

Adecco



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Job Seeker's Guide

Jump into your next job!

We can't help but be proud of you! Downloading this guide is the first step on your journey to your next job. The job hunt can be a long and difficult process. With so much competition, we want you to have all the help you can get. That's why we created a guide that walks you through everything from writing a resume to gracefully exiting your current position. What are you waiting for? Let's get started.

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Your best resume starts with the right template.

Your resume is a tool. It might be the strongest one you have for securing the job you want. To pick the right tool for the job, you have to do your research. Did you know that the template you use actually matters?

Pick a format that makes sense based on who you are and the job you are applying for. Use our chart to find a format that works for you. Then conduct a web search to find samples.

Resume Format	Structure	Use if you:
Chronological “The Standard”	The most common format. Your experience is listed in a job history section. Your most recent position is listed first.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have work experience • No employment gaps
Functional “The Quilt”	The most uncommon format. Your experience is not rooted in time. Rather, you list experiences that directly apply to the job you want.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have not worked in awhile • Are a recent graduate • Have a lot of experiences but no clear path
Combination “The Best of Both”	The most flexible format. Your skills are listed, along with your work history. A mix of functional and chronological.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have not worked in awhile • Are a recent graduate • Are changing careers • Want to highlight your work experience and skills
Targeted “The Pro-sume”	The most effective format. Everything you write is specifically tailored for the job you are applying for. From objective to education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have plenty of time to work on it • Have the experience the job description is asking for
Non-traditional “The Fun One”	The most rare format. Non-traditional resumes are defined by their creativity and lack of format. Resume scanners can't read these. Don't use them unless you're confident a human is reviewing your resume.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are in a creative or tech industry • Have exceptional design skills or technology

Your career objective is your first impression.

If you had trouble fitting your experience onto one page, just wait until you have to define yourself in a sentence or two. The career objective section of your resume should tell employers why your resume is worth considering over others.

Or use a professional summary.

A career objective tells a potential employer what you are seeking in a position. A professional summary tells the employer what you bring to the table. Highlight your strengths and use words from the job description to tell the employer how you can help them achieve their goals.

- Think about what you want from your career.
- Be specific, direct and brief.
- Update it every time you apply for a job.
- Describe who you are professionally.
- Use adjectives that describe your most compelling skill.
- Try to include outcome-oriented language.

For example:

Career objective:

An experienced customer service specialist seeking challenging work at a reputable organization with room for potential growth.

Professional summary:

A professional with a record of excellence in customer service, able to improve bottom line results by improving customer complaint resolution and encouraging teamwork.

Start now!

Use this space to practice writing a professional objective or summary.

Time to assess your skills and experiences.

When tackling the skills and work experience section of a resume, it's important to think about who will read it. Draw on past experiences and highlight the best moments.

Skills challenge

We double dog dare you to list as many of your skills as possible. Just the ones you may use at your future job.

Divide them into two categories:

1. Skills you use on the job:

2. Skills you can take anywhere:

Now that you have a solid list of skills, you may be wondering what to do with it.

1. Take a second look and be honest with yourself. Can you back each of your skills up with specific examples? If not, remove them.
2. Look at the job description of the position you are applying for. Your skills should be in sync with the words in the description.
3. Narrow it down. Keep your list short and include it under your objective statement.

Nothing on your resume is more important than experience.

No matter what format you selected, always think carefully about how to include your experience. Look at each section of the job description and write down specific examples of how your previous experiences have prepared you to fill that role. Pick the best examples and include them in your resume.

The Do's and Don'ts of resume experience

Do

- Use words from the job description to describe your experience.
- Provide your former title, company name, location and employment dates for each previous position listed.
- Carefully select the experiences, responsibilities and achievements you share.
- Keep it short while being as detailed as possible.
- Include specific details about what you achieved in your former role(s).

Don't

- Include anything that occurred over 15 years ago, if you can avoid it.
- Create a generic list that could easily apply to anyone.
- Forget to read and re-read for spelling and grammar errors.
- List more than five former jobs.

For example:

