

The YES Job Search Guide: Strategies That Work!

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About us...

As a not-for-profit organization, YES Montreal (Youth Employment Services) enriches the community by providing English-language support services to help Quebecers find employment and start businesses.

Our **Job Search Program** is designed for youth aged 16 to 35 years old and includes both daytime and evening workshops, one-on-one career counselling, a resource library, mentorship program, free computer access and tutorials, basic business French courses and job postings which are updated daily.

The YES **Entrepreneurship Program** is open to all ages and offers workshops and seminars, a legal information clinic, one-on-one business counselling, a mentorship program, and an extensive resource library.

YES also offers a unique program for **Artists** of all ages, focusing on the employment and self-employment needs of artists through workshops, employment counselling and an annual conference.

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The YES Job Search Guide: Strategies that Work seeks to assist job seekers by providing information which may help them establish their careers. The opinions contained herein are those of the individuals expressing them only and consequently, neither the contributors nor the Youth Employment Foundation shall be held liable for any error therein or damages resulting from the use or transmission of said information.



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PART I - SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Work is something that most of us will have to do eight hours a day, five days a week, for the next 40 or 50 years of our lives. When planning for your future, therefore, it is crucial that you understand and identify your work values, interests and skills in order to plan for a satisfying career.

A

WORK VALUES RATING SATISFACTION FROM WORK

Step 1

The following list describes a wide variety of satisfaction that people obtain from their jobs. Look at the definitions of these various satisfactions and rate the degree of importance that you would assign to each for yourself, using the scale below:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Not important at all |
| 2 | Not very important |
| 3 | Reasonably important |
| 4 | Very important in my choice of career |

_____ **Help Society:** Do something to contribute to the betterment of the world I live in.

_____ **Help Others:** Be involved in helping other people in a direct way, either individually or in small groups.

_____ **Public Contact:** Have a lot of day-to-day contact with people.

_____ **Work with Others:** Have close working relationships with a group; work as a team toward common goals.

_____ **Affiliation:** Be recognized as a member of a particular organization.

_____ **Friendships:** Develop close personal relationships with people as a result of my work activities.

_____ **Competition:** Engage in activities which put my abilities against others where there are clear win-lose outcomes.

_____ **Make Decisions:** Have the power to decide courses of action, policies, etc.

_____ **Work under Pressure:** Work in situations where time pressure is prevalent and/or the quality of my work is judged critically by supervisors, customers or others.

_____ **Power and Authority:** Control the work activities or (partially) the destinies of other people.

_____ **Influence People:** Be in a position to change attitudes or opinions of other people.

_____ **Work Alone:** Do projects by myself, without any significant amount of contact with others.

_____ **Knowledge:** Engage myself in the pursuit of knowledge, truth and understanding.

_____ **Intellectual Status:** Be regarded as a person of high intellectual prowess or as one who is an acknowledged "expert" in a given field.



- _____ **Artistic Creativity:** Engage in creative work in any of several art forms.
- _____ **Creativity (general):** Create new ideas, programs, organizational structures or anything else **not** following a format previously developed by others.
- _____ **Aesthetics:** Be involved in studying or appreciating the beauty of things, ideas, etc.
- _____ **Supervision:** Have a job in which I am directly responsible for the work done by others.
- _____ **Change and Variety:** Have work responsibilities which frequently change in their content and setting.
- _____ **Precision Work:** Work in situations where there is very little tolerance for error.
- _____ **Stability:** Have a work routine and job duties that are largely predictable and not likely to change over a long period of time.
- _____ **Security:** Be assured of keeping my job and a reasonable financial reward.
- _____ **Fast Pace:** Work in a circumstance where there is a high pace of activity, where the work must be done rapidly.
- _____ **Recognition:** Be recognized for the quality of my work in some visible or public way.
- _____ **Excitement:** Experience a high degree of (or frequent) excitement in the course of my work.
- _____ **Adventure:** Have work duties which involve frequent risk-taking.
- _____ **Profit Gain:** Have a strong likelihood of accumulating large amounts of money or other material gain.
- _____ **Independence:** Be able to determine the nature of my work without significant direction from others; not have to do what others tell me to.
- _____ **Moral Fulfillment:** Feel that my work is contributing significantly to set a moral standards which I feel are very important.
- _____ **Location:** Find a place to live (town, geographical area) which is conducive to my life style and affords me the opportunity to do the things I enjoy most.
- _____ **Community:** Live in a town or city where I can get involved in community affairs.
- _____ **Physical Challenge:** Have a job that makes physical demands which I would find rewarding.
- _____ **Time Freedom:** Have work responsibilities which I can work at according to my own time schedule; no specific working hours required.

**Step 2**

Choose the ten "Work Values" which you rated 4 or 3.

Step 3

Prioritize them in order of importance to you.

WORK VALUES	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	



B INTERESTS

The following exercise helps you prepare an inventory of your interests and then relates them to general occupational fields. Answer the following questions with a **yes** or **no** depending on how strongly you feel about each item.

Check the appropriate box.

Mechanical Interests **YES!** **yes** **no** **NO!**

Do you like to work with your hands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to repair things?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to work with tools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to operate machinery?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like physical work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to work outdoors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Theory Interests **YES!** **yes** **no** **NO!**

Do you like to solve puzzles?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like ambiguous challenges?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to read and study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like math and or science?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to investigate physical things?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to think through problems more than work them out?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Artistic Interests **YES!** **yes** **no** **NO!**

Do you like to express yourself?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like freedom from structure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like unconventional solutions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like aesthetic statements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to work alone?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like creative situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Social Interests **YES!** **yes** **no** **NO!**

Do you like to care for others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to work with people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to be part of a group?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to train others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to supervise people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to help others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Business Interests **YES!** **yes** **no** **NO!**

Do you like to persuade others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to be the leader?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to speak to groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to manage projects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to sell things?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to make things happen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Organizational Interests	YES	yes	no	NO!
Do you like to be orderly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like well-defined tasks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like office procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like stable situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like a chain of command?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you like to know what is next?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Now add up your score in each interest category. Use the following key:

YES! = 4

yes = 3

no = 1

NO! = 0

Record the total score for each category on the lines below:

Mechanical interests _____

Theory interests _____

Artistic interests _____

Social interests _____

Business interests _____

Organizational interests _____

List your top three "interest" categories in the space below. Which one has your highest score? Your second? Your third? Any surprises?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

CAREER FIELDS

The occupations listed below show how your interests compare to people with similar interests who are employed in various fields.

Using your three highest interest categories, circle job titles that you find appealing. Once you have done this, the next step is to list your skills and see if they match what employed people do in your areas of interest.

