

## MARKETING READINESS QUIZ

### Directions

Once you have worked through each of them, complete the Self-Assessment Summary Sheet on page 19. In addition to these tools, several online self-assessment instruments are linked from the **Companion Website**.

Do you have a "marketing or sales personality"? Are you "market-oriented" and "sales minded"? According to career personnel, those are the qualities you must have to get the job of your choice. What follows is not a test of your sales knowledge; rather, it is a quiz to evaluate your sales personality and your attitude toward selling in general by asking you questions about selling yourself in the job market. Be honest with yourself as you take this quiz. Go with your instincts, not with what you think the answer should be. You can't fail this quiz; it is only meant as a guide to help you judge your sales readiness.

For each question, circle the response that best describes you. Then, use the Quiz Rating Scale at the end of the quiz to determine your score. Finally, use the Marketing Readiness Categories to determine how your score reflects your sales readiness.

1. You are planning a vacation with a friend. You want to go to Paris, and your friend wants to go on a cruise. Would you:
  - A. Talk dynamically about Paris and what you love about it?
  - B. Debate or ignore every reason he presents for going on the cruise?
  - C. Try to find out what it is about the cruise that appeals to your friend the most?
2. What is the most difficult aspect of getting a job?
  - A. Finding the right job opportunities
  - B. Asking for the job at the interview
  - C. Calling to make the appointment
3. When you picture a salesperson in your mind's eye, do you see:
  - A. A person who is trying to help you solve a problem?
  - B. An arm-twisting, aggressive salesperson?
  - C. A smooth persuader whose main motive is to sell a product or service?
4. Your main goal at a job interview is:
  - A. To get the job
  - B. To get as much information as possible
  - C. To ask questions
5. When you solve a major problem at work, do you:
  - A. Go in and ask for a raise?
  - B. Write it down and bring it up at performance appraisal time?
  - C. Give it little notice and assume your boss is keeping an eye on all of your accomplishments?



6. You are planning to buy three pairs of expensive shoes in a small store, or three pieces of expensive electronic equipment. Do you:
  - A. Pay for them without any discussion?
  - B. Ask at the outset whether you will get a discount if you buy all three?
  - C. Say, after trying on shoes or examining the equipment for some time, "I might buy all three if you give a discount"?
7. The last time someone said no to you, did you:
  - A. Ask why she said no?
  - B. Take the no as an irrevocable decision?
  - C. Keep trying to persuade her to say yes?
8. When you are in a group of very aggressive, talkative people, do you:
  - A. Hold your own comfortably?
  - B. Sit back timidly, content to listen?
  - C. Speak up occasionally because you don't want to be left out?
9. If someone asks you to describe your best feature, do you:
  - A. Talk non-stop for hours?
  - B. Blush and not know where to start?
  - C. Briefly discuss two or three admirable traits?
10. If you hear about a job opening, do you:
  - A. Send a resumé?
  - B. Call personnel to get more information?
  - C. Try to contact the person you'd actually be working for?
11. How do you prepare for a job interview?
  - A. Role-play with friends or colleagues
  - B. Develop a list of questions to ask
  - C. Think about what you'll be asked and prepare some answers
12. When sending out a letter with your resumé to a prospective employer, do you:
  - A. Send a form letter?
  - B. Think about not sending a letter?
  - C. Write a tailored letter for each job?
13. If you call a prospective employer and he immediately says, "We're not hiring today," what do you think is the reason for that statement?
  - A. The employer took an instant dislike to you
  - B. It's not the right time
  - C. He doesn't have a good reason to talk to you

14. If you are selling computers and need customers, do you:
  - A. Call up all of your friends?
  - B. Attend a seminar on "Computer Basics for Small Business Owners"?
  - C. Open a phone book and start cold calling?
15. You applied for a job you really wanted and were turned down by Human Resources personnel. Do you:
  - A. Call and try to get another appointment?
  - B. Accept the decision and try another company?
  - C. Try to find out to whom you would report and make an appointment directly with that person?
16. Why do you think people "buy"?
  - A. Because it makes them feel good
  - B. Because their buying is based on a logical decision
  - C. Because they like the salesperson
17. You are going on an important interview. Do you:
  - A. Research the company?
  - B. Wing it?
  - C. Decide that you'll ask questions during the interview to learn what you need to know?
18. A friend gives you a referral. Do you:
  - A. Take the name and number and say, "I'll call next week"?
  - B. Take the name and number and call immediately?
  - C. Ask your friend for more information about the job and the boss?
19. Why is listening such an important part of the sales process?
  - A. To get important information
  - B. To find out the hidden concerns
  - C. To show that you care
20. What is the best way to stay in control during a sales presentation or a job interview?
  - A. Always have planned questions
  - B. Keep talking in a very persuasive manner
  - C. Answer every objection or concern raised
21. At the end of a job interview, do you:
  - A. Say thank you and leave?
  - B. Ask for the job?
  - C. Ask when you'll be hearing from the employer?

22. You've been searching for a job for six months and have been rejected 20 times. Do you:
- A. Get angry and take it out on friends and family?
  - B. Begin to doubt your own abilities?
  - C. Re evaluate your interviewing skills?
23. In an interview situation, which do you view as a strong signal of acceptance?
- A. The interviewer asks, "When can you start?"
  - B. The interviewer says, "This would be your desk."
  - C. The interview goes on for a long time.
24. You receive a memo from a colleague complimenting your performance. Do you:
- A. Show it to your family, friends, and colleagues?
  - B. Acknowledge it, feel good, and stash it away?
  - C. Make copies and send it to your boss, her boss, and even the company president?
25. Who do you think gets to the top in most organizations?
- A. People who work the hardest
  - B. People who fit into the corporate culture
  - C. People who sell themselves most effectively

For each response, assign the point value indicated. Read the related discussion for each, then add up your total points.

**1. A = 3 B = 1 C = 5**

The worst way to sell anything is to ignore or argue with the other person (B). This only hurts his feelings or makes him want to cling stubbornly to his position. Talking dynamically about Paris (A) may help, but the real secret to selling is to appeal to what the other person wants or needs. By finding out what's most appealing about the cruise (C), you'll learn what the other person really wants. If he says, "There's a lot of dancing on board ship," for instance, you can counter with a list of places to go dancing in Paris.

**2. A = 3 B = 5 C = 3**

Even the most experienced salespeople sometimes have difficulty "asking for the order" (B). When you're in an interview (the ultimate sales situation), an essential sales skill is knowing how to be assertive without being aggressive. Finding job opportunities (A) is not difficult if you take advantage of research tools available in the papers and the library, and personal contacts. Calling to make the appointment (C), also an important skill, is not difficult if you use three Ps: patience, practice, and perseverance.

**3. A = 5 B = 0 C = 1**

Your own notion of what a salesperson is determines your ability to succeed in today's job market. If you see salespeople as arm twisters (B), you won't feel very good about having to sell yourself. If you see a person who's trying to help you solve a problem (A), that's the kind of salesperson you'll be during your job hunt. Smooth persuaders (C) usually do well in this world, but they typically finish second to someone genuinely concerned with solving other people's problems.

**4. A = 5 B = 5 C = 5**

All three of these answers are good, but one is better than the others. You want to come away with a job offer so you can decide whether or not to take the job (A). You want to get as much information as possible so you can make a smart decision about the job (B). The best answer is to go in prepared to ask questions (C) in order to accomplish A and B.

**5. A = 5 B = 3 C = 1**

If you go right in and ask for a raise, you're sales oriented and interested in building your value (A). This is the best approach, in step with today's more assertive approach to life. Waiting for performance appraisal time is good (B), but that may be a long time off. One philosophy is that it's more important to keep yourself in the eye of the organization. You do this by letting people know when you've done something valuable. If you give it little notice (C), no one else will notice it either. If you don't sell yourself, nobody else will.