Customer Service Specialist

Joe's Print Shop, Jan. 2010 - Mar. 2012

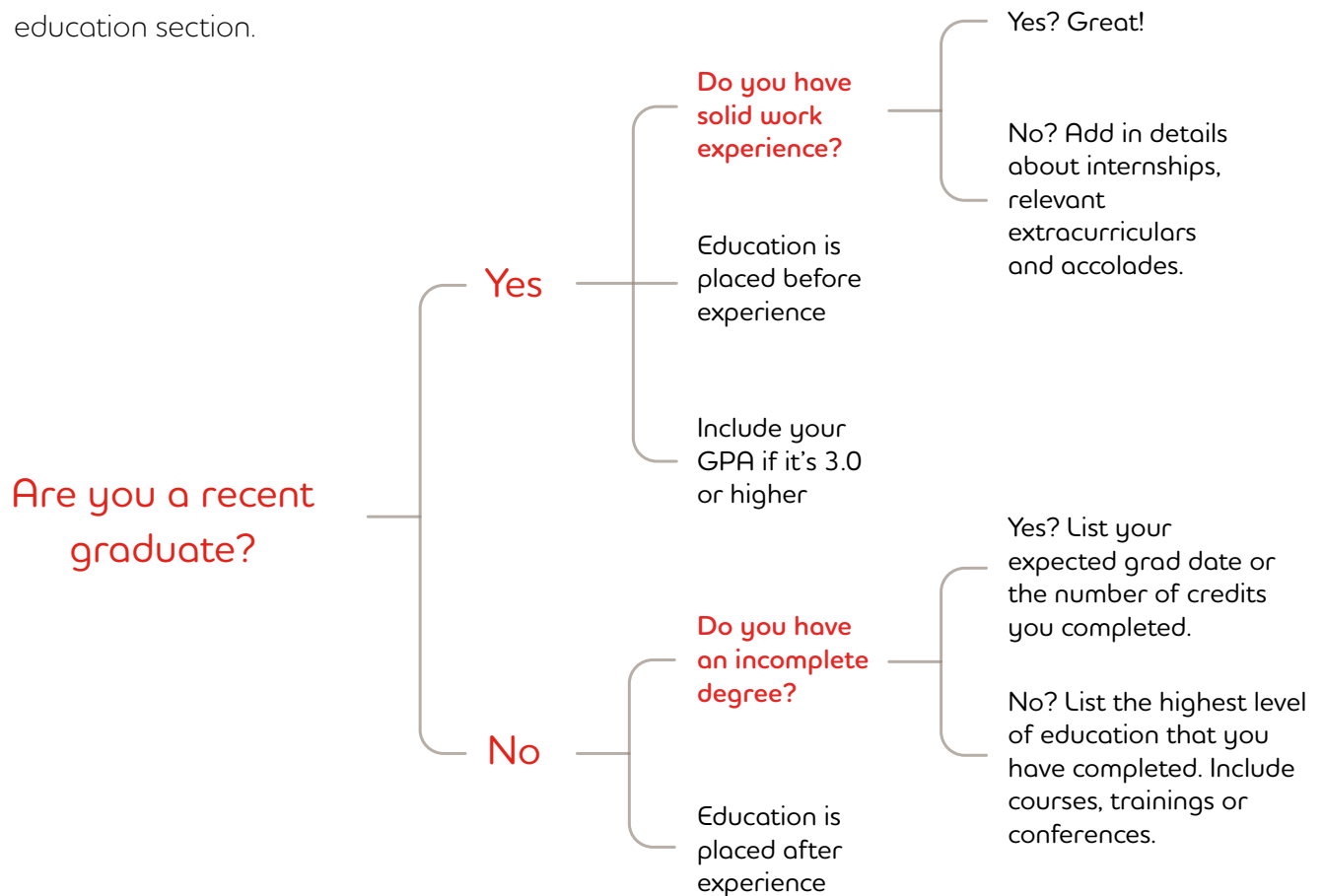
- Assisted 50+ customers per day with product inquiries and service requests
- Monitored inventory levels daily to ensure proper stock levels
- Developed new employee training program

Talking about your education.

The simplest and yet most complex section is education. The rules vary depending on who you are. A few of them are universal:

- List your most recent degree or most valuable educational experience first.
- Start with the school name and location.
- On the next line, put the name of your degree, the course of study and honors if applicable (date of graduation is optional).
- Don't include your GPA if you've been out of school for more than a few years.
- If you have a college degree or have taken courses in your field, there's no need to include your high school.

The rest of the rules can change. Use our decision matrix to make the most of the education section.



Awesometown University **City, State**

BS in Economics, magna cum laude
Minor in Psychology, June 2008

Awesometown High School **City, State**

APICS Inventory Management
Certification, Dec. 2015 - Jan. 2017

What about interests and activities?

It isn't always necessary. This really depends on the job you want. If the jobs you're applying for require certain skills—and you have them—include those skills. The same goes for personal interests and hobbies. Use your best judgment here.

Remember, your resume should get right to the point. You can always talk about your personal interests when you get the interview.

Review and then review some more.

A single typo or spelling error is all it takes to send your resume to the trash pile. Even though mistakes happen all the time in the real world, the presence of one on your resume is a clear sign that you either:

- a) didn't care enough to proofread, or
- b) did proofread, but failed to catch your mistakes.

Either way, it's not going to look good to an employer.

Avoid errors in spelling and grammar by having, not one, but several people read over your resume for you. Ask friends who are great at editing and want to see you succeed. Have them check for consistency in your use of present and past tense. The only time you should use present tense is when describing the responsibilities of your current job.



**Need someone to look over
your resume? Contact your local
Adecco recruiter today.**

Resume Do's and Don'ts

Do

- Carefully select the right template.
- Use sample resumes to help write yours.
- Spend time thinking about why you are qualified for the position.
- Match the skills you list to the ones your potential employer is looking for.
- Take time thinking about your experiences.
- Include a professional objective, experience, and education section.
- Edit, edit some more and have someone else review and provide suggestions for you.

