



UNIVERSITY of
ROCHESTER

Office of Human Resources
Multicultural Affairs & Inclusion



CAREER GUIDE

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The contents in this material are used to provide support for Internal and External candidates interested in applying for job opportunities at the University of Rochester.

Résumé Preparation

Target audience

You must identify your target audience and customize the résumé to meet their expectations as specified in the posted job description. In today's electronic world, we highly recommend you familiarize yourself with the online application process. When completing online applications or responding to job postings via e-mail, it is suggested that you attach your résumé in MS Word Document Format (.doc) or in Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf), as well as paste the text version (.txt) of your résumé into the body of the e-mail, below your signature. This is helpful in cases where the employer you are sending your résumé to cannot open attachments; this way the employer can still read your résumé.

You must determine if the company you are applying to has a Human Resources Office or whether the hiring is coordinated by management. In either case, when the résumé is reviewed by a Human Resources professional or by any potential employer, it is important to:

- ✓ Pay attention to spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style.
- ✓ Proofread your résumé, then have several other people proofread your résumé as well.
- ✓ Organize information in a logical fashion. Tailor the information you provide to the job.
- ✓ Keep descriptions clear and to the point.
- ✓ Adapt the résumé to the preferred method of submission (online, fax, e-mail, or mailing).

Types of résumés

The following section will help you to identify which type of résumé is appropriate for your job search and current career goals. It is important to remember to identify which type of résumé meets the need of the organization.

Résumé Preparation (continued)

Chronological

- ✓ Lists education and experience in reverse chronological order (most recent first)
- ✓ Most widely used, easiest to prepare, and usually preferred by employers for clearer reading and comprehension
- ✓ Puts more emphasis on job titles, names of employer, and dates of employment
- ✓ Works best for people with related experience and a steady employment history

Combination

- ✓ Profiles skills and accomplishments and includes a section with a reverse chronological listing of employment, education, and accomplishments

Functional

- ✓ Emphasizes skill and achievements using functional categories
- ✓ Works well for those who have extensive career-related experiences and/or a variety of experiences that contribute to overall skill development
- ✓ If not clearly organized, may be confusing to employers

Résumé Checklist

Your résumé should

- ✓ Sell the reader quickly (provide positive impression within 30 seconds)
- ✓ Be written with the employer in mind
- ✓ Detail accomplishments
- ✓ Have eye appeal, but scan effectively into electronic database
- ✓ Not have missing or unfocused objective

Do not use

- ✓ Arty or italicized fonts, and/or extremely small print, badly skewed type
- ✓ Dark colored paper, multicolored inks, or card stock
- ✓ Handwriting or highlighter marks over/through typed text

Things to avoid

- ✓ Too long a résumé (one-two pages, space well used, appears uncrowded and balanced)
- ✓ Overwritten résumé (experience summarized, adequate use of white space); not paragraph style (bulleted works best)
- ✓ Too brief a résumé (give yourself more credit than you think you have)
- ✓ Misspellings, typographical errors, poor grammar (use spelling and grammar checks)
- ✓ Lack of results (begin statements with action verbs, quantity/qualify results)
- ✓ Irrelevant personal information
- ✓ Disorganization. Indent and bold consistently. Include basic résumé components.
- ✓ Fancy typesetting and paper stock (avoid dark paper, card stocks)

Basic résumé components

- ✓ Heading: contact information, name, addresses, and phone numbers
- ✓ Objective: identification of target market, information on skills, areas of expertise and interest (intern, full-time, etc.)
- ✓ Education: highest degree, major, anticipated graduation date
- ✓ Employment history: employer, date employed, position, responsibilities, and accomplishments (most current position first)
- ✓ Professional development: additional training, courses which support your job objective
- ✓ Memberships/Publications

Résumé Checklist (continued)

5 things to consider

- ✓ E-mail address
- ✓ Current and permanent addresses and phone numbers
- ✓ All work experience (paid and volunteer, relevant and irrelevant, part-time and full-time)
- ✓ Computer skills and other skills (leadership, etc.)
- ✓ Professional activities

