Career Development and Transition Program

California Conservation Corps

2012

Student Workbook

Table of Contents

Module1: Self-Assessment, Occupational Research, and Goal Setting 3
Check-Off List 4
Skills Profiler worksheet 5
Work Importance Locator worksheet 8
Interest Profiler worksheet 9
Exploring Occupations worksheet 12
What Interests Me? 14
Informational Interview 17
Smart Goals 20
California Conservation Corps Goal Setting worksheet 22
Classroom Presentation 27

Module 2: Applications, Resume, Cover Letter and References 28
Check-Off List 29
Professional E-Mail and Electronic Storage 30
Personal and Employment History worksheet 32
Resumes 35
Action Words 38
Chronological Resume Sample 39
Functional Resume Template 40
California Conservation Corps Project Skills and Experience 41
California Conservation Corps Work Terms 42
Cover Letters 43
Cover Letter Template 45
Sample Cover Letter 46
Cover Letter worksheet 47
References 49
Job Application Tips 50
Classroom Presentation 52

Module 3: Organized Job Search, Networking, and Tailoring the Resume and Cover Letter 53
Check-Off List 54
Organize Your Job Search 55
Job Search Spreadsheet 57
Job Search Methods 58
Company Websites: Researching Employers 59
Networking: Connect with People 60
Create Your Elevator Speech 61
Social Media Networking and Job Search 62

Module 3, continued
Job Search Websites 63
Visiting a Career One-Stop Center 64
Career Fairs 65
Job Search worksheet 66
Understanding Job Descriptions 67
TagCrowd Activity 69
Tailoring a Resume to a Job Description 70
Tailored Resume Sample 73
Tailoring the Cover Letter 74
Letters of Recommendation 77
Classroom Presentation 79

Module 4: Portfolio, Interviewing, and How to Succeed at Work 80
Check-Off List 81
Professional Portfolios 82
What to Include in a Portfolio 86
Portfolio Assembly: Developing a Table of Contents 89
Summary Sheet of Project Logs 91
How to Prepare for Interviews 92
Using the STAR Method to Answer Behavioral Questions 95
STAR Practice Question 98
Mock Interview Activity 99
How to Succeed at Work Questionnaire 100
Succeed at Work 101
Classroom Presentation 112

Corpsmember Career Development Workbook

Module 1:

Self-Assessment, Occupational Research, and Goal Setting

In this module, you will:

Self-Assessment

I. Gain a better understanding of the importance and role of self- assessments in the career development process.

II. Be able to identify your current skill set using an online skills profiler.

III. Learn new terminology and definitions for skills used in the world of work.

IV. Be able to define workplace values.

V. Be able identify values that are important to you in your ideal workplace.

VI. Understand and define each trait in RIASEC.

VII. Identify and explain what your three letter RIASEC code is.

Occupational Research

I. Understand and define all of the elements of an occupational profile.

II. Use research skills to explore occupations based on your interests, skills, and values.

III. Identify two occupations that you are interested in pursuing.

IV. Will understand the following concepts: nature of the work, working conditions, education and training requirements, occupational skills, and employment outlook.

V. Understand the process and purpose of an informational interview.

VI. Practice interviewing and note taking skills.

VII. Gain a personal viewpoint of a specific occupation.

Goal Setting

I. Understand the importance and purpose of creating short and long term goals.

II. Learn each element in SMART Goal Setting.

III. Be able to create your own goals using the SMART Goal Setting format.

Corpsmember Career Development Workbook

Check-off List

Module 1: Self- Assessment, Occupational Research, and Goal Setting

Deliverables:

Week 1

- ☐ California CareerZone Skills Profiler Worksheet
- ☐ California CareerZone Work Importance Locator Worksheet
- ☐ California CareerZone Interest Profiler Worksheet
- ☐ Exploring Occupations Worksheet

Week 2

- ☐ What Interests Me? Worksheet
- ☐ Informational Interview: Potential Contacts
- ☐ SMART Goal Planning Worksheet
- ☐ California Conservation Corps Goal Setting Worksheet

Week 3

- ☐ Informational Interview Summary
- ☐ Classroom Presentation

CM Name_____ Site _____

CM Signature _____ Date _____

CDT Instructor Signature _____ Date _____

Skills Profiler Worksheet

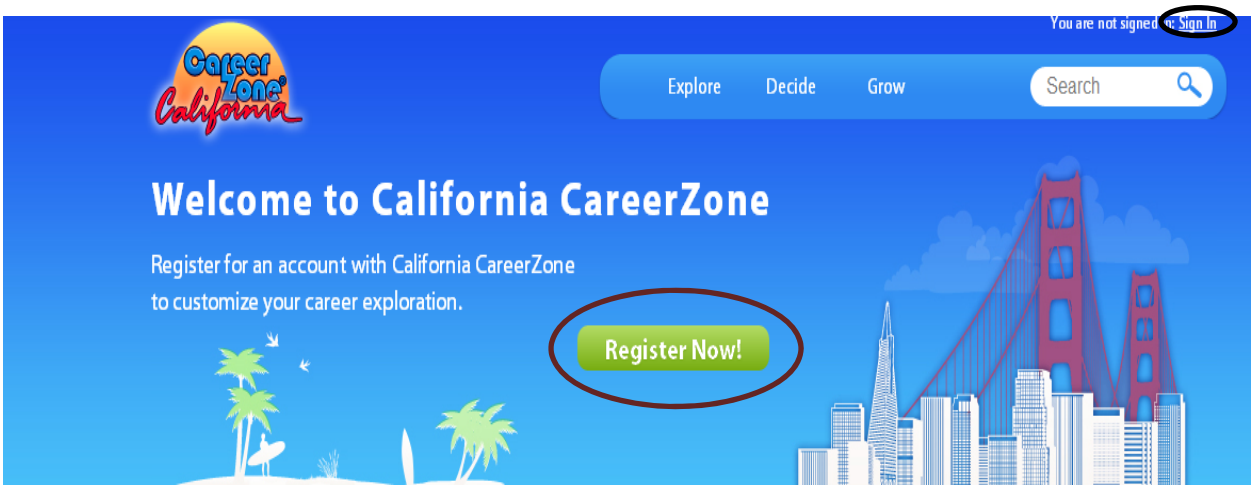
Identifying what your skills are is one of the first steps in career development. Identifying your skills will help you explore occupations that fit what you can do right now. Identifying your skills will also help you identify what skills you need to gain in order to do other jobs you might like.

Use the following website and this worksheet to help you organize your current skills as well as the skills you hope to strengthen.

<u>California CareerZone: Skills Profiler</u>

www.cacareerzone.org

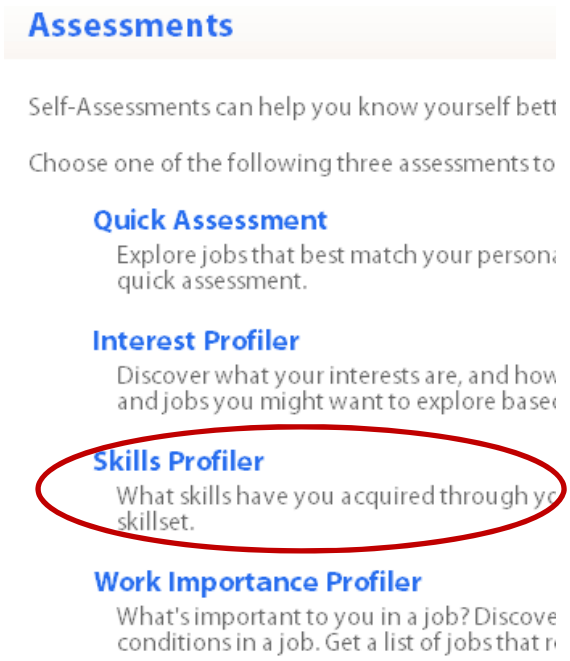
1. Log into your California CareerZone account by clicking on the "Sign In" link in the upper right hand corner of the page.
   If you don't have an account click on the "Register Now!" button in the middle of the screen. Fill in the information under "Create an account." If you are not currently enrolled in a school you do not have to give a school name.



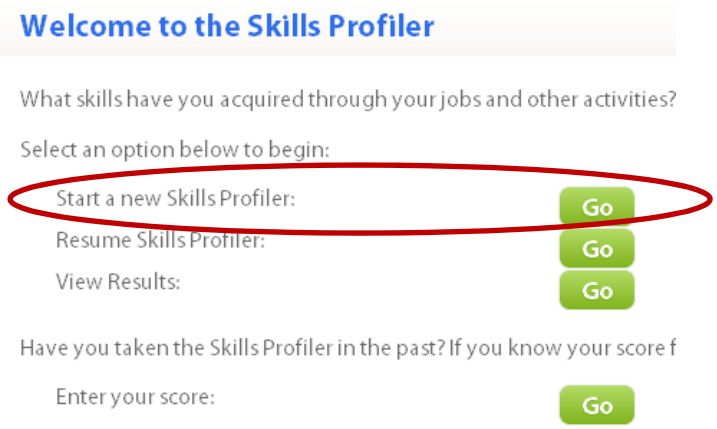
Write your Username: _____ and Password: _____

2. Click on "Begin Assessment" at the lower left corner of the main page.

3. On the next screen you will have the option of choosing from four assessments. Click on "Skills Profiler."



4. Read the introduction and click "Go" next to the heading "Start a New Skills Profiler."



5. Read each set of directions and click "Next" when finished. After you have read all of the directions click "Begin." Remember: this is not a test; it is just a tool that will help you organize your skill set.

6. When you are finished answering all 35 questions, click "Get Results."

List below the top 6 skills identified from your results.

List below some of the skills that you would like to acquire or strengthen.

Work Importance Locator Worksheet

Everybody has values, but did you know that occupations can have values as well? These are called Work Values. Work Values are characteristics of a given workplace. Many times occupations can be categorized by work values. Below is a list of Work Values and their descriptions.

Remember, happiness in a job or occupational industry increases when a person considers their work values and work needs. Each work value comprises several needs as shown below:

- The **Achievement** work value involves the need to use your individual abilities and have a feeling of accomplishment.
- The **Independence** work value refers to the need to do tasks on your own and use creativity in the workplace. It also involves the need to get a job where you can make your own decisions.
- The **Recognition** work value involves the need to have the opportunity for advancement, obtain prestige, and have the potential for leadership.
- The **Relationships** work value includes the need for friendly co-workers, to be able to help others, and not be forced to go against your sense of right and wrong.
- The **Support** work value involves the need for a supportive company, be comfortable with management's style of supervision, and a competent, considerate, and fair management.
- The **Working Conditions** work value refers to the need to have your pay comparable to others, and have job security and good working conditions. You also need to be busy all the time and have many different types of tasks on the job.

Reading the list above, what do you think are your top 3 Work Values?

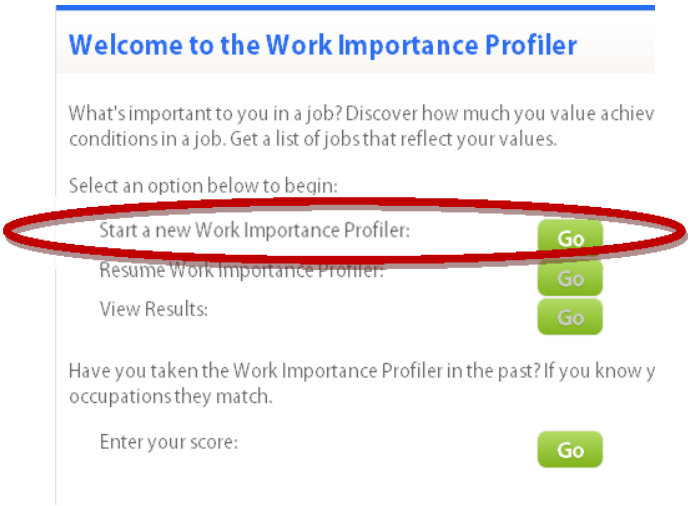
<u>California CareerZone: Work Importance Locator</u>

www.cacareerzone.org

1. Log into your California CareerZone account by clicking on the "Sign In" link in the upper right hand corner of the page. If you can't remember your username and password you can find it on your Skills Profiler Worksheet.

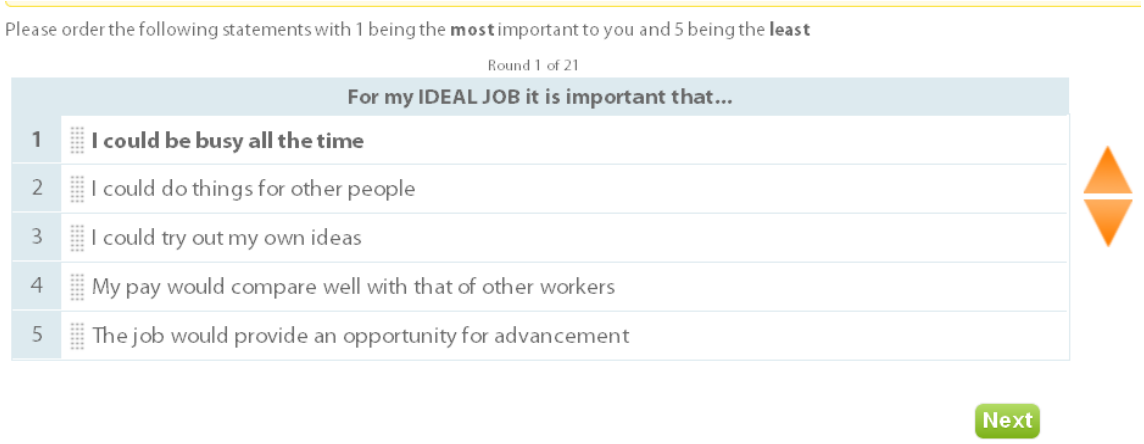
2. After you have signed in move your mouse over the word "Explore" at the top of the page. When the drop down menu appears select "Work Importance Profiler" under the yellow heading "Assess Yourself."

3. Click "Go" next to "Start a new Importance Profiler."



4. Read each set of directions and click "Next" when finished. After you have read all of the directions click "Begin." Remember: this is not a test; it is just a tool that will help you identify your Work Values.

5. There are two ways of ordering the statements in the box. You can use the arrows on the right side of the page to move the bolded sentence to the rank you want. Or you can drag and drop the bolded sentence using your mouse. Do this for all 21 rounds. Take your time to answer the following questions and click "Next" to go to the next page.



List below your <u>top 2</u> Work Values from the Work Importance Locator Summary page:

Interest Profiler Worksheet

Have you ever had to do a chore that you hated? Would you put it off to the last moment and count every second until it was done? Are there some chores that you don't mind, or even enjoy doing? Everybody has tastes or interests in what they do. Some people enjoy working outdoors, even in bad weather. Other people prefer to work indoors. Maybe you prefer to do the exact same task every day at work. Maybe you prefer to have variety in your duties, even to the point of not knowing what you will be doing at work that day. Everybody is different and so are occupations. Using RIASEC (also known as the Holland code) you can explore occupations that fit your interests.

Here is a description of each RIASEC category:

Realistic	Interested in athletics; good with hands; prefer to work with objects, machines, plants or animals rather than people. Prefer to do the job without a lot of talk or debate.
Investigative	Likes to observe, learn, evaluate, or solve problems. This type is associated with scientific/academic pursuits. Prefer to analyze problems, evaluate options/data, set action, and analyze results.
Artistic	Interested in artistic expression. Likes to work in unstructured situations using imagination and creativity. Relies heavily on intuition and imagination.
Social	Likes to work in some helping capacity: informing, teaching, developing, curing people. Will try to find solutions equitable for all concerned. Good at networking with people.
Enterprising	Likes to work with people in leadership capacity- managing, performing, influencing. Prefer to investigate a direct plan of action to be carried out by others. Focused on achieving the goal, not concerned with minor details.
Conventional	Likes to work with data and numbers, more than people. Likes following instructions rather than being in charge. Prefers a defined structured plan of action. Attention to detail. Enjoys putting all pieces of a plan together.

After reading through those descriptions, what do you think are your top 3 interests?

California CareerZone: Interest Profiler

www.cacareerzone.org

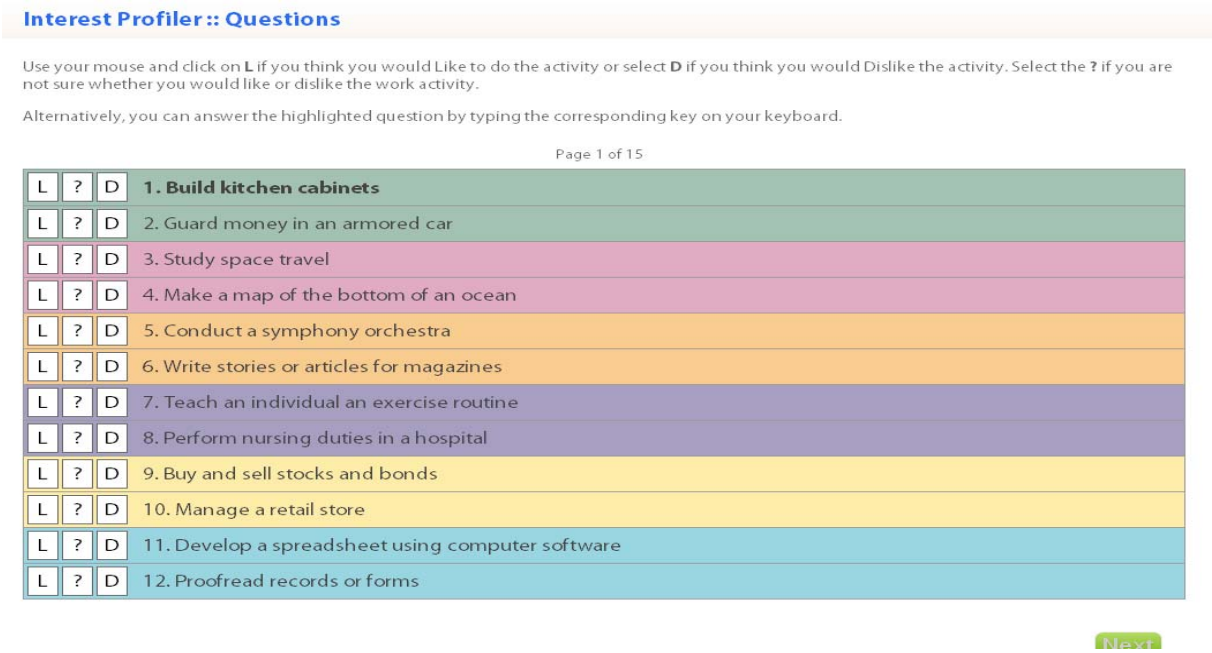
1. Log into your California CareerZone account by clicking on the "Sign In" link in the upper right hand corner of the page. If you can't remember your username and password you can find it on your Skills Profiler Worksheet.

