

Job Search Tips

Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency
CalWORKs Employment Services Program

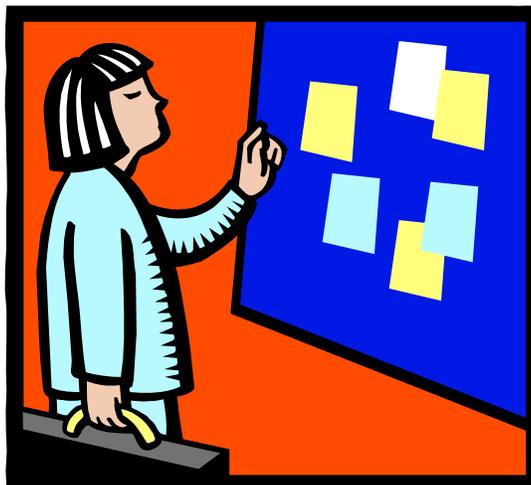


Job Search Checklist

Action Items:

In order to conduct a job search that results in getting a job, I need to:

- Think about my Appearance and how I want an employer to see me, before my job search begins.
- Plan ahead so that I am prepared to show an employer a good Attitude.
- Plan ahead for Child Care so that if I am offered a job, I'll be ready to start immediately.
- Plan ahead for Transportation so that I have a reliable way to get to and from work.
- Get ready for my Job Search by thinking about my interests, skills, experience, education, industry of choice, and personal circumstances.
- Know where the Job Openings are, and how to get the follow-up on job leads.
- Read Application Tips and Mistakes to Avoid so that I am prepared to make a good impression on potential employers.
- Complete a sample Employment Application to take with me when job searching.



Appearance

Take time to look your best! Your appearance is important.

Your appearance will make a lasting impression. Even if you are only going to pick up forms or drop off an application, dress in clothing that is suitable for the type of job you are seeking.

The following will help you make a good first impression:

- Get a good night's sleep the night before
- Freshen up with a shower or bath
- Shave or trim facial hair
- Practice a firm handshake, a smile, good eye contact, and good posture
- Hair should be clean and well-groomed
- Brush your teeth and use a mouthwash
- Do not wear perfumes or aftershave
- Makeup and jewelry should be simple and kept to a minimum
- Wear clean, neat clothing
- Wear socks or stocking with shoes
- Shine dress shoes or heels

What to Wear

Dressing in a businesslike manner will help you make a good impression at your interview. For most interviews, a suit is appropriate for both men and women. If you do not have appropriate clothing, most communities have "clothes closets" where you can choose a proper outfit. Discount stores also provide many choices. Your clothes do not need to be expensive, just neat and clean. Review the list of examples of appropriate clothing:

Women

- Suit
- Slacks and blouse
- Blouse and skirt (at least knee-length)
- Dress

Men

- Suit
- Slacks and dress shirt
- Tie, if appropriate

Do NOT Wear

Casual wear is not appropriate for interviews. Clothes that are too dressy or revealing should not be worn either. Once you are on the job, you will be able to judge the types of clothes that fit the work environment. Many employers have "dress down" days, when wearing casual clothing is acceptable. Otherwise, you should be in professional clothes.

- Examples of inappropriate interview clothing: Jeans, tight or over-sized clothing, baseball caps, T-shirts, tank tops, shorts, flip-flops or beach shoes, sandals, tennis shoes or party clothes.

Attitude

Attitude is SO important! You need a good attitude to be successful in your job search and to keep a job.

Try these tips:

- Be **friendly** and have a healthy sense of humor.
- Be willing to **learn** new skills and tasks.
- Be **persistent** and determined to get the job done. Keep trying.
- Be **dependable**. Arrive to the interview on time. Then, after you're hired, get to work on time every day.
- Make sure you are **reliable** by keeping your word and carrying out tasks within a promised time period.
- Be **honest** in your dealings with co-workers, supervisors, and customers.
- Demonstrate a **positive attitude** in the interview and on the job.
- Show your **commitment** by working the hours expected and doing your best.

Planning Ahead for Child Care

Planning ahead and finding reliable child care that you feel comfortable with is important. It will make job searching less stressful, and when you find a job, you'll be ready to go to work.

