

UNIT

11

Job Search Skills

REVIEW QUESTIONS

PART A

In the space provided after each sentence below, insert the bracketed letter of the appropriate definition in the following list.

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- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| a) education | b) work experience | c) application form |
| d) candidate | e) interviewers | f) 10 days |
| g) thank-you letters | h) 15 days | i) computers |
| j) references | k) contact numbers | l) three days |
| m) employment agencies | n) fringe benefits | o) travel agencies |
| p) preparation | q) résumé | r) applicant |
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1. Many companies use the services of these in filling their job vacancies. _____
2. Another name to describe a job applicant is this. _____
3. An application letter should always be accompanied by one of these. _____
4. The first section of your résumé will show this information. _____
5. People whom you use to recommend you when you apply for a job are known as these. _____
6. The key to confidence in an interview is this. _____
7. When you arrive for an interview you may be asked to complete one of these. _____
8. In addition to salary, a job frequently includes these advantages. _____
9. Always send one of these after an interview. _____
10. The length of time to allow before you follow up an interview is about this many days. _____

PART B

Answer the following questions in the space provided.

1. Why is it desirable to keep a copy of your application letter?

2. List five sources of job openings.

3. Employment agencies and career counselling services offer certain advantages to job seekers over other employment sources. What are these advantages?

4. Give four essential features of a well-written application letter.

5. How should a well-prepared non-Internet résumé be presented?

6. In the section of your résumé entitled "Business Experience," in what order will you present the information?

7. Why might a prospective employer be interested in your interests and hobbies?

8. If you were to organize your résumé by function, how would you do it?

9. The job interview is designed to do what two things?

10. Provide two examples of the types of questions you should be prepared to ask at an interview.

11. Provide four examples of the types of questions you would be well advised to be ready to answer at an interview.

12. Why would it not be a good idea to photocopy your application letter and send one to each of several firms?

13. Textbooks contain many samples of application letters and résumés. Why is it not a good idea just to copy one of them?

14. List three advantages and three disadvantages of posting your résumé on the Internet.

15. Why do employers want job applicants to complete application forms when most of the information sought is already contained in the application letter and résumé?

16. What preparations should you make before you attend an interview?

17. The suggestion is made that you attend an interview alone. Why do you think this suggestion is made?

18. What does the interview tell about the job applicant that cannot be found in the letter of application?

CALCULATIONS

Insert the answers to the following calculations in the spaces provided.

1. You create a dynamite looking résumé and now you would like to have it copied professionally. Your local print shop gives you two prices: \$1.15 per page for single-sided, and \$1.45 per page for double-sided (back-to-back). Your résumé is three pages long. What is the cost for 10 copies in each format, excluding taxes?

Single-sided: _____

Double-sided: _____

2. Your company offers you an additional week's vacation for a reduction of 2% in your salary. You currently earn \$29 450 a year. How much will this additional week cost?

3. Your annual performance review resulted in a 3.4% increase on your salary in #2. What is your new annual salary figure?

4. There are 52 union members at Cargill Factories. They pay a percentage of their salary in union dues. What is the total paid in dues each year?

Work Group	Number	Salary	Dues Percentage
Supervisor	4	\$52 454	3.0%
Assistant Supervisor	7	\$45 234	2.5%
Lead Mechanic	10	\$43 998	2.25%
Mechanic	26	\$39 675	2.1%
Apprentice	5	\$23 998	2.0%

5. Which job is the highest paid: \$13.25/h for 35 hours per week, \$525 per week, \$2000 per month, or \$25 000 per year?

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

1. If your school has access to the Internet, research the different ways companies look for employees on the Net. Prepare your findings in a written report.
2. Contact a major corporation to see how it finds suitable applicants for vacancies. Of the different ways, calculate the percentage use of each type (newspaper advertisement, magazine, Internet, etc.) and create a "poster board" display of your findings.
3. Gather sample application forms from different companies and compare them as to ease of completion, the type of information they require, etc. Decide which one is the best and present your finding in an oral report.
4. Are you really happy in your job? This is an interesting question. Among your family and friends conduct an informal survey on this question. Before you start, create a short list of questions that you will ask of each survey participant. You might also want to create a summary sheet to record the answers. Present your findings in an oral report.
5. Contact several firms to find out what weaknesses and what qualities applicants display during job interviews and in application letters and résumés. Present your findings in an oral report.
6. In one week, locate five job ads for which you believe you are qualified. Paste these on a sheet and indicate why you believe these jobs are appropriate and desirable for you. Give your list to two colleagues and ask for their opinion of your chances/suitability for each position.