Remember

- ✓ Recruiters can ask you about anything on your résumé, so be able to talk about everything on your résumé.
- ✓ Relate your job skills and qualifications to your target job
- ✓ Relate qualifications to leadership skills (initiative, teamwork, problem solving, communication skills, and adaptability/flexibility)

The Right Word in the Right Place

Think of accomplishment statements as flags at the top of a fortress, but you need a foundation for each statement--the word that starts each phrase. Without fail, that word must be a strong, active-voice verb. Look over the following lists of suggested verbs and use them in your résumé/job description/performance development planning. The opening word of each accomplishment and/or goal statement captures the reader's attention and illustrates your worth to the employer.

ACTION VERBS THAT ADDRESS PLANNING SKILLS

Conceived	Invented	Organized
Initiated	Scheduled	Tailored
Projected	Established	Formed
Created	Justified	Originated
Reorganized	Solved	Transformed
Developed	Estimated	Formulated
Instituted	Laid Out	Planned
Revised	Systematized	
Engineered	Experimented	

ACTION VERBS THAT ADDRESS YOUR SKILLS IN DIRECTING EMPLOYEES

Administered	Guided	Supervised
Determined	Regulated	Decided
Ordered	Conducted	Led
Approved	Headed	Trained
Directed	Specified	Delegated
Prescribed	Controlled	Managed
Authorized	Instructed	

ACTION VERBS THAT SUGGEST THAT YOU HAVE SKILLS IN ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITIES

Accepted	Assumed	Classified
Developed	Gathered	Initiated
Operated	Received	Transacted
Achieved	Attended	Collected
Doubled	Halted	Installed
Overcame	Reduced	Tripled
Adopted	Audited	Compiled
Established	Handled	Integrated
Performed	Reviewed	Used
Arranged	Built	Constructed
Evaluated	Improved	Maintained
Prepared	Sold	Utilized
Assembled	Checked	Described
Experienced	Implemented	Made
Produced	Simplified	

The Right Word in the Right Place (continued)

ACTION VERBS THAT EMBODY AN ABILITY TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE SERVICE

Carried Out	Rewrote	Installed
Explained	Demonstrated	Submitted
Provided	Generated	Expanded
Committed	Sent	Issued
Facilitated	Earned	Transmitted
Purchased	Inspected	Expedited
Delivered	Serviced	Procured
Furnished	Exchanged	Wrote

INTERACTIVE SKILLS WITH PEOPLE ARE SUGGESTED BY THE USE OF THESE ACTION VERBS IN YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS

Advised	Promoted	Interpreted
Coordinated	Clarified	Resolved
Negotiated	Informed	Contributed
Aided	Recommended	Interviewed
Counseled	Conferred	Suggested
Participated	Inspired	Cooperated
Apprised	Represented	Mediated
Helped	Consulted	Unified

FINALLY, YOUR INVESTIGATIVE SKILLS EMERGE WITH THE USE OF THESE VERBS

Analyzed	Researched	Investigated
Discovered	Calculated	Searched
Proved	Familiarized	Correlated
Assessed	Reviewed	Observed
Evaluated	Computed	Studied

Cover Letters

TIPS FOR WRITING COVER LETTERS

Length:

Generally, cover letters should be one page in length. This is true for approximately 90 percent of all cover letters. There may be instances, however, when one page is not enough. If you believe the information you are including in your letter is essential information that is not communicated in your résumé, go ahead and prepare a two-page letter. But be sure everything you've included is vital to favorably presenting yourself to a company or recruiter.

Two-page letters are most frequently used by the following types of job seekers: career changers, industry changers, senior executives, scientists and technologists, people seeking government jobs, and people seeking university and academic appointments.

Salary:

Often applicants want to know if they should include salary information in their cover letter. If you are responding to an advertisement that has requested your salary history or salary requirements:

- Supply the information if it's requested. If you do not provide this information when requested, certain companies and recruiters will not look at your materials.
- Don't supply the information if it's not requested. Repeated surveys show that nearly 100 percent of readers said they will look at your résumé and call you for an interview even if your salary information is not included. Why give them ammunition to screen you out?