Child care tips:

- Start the night before by having your child's snack, lunch, or bottles prepared. Lay out their clothes and/or pack the diaper bag.
- Know your route to the child care site and from child care to your job search destination or work or training.

Be ready with an alternate plan if your child gets sick. Some care providers will take a mildly sick child, but you must find out ahead of time. If they don't take sick children, have someone to call as a back-up care giver.

Transportation

Transportation tips:

- Know your route ahead of time and, if you're starting a new job, make a trial run to time your trip.
- If you take a bus or mass transit, know the schedule and how long the trip takes. (Check the Internet or call the company for schedules and timetables.)
- Bad weather can cause delays; leave a safety cushion of extra time.
- If you drive, check your gas gauge the night before to make sure you have enough gas for the trip, or leave enough time to stop for gas.
- Have an alternate plan for emergency transportation.



Getting Ready for Your Job Search

Step 1 - Think about what interests you as well as your skills, experience and education.

- Do you like working with people? Working independently? Working outdoors or indoors? Are you artistic? Do you type well? Have mechanical experience? Do you have certificates or degrees in any field?

Step 2 - Take time to research the company or industry of your choice.

- Research can be done online, at a library or in a job center, in newspapers, by contacting someone working in the field of your choice or by contacting the company. If possible, speak to someone who is working for the company you are applying with to find out more information about the company and workplace environment. If this person is someone who knows you well, ask them if you can use them as a reference. Many employers hire people who are recommended by their employees.

Step 3 - Think about your personal circumstances.

- Do you have reliable transportation? Do you have child care, legal or other barriers that may limit employment options?

It is important that you do these three steps before writing your resume and cover letter or obtaining an interview.

Having a clear understanding of your interests, values, skills, work style, and work environment preferences will help you:

- Understand and market your skills and strengths.
- Develop your resume and prepare for interviews.
- Clarify questions to ask and information to seek in the interviewing process to determine if the position will meet your needs.

You are more likely to be successful in your job search if you have a good understanding of your skills, interests, and circumstances and then match them to available employment opportunities.

Employers will be looking to see if you “fit” with the organization or position you apply for. Two of the things that determine job fit:

Can you do the job? To determine if you **can** do the job, employers compare your skills to the skills needed for the job.

Will you do the job? To determine if you **will** do the job, employers try to understand what interests and motivates you, in what type of job you have been the most successful in the past, and if the job that is currently being offered will be a good match for you and a good fit for them.

Read job descriptions carefully to see if the job is a good match for you and the employer. Use the wording in the job description to tailor your resume and/or cover letter to the specific job you are applying for. Career research can be done online by visiting websites such as the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) at <http://online.onetcenter.org/>

Where are the Job Openings?

Advertised job openings: Surveys indicate that advertised openings represent at most 15-20% of all jobs available. Even though these positions represent a small portion of opportunities, they are easiest to identify and therefore the most responded to by jobseekers. While it is still worthwhile to pursue these openings, it is recommended that you spend only 5-20% of your job search time focusing on them.

Unadvertised job openings: Experts state that up to 85% of jobs are never advertised. These unadvertised positions are referred to as the "hidden" job market. Use the following techniques to access these hidden jobs.

Staffing Agencies: Many employers are using temporary staffing agencies to hire workers. Many of the temporary jobs turn into full-time permanent jobs. And the demand for temporary workers is growing! There is no fee paid by the temp worker. It is advisable to sign up with at least 3 agencies. For a list of staffing agencies look in the yellow pages of the telephone book under employment agencies and employment contractors.

Networking: A good way to job search is called networking – asking people about job opportunities and developing a “network” of people who have information about job opportunities. You can network with family, friends, past employers, co-workers or other professionals. To network, it is important to meet many people who may be able to help you with your job hunt. Following are some networking tips:

- Join social clubs, job clubs, and business groups that meet regularly
- Sign-up for linkedin.com and/or other social networks; you may find people to network with
- Attend trade exhibitions and job fairs
- Go to local businesses and to job centers
- Get out and meet new people
- Check online job boards and bulletin boards
- Wherever you go, network ... ask for job leads

Volunteering provides wonderful opportunities to meet people and develop new skills. Volunteer work may also provide needed local experience to list on your resume and will enable you to expand your work references.