**6. A = 1 B = 3 C = 5**

Negotiation is an important selling skill. The best time to ask for a discount is after a salesperson has invested time showing her wares (C). At that point, she'd rather give you a deal than lose the sale. You get three points for asking for a discount when you come in (B). You're on the right track, but you don't want to tip your hand at the beginning. You get one point for being successful enough to afford paying full price for the three items (A).

**7. A = 5 B = 1 C = 3**

It's important to know why someone says no (A) if you want to get a yes the next time. It might even tell you how to change the no to a yes this time. If you keep trying to make the sale (C), you're not easily dissuaded and have enough confidence in yourself to try again. If you take every no as an irrevocable decision (B), you're not giving yourself a chance to learn what your mistake might have been.

**8. A = 5 B = 2 C = 3**

Congratulations on holding your own (A) and feeling comfortable about it. Competition for jobs will be great, and the better your communications skills, the easier you'll find it is to sell yourself and increase your chances of getting the jobs you want. Speaking up occasionally (C) gets you three points for realizing that you should make an effort to participate. You get two points for listening

(B) because you may gain valuable information. But you have to learn to hold your own in a conversation if you're going to compete in the job market.

**9. A = 1 B = 3 C = 5**

Talking non-stop about your product (in this case, you) is not a very effective sales technique (A). Your customers will see you as pushy or unconcerned with their welfare. If you blush and don't know where to start (B), it means you're unprepared for the question. You wouldn't start selling cars without knowing anything about them, so prepare yourself for the questions your customers will most likely ask. If your answer was (C), it shows you think enough of yourself to discuss your good qualities without being obnoxious.

**10. A = 1 B = 2 C = 5**

If you emulate successful salespeople, you'll take the initiative, be more assertive, and go directly to the person who makes the final hiring decision (C). Because you've heard about the position, use your source to get your foot in the door: "Johnny Jones suggested I call." Calling Human Resources to get more information (B) is less helpful but shows you're willing to do some research. If you just send a resumé to Human Resources (A), you're not taking advantage of your inside knowledge.

**11. A = 5 B = 5 C = 5**

This is a question where all three answers are good. Doing well at job interviews takes skill, and the way to build a skill is to be prepared and practise, practise, practise.

**12. A = 2 B = 0 C = 5**

Sending a resumé with no cover letter at all (B) tells a potential employer that you have no special interest in him or his company. The sales-oriented approach is to let the employer know why he should read the resumé and call you in for an interview. You do this by sending a letter tailored specifically for him (C). Sending a form letter is almost as bad as no letter at all (A).

**13. A = 1 B = 3 C = 5**

In selling terms, you've encountered sales resistance in this situation, which occasionally occurs when the customer doesn't like the salesperson (A). But in this case, you haven't spoken long enough for the employer to dislike you (unless you were rude or obnoxious). It's possible that the employer was busy and you caught him at a bad time (B). But the most common reason for resistance is that the salesperson hasn't established the value of the product or service (C)—in other words, hasn't presented a strong enough reason for the customer to buy (or for the employer to keep talking to you). If this happens often when you call, it means you should change your approach.

**14. A = 4 B = 5 C = 1**

Calling all of your friends (A) is an excellent way to start because networking is one of the best ways to find buyers for your product. Attending a seminar for new business owners (B) shows you have strong sales sensibilities. People who



attend such seminars are "qualified" buyers; they're definitely in the market for your product, so your chances of making a sale here are very good. Just opening the phone book (C) and making calls may bring you a few customers, but you'll probably waste most of your time and effort. In the job search, the more qualified buyers you reach, the better your chances of getting the job you want.

**15. A = 3 B = 0 C = 5**

If you have been turned down by personnel and just accept this decision (B), you are too easily discouraged. Successful salespeople try to close the sale (get the person to buy) at least five times before they even consider giving up. Going directly to the decision maker (C) demonstrates sales smarts and persistence, both necessary and desirable qualities for the job-search process. Trying to get another appointment through personnel (A) is not as effective, but does show you're resilient and not easily put off.

**16. A = 5 B = 1 C = 3**

Emotions play a big part in both the selling and hiring processes. People buy (or hire) for emotional reasons (A); the product fulfills a need or desire they have. That's why, in order to sell yourself to an employer, you'll have to show him how you'll solve his problems or fulfill his needs. People also buy from people they like, trust, and respect (C). You can't make someone like you, but you can show that you are a person worthy of trust and respect. Logic almost always plays a lesser role in the decision-making process (B).

**17. A = 5 B = 0 C = 3**

Although asking questions (C) is an essential part of the interview process, most people are impressed by what you already know about them. Before you go on a "sales call," learn as much as you can about the company and the person you're going to see (A). You'll stand out from other applicants. If you try to wing it (B), you put yourself at a definite disadvantage—you'll know nothing about the company or the job before sitting down with the interviewer.

**18. A = 1 B = 3 C = 5**

The best answer in this case is to ask your friend for more information before you make the call (C). You want to find out something about the person you'll be calling (who she is, what her position is in the company, etc.), what the job is like, and why this job is open. Calling immediately (B) shows you have initiative, but you'd be better off researching the company first. If you say, "I'll call next week" (A), you're probably just putting it off and may lose the opportunity.

**19. A = 5 B = 5 C = 5**

All three answers are good. There's an old saying that "Customers don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." In a hiring situation, the interviewer wants to know how much you care about the job and the company (C). Listening carefully also gives you important factual information (A) and may reveal the hidden concerns of the individual interviewer (B), the real reasons you will or won't get hired.

**20. A = 5 B = 1 C = 3**

Here is an important sales maxim: "The person who asks the questions controls the conversation." Going into the interview with a series of planned questions (A) keeps you in control of the situation and makes sure you get all of the information you need to make a smart decision. What you think is talking in a persuasive manner (B) may come across as conceited and pushy. Without asking questions, you could end up talking for hours and never satisfy the employer's real concerns. Clearly, answering objections or concerns (C) is essential to a successful interview, but that doesn't give you the same control that asking questions does.

**21. A = 1 B = 5 C = 3**

It's important that you "ask for the sale" or, in this case, the job (B). Ask in a pleasant, civil way so that you don't turn people off. Saying thank you and leaving (A) is not going to help you get the job unless you're the most sought-after person in the world. Asking when you'll be hearing from the employer (C) shows a little more assertiveness and is better than just saying thanks and leaving. But more than likely you'll be told, "We have several candidates to choose from. We'll call you."

**22. A = 0 B = 1 C = 5**

The best answer here is to re-evaluate your interviewing skills (C). Twenty interviews can give you a lot of good experience in different situations that may arise. Go over your experiences and ask yourself what you did right and what can be improved. If you begin to doubt your own abilities (B), you're taking rejection too personally. A negative decision may have nothing to do with your personality. Getting angry at yourself or at anyone else (A) doesn't improve your skills or your chances at the next interview. Don't give up trying; the next interview could be the one you've been waiting for!

**23. A = 3 B = 5 C = 1**

Most people take a long interview as a sign of definite interest (C). In fact, this often signifies nothing more than a disorganized interviewer, someone who doesn't really know what he's looking for. Don't assume an hour-long interview means you're going to be hired. If, however, the interviewer starts to visualize you in the job and refers to "your" desk or "your" co-workers (B), that is a pretty good clue that there is a strong interest. "When can you start?" (A) is a possible sign of interest, but it may also indicate that the employer is in urgent need of someone and may not be able to wait until you're available.

**24. A = 3 B = 1 C = 5**

Are you secure enough to take hold of your future and make sure the right people see what others think of you? Because only the rich and famous have public relations agents, you have to assume that role for yourself. The best answer is (C). Showing the letter to your friends and colleagues (A) will make you feel better and perhaps add to your reputation but may not do much where your boss is concerned. Feeling good is always nice (B), but why pass up opportunities to increase your visibility?



