index.html>>

Manage Your Career

The purpose of this section is to further prepare you for the job search. Information in this section will help you to learn about the hiring process, how to perform well in your new job and how to manage stress and your emotions. The activities in this section will help you to be successful in reaching your job and career goals.

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Professionalism

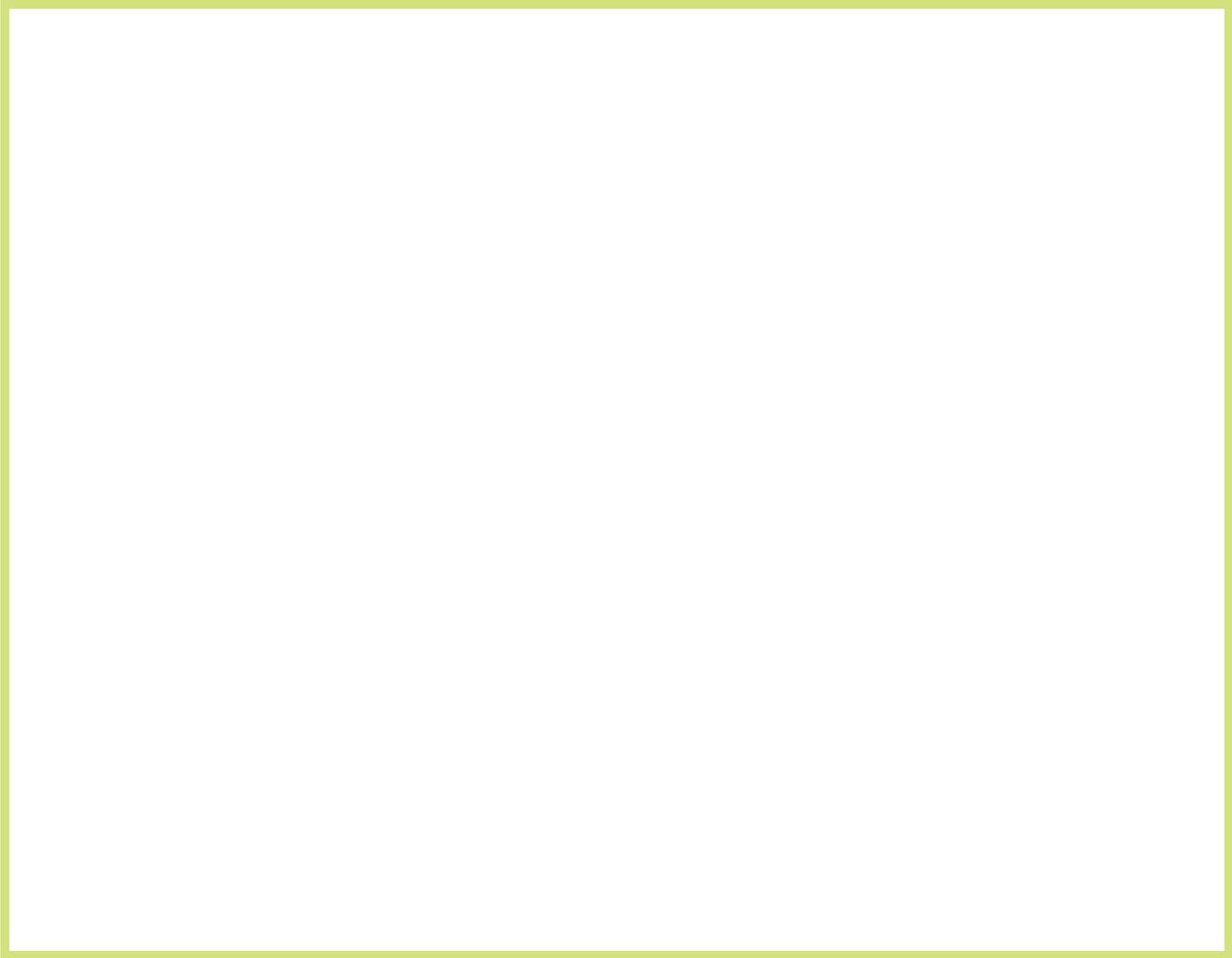
Acting “professional” means following guidelines for expected behavior in the workplace. Professionalism varies some from workplace to workplace. For example, wearing steel-toed boots to work in an office wouldn’t be considered professional, but it’s expected of someone who works on a construction site.