Associations (groups of people who have common interests) in fields of work that interest you can be found online or in local newspapers. Meet as many members as possible to learn about the industry, job opportunities, and events or conferences you could attend.

Online – you can access many large newspapers, the yellow pages, government and industry specific websites, etc. You may be required to apply for many jobs online.

Follow-up after you make initial contact with an organization. This is something most jobseekers are reluctant to do, but often the person who gets the job is the one who makes two, three, four, or more follow-up calls. If you feel uncomfortable calling back, you could ask, "Is it OK if I call back in two weeks to check again?" This persistence demonstrates your enthusiasm, interest, and professional skills.

Application Tips

- * **When picking up an application** dress as you would to go to work. You may be interviewed immediately!
- * **Pick-up two applications or make a copy to practice on first.**
- * **Don't chew gum.**
- * **Do not wear perfume or aftershave.**
- * **Don't bring a friend or family.**
- * **If you take the application with you**, ask who you should return it to.
- * **Before you write**, read and review the entire application to notice details such as the order first and last names are to be written.
- * **Be organized!** Bring the following items with you:
 1. Two ballpoint pens (use only blue or black ink - erasable pens are helpful)
 2. A completed sample application (see sample application)
 3. Recent copies of your resume
 4. Photo ID and social security card
- * **Always print** (unless instructed otherwise). Write clearly.
- * **When completing the social security number section** write, "Will disclose upon hiring" (to protect from identity theft).
- * **Fill out all blanks.** If a question does not apply to you, put N/A (not applicable) or a dash in the blank space.
- * **Do not write** "See Resume." Complete the application first, and then ask if a resume may be attached (use a paperclip, do not use a staple).
- * **Be neat:** no smudges or stains.
- * **Include** your area code and telephone number or the area code/phone number of a friend who has agreed to take messages for you.
- * **Use** an address where you can receive mail.
- * **Be honest** in your answers (see [Mistakes to Avoid on the following page](#)).
- * **Read and check** the application for completeness before turning it in.
- * **Be sure to sign** and date each application.
- * **Mail or turn in the application** to the correct person or place.

Choose Your References Wisely

1. Be sure to list only references that benefit your job application.
2. References should be able to say something positive about your ability to do a job.
3. You can list someone you worked with on the job or on a project, a previous teacher, supervisor, school counselor, and/or others you've worked for.
4. AVOID using family or close friends. And remember, if you list someone as a reference, notify them immediately.

When and Why Should I Submit a Cover Letter?

If you submit a resume, you should submit a cover letter. The cover letter will give you an advantage over other applicants and it gives you the opportunity to show your personality, your enthusiasm for the job, and give more information about your skills and experience.

Mistakes to Avoid

Some of the most common mistakes job seekers make on applications are:

- Not following directions
- Missing information
- Using the words “quit” or “fired”
- Crossing out words
- Leaving unexplained gaps in work history/overlapping employment dates
- Misspelling words
- Submitting a wrinkled or messy application
- Not turning in an application by deadline
- Claiming to be a high school graduate when it is not true

Never Write:

- Fired or Quit
- Personality conflict
- Burnout
- Injured

Instead Write:

- Will discuss during interview
- Company restructuring (if true)
- Career shift
- Career change

If asked for the reason you left a job, use positive statements like: “to take a job with more responsibility,” “moved,” “seasonal,” “business closed,” “job ended,” “temporary work,” “laid off,” “returned to school,” or “career change.”

If the employer needs more information be prepared to answer related questions in the interview.

If you have any professional certificates or licenses, list or tell about them. List or tell about any hobbies or interests if they include job related skills.

Some applications ask if you have had misdemeanor or felony convictions. Answer truthfully, adding “will discuss at interview.” You can be fired for not telling the truth on an application.

Avoid staying hidden in your home. Rarely will a job come to you.

You need to seek opportunities wherever they exist. Be upbeat and positive. Follow up on every lead. Have a successful job search!



Sources: Information contained in this packet was adapted from material found on the following websites:

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Career Development Center. Retrieved from http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CDC/jobsearch_guide.html in 04/08.

The Smart Business Resource Center. Retrieved from <http://www.thesmartcenter.biz/> in 04/08.