Mechanical Interests

Bus Driver
Carpenter
Draftsman
Electrician
Engineer

Artistic Interests

Advertising Artist
Architect
Art Teacher
Author/Writer
Beautician



Mechanical Interests

Farmer/Rancher
 Firefighter
 Forest Ranger
 Janitor
 Mail Carrier
 Painter
 Plumber
 Police Officer
 Printer
 Sheet Metal Worker
 Tool/Die Maker
 Truck Driver
 Telephone Repair
 Veterinary Technician

Theory Interests

Chemist
 Chiropractor
 College Professor
 Computer Programmer
 Dental Hygienist
 Electronic Technician
 Geologic Assistant
 Medical Technician
 Mathematician
 Nurse
 Physical Therapists
 Radiological Tech
 Scientific Researcher
 Science Teacher
 Sociologist
 Surveyor
 Systems Analyst

Social Interests

Athletic Trainer
 Child Care Assistant
 Cosmetologist
 Dental Hygienist
 Elementary Teacher
 Guidance Counsellor
 Nurse
 Occupational Therapist
 Operating Room Technician
 Minister
 Recreation Leader
 Social Worker
 Special Education
 YWCA/YMCA Director

Artistic Interests

Broadcaster
 Chef
 Commercial Artist
 Copy Writer
 Flight Attendant
 Foreign Languages
 Teacher
 Interior Decorator
 Librarian
 Musician
 Newspaper reporter
 Photographer
 Piano Technician
 Public Relations

Organization Interests

Accountant
 Bank Teller
 Bookkeeper
 Credit Manager
 Cafeteria Worker
 Court Reporter
 Data Entry Operator
 Dietician
 Executive Housekeeper
 Food Service Manager
 Revenue Canada Agent
 Medical Assistant
 Pharmacy Tech
 Secretary
 Teacher's Aide
 Waiter/Waitress

Business Interests

Barber
 Buyer/Merchandiser
 Card/Gift Shop Manager
 Caterer
 Elected Public Official
 Florist
 Food Service Manager
 Hotel/Motel Manager
 Insurance Agent
 Manufacturing Rep
 Personnel Manager
 Purchasing Agent
 Real Estate Agent
 Reservation Agent



C SKILLS INVENTORY

An employer is interested in the skills you can bring with you to the job. All employers, regardless of industry or discipline, look for the following general skills:

- Communication
- Creativity
- Initiative
- Interpersonal
- Leadership
- Organizational
- Problem-solving
- Technical

In your CV you must be able to demonstrate that you have these skills by citing specific activities in which you have participated in your past. Look at all aspects of your past – not only work experiences.

In order to simplify your task, the above skills have been broken down into more specific examples below. Tick off those skills that you feel you have already developed as well as those you would like to develop. By identifying skills that you would like to develop, you can then take concrete steps towards doing so.

COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS

A. Verbal

- Conversing with individuals
- Exchanging ideas with groups
- Making presentations
- Listening
- Debating

Enjoy or
Enjoyed

Want to
develop

B. Written

- Writing correspondence
- Writing business materials
- Writing research papers

C. Teaching

- Demonstrating ideas through examples
- Instructing/tutoring individuals
- Creating effective learning environments

CREATIVE SKILLS

- Creating new ideas, images
- Inventing new products
- Designing projects/systems
- Designing learning materials
- Improvising with existing resources
- Finding new solutions
- Composing music
- Playing musical instruments
- Writing novels, short stories, plays, poems
- Drawing, painting, sculpting
- Acting, dancing

Enjoy or
Enjoyed

Want to
develop



- Finishing, restoring

INITIATIVE

Enjoy or
Enjoyed

Want to
develop

- Initiating new ideas/projects
- Making the first move in relationships
- Finding new solutions

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Enjoy or
Enjoyed

Want to
develop

- Managing/resolving conflicts
- Negotiating
- Collaborating
- Persuading, recruiting, selling
- Treating, healing others
- Giving constructive feedback
- Coaching, mentoring
- Giving practical advice
- Developing rapport
- Demonstrating empathy
- Understand people's motivations

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Enjoy or
Enjoyed

Want to
develop

- Promoting change
- Taking risks
- Engendering trust
- Leading groups
- Building a team
- Delegating authority
- Overseeing work projects
- Getting things done through other people

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Enjoy or
Enjoyed

Want to
develop

- Organizing people, events, things
- Classifying information
- Coordinating resources
- Streamlining procedures
- Researching, gathering information
- Separating important from unimportant
- Determining sequence of tasks
- Setting priorities

PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Enjoy or
Enjoyed

Want to
develop

- Evaluating alternatives
- Clarifying problems
- Generating solutions
- Testing ideas
- Determining outcomes, consequences
- Tracing problems to sources



TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Maintaining equipment
- Operating machinery/equipment
- Computer skills
- Managing budgets, money
- Controlling inventory
- Conducting experiments
- Applying established procedures

Enjoy or
Enjoyed

Want to
develop

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The second part of this exercise involves finding specific examples to illustrate the skills you have identified. Find examples of times where you have demonstrated the above-mentioned skills and write them down so that you can give examples when asked by an employer. It is not good enough, for example, to say that you are good at sales. You have to prove it, back it up with concrete examples, say: "I sold in the top 5 per cent of our department last year."

D

OCCUPATIONAL DAYDREAMS

If you are going to have to spend that much time at work, it would be wise to plan and work towards a satisfying career.

In times of recession, you do not always have the luxury of selecting your ideal job right away, but you can have short and long-term goals and plans.

To get you started, list eight different occupations that you have thought about at some point in your life.

**Don't worry about whether or not you have the qualifications, just allow yourself to dream. List the most recent ones and work backwards.

OCCUPATIONS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____



Now that you have identified several career interests, you must make an assessment of your situation and ask yourself some hard questions. Take each job you have identified and answer the following questions **for each option**.

What are the qualifications required to obtain such a job?

Which ones do I already have?

Which ones don't I have?

Am I willing (or able) to invest (my money, time, etc.,) to acquire these missing skills?

Yes No

If your answer is yes, make a step-by-step action plan towards that goal.

If the answer is no, move on to the next job on your list.

Do this for all the careers you have selected and your goal should begin to look clearer.



JOB SEARCH ACTION PLAN

NINE STRATEGIES THAT REALLY WORK

1) Personal Contacts/Networking

Definition of networking: People talking to other people in order to obtain ideas, information and resources, in order to reach the goal of getting a job.

It is estimated that about one-third of all workers obtain their jobs through some kind of direct personal contact. It is also estimated that each of us has, on average, two hundred people whom we know well enough to ask for information or referrals.

When you're unemployed, you tend to ignore or stay away from the very people who can help you the most – your friends and acquaintances. You also tend to underestimate the number of people that you know.

Your family, friends and acquaintances may offer one of the most effective ways to find a job. They may help you directly or put you in touch with someone else who can. Such networking can lead to information about specific job openings, many of which may not be publicly posted.

Who can be a part of your network?