If a personal contact or source you've uncovered during your search has requested your résumé and salary information:

- Supply the information. To do otherwise would seem unresponsive and impolite.
- Consider addressing the issue without providing numbers that can be detrimental in a future negotiation. Say something such as "I'd be glad to discuss salary when we meet, once I learn more about the position and you have the chance to assess my fit for your needs."

When contacting companies either as a cold call or in response to an ad where salary information has not been requested:

- Do not supply the information. It is much better to have those conversations in person rather than on paper. Always try to defer any discussion of salary until you have been offered the position.

When writing "cold" to an agency, headhunter or recruiter:

- Always offer salary information. It helps them to determine your "proper fit" within a hiring organization. A recruiter will not work with you without knowing whether you match the requirements (including salary) for the specific position he or she is attempting to fill.

Cover Letters (continued)

Follow up a faxed or e-mailed résumé?

Electronic communication is now a totally acceptable method of communication in virtually any business, industry, and market sector. The only time you should follow up with a hard copy is when it has been requested.

If you do not know the addressee's name?

It's a personal choice. Take a look at the following possible situations:

- **Dear Sir/Madam:** All-purpose and inoffensive, although it might be perceived as stodgy and old-fashioned.
- **To Whom It May Concern:** Another standard; has the downside of being impersonal and old-fashioned.
- **Dear Hiring Executive (or Hiring Committee):** Formal, but appropriate.
- **Dear Human Resources (or Human Resources Representative):** acceptable only if you're writing to a "blind ad" that lists only a P.O. Box and you cannot call to get a specific individual's name.
- **Dear Hiring Authority:** Acceptable only if, despite your best efforts, you have been unable to recover the name of the non-HR person to whom you're sending your résumé.
- **Good Morning (or Good Day):** a bit more up to date, but it reminds us of junk-mail greetings that try (unsuccessfully) to be personal.
- **Re: Job Title You're Applying For (leaving off a specific salutation):** A useful method for replying to want ads when you truly don't know whom you are sending your résumé. We think it preferable to the "Dear Human Resources" greeting.
- **No Salutation (begin your letter immediately after the inside address):** Again, perfectly acceptable for want-ad replies. Might be considered an improvement over old-fashioned, nonspecific greeting.

If I'm unsure of the addressee's gender?

Simple answer: Dear R. Smith (assuming that "R. Smith" is the contact name listed in the ad). But do make an effort to find out the person's gender so you can address your letter to "Dear Mr." or "Dear Ms."

Applicants often ask if they need to mention why they're in the job market?

There's certainly no requirement that you do so, but if your reason is particularly legitimate (such as a plant closing or a management change due to the successful initial public offering you were instrumental in negotiating), you might send a positive message by mentioning this information. In any event, be prepared for the question, "Why are you leaving your current job?" or "Why are you looking?" to come up early in your search. Practice a concise, positive and believable response. Never badmouth your company, boss or co-workers.

Interviews

DETERMINE HOW YOUR EXPERIENCE AND TALENT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMPANY'S MISSION, VISION AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION!

Interviews can be tough even for seasoned veterans. The interview is however, your best opportunity to gain insight into the position and company and to determine how your talent can contribute to the company's mission, vision and strategic direction. We have outlined a list of things you can do to make your interview as successful as possible. No tricks or gimmicks here – just good, solid information to help you prepare and win any position you are seeking.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK – KNOW ABOUT THE COMPANY!

Find out as much as possible about the company – it's history, current situation, and future. Sources for information are the Internet, periodicals and trade journals, annual reports, employees, friends, and business associates.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK – KNOW ABOUT THE POSITION

You most probably will not be the only qualified candidate considered. The deciding factor may well be the way you present your skills and qualifications relevant to the position, how you conduct yourself during the interview, the image you project, and the “chemistry” with the manager(s). Be prepared to tell the interviewers why their company is attractive to you, to assure yourself that you want to be associated with them, and to raise your interview “comfort level.”