It is important to always consult your employer handbook to learn about specific guidelines of your workplace. While some of the guidelines for professionalism might be written down, most are not. For example: An employer might have rules against saying mean things to coworkers, but the handbook will not state specifically that employees should not use curse words at work.

Though professionalism may look slightly different in various settings, there are some qualities that are expected from nearly all employers. The statements below demonstrate professional behavior. If you haven’t worked before, think about how you would act in a group, class, or volunteer setting. For each statement, select whether you agree or disagree. Be honest!

Statement	Agree	Disagree
I am usually on time for work, appointments or other time commitments.		
I am OK with being told what to do by someone in a position of authority, or by someone who has more experience than me.		
I ask questions when I’m not sure what to do.		
I don’t use my phone when I’m at work or in class, even if it’s slow or if I have downtime.		
If a conflict arises with someone, I talk to them calmly and directly, and work with them to solve the problem.		
I always try my best to do a good job on any task I’m assigned, even if it is something I don’t enjoy doing.		
I follow dress codes and keep good hygiene habits.		
I do my best to get along with my others and treat everyone with respect.		
I communicate in advance if I need to take a day off and give plenty of notice if I am sick.		
I try my best to stay busy at work.		

For the statements that you selected “disagree,” think of ways you could work on improving those behaviors. Write your thoughts about professionalism in the space below.



Sexual Harassment

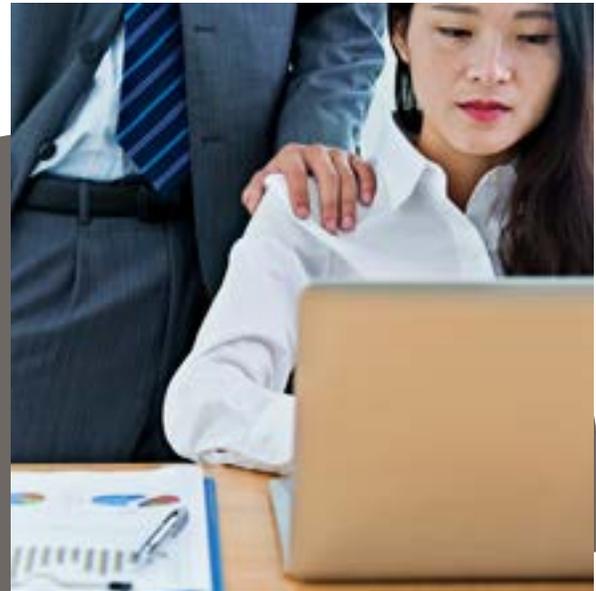
Did you know that sexual harassment is a form of discrimination? Workplaces take sexual harassment very seriously. Because of that, it is important to know what is considered sexual harassment.

There are two forms of sexual harassment: Quid Pro Quo and Hostile Work Environment.

Quid pro quo means “this for that.” This type of harassment occurs when an employment benefit is offered in exchange for some type of sexual favor. For example, a supervisor might offer a promotion to an employee if they agree to go out with them. Quid pro quo sexual harassment is illegal. It can be the grounds for a lawsuit.

Hostile work environment is the type of sexual harassment that occurs when there is frequent unwanted sexual comments, advances, requests, or other similar conduct. It can also occur when there is other verbal or physical conduct that is sexual in nature. This could include:

- Displays of inappropriate or offensive materials;
- Sexual jokes;
- Interference with someone’s ability to move freely; and
- Persistent, unwanted interactions, such as asking for dates continually.



Is it Sexual Harassment? (Activity)

For each scenario below, decide whether it would qualify as sexual harassment. Circle Yes if you believe the statement is sexual harassment, circle No if you do not think it is sexual harassment.