- Family members, friends, relatives of friends and neighbours
- Previous employers and work colleagues
- Professors/teachers and previous classmates
- Professional contacts such as: doctors, lawyers, accountants, pharmacists, politicians, dentists...
- Service providers such as: hairdressers, small business owners, libraries, retailers...
- Club members

What else can someone in your network do for you?

- They can give you names of people who might need your services.
- They can talk to other people about you.
- They can give you ideas about your job strategies.

Where can you develop your network?

- An evening with friends
- Conferences/ Training courses
- Receptions
- Volunteer activities
- Sports Activities

What is the goal of networking? To let as many people as possible know that you are job seeking so that they can assist you in your search. You want them to know your skills and what kind of job you are looking for, so that they can give you appropriate contacts.

**** Keep reading for more information about networking. ****

It is, therefore, essential that you spend a few hours trying to recall people from your past with whom you have an established rapport. Avoid the tendency to think only of the immediate past and your immediate surroundings. You could be amazed at how often acquaintances from the distant past have proved to be extremely helpful (if only you were to communicate your need to them!)



PREPARE THE INFORMATION THAT YOU WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT YOU

When you are at a social function (e.g., a party, etc.) use the opportunity to meet people. You will be surprised how nice and helpful people can be. Prepare a short summary of who you are and what it is that you are interested in doing.

Be sure to learn about their interests as well. Relationship building takes two. Try to find a common area of interest to discuss, if you are having difficulty in creating conversation.

A final tip, try to meet as many people as possible. When you have been speaking with someone for fifteen to twenty minutes, politely excuse yourself and move on.

Inventory of friends and acquaintances

Name

What can this person do to help?

(Where does this person work?

Who do they know?)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2) School Career and Placement Offices

High schools, CEGEPS and University placement offices can help their students and alumni find jobs. They set up appointments and allow recruiters to use their facilities for career fairs and on-campus recruiting. Placement offices usually have a list of part-time, temporary and summer jobs offered on campus. They also may have lists of jobs for regional, non-profit, and government organizations. Students can receive career counselling, testing and job search advice. At career resource libraries you can attend workshops on such topics as job search strategies, resume writing, effective interviewing and videotaped mock interview that you may watch. Ask if they have a mentorship program – you may just get matched with a mentor in your desired work field.

3) Employer/Company Search

Through your local library as well as through the Internet, you can develop a list of potential employers in your desired field of interest. Company websites often contain a list of opportunities. Websites and business directories can provide you with information on how to apply for a position or whom to contact. Even if no positions are posted, do not hesitate to contact the employer or director of the department for an informational interview. You can also try to arrange an interview with someone working in the same area you wish to work for. Ask them how they got started in that company, what do they enjoy or dislike about the work, what type of qualifications are necessary for the job, and what type of personality



would succeed in that position. They may be able to put you in contact with other people who might hire you and they can always keep you in mind if a position does open up in the future. Make sure to send them your resume and cover letter. If they assisted in helping you get an interview, be sure to send a thank you note. Directly contacting employers is one of the most successful means of job hunting.

4) Internet networks and resources:

The Internet allows job seekers faster access to job postings. The Internet provides a variety of information, including job listings and job search resources and techniques. However, no single network or resource will contain all of the information available on employment or career opportunities, so be prepared to search for what you need. The Internet allows people to do research on a company, which is very useful when it comes to writing a cover letter and preparing for the interview.

Although the Internet makes things easier, it should not become your primary job search tool. In order to set yourself apart from everyone else, you must do more than e-mailing your resume to the company's database. You will need to use all the traditional strategies such as directly contacting the employer and personally dropping off your resume to that person.

If you don't have a computer or Internet access at home, don't worry, there are a number of places where you can surf the Internet free of charge. Here's where you can find this service:

- Local job centers such as *Youth Employment Services*
- Most municipal libraries
- Carrefours Jeunesse Emploi
- Local Employment Centers (CLE). There are now 151 throughout Quebec.
- Job search clubs
- Internet cafes (which charge a small fee).

5) Placement Agencies

These agencies can be helpful, but they are in business to make money. Most operate on a commission basis, with a fee dependent upon a percentage of the salary paid to a successful applicant. You, or the hiring company, will pay that fee. Although employment agencies can help you save time and contact employers who otherwise might be difficult to locate, the costs may outweigh the benefits, especially if you are responsible for the fee, (which may be deducted through your hourly wage). Contacting employers directly will often generate the same type of leads that a private employment agency will provide. Consider any guarantees the agency offers when determining if the service is worth the cost

**Remember, placement agencies are an option if you are seeking temporary or contract work! Make an effort to keep in touch with your placement agent once or twice a week. They will be more likely to contact you when the right position comes in.

6) Volunteer Work:

Getting involved, as a volunteer with a non-profit organization, is definitely a way to acquire new skills. Any jobs you have done as a volunteer should be added to your resume. Employers take into account the type of work done, what responsibilities you took on and skills you developed in carrying out your duties.

Professional associations very often need volunteers, whether they are students or unemployed members. Volunteering for an association is an excellent way to establish ties with people in the same field as you. Still not sure *where* you want to volunteer? Why not call the Volunteer Bureau of Montreal at 514-842-3351.



7) Classified Advertisements:

The classified or career sections of the newspaper list numerous jobs that are currently available but when you think of the want ads, think 5% of your strategy, not 95%. Over 80% of the best jobs are not advertised. The classified ads tend to not give you all of the important information you need such as the name of the director of the department you are interested in. They may offer little or no description of the job, working conditions, or the salary. Some ads do not even identify the company name. They may simply give a post office box to mail your resume to, making follow-up inquiries next to impossible. Some ads offer out-of-town jobs, others advertise employment agencies rather than actual employment opportunities.

Everyone should use the classified ads for their job search but generally this should not consume more than 30 minutes of your day. Do not forget to look at career ads in the business section (although at senior levels, these can signal changes/expansions/new ventures - use them as leads for direct contact.)

When using the classifieds for your job search you should keep the following important points in mind:

- Only 14% of people using the classifieds exclusively will actually get a job. Do not rely solely on them.
- Answer ads promptly, openings may be filled quickly, even before the ad stops appearing in the paper. Respond to ads if you have at least 50% of the job requirements.
- Read the ads every day, not only on Wednesdays and Saturdays, which usually include the most listings.
- If you find an ad that is your ideal dream job, take the time to tailor the cover letter. Find the name of the hiring manager or Director of the department and send the letter to that person's attention.
- Be aware of "no experience necessary" ads. These ads often signal low wages, poor working conditions, or commission work.
- Keep a record of all ads to which you have responded, including the specific skills, educational background, and personal qualifications required for the position.
- If you're not getting any response from ads, don't be discouraged. That's the rule today, not the exception. Few companies send rejection letters anymore. It's too costly. Keep answering the ads that interest you. Sooner or later, the phone will ring!

8) Professional Associations:

Many professions have associations that offer employment information, including career planning, educational programs, job listings and job placement. To use these services, associations usually require that you be a member of their association. Information can be obtained directly from an association through the Internet, by telephone, or by mail.