Don't

- Send the same resume to every job you apply for.
- Forget to proofread.
- Lie or over embellish.
- Sweat interest and activities.
- Exceed two pages.
- Underestimate the power of a good resume.



A case for cover letters.

This single-page letter can make or break an interview offer. It introduces you, highlights your relevant experiences and clearly displays your interest in a specific job. It's personal. So it should be addressed to the hiring manager to show respect for the company and position. Really make it your own.

Here are our tips for how to write a compelling cover letter.

1. Keep it to a single page.
2. Introduce yourself and brag a little.
3. Customize it!
4. Thank the reader for their consideration.

Just like the experience section of a resume, the cover letter should be customized. Only this time, you are telling a story. Pick key responsibilities from the job description and tell the story of how you have managed similar tasks in your previous roles.

Start now!

Select responsibilities from the job description, then pick examples of when you have performed a similar duty.

Examples

1. Job Description

EX: Manage a team

EX: Forecast industry business trends

EX: Resolve customer complaints

2. My Experience

EX: As Branch Manager at Joe's Print Shop, I was responsible for shift management, training and day-to-day issue resolution for a team of six customer service representatives.

EX: Provide predicative analysis based on customer use frequency on a monthly basis. Printing, paper and office supply.

EX: As team lead, I reduced customer complaints by 5% per quarter.

Now you try!

1. Job description

2. My experience

Learn by example.

Jane Doe
123 West Imer Steet
City, State 12345
555.555.5555 or jane.doe@email.com

Month Day, Year

Kim Blanchet
Bib Box Paper Company
123 Main Street

Dear Ms. Blanchet,

Your organization is seeking a responsible consumer liaison, capable of resolving complaints, errors, questions, cancellations and more. My time at Joe's Print Shop has endowed me with the right experience for this role. Over the course of the past three years, I have earned two promotions.

Beginning as a Customer Service Specialist, I was responsible for managing customer expectations daily. In addition to my cashier duties, I successfully fielded customer inquiries via telephone and in person. My ability to positively resolve customer issues resulted in four Employee of the Month awards and a promotion to Team Lead.

As Team Lead, I retained my customer service duties while managing additional leadership roles. My new employee training improvements helped reduce turnover by 10% and resulted in better morale storewide. In this role, I was able to develop a deeper understanding of what motivates employees and customers alike, sharpening my managerial and problem solving skills.

Finally, as Assistant Store Manager, I assisted with service escalations, stock management, bookkeeping, personnel issues, vendor relationships, scheduling and more. These responsibilities helped me learn to multi-task while keeping the bigger picture in mind.

I look forward to discussing how my experience can be leveraged at your company in more detail.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jane Doe

Wrangling references

Choose wisely. Your reference is the person who will speak honestly (and hopefully, positively) about you with your potential employer. A reference should be a “work friend,” colleague, former boss, business contact, etc. Essentially, anyone you’ve worked closely with. A personal reference will do in a pinch, but a professional one is always better.

You need about four references; most companies will only contact a few. Make sure the name you provide is aware that they will be used as a reference. You need to include the following:

- First and last name
- Employer’s name
- Job title
- Email
- Phone number
- Nature of your relationship to the reference (boss, coworker, etc.)

Most people don’t include references on their resume unless specifically prompted to do so. If you do, just add them to the bottom. If not, include the phrase “References available upon request”.

Ex: Jane Doe, District Manager at Joe’s Print Shop
Jane.doe@joesprintshop.com
555.555.5555
Relationship: Former Manager



Social media and the job hunt



Spring or not, it's time to clean up.

Let's move on. Employers today aren't limited to a resume, handshake or interview as their first impression of you. It's becoming more common that they go deeper, and it's never been easier to do so.

It's in an employer's best interest to determine if your personality is a cultural fit for the business beyond what's on paper. Googling yourself is a great first step to see what a recruiter might find and to start cleaning up your online presence.

What do you find when you



your first and last name?

Jane Sm|

Search

65% of recruiters

admit they use social networks to screen the professionalism of a candidate.

43% of recruiters

have eliminated an applicant from consideration based on their online reputation and social media activity.

Here are a few pointers to ensure you don't forget any of the essentials:


- **Privacy.** Be wary of providing too much personal information. If you'd prefer to be more casual on a platform, ensure you're fully leveraging the privacy settings.
- **Inappropriate media.** Remove any pictures, posts, comments or anything else that could damage your reputation. On Facebook you can also restrict who's allowed to tag you in photos so you won't be surprised.
- **The company you keep.** Consider your social media connections. Disconnect with anyone you believe will hurt your reputation. This is especially important on Twitter and Instagram.
- **Unclutter.** Tidy up your profiles by removing page likes or apps on Facebook you haven't interacted with in a long time, or no longer care to. If it's not relevant to who you are today or if you can't speak to it, remove it.
- **Google check.** Scroll through a few pages of your Google search to ensure you've adjusted any profiles you have access to.



Don't forget us!

If you have a profile on any of these networks, make sure they are ready for a recruiter's inspection.