1. A manager tells an employee applying for a promotion that the job would be theirs if they just “treated her right.” **Yes or No**
2. One employee experiences repeated advances from another asking them for dates or “just to go out for drinks after work.” The employee says they are not interested, but the co-worker won’t take “no” for an answer. **Yes or No**
3. Two coworkers are telling sexual jokes in the workplace. A third coworker overhears and feels very uncomfortable. They ask them to stop, but they continue to tell the jokes. **Yes or No**
4. An employee asks out a coworker who politely declines. The employee spreads a rumor around the workplace that the coworker won’t go out with them because they are gay. **Yes or No**
5. A manager has a sexually suggestive screen saver on their computer. The computer is in the warehouse where everyone can see it. Employees have mentioned it makes them uncomfortable but the manager won’t change the screen saver. **Yes or No**
6. An employee was out sick and asked a coworker to take notes during an important meeting. When the employee asks the coworker for the notes the next day, the coworker says they will not give them up unless the employee goes on a date with them. **Yes or No**

Answer Key

1. **Yes:** This is Quid pro quo harassment. The manager is offering a promotion in exchange for favors from the employee
2. **Yes:** This is Hostile Work Environment harassment. The coworker continually asks even though the employee has declined, and this creates an uncomfortable environment for the employee.
3. **Yes:** This is Hostile Work Environment harassment. Though their coworker asks them to stop, they continue to make the jokes, making their coworker uncomfortable.
4. **Yes:** This is Hostile Work Environment harassment. The employee spreads a rumor about him throughout the office, which creates a hostile work environment.
5. **Yes:** This is Hostile Work Environment harassment. The manager will not change their screen saver even though it makes employees uncomfortable.
6. **Yes:** This is Quid pro quo harassment. The coworker is using the meeting notes to get the employee to go out on a date with them.

What to do if you experience sexual harassment in the workplace: First, talk to the other person. Let them know that their behavior makes you uncomfortable and ask them to stop. If they do not stop, report the behavior to your supervisor or human resources. Consult your employee handbook to see if your company has a specific process for reporting sexual harassment. It is against the law for coworkers or other employees to retaliate against you for reporting sexual harassment.

Is Your Online Profile Hurting Your Career?

Employers often view applicants' Facebook and other social media profiles when making hiring decisions. If the employer finds inappropriate or questionable content on your profile, you may not be considered for hire.

Directions: Answer the following questions by circling “**T**” for true or “**F**” for false. If you answered with mostly trues, you will want to edit the content and privacy settings of your social media profiles to be more employer-friendly.

1. My Facebook profile contains a lot of pictures of me drinking. **T or F**
2. My status updates contain curse words and inappropriate content. **T or F**
3. My friends post inappropriate pictures and messages on my wall. **T or F**
4. My profile pictures show off all my tattoos. **T or F**
5. When I Google my name, links to all my social media profiles show up. **T or F**
6. People who are not my friends can view my entire Facebook and Twitter profiles. **T or F**
7. I would not let my grandmother view my Facebook profile. **T or F**



Managing Stress

Directions: Looking for work or keeping your job can be stressful. A certain amount of stress makes life interesting and challenging. However, when there is too much stress or a person is not managing it well, illness can result. Research shows that stress is reduced by adding more things you enjoy doing to your routine.



Review the stress reducers below. Put a check mark in the column “I already use this strategy” if it is something you already do to relieve stress. If it is something you would like to try, put a checkmark in the column “I would like to try this strategy.” If the strategy is not interesting to you, do not put a mark in either column.

Strategy	I already use this strategy	I would like to try this strategy or develop it further
Talking to someone		
Using self-talk		
Participating in religion or other forms of spirituality		
Exercising		
Writing in a journal		
Listening to music		
Artwork		
Going for a walk		
Reading a book		
Watching a funny video		
Playing a video game		
Other: _____		
Other: _____		

Next steps: Review the items from the previous page and identify one or two strategies that you would like to try to help relieve stress. Write them in the space below, with a specific detail on how you will try implementing this strategy. *For example: I would like to try reading a book to relieve stress. To do this, I will pick out a book from the library and read it for 10 minutes every night before bed.*

Strategy:

How I will add this in my life:

Strategy:

How I will add this in my life:

How to Leave a Job on Good Terms

Directions: You have just received word that you got a new job. It might be the next step on your path to your dream job, or maybe you want to explore other opportunities. You might be wondering how to break the news to your current employer. The following steps will help you leave a job properly in order to make sure that you receive a good reference for future jobs.

Check off the items below as you complete them.

- Give at least two weeks' notice.** Be sure to tell your boss you are leaving before you tell any of your coworkers. Find out if Human Resources have a procedure to follow.
- Tell your coworkers.** Make sure they are prepared for your leaving. It is good to provide your contact information so your boss or coworkers can get in touch with you in the future if needed or desired.
- Complete all your work.** Finish all the projects you have been working on. This will help the person who replaces you as well as help you maintain a good reputation.
- Ask for an exit interview.** During this interview, thank your boss for all the opportunities the company has given you. Discuss what you have learned and how it will help you in the future.