9) Where else can you to look for a job?

- Trade, professional and special interest magazines
- Radio & television stations
- Store windows might have "Help wanted" signs
- Community notice boards
- Collect leads from ads, news items, recruiting brochures, Web sites, company abstracts, product profiles and annual reports
- Yellow pages and corporate advertising pamphlets
- Business, trade, and professional journals and directories
- Join the Chamber of Commerce and go to the events
- Job fairs



THE FIVE MOST EFFECTIVE METHODS OF FINDING A JOB

Richard Nelson Bolles, author of *The 2001 What Color Is Your Parachute?* lists the five most effective and ineffective methods of finding a job:

1. **Applying directly to an employer, factory, or office in person.**
This method is 47% effective.
2. **Asking friends and family for job leads.**
This is 33% effective.
3. **Using the Yellow Pages.**
This method leads to a job 69% of the time.
4. **Using your old university or college placement office.**
This leads to a job 21% of the time.
5. **Researching, networking, and meeting decision makers.**
This creative approach to job-hunting leads to a job 86% of the time.

THE FIVE MOST INEFFECTIVE METHODS OF FINDING A JOB

1. **Responding to non-local advertisements.**
10% effective.
2. **Answering local newspaper ads.**
Between 5 to 14% effective (depending on the level sought – the higher the level, the less effective).
3. **Going to private employment agencies.**
This is 10 to 14% effective (again, depending on the level sought).
4. **Answering ads in professional or trade journals within your field.**
7% effective.
5. **Mailing out CV's randomly by the bushel.**
7% effective.

Here are some activities that may help you get ideas or contacts during your job-search.

- Do volunteer work in a field that interests you.
- Collect written information on careers that interest you.
- Attend lectures by people who are in industries that interest you.
- Identify schools or training experiences that will help you build the skills you want to use in a career.
- Take advantage of cultural activities at nearby colleges or universities.
- Check out professional groups and special interest groups.
- Look at newspapers for the local calendar of events throughout the city.
- Get involved in local government activities.

Get Busy! - It's half the battle



Getting out and getting involved is important when you are unemployed. It's a great opportunity to try something exciting and to expand your scope of knowledge.

Studies have shown that those who spend at least three hours per day, every day, in their preparation and search efforts will succeed!

When you are unemployed it becomes very easy to isolate yourself. It is crucial that you get out there and circulate as much as possible. Start off by buying an agenda to organize your time effectively. The more you do, the more you will get done.

You now have a job: to find a job! Be patient. Success does not come overnight.





Using a phone effectively is becoming what might be called a survival skill in a labour market where job security no longer exists. Cold calling is one of the most effective methods of obtaining a job interview, it does although require training. Conducting a cold-call the wrong way, or with unclear goals, is not only a waste of time and a source of irritation to employers, it may be damaging to your confidence level. Your self-confidence plays a crucial role, so monitor it closely. Whenever it drops, your priority should then shift to raise it to a comfortable level.

- If you don't have a clear and realistic employment goal, you can only use the phone in order to request advice and information about possible career directions
- The underlining goal of any call is to impress listeners with your professionalism, politeness, grammar, and pronunciation. You won't get any referrals if you don't sound like a recommendable person.
- Establish your strategy and write your script before you call. If you are looking for a job, be prepared to say how you can benefit an employer. Asking for a job is not the best strategy. Rather focus on obtaining referrals, a short exploratory meeting, or simply share, industry related information.
- When dealing with a gatekeeper, don't hesitate to sound like a frequent caller.
- Keep a record of your calls and messages left. You don't want someone returning your call while you are unable to remember who the person is and where he or she works.
- Establishing common ground helps create rapport. A referral by a contact of both parties is an example of common ground. Without referrals, you can create the rapport by focusing on common professional interests

POSSIBLE GOALS FOR A JOB SEARCH RELATED PHONE CALL

- Information: industry, position, qualifications, class projects etc.
- Advice: tips for C.V., jobs in demand, etc.
- Referrals: name of someone who could help you obtain relevant information
- Job leads: conducting a tele-search campaign using the yellow pages asking for specific openings, and if they accept résumés.
- Permission to send or deliver in person your résumé
- Job interview: request a short meeting to explore possibilities...

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR CALLS

- Obtain names and phone numbers
- Research organizations and/or industries
- Determine the objective of your call
- Prepare synopsis of what you will say
- Prepare for common screening questions
- Prepare a message for a answering machine
- Prepare how you are going to close the conversation



HOW TO PREPARE YOUR SYNOPSIS

- Determine if it is a cold call or a referral call.
- Determine the purpose of your call.
- Determine what will be the common ground between you and the person you are calling. If it is a referral call, the obvious common ground is the person you both know. If it is a cold call, then you should focus on the work they are doing and how it matches your interests, skills, experience, passion, etc.
- Determine what are your most relevant strengths pertaining to the field you want to work in. What is most important is what you contribute as opposed to what you could gain.
- Determine the questions you want to ask in closing in order to meet your goal (s).

HOW TO CLOSE A CALL

- Express your appreciation for the time spent on the phone.
- Summarize the conversation.
- Request what you need in order to meet the objective of your call. For example you may request one or two referrals, a short meeting, permission to send your résumé, names of relevant organizations or publications.

When using the telephone, keep these points in mind:

- Smile – it will have a positive effect on your tone of voice (standing up helps).
- Get to the point quickly (don't beat around the bush). Organize yourself ahead of time.
- Listen attentively. You may get people at a bad time; ask if there is a better time.
- Show enthusiasm and ask any question – organize thoughts clearly, people respond better when the request is clear.
- Show a positive attitude – use positively worded language.
- Treat anyone and everyone you speak to with respect and always remain polite, regardless of the circumstances.
- Keep in mind your objective – to obtain a face-to-face meeting. However this might not be possible so keep options open and try for another opportunity (phone-call).

Before making a telephone call:

- Verify the name and title of the person to whom you wish to speak.
- Make sure you have all reference documents at hand (CV, correspondence sent or received, etc.)
- Rehearse what you are going to say – write a script

During the telephone call:

- Suggest a 15 to 20 – minute meeting early in the morning - 8:00 or 8:15 (ideally before daily business activities begin).
- Take notes during your conversation.

After the telephone call:

- Immediately after your conversation, file the telephone record on which you took notes in your binder under the appropriate company name.
- Update your agenda (e.g. follow – up date, send CV, etc.).



DEALING WITH SECRETARIES

The secretary's job is to screen calls to prevent unnecessary work interruption. **DO NOT TREAT THE SECRETARY AS YOUR ENEMY.** He or she can be an important facilitator in helping you reach the person you are calling. Knowing the name of the secretary can be helpful in personalizing your call.