Have a thorough understanding of the position, its key duties and primary responsibilities, and what is expected. Be prepared to ask good questions. A few are listed below:

- ✓ How would you describe the work environment?
- ✓ What are the skills and attributes you are looking for in a candidate?
- ✓ What is the overall structure of the department where the position is located?
- ✓ Why do you enjoy working for this firm?
- ✓ What other qualities are you looking for in new hires?
- ✓ Where is the job located? What are the travel requirements?

Interviews (continued)

DO YOUR HOMEWORK – REVIEW YOUR CAREER HISTORY THOROUGHLY

- ✓ Review all dates, positions, duties, responsibilities, and achievements
- ✓ Know your strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ Be prepared to cite specific examples on achievements and how these experiences can help the company solve some of its problems
- ✓ Concentrate on your most recent position, but don't neglect to include other experiences such as volunteer work and other organizations

COMMON EMPLOYER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS INCLUDE

- ✓ Tell me a little about yourself
- ✓ What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- ✓ What qualifications do you have that you think will help you be most successful in our business?
- ✓ What major problems have you encountered and how did you deal with them?
- ✓ Why are you interested in our company and this job?
- ✓ Why do you feel you are a qualified candidate for this position?

QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYERS DURING INTERVIEWS INCLUDE

- ✓ What are the company's strengths and weaknesses compared to its competition?
- ✓ How important does upper management consider the function of its department/position?
- ✓ How will my leadership responsibilities and performance be measured? By whom?
- ✓ What is the organization's plan for the next five years, and how does this department fit in?
- ✓ What are some of the skills and abilities necessary for someone to succeed in this job?

For more information, visit
www.career.vt.edu/JOBSEARC/interview/AskQues.htm

Tips to Aid in Success

Selling yourself to a prospective employer in 45 minutes is enough to make anyone a bit nervous. There's a simple way to overcome nerves – practice interviewing. Ask a relative, a friend, a professor, a spouse, or anyone you trust to conduct a realistic interview and to provide constructive criticism.

Tell the employer why you are interested in the opportunity/company. (Use the space provided below to formulate your thoughts and capture your best attributes.)

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

Tell the employer why you are the most qualified person for the position. (Highlight your areas of expertise and major accomplishments.)

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

Question Samples on this Website:

www.jobbankusa.com/interview_questions_answers/free_samples_examples/communication_skills.html

KNOW WHAT TO DO DURING AN INTERVIEW!

BASIC INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE

- ✓ The interview begins in the waiting room
- ✓ Do not bring anyone with you
- ✓ No smoking, eating, or chewing gum
- ✓ Do not ask to use the phone – unless it is an emergency
- ✓ No listening to a walkman or MP3 player
- ✓ Do not apply makeup or brush your hair
- ✓ Do not pester or distract employees
- ✓ Avoid negativity when answering questions
- ✓ Keep your personal life private
- ✓ Ignorance is not bliss
- ✓ Check your ego – you are not going to be CEO tomorrow!

Tips to Aid in Success (continued)

BE AWARE OF PET PEEVES THAT ANNOY

- ✓ Yawning or acting disinterested while the interviewer discusses the job
- ✓ Leaving your coat on as though you need to be ready to bolt
- ✓ Glancing at your watch as if you have better things to do
- ✓ Continually touching your face or mouth, biting your nails, or picking your teeth
- ✓ Sniffing continuously because you forgot to bring a handkerchief or tissue
- ✓ Stacking your personal items on the employer's desk or scattering your belongings around the office
- ✓ Slouching in your chair or preferring to stand during the entire interview
- ✓ Cracking inappropriate or offensive jokes
- ✓ Excusing yourself to the restroom – unless an absolute emergency
- ✓ Shaking hands too vigorously or as if your hand is frail

Many organizations use behavioral and case method interviewing techniques that provide the interviewer with how an interviewee might respond in similar work-related situations. Go to these links for examples:

www.best-job-interview.com/behavioral-interview.html or

careercenter.tamu.edu/guides/interviews/case.cfm?sn=prospectivestudents

The bottom line is to use good manners before, during, and after your interview. Practice your best behavior until it becomes your natural way of conducting yourself in both business and casual environments