2. After you have signed in move your mouse over the word "Explore" at the top of the page. When the drop down menu appears select "Interest Profiler" under the yellow heading "Assess Yourself."

3. Click "Go" next to "Start a new "Interest Profiler."

4. Read each set of directions and click "Next" when finished. After you have read all of the directions click "Begin." Remember: this is not a test; it is just a tool that will help you identify your Interests or RIASEC Code.

5. For each activity indicate whether you think you would Like or Dislike doing it. If you are absolutely not sure about it, click on the question mark. Take your best guess, though. The more 'Likes' and 'Dislikes' you select will give you a more accurate result. This is not asking if you have ever done the activity before.



Interest Profiler :: Questions

Use your mouse and click on **L** if you think you would Like to do the activity or select **D** if you think you would Dislike the activity. Select the **?** if you are not sure whether you would like or dislike the work activity.

Alternatively, you can answer the highlighted question by typing the corresponding key on your keyboard.

Page 1 of 15

L	?	D	**1. Build kitchen cabinets**
L	?	D	2. Guard money in an armored car
L	?	D	3. Study space travel
L	?	D	4. Make a map of the bottom of an ocean
L	?	D	5. Conduct a symphony orchestra
L	?	D	6. Write stories or articles for magazines
L	?	D	7. Teach an individual an exercise routine
L	?	D	8. Perform nursing duties in a hospital
L	?	D	9. Buy and sell stocks and bonds
L	?	D	10. Manage a retail store
L	?	D	11. Develop a spreadsheet using computer software
L	?	D	12. Proofread records or forms

Next

What are your top 3 Interests? List them below.

Exploring Occupations Worksheet

Are you ready to read through 900 occupational profiles? Don't worry, you don't have to. Now that you have identified your skills, work values, and interests you can explore occupational profiles that fit you. All of these assessments will filter out occupations that you likely won't be interested in. What started out as 900 may now only be 45!

Here are a few things you should know before you start exploring:

1) Do not feel like you are limited to the occupations on the list provided by the assessments. You can explore occupations that are not on the list.

2) Be realistic for now, and aim high for the future. Just because you do not have enough education right now for your ideal occupation does not mean that it should not be a goal. You can look for occupations you can do right now and occupations you would be interested in for the future.

3) Question what you think you know. Read through some of the occupational profiles even though you think you know what they do. You might be surprised by what you find out about a Plumber, or a Civil Engineer. Also, if you don't know what a specific occupation is (like an Actuary), make sure you take a look at the profile.

California CareerZone
www.cacareerzone.org

1. Log in to your California CareerZone account by clicking on the "Sign In" link in the upper right hand corner of the page.

2. After you have signed in move your mouse over the word "Explore" at the top of the page. When the drop down menu appears select any assessment under the yellow heading "Assess Yourself."

3. Click "Go" next to "View Results."

4. Click on "View Occupations."

5. When you read a profile that you like, save it in your account by clicking on "Bookmark" in the upper right hand corner of the page.

6. Do this for each assessment: Skills, Work Importance, and Interest Profiler. Write down your favorite occupations from each assessment below.

Skills Profiler

Occupation: Education Required:	Occupation: Education Required:
Occupation: Education Required:	Occupation: Education Required:

Work Importance Profiler

Occupation: Education Required:	Occupation: Education Required:
Occupation: Education Required:	Occupation: Education Required:

RIASEC Interest Profiler

Occupation: Education Required:	Occupation: Education Required:
Occupation: Education Required:	Occupation: Education Required:

What Interests Me?

Developing your Career Path

While it may not seem like a big deal right now, developing a career path is filled with some of the biggest decisions of your life. You do research before you make a big purchase like a car or house, wouldn't you expect to do the same with your career?

However, before you jump into the research, take a moment to imagine your ideal job in the near future, and farther out.

Envision Your Ideal Workday

Describe below your ideal workday. Do *not* rule out any options because you think it's impossible or impractical to achieve them. Although we cannot all be professional basketball players, we can explore *why* we would want to play basketball all day, every day.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Now take a moment to think about what makes these activities so appealing to you. Then go ahead and list those characteristics below. When answering be very specific this way you can get a better insight as to why it's appealing.

Questions you may want to ask yourself include:

- ✓ What activities make me feel good about myself?
- ✓ What gets me excited?
- ✓ What did I want to be when I was young? Why did this interest me?
- ✓ Which interests have stayed with me for the longest time?
- ✓ Which activities make me feel confident?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Now that you had time to think about why those activities appeal to you, in the space below list *two* occupations from your Exploring Occupations Worksheet that you feel would appeal to

you. Choose one occupation that you could do in the near future (1-3 years from now), and choose one occupation that you could work towards over a long period of time (5-10 years from now).

Occupation 1_____

Occupation 2_____

Researching Your Ideal Occupations

Occupation 1

1. Occupation:_____
2. Nature of the work

   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Working conditions

   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Education and Training Requirements (education required, estimated time to achieve this, etc.)

   _____
   _____

5. Skills necessary for this occupation

   _____
   _____
   _____

6. Outlook – what is predicted for jobs in this occupation: rising, falling?

   _____

7. Average Salary

   _____
   _____
   _____

8. Related Occupations

   _____
   _____
   _____

Occupation 2

1. Occupation:_____
2. Nature of the work

   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Working conditions

   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Education and Training Requirements (education required, estimated time to achieve this, etc.)

   _____
   _____

5. Skills necessary for this occupation:

   _____
   _____
   _____

6. Outlook – what is predicted for jobs in this occupation: rising, falling?

   _____

7. Average Salary

   _____
   _____
   _____

8. Related Occupations

   _____
   _____
   _____

Informational Interview

Another method to find information about what's happening in an occupation or an industry is to talk to people working in the field. This process is called informational interviewing. An informational interview is an interview that you initiate - you ask the questions. The purpose is to obtain information, not to get a job.

Here are some ways to find people to interview:

- Make a list of people you know and what they do for work. The person you need to interview may be a family member or close friend.
- If you don't know someone in that specific occupation, ask people you know if they know someone.
- If that doesn't work, look online for someone local that is in that occupation.

How to contact someone for an Informational Interview:

- Tell the person who you are and you are looking for someone to conduct an informational interview with.
- Ask them if they can meet with you for at most 30 minutes.
- If they can't meet with you, ask them if they know someone who might be willing to be interviewed.

How to prepare:

- Using the Informational Interview Questionnaire choose 10 questions for your interview.
- Dress professionally for the interview and be prepared.
- ARRIVE ON TIME! Make sure to thank them for their time.

Potential Contacts:

Name	Title	Phone	Occupation

Informational Interview Questionnaire

Please choose no less than 10 of the following questions for your informational interview.

Occupational Questions:

- What is the title of the person you are interviewing?
- What are other commonly-used titles for the position?
- What are the duties performed during a typical day? Week? Month? Year? Does s/he have a set routine? How much variety is there on a day-to-day basis?
- What educational program is recommended as preparation? What types of courses are required for success in this occupation? (Distinguish between courses which are desirable and those which are indispensable.)
- What degree or certificate do employers look for?
- What kind of work/internship experience would employers look for in a job applicant?
- Are any co-curricular activities recommended?
- What steps besides meeting educational and experiential requirements are necessary to "break into" this occupation? (i.e. - exam? interview? union membership?)
- What are the important "key words" or "buzz words" to include in a resume or cover letter when job hunting in the field?
- What kind of opportunities are there for advancement in this occupation? Is an advanced degree needed?
- What are the different settings in which people in this occupation may work (i.e. - educational institutions, businesses, etc.)?
- What other kinds of workers frequently interact with this position?
- Is there evidence of differential treatment between men and women workers with respect to job duties, pay, and opportunities for advancement?
- What are the employment prospects in the advisor's geographic area? Where are the best employment prospects? What are the employment prospects at the advisor's company? Is mobility a necessary factor for success?
- What are some related occupations?
- What are the demands and frustrations that typically accompany this type of work?
- Is there a typical chain of command in this field?
- How can you determine that you have the ability or potential to be successful in this specific occupation?
- Is this a rapidly growing field? Is it possible to predict future needs for workers in this field?

- What types of technology are used and how are they used?
- What does the advisor know now which would have been helpful to know when s/he was in your shoes?

Functional Questions:

- How many hours do they work?
- What sort of education do they have?
- What has been their career path from high school to present?
- What are the satisfying aspects of their work?
- What are the greatest pressures, strains or anxieties in the work?
- What are the major job responsibilities?
- What are the toughest problems and decisions with which they must cope?
- What are the dissatisfying aspects of the work? Is this typical of the field?
- How would they describe the atmosphere/culture of the work place?
- Do they think you left you out any important questions that would be helpful in learning about the job or occupation?

Smart Goals

Creating short and long term goals helps keep us motivated and focused. Without a goal it is hard to make plans or know when we have completed something.

The best way to create goals is to determine a long term goal and create short term goals that help you get there. An example would be:

Long term goal: Become certified as an Emergency Medical Technician in two years.

Short term goals:

1. Find out what is required for certification before I leave the CCC.
2. Learn and be certified in First Aid and CPR by the end of the summer.

Create some goals based on what you have discovered about yourself from the What Interests Me worksheet and the informational interview.
The best way to do this is using the SMART Goals method below.

A SMART Goal has the following characteristics:

Specific	The goal focuses on the specific accomplishment. Who or what. *I will become an Emergency Medical Technician.*
Measurable	How will the goal be measured for success? How much will you accomplish and when? *I will plan to complete all of the requirements and keep track of my achievements.*
Attainable	Create steps for the goal. Can you break this goal in to short term goals? *I have created short term goals for every 6 months.*
Realistic	You are more likely to reach a goal if you believe you can do it. *Based on my assessments and my research it is very realistic that I can gain the necessary skills to be an EMT and I would enjoy the work.*
Time Bound	Set a deadline so you have something to work towards. *Become certified as an Emergency Medical Technician <u>in two years</u>.*

<u>Not a SMART short term goal:</u>

- I will attend classes after work.

This goal does not identify a measurement or time frame. The "trend" is not measurable.

<u>SMART short term goal:</u>

- I will attend 3 hours of class per week.

Use the SMART Goal Planning Worksheet to create your occupational and educational goals.

SMART Goal Planning Worksheet

(S) Specific
WHO? *Describe the goal and who/what is involved.*

(M) Measurable
HOW? *How you will know a goal is achievable?*

(A) Attainable:
WHAT? *Steps I need to complete in order to achieve the goal.*

(R) Realistic
WHY? *In what way is the goal relevant to my personal and professional growth?*

(T) Time Bound
WHEN? *Clearly define the time-frame.*

California Conservation Corps
Goal Setting Worksheet

Corpsmember Name _____ Supervisor _____

Date_____ Center_____ Date of Hire _____

	Start Date	Target End Date	Completed (check box)
CCC Work Goals			
Understand proper use of hand tools.			
Complete Emergency Fire Camp Support Training.			
Use proper safety gear.			
Practice safety on the job and participate in tailgate sessions.			
Accept constructive feedback from supervisor and crew members.			
Understand and practice conservation ethics on the job.			
Keep a weekly journal (500 words) and list on the job skills.			
Demonstrate strength and stamina on the job (i.e. walking, lifting).			
Achieve 90% or better daily job attendance.			
Pass (3) monthly evaluation with satisfactory or better rating.			
Meet standard personal hygiene practices.			
Develop and improve my interpersonal skills (oral/written).			
Effectively communicate and follow problem solving methods.			
Understand and participate in emergency response projects.			
Complete the Career Develop and Transition Competency.			
Complete the Conservation Awareness Program competency.			
Complete Certified Sawyer Training.			
Attend Leadership Development Training.			

	Start Date	Target End Date	Completed (check box)
Complete 48 volunteer hours in community service projects.			
Complete Blue Card Program.			
Apply for a CCC Specialist position.			
Become a Vehicle Swamper (maintain a CCC vehicle).			
Become a Crew Tool Swamper (maintain crew tools).			
Become a Crew Safety Officer.			
Become an Assistant Crewleader (ACL).			
Complete a crew leader application and interview.			
Complete Class C Driver's License.			
Complete Class B Driver's License.			
Become a Crewleader.			
Research CCC internship opportunities.			
Apply to Intern Program and interview for the intern position.			
Apply for CCC special programs (i.e. Australian Exchange, Backcountry, Transitional Candidate, WEER, Salmon Restoration Project).			
Qualify for the CCC and AmeriCorps Education Award.			
Other:			
Other:			
Other:			
Personal Development Goals			
Register to vote and exercise my right to vote.			
Participate and improve personal physical fitness.			
Attend AA/NA classes.			
Attend weekly Corpsmember Community Meetings.			
Attend and participate in Corpsmember Advisory Board (CAB).			
Open a checking, and/or saving account.			
Develop and implement a monthly spending and savings plan.			

	Start Date	Target End Date	Completed (check box)
Participate in CCC monthly recreational events or activities.			
Understand and practice healthy diet and exercise program.			
Abstain, or decrease alcohol and drug use.			
Abstain, or decrease use of cigarettes.			
Volunteer, and participate as a CAB officer.			
Participate in counseling services to improve my self-image, and/or interpersonal skills.			
Locate and utilize a mentor(s).			
Donate to a charity.			
Become a blood donor.			
Other:			
Other:			
Other:			
Career Development Goals			
Identify career pathways and occupations you might like to explore.			
Explore occupations at the library, on websites or through other research methods.			
Interview people in careers of interest to learn what they do and why they chose that career path.			
Set a short-term goal.			
Set a long-term goal.			
Research colleges or trade schools entrance requirements and cost.			
Apply for CCC Scholarship.			
Apply for AmeriCorps Scholarship			
Enroll, participate & complete the GED curriculum & pass the GED test.			
Enroll, participate & complete in ESL (if applicable).			
Enroll, participate & complete a High School Diploma Program.			
Learn keyboard and computer skills.			
Write a cover letter for a CCC opening (promotional			

	Start Date	Target End Date	Completed (check box)
or civil service).			
Write a resume for a CCC opening (promotional or civil service).			
Learn how to find good job/work references.			
Request three or more letters of reference from supervisors or employers.			
Develop a resume for a CCC position or promotion.			
Develop an electronic file space to store my job seeking documents.			
Find a mentor for job development knowledge and guidance.			
Update resume, cover letter and application for a job outside the CCC.			
Apply for CCC opening (promotional or civil service).			
Practice interviewing for a CCC opening (promotional or civil service).			
Visit a local One-Stop Center and research job opportunities.			
Research the Internet for job opportunities.			
Apply for college or technical school admission.			
Research and apply for college/technical school financial aid.			
Complete college assessment and placement program for admission.			
Practice interview skills for job opportunities outside the CCC, apprenticeship programs or educational programs.			
Complete the ASVAB assessment for Military requirement.			
Visit a military recruiter (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine, or Coast Guard).			
Transfer closer to home or job location prior to completing CCC.			
Develop a portfolio to collect job search materials.			
Research apprenticeship opportunities.			

	Start Date	Target End Date	Completed (check box)
Research internship opportunities in the community.			
Enroll & participate in local community college classes.			
Apply for Job Opportunities (all types).			
Other:			
Other:			
Other:			

List 5 goals from each of the areas:

CCC Work Development Goals

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Personal Development Goals

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Career Development Goals

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

After you complete this worksheet, put a copy in your CMD file and take a copy with you to update your Individual Development Plan (IDP). If an electronic copy is available, make sure you store it in your electronic storage space (for example, Google Docs).

Classroom Presentation

Module 1: Self -Assessment, Occupational Research and Goal Setting

You will have 10 minutes to present an overview of what you have learned in this module. You can use the 10 minutes any way you like and you can use any type of presentation methods and tools that are available to you.

These topics need to be addressed in your presentation:

1) An overview of the two occupations you chose from the What Interests Me? worksheet. Include information on what a person in each occupation does, what skills are used and the education required for each occupation.
2) Provide three key pieces of information that you found out during your informational interview. Also include information about who you interviewed and the business or organization they work for. This information should be interesting to you and hopefully relevant to your goal setting exercise.
3) Share one of the long term goals you developed for yourself using SMART Goals and include any short term goals that were developed based on that activity.

Possible presentation tools:

1) Create a single page handout or poster board for the instructor and other students.
2) Create an informational packet with various resources about the occupations you chose.
3) Create a quick activity for the class to do that is relevant to your presentation.
4) Create a Powerpoint presentation.
5) Use your imagination.

Have fun and Remember: You are presenting something to the class that you find interesting. You get to choose the topic (occupations) and information you share with them. Help them see what makes you excited about it.

Corpsmember Career Development Workbook

Module 2:

Applications, Resume, Cover Letter and References

In this module, you will:

Applications

I. Create and learn how to use a professional email account.
II. Understand how to create, upload, and save documents in Google Docs.
III. Learn how to email documents.
IV. Understand the importance of an organized portfolio.
V. Use research and decision making skills to determine what information is important to have easily available during the job search.
VI. Understand how an application is part of the application process.
VII. Be able to identify the elements of a state application.
VIII. Complete a state application using information from your resume and personal and employment worksheet.

Resumes

I. Have a basic understanding of the differences between chronological and functional resumes.
II. Learn how to read through a job description and identify key words and skills specific to the position.
III. Understand how to identify your own skills specific to the job description.
IV. Develop a resume specific to a CCC job description.

Cover Letter and References

I. Understand the importance of a well written cover letter.
II. Be able to identify the elements of an effective and professional cover letter.
III. Develop a cover letter relevant to applying for a California Conservation Corps job.

Corpsmember Career Development Workbook

Check-off List

Module 2: Applications, Resume, Cover Letter and References

Deliverables:

Week 4

- ☐ Professional Gmail address
- ☐ Shared a document on Google Docs
- ☐ Personal and Employment History Template
- ☐ Copies of licenses and certificates

Week 5

- ☐ Resume for a CCC position
- ☐ References sheet
- ☐ Cover Letter for a CCC position
- ☐ Completed State Application

Week 6

- ☐ Classroom Presentation

CM Name_____ Site _____

CM Signature _____ Date _____

CDT Instructor Signature _____ Date _____

Professional E-mail and Electronic Storage

Setting up A Professional E-mail Address

First impressions are important, especially when you are trying to get a job. For the most part an employer has several opportunities to get an impression of you before they ever meet you in person. An employer can figure out what you are like by looking at your resume and cover letter, but the very first thing they will notice is your email address. You might feel like your email address is an extension of your personality- who you are, but is it the part of your personality that will make you a desirable employee?