25.  $A = 3$   $B = 4$   $C = 5$

Although we're in the middle of the information age, we're also at the beginning of the age of marketing. Even political candidates have to "sell" themselves if they want to get elected. You must be well versed in sales and marketing skills to get ahead (C). Corporate fit is and will continue to be important (B), but work is becoming less structured in many situations. Hard workers (A) are not to be discounted, but they are not necessarily the people who get ahead. In a small or newly organized company, this may be the case, but unless other people know how hard you work, or unless you "fit in" with the rest of the team, your hard work will not always be appreciated.

### **Marketing Readiness Categories**

#### ***96–125 points***

Good for you! You've scored high in sales readiness, which means you're one step ahead of the competition already. You have a positive attitude toward selling and a personality that makes you a natural for marketing yourself!

#### ***71–95 points***

You are well on your way toward the sales and marketing orientation required for success in today's market. You're thinking in the right direction, and with just a little improvement, there'll be no stopping you!

#### ***46–70 points***

You're not quite at the level you should be, but you're getting there. You should be a bit more assertive and have more confidence in yourself. All it takes is a shift in attitude and a willingness to learn. You're on the right track.

#### ***45 points or less***

You need to re-evaluate your attitudes and perceptions regarding sales and marketing. Doing the exercises and following the advice in this book will help improve your readiness to market yourself and increase your job-search know-how.

How well did you score as a salesperson or marketing expert? What did you learn about yourself? Are there any aspects of selling yourself that need improvement? Write your thoughts below, focusing on ways to strengthen your sales and marketing readiness.

## SELF-AWARENESS CHECKLIST

An important part of self-assessment is self-awareness. How do you see yourself and others? How much do you know about the ways you react to situations? To determine your level of self-awareness, read the statements below and place an X in the circle that corresponds to how often you feel this way. Use this page to help you think about how you perceive yourself and how you wish to be perceived.

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I am eager to learn.					
My work is exciting.					
I'm willing to listen with an open mind.					
I constantly have new insights.					
I like taking direction from people who know something I don't.					
I try to look at the world through the eyes of the other person.					
When someone is talking to me, I really listen.					
I'm honest with myself and others.					
I've thought about my own strengths and weaknesses.					
I'm sensitive to others' needs.					
I care for and am concerned about others.					
I adapt easily to the environment and situation.					
I am willing to take risks.					
I am satisfied with the way I look physically.					
I am satisfied with the way I feel physically.					

## ABILITY ASSESSMENT

In our day-to-day lives, we often don't take time to make a serious assessment of ourselves. This is critical to conducting a successful job search. In the following exercise, you will look at what you consider to be your talents and examine a variety of ability areas in an attempt to pinpoint your unique qualities.

The ability categories are defined on the following pages. Evaluate yourself on each of these according to the following scale:

- 1 = No ability at all
- 2 = Enough ability to get by with some help
- 3 = Some natural ability
- 4 = Definite, strong ability
- 5 = Outstanding ability

Try not to compare yourself with any particular reference group such as other students, other colleagues, or the general population. Just rate yourself according to your best assessment of your individual capability.

**VERBAL/PERSUASIVE**

*Writing:* express self well in writing

*Talking:* express self well in ordinary conversation

*Speaking:* deliver a speech, address an audience

*Persuading:* convince others of your view

*Selling:* convince others to purchase a product or service

*Negotiating:* bargain or assist in the bargaining process

**SOCIAL**

*Social ease:* relax and enjoy social situations such as parties or receptions

*Appearance:* dress appropriately and presentably for a variety of interpersonal or group occasions

*Self-esteem:* maintain a positive view of self, including accepting negative feedback or criticism

*Dealing with public:* continually relate to a broad cross section of people who need information, service, or help

**TECHNICAL**

*Computational speed:* manipulate numerical data rapidly and accurately without using any mechanical device

*Working with data:* comfortably work with large amounts of data; compile, interpret, and present such data

*Computer use:* use computers to solve problems, knowledge of programming, and familiarity with various computer capabilities

**INVESTIGATIVE**

*Scientific curiosity:* comfortable with scientific method of inquiry, knowledge of scientific phenomena

*Research:* gather information in a systematic way for a certain field of knowledge

**CREATIVE**

*Artistic:* sensitivity to aesthetics, create works of art

*Use imagination:* create new ideas or forms with various physical objects

*Use imagination:* create new ideas by merging abstract ideas in new ways

**WORKING WITH OTHERS**

*Supervisory:* oversee, direct, and manage work of others

*Teaching:* help others learn how to do something or to understand something; provide insight

*Coaching:* instruct or train for improvement of performance

*Counselling:* develop helping relationship with another individual

### MANAGERIAL

*Organization and planning:* develop a program, project, or set of ideas with systematic preparation and arrangement of tasks; coordinate people and resources as well

*Orderliness:* arrange items in a regular fashion so that information is readily retrieved and used

*Handling details:* work with a variety or volume of information without losing track

*Making decisions:* comfortably make judgments or reach conclusions about matters that require action; accept responsibility for the consequences of such actions

Now that you have reflected on your abilities, decide which ones you believe represent your most prominent strengths. Refer to those areas that have 4s and 5s. Now, choose which are your most outstanding and noteworthy abilities and list them below. Remember these as you continue to focus on the personal abilities and skills you have to offer an employer.

## TRANSFERABLE SKILLS CHECKLIST

Transferable skills are those general competencies that you have developed from previous jobs, volunteer work, or life experiences. These competencies are very valuable when marketing yourself to employers—especially if you are a recent college graduate with little direct business or industry experience. These skills, gained in other settings, will be transferred into the new position you seek. Review the list of transferable skills that follows and check the ones you feel you have. Keep these transferable skills in mind because you will use a similar checklist when resumé preparation is discussed later. Use the two checklists to help you write a resumé that will promote your worth to a potential employer.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advise people                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Check for accuracy       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Analyze data                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Coach                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipate problems              | <input type="checkbox"/> Collect money            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arrange functions                | <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate (in writing) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assemble things                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate (verbally)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audit records                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Construct                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budget money                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Consult with others      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buy products or services         | <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate activities    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calculate and manipulate numbers | <input type="checkbox"/> Cope with deadlines      |

(Continued)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Correspond                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Learn quickly                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Create                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delegate                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Make decisions                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate                | <input type="checkbox"/> Make policy                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate responsibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Manage a business               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Design                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Manage people                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Develop                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Mediate problems                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct others              | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet deadlines                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do precise work            | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet goals                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drive a vehicle            | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet the public                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Edit                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorize information            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentor others                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Endure long hours          | <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiate                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enforce                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Nurture                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Observe                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Examine                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Organize                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> File records               | <input type="checkbox"/> Pay attention to detail         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Find information           | <input type="checkbox"/> Perceive needs                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Follow directions          | <input type="checkbox"/> Perform customer service        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Follow through             | <input type="checkbox"/> Perform public relations duties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handle complaints          | <input type="checkbox"/> Persuade others                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handle equipment           | <input type="checkbox"/> Plan                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handle money               | <input type="checkbox"/> Program                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help people                | <input type="checkbox"/> Protect property                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Implement                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Raise money                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Research                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sell                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interpret data             | <input type="checkbox"/> Set goals                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interview people           | <input type="checkbox"/> Solve problems                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Investigate                | <input type="checkbox"/> Write reports                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lead people                |  |

### WORK ENVIRONMENT AND LIFE PREFERENCES

When making a career decision, it is important to look at work environment and life preferences. If you identify areas that are important to you, this can guide you to a position with which you will be satisfied.

The following inventory lists work environment and life preferences. Reflect on what is really important to you in these areas and indicate your preferences.

Place an X in the circle that reflects the degree of importance for that item. If you strongly prefer to be self-employed, for question #1, put your X over the 2 on the left. If you are neutral about whether you work alone or with people, place your mark for question #2 over the zero. If you have a strong preference for a structured environment, place your mark for question #3 over the 2 on the right.