1 

2 **Adam Adecco** 1st

3 Assistant Store Manager at Joe's Print Shop | Customer Service | Local Marketing | Local Business Network Member

Jacksonville, Florida | Retail

Current Joe's Print Shop
 Previous Joe's Print Shop
 Education Acme University

[Send a message](#)

4 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/adamadecco> 1 connection [Contact Info](#)

5 **Posts**

Published by Adam 1 follower

The Latest in Print Marketing!
 October 14, 2016

6 **Background**

Summary

I am a responsible consumer liaison capable of resolving complaints, errors, questions, cancellations and more. I'm looking to grow my professional abilities with new roles in customer service.

Limitless Paper for a Paperless World **The Latest in the Paper Industry**

Experience

Assistant Store Manager
 Joe's Print Shop
 June 2007 – Present (9 years 5 months)

Running the shop, leading the entire team in store operations.

* 1 recommendation

Dan Spadora
 Sr. Marketing Specialist | Lead Generation | Social Media Marketing | Fortune 500 E...
 Adam is very detail-oriented and produced great results for the shop! He's on a clear track to upper management. View

Team Lead
 Joe's Print Shop
 January 2010 – January 2014 (4 years 1 month)

I retained my customer service duties while managing additional leadership roles. My new employee training improvements helped reduce turnover by 10% and resulted in better morale storewide. In this role, I was able to develop a deeper understanding of what motivates employees and customers alike, sharpening my managerial and problem solving skills.

Customer Service Specialist
 Joe's Print Shop
 June 2007 – January 2010 (2 years 8 months)

I was responsible for managing customer expectations daily. In addition to my cashier duties, I successfully fielded customer inquiries via telephone and in person. My ability to positively resolve customer issues resulted in four employee of the month awards and a promotion to Team Lead.

Recommendations Received (1)

7 Dan, would you like to recommend Adam?
[Recommend Adam](#)

Assistant Store Manager
 Joe's Print Shop

Dan Spadora
 Sr. Marketing Specialist | Lead Generation | Social Media Marketing | Fortune 500 Experience

Adam is very detail-oriented and produced great results for the shop! He's on a clear track to upper management.
 October 14, 2016, Dan managed Adam at Joe's Print Shop

8 **Skills**

Top Skills

- 34 Social Media
- 25 Social Networking
- 24 Management
- 16 Social Media Marketing
- 11 Strategy
- 28 Leadership
- 14 Leadership Development
- 12 Marketing
- 16 Recruiting
- 8 Advertising

9 **Groups**

- A Cappella in the Re... 16 members
- Disney College Progr... 11,434 members
- Alpha Kappa Psi 34,314 members
- Adecco (Staffing, USA) 6,433 members
- social fresh 2,000 members
- Toy Industry Associa... 4,328 members
- Social Media Today 187,032 members

10 **Honors & Awards**

Additional Honors & Awards

Marist College BS in Business Administration, Minor in Communication Studies. 3.35 GPA, Graduated Cum Laude, May 2007.

Organizations

Additional Organizations

Marist College School of Management, Marist College

Improve your LinkedIn profile.

Your LinkedIn profile is so much more than just a glorified resume. Or, at least, it should be. You can really bring your career to life using LinkedIn. We have 10 important points to ensure you don't forget a thing:

1. Clear profile photo

The first thing a viewer should see is your smiling face worthy of a business card. A color photo that clearly displays your face is best. Someone searching your name after meeting you in person will have an easier time identifying your profile.

2. Full name, plain and simple

Don't add initials, acronyms or other titles to your name field. If you have a maiden name users might search, include that...but keep it simple.

3. Keyword-heavy headline

Instead of just including your current job title, include hashmarks (#) to creatively explain core responsibilities or industry associations. (ex. Social Media Marketing | Digital Strategy | Fortune 500 Experience)

4. Custom vanity URL

By default your LinkedIn vanity URL is typically your first and last name followed by a string of alphanumeric characters. Edit this to simply be your first/last name, or something that can be easily remembered.

5. Posts showcasing your latest activity

When you write a blog piece on the LinkedIn Pulse platform, your most recent content will be featured in the Posts section of your profile. Showcase your professional perspectives, workplace achievements and writing style.

6. Summary and experience with added media

Your LinkedIn profile doesn't have to read like a resume. Use these fields to tell your story. Add media that brings it to life with links to the websites, projects or videos you're proud of producing.

7. Meaningful recommendations

Offer recommendations to those you've worked with in the past without being asked, and ask for a recommendation in kind. When one is submitted on your behalf, you can ask for changes and choose which to show.

8. Your top 10 skills

A visual representation of your abilities, these crowd sourced skills are acknowledgements from your connections that you're good at what you do. You can prioritize the "Top 10" you wish to highlight that you bring to the table. Plus, prioritizing your top skills will mean that you're more likely to get endorsed from your connections as someone who has these skills.

9. Groups and followings worth sharing

Follow any alumni groups, community organizations or industry groups you're a part of. Following influencers, news sources and companies you care about tell viewers what matters to you and how you keep informed of the latest industry trends and topics, deepening a potential connection.