It is important that you take some time to think about how your email looks from the standpoint of the recipient. Here are several things you should check to make sure it conveys the image you want.

1. **Having Your Name Show up Instead of Your E-mail Address** – When you send an email, it should show your name in the "from" field. Sometimes people have it set to just show their email address.
   This is an example of how the "to" field should appear when someone receives your message:
   "Mark W. Shead" <mark@productivity501.com> to me
2. **Include Your Full Name**– Some people like to use just their first name, but when the person receiving your message is scanning a list and sees "Tom," it may be difficult for them to know which "Tom" the message is from.
3. **Use Something Professional for the Username** – Getting emails from LuckyOne007 or PrincessDeeDee may be cute to your friends, but for employers it sends a different message. There might be a reason to use a nickname if you are concerned about privacy, but be prepared for people not to take you seriously because there doesn't seem to be a real person standing behind the e-mail.
   Here are some ideas to help get you started:
   - bob.hope@gmail.com
   - bob.t.hope@gmail.com
   - bhope@gmail.com
   - bobh@gmail.com

Create 6 options for your professional email address

Creating a Gmail account

1. Go to www.gmail.com
2. Click on Sign up for Gmail
3. Fill out the registration form:
    A. Your first and last name.
    B. Choose your ID – Go through the list you created and find one that is available.
    C. Choose a password that you will remember, but do not use proper names.
    D. Make sure that the "remember me" features are NOT checked when using a public computer.
    E. Choose and answer the security question.
    F. Type in the letters or numbers that you see where it says "Word Verification."
    G. Agree to the Terms of Service and click on "I Accept. Create My Account."
    H. To verify your account, fill in mobile phone number and select whether you want text verification or an automated voice phone call to give you your verification code.

Using Google Documents

Google Documents allows you to upload, create, and share many types of documents. It is like having a virtual storage space on the Internet. You can access your documents from any computer with Internet access. Sharing documents with other people allows them to see your work, and collaborate on that document if you give them permission.

It is a good idea to store your resume, cover letters, certificates, and other work related documents on Google Docs since it will make it easier for you to download and email important information when you are away from your personal computer.

Emailing Documents:

Most of the time employers will ask you to e-mail a resume and cover letter as part of the application process. Here are some brief instructions and rules for emailing documents.

To email a document in Gmail:

1. Sign in to your Gmail account.
2. Click on "Compose" and type in the e-mail address of the person you are sending it to.
3. In the subject line indicate the Job Title or follow the application instructions and type in what the employer wants you to use.
4. Make sure to write a brief introduction and indicate that there are documents attached in the body of the e-mail.
5. Click on "Attach a File". Locate the document you want to attach and double click on it. Repeat this process until you have attached all of the documents you need to send. **Note**: It is always a good idea to convert your Word documents into a PDF before emailing them.
6. After attaching all of the necessary documents, click on "Send".

Personal and Employment History Worksheet

Writing a résumé can be easy if you are properly prepared. The following worksheet allows you to compile all of the necessary information needed for applications and résumés.

Contact Information

Name: _____

This should be your full legal name. No nicknames or abbreviations!

Address: _____

_____

_____

Example: 12345 Penny Lane, Apt. # 4
New York, NY 84501

This address should be at a residence where you check the mail often.

Phone Number: _____

Example**:** (xxx) xxx-xxxx

- Put a phone number that is **ONLY** answered by **YOU** or **VOICEMAIL**. Employers do not want to talk to multiple people to get to you.

Email Address: _____

Example**:** josephtsmith@email.com

- Your email address should be simple and professional!

Employment Experience

(Full-time/part-time/seasonal/temporary/internships)

Begin with your most recent employer and work backwards (reverse chronological order). If you are still working for that employer, put **present** on the dates of employment.

Example: 05/2010 – present

DO NOT guess on your dates of employment. These *must* be accurate so contact the employer if you are unsure.

Fill out information for every job you have had. You will include the most relevant job experience on your résumé depending on the position you are applying for.

Employer: _____ Supervisor: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Your job title/position: _____ Dates: _____to_____

Short description of your duties: _____

_____

_____

_____

Employer: _____ Supervisor: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____
Your job title/position: _____ Dates: _____to_____
Short description of your duties: _____
_____
_____
_____

Employer: _____ Supervisor: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____
Your job title/position: _____ Dates: _____to_____
Short description of your duties: _____
_____
_____
_____

Volunteer Experience

Volunteer experience is just as valid as work experience since you learn skills while volunteering. Volunteering indicates that you are dedicated to your community so an employer assumes you will also be dedicated to the job.

Organization: _____ Dates:_____to_____
Short description of your duties: _____
_____

Organization: _____ Dates:_____to_____
Short description of your duties: _____
_____

Education

Like your employment information, begin with the most recent school that you attended and work backwards. Indicate whatever degree/diploma that you received from each school.
If you have a Bachelor's degree, it is not necessary to include your high school.
Include any extracurricular activities, awards, or honors that you received.
If you have not completed your diploma or degree yet, state that it is **in progress** and indicate when your expected completion date is.

School:_____ City, State:_____
Dates attended: _____to_____ Diploma/Subject matter: _____
Awards and activities: _____
_____

School:_____ City, State:_____
Dates attended: _____to_____ Diploma/Subject matter: _____

Awards and activities: _____

_____

School:_____ City, State:_____
Dates attended: _____to_____ Diploma/Subject matter: _____
Awards and activities: _____

_____

Licenses/Certifications/Skills

It is important to list ALL licenses, certifications, and skills you might have. You never know what can come in handy!

Driver's License
Number: _____ Class: _____ Endorsements: _____

Safety
CPR-Adult Expiration Date: _____
Standard First Aid Expiration Date: _____
Other: _____

Computer Skills (programs, databases, operating systems, etc.)

_____

_____

Other

_____

_____

References

You should have the contact information for at least three ***professional*** references. Get permission before using someone's information for a reference!

Name: _____ Phone: _____
How do you know this person? _____ E-mail: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____
How do you know this person? _____ E-mail: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____
How do you know this person? _____ E-mail: _____

RESUMES

What is a resume?

Your resume creates a snapshot of your academic achievements, skills and experiences for prospective employers. It is a concise summary of your background and relevant qualifications so it is not necessary to describe every job you had, only the most important and relevant ones. Your resume should be tailored to the job you are applying for so it clearly highlights your relevant skills. Your resume should fit in only one or two pages.

What is in a resume?

1. Name and Contact Information

List your name, current address, telephone and/or cell phone number and email address at the top of the page. Add your permanent address as additional contact information, and possibly to show your familiarity with a geographic area if you plan to return home.

2. Objective

An objective is optional. This one sentence statement however, may serve as a 'thesis statement' for the rest of the information on your resume. If included it should provide the reader with a clearer idea of your preferred career interests, and skills you wish to use in your next position. If you choose to omit the objective, plan to include the detail of your career plans in a well-written cover letter. If the employer specifically says not to include a cover letter, make sure you have the objective section.

3. Education

Highlight your academic experiences. List the school you attended along with its location, degree obtained, date of graduation, and GPA (if 3.0 or above). Any additional information that may be of interest to employers such as special certifications, or highlighted coursework should be included.

4. Experience

This section offers you the greatest flexibility to showcase yourself to employers in the best way possible. Here you will describe any work, internship, extracurricular, leadership, and/or volunteer experiences that you believe highlight positive qualities about your background. Make sure you include any CAB experiences you have.

May 2010 **CAB Store Manager** *Sacramento, CA*

- Maintains store keys and opens store to make sales
- Keeps stock of the store's inventory, order supplies, and re-stocks store as needed
- Holds the Assistant Treasure accountable for running store in his/her absence

List organizational names, locations, job title, start date and end date. You may present the information in bullet pointed phrases, or short paragraphs in reverse order with your most recent job at the top. Use action verbs to keep the language interesting. Descriptions should be a combination of responsibilities,

skills developed through the experiences, and results achieved. **If you have many experiences to choose from, select those that may be more closely aligned to the position to which you are applying**.

5. Skills

Additional Skills

- Experience with Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Inflow, Salesforce and QuickBooks
- Fluent in Spanish, and French

This section is also optional. It may be used to highlight skills not mentioned in another section, such as foreign language ability and level of proficiency, technical skills like knowledge of a particular computer program or typing proficiency, or any other skill area that may attract an employer's attention.

6. Achievements

Achievements

- Corpsmember of the month for August 2011
- Corpsmember of the year 2009

This section is good to include if you have won any special recognition or awards. It shows employers that you have skills, and experiences that stand out from other applicants. Be sure to include any awards, scholarships or recognitions you received while in the CCC.

7. Volunteer Experience

Volunteer Experience

2010 – 2011 **Over 50 hours of volunteering completed**

- Relay for Life, September 2011

Listing your volunteer experience in your resume is important. As corpsmembers, you have a lot of different things you can list here. The more experience you put in your resume, the more attractive you are to employers. Only include those volunteer opportunities you feel relate to the position you're applying for. You might also want to include the total number of volunteer hours you have completed while in the CCC.

Tips When Writing Resumes

1. Use Keywords

The job title and desired qualifications will give you a feel for the keywords that you should use in your resume to catch the attention of a potential employer.

You can use keywords when describing your former positions, past accomplishments, and job duties. If you can show that you have experience in just what the employer is looking for, you are more likely to be considered for an interview.

2. Use Action Words (on next page)

Try to find action words to describe your accomplishments and past duties. Instead of saying "I was in charge of accounts receivable", use something like "Oversaw accounts receivable." Action words can move the reader, and help you appear more interesting. Additionally, it helps cut down on words used, and can provide your resume with a clean, attractive look. When possible, use keywords as part of your efforts.

3. Reduce the Items that Are Not Relevant to the Job Position

Rather than including a list of everything you have ever done, consider editing your resume so that the most relevant items are emphasized. This is especially important if you have limited space (a resume should not exceed two pages). Formatting and keywords can help you draw attention to the most relevant portions of your past experience, and you can cut some of the clutter by removing items that are of little importance to the position at hand.

4. Properly Format Your Resume

You can stand out with a properly formatted resume. Look through different templates and determine which is most likely to fit your personality and the position you are applying for. Make sure that your margins are regular, the font is readable, and the resume has a clean look. Re-read your resume to ensure that grammar and spelling are correct, and that this is the resume tailored for the specific position you are applying for.

Action Words

- Achieved
- Adapted
- Addressed
- Administered
- Advised
- Analyzed
- Arranged
- Assembled
- Assessed
- Assisted
- Attained
- Audited
- Budgeted
- Calculated
- Classified
- Coached
- Collected
- Communicated
- Compiled
- Composed
- Computed
- Conducted
- Consolidated
- Constructed
- Consulted
- Coordinated
- Counseled
- Created
- Critiqued
- Defined
- Designed
- Detected
- Determined
- Devised
- Diagnosed
- Directed
- Discovered
- Displayed
- Earned
- Edited
- Eliminated
- Enforced
- Established
- Estimated
- Evaluated
- Examined
- Expanded
- Explained
- Experimented
- Financed
- Formulated
- Gathered
- Generated
- Grossed
- Guided
- Handled
- Hypothesized
- Identified
- Illustrated
- Implemented
- Improved
- Increased
- Influenced
- Initiated
- Inspected
- Installed
- Instituted
- Instructed
- Interpreted
- Interviewed
- Invented
- Investigated
- Lectured
- Managed
- Marketed
- Mediated
- Modeled
- Monitored
- Motivated
- Negotiated
- Obtained
- Operated
- Ordered
- Organized
- Oversaw
- Performed
- Persuaded
- Photographed
- Planned
- Prepared
- Presented
- Printed
- Processed
- Produced
- Projected
- Promoted
- Proofread
- Provided
- Publicized
- Purchased
- Received
- Recommended
- Reconciled
- Recorded
- Recruited
- Reduced
- Referred
- Refined
- Rehabilitated
- Repaired
- Reported
- Represented
- Researched
- Resolved
- Responded
- Restored
- Retrieved
- Reviewed
- Scheduled
- Selected
- Solved
- Sorted
- Studied
- Summarized
- Supervised
- Supplied
- Surveyed
- Tested
- Trained
- Translated
- Traveled
- Tutored
- Upgraded
- Utilized
- Wrote

Chronological Resume Sample

Jane Pulaski

12345 R-5 Street Redding, CA 96001 (535) 555-5555 Jane.Pulaski@gmail.com

---

Objective: Acquire the position of Chainsaw Specialist on Crew 99 where I can use my skills and training in forestry and fire prevention.

Education

John Muir Charter School – Diploma 6/2010

Employment History

California Conservation Corps-Corpsmember 06/12/09-Present

Gabion, CA

- **Trails -** Building accessible A.D.A. compliant trails, trail maintenance, water bars, check dams, swells, bridges, causeways, dry stone rock walls, and dry stone terrace steps, brushing, clearing, tread work, fencing, hand rails and logging out.
- **Fuel Reduction -** Brush clearing, thinning, invasive species removal, chipping, chainsaw work, burn piles, firewood, hazard tree removal, bucking, felling, and stumping.
- **Fire Camp Support** - Facilities, supply, checking out and in gear on fires, kitchen duties, ground support, maintenance, and refrigerator unit.
- **Landscape/Beautification** - Roadside brushing, tree planting, weed removal, exotic species removal, and campsite improvement.
- **Spike Camp** - Vehicle and pack in, camp set up, layout, mule packing, spike food shopping, cooking, meal planning, food storage and safe food handling. Pack in camp; Jungle can set up which is what we heat and hold water to do dishes with, building latrine, sump pit, and wood gathering.
- **Chainsaw –** Tree felling, limbing, bucking trees, hazardous tree removal, and chainsaw maintenance.

Round Table Pizza Company-Kitchen Services 04/25/08 - 06/05/09

Gabion, CA

- **Pizza Making** - Preparing, making the pizza and cooking the pizza.
- **Dish Duties** - Washing and drying, and putting the dishes away.

Certificates

- S212 Chainsaw Class (40hrs)
- C.P.R. and First Aid
- Flood Training (16hr course)
- Hazwopper (40hr course)
- First Responder (40hr course)
- 1 Year Safety Award
- Blue Card Certified (3/5/10)
- Heat Illness Prevention
- Conflict & Attitude
- Map & Compass
- Chipper Training

Skills

- **Hand tools -** Hazel hoe, R-5, loppers, handsaw, rock bar, single jack, double jack, grip hoist, Mcleod, rock rakes, axe maddox, pick maddox, and Pulaski.
- **Power Tools -** Chainsaw, weed eater, jack hammer, pole saw, vibraplate, and trail carts.

Volunteerism

Red Cross Blood Drive 10/31/2010

- Assist donation efforts at the check-in table and refreshments area.

Functional Resume Template

Full Name

Street, City, State, Zip phone email

Objective

What position are you applying for and what skills will you bring?

Highlights of Qualifications

- Write three or four bullet statements that summarize why you would be good at your job objective. Each statement should be no longer than two lines.
- Your statements should highlight your relevant strengths such as experience, skills, community service and personality traits.
- Prioritize the statements in this section so the most relevant ones come first.

Professional Accomplishments

Key Skill

- Write two or more bullet statements about the work you performed on the job and what you learned or accomplished that's relevant to your job objective
- Quantify results of your accomplishments when possible and appropriate. Refer to how you positively affected the organization, the bottom line, your boss, co-workers or customers.
- Mention on the job awards you received that relate to your job objective
- IF you used the skill to solve problems, briefly describe the problems and results.

Key Skill

- Write two or more bullet statements, following the tips mentioned under the first Key skills section.
- Prioritize the statements under each job title section so the most relevant one comes first.

Work History

20xx-present	Organization, City State	Job Title
20xx-20XX	Organization, City State	Job Title

Education

School, City, State	Highest level of schooling	Year

Community Service

20XX- 20XX	Organization	Position held

CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION CORPS

Project Skills and Experience

A corps member works on various conservation and community service projects and responds to emergencies (including floods, forest fires, and major earthquakes). In the California Conservation Corps, participants learn the skills necessary to complete projects, while gaining valuable work experience.

A corps member receives training in proper tool usage, safety, first aid, and may receive training in flood control, fire suppression, water safety, CPR, chain saw operation ... and much more.

Specific skills and experience may include:

- **Natural resource enhancement:** Tree planting, stream clearance, erosion control, timber stand improvement, trail construction and maintenance, seed cone collection, and wildlife habitat improvement.

- **Construction:** Carpentry, plumbing, and masonry, including framing and fence and rock wall construction.

- **Maintenance:** Renovation of structures: painting, repair and remolding of buildings, both interior and exterior.

- **Landscaping:** Plant identification and propagation, planting, sprinkler and irrigation installation, and nursery operations.

- **Emergency Response:** Firefighting, flood control, and cleanup assistance following oil spills and major earthquakes.

- **Food Service:** Quantity food preparation, menu planning, sanitation and safety.

Other Areas Skills and Experience:

- Physical fitness
- Stamina
- Ability to do strenuous labor/lifting
- Accept responsibility
- Develop good work habits
- Punctual and dependable
- Follow instructions
- Work well with people of different ethnicity, gender, and backgrounds
- Must follow safe work practices

CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION CORPS

Work Terms

Circle the phrases and terms below that you have used on CCC projects.
This worksheet will be helpful when you begin the process of developing your resume.

Phrases

- ☐ Assisted Caltrans (freeway landscape maintenance, rest area maintenance)
- ☐ Conservation
- ☐ Emergencies (fire camp support, flood control, earthquake recover, oil spill cleanup)
- ☐ Erosion Control
- ☐ Exotic Species Removal
- ☐ *Fire Crew* – participated in initial attack, mop-up, and logistical support crews
- ☐ Fish Habitat Restoration
- ☐ Fire Hazard Reduction
- ☐ Flood Prevention
- ☐ Fire Rehabilitation
- ☐ Fuel Reduction
- ☐ Invasive Species Removal
- ☐ Natural Resource Projects
- ☐ Salmon Restoration
- ☐ Rock Construction (dry stone rock walls, dry stone terrace steps)
- ☐ Trail Construction (Re-routes, hinge, back slope, tread, water bars)
- ☐ Trail maintenance
- ☐ Watershed Restoration

Tools

Fire

- ☐ Double Bit Ax
- ☐ McCleod
- ☐ Pulaski
- ☐ R-5 Shovel
- ☐ Drip Torch
- ☐ Back Pump

General Grade Tools

- ☐ Banjo Canteen
- ☐ Square shovel
- ☐ Round shovel
- ☐ McCleod
- ☐ Pulaski
- ☐ Post hole digger
- ☐ Rock bar
- ☐ Weed whip
- ☐ Sledge hammer
- ☐ Splitting maul
- ☐ Folding saw
- ☐ Pole saw
- ☐ Pick
- ☐ Pick mattocks
- ☐ Axe mattocks
- ☐ Turning fork
- ☐ Pitch fork
- ☐ Leaf rake
- ☐ Steel rake
- ☐ Loppers

Power Tools

- ☐ Chain saw
- ☐ Pole saw
- ☐ Weed eater
- ☐ Hedge trimmer
- ☐ Leaf blower

Heavy Equipment

- ☐ Chipper

Other Equipment

- ☐ Cable rigging system

COVER LETTERS

What is a cover letter?