	2	1	0	1	2	
1. Self-employed	2	1	0	1	2	Work in a company
2. Work with others	2	1	0	1	2	Work alone
3. Creative environment	2	1	0	1	2	Structured environment
4. No supervision	2	1	0	1	2	Close supervision
5. Extended work hours	2	1	0	1	2	Standard eight-hour day
6. Similar duties daily	2	1	0	1	2	Variety of duties
7. Structured work	2	1	0	1	2	Creative work
8. Flexible hours	2	1	0	1	2	Regular hours
9. Overtime desired	2	1	0	1	2	No overtime work
10. Security	2	1	0	1	2	Challenge, risk
11. Slow pace, little pressure	2	1	0	1	2	Fast pace, high pressure
12. Little, no travel	2	1	0	1	2	Frequent travel
13. Opportunity for relocation	2	1	0	1	2	No relocation
14. Small business	2	1	0	1	2	Large business
15. Live in rural area	2	1	0	1	2	Live in urban area
16. Desire culture/community	2	1	0	1	2	Little need for culture/community
17. Spend money	2	1	0	1	2	Save money
18. Material things matter	2	1	0	1	2	Material things don't matter
19. Live close to family members	2	1	0	1	2	Live anywhere
20. Marry/children	2	1	0	1	2	Single life

## SELF-ASSESSMENT SUMMARY SHEET

Now, let's take a look at how you did with your self-assessment work.

1. What was your score on the Marketing Readiness Quiz? Based on this sales ability score, will you have to make adjustments in the way you approach marketing yourself for a job?

2. Now that you have completed the Ability Assessment, in what ability area(s) are you strongest? How can you use this knowledge to market yourself in your chosen career? What ability area(s) are your weakest? How can you work at improving these?  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Using the results of the Transferable Skills Checklist, what are the top three transferable skills you possess? How might you showcase these on your resumé or during an interview?  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What work environment and life preferences are most important to you? In what ways might these preferences affect your career decision making?  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_

## SELF-PROMOTION

All of the self-assessment in the world won't help you achieve your career goals unless you know how to promote yourself. The tighter the job market, the greater the need to market! Later chapters will help you prepare the marketing tools necessary for a successful marketing campaign, but for now let's take a look at some other aspects of selling yourself.

When you were young, you may have been taught by your parents not to boast or brag about yourself because it wasn't appropriate or polite. So, somewhere deep in your psyche, you may feel that you shouldn't toot your own horn. Or maybe you think that your actions speak for you. This may be true for people who know you and like you and your work, but what about those who don't know you? What about those whom you are trying to convince to give you a job? How are these individuals going to learn what you are capable of doing unless you tell them?

Self-promotion is essential if you wish to secure the job you want, and if you wish to advance in that job in the future. You must get past any thoughts you have about not talking or bragging about yourself. Indeed, that's basically what a job search is all about: bragging about yourself! But it is bragging with facts to back up what you say. As indicated earlier, throughout this book the MY Focus feature (MY Focus = marketing yourself focus) will highlight ways to market yourself. To implement MY Focus, read the advice in the box on page 22.

Just what is it that employers are looking for? Of course, they want you to be qualified for the positions they have open. Your basic qualifications are probably your diploma or degree, additional training, and work experience. But what other skills or traits do employers seek? The list of skills in the box





of what people put on their resumé, feeling there has been a growing tendency to lie or exaggerate what is being said. Make sure all details on your resumé are factual and accurate.

### Using Action Verbs

To ensure a dynamic and powerful resumé, use action verbs to describe your school and work experiences. Read through the following list, circling the verbs that apply to your school and work activities. Then, use this list as you draft your resumé.

act/perform	direct	lead	report
adapt	distribute	learn	research
advise	enforce	listen	resolve
analyze	entertain	locate	restore
anticipate	estimate	log	retrieve
appraise	evaluate	maintain	review
arrange	examine	manage	run
assemble	exhibit	meet public	schedule
assess	expand	memorize	select
audit	explain	mentor	sell
budget	explore	motivate	service
calculate	find	negotiate	set
check	fix	observe	solve
collect	gather	obtain	sort
communicate	generate	operate	speak
compare	handle complaints	order	study
compile	handle equipment	organize	supervise
compute	handle money	perform	support
confront	help people	persuade	test
contact	illustrate	plan	teach
control	implement	prepare	train
coordinate	improve	process	translate
cope	inform	produce	troubleshoot
create	initiate	program	understand
decide	inspect	promote	update
delegate	install	protect	upgrade
deliver	instruct	question	verify
demonstrate	interpret	raise	volunteer
design	interview	read	work
determine	invent	reduce	write
develop	investigate	recommend	



## **Skills Most Sought After by Employers**

So, what are these critical employability skills that employers demand of job-seekers?

### **Communications Skills (listening, verbal, written)**

By far, the one skill mentioned most often by employers is the ability to listen, write, and speak effectively. Successful communication is critical in business.

- Exceptional listener and communicator who effectively conveys information verbally and in writing.

### **Analytical/Research Skills**

Deals with your ability to assess a situation, seek multiple perspectives, gather more information if necessary, and identify key issues that need to be addressed.

- Highly analytical thinking with demonstrated talent for identifying, scrutinizing, improving, and streamlining complex work processes.

### **Computer/Technical Literacy**

Almost all jobs now require some basic understanding of computer hardware and software, especially word processing, spreadsheets, and email.

- Computer-literate performer with extensive software proficiency covering wide variety of applications.

### **Flexibility/Adaptability/Managing Multiple Priorities**

Deals with your ability to manage multiple assignments and tasks, set priorities, and adapt to changing conditions and work assignments.

- Flexible team player who thrives in environments requiring ability to effectively prioritize and juggle multiple concurrent projects.

### **Interpersonal Abilities**

The ability to relate to your co-workers, inspire others to participate, and mitigate conflict with co-workers is essential given the amount of time spent at work each day.

- Proven relationship-builder with unsurpassed interpersonal skills.

### **Leadership/Management Skills**

While there is some debate about whether leadership is something people are born with, these skills deal with your ability to take charge and manage your co-workers.

- Goal-driven leader who maintains a productive climate and confidently motivates, mobilizes, and coaches employees to meet high performance standards.

**Multicultural Sensitivity/Awareness**

There is possibly no bigger issue in the workplace than diversity, and job-seekers must demonstrate a sensitivity and awareness to other people and cultures.

- Personable professional whose strengths include cultural sensitivity and an ability to build rapport with a diverse workforce in multicultural settings.

**Planning/Organizing**

Deals with your ability to design, plan, organize, and implement projects and tasks within an allotted timeframe. Also involves goal-setting.

- Results-driven achiever with exemplary planning and organizational skills, along with a high degree of detail orientation.

**Problem-Solving/Reasoning/Creativity**

Involves the ability to find solutions to problems using your creativity, reasoning, and past experiences along with the available information and resources.

- Innovative problem-solver who can generate workable solutions and resolve complaints.

**Teamwork**

Because so many jobs involve working in one or more work-groups, you must have the ability to work with others in a professional manner while attempting to achieve a common goal.

- Resourceful team player who excels at building trusting relationships with customers and colleagues.

## **Personal Values Employers Seek in Employees**

Of equal importance to skills are the values, personality traits, and personal characteristics that employers seek. Look for ways to weave examples of these characteristics into your resume, cover letters, and answers to interview questions.

**Here is our list of the 10 most important categories of values.**

### **Honesty/Integrity/Morality**

Employers probably respect personal integrity more than any other value, especially in light of the many recent corporate scandals.

- Seasoned professional whose honesty and integrity provide for effective leadership and optimal business relationships.

### **Adaptability/Flexibility**

Deals with openness to new ideas and concepts, to working independently or as part of a team, and to carrying out multiple tasks or projects.

- Highly adaptable, mobile, positive, resilient, patient risk-taker who is open to new ideas.

### **Dedication/Hard-Working/Work Ethic/Tenacity**

Employers seek job-seekers who love what they do and will keep at it until they solve the problem and get the job done.