7. Nobody likes change, especially when it directly affects their job. Conduct a small research project to determine how different people cope with change in their day-to-day jobs. Present your findings in an oral report.
8. "If I give them more money, they'll only have one less thing to complain about." As an incentive, does money alone lead to job satisfaction? Form teams and debate this question.
9. Ask a few local businesses how they find new employees. Ask which approach seems most successful and why they believe this is so. Present your findings in an e-mail to your instructor.
10. Some companies appear to be better employers than others. Select a company and find out the following information: salary-increase policy, hours of work, benefits, vacations, training, retraining, assistance with professional development, educational allowances, performance appraisals, and promotion policy. Present your findings in an oral report.
11. For some jobs, the conventional method of applying is not appropriate. If your ambition is to be a franchise operator, for example, how would you apply? What would you have to do if you wanted to open your own veterinary office? What about becoming a freelance artist or photographer, a dancer, a model, an interior decorator, or opening a desktop publishing business? Obviously a résumé and application letter would not do. What would be required? What other non-traditional jobs can you think of that would require some creativity in establishing yourself? Present your findings in an oral report.
12. "Dress for success!" How important is what you wear and how you look to career advancement? Consult texts, recent articles, friends, and acquaintances in the business world. Then plan a debate on the issue: "It's the inner person that counts—not the cover!"
13. Research and review the latest résumé preparation software. Express your opinion of the software in an oral presentation.
14. Many companies scan résumés for easier applicant tracking in their human resources departments. Research what is involved when a résumé is scanned and it is matched to a suitable position through keywords, etc. Present your findings in a short report and e-mail the report to your instructor.
15. When jobs are difficult to find, applicants must use creative methods to capture the attention of potential employers. One such method is to create a multimedia résumé. Research what is involved in preparing such a résumé and when it would be appropriate. Then, working with colleagues, create one.

ON-THE-JOB ACTIVITIES

1. You are about to write your résumé when a friend suggests that you prepare an outline, starting with the following main sections and then adding items under each section as you think of them.

- educational accomplishments
- jobs and positions held, in chronological order (last job listed first)
- special or other skills
- special projects or short jobs
- activities, interests, and hobbies
- specific skills, knowledge achieved through education, work, or home life (organizational skills, keying speed, software knowledge)
- possible references.

Draft your résumé using this method.

2. It is essential to keep a positive attitude when looking for a job. List the advantages of being in the job market and visiting various companies to see what they have to offer. Discuss your thoughts with your colleagues.

3. Making the decision about the type of career you want involves more than just finding a way to use the skills you have developed. There are some lifestyle considerations to take into account as well. Get to know yourself a little better as you work your way through this activity.

List all of the things that are important to you (e.g., spending time outdoors); that you're good at and enjoy doing (e.g., speaking in front of a group of people); the personal qualities that you have (e.g., a great sense of humour); the skills that you have (e.g., three years of accounting). Now create a list of the things you really don't like to do and feel you're not so good at but could work on.

Take a look at your list and see if you can identify some career possibilities that you may not have thought of. Now give your list to friends for them to identify some career possibilities that they feel would make the best use of your talents and abilities.

Compare the results.

4. Most careers start with a set of short-term goals that lead toward long-term career goals. Prepare a flowchart showing your short- and long-term goals.

5. Read through the advertisement at the top of the following page and answer the questions about it.

JR. ADMIN. ASS'T.

Admin. Ass't required for busy sales dept. to respond to sales inquiries. Excellent language skills essential. Other duties include making travel/ meeting plans, maintaining a records management system. Word processing, spreadsheet, and Internet skills needed. Post-sec. business grad with some experience. Excellent promotion prospects. Salary range \$22 000-\$26 000. Three weeks' annual vacation. Dental plan. Send written application with résumé to MAKE Systems Inc., 321 Wallace St., Nanaimo, BC V9R 5B6 or fax to (250) 755-1710.

a) What does *Jr.* mean?

b) What does *Ass't.* mean?

c) What do you consider to be excellent language skills?

d) In which department is the job available?

e) Is keyboarding essential for the job?

f) What could you include as "some experience"?

g) What does *post-sec. business grad* mean?

h) What will your application include?

i) Which of your qualifications will you highlight in your letter?

j) What salutation and complimentary closing will you use in your letter?

k) What information will you use on your envelope for: The return address? The mailing address?

l) Would a telephone call be acceptable as a response to this ad?

m) What would you use as the inside address of your letter?

n) Does the job include a yearly vacation?

o) A dental plan is one of the benefits included. What others might be included?

6. When using some on-line résumé builders, you have to select a figure in the Salary Expected field. Discuss the pros and cons of this requirement with your colleagues.

7. One of the major problems when reading advertisements or applying for jobs is to know what functions are performed by various departments. Working in small groups, decide what functions might be performed in the following departments:

- Purchasing
- Production
- Research and development (R&D)
- Marketing
- Finance and accounting
- Administration

8. E-mail a memo to your instructor explaining why a firm would want to hire you, bearing in mind the qualities employers are looking for. Prepare your memo off-line to save money and then attach it to your e-mail message.
9. What you wear to a job interview is extremely important. To help you to be properly prepared when the time comes, plan an appropriate outfit by cutting pictures from catalogues and magazines and pasting them onto a sheet of paper. Include reasons for your selections.
10. Prepare a letter of application for a job of your choice from a recent newspaper, following the guidelines provided in the *Pitman Office Handbook* or by your instructor. Trade letters with a colleague. Have your colleague evaluate your letter while you do the same for him/her. A sample evaluation sheet appears on the following page. Amend your letter as required after the evaluation.