10. Additional information not to forget!

Education, honors, awards, volunteering and languages are some of the last highlights you add to the profile. It's the final fingerprint that differentiates you from other candidates. Who knows? Maybe a hiring manager has something in common with you. Any of these categories could strengthen your connection to an employer, so don't neglect them.

Winning the job search!

Your network will make all the difference.

People are more likely to do business with people they know. So often, getting a job isn't about what you know, it's about who you know. That's why building a professional network is essential. Play the long game, as networking doesn't necessarily always provide instant gratification. In fact, it's most useful when long-lasting, mutually beneficial relationships are formed.

Make your networking moves in ways that are consistent with your long-term goals and dreams. These tips will get you started on the right track.

- Make yourself visible. It's a big world; go explore it!
- Don't be afraid to talk to people; that's what networking's all about.
- Don't just collect business cards and shake hands; focus your conversations and efforts on the people who can eventually help you.
- Don't look for favors too early, as this can turn your contacts off and risk damaging any goodwill you've created.
- Offer something of value to your network, such as helpful insight or introductions to other professionals.
- Follow up and keep in touch. People are busy, but if you stay top-of-mind, your chances of success will rise.
- Communicate via email, blogging and, of course, social networking events.



Be your own job search boss.

If you've ever embarked on a job search, you know things can get really chaotic, really quickly. To remain focused and achieve a favorable outcome, you'll need to learn how to manage your job search. Follow these basic steps to help you get started.

1. Manage your time wisely.

Time is of the essence, and you definitely don't want to drag your feet and risk losing out on a great opportunity. Work on the job search during your most productive hours. Block off three hours every day to peruse job boards, bookmark job postings that interest you, and respond to emails from potential employers. Actively searching for a job is basically a full-time job in and of itself, so it's important that you establish a routine and stick to it.

2. Track your applications on a spreadsheet.

You'd be surprised how often candidates accidentally apply to the same job twice. If you lose track of your submitted applications and accidentally apply to the same job twice, you might be perceived as disorganized by whoever screens the applications. Use a spreadsheet to keep track of all your job applications and avoid embarrassing blunders like this. Include title, company name, location, link to posting, date applied, follow-up dates, interview dates and application status.

3. Set daily goals for yourself.

In order to improve any aspect of your life, you need to set goals. Whether you're working, in school or unemployed, the goals you set for your job search will vary. For example, someone who is working full-time while job searching might set the following daily goals:

- Apply to at least one job per day
- Spend 30 minutes researching a prospective employer per day
- Spend 30 minutes researching job tips or career advice per day
- Spend 30 minutes reviewing your skills and experience

Turn the job fair into a job.

Most people are relaxed at a job fair, seeing it as an opportunity to weigh their options. While there is nothing wrong with that, serious job seekers have the opportunity to edge out the competition.



Do your homework.

Do a little research. Take the time to learn what companies, organizations and recruiters will be in attendance. Google the businesses that spark your interest and see if they're hiring. Make a list of the ones that might be a good fit for you.



Dress for success.

What you wear is an important factor that influences the first impression you make on potential employers. Dress as you would for an interview. Business casual is usually your best bet for a job fair. Make sure your clothes are clean and pressed. Stay somewhere in between casual and formal. No hoodies or tuxes please!



Bring your resume.

Actually, resumes... lots of them! You never know. You might only need a couple, but you'll likely need lots. And if you have business cards, that's a plus. Bring those too.



Listen up!

In a busy, fast-paced environment, it's easy to get distracted. Focus during your conversations with potential employers, especially when you ask them questions. You should listen carefully and take mental notes in order to determine your best fit.



Get the lay of the land.

As soon as you get there, plan your attack. Confirm that the companies you're interested in are still there, and see if any new companies were added last minute. It's probably a safe bet to meet with your top companies first, then visit others last. Either way, having a plan makes it less stressful and more productive.



"Speed date" employers.

Use the job fair as an opportunity to get to know multiple companies in a short period of time. And make sure they get to know you just as well. Pump up your ambition, experience and skills, while also asking them questions. That way, it's a two-way street. Make sure you collect contact information or business cards.



Follow up.

Make sure you reach out to anyone you connected with at the job fair. Send them an email or a handwritten note, or leave them a voicemail. They expect it. And it helps if you can remember a small detail from your conversation with them. It'd be a great icebreaker for your follow up.