- Productive worker with solid work ethic who exerts optimal effort in successfully completing tasks.

### **Dependability/Reliability/Responsibility**

There's no question that all employers desire employees who will arrive to work every day -- on time -- and ready to work, and who will take responsibility for their actions.

- Dependable, responsible contributor committed to excellence and success.

### **Loyalty**

Employers want employees who will have a strong devotion to the company -- even at times when the company is not necessarily loyal to its employees.

- Loyal and dedicated manager with an excellent work record.

### **Positive Attitude/Motivation/Energy/Passion**

The job-seekers who get hired and the employees who get promoted are the ones with drive and passion -- and who demonstrate this enthusiasm through their words and actions.

- Energetic performer consistently cited for unbridled passion for work, sunny disposition, and upbeat, positive attitude.

**Professionalism**

Deals with acting in a responsible and fair manner in all your personal and work activities, which is seen as a sign of maturity and self-confidence; avoid being petty.

- Conscientious go-getter who is highly organized, dedicated, and committed to professionalism.

**Self-Confidence**

Look at it this way: if you don't believe in yourself, in your unique mix of skills, education, and abilities, why should a prospective employer? Be confident in yourself and what you can offer employers.

- Confident, hard-working employee who is committed to achieving excellence.

**Self-Motivated/Ability to Work With Little or No Supervision**

While teamwork is always mentioned as an important skill, so is the ability to work independently, with minimal supervision.

- Highly motivated self-starter who takes initiative with minimal supervision.

**Willingness to Learn**

No matter what your age, no matter how much experience you have, you should always be willing to learn a new skill or technique. Jobs are constantly changing and evolving, and you must show an openness to grow and learn with that change.

- Enthusiastic, knowledge-hungry learner, eager to meet challenges and quickly assimilate new concepts.

**Final Thoughts on Employability Skills and Values**

Employability skills and personal values are the critical tools and traits you need to succeed in the workplace -- and they are all elements that you can learn, cultivate, develop, and maintain over your lifetime. Once you have identified the sought-after skills and values and assessed the degree to which you possess, then remember to document them and market them (in your resume, cover letter, and interview answers) for job-search success.

**January 1, 20XX (SAMPLE COVER LETTER)**

**Anybody Anywhere / Human Resources  
XYZ Company  
Address, City, Postal Code  
Email:  
Ph: If available.**

**Dear Mr./Ms. Anywhere:**

**Paragraph I—Position applied to:**

**I am submitting my application for the position of \_\_\_\_\_ (as posted on the  
\_\_\_\_\_ website on Month Day, Year).**

**Paragraph II—Knowledge, Skills, Abilities**

- Write how your specific work experience is relevant to the position.
- State what you achieved in the workplace situation i.e. increased sales, better client care.
- Describe how your work contributed to providing a better product/service to your clients.

**Paragraph III—Skills & Abilities**

- State HOW your knowledge (program content) and abilities (analytical, interpersonal, motivation etc.) will make you an excellent candidate for the position.
- Do some research on the company/organization and state an important piece of information ( a new program etc.) that would help them realize that you have taken an interest in them.

**Paragraph IV—Close**

**I welcome the opportunity to speak with you further about this position. I can be reached at [somebody@somebody.com](mailto:somebody@somebody.com) or at 123-4567.**

**Sincerely, (Signature required below if faxed or mailed)  
Somebody Somewhere**

***Your Cover Letter should be no longer than 1 page. The tone in your letter should be confident and articulate. You should follow up an application by calling the employer (unless the employer says NO CALLS) the day before a posted closing date (if there is one) to confirm receipt of your application.***

***Do not use words like reputable, reputation or esteemed in your resume or cover letter. Although these words are generally acceptable in cultures around the world as a sign of respect,***





## RESUME GUIDELINES

Your resume should include the following headings:

- **CONTACT INFORMATION (only one phone number)**
- **OBJECTIVE**
- **QUALIFICATIONS**
- **WORK/EMPLOYMENT**
- **RELEVANT SKILLS- if it is a functional resume**
- **EDUCATION**

## RESUME FORMAT TIPS

- Put all information in your resume in left margin format
- Bold all headings in your resume including your name.
- Use only dark bullets such as dots or squares and at least 11 point font.
- Write full descriptions of your job duties/skills and begin each line with a verb.
- List skills that are relevant for the specific job/opportunity in your application.
- Do not make references to the locations of your employment or education.
- Remove your actual references and state: References are available upon request.
- Follow the Cover Letter format as shown at the end of this document.

It is important to use vocabulary that employers will recognize. For example, simply stating **Assisted patients with moving** or **Did Accounts Receivable** explains the **WHAT** of your experience. You need to explain the **HOW!** Read below to improve your descriptions.

- **Assisted patients** with 1 and 2 person transfers, hoyer and occupied bed-making.
- **Processed accounts receivable** for 20 vendors with a \$250K annual portfolio.

*Take the time to reflect carefully and write down everything that you have done in both your paid work and any volunteer roles. You will find that you have a lot to offer an employer but YOU need to articulate your knowledge, skills and abilities.*

## **SOMBODY SOMEWHERE (CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME)**

123 XYZ Road Winnipeg, MB R0H 0H0

somebody@somebody.com

Ph: (204) 555-1212

**OBJECTIVE:** To secure an administrative assistant position at XYZ Insurance Corp.

### **QUALIFICATIONS :**

- 4+ years of experience in accounting administration and customer service.
- Proficient in Quickbooks, Simply Accounting and Microsoft Office.
- Certified as a Canadian Payroll Practitioner

### **RELEVANT EMPLOYMENT**

<b>Sales Associate</b>	<b>XYZ Retail Store</b>	<b>2008-2010</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Processed cash, credit, debit sales and refund transactions using POS software.</li><li>● Assisted manager with making bank deposits and completing refund reconciliations.</li><li>● Maintained inventory supplies and prepared merchandising displays for promotions.</li><li>● Sold to over 20 retail customers daily achieving an annual sales level of \$30K.</li><li>● Coached on-line customers by phone on how to complete e-commerce purchases.</li></ul>		

<b>Accountant</b>	<b>XYZ Imports</b>	<b>2000-2004</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Managed 3 accounting staff with an annual accounts receivable of \$350K.</li><li>● Increased realized revenues of collections by 10% and re-negotiated payment terms.</li><li>● Prepared customs brokerage documentation for cross-border imports and delivery.</li></ul>		

### **RELATED EMPLOYMENT**

<b>Customer Service Agent</b>	<b>XYZ Call Centre</b>	<b>2006-2008</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Answered over 80+ calls daily to assist customers with product information and pricing.</li><li>● Sold travel products including package tours, vouchers promotions and insurance.</li><li>● Resolved customer complaints by completing incident reports and phone call backs.</li></ul>		

<b>Team Leader</b>	<b>XYZ Hamburgers</b>	<b>2004-2008</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Managed 5 employees in a restaurant operation to serve over 400+ customers daily.</li><li>● Trained staff in Health and Safety procedures, cash handling and customer service.</li><li>● Prepared food items and monitored temperature gauges for food safety purposes.</li></ul>		

### **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

- Collected donations for the XYZ Child Fund and processed all paperwork for charity.

### **EDUCATION**

<b>Payroll Accounting Diploma</b>	<b>The Learning Company</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Bachelor of Science</b>	<b>XYZ College</b>	<b>2000</b>

*References available upon request*

## **SOMEBODY SOMWHERE (FUNCTIONAL RESUME)**

123 XYZ Road Winnipeg, MB R0H 0H0

somebody@somebody.com

Ph: (204) 555-1212

**OBJECTIVE:** To secure a position as a Healthcare Aide at XYZ Health Homes

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

- Health Care Aide certification including PHIA, CPR and NVIC.
- 160+ hours healthcare experience in patient transfer, feeding, and care.
- Program delivery experience in recreational and childcare settings.