A cover letter is a one-page letter usually attached to a job application along with your resume. Cover letters are a way to introduce yourself to a potential employer and to show how you are suitable for the desired position.

Why is a cover letter important?

Most employers don't even consider applications that do not include a cover letter. In addition, a cover letter is a way for you to explain things (like a gap in your employment history) and express your personality in a way your resume can't.

What is in a cover letter?

Cover letters should be formatted and written in a particular way. Not only is it important to have your cover letter look like the example below, but specific information should be addressed in certain parts of the letter. We are going to discuss the different sections that should be included in a cover letter and what is included in each.

1. **Contact Information**
   The first thing you need to include is your contact information. You should include all of the contact information included at the top of your resume:
   a. Your Name
   b. Your Address (Street, City, State, Zip Code)
   c. Your Phone Number
   d. Your Email Address
2. **Employer Contact Information (If Available)**
   Find the contact information for the employer; list it below your contact information.
3. **Cover Letter Salutation**
   Following the contact information, you should always begin your cover letter with a salutation. If you can, always try to address your letter to an individual. If you <u>*do*</u> have a contact's name, the following salutation format should be:

   a. Dear [*Suffix*] [*Name*] [: *or* ,]
   b. Examples:
      i. Dear Mr. Jonathan Clancy,
      ii. Dear Ms. Emily Rose:
      iii. Dear Dr. Patrick Wilson,

   If you do <u>*not*</u> know have a contact name use a general salutation like these below:
   a. To Whom it May Concern:
   b. Dear Hiring Manager,
   c. Dear Sir or Madam,
   d. Dear Human Resources Manager,
4. **Body of Cover Letter**
   The body of your cover letter should consist of three to four paragraphs. If possible, the content in your cover letter should be tailored to the job you are applying for.

a. **First Paragraph: Why You are Writing**
This paragraph should be an introduction into why you are interested in the position and company. Be sure to:

i. State the title of the position you are applying for.
ii. If you were referred to the potential employer by a friend or acquaintance, mention this mutual contact by name.
iii. Express your enthusiasm for the position and employer; to do this you may need to find out more about the company like the type of work they do, their mission statement, and their goals.

b. **Middle Paragraphs: What You Have to Offer**
You should have one or two middle paragraphs that express what you can offer the company. These paragraphs should demonstrate two to three strong matches between the position's qualifications and your skills, with examples of your past experiences. You should:

i. Show enthusiasm and a desire to help the company reach its goals.
ii. Use some research about the employer's background and history.
iii. Express your potential to fulfill the employer's needs rather than focusing on what the employer can offer you.
iv. Make two or three solid points illustrating how your particular abilities and experiences relate to the position for which you are applying. Make sure to reference the qualifications listed in the job description.
v. Emphasize your achievements and problem-solving skills.

c. **Concluding Paragraph: How You will Follow-Up**
You should end your cover letter with a short conclusion. Be sure to:

i. Make the paragraph only 2 – 4 sentences long.
ii. Reiterate your interest in the job.
iii. Let the employer know how they can reach you and include your phone number and/or email address.
iv. If you want to, indicate that you will follow-up with a telephone call. Be sure to make the call within the time frame indicated!
v. Thank the employer for their time and consideration.

5. **Cover Letter Closure**
You should always close your letter with an appropriate signature line. Some ideas for this are below.
   a. Sincerely,
   b. Best regards,
   c. Respectfully,

6. **Signature**
Always type your name several lines below the cover letter closure. If possible, hand sign your cover letter in blue ink, printing your name below the signature. The blue ink is so it does not look like a printed copy.

Cover Letter Template

Same header used on your resume

Address City, State, Zip (535) 555-5555 professional@email.com

---

Date of Writing

Contact Name
Title of Contact
Name of Organization
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr. or Mrs. and/or Committee Members,

State the purpose for writing and the name of the position you are applying for. Say who referred you or how you heard of the position. Be as specific as possible. Write with enthusiasm.

Summarize your qualifications which you think would be of the greatest interest to the employer. Look at the job announcement and use your résumé along with the results of your assessments to help you find the skills and experience that makes you an ideal candidate. Cite relevant education and experience, competencies and interests as they relate to the position. This may take two or three paragraphs.

Sincerely state your interest in their organization. Show them you have done your research by including information that you know about the company or the position. Explain why you want to work for them.

Thank them for taking time to review your enclosed résumé and/or application. Let them know you are looking forward to the next step in the process of the opportunity and to meet with them in person. Tell them how they can reach you and thank them for their consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your typed name

Sample Cover Letter

Jane Pulaski

12345 R-5 Street Redding, CA 96001 (535) 555-5555 Jane.Pulaski@gmail.com

---

April 19, 2011

Gabion Smith
Conservation Supervisor
California Conservation Corps
4900 Mountain Lakes Blvd.
Redding, CA 96003

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am writing to you because I want to take on the challenging responsibilities as a Tools Specialist on Crew 99. My crew Supervisor, Brett McLeod highly recommended me for the position. I am enthusiastic and I am ready for the next step in continuing my experience within the California Conservation Corps (CCC).

I feel that I am qualified for this job because I have been working with tools since I was hired with the CCC, 7 months ago. I am a Tool Swamper for Crew 99, which is a very important role for many reasons. I catalog all of our crews' tools to ensure that our tools are working properly. I am knowledgeable in how to repair all of our hand tools that are used on the grade to ensure safety to my fellow Corpsmembers. I flag tools that need repair to ensure Corpsmembers do not use the non-functioning tools which may pose a safety concern. I have extensive knowledge and experience using all CCC grade hand tools. I know how to work hard, I'm on time to work, and I'm ready to further develop my leadership roles.

Thank you for your time reviewing my resume and cover letter. I am excited for this opportunity to take the next step in my development as a leader as well as a skilled worker. I am ready to lead my peers by example as well as enlighten those on how to properly handle and repair tools. Again, thank you for your time and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sign your name in this area.

Jane Pulaski

Cover Letter Worksheet

First Paragraph

- **Spark Employers Interest.**
- **Tell why you're writing – what position you're targeting.**
- **How did you find out about the position?**

Second and Third Paragraphs

- **Provide more detail about your professional/academic qualifications.**
- **Detail how you can contribute.**
- **Stress accomplishment and achievements (not job duties/responsibilities).**
- **Tailor to employers need (from ad or job description).**
- **Relate yourself to the organization and how you can meet employers' need.**
- **Demonstrate your knowledge of the employer (based on your research).**

Closing Paragraph

- **Be proactive – request action.**
- **Ask for an interview or meeting.**
- **Express confidence that you are a perfect fit for the job.**
- **Tell how you will follow up.**

References

Purpose

The purpose of a reference sheet is to have a list of people who can verify and elaborate on your skills and work experience for a potential employer. Past employers, teachers, and advisors are the best professional references to have. It is important to have a reference sheet because potential employers will often ask for a list of references they can contact. Having a reference sheet ready will save you time later on during the interview process.

Things to Remember

Make sure to include people who know what type of person you are and who are familiar with your work. It is important to select individuals who know your skills and work ethic so that they can provide a positive and accurate description of you to the employer or company in which you are seeking employment. You should ALWAYS contact your references before including them on a reference sheet. It is also a good idea to give them a copy of your resume and talk to them about the job you are seeking so they will know how to best represent you.

Jane Pulaski

12345 R-5 Street Redding, CA 96001 (535) 555-5555 Jane.Pulaksi@gmail.com

---

References

Joe Schmo
Company and Position
Address
Address
Phone number
Email

Jessie Important
Company and Position
Address
Address
Phone number
Email

Imma Getyoujob
Company and Position
Address
Address
Phone number
Email

Job Application Tips

A job application is used by employers to collect information on all job applicants.

Employers choose applicants which seem to be most qualified for the job by looking at the application and resume. Personnel office staff may use the application to make job decisions without ever meeting or seeing the applicant. Mostly an application and resume are used to decide whether or not an applicant will be asked to come in for an interview. Those who complete their applications well will greatly increase their chance of getting the job.

HOW THE APPLICATION IS USED BY EMPLOYERS

1. It is the employers' introduction to you. It is their first impression of you. It is a screening device for the interviewer.
2. It gives a picture of your work history, skills, education and training.
3. It gives a clear picture of your ability to communicate on paper.
4. It often determines the type of questions you will be asked in the job interview.
5. Sometimes it is kept on file for future reference. If you don't get the job, you may be considered for a job in the future if your application is clear, and informative.

GENERAL APPLICATION

1. Always bring a pen when applying for a job at the location. Use your Personal and Employment History worksheet for reference when completing an application.
2. When taking an application home, try to get two copies of the application form or make a second copy for yourself. Complete the first draft as neatly, accurately and completely as you can using pencil.
3. Always use a pen, never pencil, for the one you submit to the employer. If your printing is not very good, you may be able to get someone else to do it for you. If there is an electronic version of the application that you can type in to, take advantage of that.
4. Always keep a copy of the application for yourself. If you get an interview it will remind you what you wrote on the application.
5. Be as neat as possible. The employer expects that your job application will be an example of your best work. Check your spelling, punctuation and grammar. If you are in doubt about a word or your use of English, check it out in a dictionary, computer, and have someone else read through it.
6. Answer every question. If some of the questions do not apply, you may write "N/A", meaning "not applicable," or draw a line through the space to show that you did not forget or overlook the question.

7. Do not falsify any information. This can backfire later, and you may be fired for misrepresentation.
8. A question on job preference or the "job for which you are applying" should be answered with a specific job title or type of work. Do not write "anything." Employers expect you to state the position for which you are applying.
9. If you answer 'Yes' to "prior convictions" or "suspension of license" be honest and briefly explain the situation. You may also add that you would like to discuss it further in the interview.
10. Submit your resume with the application.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1. All specialized training which seems to be related to the job you are seeking should also be listed under "Education". Example: CPR/First Aid, Cook Specialist Training Certificate, etc.

WORK EXPERIENCE

1. Emphasize experiences which relate to the job you are seeking. Keep the job description at hand, and whenever possible, use the same language to describe your experience used in the job description.
2. Stress the important skills required to get the job done: flexibility, technical knowledge, accuracy, etc.
3. Briefly state the unusual or special aspects of past job experience, e.g. daily physical training, etc.
4. You may want to leave out jobs that you held for a very short time, (one month or less).
5. Any volunteer experience - hospital work, community events, etc. - should also be listed under "work experience." Write "volunteer" in the space for salary.
6. If you were fired from any past job, try to state the reason in a positive manner rather than writing "fired" or "terminated". Examples include: "reduction in the work force", "laid off", "conflicting schedules". You should not falsify job information you put on your application. Never blame your employer or former co-workers for leaving a job.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Follow-up shows interest, initiative, and a sense of responsibility to a possible employer.
2. Wait a few days, but no longer than one week after applying or interviewing before calling.
3. Identify yourself and the position you've applied for.
4. Ask if the employer received everything you sent.
5. Ask when the decision might be made and if the employer needs anything else from you.

Classroom Presentation

Module 2: Applications, Resume, Cover Letter and References

You will have 10 minutes to present an overview of what you have learned in this module. You can use the 10 minutes any way you like and you can use any type of presentation methods and tools that are available to you.

These topics need to be addressed in your presentation:

1) An overview of your application package for the CCC job.
2) For your resume, discuss: the type of format you used, job specific skills you detailed, your objective, and anything else you feel sets you apart from other applicants.
3) Be prepared to read your cover letter or share large portions of it.

Possible presentation tools:

1) Create an application packet to hand out to the whole class. This can include your cover letter, resume and application. Remove any personal information, like address and phone number. Do not include the references page.
2) Create a quick activity for the class to do that is relevant to your presentation.
3) Create a Powerpoint presentation.
4) Use your imagination.

Have fun and Remember: You are the only person that knows what you are capable of doing. Surprise everyone with a special talent or skill that they didn't know you had.

Corpsmember Career Development Workbook

Module 3:

Organized Job Search, Networking, and Tailoring the Resume and Cover Letter

In this module, you will:

Organized Job Search and Networking

I. Learn how to use a Job Search Spreadsheet in order to stay organized while applying for jobs.
II. Be introduced to multiple job search methods.
III. Learn the differences between each of the methods for finding job openings.
IV. Identify your network of contacts.
V. Develop an elevator speech used to introduce yourself to employers.

Understanding Job Descriptions

I. Understand what to look for in a job opening and description.
II. Learn a new way to easily isolate major keywords in a duty statement or job description.

Tailoring the Resume

I. Learn how to highlight your skills, education, and past job duties that are relevant to a job opening.
II. Review how to develop an effective resume.
III. Write a new resume specific to your ideal job opening.

Tailoring the Cover Letter and Letter of Recommendation

I. Learn how to highlight your skills, education, and past job duties that are relevant to a job opening.
II. Learn how to incorporate your research about the employer into the cover letter.
III. Review how to develop an effective cover letter.
IV. Write a new cover letter specific to your ideal job opening.
V. Understand the purpose of a letter of recommendation and how to acquire one.

Corpsmember Career Development Workbook

Check-off List

Module 3: Organized Job Search, Networking, and Tailoring the Resume and Cover Letter

Deliverables:

Week 7

- ☐ My Network Worksheet
- ☐ Elevator Speech Worksheet

Week 8

- ☐ Visiting a Career One-Stop Center Summary
- ☐ Job Search Worksheet
- ☐ Sample Job Description Worksheet
- ☐ Tag Crowd Activity

Week 9

- ☐ Job Search Spreadsheet
- ☐ Tailored Resume
- ☐ Tailored Cover Letter
- ☐ One Letter of Recommendation
- ☐ Classroom Presentation

CM Name_____ Site _____

CM Signature _____ Date _____

CDT Instructor Signature _____ Date _____

Organize your Job Search

Being organized is extremely important when searching for jobs. Being organized helps keep you from looking at the same job openings every day, allows you to apply for even more jobs, and helps you remember what jobs you have applied to. Here are some tips and tools for developing and maintaining an organized job search.

Use a Calendar

Use your calendar as a daily to-do list. Write down when specific jobs have closing application dates, when you submitted a resume and application for each job, and when to follow up for each one. List when you should make calls and other effective job search actions.

Get organized!

To stay on top of your job search, it's useful to have a spreadsheet to keep track of the jobs you've applied to and where you are currently in the application process. Use the Job Search Spreadsheet when looking for jobs. You will need to turn in a Job Search Spreadsheet during your Classroom Presentation that shows the jobs you considered applying for.

Record each job you have applied to, taking note of the following information:

- Job title
- Company
- Contact information
- Where you found the job (job site, newspaper etc.)
- Deadlines
- Date you sent in your application
- Actions taken and their result
- Information about prospective employers and any contacts you have at that employer

As you continue your job search, write down every time you have talked to someone from each potential job. For example: the date you followed up after sending a resume, when you were contacted for an interview, when you sent a thank you note to your interviewers, etc. (Example: Applied January 12; Called to follow-up on resume January 17…)

Be sure to take note of the names of people you talk to when making contact with a potential employer. If you speak to a manager or a human resources person, you will need their information to get in touch with them again.

- Write the date you contacted the employer
- Use one page per job
- Tape the ad or listing or write a summary of the job description down
- Write the name and title of each contact person
- Describe each phone, email, fax, or face-to-face interaction
- Note the main points of each conversation

Also, don't forget to cross out jobs when you hear they have been filled or you are no longer being considered for the position. This will allow you to focus your energy on active job leads and not waste your time with closed positions. Sometimes employers take weeks to get back to you, so give them a few weeks and make several attempts to contact them before crossing it off the list.

Until you have received a job offer, continue your search as you find jobs that fit your experience and interests. Don't assume you have the job after a great interview, because the employer may go with someone else. Besides, you may get a better offer from another employer in the meantime.

Job Search Spreadsheet

Company and Location	Job Title & Brief Description of Job	Application Deadline	Date Resume/ Cover Letter Submitted	Date Application Submitted	Contact Person Name	Contact Person Information (phone, email)	Updated resume/references/ portfolio for interview?	Interview Date	Thank You Note/Email Sent?

Job Search Methods

(Adapted from: Find and Get the Right Job)

There are many different ways to search for a job, and you should use them all. Here are some of the main methods.

Company Websites: Find out where your skills may be needed and research who to contact at that company. Even if there are no job openings, be sure to follow up by sending your electronic résumé and filling out an application on-line at the specific company website.

Connecting with People: This is also called networking. This means receiving job search assistance from your friends, former co-workers, or other people you know. Let them know you're looking for a job. One of the best ways for an employer to get a good hire is by referral from existing employees.

General Internet Job Boards: Increasingly, employers are posting jobs through a variety of general purpose websites. There is a lot of competition for these jobs, but at least you can find them!

Hiring Agencies and Recruiting: Get professional help from government employment agencies or not-for-profit organizations. Career One Stop Centers are a great example of this.

Job Search Methods Success Rates

Here is the breakdown of which job search methods are most effective based on a survey from Booz, Allen Hamilton 2006:

Company Websites: 21%
Connecting with people: 19%
General Internet Job Boards: 15%
Recruiting: 10%
Newspaper Ads: 6%

(Source: *Find and Get the Right Job*, California Career Resource Network)

Company Websites: Researching Employers

Since some employers prefer to hire locally, or from within, sometimes jobs are posted on their website before being placed on a larger job search website. Finding and applying for a job on an employer's website also tells them that you are interested in their company since you went to the effort to visit their site.

Using the Ideal Occupation you chose from the What Interests Me worksheet in Module 1, begin looking for companies or organizations that provide jobs for that occupation. You can usually find them by typing in the occupation and location you want to work in an Internet search engine like Google.

For example, if I want to be a middle school teacher in Stockton I will search for: "jobs at middle schools in Stockton". The search results will bring back a listing of middle schools in Stockton. I can use the links on this page to find job openings at each of these schools.

Researching the Employer

Before applying for employment, it is a good idea to research the company's background. It tells them that you have more interest in the company and its products than your paycheck. It also helps you determine if it is a place you would like to work.

Here are some things to look for when researching an employer:

What products or services does the company provide?

What jobs does the company hire for?

Has the company been in the news lately? Any major achievements?

What is the company's mission and values?