State of California WorkSmart Website. Retrieved from http://www.worksmart.ca.gov/tips_application.html/ in 04/08

Demand for Temporary Workers Increases. Retrieved from <http://blog.temphunt.com/temp-work/temporary-workers-demand-increases/> in 11/13

How to Find a Job in Today's Economy.

Retrieved from http://www.ehow.com/how_4526418_job-todays-economy.html#ixzz2ImcsEslH in 11/13

Top Job Search Tips from Actual Recruiters

Retrieved from <http://www.job-application-and-interview-advice.com/job-search-tips.html> in 11/13



EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

Please carefully read and answer all questions. You will not be considered for employment if you fail to completely answer all the questions on the application. You may attach a resume, but all questions must be answered.

Employer:		Position applying for:			
PERSONAL DATA					
Name:			Social Security Number:		
Street Address:		City:	State:	Zip:	
Mailing Address:		City:	State:	Zip:	
Home Phone:		Business Phone:		Message Phone:	
Date you can start work:		Salary Desired:		Do you have a High School Diploma or GED? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
POSITION INFORMATION Check all that apply					
Hours:	Full-time <input type="checkbox"/>	Days <input type="checkbox"/>	Graveyard <input type="checkbox"/>	Status:	Regular <input type="checkbox"/>
	Part-time <input type="checkbox"/>	Evenings <input type="checkbox"/>	Weekends <input type="checkbox"/>		Temporary <input type="checkbox"/>
	Supplemental <input type="checkbox"/>				
If employed in this position, would you be in a supervisory or subordinate relationship to any family members? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
Have you ever been convicted of a felony? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, state nature of the crime(s), when and where convicted and disposition of the case. _____ (Note: No applicant will be denied employment solely on the grounds of conviction of a criminal offense. The nature of the offense, date of the offense, the surrounding circumstances and the relevance of the offense to the positions(s) applied for may, however, be considered.)					
QUALIFICATIONS Please list any education or training you feel relates to the position applied for that would help you perform the work, such as schools, colleges, degrees, vocational or technical programs, and military training.					
	School Name Address/City/State	No. of Years Completed	Did You Graduate?	Degree Received	Areas of Specialization
College					
Vocational/Technical					
Other					
SPECIAL SKILLS Please list any special skills or experience that you feel would help you in the position that you are applying for.					
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>					
REFERENCES Please list three professional references not related to you with full name, address, phone number, and relationship. If you don't have three professional references, list personal unrelated references.					
Name	Address/City/State	Phone	Relationship		

WORK HISTORY List all present and past employment starting with your most recent employer.		
1. Job Title:	Start Date (mo/day/yr) _____ / _____ / _____	End Date (mo/day/yr) _____ / _____ / _____
Company Name:	Supervisor's Name:	Phone Number:
Address	City/State	Zip
Duties: _____		
Reason for Leaving:	Starting Salary:	Ending Salary:
May we contact your present employer? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
2. Job Title:	Start Date (mo/day/yr) _____ / _____ / _____	End Date (mo/day/yr) _____ / _____ / _____
Company Name:	Supervisor's Name:	Phone Number:
Address	City/State	Zip
Duties: _____		
Reason for Leaving:	Starting Salary:	Ending Salary:
3. Job Title:	Start Date (mo/day/yr) _____ / _____ / _____	End Date (mo/day/yr) _____ / _____ / _____
Company Name:	Supervisor's Name:	Phone Number:
Address	City/State	Zip
Duties: _____		
Reason for Leaving:	Starting Salary:	Ending Salary:
4. Job Title:	Start Date (mo/day/yr) _____ / _____ / _____	End Date (mo/day/yr) _____ / _____ / _____
Company Name:	Supervisor's Name:	Phone Number:
Address	City/State	Zip
Duties: _____		
Reason for Leaving:	Starting Salary:	Ending Salary:

_____ I hereby certify that I have not knowingly withheld any information that might adversely affect my chances for employment (Int'l's) and that the answers given by me are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I further certify that I, the undersigned applicant, have personally completed this application. I understand that any omission or misstatement of material fact on this application or on any document used to secure employment shall be grounds for rejection of this application or for immediate discharge if I am employed, regardless of the time elapsed before discovery.

Applicant Signature

Date

(rev LBT/BRC 3/11/03)