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

Healthcare Aide	XYZ Hospital	2010
Sales Clerk	XYZ CoffeeShop	2008-2010

### **HEALTHCARE SKILLS**

- Performed and record vital signs including temperature, pulse and respiration.
- Ambulate clients and demonstrate use of transfer belts, canes and walkers as needed.
- Prepared clients for bathing using 1 and 2 person transfers including use of hoysers.
- Dressed clients for group activities, outings and mealtimes at the hospital.
- Completed regular and occupied-bed making for disabled and infirm clients.
- Completed bedpan procedures and explained incontinence products to clients.
- Assisted with personal grooming including oral hygiene, shaving and washing.

### **RELATED SKILLS**

- Supervised children aged 7-15 in a recreational setting and managed athletic activities.
- Completed incident reports at recreational facility and informed families of any concerns.
- Sold restaurant products to over 200+ customers daily and handled cash transactions.
- Stocked food inventory and cleaned facilities following health & safety procedures.

### **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

Camp Counsellor	XYZ Camp	2008-2010
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### **EDUCATION**

Health Care Aide Diploma	The Learning Company	2010
High School Diploma	XYZ High School	2008

*References available upon request*



## EXHIBIT 5.2

## Sample Functional Resumé with Branding Statement

RYAN H. CHAN

1221 Pleasant Hill Drive

Regina, SK S4S 0P5

306-495-8892

rchan@lookup.com

PROGRAMMER • ANALYTICAL • LEADERSHIP •  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT • SOLUTIONS BASED

## EDUCATION

COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST - GRADUATE May 2013  
Camberland College, Millert, SK*Honours:*GPA 3.9/4.00  
Dean's Honour List

## SKILLS

*Supervisory:*

- Responsibility for controlling production, efficiency, employee motivation, promotion, and discipline
- Supervised of 25 floor employees during second shift
- Project leader for co-op consulting project

*Technical:*

- Demonstrated working ability with common hardware server and workstation platforms
- Practical experience with Networking Systems Linux, Windows Workstation/Server
- Programming languages used are Java, C, C++, Perl/Unix Shell script writing and Assembler
- Ability to analyze problem situations and generate creative solutions
- Applied structured approach to program design development testing and debugging
- Designed and implemented an inventory tracking system for automotive parts distributor, which improved efficiency by 20 percent
- Demonstrated ability to apply workflow analysis
- Provided ongoing support of production applications systems including problem analysis, resolution, and reporting as necessary
- Designed, constructed, tested, documented, and implemented new or existing applications

*Communication:*

- Consulted with clients concerning systems operation
- Advised technical managers in operational techniques
- Trained new employees and held communications meetings
- Evaluated employees in job performance reviews
- Conducted oral presentations for internal and external audiences
- French bilingual

## EMPLOYMENT

Operations Supervisor, July 2013-present  
SPEEDY PARCEL SERVICE CORPORATION, Regina, SKCo-op, Sept. - Dec. 2012  
ABC AUTOMOTIVE PARTS, Saskatoon, SKDestination Specialist, 2010-2012  
GROUND DELIVERY TRANSPORTATION, Toronto, ON

## REFERENCES

Available upon request

**EXHIBIT 5.3****Sample Two-Page Resumé with Objective****AISHA SMITH**

1144 Tenth Avenue Sarnia, ON N6A 1H5 • 519 342 1147 • asmith@internet.net

**OBJECTIVE**

Hospitality Co-op position May-Aug 2013

**EDUCATION****HOSPITALITY & TOURISM MANAGEMENT**

Lambton College Sarnia, ON

GPA 3.78/4.00

Candidate to graduate May 2013

2011-present

2011

**OSSD**

St. Clair High School, Sarnia, ON

**QUALIFICATIONS**

- Smart Serve Certified
- Computer skills: Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Internet, email
- Cash-handling and balancing experience
- 5 years' customer service experience
- WHMIS trained
- Valid CPR certificate
- Basic French

**EXPERIENCE**

2012-present

**Front Desk Agent**

Riverview Hotel, Sarnia, ON

- Efficiently check guests in and out of 175-room full-service hotel
- Provide excellent customer service advising guests on local attractions, restaurants, and events
- Maintain hotel standards while following all procedures
- Accurately perform night audit
- Confirm reservations and determine appropriate nightly rate
- Work efficiently and accurately under pressure and with little or no supervision

May-Sept 2012

**Co-op Student/Server**

Muskoka Resort, Huntsville, ON

- Served food and beverage in the resort's fine-dining restaurant in a professional manner
- Familiar with all menu items and made recommendations for special diets
- Recommended appropriate wine with meals
- Advised guests on resort and local activities
- Received outstanding evaluation

2011-2012

**Food and Beverage Server**

Lakeview Cafe, Sarnia, ON

- Served food and beverage in a busy family style restaurant
- Provided friendly and excellent customer service
- Demonstrated ability to discuss all 185 menu items
- Assisted with basic food preparation
- Learned the value of team work
- Developed excellent time management and organizational skills

*(Continued)*

**EXHIBIT 5.3**

**Sample Two-Page Resumé with Objective (Continued)**

**AISHA SMITH**

519-242-1047

**VOLUNTEER**

**BIG SISTERS**

- Big Sister to 10-year-old girl for 1 year
- Active fundraiser for Big Sisters

Sarnia, ON

**CELEBRATION OF LIGHTS**

- Assist with set-up and take-down of annual event

Sarnia, ON

**INTERESTS**

- Active in team sports including basketball and volleyball
- Member of the Lambton College Women's Volleyball Team
- Work out to maintain physical fitness
- Photography

**PORTFOLIO**

- Available upon request

**REFERENCES**

- Available upon request

**EXHIBIT 5.4****Other Sample Format with Professional Summary****CAROLYN STEVENSON**

492 Middleton Lane  
Calgary, AB T0M 3Y1

**403-430-3758**

stevenson@interact.ca

**PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY**

Areas of strength in accounting include:

- Cost accounting, federal tax accounting, accounting information systems
- Microsoft Office—Word, Excel, Access; Accpac computerized accounting package
- Take pride in producing accurate calculations for data used by management for budgeting, forecasting, and sales projections. Capable of building excellent working relationships with professional staff at all levels.
- Decision making and leadership skills used to prioritize daily workload. Organize projects and written reports and records. Consistent follow-up on work environment to ensure deadlines are met on time and to specifications.

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Tax Associate**

2013–present

CLARK AND LEWIS ACCOUNTING SERVICE, Calgary, AB

- Perform tax compliance, analysis, and research for consolidated companies
- Provide tax consulting to partnerships, trustees, and non-profit organizations
- Awarded excellent rating for customer service

**Accounting Assistant**

2011–2013

ASPEN HILL RETIREMENT COMMUNITY, Windsor, ON

- Responsible for developing and presenting financial topics to residents
- Counselling individuals concerning personal finances
- Provided assistance to corporate controller in financial statement matters

**EDUCATION**

**Bachelor of Commerce**

2013

University of Windsor, Windsor, ON

**Accounting Diploma**

2011

Lambton College, Sarnia, ON

References available upon request



**EXHIBIT 5.5****Sample Text Resumé for Applying Online**

RYAN H. CHAN  
 1221 Pleasant Hill Drive  
 Toronto, ON M5P 2T9  
 416 495 8892  
 rchan@linkup.com  
 \*\*\*\*\*

**EDUCATION**

May 2013  
 COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST GRADUATE  
 Lambton College, Sarnia, ON

- Honours
- GPA 3.90/4.00
- Dean's Honour List

**QUALIFICATIONS**

- Demonstrated working ability with common hardware server and workstation platforms
- Practical experience with Networking Systems Linux, Windows Workstation/Server
- Programming languages used are Java, C, C++, Perl/Unix Shell script writing and Assembler
- Ability to analyze problem situations and generate creative solutions
- Apply structured approach to program design development testing and debugging
- French bilingual