Your strategy is to always stay in control of the situation. Don't let the secretary come up with an acceptable reason for you not to get through. This is much easier to do if the focus of your call is on obtaining certain information, and not on whether or not there are any job openings.

Be prepared to answer the following questions:

"What is your call in reference to?"

The best strategy to use is to be honest and positive. Honestly state what type of information you are looking for. Develop a sense of entitlement to be informed and confidence. If someone has referred you, make sure to mention his or her name.

"The person is unavailable. May I take a message?"

Say that you are hard to reach and ask for the best time to call back. You do not want to be put into a position of waiting for a call that may never come. You're in control. Ask at what time the person arrives in the morning. Early morning is the best time to call.

"Personnel will be able to help you, I'll transfer you." or "We're not hiring right now".

The secretary thinks you are looking for a job opening. Reemphasize that you are calling to obtain information.

The key to getting through is persistence. If you are able to reply intelligently, logically and confidently to the secretary's screening statements, you will most likely eventually get through. Studies show that it takes an average of 7 to 8 calls before reaching the intended person.

Remember to thank the secretary after every call. Regardless of whether or not you get through.

Once you do get through, have your script ready. Your objective is to obtain a face-to-face meeting, but be flexible so that if that is impossible you have other options, phone, and e-mail.



DOS AND DONT'S OF COLD CALLING

DON'TS

- ✘ Contact human resources
- ✘ Sound unsure, hesitant
- ✘ Project a dull or weak voice
- ✘ Be impatient with secretary
- ✘ Mispronounce the name
- ✘ Take too much time to get to the point
- ✘ Read a memorized script
- ✘ Sound like a salesperson
- ✘ Hang-up too quickly, without asking important questions
- ✘ Use pauses "ummm..." poor diction or grammar
- ✘ Run out of things to say
- ✘ Call at the wrong time
- ✘ Leave incomplete voice messages
- ✘ Fail to use an answering machine
- ✘ Create an inappropriate greeting message on your answering machine

DOS

- ✔ Have a clear employment goal
- ✔ Research the company as much as you can
- ✔ Know the names of the people you are calling
- ✔ Find out about problems and projects
- ✔ Adapt your approach to the culture of the organization
- ✔ Prepare your script and strategy in advance
- ✔ Sound as if you call there every day
- ✔ Smile
- ✔ Treat the secretary with courtesy
- ✔ Prepare for most common obstacles
- ✔ Call before and after hours
- ✔ Ask if this is a good time to call
- ✔ Establish common ground
- ✔ Adopt the attitude of a consultant developing his or her customer base
- ✔ Offer your skills, state how you can benefit the organization
- ✔ Ask a question to develop rapport
- ✔ Convey the right attitude
- ✔ Summarize your conversation before closing
- ✔ Close conversation with request for action (asking permission to do something or asking for referrals).
- ✔ Keep records of all your calls
- ✔ Follow-up (thanking contacts that gave referrals)
- ✔ Monitor your phone voice and behavior
- ✔ Know how many rejections you can handle and plan for breaks

**EXAMPLE**

Salutation: Hello Ms. Smith

Identification: My name is Norman Brown

Objective: I would like to pursue a career in marketing and am presently researching potential employees.

Sale: I'll be graduating from McGill at the end of this year and have recently completed a consumer survey on the use of _____ .

Question: I really enjoyed this experience and was wondering if conducting market surveys is a major component of the activities in your marketing department.

DIALOGUE

Suggest meeting: I would very much like to meet with you for a few minutes in order to make your acquaintance and also to hand deliver my CV. Would you be available tomorrow at 8:00 for a meeting of about 10 minutes? Or, if you prefer, I could drop by towards the end of the day say 5:15?

If Yes:

Thank you very much Ms. Smith. I am looking forward to meeting you.

If No:

May I send you my CV in the mail and call you again once you have received it?
 Would you know of any other People I might contact in the industry who might have more information on possible careers in marketing?

May I use your name when I call these people?

Thank you very much for your time. Goodbye Ms. Smith.



TELEPHONE SCRIPT

Salutation: _____

Identification: _____

Objective: _____

Qualification _____

And Sale: _____

(30-second summary) _____

Question: _____

DIALOGUE

Suggest meeting _____

If yes:

If no:





PART III - THE HIDDEN JOB MARKET

Did you know that only 15% of available jobs are actually advertised? Obviously it will take more than searching through the classified section of the newspaper to find a job in today's job market. But don't be discouraged: There are ways to tap into the remaining 85% of the job market - known as the "hidden job market".

There are several reasons why this hidden job market exists. Most managers prefer to fill positions through internal resources such as referrals from other managers or directors, friends and business colleagues. Such a method saves screening and interviewing time as well as advertising and recruitment fees. Many jobs are also created in the minds of business managers out of a perceived need and solution to a particular problem. The manager may begin an informal process of contacting other managers or directors of the same industry who may provide ideas or contacts. Human Resources may never be contacted during this process, therefore being unaware of the actual "position".

If the position is not filled during the informal process, the Human Resources department is typically contacted and a formal employment requisition is established. Résumés already on file may be screened. If the position is still not filled, it will be advertised or submitted to an external recruiter.

Below are strategies for penetrating the hidden job market and increasing your chances of landing a great job.

NETWORKING YOUR WAY TO A NEW JOB

Networking is one of the most important - if not **the most important** - skill that job seekers need to master to be truly successful in their job search. Career experts estimate that the vast majority of job openings are never advertised but filled through word-of-mouth or networking. Senior level positions are most frequently filled in this manner. Even with all this knowledge, most job seekers fail to fully utilize networking for all it's worth.

Networking means developing a broad list of contacts. It is people talking to others in order to obtain ideas, information and resources with the objective of finding employment.

People cynically say "it's not what you know, it's who you know". They see networking as an opportunity to use people. That's not the way to do it. What's really important is "WHO KNOWS YOU". The best place to start developing your network is with your family, friends, and neighbors-and with their family, friends and neighbors. Don't stop there though. Speak with co-workers, colleagues in your industry, and those you meet at trade shows and conferences. Speak with former employers and teachers. The goal is to let as many people as possible know that you are job seeking so they can assist you in your search. You want them to know your skills and what kind of job you are looking for, so that they can give you appropriate contacts. These people do NOT need to be friends, or even acquaintances, just anyone that you can initiate conversation with. If you can pick up the phone and call them, *for any reason*, they are potential networking contacts.

Your contacts do not have to be people who can **obviously** help you. Don't limit yourself by thinking, "How could my neighbor know anything about events planning?" Give your neighbor a chance to tell you that her son is an attorney for the founder of a large local association that plans conferences all over Canada. This may seem like a "long shot" until you consider that everyone has a network and it's amazing what others know about job opportunities. With assistance from your neighbor, her son may introduce you to someone in HIS network.



Networking is the key to success in today's job market. Set goals for yourself such as making five or ten new contacts per week, whatever is most realistic for you. If you establish only three new contacts per week and get three more from each of those individuals, before long, you will have a wealth of networking and contact information, which will result in your next job.