Appendix

Acknowledgements

The Career Planning workbook is dedicated to Lori Sterner, Goodwill/Easter Seals Quality Assurance Manager, 1959 - 2013.

"Never doubt that a small group of dedicated individuals can change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has." -Margaret Mead

Production

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Additional partners who collaborated on this project can be found in the About Us section of the website.

[careerwise.minnstate.edu/exoffenders/about-us.html]

Distribution

This workbook is used in Goodwill/Easter Seals ReEntry programming within Minnesota Department of Corrections facilities. A copy of this workbook can be found:

- on the Minnesota State website [careerwise.minnstate.edu/exoffenders/workbook.html]
- Questions about the workbook? Contact Minnesota State: [https://askus.minnstate.edu/app/chat/chat_launch/c/1591]

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1. The information must be used for educational, noncommercial purposes.
2. The information must be accompanied by a citation that includes that this information is cited from the Minnesota State workbook or website.

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Minnesota Federal Bonding Program

Hire At-Risk Employees with No-Cost Bonding Insurance

Fidelity Bonding is no-cost employee dishonesty insurance that protects employers against employee theft of any money or property by means of theft, larceny, forgery or embezzlement. The Minnesota Federal Bonding Program provides individual Fidelity Bonds to employers for new or current employees who may be denied coverage by commercial carriers because of a:

- Record of arrest, conviction or imprisonment
- Economically disadvantaged youth or adults who lack a work history
- History of alcohol or drug abuse
- Poor credit history
- Welfare recipients
- Dishonorable discharge
- Lack of employment history
- Anyone who cannot secure employment without being bonded

How the Program Works

To be eligible for the bonding service, a person must have a full or part-time job or a job offer with a date set to start work. Also, the wages must be paid with Federal taxes automatically deducted from the paycheck. Self-employment is not eligible for the service.

Application - The Fidelity Bond is issued as a policy of Travelers Property Casualty. The Minnesota Department of

Employment and Economic Development is an authorized agency for the issuance of these Fidelity Bonds. The employer can contact the Minnesota Federal Bonding Coordinator to apply for a Fidelity Bond.

Processing - There are no papers for the employer to sign. The Fidelity Bond coverage for current employees is effective when the Minnesota Federal Bonding Coordinator certifies the bond. For new employees, the Fidelity Bond is effective the day the employee begins work.

Coverage - The Fidelity Bond has "no deductible" and the amount of insurance issued is \$5,000. The Fidelity Bond is mailed to the employer by Travelers Property Casualty. The duration of the Fidelity Bond is six months. If the bondee demonstrates honesty during the six months, Travelers Property Casualty will make a standard commercial policy available for the employer to purchase.

MN Federal Bonding Coordinator

WEBSITE: <http://mn.gov/deed>
(enter keyword "Bonding")

EMAIL: deed.wotc@state.mn.us

PHONE: 651-259-7521 or 1-888-234-5521

Rev. 01/17

Minnesota Bonding Program

1st National Bank Building 332 Minnesota Street Suite E200 Saint Paul Minnesota 55101-1351
651-259-7521 PHONE 888-234-5521 TOLL FREE 651-297-7722 FAX <http://mn.gov/deed>
An Equal Opportunity Employer and Service Provider

OFFICE OF WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

Fact Sheet

About WOTC

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is authorized under the *Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015* (the PATH Act) for new hires after December 31, 2014 and before January 1, 2020.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and U.S. Department of Treasury, through the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), jointly administer the implementation of the WOTC program. DOL, through the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), provides grant funding and policy guidance to the State Workforce Development Agencies, also called State Workforce Agencies (SWA) to administer the certification process, while IRS administers all tax-related provisions and requirements.

WOTC target groups include: 1) Qualified IV-A recipient; 2) Qualified veteran; 3) Qualified ex-felon; 4) Designated community resident; 5) Vocational rehabilitation referral; 6) Recipient of SNAP benefits (food stamps); 7) Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipient; 8) Long-term family assistance recipient; and 9) Qualified Long-term unemployment recipient.