Who are the decision makers in this company?

Networking: Connecting with People

People are the most important source of information about new jobs and career opportunities. ***For every person who finds a position online, at least ten more find theirs through the people they know.*** *Most job opportunities are never even advertised because organizations look first at people they know and people who come recommended. Building a good personal network will help you make your way in the workplace. (Source: www.cacareercafe.com)*

Identifying and building your network is one of the best things you can do when looking for a job. Your network can include: family, friends, acquaintances, co-workers, classmates, former supervisors, and former teachers. When people in your network know your skills, work ethic, and know you are looking for a job, they can help you find jobs that may not be advertised yet. They can help you get jobs at their own place of work since most employers prefer recommendations from their own employees.

Use the Networking Worksheet to help you identify your network.

My Network Worksheet

Who is your…	Name	Email	Employer
Friend			
Friend			
Relative			
Relative			
Teacher			
Teacher			
Supervisor			
Supervisor			
Co-worker			
Co-worker			
Co-worker			
Landlord			
Roommate			
Religious leader			
Classmate			
Classmate			
Other			

Create Your Elevator Speech

It is very important that you can show that you are a good fit for a job. The person who gets a job may not be the most skilled, but they may have been good at promoting themselves. Here are some tips to help you market yourself.

Think about being in an elevator. You have one minute to talk about yourself to a potential employer. You want this person to know your job target and why you're a good fit. Practice your speech with people who can give you feedback. Do they understand what kind of job you're looking for? Do they understand why you would be good at it?

Examples of elevator speeches:

- ✓ *"My name is Jane Doe. I have two years' experience as an office assistant. I also took classes in project management at Whatever College. I have worked in customer service most of my life. I'm looking for an administrative support position. I'd really like to work for a medical company. Do you know of any jobs in that area?"*

- ✓ *"I'm John Doe and I'd love to be your caterer for your next event. I have worked as a chef for six years. I'm starting my own catering company. I can make good food for memorable events."*

Your Elevator Speech
My name is: _____
I'm interested in: _____ _____
My skills and background for this job are: _____ _____ _____

(Source: Jewish Vocational Service of Los Angeles Job Seekers Guide)

Social Media Networking and Job Search

Due to the increase in popularity and use of social networking websites like Facebook, Twitter, and Linked In, many employers are using these websites to screen potential employees. In many cases employers will decide who they want to interview based on the information that is provided on an individual's social networking profile. It's important to be aware of your personal profiles on these types of sites and change/edit them accordingly to reflect a positive profile of yourself.

Below is a list of the most popular social networking sites used:

Facebook www.facebook.com

A social network service that allows individuals to create a personal profile and connect with other Facebook users all over the globe to share pictures, videos, events, and common interests and ideas.

Twitter www.twitter.com

A social networking site where individuals connect with each other through micro blogging—short text-based posts that update users on the individuals' thoughts/ideas/actions.

LinkedIn www.linkedin.com

A business-oriented social networking site that allows users to create a personal profile and network with other professionals.

Positive actions

- Limit the amount of personal information available (phone number, address, etc…).
- Make your profile, photos, videos, and status updates private to anyone that isn't your friend.
- Do not allow anyone to tag you in photos.
- Update your profile regularly using information consistent with your resume.
- Delete pictures/messages/information that is controversial or inappropriate
- Be selective on what is posted/not posted on your profile or updates.
- Realize that your friends and followers on these sites can be a negative or positive reflection of yourself.

Negative Actions

- Posting controversial or inappropriate pictures, messages, or information on your profile.
- Writing negative comments about past or present employers/companies.
- Joining interest groups based on inappropriate or controversial themes.
- Using inappropriate language on your profile/updates.
- Discussing recent interviews you have had.

Job Search Websites

Using the Internet will be an important part of your post-California Conservation Corps job search. You can find many job banks and career resources online, but will you know which ones are best for you? Using the Internet for a job search is going to take some time and practice. The Web sites listed below are excellent resources to start your job search. Be patient, and feel free to ask the CMD staff for help.

CCC JOB BOARD WEBSITE	www.ccc.ca.gov/go/jobboard
GENERAL JOB SEARCH DATABASES	
www.monster.com	www.craigslist.com
www.careerbuilder.com	www.indeed.com
www.fins.com	www.simplyhired.com
www.bright.com	www.snagajob.com
www.alljobsearch.com	www.quintcareers.com/index.html
www.jobsonline.net	
INTERNATIONAL JOB SEARCH	
www.overseasjobs.com	www.peacecorp.gov
NON-PROFIT JOB SEARCH	
www.americorps.gov	www.idealist.org
www.philanthropyjournal.org	www.opportunityknocks.org
FEDERAL/STATE JOB SEARCH	
www.jobs.ca.gov	www.nationjob.com
www.jobbankinfo.org	www.usajobs.gov
www.jobcentral.com	www.avuedigitalservices.com

Visiting a Career One-Stop Center

Career One-Stops are a good place to receive job search assistance and services. They also provide online job boards for each region. It is important that you are familiar with the location and services of your nearest One-Stop. Below are instructions on how to find this information.

Find the Career One-Stop center that is closest to your location:

1. Go the federal Career One-Stop website: www.careeronestop.org
2. In the bottom gray box, click the link that says: "People + Places to Help"
3. On the left side of the page, search for the nearest Career One Stop Center either by zip code or city/state. You can also choose the amount of miles you wish to stay within
4. A list of locations should show up. This list will give you the name of the center, location, phone number, distance, and service type
5. To see more information, click on the link under the far left "Name" column (aka the name of the One-Stop center)
6. When you click on this link, a breakdown of what is offered at the center is provided. It will also include the website for that specific One-Stop career center (if they have one)
7. If possible, choose a One-Stop center that provides Comprehensive Services, as these centers have the most resources, information, and staff available

Scheduling a Visit to a Career One-Stop Center:

1. Once you have chosen the appropriate One-Stop Career center, use the contact information provided on the website to contact the center.
2. One-Stop Career Centers have recurring orientation times where the staff show individuals all the resources available at the center and answer any questions. These are good times to bring students. You may even be able to schedule a private orientation, depending on the group size.
3. Keep in mind, students may be required to register for services. Often times this means filling out a short form, usually asking for their social security number. If possible, to save on time and confusion, see if you can get the forms ahead of time so students can have them filled out and ready to go once you get to the center.

Provide a summary of your visit including all of the following information you find out while on a tour of a Career One-Stop Center:

1. What resources are available to job seekers?
2. Are workshops available? What do they cover? When are they? (Is there a calendar you can pick up for future workshops?)
3. Are counselors available to help with job search?
4. What are the center hours?
5. How often are job openings posted, and where?

Career Fairs

Career Fairs (also called Job Fairs) are becoming very common recruiting tools for companies. They offer an excellent opportunity to have access to a large number of qualified applicants. Career Fairs may be held at local high schools, community college campuses, at convention facilities, or at fair grounds.

Career Fairs are valuable and are a golden opportunity for you to get exposure to a number of companies in one day. You can test the waters with respect to your employability, as well as to help you focus on a specific, realistic career goal. You can learn what kinds of openings are offered by employers.

Career Fairs are a fun, efficient way to further your career and perhaps to land the job for which you are looking. Remember, employers wouldn't be there if they didn't have openings, and/or didn't want to talk with interested persons.

Here are some quick tips about attending a Career Fair:

- Dress as if you are going for a job interview, go with a positive and enthusiastic attitude, and enjoy yourself.
- Bring a supply of resumes to hand out to the recruiter to increase your chances of further consideration. Polish your resume to highlight your skills and accomplishments. Try to leave a resume with all the recruiters with whom you are interested in working, even if they don't have job openings.
- You will have only a few minutes to introduce yourself and to spark the recruiter's interest. Practice your Elevator Speech before attending the Fair.
- Listen attentively. Develop your listening skills so that you can hear not what you want to hear, but what the recruiter is actually saying.
- Be assertive and show initiative; shake hands and introduce yourself to the recruiters when you reach the table. Do not walk up to the table with a lackluster approach. You want to convey enthusiasm, a positive attitude and confidence.
- Get a business card from every employer you are interested in working for. Each new contact you make is expanding your network!

Remember: in order to be eligible for the CCC Scholarship, you must attend a Career Fair. The Corpsmember Development Branch recommends you attend a Career Fair in person, but we realize that is not going to always be possible for everyone to accomplish. To fulfill the requirement, you may attend a virtual Career Fair. For more information on Virtual Career Fairs, see your Corpsmember Development Coordinator or person in charge of Corpsmember Development at your center.

Job Search Worksheet

This worksheet will guide you through the job search process where you will eventually choose a current job post of interest to use for your presentation. Follow the steps, and if you have any questions, ask your CDT instructor or CCC CMD staff.

What are the two ideal occupations you listed from What Interests Me?

1.
2.

List the top 3 places you would like to live after leaving the California Conservation Corps?

1.
2.
3.

Using the directions provided in Company Websites: Researching Employers, list the top 3 companies/agencies you are interested in working for.

1.
2.
3.

Choose at least 3 job search websites you will use to find job openings.

1.
2.
3.

Search for Jobs!

Remember, each website will have a different way to search for jobs. Use your Job Search Spreadsheet to keep you organized while you search for jobs based on location, keyword, salary, etc….

Try to find 2-3 jobs that you are interested in. Choose the top two jobs that interest you and fill out the information in the table below:

Job Title	Website	Company/Agency	Minimum requirements

Understanding Job Descriptions

Sample Job Description Worksheet

Using the example job description provided, answer the following questions about the different sections of a job description:

1. What is the deadline for this position?

2. Where is the position located?

3. What is the salary for this position?

4. What are the health benefits and/or retirement benefits?

5. List 3 of the duties/responsibilities for this position?

-
-
-

6. Using your decoding knowledge, pick out 3 key words in this job description and list them below:

-
-
-

7. How would you apply for this position?

Sample Job Description

About ECI

Since 1972, ECI has provided innovative vegetation and asset management consulting services. We offer a business perspective backed by proven, research-driven solutions.

ECI is the industry leader in utility vegetation management. We have a solid track record for improving reliability and operational efficiency for our clients, while helping them save money. Based on our success with vegetation management, we also offer effective solutions for the management of other utility assets such as wood pole, streetlight and joint use programs.

APPLY NOW

Consulting Utility Forester / Utility Arborist

Look no further, we have the job to get you in the outdoors in the great state of California. Explore all types of terrain from urban, agricultural, forest, alpine, and waterways. This is your chance to explore the unique environment of California with possibilities of transferring throughout the state and across the country.

ECI's Family Of Companies offers exciting career opportunities with an excellent compensation package and ongoing growth potential. Advancement opportunities include supervisory and management positions, special project work, and more. ECI's Family Of Companies promotes from within for our supervisory and management positions. Many of our employees have continued their careers with our clients.

A Consulting Utility Forester (CUF) is responsible for tree inventories, tree inspection & evaluation, tree contractor work planning, data management, and contact with property owners regarding planned pruning and/or removals near the power lines and/or utility Rights-Of-Ways for our clients, such as PG&E (Pacific Gas & Electric).

Individuals with tree identification skills, strong problem solving abilities, an attention to detail, and exceptional customer service / public relations / interpersonal skills best meet the challenges of a CUF position.

A degree is not necessary if you have related experience, but we prefer candidates with a two or four year degree in a related field. Successful professionals at ECI's Family Of Companies have come from a variety of backgrounds, including: forestry, arboriculture, natural resource management, biology, landscape maintenance, horticulture, nursery management, environmental sciences, geology, agriculture, parks & recreation management, urban forestry, geography, and more. Certification as an ISA Arborist is a plus.

All candidates must possess a valid driver's license and a good driving record.

EEO/AA

POSITION INFORMATION

- **Company:** ECI's Family of Companies
- **Location:** Chico, CA 95928
- **Salary/Wage:** Dependent Upon Experience
- **Job Status/Type:** Full Time Employee
- **Job Category:** Quality Assurance/ Safety
- **Occupations:** General/Other: Quality Assurance/Safety
- **Industry:** Agriculture/Forestry/ Fishing
- **Work Experience:** Less than 1 Year
- **Career Level:** Entry Level
- **Education:** Associate Degree

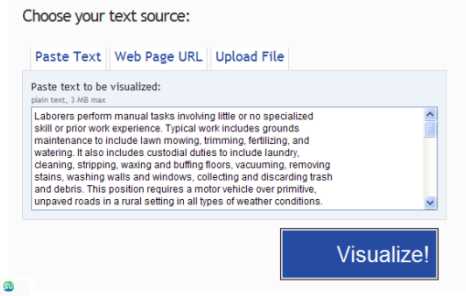
CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Company:** ECI's Family of Companies
- [redacted]
- **Email:** Apply by Email

TagCrowd Activity

TagCrowd.com is a useful website to help visualize key words and phrases that are used in job descriptions, basic qualification sections, or any text. It can be helpful to see keywords instead of being overwhelmed by lots of text. Using a job description that interests you, create your own TagCrowd using the instructions below.

1. Go to the TagCrowd website: www.tagcrowd.com
2. Copy and paste the job duties or description into the box indicated on the TagCrowd site.
3. Click **Visualize**.



4. On the next page, a TagCrowd visual will be shown.

The top 50 words are displayed in the box; the words used the most are displayed the largest in the TagCrowd visual.

5. If you see words in your TagCrowd visual that are not relevant, for example “include” or “conditions”, go to the bottom of the page under **Options,** in the box that says “Don’t show these words” type in any unwanted words.
6. Click **Visualize** again to see the updated TagCrowd visual.

What are the top 10 words in your TagCrowd?

1. _____ 6. _____

2. _____ 7. _____

3. _____ 8. _____

4. _____ 9. _____

5. _____ 10. _____

Tailoring a Resume to a Job Description

A Good Starting Point

One of the most important aspects of resume writing is tailoring each resume to each specific job. The sum of your experiences involves different skills that can be particularly attractive to a specific employer. By tailoring your resumes, you make yourself appear more qualified for the job you are applying for and an employer will be impressed that you took the time and effort to customize your resume for them.

First Steps

1. Read the Job Description

- Carefully read the description of the job you are submitting this resume for.
- Take note of any specific skills the job describes and potential projects you could be working on.
- Also look for: working environment (group or individual), equipment used (technical software), hours (levels of flexibility required).
- Remember, just because two jobs might be in a related field, they could require very different types of skill sets. Reading each job description will ensure that you don't miss any specific requirements or qualities an employer may be looking for.

2. Write Down Your Experiences

- Think of any work experience you have had in the CCC; include internships, extracurricular, unpaid experiences, part-time jobs, Corpsmember Advisory Board participation, etc.
- Include volunteer experience, trainings, leadership positions, class projects, etc.

3. List Your Skills/Abilities

- Think carefully about any skills or abilities that you used or learned in each experience.
- Write down these skills using action words.
- Also think carefully of any obstacles you overcame, tasks you completed, and the skills you used to make this possible.
- With group projects, note the number of people you worked with, the communication skills used, and the teamwork required to complete your task.
- With event planning experiences, note the number of people the event was for, the amount of money you handled, and any obstacles you overcame, such as budgetary restrictions.
- For marketing experience, note the number or people you solicited, and any creativity it took to make your task possible.
- In technical experience, note the equipment you used or learned to use.

4. Match Your Skills to the Job Description

- With the description you have for the job you are applying for, look through your experiences and skills.
- Pick out the experiences you have that match skills required in the job description.
- Take note of any key words that appear in the job description and try to use the same key words when describing your work experiences and job skills. REMEMBER: many employers scan resumes, and will select resumes based on key words they find that match the job requirements.

Putting it all Together

Now that you know what steps to take to tailor your resume to a job description, here is one example walking you through the process. To start, read through the job description and pick out key words (specific skills). Then, choose experiences at your previous jobs that relate to those keywords. In the first step we have highlighted the keywords for this job.

Step 1

Job Title: **Park Ranger (General), GS-0025-05**

Duties

Primary duties include patrolling backcountry areas by foot and 4x4 vehicle, contacting park visitors, monitoring natural cultural resources, and performing preservation and impact mitigation activities. Incumbent may make overnight stays in the backcountry. Additional duties include responding to medical emergencies, traffic accidents, fires and search and rescue incidents.

Qualifications and Evaluations

EXPERIENCE: You must show one year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-04 level in the federal service. Specialized experience demonstrates the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the duties of the position. Experience may have been in technical, administrative, or scientific work, fish and wildlife management, recreation management, law enforcement, or other park-related work. Examples of qualifying specialized experience include but are not limited to the following: park guide or tour leader; law enforcement or investigative work; archeological or historical preservation research work; forestry and/or fire management work in a park, recreation, or conservation area; management, assistant, or program specialist work involving the development and implementation of policy related to protection, conservation, or management of park areas or similar operations.

Applicants who meet the qualification requirements specified above for this position will be evaluated and a score assigned, based upon the responses provided on the job-specific questionnaire that is required as part of the application process for this position. The questions are related to the following competencies required for successful performance in this position:

1. Backcountry Work and Travel
2. Oral Communication
3. Interpersonal Skills
4. Writing

Step 2

Instructions: Once you have identified the key job skills the employer is looking for, you can match your skills to theirs, using key words to emphasize your qualifications. Below are several examples using the same job description.

Example:

1. Job skill: patrolling backcountry areas by foot and 4x4 vehicle
    a. You can say: *Extensive experience in backcountry settings hiking in up to 10 miles to perform trail building and trail maintenance work.*
2. Job Skill: performing preservation and impact mitigation activities, fish and wildlife management
    a. You can say: *Training and hands-on experience in various preservation activities, including fish habitat restoration, fire suppression, tree planting, and trail maintenance.*
3. Job Skill: responding to medical emergencies, traffic accidents, fires, and search and rescue incidents
    a. You can say: *Responded to the Inyo fire and performed camp support services for active fire fighters.*
    b. You can say: *Experience and training in emergency flood response, including filling sandbags and constructing sack topping, sack rings, and envelope levee protection.*
4. Job Skill: forestry and/or fire management work in a park, recreation, or conservation area
    a. You can say: *As a Crew Leader, assisted in the management of a 20 person crew performing trail maintenance and fire suppression work in Sequoia National Park.*
5. Job Skill: Oral Communication, Interpersonal skills
    a. You can say: *Presented daily safety topics and training to groups of corpsmembers as a Safety Specialist.*
    b. You can say: *Organized and motivated a 20 person crew as Crew Leader with experience and training in leadership skills.*

Tailored Resume Sample

Jane Pulaski

12345 R-5 Street Redding, CA 96001 (535) 555-5555 Jane.Pulaski@gmail.com

Objective

To obtain the position of Park Ranger where I can use my skills in trail maintenance, fire management and campsite improvement.