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

2013–present  
 SPEEDY PARCEL SERVICE CORPORATION, Toronto, ON

- Responsible for controlling production, efficiency, employee motivation, promotion, and discipline
- Supervise 25 floor employees during second shift
- Demonstrate ability to apply workflow analysis
- Provide ongoing support of production applications systems including problem analysis, resolution, and reporting as necessary
- Design, construct, test, document, and implement new or existing applications
- Train new employees, and hold communications meetings

Sept.–Dec. 2012  
 ABC AUTOMOTIVE PARTS, Toronto, ON

- Served as project leader for co-op consulting project
- Designed and implemented an inventory tracking system for automotive parts distributor, which improved efficiency by 20 percent
- Received an outstanding evaluation during my work term
- Gained experience with Java, C, and C++

2010–2012  
 GROUND DELIVERY TRANSPORTATION, Toronto, ON

- Consulted with clients concerning systems operation
- Advised technical managers in operational techniques
- Conducted oral presentations for internal and external audiences

REFERENCES Available upon request



## Interview DOs and DON'Ts

### Interview DOs:

- Dress appropriately for the industry; err on the side of being conservative to show you take the interview seriously. Your personal grooming and cleanliness should be impeccable.
- Know the exact time and location of your interview; know how long it takes to get there, park, find a restroom to freshen up, etc.
- Make a practice run to the location where you are having the interview or be sure you know exactly where it is and how long it takes to get there.
- Arrive early; 10-15 minutes prior to the interview start time. Do not arrive too early. A late arrival for a job interview is never excusable. If you are running late phone the company to let them know you are on your way.
- Treat other people you encounter with courtesy and respect. Their opinion of you might be solicited during hiring decisions.
- Always bring an extra Resume to the interview.
- Offer a firm handshake, make eye contact, and have a friendly expression when you are greeted by your interviewer.
- Listen to be sure you understand your interviewer's name and the correct pronunciation. Even when your interviewer gives you a first and last name, address your interviewer by title (Ms, Mr, Dr) and last name, until invited to do otherwise.
- Maintain good eye contact during the interview.
- Sit still in your seat; avoid fidgeting and slouching. To avoid being uncomfortable in your chair, when you sit down make sure you sit with your back completely against the back of the chair.
- Respond to questions and back up your statements about yourself with specific examples whenever possible.
- Ask for clarification if you do not understand a question.
- Show enthusiasm in the position and the company but do not make it sound like you are desperate for the position.

- Be thorough in your responses, while being concise in your wording. Try not to use poor language, slang, and pause words such as “like”, “uh”, and “um”.
- **BE HONEST AND BE YOURSELF!** Dishonesty gets discovered and is grounds for withdrawing job offers and dismissal from your job.
- You want a good match between yourself and your employer. If you get hired by acting like someone other than yourself, you and your employer will both be unhappy.
- Treat the interview seriously and as though you are truly interested in the employer and the opportunity presented.
- Exhibit a positive attitude. Show confidence and energy but do not be overly aggressive. The interviewer is evaluating you as a potential co-worker. Behave like someone you would want to work with.
- Have intelligent questions prepared to ask the interviewer. Having done your research about the employer in advance, ask questions which you did not find answered in your research.
- Evaluate the interviewer and the organization they represent. An interview is a two-way street. Conduct yourself cordially and respectfully, while thinking critically about the way you are treated and the values and priorities of the organization.
- **DO** expect to be treated appropriately. If you believe you were treated inappropriately or asked questions that were inappropriate or made you uncomfortable, discuss this with the Career Services advisor or the director.
- Make sure you understand the employer’s next step in the hiring process; know when and from whom you should expect to hear next. Know what action you are expected to take next, if any.
- When the interviewer concludes the interview, offer a firm handshake and make eye contact. Depart gracefully.
- After the interview, make notes right away so you do not forget critical details.
- Write a thank you letter/card to your interviewer promptly. (Not always required)

## Interview DON'Ts:

- x Don't make excuses. Take responsibility for your decisions and your actions.
- x Don't make negative comments about previous employers or professors (or others).
- x Don't falsify application materials or answers to interview questions.
- x Don't treat the interview casually, as if you are just shopping around or doing the interview for practice. This is an insult to the interviewer and to the organization.
- x Don't give the impression that you are only interested in an organization because of its geographic location.
- x Don't answer questions with a simple "yes" or "no". Explain whenever possible. Describe those things about yourself that showcase your talents, skills, and determination. Give examples.
- x Don't bring up or discuss personal issues or family problems.
- x Don't respond to an unexpected question with an extended pause or by saying something like, "boy, that's a good question". And do repeat the question out loud or ask for the question to be repeated to give you a little more time to think about an answer. Also, a short pause before responding is okay.
- x Don't give the impression you are only interested in salary; do not ask about salary and benefits until the subject is brought up by your interviewer.
- x Don't act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment.
- x Don't make the interviewer guess what type of work you are interested in; it is not the interviewer's job to act as a career advisor to you.
- x Don't be unprepared for typical interview questions. You may not be asked all of them in every interview, but being unprepared looks foolish.
- x Don't rely on your application or resume to do the selling for you, no matter how qualified you are for the position, you will need to sell yourself to the interviewer.
- x Don't tell jokes during the interview.
- x A job search can be hard work and involve frustrations; don not exhibit frustrations or a negative attitude in an interview.

- x Don't act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment.
- x Don't go to extremes with your posture; do not slouch or sit rigidly on the edge of your chair.
- x Don't assume that a female interviewer is "Mrs" or "Miss". Address her as "Ms" unless told otherwise. Here marital status is irrelevant to the purpose of the interview.
- x DO NOT chew gum or smell like smoke!!!
- x Make sure your cell phone/pager is **TURNED OFF!** There is no good reason to have these items on during an interview.
- x Don't take your parents, your pet, spouse, fiancé, friends or enemies to an interview. If you are not grown up and independent enough to attend an interview alone, then you are insufficiently grown up and independent for a job.

## Tough Questions and Answers

**Ok, you're in the interview and you are prepared to talk about your past job experiences. Then, the interviewer starts to ask more general and maybe, uncomfortable questions. Here are some of those questions and things to think about BEFORE you go to the interview!!**

### **1. Tell me a story about yourself.**

Just talk for 2 minutes. Be logical. Start anywhere, e.g. high school, college or first position. The interviewer is looking for communication skills, linear thinking. Also try to score a point or two (describe a major personal attribute.)

### **2. Why are you leaving your current position?**

This is a very critical question. Don't "bad mouth" your previous employer. Don't sound too opportunistic. Some reasons for leaving your current position could be downsizing, buy-out, or positive career advancement. It is also good to state that *after a long personal consideration your chance to make a contribution is very low due to company changes.*

### **3. What do you consider your most significant accomplishments?**

This can get you the job. Prepare extensively. Score points. Tell a 2 minute story, with details and discuss your personal involvement. Make the accomplishment worth achieving. Discuss hard work, long hours, pressure, important company issues at stake.

### **4. Why do you believe that you are qualified for this position?**

Pick two or three main factors about the job and about you that are most relevant. Discuss for two minutes, with specific details. Select a technical skill, a specific management skill (organizing, staffing, planning), and a personal success attribute to mention.

### **5. Have you ever accomplished something you didn't think you could?**

Interviewer is trying to determine your goal orientation, work ethic, personal commitment, and integrity. Provide a good example where you overcame a number of difficulties to succeed. Prove you're not a quitter, and that you'll get going when the going gets tough.

### **6. What do you like/dislike most about your current position?**

Interviewer is trying to determine compatibility with open position. If you have interest in the position be careful. Stating you dislike overtime or getting into the details, or that you like management can cost you the position. There is nothing wrong with liking challenges, pressure situations, opportunities to grow, or dislike for bureaucracy or frustrating situations

### **7. How do you handle pressure? Do you like or dislike these situations?**

High achievers tend to perform well in high pressure situations. Conversely, questions also could imply that position is pressure packed and out of control. There is nothing wrong with this as long as you know what you're getting into. If you do perform well under stress, provide a good example with details, giving an overview of the stress situation. Let the interviewer "feel" the stress by your description of it.