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO CREATE NEW CONTACTS

➤ VOLUNTEER WORK

Get involved in your community. Volunteering touches every part of a community and is something that is regularly practiced by over 7.5 million Canadians. It is seen as an important method for youth and other job searchers to gain valuable experience in their field of interest.

Volunteer work provides you with the opportunity to develop new skills in an area that is of interest to you. It is also a great way to develop new business contacts, as many business people are involved with volunteer organizations.

➤ PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

One way of creating new contacts is to join a professional association in your field. Associations have regular meetings that provide excellent opportunities for networking and developing new contacts. Associations also have membership directories, which can be useful in generating job leads. By joining an association, you will also increase your knowledge and, at the same time, demonstrate to other professionals your commitment to the field, plus meet people who are employed in your field who are the best people to know of openings in your field.

➤ CREATING A PRIMARY CONTACT LIST

(Remember, the longer your list, the higher your chances of success.)

1. People You Know From School (University, CEGEPS, High School)

Example:

- Professors
- Classmates
- Internships, Field studies

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

2. People You Know From Work (Summer, Part-time, Volunteer)

Example:

- Co-workers
- Competitors
- Professional Associations
- Clients
- Supervisors

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____



- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

3. People You Know From Leisure/Family Activities:

Example:

- | | |
|-----------|---------|
| Family | Sports |
| Friends | Clubs |
| Neighbors | Hobbies |

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

4. Other People:

Example:

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Doctors | Bankers |
| Dentists | Insurance Agents |
| Lawyers | Chamber of Commerce |
| Accountants | Community Business People |
| Religious Leaders | Store Owners |

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____



NETWORKING DOS AND DON'TS

- **DO** realize why networking is so important. Only 5 to 20 percent of jobs are advertised, so you can find out about all the unadvertised openings only through talking to as many people as possible and telling them you are looking for a job.
- **DO** join a professional organization related to your field.
- **DO** volunteer. Volunteer work is a great way to make new network contacts.
- **DO** come up with a system for organizing your network contacts, whether a spreadsheet on your computer, a three ring binder or whatever works for you.
- **DO** keep networking even after you've found a job. You never know when you might need your contacts again.
- **DON'T** be afraid to ask for help. Most people are flattered to be asked for assistance and advice with your job search. It makes them feel important.
- **DON'T** forget to thank everyone in your network that has been helpful to you. Show your appreciation with a thank-you note.
- **DON'T** go anywhere without copies of your résumé. You can keep them in your car or briefcase, but be sure you can access it easily if you meet someone who could pass your résumé along to a hiring manager.

Be prepared for some rejection, it's part of any job search. Don't give up! Your success rate will increase with persistence. With each phone call you'll become more knowledgeable and gain confidence.





PART IV - INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Informational interviewing is career counsellor jargon for the process of systematically **researching a career field** through a series of in-person, workplace visits with people already employed in similar jobs. It is one of the most valuable career development tools.

Major benefits of informational interviewing:

1. It **demystifies** the field or position you're interested in - making it possible for you to speak more knowledgeably about what you want to do, and helps you decide whether this is really an appropriate career choice.
2. It provides you with explicit **job description information** that you need in developing a sharp and focused résumé, and a source of **constructive criticism** if you've brought a draft résumé with you.
3. It adds valuable personal contacts for your job search networking, which is the time-tested, surest route to a good job.

Guidelines for informational interviewing:

1. DON'T CONFUSE IT WITH A JOB INTERVIEW; be clear, honest and unambiguous about your motive or agenda, and stick to the agenda of just getting career information, not fishing for a job opening.
2. MAKE AN EXPLICIT APPOINTMENT for a short period of time (say 20 minutes); be on time, and leave on time.
3. ARRIVE THOROUGHLY PREPARED with the questions you want answered.
4. LEAVE WITH AT LEAST TWO REFERRALS to other people in the field that you can talk to in the same way.
5. TAKE DOWN NOTES IMMEDIATELY after the interview, recording everything you learned.
6. SEND A THANK-YOU NOTE right away.
7. KEEP WELL-ORGANIZED RECORDS of your informational interviewing process.

How to find people to interview

1. Ask your friends and acquaintances, "Who do you know who works at a job SOMETHING LIKE the one I'm looking for?" Then ask THEM "Who do you know who works at a job just like the one I'm looking for?" That's the commonest, most direct way; another is:
2. Check with a local career-counselling center ... a non-profit agency or a community college placement centre for leads on people available for informational interviewing.

For more information on informational interviewing (and why you shouldn't CALL it that), see:

What Color is Your parachute, R. Bolles, latest edition.

How to Get a Job in the San Francisco bay Area, J. Beach 1963 edition, pages 41-42.

THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

The quickest way to get a job is never to ask for one. That's right! Never ask for a job. It is unlikely that when you ask a person for a job he will have just such a job open, or even know where such a job is open, so chances are at least 10 to 1 that you will get a negative answer.

When you ask for a job, you are almost always asking to be turned down, and being forced to turn you down or put you off will make an interviewer feel uncomfortable. The more uncomfortable he feels, the quicker he will want to forget you - - which is just the opposite from what you are trying to achieve.



You are not trying to hide the fact that you are looking for a job. You are only being reasonable when you assume the interviewer will not have or know of a job opening at the exact time when you are talking with him. When you ask an interviewer for a job you put him under pressure. When you make it clear that you do not expect him to have a job opening or to know of one, you take the pressure off him; he becomes more willing to listen to you, and to remember you favourably.

Whenever you are not being interviewed for a specific job, you are on what we call a Informational interview. The Informational interview is different from the Job Interview. It is an excellent way to get information and to make contacts. Your understanding of the purpose and technique of the Referral Approach is going to be one of the most important tools of your Career Search.

There are six purposes for an Informational interview:

The FIRST purpose is to establish a RAPPORT with the interviewer. Get to know who he/she is. The best way to establish personal contact with the interviewer is to take a genuine interest in him/her. In any encounter with another person, that person will reflect your attitude back to you. It's not all about techniques, but genuine, constructive attitudes.

The SECOND purpose is to EDUCATE your interviewer. Let him/her know who you are. Make certain that he/she understands your major strengths. Share your accomplishments with him/her. Define your career area. Make it easy for him/her to help you.

The THIRD purpose of a Informational interview is to get ADVICE on your career search program. Remember, advice genuinely asked for is usually freely given. And you need your interviewer's advice on how he/she sees your strengths and career area best fitting together within his/her world, the business community with which he's/she's most familiar.

The FOURTH purpose of such an interview is to get INFORMATION about your job market. This includes the latest developments in your field, who is doing what, articles and publications you should read, or professional societies you should join. If you come out of your interview with more information than you went in with, you have had a successful Informational interview.