Education

High School Diploma June 2010
John Muir Charter High School, Sacramento CA

Include your highest level of education. If you haven't completed a degree give the estimated date of graduation. If you have earned college credits but not yet graduated, include how many credits earned and from what institute. If you have taken classes specific to the job you are applying for include relevant course work.

Work Experience

Corpsmember California Conservation Corps, Gabion CA 6/2009 to Present

- Extensive experience in backcountry settings hiking up to 10 miles to perform trail building and trail maintenance work.
- Training and hands-on experience in various preservation activities, including fish habitat restoration, fire suppression, tree planting, and trail maintenance.
- Responded to the Inyo Fire and performed camp support services for active fire fighters.
- As a Crew Leader, assisted in the management of a 20 person crew performing trail maintenance and fire suppression work in Sequoia National Park.
- Presented daily safety topics and training to groups of corpsmembers as a Safety Specialist.
- Organized and motivated a 20 person crew as Crew Leader with experience and training in leadership skills.

Kitchen Services Round Table Pizza, Gabion CA 4/2008 to 6/2009

- Responsible for preparing ingredients, making, and baking the pizza.
- Part of the clean-up crew at closing.

Your current or most recent job should always be listed first and then work your way back. If you have had a lot of jobs you should tailor your résumé to include similar jobs to the one for which you're applying.

Skills

- S212 Chainsaw Class (40hrs)
- C.P.R. and First Aid
- Flood Training (16hr course)
- Hazwopper (40hr course)
- First Responder (40hr course)
- Blue Card Certified (3/5/10)
- Heat Illness Prevention
- Conflict & Attitude
- Map & Compass
- Chipper Training

Awards

Corpsmember of the Month for November 2010, Corpsmember of the Year for 2010, Most Appreciated on Crew for December 2010, Most Appreciated on Center for December 2010, and Certificate of Achievement for Earning 50 Volunteer Hou January 2010 to Present.

Try to keep your résumé to one page.

Don't include your three month and six month awards.

Tailoring the Cover Letter

WHAT MAKES A COVER LETTER GREAT?
Tips to Help Your Letter Stand Out

A Good Starting Point

Below is an example of a basic cover letter. Like the cover letters previously shown, there is nothing wrong with this letter. However, it doesn't stand out. This letter doesn't add anything to the application—it just repeats what is in the resume. Most importantly, this letter doesn't tell the employer why *they* should want to hire *Jane Doe*; it only tells the employer why *Jane Doe* wants to work for *them*.

Dear Human Resources:

Enclosed please find my resume for the position of staff writer.

I currently work as a copy editor for Acme Company, where I am responsible for editing brochures, fact sheets, and Web content. Before that, I spent a year interning at Tiger Beat magazine, where I had the opportunity to write several articles for publication. I also majored in English in college, with a concentration in writing.

I am seeking a position that that will utilize my writing skills with opportunity for growth. I hope to hear from you to schedule an interview.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

When an employer is reading tens to hundreds of applications, it is important to have an outstanding cover letter. This increases the chances of your being called in for an interview and eventually being hired. All in all, the cover letter below is a good starting point, but once you have a basic letter like those shown previously it is important to use the following tips to create a letter that will help you stand out from the crowd.

Tips When Writing Cover Letters

- **Break down any contractions** (e.g. "I've" to "I have").
- **Get rid of the words "very" and "that" as much as you can.** Look through your cover letter and delete these as much as possible.
- **Don't make it too long.** If your cover letter is longer than one page, it is too long. Keep it short and interesting.

- **Don't repeat your resume word for word.** Your cover letter shouldn't just repeat what's on your resume. Try and include things like brief stories that may not be included on your resume but which demonstrate your top skills. If you have to include the same information, reword your cover letter statements to avoid dulling your resume's impact.

- **Follow any instructions given.** If you're replying to an ad that has any specific instructions, make sure you follow them. Often, seeing whether a candidate can follow basic instructions is a way to weed applicants out.

- **Don't overuse the word "I".** Your cover letter is not your life story. The focus should be on how you meet an employer's needs. Avoid seeming self-centered by not using the word "I" much, especially at the beginning of your sentences.

- **Talk about what *you did*, not what happened *to you*.** For example, try not to say "this experience gave me the opportunity to;" instead, say something like, "In this experience, I developed/reinforced/learned..."

- **Don't use a weak opening.** You want an introduction that grabs the reader's interest. Consider these examples. A weak first sentence: "*Please consider me for your mechanic position.*" A better first sentence: "*Your need for an experienced car mechanic fits perfectly with my three-years as a car mechanic supervisor*."

- **Don't just end it.** When possible, promise to get in touch with them later. Instead of asking them to call you, try a statement like this: "*I will follow up with you in a few days to answer any questions you may have. In the meantime, you may reach me at (555) 555-5555*." Be sure to follow through with what you say and contact them within the time frame you give.

- **Don't forget to tailor your cover letter.** If you're applying to a number of similar positions, chances are you're tweaking one letter and using it for several jobs. That's fine, as long as you change each letter. Don't forget to update the company, job and contact information!

- **Use action words.** To jazz up your cover letter, try using some of the following action words:

  - Accomplished
  - Achieved
  - Attained
  - Completed
  - Created
  - Delivered
  - Demonstrated
  - Enhanced
  - Expanded
  - Improved
  - Increased
  - Managed
  - Obtained
  - Performed
  - Produced
  - Secured
  - Succeeded
  - Surpassed

An Excellent Cover Letter

Below is an example of an excellent cover letter. Read through it and see if you can identify some of the ways Jane Doe uses the tips above. In addition to following the tips, some of the reasons this is such a good cover letter are:

- It is clear Jane Doe is interested in working for *this* organization, and it's specific about why. This makes it more believable and more persuasive. It's human nature—people respond when you seem interested. It works in dating, and it works in job-hunting.

- It only briefly touches on the writer's work experience, giving just the upshot and leaving the details for the resume.

- Best of all, it provides information about the writer that won't be in a resume—a sense of Jane Doe's personality, information on personal traits and work habits, and even a review by a previous manager.

Dear Ms. Smith:

I hope you will consider me for the position of staff writer, as advertised in The Washington Post.

I was particularly excited to see a position open at the Sierra Club, as I have long been a fan of your work. I'm impressed by the way you make environmental issues accessible to non-environmentalists (particularly in the pages of Sierra Magazine, which has sucked me in more times than I can count), and I would love the opportunity to be part of your work.

Reading over the job description for the position, I recognized myself. As you will see on my attached resume, I have more than seven years' experience in non-profits, writing everything from newsletters to Web sites to brochures to letters to the editor and op-eds. In addition to in-house publications, my work has been published in newspapers around the country.

Additionally, I am a fast, versatile writer, and I specialize in taking complicated information and presenting it in an easy-to-understand, upbeat format. I've never missed a deadline (in a recent performance review, my manager called me "the fastest writer on the planet") and pride myself on being able to juggle many different projects. My copy-editing skills border on the obsessive-compulsive; I have been known to correct mistakes on restaurant menus!

I think my skills and experience are an excellent match for what you are seeking, and I am excited about the chance to work with you. If you would like to talk with me or schedule an interview, please call me at 555-555-1212. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

Letters of Recommendation

Why do companies and organizations ask for a letter of recommendation?

Companies ask for letters of recommendation in order to get a better idea of your performance as an employee. It gives them an idea of how you will perform and details about some of your positive traits. A letter of recommendation is usually required for most jobs.

A letter of recommendation:

1. Gives a brief description of what you accomplished
2. A snapshot of your workplace demeanor
3. A description of how you perform as an employee
4. An indication of how professional you are

Is a letter of recommendation important to getting a job?

Yes!

A letter of recommendation is critical when applying for a job where it is required. This component is taken very seriously by employers and a bad reference could potentially lead to not getting a job. Therefore, a letter of recommendation is extremely important to getting a job.

How can you get a good letter of recommendation?

Here are some key components that go into receiving a good letter:

- Be certain that you perform to your best capacity on the job.
- Build good relationships with co-workers.
- Exhibit professionalism in the workplace.
- Complete all assigned tasks.
- Build a good working relationship with your employer.
- Make sure to ask for a letter from someone you have a good working relationship with.
- Ask for a letter of recommendation before you leave the job.
- Create a sample letter of recommendation for your employer to use as a template. Sometimes providing them with a resume also helps them develop the letter of recommendation.

The structure of a letter of recommendation should look something like this:

Employers Letterhead
Includes address and contact information

Current Date

Potential Employer
[**Title**]
[**Company Name**]
[**Street Address**]
[**City, ST ZIP Code**]

Dear[**Recipient Name**]:

Trey Research employed Stephanie Bourne full-time as a senior editor. For more than four years she managed the content and delivery of our monthly internal newsletter. Her recent layoff was the direct result of an initiative at Trey Research to downsize during this slow economic quarter. Last month, Trey Research closed its editorial department indefinitely.

Stephanie is an intelligent and motivated individual. She is more than capable of managing a small group of people. As senior editor, Stephanie recruited and managed one writer and one copyeditor. With the help of this team, she produced a high-quality newsletter every month and never missed a deadline.

As part of her former responsibilities, Stephanie interviewed competitors in our sector and developed reports on new technologies and areas for growth. Peers in my field would often tell me that Stephanie was interesting to talk to and wrote credible content that accurately reflected their feedback. I believe that developing quality relationships with industry competitors is the responsibility of each Trey Research employee, and Stephanie's consistent contributions to that end are an excellent case in point.

If you would like additional information about Stephanie, you can telephone me at (555) 555-0156.

Sincerely,

References Name
[**Title**]

Classroom Presentation

Module 3: Organized Job Search, Networking, and Tailoring the Resume and Cover Letter

You will have 10 minutes to present an overview of what you have learned in this module. You can use the 10 minutes any way you like and you can use any type of presentation methods and tools that are available to you.

These topics need to be addressed in your presentation:

1) Start the presentation by using your Elevator Speech.
2) A summary of the jobs you were looking for and where you looked for job openings.
3) An overview of the job you are applying for. Include information about the employer, the job title, the job duties, and location. (Hint: use the questions from the Sample Job Description worksheet)
4) An overview of the application package you created for the job. Include: your resume, cover letter, application (hide personal information), and one letter of recommendation.

Possible presentation tools:

1) Create a single page handout about the job and the employer.
2) Create an application packet including your resume and cover letter for the class.
3) Create a Powerpoint presentation.
4) Use your imagination.

Have fun and Remember: It is all about you now! You are the one making the choices about where you are going and what you are going to do.

Corpsmember Career Development Workbook

Module 4:

Portfolio, Interviewing, and How to Succeed at Work

In this module, you will:

Portfolio and Project Logs

I. Understand the different types, uses, and benefits of a portfolio.
II. Construct a table of contents for a portfolio including: employment background, education, achievements, references, letters of recommendation, and summaries of projects completed with the CCC.
III. Understand how a project log will help define your skills acquired while in the CCC.
IV. Complete and assemble all components of a portfolio in a professional presentation that includes sheet protectors and a quality binder.

How to Prepare for Interviews

I. Understand the different types of interview styles and how to prepare for an interview.
II. Be able to identify a behavioral question and understand its purpose in an interview.
III. Learn about the STAR method in order to prepare for behavioral questions.
IV. Learn how to properly follow up after an interview.

How to Succeed at Work

I. Understand how to evaluate job expectations and duties.
II. Identify ways to develop positive work relationships.
III. Identify ways to succeed your first day and year at the new job.
IV. Understand the importance of developing a good work ethic and work habits in order to achieve work excellence.

Corpsmember Career Development Workbook

Check-off List

Module 4: Portfolio, Interviewing, and How to Succeed at Work

Deliverables:

Week 10

- ☐ Professional Portfolio Table of Contents
- ☐ Summary Sheet of Project Logs worksheet

Week 11

- ☐ STAR Practice Question worksheet
- ☐ Mock Interview Questions and Answers
- ☐ Succeed At Work Questionnaire

Week 12

- ☐ Professional Portfolio
- ☐ Classroom Presentation

CM Name_____ Site _____

CM Signature _____ Date _____

CDT Instructor Signature _____ Date _____

Professional Portfolios

What is a portfolio?

A portfolio is a collection of personal and professional documents used to present and highlight an individual's skills, achievements, accomplishments, development and performance. Portfolios can be used in many different settings. Here are two of the more popular uses:

1. ***Personal*** - focuses on the various aspects of our lives and is found in multiple formats including journals, scrapbooks and photo albums. Some can be stored online, but most are created in hard copy formats.

2. ***Professional -*** focuses primarily on career related development including training, experience, education, etc. and is often produced in a 3-ringed binder or electronically. Many times a professional portfolio is geared toward a specific occupation or industry. For example, someone trying to get a job as a graphic designer will include samples of his/her work in the portfolio.

Uses for a Portfolio

Individuals choose to create and use portfolios for a variety of reasons. A recent graduate may use a portfolio to highlight his or her academic accomplishments as well as demonstrate the application of knowledge to a particular work setting. A corpsmember may use a portfolio to demonstrate the various skill sets gained while in the CCC as well as to showcase some of their projects while working with different sponsors. Portfolios can be used in the following ways:

- For job search
- To track certifications
- To seek promotion/advancement
- To seek internship opportunities
- For resume enhancement
- To set you apart from other candidates
- To document the quality and quantity of your professional development
- To demonstrate prior work or learning experiences

The Professional Portfolio can serve as a marketing tool, providing employers a preview of your performance as a potential employee.

The Benefits of Using a Portfolio

Constructing a portfolio provides you with time to reflect and critically evaluate your skills, abilities and experiences. Portfolios also help you to prepare for interviews and, if constructed correctly, allow you to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding about organizational characteristics and needs. Customizing your portfolio to the specifics of the position and the company shows potential employers that you are a great fit for the position as well as their organization.

Portfolio Formats

When it comes to creating a portfolio, individuals have two options—hardcopy (paper) or electronic. Below you will find a list of pros, cons and guidelines for both formats.

1. **Electronic Portfolios**

Pros:

- The ability to utilize video, animation, sound, graphics, etc.
- Compact and easy to carry
- Relatively inexpensive to mail
- Easy to duplicate
- Does not show wear and tear
- Non-linear; allows reader to freely move around

Cons:

- Some employers still prefer hardcopy formats
- Possible software conflicts
- Overuse of animation, sound, graphics, etc.
- May require the purchase of additional software

Guidelines for creating electronic portfolios:

- ✓ Don't overdo it
- ✓ Make sure the portfolio can be accessed by different computers and software
- ✓ Make sure the portfolio can be sent via email (i.e. attachment is not too large, or store it as a website)

2. **Hardcopy Portfolios**

Pros:

- Easy to add and remove items
- Can be displayed during an interview without the use of a computer

Cons:

- Easily shows wear and tear
- Fragile document
- Can be too cumbersome to carry around
- The portfolio can look amateurish, if professional looking supplies are not used
- Linear; reader is confined to the organization of the portfolio

Guidelines for creating hardcopy portfolios:

- ✓ Put items in a loose-leaf binder
- ✓ Use sheet protectors
- ✓ If possible, keep a master copy of all work and use copies in the portfolio
- ✓ Keep your interview portfolio to a manageable size—5-15 pages
- ✓ Omit page numbers—this provides you the freedom to rearrange as necessary
- ✓ Use consistent headings
- ✓ Use index tabs and/or title pages to separate sections
- ✓ Include a table of contents
- ✓ Use a computer to create all text
- ✓ Use quality paper

Assembling a Portfolio

In order to begin creating your portfolio, you need to gather materials to put into it. Collect evidence of all your achievements, accomplishments, experiences, and skills or abilities. If you do not possess evidence, then consider reconstructing some items. The content of what items you collect will vary according to your career goals. The following are some examples of documents you can incorporate into your portfolio.

- Resume
- Employment History
- Awards/Honors
- Certifications/Licenses
- Education Degrees (HS Diploma)
- Extra-Curricular Activities (CAB, Volunteer Activities)
- Skills/Abilities
- Projects
- Performance Evaluations
- References/Letters of Recommendation

Consider the field in which you want to work. You may want to include additional items not listed above. For example, if you are applying for CalTrans, you might want to focus more on the skills you acquired while working on CalTrans projects. This might include brief summaries of different CalTrans projects you have been a part of with any pictures you might have of your crew's work.

When compiling documents to include into your portfolio, make sure your portfolio is not too large. Although you might have a lot of documents to help showcase your abilities, try to select the ones that best demonstrate your abilities and the ones that relate the most to the position you are applying to. Ideally, a portfolio should be 5-15 pages.

Portfolio Organization

Portfolios should be organized in an easy to find format. As a guide, it is helpful to consider your audience and the field in which you are working or want to work. There are three main ways to organize a portfolio—chronologically, functionally or thematically.

1. ***Chronologically***—Items are arranged in order. This method allows individuals to highlight an increase in job responsibility and career progression. It is typically arranged into categories first. Subsequent entries are then organized chronologically. Common categories include work history, education, awards, accomplishments, etc. This is like an expanded resume with samples.

2. ***Functionally***—Items are arranged by description, task, etc. This method allows individuals to highlight a variety of skills obtained from different experiences. The first step is to pick the functions to highlight. Include documents that support or demonstrate competency within the identified functions. Examples of categories used in functional portfolios include

experience in supervision, leadership, management, project development, customer service, etc.

3. ***Thematically***—Items arranged by major themes. This method is more for the creative type. There is a design element incorporated throughout the portfolio that guides the user through all of the content. It is used more with online portfolios.

Important Things to Consider

Creating a portfolio requires a fair amount of work. You may think you have created the ideal portfolio when, in actuality, it still is not complete. Below are some things to consider when working on your portfolio. Remember, your portfolio is a representation of you and your professionalism and should, therefore, be one of your best works.

- Does my portfolio look professional?
- Does my portfolio accurately reflect my skills?
- Is my portfolio occupationally focused?
- Can my portfolio stand-alone without explanation?
- Does my portfolio support my resume?
- Is my portfolio easy to review?
- Is my portfolio free of typos and other errors?
- Is my portfolio current and up-to-date?
- Is my contact information easy to locate and read?
- Have I avoided using too many different fonts?

Read for typos, spelling, grammar, and formatting problems. Then pass it on to a friend to look over as well. Talk through the sections of your portfolio with a friend, thinking about which parts you may elaborate on in an interview, if you plan to look over it together. If you plan to leave the portfolio with an employer, than make sure that it is readable and self-explanatory.

Using the Portfolio

If a portfolio is not requested prior to an interview, you can take it with you and offer it for viewing near the end of the meeting. It can also be displayed during the interview. However, leave the viewing option up to the employer so that he/she can either view it with you or after you leave. Determine ahead of time if you are comfortable with leaving the portfolio for good, or if you will need it back. If you need it back, come up with an easy solution for the employer to get it back to you.