Interview Do's

Interviewing is tough. Here are a few simple ways to make it a little easier:

- **Be early.** At least 10 minutes early.
- **Fill out all applications completely.** Oh, and write “negotiable” in the pay/salary section.
- **Be enthusiastic.** About the position, company and yourself.
- **Ask specific questions.** An interview isn't a one-way street. Asking questions shows you're interested.
- **Stress your achievements and accomplishments.** This is your time to brag a little. Just don't go overboard.
- **Tell your possible employer what you'll do for them.** Because it's not the time to tell them what they can do for you.
- **Play up your strengths.** If you must discuss negative experiences, be direct and tell them what you learned.
- **Always represent yourself honestly.** It's OK to be Robin and not Batman. Talk about what makes you unique.
- **Be organized.** Know the key points you want to make—you can even make a list—and find ways to fit them in.
- **Be positive about your reason for leaving any current or previous job.** The key word to remember is “more.” You want more challenges, responsibilities and opportunities—you're a go-getter! If you've been let go or laid off, stress how much experience you gained.
- **Talk about the confidence former employers placed in you.** Point to specific projects and responsibilities your employer assigned to you.
- **Make the job you're interviewing for #1.** Let the interviewer know it's your first choice and that you can't wait to help.



Interview Don'ts

There are number of reasons companies don't hire candidates—even qualified candidates.

- **Don't be late.** Just don't.
- **Don't discuss pay or benefits.** We repeat: do not. Instead, remain open and let your recruiter handle the negotiations.
- **Don't answer questions with a simple "yes" or "no."** Yeah, it's good to be concise, but sell yourself by using clear, relevant examples.
- **Don't forget to ask questions.** Make sure they're detailed questions about the position that show that you did your homework.
- **Don't make derogatory remarks about previous or present employers.** Don't go there. Ever.
- **Don't misrepresent your experience.** Provide factual information about your work history and your skills.
- **Don't have poor personal appearance.** See our "Dress to impress" section in this guide, or talk to your recruiter.
- **Don't seem uninterested, indifferent, lazy or bored.** Employers want to see some self-confidence and enthusiasm about the job. Also, maintain good eye contact and give a firm handshake.
- **Don't come across as cynical, intolerant, overbearing, aggressive, indecisive or conceited.** Because all of those are undesirable qualities.
- **Don't forget to say "thanks."** Also, see our section on writing a follow-up letter.

Your step-by-step guide to winning the interview

Step 1: Do your homework.

Interviews can be tough, no matter how many times you've been through them. But, trust us, if you take the time to get to know the position, the responsibilities and the company, we promise you'll feel a lot more comfortable. And you'll be ready to talk about how your skills, experience and personality will fit right in.

Do your homework on the company.

Find out as much as you can about the company—from its history to its future. Use these sources:

- Your recruiter
- The internet
- Trade journals
- Annual 10-K report
- Friends and business associates

Do your homework on yourself.

Sure, that might sound strange, but you have a lot to remember, right? So make sure you remember it all. Start by brushing up on your entire career history:

- Review all dates, positions, responsibilities and accomplishments.
- Know your strengths and weaknesses.
- Be prepared to discuss specific achievements and how they apply to your potential new job.
- Focus on recent positions, but don't neglect your early career.

Remember, the employer won't hire you only for your skills and experience. They'll also consider your:

- Attitude and poise
- Presentation and communication
- Education and certifications
- Related industry and technical background

Be prepared to ask questions:

- What are the main responsibilities of the job?
- Who does the position report to?
- Who has been successful in this job and why?
- Who has failed and why?



Step 2: Write it down so you won't forget.

Let's be honest—selling yourself to an employer in 45 minutes is enough to make anyone sweat. But there are three simple ways to overcome nerves: practice, practice, practice.

Ask your recruiter, spouse, a relative, a friend—anyone you trust—to do some mock interviews with you and give you honest feedback.

Be ready to discuss these two very important points:

Tell us why you're interested in the opportunity.
(Use this space to collect your thoughts.)

Tell us why you're the best person for the position—brag a little.
(Highlight your areas of expertise and major accomplishments.)

Practice your answers to these commonly asked questions.

There are no 100% right answers to these questions, but there is a right way to answer them—make sure your answer is direct, confident, honest and thoughtful. For a little extra help, check out these great sample answers:

What do you look for in a job?

Sample answer: “First and foremost, I want to work for a company that I admire and respect. I also look for the right opportunity that fits my experience and skills and will allow me to grow. It’s also important for me to constantly feel challenged and make an impact for the business. That’s what I think this job offers and why I’m so excited about it.”

How long would it take you to make a contribution to our company?

Sample answer: “Right from the start, my skills and experience would allow me to play an important part on your team. And once I get more familiar with the company’s goals and resources, I think I’ll make an even more valuable impact.”

Why did you leave your last job?

Or

Why are you leaving your current job?

Sample answer: “I enjoyed my work, but I’m anxious to expand my knowledge and take on more. Honestly, the great opportunities at this job did not exist in my last position. That’s why I’m very interested in your company, and all that you have to offer. And I’m confident that I can do an excellent job.”

Now it's your turn.

Use the space provided to jot down your answers. Ready? Go for it!

What are your short- and long-term goals?

What do you look for in a job?

What's the difference between a good job and an excellent one?

Why did you leave your last job? or Why are you leaving your current job?

Why did you choose to interview with us?

What can you do for us that someone else can't do?

Why should we hire you?

Do you work well under pressure?

How are you best managed?

How has your early career and/or background influenced who you are today?

What pay or salary do you expect to make?

What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?

What are your five biggest accomplishments in your career?