WHAT TO TAKE TO THE INTERVIEW

- ✓ **Positive, confident attitude**
- ✓ **Résumé - take five “crisp,” clean, unfolded copies**
- ✓ **References**
 - List only people who can reflect on your professional activity
 - Have at least four easily contactable people
 - Use former (or present!) managers who are familiar with your work
 - Always consult with references for their approval and availability before submitting your résumé
 - Include their company as well as the work phone numbers and e-mail information
- ✓ **Other Items**
 - Folder, pad, and pen(s)
 - Thoroughly prepared, written questions
 - Directions to the interview location
 - Company’s phone number
 - Performance results that may not be in the résumé and any letters of recommendations you may have. Never discuss or show proprietary information.
 - Knowledge of who you should ask for upon arrival.
 - Complete list of manufacturing functions, systems, and equipment you have used.
 - **DO NOT** take cell phones or pagers!
 - Take all the information that might be needed to complete an “application.” You most often will not be asked to, but if you have all the information, you are ready!

ARRIVAL AT THE INTERVIEW

Arrive 15 minutes before the interview. Get there and wait for the proper timing. If asked, fill out an application. Complete it in full and leave no blanks. Do not write “See Résumé” as a response to any application question. Respond to “expected salary” questions as “open” and to “current salary” questions truthfully. List references if requested.

Tips to Aid in Success (continued)

FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE (ALMOST) EVERYTHING!

In many instances the hiring decision is “mentally” made in the first few minutes of the interview, and then the manager seeks to justify the decision.

- ✓ Shake hands firmly and maintain eye contact with the interviewer. This is a sales effort!
- ✓ Maintain a high energy level. Be alive!
- ✓ Try to avoid drinks (spills), but don't be discourteous about it. **NO SMOKING!**
- ✓ Engage in “ice breaker” conversations. Go in with something you have picked up in your research that you can comment on, preferably a compliment to the company.
- ✓ If you know past or present employees, be careful. You should let it be known, but do not indicate your support or similarities with that person until you are sure they are “in favor” with the interviewer
- ✓ Most importantly, BE YOURSELF!

INTERVIEW CONCLUSION

If you are sincerely interested in the position, your role now becomes salesperson! You should clearly communicate your feelings to the employer, perhaps simply by saying, ***“Based on everything I know about the opportunity, what I saw and heard today, this is something I know I can do and am very interested in!”***

CLOSE THE INTERVIEW

Find out where you stand if possible (there may be other candidates, feedback may be necessary from other people you interviewed with, etc.). Ask the interviewer if he or she feels that you are qualified for the position. This gives you another chance to review points that may need clarification. Illustrate confidence in your abilities and convince the interviewer that you are capable of handling the position successfully. In parting, ask the interviewer what the next step might be and when they plan on making a decision.

Thank the person(s) for their consideration; again state your interest and your availability. The farewell should also include a smile, direct eye contact, and a firm but gentle handshake.

REMEMBER, *The top 10 qualities employers seek:*

1. Communication skills
2. Integrity
3. Teamwork skills
4. Interpersonal skills
5. Initiative
6. Strong work ethic
7. Analytical skills
8. Flexibility
9. Computer skills
10. Organizational skills

source: JobWeb.com-Career Development and job search advice for new college graduates. Copyright National Association of Colleges and Employers, 62 Highland Ave., Bethlehem, PA 18017-9085

25 Interview Tips

1. Always have a “polished” and professional appearance.
2. Always maintain a level of enthusiasm about the opportunity.
3. Do not place overemphasis on money.
4. Do not criticize past employees.
5. Always maintain good eye contact with the interviewer.
6. Make sure your handshake is “firm,” displaying confidence.
7. BE ON TIME. Arrive not more than 15 minutes early.
8. Express appreciation for the interviewer’s time.
9. Ask detailed questions about the position.
10. Be detailed when responding to questions asked by the interviewer.
11. Sell yourself (emphasize your strengths).
12. Make sure you are not perceived as being overbearing, overaggressive, conceited, or having a “know-it-all” complex.
13. Express yourself clearly.
14. Have a good career plan; this should include your goals and/or objectives, both short- and long-term.
15. Be confident.
16. Have factual information.
17. Always display good manners.
18. Exemplify maturity.
19. Illustrate vitality and enthusiasm.
20. Show interest in the company.
21. Demonstrate enthusiasm for the position.
22. Show flexibility for the demands of the job.
23. Do your research about the company.
24. Bring at least five copies of your résumé.
25. Send a thank you note to the interviewer(s).