A scaled down version of a portfolio is another option. You can leave copies with the interviewer to keep, however make sure the copies are of good quality. Also, keep the items relevant to the position you are seeking.

What to Include in a Portfolio?

Table of Contents

Showing an employer that you have organizational skills is one of the best first impressions you can give. The table of contents helps keep you organized and it allows the employer to skip to any section that they are most interested in. If you are looking through your portfolio with an employer you will look less flustered if you know where to find what you are looking for.

Cover Letter

A cover letter introduces you and your resume to potential employers or organizations you are applying too. It is the first document an employer sees, so it is often the first impression you will make. Take advantage of this important first impression and prepare the reader for your application, stating why you are writing, why you are a good match for the job and the organization, and when you will contact him or her.

Cover letters do more than introduce your resume, though. A cover letter's importance also includes its ability to:

- Explain your experiences in a story-like format that works with the information provided in your resume
- Allow you to go in-depth about important experiences/skills and relate them to job requirements
- Show the employer that you are individualizing (tailoring) this job application
- Provide a sample of your written communication skills

Resume

A resume is a complete and concise summary of your education and experience, and is the prospective employer's only picture of your past performance and future ambitions. The resume is used by the employer as a tool for screening applicants for the interview process.

Your resume should be designed to pique the interest of the prospective employer and open the door to a career opportunity. The resume should be neat and clean in appearance, organized and well-written. A computer generated, one page resume is desirable.

To create a professional look, custom stationary can be obtained from your local print shop.

Application or Employment History

A completed job application is a statement about your personal, educational, and work experience to prospective employers. For most job openings, you will be required to fill out an application either online or hard copy. Provide a copy of the hard copy application that you submitted in this section. If there is no application, include an expanded summary of your employment history, much like what is included in your Personal and Employment History worksheet.

Supergrade

The Supergrade process allows corpsmembers who demonstrate exceptional leadership skills to take on more responsibility by promoting to "green", "red", or "orange" hats. Each promotion comes with a very modest pay raise and is a great item to add to a resume or application. Include any documentation about any Supergrade promotions.

Summary Sheets of Project Logs

The summary sheets of project logs can help you keep track of projects that you have worked on. You can include them in your portfolio as a reference or example of your writing skills. They also help to jog your memory after you have left the CCC.

Evaluations

Corpsmember performance evaluations are an important component to your Employment Package since they describe a person's commitment and can provide a positive picture of your character. Make sure to keep a record of each performance evaluation. These evaluations can be used in the future as character references for prospective employers. Other letters of thanks from volunteer and non-paid activity groups can also be used as evaluations.

Achievements

Achievements and accomplishments are excellent things to put on a resume and application. During your time in the California Conservation Corps, you may receive several of these; make sure to save copies of all certificates and achievements received so you can add them to your employment portfolio. Examples of achievements include:

Records of Certificates:

- High School Diploma
- Chain Saw
- Flood Training
- Fire Training

Leadership Positions:

- Crew Leader
- Specialist
- Corpsmember Advisory Board (CAB)

Participation in Volunteer Activities:

- Salmon Festival
- Air Show
- River Trial Clean Up
- Veteran Day

References and Letters of Recommendation

A reference is someone who knows you personally and is willing to be contacted by a potential employer or write a letter verifying your ability, skills, and positive attitude in a manner that is helpful to you in your employment search.

Before adding a reference or including a letter of reference, the following steps should be taken:

- Obtain permission for the letter of recommendation to be included in your portfolio.
- Obtain permission for the reference to be contacted by prospective employers.
- Keep the letters current by periodically asking for new ones.

A letter of recommendation is a valuable item to request when leaving a job. Often, the employer will ask you to write the letter and he/she will sign it. This is an excellent opportunity for you to honestly make a sales pitch for yourself. Cite examples of your strengths, abilities and strong points.

Portfolio Assembly: Developing a Table of Contents

A table of contents is a great way to make your portfolio easy to explore for the reader. Below, you will find sections that can be used for your portfolio's table of contents to organize your portfolio. Beneath each section, there a list of potential documents that could be used in your portfolio. Go through the list and check the items you have and would like to use for display. If you have additional items, list them in the appropriate sections. Once you have determined the documents you want to display in your portfolio, create a Table of Contents. This will be the first step in developing your own portfolio.

1. Introduction
   - ☐ Cover Letter
2. Work History
   - ☐ Resume
   - ☐ Employment Application
   - ☐ Project Pictures
   - ☐ Work Samples
   - ☐ References List
   - ☐ Letters of Recommendation
   - ☐ Performance Evaluations
   - ☐ _____
   - ☐ _____
3. Education
   - ☐ High School Diploma
   - ☐ Associates/Bachelor's Degree
   - ☐ Transcripts (if relevant)
   - ☐ Education Honors
   - ☐ Sample of an impressive assignment
   - ☐ Extra-Curricular Activities – Sample/write-up of activity, pictures, awards
   - ☐ _____
   - ☐ _____

4. Accomplishments (Awards/Certificates)

- ☐ Work Related Awards
- ☐ Education Related Awards
- ☐ Volunteer/Extra- Curricular Activities Awards and Letters of Participation
- ☐ Chainsaw Training
- ☐ Flood Training
- ☐ HAZWOPER Training
- ☐ Fire Training
- ☐ Leadership Positions
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

5. Certifications

- ☐ CPR/First Aid Certification
- ☐ Class B Driver's License
- ☐ Blue Card
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Summary Sheet of Project Logs - Skill Sets

Project Summary
Dates:
Sponsor/Agency:
Location:
Project Description:

Acquired Skills
List the skills you gained while working on this project (make sure you use proper terminology). Refer to the "California Conservation Corps Work Terms" document for assistance.

Tool Proficiency
List tools that you became familiar with while working on this project:

How to Prepare for Interviews

Why do Employers use Interviews in the Hiring Process?

Employers usually have a lot of applicants for each position. They use the resume to determine who has the basic skills, education, and experience for the position. The interview helps them determine who the best person for the job is.

During the interview, the employer is looking for the following things:

- Does the applicant want this job? Do they have an interest in the company or organization?
- Will this person fit into the work environment?
- Is this person socially skilled? How do they represent themselves?
- How does this person deal with stressful situations?
- Can they really do x, y, or z?

Employers want to lower their risk and make sure they are making a good decision. Employers face huge costs when they hire the wrong person, these costs include:

Hiring: Expenses for ads, sign-on fees.

Time: Spent interviewing the bad hire and checking references.

Training: Time spent training the bad hire.

Damage: Damage done if the bad hire injures people or property.

Repairs: Time spent repairing the poorly done work of the bad hire.

Replacing: Cost of the time spent replacing the bad hire.

Productivity: Productivity and profit lost while the position is vacant.

Different types of Interviews

There are many types of interviews used by employers. Sometimes there are multiple types of interviews conducted before a decision is made. Below are some of the different types of interviews:

Telephone/online Interview*:* You are initially interviewed over the phone or through Skype to check for basic qualifications. Sometimes this is done when headquarters or the human resource department is located far away from the applicants.

Traditional*:* You sit and talk with the interviewer(s), usually at the employer's location.

Behavioral*:* This is how an employer can find out more about your personality and how you deal with stressful situations. This usually involves specific types of questions, projects, or activities.

Technical*:* This includes specific questions related to the job requirements and/or equipment or technology mastery. You may be asked to use specific machinery to prove your ability.

One-on-One*:* You are interviewed by an individual.

Team or Committee*:* You are interviewed by a number of people at the same time.

Group: You are interviewed at the same time as other candidates.

Multiple Levels*:* You are interviewed individually by different people in a planned series of interviews. These can happen all on the same day or over a series of days.

As soon as you're invited for an interview, get the details.

- Ask for location and directions to the interview site. Take a test drive to be sure you know where it is and how long it should take to get there.
- Ask for the start time and expected duration of the interview.
- Ask for each interviewer's name and title.
- Ask if there will be tests or tasks involved.
- Ask if you will need a writing sample or portfolio.
- Ask who to contact if you have any other questions or issues come up.

Prepare for an Interview

The day before your interview, think about what types of questions the employer might ask you and prepare answers you can give in less than 2 minutes.

On the day of the interview:

- Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early. You might need to fill out paperwork before the interview.
- Go by yourself. If a friend or relative drives you, have them wait in the car.
- Wear an outfit that is professional looking. It should fit the type of job for which you are interviewing.
- Do not wear fragrances in case one of your interviewers has allergies.

Dressing for an Interview

What you wear to an interview is an important way to impress an employer. What does your look say about you as an applicant? A neat appearance indicates that you have respect for the employer and yourself; maturity; and responsibility.

When you select a look for an interview, remember you are going to a job interview, not a party. Pay attention to detail.

- Invest in clothes that fit your body and budget. Avoid trendy styles.
- Consider using a department store personal shopper.
- Save money by shopping at a local thrift store.
- Pay attention to personal hygiene, shower and use deodorant.
- Avoid using cologne or perfume.
- Clean and trim fingernails.
- Keep breath mints handy.
- Hide or camouflage tattoos.
- Remove distracting jewelry.
- Keep your hair brushed away from your face.
- If you must carry a purse, make sure it matches your outfit.
- If using nail polish use a clear or neutral tone.
- Keep a spare, clean tie in your car just in case the one you are wearing gets stained.
- Keep facial hair (mustache/beard) relatively short and neat and make sure you are freshly shaved.

What to Bring to an Interview

- Extra copies of your resume, your reference list, and examples of your work.
- Papers needed to complete your application. This includes copies of work licenses, your driving record (if required), your portfolio, and your social security or immigration cards.

During the Interview

- Display confidence. Shake hands firmly, but only if a hand is offered to you first.
- Maintain eye contact with the interviewer.
- Let the interviewer start the conversation.
- Listen carefully. Give honest, direct answers.
- Accept all questions with a smile, even the hard ones.
- Think about your answers in your head before you talk. If you don't understand a question, ask to hear it again or for it to be reworded. You don't have to rush, but you don't want to appear indecisive.

After the Interview

The job interview is not over when you leave the meeting. You have one more chance to impress the employer. Follow up the interview with a thank-you letter. Send a thank you letter or note to each person who interviewed you. Your letter should have these main ideas:

- Thank them for their time.
- Say you are interested in working for them.
- Briefly say why you are qualified for the job.
- Give any information that you forgot to say in the interview.
- Put anything that will help them remember who you are—did you have any personal connection or rapport building?
- Add a final "thank you" for the chance to interview.
- Say how your plan to follow up.

If you told the interviewers that you would give them added information, make sure that you do. Keep track of when you said you would contact this employer to find out if you were hired. Don't forget to make that contact.

Be sure to check the grammar, spelling, word use and punctuation before sending the thank you not or letter. If you choose to write your letter by hand, check with a friend to verify that your handwriting is legible.

Using the STAR Method to Answer Behavioral Questions

Tell me about a time where you experienced a conflict with a supervisor and how you dealt with it.

What does your answer to that question say about you?
This is an example of a behavioral question, and they are very common in interviews. There are many ways to ask a behavioral question, but they basically have the same style: tell us a story about something you did.

Interviewers that include behavioral questions are trying to find out what your personality is like, especially in stressful situations. You can prepare for these types of questions by learning and practicing the STAR method. The STAR method provides you with a format for answering these types of questions, here is a description of each step:

Situation or **T**ask	Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.
Action you took	Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did -- not the efforts of the team. Don't tell what you might do, tell what you did.
Results you achieved	What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

Telling success stories about your work experience make you memorable and believable to the interviewer. Many employers will give you an opportunity to give examples of success stories.

Prior to the interview, write out an answer to possible questions using the STAR system explained above. Make the stories about accomplishments or problems you solved. Use the STAR method to detail how the situations were dealt with.

Here is an example of a behavioral question and appropriate answer:
Question: ***Have you ever had to take on more responsibility than your job required you to do?***
ANSWER:

Situation

"Yes, I was previously working at the California Conservation Corps Pomona Center as a crew leader and supervised a group of corpsmembers during a project."

Task

"The project was on a park restoration for the City of El Monte. It was critical, since we were behind schedule with our sponsor who wanted to finish the restoration project for a local community event before the end of the week. Unfortunately, my supervisor had called in sick and conveyed that I needed to organize and finish enough work in time of the event."

Action

"I decided to take this opportunity where I would be able to challenge myself and take on a leadership role. I used my organizational skills to plan and prioritize the major tasks. Then I communicated instructions to my crew on how to finish the project 3 days before the community event. Since my supervisor was away, I informed the center director and project sponsor on the tasks the team had completed."

Result

"Within 3-days, I successfully completed the project with my crew and received great feedback about our efforts to finish the task in a timely manner. Because of our hard work, my crew and I were invited to come back to celebrate at a pizza party hosted by the city."

Note: This was a situation where the interviewee could have spoken negatively about the situation or his/her supervisor, but didn't. NEVER use this as an opportunity to speak badly about a prior supervisor, organization, employer, or co-worker! ALWAYS be positive, even if the outcome of the situation was not a good one, include what you learned from the experience. Learning experiences are always positive.

STAR Practice Question

Now try answering that initial question again, this time write out your answer using the STAR method.

Tell me about a time where you experienced a conflict with a supervisor and how you dealt with it.

Situation:

Task:

Action:

Result:

Read your answer out loud to yourself or a friend.

How does it make you sound?

Was there a positive outcome?

Did you speak badly about anybody?

Does it show the listener that you are a competent and capable employee who can get along with others?

Mock Interview Activity

You have been asked in for an interview for your ideal job opening. Develop 10 questions for your mock interview. You can use questions from this list, or write others based on the job description. At least 4 of the questions need to be behavioral questions. Write down your answers to each question, and be sure to use the STAR method on the behavioral questions.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your strengths?
3. What do you know about our company/organization?
4. Describe a weakness and how you plan to improve it?
5. How do you define "being on time"?
6. How would you describe yourself?
7. Describe a time when you handled a stressful situation successfully. (STAR question)
8. Tell me about a time when you solved a problem. (STAR question)
9. Give an example where you set and achieved a goal. (STAR question)
10. How do you resolve conflict? (STAR question)
11. Describe a time when you had to follow a policy you didn't agree with. (STAR question)
12. Describe a situation where your job required you to go "above and beyond the call of duty". (STAR question)
13. Describe a recent situation where you dealt with an upset customer or co-worker. (STAR question)
14. Why did you leave your last position?
15. Why do you want to work for our company?
16. What are your interests/hobbies?
17. Who are your role models? Why?
18. Tell me about a short term and long term goal you have.
19. Describe a time when you worked as a team player?(STAR question)
20. Why are you interested in this position?
21. What job related skills have you developed?
22. What did you enjoy most about your last employment? Least?
23. Do you volunteer? Where? Doing what?
24. How would your co-workers describe you?
25. Why do you think you can do the job?
26. What do you expect from a supervisor?

HANDLING ILLEGAL QUESTIONS: All questions should be job-related. Questions based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, birthplace, age, or physical disability may not be asked. If you are asked an illegal question, evaluate the interviewer's intent; trust your instincts and respond in a calm tone by saying: *My qualifications for this job seem to meet your needs. How does this question relate to my ability to do the job?*

How to Succeed At Work

Questionnaire

1. What are new hire expectations?

2. What is the difference between work ethic and excellence?

3. What are the effects of missing work?

4. What are some strategies for being a productive employee?

5. How can you effectively communicate with your co-workers?

6. How do you plan to continue learning once you have a job?

7. What are some strategies for time management?

SUCCEED AT WORK

6

California Career CalCRN Resource Network

STAGE 2:

STARTING A NEW JOB

Starting a new job can be stressful. Reduce the stress by knowing what to expect and preparing for it in the future.

Upon completion of this section you will be able to:

1. Evaluate your job expectations and duties.
2. List ways to develop positive work relationships.
3. Identify ways to succeed your first day and first year.

Realistic Expectations

Have realistic expectations for yourself in regards to your new job so you can enjoy the experience and handle difficulties in a calm manner.

Areas in your job where you form these expectations are in:

- Duties, People, Attitudes
- Systems, Equipment, Procedures
- Atmosphere, Work space, Commute.

School vs. Work

Understanding the differences between school and work will help you form more realistic expectations about your new job.

School:

- Many teachers
- Frequent evaluations (exams, report cards)
- Summers off and long holiday breaks
- Annual promotion (grade level changes e.g. junior to senior)
- Can get perfect grades
- Learn on one kind of equipment/software
- Fellow students generally your age and experience level
- Told what to do and when to do it
- Can start fresh with a new teacher every term

Work:

- One boss
- Annual review
- One to two weeks off a year
- Infrequent promotions
- No way to be perfect
- Use different kinds of equipment/software
- Form long-term relationships with co-workers
- Co-workers generally of all ages and levels of experience
- May be told what to do or may have to figure it out and be self-motivated
- Keep the same boss a long time

School and work have many things in common. ***Both require you to:***

✓ Focus on tasks and prioritize them

✓ Learn new skills

✓ Be patient with the learning process and have realistic expectations about study time, grades, etc.

✓ Be around a diverse group of people.

SUCCEED AT WORK

7

California Career Cal CRN Resource Network

New Hire Expectations

Regardless of the type of work you do or the type of company that hired you there are certain expectations you should have.

- **Orientation:** Usually on the first day, someone orients you to the company, department, and your new position, including finalizing any paperwork.
- **Introductory Period:** In most cases this is the first 90 days on the job, but may last up to a year.
- **Benefit Limits:** When you begin your new job you may not have access to all of your benefits. Benefits usually begin after the introductory period.
- **Training:** You may be required by your employer to attend training.
- **New Jargon:** Some professions and companies use specific language for their industry.
- **New Equipment:** The equipment and tools used on your new job may be different than those used on your previous job or in school.
- **New Policies and Procedures:** Learn your company's policies and procedures and follow them.
- **"New Hire" Duties:** New hires duties are usually temporary, and may be tasks that do not suit your interests. Keep in mind that it is only temporary.

How You May Feel

When you start a new job you may experience many different and conflicting emotions and impressions. Being realistic about what to expect and knowing that most people feel similar to you when starting a new job can help.