What's your biggest strength? Weakness?

What qualifications do you have that'll make you successful here?

How long would it take you to make a contribution to our company?

How long would you stay with us?

If you could start your career over, what, if anything, would you do differently?

How do you rate yourself as a professional?

What qualities have you liked or disliked in your bosses?

What's the most difficult ethical decision you ever had to make? What was the result?

What parts of your previous jobs have you disliked?

How would you rate your most recent employer and why?

Step 3: Ask some questions of your own.

The best interviews are conversations. That's why you need to be ready with some conversation starters of your own. This is also your chance to get to know the person and the company and figure out if this job is a good fit for you.

Here are some questions you can ask that'll help you keep the conversation going, get some important information about the job and decide if this is someplace you want to work. Take a look.

- Who are your major competitors? How do they stack up against you in terms of strengths and weaknesses?
- Tell me about the history and growth of your company. What's been the biggest improvement and the biggest setback?
- What are the company's main goals and how will I help reach them?
- Tell me about a typical day.
- Tell me about your onboarding/training program.
- What are the qualities of your top people?
- Where do you see your company going in the next several years?
- What are your favorite and least favorite parts about working here?
- How do you see me fitting in with your company?
- What do you think your top people like most about your company? What do they like least?
- How do I compare with other qualified candidates?
- When can I return and meet some of the people on the team?

You may only get one chance— don't leave anything out.

Before you shake hands and walk away, make sure the interviewer knows everything they need to do to make a decision about you and why you'll be such a great match. If you prepared an awesome answer to a question they didn't ask, tell them the answer anyway. It's all part of selling yourself.

Oh, and lastly, always find out what and when the next steps will be—if you're proactive, you won't be caught off guard.

Step 4: Dress to impress.

These days, different companies have different dress codes, but, for an interview, you're going to want to dress a little nicer and more conservatively. Basically, just look your best. And if you're not sure about exactly what to wear, ask your recruiter. They'll know what the interviewer is expecting.

Men

- If you're wearing a suit, go for a dark blue or dark gray with a long-sleeved white shirt.
- Your tie should be conservative, but stylish.
- On your feet, wear dark socks (over-the-calf) with nice, clean polished shoes.
- Go easy on the jewelry—maybe just a watch and a wedding band.
- Fingernails—trim and clean them!
- Facial hair should be clean-shaven or trimmed neatly.

Women

- Dress in today's styles, but keep your hemline close to knee-length and keep blouses on the modest side.
- Keep jewelry minimal and in good taste.
- If you have to go with a suit, a business suit in a neutral color is usually best for first interviews.
- Hair should be clean and neat and nails should be well manicured.
- Makeup should be stylish, but natural and lightly applied.
- Go light on the perfume. Some people actually have allergies to strong perfume.

What if it's a phone interview?

A lot of times, a phone interview is the first step, so you should take them just as seriously. Here are some tips:

- Work with your recruiter to set up a specific time for the call.
- Be on time.
- Just in case you somehow miss the call, make sure your voicemail recording is courteous and professional.
- Make sure the phone you're using is high quality and in a quiet spot. If you're using a cell, be in an area where you get good reception and don't try to drive and interview at the same time.
- Stay focused! Turn off your music, your computer, your TV, your video games and whatever else can possibly distract you.
- Never, ever, interrupt your interview call for another call that's "beeping in." Ever.

- If you have a bad connection and are having trouble hearing every word, offer to call them back.
- Be prepared and organized with notes about the company, the position and yourself.

Again, don't take a phone interview lightly. Think of it like the first step in a two-part tryout. If you make the cut, the next step is an in-person interview.

Last but not least, if your phone interview goes well, ask to set up an in-person interview before hanging up. Even if they don't schedule one on the spot, they'll still appreciate you being proactive.

Step 5: Write a follow-up letter.

After the interview is over, it's important to follow up. This gives you a chance to say things you forgot or to correct things you wish you had said differently. More importantly, a lot of people have forgotten the importance of following up, so this could make you stand out!

Here are a couple of pointers:

- Send a follow-up letter immediately. This allows you to show a sense of urgency and a high interest in the job. Ideally, your letter should be dropped in the mailbox the next day.
- Ah, but before you drop the letter in the mailbox, email it to us. We'll proofread it and put ourselves in the shoes of the interviewers (we're sort of interviewers ourselves, so we know what they like) to make sure it's 100% spot on.
- Be as brief as possible. It shows respect for others' time. As a bonus, it's also easier on you.
- In the letter, thank them for their time and restate your interest and enthusiasm for the job—for example, say that you can't wait to hear back from them.

Can I just email them?

Sending follow-up letters via email is a bit on the impersonal side, so we recommend avoiding it, unless it's necessary due to timing or special circumstances.

If you just can't get around sending an email, no worries; the rule of thumb is to send the letter as an attachment.

Sample follow-up letter

Date
Primary Interviewer's Name
Primary Interviewer's Title
Company Address

Dear [Primary Interviewer's Name],

I appreciate the time spent with you discussing [Company] and the _____ position. It was a pleasure meeting with you, _____ and _____. I feel my qualifications and skills in _____, _____ and _____ reflect those necessary to be successful at [Company].