The FIFTH purpose of this type of interview is to obtain REFERRALS to other individuals. Experience has shown that when an interviewer has understood who you are and where you are going, he/she will want to help you get there. In almost every case, you will come out of the interview with the names of one or more people to contact. An exception might be if the interviewer wants to consider you for his/her own organization.

The SIXTH and last purpose is to be REMEMBERED FAVORABLY by the interviewer. If you have accomplished the other five purposes, you will have no problem with this one. But, just to make sure, you will write him/her a thank you letter after the interview.

After each interview, ask yourself how many of these purposes you have accomplished. When you have had some practice, you will see that the Advice Approach will put you ahead of 95% of the working population in interview effectiveness. You will have interviews with people you never expected to see or talk with.

Summary: The six purposes for an Informational Interview are:

1. To establish rapport
2. To educate your interviewer
3. To get advice
4. To get information
5. To get referrals



6. To be remembered

SPECIAL NOTES

1. Under NO circumstances should the Personal Assessment or the Résumé, which you have developed, be given to the interviewer while on an informational interview.
2. Send a thank-you letter to the interviewer as soon as possible.
3. You want to see successful PEOPLE, not COMPANIES.

AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

- helps you decide whether an occupation is suitable
- is a step in your career planning process
- is not a job interview

JOB INTERVIEWS	INFORMATION INTERVIEWS
You are being interviewed	You are doing the interview
You are giving information	You are getting information
You are selling yourself to the employer	You are telling the employer about yourself to get feedback
You are being evaluated for a job	You are evaluating an occupation

CONTACTS

DEFINITION: Anyone you know, meet, talk to, or are referred to, who is a potential source of information about the field of work, which interests you, or about other people who are potential sources of such information.

PRIMARY - "A" CONTACTS

- Friends, family, acquaintances, colleagues.
- People that can refer you to other contacts.
- People that can give frank and open critique of how you come across.
- People who will become involved in your career campaign.

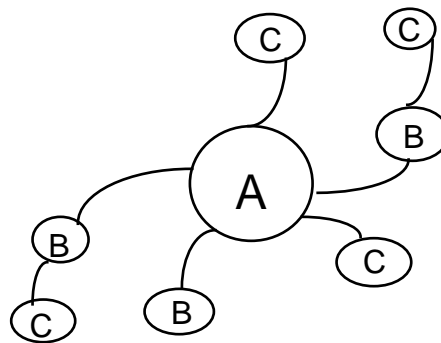
INTERMEDIARY - "B" CONTACTS - "Bridging"

- People you are referred to or are able to reach on your own.
- People who work in the field that interests you but not in the exact position you want initially.

FINAL - "C" CONTACTS

- People who do what you would like to do and do it well.
- People who could eventually hire you if you decide to work in that field.

It is good if the connection is mutually beneficial so that you can give information, which your contact might need or want.



HOW TO CONDUCT AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Set up your meeting

- phone or write your contact
- state purpose: information, not a job
- time needed: 20-30 minutes
- location: get this information

Conduct the interview

- arrive promptly
- re-state purposes: information, not a job
- briefly, tell about yourself (background, experience, goals)
- ask questions you have prepared and take notes
- ask about other person's background
- ask for suggestions and referrals
- thank and show appreciation

Follow-up the interview

- write a thank you note - same day
- keep a record of your meeting

WHEN TO CONDUCT AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

When you already have information:

- about yourself: interests, abilities, personal characteristics, values.
- about some jobs or areas which interest you, gathered by reading and talking to resource people.

When you need more information:

- about how your qualifications can be used in the area you are considering.
- about specific jobs and duties in this area.
- about new areas or possible future directions within an occupational field.



Sample questions for an informational interview

- Given my background and experience, what kinds of areas/jobs should I be researching?
- Could you think of any particular job titles that might be a good fit?
- You mentioned x - what special skills and qualities does an x need to be successful? Could you describe some typical job functions of an x?
- What gaps are there in my background that I need to be aware of, should I decide to become an x?
- How would you recommend that I fill these gaps?
- Could you describe your background and what you consider were the factors that made you successful?
- X sounds very interesting, and your information is most valuable. Who else would you recommend I speak to who could give me additional information and opinions?





KEEP A RECORD OF EACH INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Person: _____

Title: _____

Phone: _____

Referred by: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Secretary's Name: _____

Date of Interview: _____

What facts did this person provide?

What opinions did this person have?

Some of my positive impressions are:

Some of my negative impressions are:

What suggestions were made?

Referrals - name, function, background



APPROACHING THE EMPLOYER

Using the control sheet

The control sheet should contain all the information that you find out about an employer, either from him/her or from others who know about his/her company. It will be useful in taking stock of your position and keeping up to date the list of employers you have met. It is a practical way of avoiding unnecessary steps.

At this stage, you are using two tools to keep you in your job search:

- List of employers
- Control sheets.

Name of employer	Date	Name of person seen	Information given	Follow-up	Job-title

SUGGESTIONS

1. Keep ad in front of you.
2. Make your own personal list of the things you can do in your profession - check your résumé.
3. Don't be ashamed to ask the person to spell out the name and address of company or repeat any information. You will be more embarrassed if you do not arrive for your appointment because you have the wrong information.



PART V – RÉSUMÉ / C.V. PREPARATION

The backbone of a successful job search is a powerful résumé!

A résumé is a “*fact sheet*” about what you have done that will assist an employer to assess if you are the appropriate person for the job that they are trying to fill. You should be absolutely certain that your résumé is going to outsell the competition. It needs to professionally represent your career background, qualifications and achievements. Bear in mind, *eighty percent of employers look for accomplishments first before even reading the responsibilities.*

We at Youth Employment Services believe that the **strategic chronological type of C.V.** is the most appropriate because:

- It is the most commonly used, accepted and trusted format by employers.
- It makes it easy for the reader to assess where you've been, what you've done, and where you are going.

A Strategic Chronological C.V. may pose problems for people who have had gaps in their employment history, those who have “job-hopped” or who wish to change the focus of their careers. In these cases, the **Functional C.V.** would be more appropriate, but employers are sceptical of this type of C.V. and feel that the person may be trying to conceal something.

For our purposes, this booklet will discuss the components of a strategic chronological C.V.. If you feel you would like to have a functional one, you may make an appointment with one of our counsellors and they will assist you.

COMPONENTS OF A C.V.

The following are the basic components of a C.V.: personal information, highlight of your qualifications, career objectives, education, additional training, employment history, other experience, volunteer/extra-curricular, professional associations, publications, interests, references.

Aside from your personal data, which always comes first, the other components can be presented in whatever order you feel is most pertinent to the job that you are applying for. If your education is your strongest or most recent asset, then it should precede your work experience. If you have many years of work experience then this section should precede your education.