Here is a list that may help you identify some of these emotions:

- ✓ Overwhelmed
- ✓ Anxious
- ✓ Dependent
- ✓ Excited
- ✓ Lonely
- ✓ Doubtful
- ✓ Uncomfortable
- ✓ Motivated

How Your Co-Workers May Be

Co-workers can make a place of employment a fun or miserable place to work. As a new employee realizing how your co-workers will react to you in the beginning can make the transition to a new job easier. Your new co-workers may:

- **Forget You:** When you are introduced to your co-workers they may seem welcoming and interested. Once you begin working they may suddenly seem unavailable and indifferent. Remember that it is not that they dislike you, it is just that they are busy with their own work. Do not take it personally.
- **Stereotype You:** Right or wrong, it is human nature to base initial judgments on appearances and preconceptions. Do not take this personally because time and experience will help them see the real you.
- **Label Your Work Style:** Show your co-workers your openness and willingness, and most of all respect. It is through your behavior that you help shape the labels that people have about you.

Developing Positive Work Relationships

Here are some ways you can build productive work relationships with your co-workers:

- ✓ Learn names
- ✓ Learn unofficial rules of your work place
- ✓ Ally with successful and trustworthy co-workers
- ✓ Be sensitive to differences among co-workers
- ✓ Reach out slowly
- ✓ Avoid personal questions
- ✓ Reveal only as much as others do
- ✓ Keep your relationships with your co-workers professional

How Your Supervisor May Be

Your supervisor is there to help you succeed and be productive. Acknowledging there are different styles of supervisors can help you transition into your new job.

SUCCEED AT WORK

8

California Career Cal CRN Resource Network

Gossip

Gossip usually means talking about someone else without all the facts. Gossip can be hurtful, is unprofessional, and can make you look bad. Although gossip can reveal the company's culture and can alert you of potential problems gossip can actually ruin peoples' reputations and cause your co-workers to distrust you. Gossip can even get you fired, so don't engage in this behavior. If you find yourself or someone else the subject of gossip here are some strategies for dealing with it.

Gossip about you:

- ✓ Ignore it, if the rumor isn't damaging let it go.
- ✓ Confront it. Ask the gossiping person to stop or retract the statement.
- ✓ Report it to your supervisor or human resources department.
- ✓ Be skeptical of the gossip. Just because you hear about gossip second hand doesn't mean it's really happening.

Gossip about others:

- ✓ Ignore it. It is none of your business.
- ✓ Encourage the individual gossiping to speak with the other person directly.
- ✓ Challenge it or defend the person being gossiped about.
- ✓ Express discomfort with gossip and say that you don't want to participate in gossip.

Do Your Job Well

To perform well at a new job you need to be prepared to learn, show appreciation, follow directions, be teachable, take responsibility, believe in yourself and take the initiative.

Succeed the First Day:

- ✓ Prepare for orientation.
- ✓ Be ready to start fresh.
- ✓ Encourage yourself.
- ✓ Research the company.

Succeed the First Year:

It is not uncommon to take a year to feel comfortable at your new job. Be patient with yourself.

- ✓ *Remember, "This too shall pass".*
- ✓ *Try to be comfortable with not knowing.*
- ✓ *Don't judge your feelings of uncertainty and share them with others.*
- ✓ *Take pride in small steps.*
- ✓ *Remember your goals.*

SUCCEED AT WORK

9

California Career CalCRN Resource Network

Stage 3:

Being An Excellent Employee

Being an excellent employee means developing a good work ethic and good work habits.

Upon completion of this section you will be able to list ways to develop a good work ethic and implement actions to achieve work excellence.

Work Ethic and Excellence

You may be wondering: *What is the difference?* Having a good work ethic means you are honest and hard working. Work Excellence means performing your job extremely well. You need both to succeed at work. If you have a great work ethic but are incompetent, employers will not want you. Nor will they want you if have work excellence and are extremely productive, but you steal from them.

Work Ethic:

- Pride in work
- Good attendance
- Integrity
- Attitude
- Maximum Effort

Work Excellence:

- Productivity
- Customer Service
- Good Communication
- Good Team Player
- Continuous Learning
- Problem Solving
- Good Organizational Skills
- Good Time Management Skills

Pride in Work

A strong work ethic means taking pride in your work, regardless of what job you do or position you hold.

Every Job Matters:
Every job is interconnected. So no matter what job you do, or how menial, it serves an important purpose.

Your Job Matters:
Believe in yourself and in the value of your job. It's up to you to decide the value of your job.

Pride in Work Leads to Pride in Self:
If you think you are a quality person, you will do quality work. You learn to think positively about yourself by doing positive things.

Attendance:

Most people need to miss work occasionally for various reasons, such as illness, accidents, or a planned vacation. It is important that you handle these situations properly. Here's how:

Absences:
Call as soon as you realize you will not be able to make it to work. Make the call yourself.

Vacations:
Ask for vacation time as soon as possible.
Explain your reason honestly.
Give your boss exact dates.
Offer to make up the lost time.
Put request in writing, using company form or note that your supervisor signs.
Arrange to have a co-worker to cover for you BEFORE notifying your supervisor, if applicable.

Late Arrivals/Tardiness:
Call in even if you think it will make you even more late.
Speak with a supervisor not a co-worker.
Give an estimate of your arrival time.
Apologize when you arrive.
Don't let it happen again.

SUCCEED AT WORK

10

California Career CalCRN Resource Network

Missing Work?

Some reasons for missing work are more acceptable than others.

Acceptable:

- I am ill with an infection or flu.
- My child is ill and I have to care for him/her.
- I was in an accident on my way to work.
- It's a religious holiday for me.
- A death of a family member or close friend.

Unacceptable:

- My car is not running and I don't have a ride.
- Have to meet with my lawyer or other professional.
- Family or friend asked you to watch their children.
- Too upset to work because had an argument with partner, family or friend.
- Need to visit someone in the hospital.
- Need to get new contacts/glasses.
- Have a hangover.

The Effects of Missing Work

When you are absent or even just late, it can negatively affect everyone at the worksite.

You:

✓ Lose pay.

✓ May lose your job, especially if you are late or miss work often.

✓ Make your boss and co-workers angry at you.

Your Supervisor:

✓ Has to rearrange the work schedule or personally have to cover for you.

The Company:

✓ Loses productivity.

✓ Faces upset customers who did not receive the service they should.

Your Co-workers:

✓ Have to pick up the slack for you which creates resentment and anger.

✓ May have to come in early, stay late, or come to work on a day off to cover you.

Integrity

When you agree to work for someone, you agree to be sincere, follow the rules and be honest.

Employers expect you to:

- Be honest and discreet.
- Follow company rules.
- Follow local, state and federal laws.
- Follow the written code of ethics for your occupation (if there is one).
- Speak up when someone else acts improperly.

- Employers also expect you to do the right thing, which means avoiding behaviors that are viewed as inappropriate or dishonest such as:
  - Stealing.
  - Using company equipment for personal business.
  - Cheating on your time sheet.
  - Abusing drugs and alcohol at work.
  - Violating confidentiality (employer, employees, customers).
  - Tolerating other's bad behavior.
  - Violating company policies.

SUCCEED AT WORK

11

California Career Cal CRN Resource Network

Integrity Questions

Having integrity is not always easy. You might find yourself in a situation or an ethical dilemma and wondering what to do.

Ask Yourself:

- ***Is it legal?*** If it is against the law, ***Do Not Do It,*** even if your boss tells you to. The law will hold you accountable.
- ***Would I feel proud about it?*** If your conscience tells you it is wrong, ***Do Not Do It.***
- ***Would I like everyone to know it?*** If you would not want your supervisor, co-workers, family, etc. to know about it ***Do Not Do It.***
- ***Would it hurt someone?*** If it harms someone or an organization physically, mentally, or financially, ***Do Not Do It.***
- ***What would happen if I didn't decide?*** If not deciding could result in harm, ***Do something positive, don't just wait.***

Positive Attitude

Employers want their employees to be friendly and have a positive attitude. Having a positive attitude makes it easier for co-workers and customers to work with you.

A positive attitude cannot be faked. Your true feelings are revealed through your verbal and nonverbal signals.

Having a positive attitude makes you feel better about your job and your life.

Sometimes having a positive attitude is challenging, but try to look for the humor in the situation and remember to be grateful for all the good things in your life.

What's Your Attitude?

What kind of attitude do you want to project, Positive or Negative?

Positive:

- Takes pride in work and behavior
- Optimistic
- Eager to learn, change, and grow
- Happy to help others
- Energetic and enthusiastic

A Positive Attitude:

- ✓ Enhances relationships
- ✓ Creates fun and creative work environment
- ✓ Increases productivity
- ✓ Allows more opportunities for advancement

Negative:

- Does only the minimum
- Complains and criticizes
- Resists change
- Treats others poorly
- Procrastinates
- Blames others for own problem

A Negative Attitude Will:

- ✓ Drive others away
- ✓ Make yourself miserable
- ✓ Create more illnesses and absences
- ✓ Limit opportunity for advancement

SUCCEED AT WORK

12

California Career CalCRN Resource Network

Maximum Effort

In order to succeed at your job you have to be focused, work hard, and give your job your all. Here are some tips to maximize your working effort.

Leave your home life at home.
Sharing your personal problems with your co-workers is not a good idea. It reduces your productivity and you risk losing the respect of your co-workers.

Limit socializing at work:
Building relationships with co-workers is valuable and shows that you want to be part of the team. Be careful, and professional, and know when to get back to work.

Put in a full shift:
Be sure to work your entire shift. Make up any personal time you take at work. Take breaks only in accordance with company policies. Conduct personal business, such as web surfing or phone calls, only during breaks.

Be physically ready to work:
Show up to work ready to work hard. Avoid drinking alcohol or doing drugs before going into work. Arrive to work well rested, and focused.

Productivity

On top of working hard you should also work smart. Working smart increases your productivity making you a valuable employee. Here are five steps to help you.

1 *Prioritize:*
Learn which tasks are most important. These are the ones you should compete first.

2 *Do your tasks:*
Productivity means working effectively and accomplishing the tasks you have prioritized. Plan ahead, it saves time later. Be results oriented. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

3 *Do your tasks on time:*
Meet your deadlines. High productivity means you complete you work in a timely manner while still being efficient and accurate.

4 *Do your tasks well:*
Make your work time count. Listen carefully to instructions to reduce mistakes.

5 *Do more tasks:*
Take the initiative to do the assignments that no one else wants to do. If you see something that needs to get done, do it without being told.

Ask For What You Need

You can increase your productivity if you have the necessary or the best tools for the job.

If you need certain equipment or support to be more productive, ask for it.

Do some research. If you need a faster computer, for example, learn what type and speed you need.

Be reasonable, do others in your same position at a similar company use that type of computer?

How much will it cost? Put the request in writing. Explain how it will benefit the company.

Meet with your employer in person to discuss the request, and be gracious no matter what the decision is.

SUCCEED AT WORK

16

California Career CalCRN Resource Network

Communication

Communicating effectively means listening, and exchanging information and ideas. Employers value proper communication skills more than ever. To succeed at work, you need to perfect your communication skills in speaking, listening, writing and reading.

Speaking Effectively

Communication guidelines for effective speech are the same whether you are talking one-on-one with a customer or co-worker or addressing an audience.

- Be calm and honest.
- Speak for yourself.
- Be positive and you will get positive responses in return.
- Use appropriate language your listener can understand – no jargon or shorthand.
- Avoid extremes. If you use harsh language and give orders you will push people away. If you never speak up people forget about you.
- Stay aware of your body language. Look the person you are speaking with in the eye.
- Be responsible for making sure that your listener hears and understands you. Ask to be sure.

Public Speaking:

Public speaking is a desirable skill for employers. The skill of speaking in front of an audience makes you marketable and successful at work. Here a few things to remember to do well:

- Treat your speech as a conversation not a lecture.
- Tell stories, don't just give facts.
- Nervousness gives you energy to do your best, so welcome it.
- Begin your speech with a story, a question, or a startling fact to grab the audience's attention.
- Try to involve the audience as much as possible, especially with activities. It keeps your audience interested.

Listen Effectively:

Listening is more than staying quiet while someone else talks.

To listen effectively:

- Be attentive.
- Show your interest.
- Ask questions.
- Reflect back what you hear.

Write Effectively:

If you know how to write clearly and concisely, you will always find work.

To write effectively:

- Plan ahead.
- Be logical.
- Be brief.
- Be organized.
- Think of your readers.
- Use simple words.
- Use action verbs.
- Proofread.

Read Effectively:

Almost every job requires you to read, whether it is from books, web content or directions.

To read quickly and accurately:

- Skim first.
- Take notes.
- Ask yourself questions about what you are reading.
- Summarize the main points later.

SUCCEED AT WORK

17

Team Player

To succeed at work you must be a team player. This requires you to work hard and get along with others. Team work means working towards a common goal, not personal interests or glory.

Follow these guidelines:

- Participate
- Don't be shy
- Encourage others to participate
- Communicate
- Let go of your ego
- Value differences in people and opinions
- Expect conflict
- Keep the project on track
- Keep your sense of humor
- Be considerate

Team players ensure that their working environment is positive and run efficiently by taking care of the little things:

- ***Notice your co-workers:*** Greet them when they arrive and say "good bye" when they leave.
- ***Clean up after yourself:*** Don't leave a mess in the break room or spoiled food in the refrigerator.
- ***Restock supplies:*** If you use the last of anything such as copy paper, printer paper, water from the cooler, etc. be sure to either restock or notify the proper person.
- ***Replace items where they belong:*** Don't just throw things back in the supply closet or leave them lying around.
- ***Return borrowed items promptly:*** Take items only if you have permission.

Here are some *Do's* and *Don'ts* to being a team player:

Do:

- ✓ Take the initiative
- ✓ Keep the boss informed
- ✓ Take responsibility
- ✓ Be solution oriented
- ✓ Learn from your boss

Don't

- ✓ Blame the boss
- ✓ Fight the boss
- ✓ Wait for problems to get fixed
- ✓ Feel frustrated by slow progress
- ✓ Be afraid to change

Continuous Learning

To be an excellent employee you will need to stay current with technological and other advances in your area of expertise. Sometimes this will mean you develop new skills or upgrade existing skills.

Where to Learn:

- ✓ Read books and articles that relate to your job.
- ✓ Listen to business news about your field.
- ✓ Ask your supervisor to send you to job related workshops.
- ✓ Take classes at a community college.

How to Learn:

- ✓ Listen and observe.
- ✓ Be curious, ask questions.
- ✓ Be adventurous, exploring new ideas.
- ✓ Be willing to make mistakes.
- ✓ Be determined.
- ✓ Admit when you don't know.

Benefits of Continuous Learning:

- ✓ Get hired easily.
- ✓ Get promoted quickly.
- ✓ Earn more.
- ✓ Direct your own work life.

SUCCEED AT WORK

18

California Career Cal CRN Resource Network

Problem Solving

Problem solving is a critical job skill of the new world of work. To solve a problem you should follow the seven steps below:

1. **Define the Problem:**
   If store sales are down, and everything sells except the sweaters, the problem isn't the store; it's the sweaters.
2. **Analyze the Problem:**
   Sweater sales are down. Are the sweaters priced too high or is it too hot to sell fall clothes?
3. **Develop Solutions:**
   Ask salespeople and return customers how to get people to buy sweaters in the summertime.
4. **Evaluate Solutions:**
   Compare solutions that are logical, simple, and cost-effective.
5. **Select a Solution:**
   Decide on the best solution to implement, using whatever criteria you decide.
6. **Implement the Solution:**
   Get support from others, especially your supervisor.
7. **Evaluate the Outcome:**
   Determine whether the solution worked, and why it succeeded or failed.

Organization

Organization helps you be successful at work by increasing your efficiency. By being organized you get more done without wasting time.

Organize Your Duties:

- Gather all the supplies you need before you begin your project.
- Break your routine tasks into parts.
- Take notes.
- Group similar tasks together.
- Automate everything you can.
- Clean your work area before you go home.

Organize Your Work Area:

- Arrange items by frequency of use.
- Use broad categories when filing or arranging items or tools.
- Throw or give away anything you don't need.
- Use bins and boxes to store items.

Time Management

To be an excellent employee, you need time management so you can complete your work on time. In order to manage your time there are a couple of things to remember.

Set Your Priorities:

Begin with the assignments or tasks that are important:

- To your boss.
- To your team, co-workers, or customers.
- New tasks, because they might take you longer than you expect to complete.

Useful Time Management Tools:

- ***Calendar*** – helps you remember appointments, deadlines, and keeps you from over scheduling.
- ***Daily Action List*** – helps you keep track of the individual activities that you need to accomplish that day.

SUCCEED AT WORK

19

California Career CalCRN Resource Network

Appearance

Success at work means following the dress code set by your employer.

Be clean:

- Proper hygiene is important. Keep your face, body, hair and nails clean. Always wear clean and unstained clothes. Use antiperspirant/deodorant daily.

Ensure safety and health:

- Chose clothes that fit the work place such as an apron, boots, hair net, etc.

Try to fit in:

- Model yourself after your successful co-workers. Keep your look simple, fairly conservative, or traditional business. Dress so that people feel comfortable around you and minimize distractions.

Minimize distractions:

- Your goal at work is to work, not distract others from the business at hand. For most jobs, ***NEVER*** wear:
  - ✓ Suggestive or low-cut clothes.
  - ✓ Elaborate or unusual hair styles.
  - ✓ Unnatural-looking hair color.
  - ✓ Excessively high-heeled shoes.
  - ✓ Heavy perfume or cologne.
  - ✓ Large, eye-catching jewelry.
  - ✓ Visible or unsupportive underwear.
  - ✓ Clothing with holes or messages.
  - ✓ Visible tattoos, ritual scars or piercings other than in the earlobe.

Manners

Manners are as important as your appearance. Conduct yourself professionally.

Always:

- ✓ Hold the door for customers.
- ✓ Let customers walk ahead of you unless you're showing the way.
- ✓ Act confidently.
- ✓ Smoke only in designated areas.
- ✓ Put cigarette butts and chewed gum in the garbage.
- ✓ Keep the volume on your radio or stereo low.

Never:

- ✓ Swear or yell at work.
- ✓ Interrupt a customer.
- ✓ Slouch, lean, put your feet up.
- ✓ Dip or chew tobacco in public.
- ✓ Chew gum in front of others.
- ✓ Pick at your nose, ears, fingers or clothes.

Classroom Presentation

Module 4: Portfolio, Interviewing, and How to Succeed at Work

You will have 10 minutes to for a mock interview. You should use these 10 minutes to convince the interview panel that you are the right person for this job.

This presentation is a Mock Interview. You need to treat this just like you are going in to an interview for your ideal job opening. Things you will need to do:

1. Dress the part.
2. Use your elevator speech.
3. Be ready to answer the 10 interview questions you developed in front of a panel.
4. Have your portfolio ready to share.

Items you will need to provide:

1. Multiple copies of your ideal job opening. These are for your panel.
2. Multiple copies of your mock interview questions. These are for your panel.
3. One copy of your portfolio.

Have fun and Remember: After this you are all done! Congratulations!!!