At _____, I successfully [Mention one or two of your top accomplishments]. I am confident that I have the experience and drive to succeed on your team.

I feel an even greater excitement level about the opportunity because it will allow me to attain my goals of _____ and _____.

I look forward to our next meeting to discuss this in greater detail.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Let's talk money.

If you get to the point when you're discussing your hourly rate or salary, that's good news—you're getting closer to landing the job! Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Most companies want to make a fair offer. They really do. They want to bring new employees on board at a salary or hourly pay level that makes them happy and keeps them around—they want you to feel valued.
- Be realistic and know what you're worth. For the most part, the economy has been growing slowly, but steadily. Most companies are offering reasonable salaries, but don't get carried away with your expectations. Talk to your recruiter to get a true picture of what someone with your skills and experience is earning these days.
- Sometimes having a great job with great coworkers is worth more than a few extra dollars.
- Be flexible. A lot of times your entire compensation package is more than your pay. Think of what benefits and perks come with the job.
- If you're asked what salary you're looking for, try to avoid quoting a specific number. Say something like this: "I'm very interested in the opportunity and feel I can make a meaningful contribution. I am currently earning \$_____ per year (or per hour). I'm open to a competitive offer." It's best not to mention a specific number because you don't want to over- or underprice yourself. That could raise a red flag in the minds of the interviewers.

Overall, it's a good idea to keep your recruiter in the loop. Trust us, we do this for a living and can come up with a good solution that will make everyone happy.

Know your worth! Visit adec.co/showmysalary and use the Salary Calculator to find out how much you should be making.

Step 6: Resign from your job with class.

Resigning from your current position can be emotional and stressful. There's no easy way to say it, but here are a few ways you can make it a little easier:

- Put it in writing. Handing your boss a resignation letter is the best way to handle an uncomfortable situation. Not to mention, it's something to keep for your records—for your protection. Oh, and it makes that initial awkward conversation a little more comfortable.
- The sooner you leave the company, the better. Give fair notice, but ask to be relieved ASAP. Yeah, you're awesome, but the company will get by without you. You now owe your loyalty to yourself and your new job!
- Don't talk about counteroffers; it's probably the worst thing you can do during the resignation process.
- Talk to us first. We'll help make this process as stress-free as possible.

Sample resignation letter

Date
Former Manager's Name
Title
Company

Dear [Former Manager's Name],

It is with mixed emotions, yet with firm conviction, that I write this letter of resignation from [Company].

My association during the past [#] years with this excellent company and its many fine people has been a wonderful part of my professional and personal life.

Please understand that I have made my decision after considerable thought. An outstanding opportunity presented itself that will significantly enhance my career and assist me in achieving my goals.

I am therefore resigning from [Company] effective [date]. This will allow sufficient time to complete current commitments prior to commencing with my new employer on [date]. In the interim, I will work with you and the staff to provide a smooth transfer of my current duties.

I hope that you understand and accept my decision. I will support you in making this change as easy as possible for the staff and department.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Think twice about a counteroffer.

Did you get a counteroffer to stay at your current job? We're not saying you shouldn't accept it, but here are a few things to consider.

1. What does it say about the company you are working for if you have to threaten to resign before they pay you what you're worth? Think about it.
2. Where's the money for the counteroffer coming from? Is it your next raise early? All companies follow some strict wage and salary guidelines. Can they make your increase retroactive in order to compensate for underpaying you?
3. The same problems that caused you to look for a new job in the first place will probably repeat themselves in the future. As much as some things change, others stay the same.
4. Your company may immediately start looking for a new person at a cheaper price. In some cases, you could be training your replacement. It's true.
5. You've now basically made your employer aware that you're unhappy. From this day on, they may question your loyalty.
6. When promotion time comes, where will you be on your employer's list?
7. When times get rough, your employer might begin the cutbacks with you.
8. Statistics show that, if you accept a counteroffer, the probability of voluntarily leaving in six months, or being let go within a year, is extremely high—85% of people who accept a counteroffer are gone in six months, and 90% are gone in 12 months.
9. Accepting a counteroffer, can give you the feeling that you were bought.
10. Once word gets out, the relationships that you now enjoy with many of your coworkers may not ever be the same.

Based on an article from *The Wall Street Journal*

If you're working with one of our recruiters, tell them what you thought about your interview, or ask them any other questions throughout the whole process—even after you land the job. Don't be shy. After all, it's our job to find the best job for you, and the more we know, the better.

About Adecco Staffing USA

When we talk about us, we're really talking about our people—the best staffing and recruiting experts on the planet. They connect over 88,000 people to great jobs across the country every single day. That makes us one of America's biggest employers.

Our people are also the go-to workforce management partners for a lot of Fortune 500 companies. And thousands of American workers, in almost every industry and profession, rely on them for career advice. When you're ready to find out what we can do for you, stop by one of our more than 900 career centers in the U.S., or visit adeccousa.com today.

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