Funding

For Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, SWAs received \$18,485,000 to support the administration of WOTC, which includes certification process and reporting data on a quarterly basis.

Outcomes

- ◆ In FY 2018, SWAs issued 2,204,142 certifications.
- ◆ In FY 2017, SWAs issued 2,027,012 certifications.
- ◆ In FY 2016, SWAs issued 2,484,149 certifications.
- ◆ In FY 2015, SWAs issued 1,896,528 certifications.
- ◆ In FY 2014, SWAs issued 1,300,934 certifications.

Note: Data may change due to performance reporting updates.

Information and Resources

For more information on how to file for the tax credit, visit the IRS website, <http://www.irs.gov/wotc> and the WOTC website, <https://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/>. Please email questions to Ask.WOTC@dol.gov.

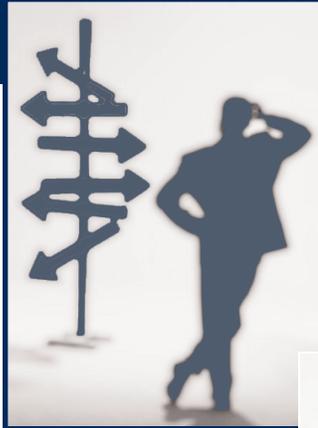
March 2019



EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Disclosure Decisions TO GET THE JOB

Every individual with a disability must choose whether to disclose (share) his or her disability with an employer. Primary factors to consider include whether accommodations will be needed on the job or whether a disability is visible or hidden. Other aspects related to the employer and the company may also influence your decision. Follow this disclosure decision guide to determine what will work best for you. Remember, if you choose to disclose your disability, you are protected from discrimination by federal laws.



First, identify a **NEED** for disclosure, such as determining accessibility, necessary accommodations, or potential job match. Consider your answers to questions in Chart 1 and decide if you have a reason to disclose.

If you decide that disclosure will help you be successful, look at the pros and cons of **WHEN** you disclose in Chart 2. Then, follow the general guidelines in Chart 3 to decide **HOW** to disclose.

Effective disclosure can establish a positive working relationship with your employer. Practicing with a close friend, family member, or career counselor can help to increase your comfort level and skills.



Three Steps to Disclosing a Disability

3. Choose HOW to Disclose

2. Decide WHEN to Disclose

1. Determine NEED for Disclosure

Virginia Commonwealth University

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1. Determine NEED for Disclosure: Gather all the Facts

Consider the questions below. "Yes" answers may indicate a need for or benefit of disclosure. "No" answers may indicate a need for more preparation or limited benefit of disclosure.

Area	Questions	Circle Answer
Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do I have background information about the company? Does the company, senior management, or owner welcome and value diversity? Has the company participated in any disability related recruitment programs? Is there a company policy on hiring individuals with disabilities? Does the company offer any internship programs? Is pre-employment testing required? What is the medium for testing? 	Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No
Job Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have I requested a detailed job description for the position? Do I know what are the essential functions and expectations of the job? Can I talk with an employee who is currently in this position or in a similar one? Will my compensatory strategies (e.g., use of adaptive software or assistive technology) change the traditional way of getting the job done? Will I need accommodations for the application process, interview process, or at the worksite? 	Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the supervisor use a flexible and personal management style? Does the employer have experience in managing differences or diversity? Does the employer focus on essential, rather than marginal functions? Has the employer had positive experiences hiring individuals with disabilities? Can I provide the employer with resource information about the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and my specific accommodation needs? 	Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No
Myself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Am I familiar with the protections provided by the ADA? Am I comfortable with my disability? Am I aware of my strengths and functional limitations? Will I need potential medical assistance? Have I explored technology or strategies to compensate for my limitations? Have I previously used accommodations at a work-site? Have I practiced disclosure with a family member, close friend, or career professional? 	Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No

Need More Information?