APPLICATION LETTER EVALUATION SHEET		
<p>You are asked to evaluate the attached letter. To help, please focus on the features of a well-written application letter, as discussed in class. Insert a check mark in the appropriate box in each case.</p>		
	Yes	No
Does the letter have three paragraphs?		
Are the "I's" used sparingly?		
Paragraph 1:		
Does it have an interesting opening?		
Does it show the source of the advertisement being answered, including the date?		
Does it specify the job for which application is being made?		
Does the writer apply for the job?		
Paragraph 2:		
Does the writer emphasize his/her specific skills/qualifications that are appropriate for the job?		
Does the letter give information to back up these skills and qualifications?		
Does it contain only positives?		
Does it make reference to an enclosed résumé?		
Paragraph 3:		
Does it ask for an interview?		
Does it include telephone number(s) for contact?		
Does it close politely?		
Is the letter completely error-free (grammar, spelling, punctuation)?		
Comments/suggestions to improve wording: _____ _____ _____		
Would you grant the writer of this letter an interview? Why or why not? _____ _____ _____		
Evaluator: _____ Letter Grade: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤		

11. Completing an application form is part of applying for a job. To provide you with practice, complete the form below, in handwriting, as neatly and as clearly as you can. You might want to make a copy and use that, keeping the original form.

Tusker International Consulting Ltd. EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION FORM			
Name:		Phone:	
Address:			
Type of Work Desired:			
Education:	Name and Address:	Course Taken/Degree	No. of Yrs. Completed
HIGH SCHOOL			
COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY			
OTHER			
List any previous duties, skills, or achievements that are relevant to position applied for:			
<hr/> <hr/>			
Employment History: Show Current or Last Employer First			
EMPLOYER'S NAME	FROM	POSITIONS HELD	
ADDRESS	TO		
NAME OF LAST SUPERVISOR/MANAGER	END RATE		
EMPLOYER'S NAME	FROM	POSITIONS HELD	
ADDRESS	TO		
NAME OF LAST SUPERVISOR/MANAGER	END RATE		
EMPLOYER'S NAME	FROM	POSITIONS HELD	
ADDRESS	TO		
NAME OF LAST SUPERVISOR/MANAGER	END RATE		
References: Provide names and telephone numbers of three references.			
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12. Assume that you are granted a job interview. Create an evaluation checklist comprising at least 15 points that you might complete at home after the interview. The following are some suggestions to get you started:
- Was I relaxed?
 - Did I remember the interviewer's name?
 - Did I smile?
13. Assume the following and write appropriate letters:
- a) You have been offered a job for which you applied and want to accept.
 - b) You have been offered a job for which you applied but do not want to accept.
14. a) Apply for a job (designed by your instructor) using a fictitious name. Complete an application letter, a résumé, and an envelope. "Mail" your application in a place provided in class. Be sure that you do not reveal your fictitious name to either colleagues or your instructor. (While you may be using a fictitious name, you should use only accurate information in your application.)
- b) Your instructor will screen all of the applications and eliminate any with errors in spelling or grammar, unattractive formatting, or other faults.
 - c) Your instructor will read the remaining letters to the class and, as a class, you will select the three best candidates for interviewing.
 - d) Stage mock interviews with the remaining three candidates and make a final selection.
15. "I'll be glad to get out of school because it means I'll never have to be in a classroom again." Discuss.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

In the space provided, indicate what you would do in the following situations.

1. You have left ample time to get to an interview but, unfortunately, there is an accident on the highway and the road is completely blocked. You know that you are not going to arrive on time.

2. You are asked at an interview to take a test on a piece of equipment you have not used before.

3. You hear through a friend about a job at ABC Company. You would like to apply for it.

4. You go to an employment agency with a detailed résumé. On your arrival, the receptionist asks you to complete an application form. The application form asks for the same information that is on your résumé.

5. Your father hears of a job opening in the company where he works. It is just the type of job you want.

6. You are very short of money and do not have any suitable clothes for a job interview.

7. You have no previous work experience to show on your résumé except some babysitting and volunteer work.

8. You made a spelling error in your application letter and realized this after you had mailed it.

9. You have received no response to your application letter.

10. You cannot keep an appointment for an interview because you would prefer to attend another interview that has to be held at the same time.

11. You did not take the precaution of visiting ahead of time the office at which you were to be interviewed and now you cannot find the place. The time is 1:55 p.m. and the interview is scheduled for 2 p.m.

12. While you are waiting for an interview, the interviewer's assistant says unpleasant things about the firm.

13. The interviewer offers you a cigarette, a cup of coffee, or a candy.

14. The salary mentioned in the interview is significantly lower than you had anticipated.

15. You realize part way through an interview that you really do not want the job.

16. You arrive home and realize that no mention of salary was made at an interview you attended this afternoon.

17. You have received no response after an interview and you had expected to hear within 10 days.

18. You got a job and found after a few days that you really did not like it.

19. You feel that the person who has just interviewed you has shown signs of bias against you and that you have, in fact, been the victim of prejudice.