**8. The sign of a good employee is the ability to take the initiative. Can you describe situations like this about yourself?**

A pro-active, results oriented person doesn't have to be told what to do. This is one of the major success attributes. To convince the interviewer you possess this trait you must give a series of short examples describing your self motivation. Try to discuss at least one in detail. The extra effort, strong work ethic and creative side of you must be demonstrated.

**9. What's the worst or most embarrassing aspect of your business career? How would you have done things differently now with 20/20 hindsight?**

This is a general question to learn how introspective you are, also to see if you can learn from your mistakes. If you can, it indicates an open, more flexible personality. Don't be afraid to talk about your failures, particularly if you've learned from them. This is a critical aspect of high potential individuals.

**10. How have you grown or changed over the past few years?**

This requires thought. Maturation, increased technical skills, or increase self-confidence are important aspects of human development. To discuss this effectively is indicative of a well-balanced, intelligent individual. Overcoming personal obstacles, or recognizing manageable weaknesses can brand you as an approachable and desirable employee.

**11. What do you consider your most significant strengths?**

Be prepared. Know your four or five key strengths. Be able to discuss each with a specific example. Select those attributes that are most compatible with the job opening. Most people say "management" or "good interpersonal skills" in answer to this. Don't use this unless you can describe the specific characteristics of management (planning, organizing, results, staffing, etc.) or how your relationship skills have proven critical to your success.

**12. What do you consider your most significant weaknesses?**

Don't reveal deep character flaws. Rather discuss tolerable faults, that you are working towards improving. Show by specific example how this has changed over time. Better still, show how a weakness can be turned into a strength. For example, how a concentration on details results in higher quality work even though it requires overtime.

**13. Deadlines, frustrations, difficult people, and silly rules can make a job difficult. How do you handle these types of situations?**

Most companies, unfortunately, face these types of problems daily. If you can't deal with petty frustrations, you'll be seen as a problem. You certainly can state your displeasure at the petty side of these issues, but how you overcome them is important. Diplomacy, perseverance, and common-sense can often prevail even in difficult circumstances. This is part of corporate America, and you must be able to deal with it on a regular basis.

**14. One of our biggest problems is \_\_\_\_\_. What has been your experience with this? How would you deal with it?**

Think on your feet. Ask questions to get details. Break it into sub-sections. Highly likely you have some experience with sub-sections. Answer these, and summarize the total. State how you



would go about solving the problem, if you can't answer directly. Be specific. Show your organizational and analytical skills.

**15. How do you compare your technical skills to your management skills?**

Many people tend to minimize their technical skills, either because they don't have any, or they don't like getting into the details. Most successful managers possess good technical skills and don't get into enough detail to make sure they understand the information being presented by their group. Try for a good balance here if you want to be seriously considered for the position.

**16. How has your technical ability been important in accomplishing results?**

Clearly the interviewer believes he needs a strong level of technical competence. Most strong managers have good technical backgrounds, even if they have gotten away from the details. Describe specific examples of your technical where with all, but don't be afraid to say you are not current. Also, you could give examples of how you resolve a technical issue by "accelerated research."

**17. How would you handle a situation with tight deadlines, low employee morale, and inadequate resources?**

If you pull this off effectively, it indicates you have strong management skills. Need to be creative. An example would be great. Relate your toughest management task, even if it doesn't meet all the criteria. Most situations don't. Organizational skills, interpersonal skills, and handling pressure are key elements of effective management. Good managers should be able to address each issue, even if they are not concurrent. Deftly handling the question is pretty indicative of your skills

**18. Are you satisfied with your career to date? What would you change if you could?**

Be honest. Interviewer wants to know if he can keep you happy. It's important to know if you're willing to make some sacrifices to get your career on the right track. Degree of motivation is an important selection criteria.

**19. What are your career goals? Where do you see yourself five years from now? Ten years?**

Most importantly, be realistic! Blue sky stuff brands you as immature. One or two management jumps in three to five years is a reasonable goal. If your track indicates you're on line for senior management in ten years, it's okay to mention. However, if you've have a rocky road, better to be introspective.

**20. What do you think of your last boss? Favorite boss? Least favorite boss?**

Realize that complainers are recognized as potential trouble-makers. Keep your answer short, sweet and move on. *"I like him as an individual and respect him professionally and I learned a great deal."* Do not elaborate further. Find a growth opportunity in any situation.

**21. What is your energy level like? Describe a typical day?**

Demonstrate good use of time, include planning in advance and that review of your performance helps you reach your desired goals

**22. How do you take direction? How do you take criticism?**

The preferred situation is when a manager can provide fully detailed directions. Remember that managers have a larger agenda, which might not be shared. Learning what signals could have been recognized earlier is preferred to taking offense to criticism.

**23. Why should we hire you for this position? What contribution would you make?**

Good chance to summarize. By now you know the key problems. Re-state and show how you would address. Relate to specific attributes and specific accomplishments. Qualify responses with the need to gather information. Don't be cocky. Demonstrate a thoughtful, organized, strong effort kind of attitude.

### **Standard Interview Questions**

1. Can you tell me something about yourself?
2. Why should I hire you?
3. What are your strengths?
4. What are your weaknesses?
5. Why are you applying for this position?
6. How are you qualified for this position?
7. Why are you interested in working for our firm?
8. What can you contribute to this company?
9. What are your short-term goals?
10. What are your long term goals?
11. Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten years?
12. How does this job fit into your career plan?
13. How do you handle stress?
14. Do you prefer to work on a team or independently?
15. Describe a difficult work situation and how you handled it.
16. Are you willing to travel?
17. What are your salary expectations?
18. What interests you about this job?
19. What are you looking for in your next job? What is important to you?
20. What do you know about this company?
21. What do you like to do in your spare time?
22. What are your hobbies?
23. Why did you choose this line of work?

24. How does your job fit in to your department and company?
25. What do you enjoy about this industry?
26. Give an example of when you have worked under pressure
27. What kinds of people do you like working with?
28. Give me an example of when your work was criticized.
29. Give me an example of when you have felt anger at work. How did you cope and did you still perform a good job?
30. What kind of people do you find it difficult to work with?
31. Give me an example of when you have had to face a conflict of interest at work.
32. Tell me about the last time you disagreed with your boss.
33. Give me an example of when you haven't gotten along with others.
34. Do you prefer to work alone or in a group? Why?
35. This organization is very different to your current employer - how do you think you are going to fit in?
36. What are you looking for in a company?
37. How do you measure your own performance?
38. What kind of pressures have you encountered at work?
39. Are you a self-starter? Give me examples to demonstrate this?
40. What changes in the workplace have caused you difficulty and why?
41. How do you feel about working long hours and/or weekends?
42. Give me an example of when you have been out of your depth.
43. What have you failed to achieve to date?
44. What can you bring to this organization?

### **Example Behavioral Interview Questions:**

How have you dealt with an angry or upset customer?

Have you ever gone above and beyond to help a customer? What did you do?

Tell me about a time when you had to fight for an idea at work.

Talk about a time where you had to make an important decision quickly. What did you decide? What were the results?

Have you ever been in a business situation that was ethically questionable? What did you do?

Have you ever had a project that had to change drastically while it was in progress? Why? How did you do it?

Talk about a time when a co-worker was not doing their share on a project. How did you handle it?

Tell me about a major setback you've had. How did you deal with it?

What have you done when colleagues have been stressed out by a project?

Talk about a difficult problem you've had to solve. How did you solve it?

Have you ever had to defend a customer's point of view? What did you do? Why?

Talk about a time when you've had to sell an idea to your colleagues.

Tell me about a problem you solved in a creative way.