About company and position:

- University career centers
- Human resource departments
- Professional associations
- Local chambers of commerce
- Company specific websites
- Informational interviews

About potential accommodations:

- Job Accommodations Network
www.jan.wvu.edu
- Virginia Assistive Technology System -- www.vats.org
- ABLEDATA -- www.abledata.com
- Department of Rehabilitative Services -- www.vadrs.org

2. Decide WHEN to Disclose: Consider Pros and Cons

When	Potential Gains	Potential Setbacks
In a cover letter	Advance time to prepare positive written disclosure and to tailor your abilities to duties of job description.	Employer's preconceptions may hinder opportunity for an interview. Unable to read employer's body language and mood.
In a resume or on a job application	Establishes "up front" relationship and communication.	Employer may have stereotypes about disabilities and may not offer you an interview.
When employer calls for an interview	Establishes open communication and gives an employer time to review Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 compliance information.	May not get serious consideration during interview.
Before the interview	Shows respect to employer, gives employer advance notice to secure any accommodations that may be needed during the interview, and time to research proper etiquette or refresh knowledge on ADA.	Employer has advance time to yield to his or her stereotypes about disabilities.
During the interview	Opportunity to read employer body language, to time the disclosure, and to disclose in a brief, positive manner.	Employer may feel uneasy and ill prepared to respond with appropriate and legal questions.
After the job offer	May have legal recourse if disclosing disability negatively affects the hiring decision. There is time to get accommodations in place before the job starts. Positive relationship has already been established with employer.	Employer may feel that you have been dishonest in the application process, which may erode trust.
After the job begins	Gives opportunity to establish credibility before disclosure. Gives freedom to talk with co-workers about disability related issues.	May take time to secure requested accommodations. Employer may believe you have not been honest which may negatively affect your relationship.
When performance difficulties arise	Difficulties may not arise (i.e. you may never need to disclose).	Employer may have difficulty changing his or her perceptions of your work performance, feel betrayed or wonder why you waited so long.
Never	Disability information is kept private.	Not protected from discrimination under the ADA.

3. Choose HOW to Disclose: General Guidelines

How	Examples
Stress current involvement in a positive activity that shows your ability to manage your disability.	Resume -- Member of the American Blind Skiing Foundation
Be optimistic; focus on your abilities and job qualifications.	Cover Letter -- As an individual with a life long physical and speech disability, I learned early on to focus on my intellectual abilities and to develop strengths within my limits. For example, I received my first computer when I was 5 years old and learned to operate it independently. Today I am proficient in many software applications, operating systems, and system troubleshooting.
Give the employer information on what he or she needs to do or provide regarding communication, directions, or supervision.	Telephone Call Prior to the Interview -- "I am calling to confirm my interview scheduled at your company in 2 days. Could you please tell me where to find your office's accessible entrance?"
Educate the employer by articulating or demonstrating how you can perform the essential functions of the job. Have resource information available for the employer.	During the Interview -- Have you ever heard of a screen reader? I have a learning disability and have difficulty reading in the traditional way. My screen reader, which reads electronic information aloud using a computerized voice, has enabled me to succeed at college and I know it will be useful on this job. "
Explain the benefits of your disability regarding your personal growth or perseverance.	During the Interview -- "Through my disability, I have learned the value of connecting with professionals. I can be resourceful and creative to get the job done."
Face employer concerns by talking about your compensatory strategies or accommodation solutions.	During the Interview -- "You may be wondering how I can type letters with my physical disability. I have a great software program that allows the computer to type as I speak words. It can be loaded on most computers. I would be happy to show it to you sometime."
Use general, functional terms to briefly explain the impact of your disability on the job; avoid technical, medical diagnoses.	After the Job Offer -- "During the interview, you explained that work was verbally assigned at a staff meeting. I find that I work best when instructions are both written and verbal. I have a disability that makes processing verbal information a challenge. Could you accommodate me in this way?"
In a private setting, remind your employer about your right to confidentiality.	After the Job is Accepted -- After disclosing your disability in your employer's office: "Thank you in advance for keeping this information confidential."
Frame the disclosure around how you work best.	A Few Weeks on the Job -- "I have noticed that I am having a difficult time completing my work assignments. I have a medical condition that requires frequent breaks in order to do my work. Would you allow me to work later to enable me to take more breaks? I always get the job done when I manage my schedule in this way."



OPENING DOORS



Disclosure Decision Worksheet

YES
I will disclose

1

List the reasons why you **NEED** to disclose.

2

WHEN will you disclose your disability?

2

2

List the reasons for choosing this time.

3

HOW will you disclose your disability?

3

Write a few phrases telling your employer about your disability.

3

Practice your disclosure with another person.

NO
I will not disclose

List the reasons why you choose **not** to disclose.

For each new job, review the information in this brochure to determine whether or not to disclose.