Dress for Success

Always be prepared and confident. Your preparation, including your appearance, will allow you to enter the interview relaxed and confident that you can fulfill the needs of the company.

Listed below are recommendations for how you should look when you arrive:

MEN:

- ✓ A conservative suit in a dark blue or dark gray with a long-sleeved white shirt. The tie should be conservative, but stylish.
- ✓ Dark socks (over the calf) with dark, freshly shined shoes. This is typical, standard attire. However, please take into consideration the type of position you are applying for.
- ✓ Jewelry should be limited to no more than a wristwatch and wedding ring.
- ✓ Fingernails should be cleaned and trimmed.
- ✓ Facial hair should be neat and trimmed.

WOMEN:

- ✓ A business suit in subdued color is best for the first interview. Natural fibers work best. Dress in today's styles, but keep the hemline close to knee-length and keep blouses modest. This is typical, standard attire. However, please take into consideration the position you are applying for.
- ✓ Hosiery should be worn at all times, regardless of weather conditions. Shoe heel height should be moderate and comfortable; shoes should be freshly polished. If heels tips are worn, get them repaired so you don't click as you walk.
- ✓ A conservative dress suit is fine for most interviews.
- ✓ Jewelry should be minimal and nothing oversized.
- ✓ Nails should be trimmed and well manicured (**NO EXOTIC DECORATIONS/GLITTER**)

Networking

11 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS NETWORKING

Effective business networking is the linking together of individuals who, through trust and relationship building, become walking, talking advertisements for one another.

1. **Keep in mind that networking is about being genuine** and authentic, building trust and relationships, and seeing how you can help others.
2. **Ask yourself what your goals are in participating in networking meetings** so that you will pick groups that will help you get what you are looking for. Some meetings are based more on learning, making contacts, and/or volunteering rather than on strictly making business connections.
3. **Visit as many groups as possible that spark your interest.** Notice the tone and attitude of the group. Do the people sound supportive of one another? Does the leadership appear competent? Many groups will allow you to visit two times before joining.
4. **Hold volunteer positions in organizations.** This is a great way to stay visible and give back to groups that have helped you.
5. **Ask open-ended questions in networking conversations.** This means use questions that ask who, what, where, when, and how as opposed to those that can be answered with a simple yes or no. This form of questioning opens up the discussion and shows listeners that you are interested in them.
6. **Become known as a powerful resource for others.** When you are known as a strong resource, people remember to turn to you for suggestions, ideas, names of other people, etc. This keeps you visible to them.
7. **Have a clear understanding of what you do and why, for whom, and what makes your doing it special** or different from others doing the same thing. In order to get referrals, you must first have a clear understanding of what you do that you can easily articulate to others.
8. **Be able to articulate what you are looking for and how others may help you.** Too often people in conversations ask, “How may I help you?” and no immediate answer comes to mind.
9. **Follow through quickly and efficiently on any referral you are given.** When people give you referrals, your actions are a reflection on them. Respect and honor that and your referrals will grow.
10. **Call those you meet who may benefit from what you do and vice versa.** Express that you enjoyed meeting them and ask if you could get together and share ideas.
11. **Be prepared.** Savvy networkers always have their networking tools with them at all times. The networking tool kit includes: an ample supply of business cards, your name badge, any collateral material (flyers, brochures, etc.), and your marketing message (often referred to as your elevator speech).

For additional networking tips, visit:

<http://www.careerknowhow.com?networking/abcnetwork.htm>