We will now look at each of the components in detail:

Personal Information: This part always appears first and can be incorporated into a header, to save space and make the C.V. look more attractive. It is not necessary to put the header “Résumé” or “Curriculum Vitae” at the top of your C.V. Rather; you list your name, address, and telephone number(s). Include a number where an employer may leave a message (another person or an answering machine). A fax number or an electronic mail address can also be included.

Be sure to leave a professional message on your answering machine while you are looking for work. Remember, a first impression, even from an answering machine, leaves a lasting impression. In addition, make sure everyone answering the phone is aware that it could be an employer calling.

Career Objective: Because you will probably be applying for several different types of positions, specific career objectives should be put in your **cover letter**.

Highlight of Qualifications: This section is the heart of your résumé. It serves to immediately supply the employer with a global picture of your most significant aptitudes, skills, and qualities without bogging him/her down with dates and places. These may include the number of years of experience in the field or



line of work, relevant credentials or training or education, an accomplishment that directly relates to the objective, a quality or characteristic of yours that supports this goal and perhaps another accomplishment or another characteristic.

Relevant Experience (Employment history): This section should include dates of employment (months must be included if the position was held for less than one year), position title, name and location (city, province) of the organization, and a brief description of what you did. Jobs should be listed by most recent.

When describing what you did, be sure to use **action verbs** and cite specific examples. Avoid using words such as "responsible for, duties included". Be specific; illustrate the skills you used on the job. An effective way to do this is to focus on what you learned or achieved in each position.

Students often feel that they don't have enough relevant work experience, especially if summer jobs had no direct relationship to the type of work being sought. However, by using specific examples, you can demonstrate more general skills, such as working with the public, communications, leadership, organizational, etc., which are transferable to any job. Always try to emphasize those elements of your previous jobs that relate to your desired career objective.

Other Experience: Simply **list** those experiences that are **not** relevant to the kind of work you are looking for, without describing your duties.

Education: This section includes dates of graduation and names of degrees/diplomas/certificates received in reverse chronological order. **It is more important to accentuate the degree that you received than where you got it.** You must also include the name and location (city, province) of the institution that granted you your degree. If you have not yet received your degree, put the expected date down and write, "expected" next to it. You should also indicate your area of specialization.

In most cases it is only necessary to go back as far as CEGEP, although if you make reference to high school in other parts of your C.V., you may want to include the name of your high school in this section as well.

You may also include scholarships and educational awards in this section.

You may include brief descriptions of special projects, fieldwork, courses and/or workshops that are relevant to your career objective.

If you have a very high grade point average (G.P.A.) you may mention it in this section. However, if it is average, it is better not to mention it.

Additional Training: You may consider listing partially completed degrees, additional courses and/or workshops here. Reference these as you would your formal academic degrees.

Extracurricular/Community Involvement: For a student graduating from university, this is a very important section. You should treat extracurricular and volunteer activities the same way you treated previous jobs. Explain what you did in each club or organization. Use action verbs and specific skill and achievement statements. An employer will carefully look at this section, especially if your work experience is limited.

Professional Associations: Here you can list the associations of which you are a member. Whenever possible, include specific information on what you did as a member. For example, instead of stating "Member of Management Club," you can say something like "Selected Keynote speaker for Annual Management Club Luncheon."

Publications: If applicable, list your publications in chronological order.



Interests and Hobbies: Briefly state how you spend your leisure time. Sports and hobbies would be included in this section. As with other sections, wherever possible, describe specific activities. For example, instead of listing “hockey” as one of your interests, write something like “elected team captain of community hockey team.”

References: It is not necessary to write the names of your references in your C.V. Yet, you must be prepared to provide three references to a potential employer at the interview. Select three people who are in a position to comment on your work habits and technical expertise as well as on how you relate to other people. The best references are former supervisors/managers or professors. You may also select people you know from volunteer or extracurricular activities as well.

You should speak with each of the people you have selected to be your references to ask for their permission. Let them know what your career objectives are and provide them with a copy of your C.V.

Then, list your references on a separate sheet of paper that is the same texture and quality you have used for your C.V. You should include the following information:

Name
Title
Organization
Address of Organization
Telephone Number
Fax Number
E-mail

Bring this list with you to interviews and be ready to supply it if asked. Do not include this list with your C.V. unless specifically requested to do so.

References are usually checked towards the end of the selection process. References are not always checked, and are only checked for those candidates that are being seriously considered.

By not providing the names of your references at the beginning, the employer is forced to approach you for that information. This signals to you that you are seriously being considered for the position - information that you otherwise would not have. It also provides you with an opportunity to contact your references once again and advise them that they will be called, regarding a particular position that you can now explain in detail.

You can then ask your references to emphasize certain things about your past that are particularly relevant to this position. In effect, by not providing names of references in your C.V., you get a chance to manipulate the situation to your advantage.

TIPS FOR STUDENTS WITH NO RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

If you really want a particular kind of job and are sure you could do well at it if only you got the chance, it's just about certain that you have enough **transferable skills** to show that you're a good candidate for the job - at **least** at the entry level.

Here's what your C.V. will need to show:

- Transferable skills from paid or unpaid experience.
- A credible progression from where you've been to where you want to go now.
- Evidence of motivation and potential - experience that used the same kind of personality traits and strengths that your "ideal job" calls for.



Students (both high school and college levels) sometimes think they have no work experience to put on their C.V. until they look at the many informal ways that they acquired skills that are actually marketable, such as:

- Working on a school paper or yearbook (researching, editing, writing, selling ads, etc.)
- Working as a student intern for a business
- Serving on student government committees
- Coaching sports or tutoring academic subjects
- Winning recognition for an exceptionally good essay, report, project
- Helping a professor research background information for a textbook
- Photography projects; science projects; marketing projects
- Helping to promote a concert
- Helping put a data bank together
- Helping with church activities
- Leadership with a club

WORD FINDER - ACTION VERBS

Words that imply **COMMUNICATION**

advertised	lectured
called	oriented
circulated	presented
coached	promoted
communicated	publicized
conferred	recommended
corresponded	redirected
discussed	represented
displayed	referred
distributed	related
edited	showed
emphasized	translated
familiarized	transmitted
informed	tutored
instructed	wrote
interested	

Words that imply **LEADERSHIP**

administered	executed
allocated	governed
appointed	hired
approved	led
assigned	managed
authorized	oversaw
awarded	presided
conducted	recommended
controlled	regulated
delegated	required
designated	selected
directed	settled
disapproved	signed
discharged	specified

Words that imply **INITIATIVE**

attended	inventoried
automated	maintained
collected	monitored
compiled	moved
considered	operated
contemplated	packaged
contracted	participated
delivered	performed
discharged	processed
engaged	provided
engineered	received
established	recruited
examined	reviewed
expedited	shipped
founded	solicited
handled	sorted
implemented	staffed
increased	submitted

induced	supplied
inspected	systematized
instituted	trained
insured	utilized
interviewed	verified

Words that imply **RESULTS**

accomplished	expanded
accounted	finished
achieved	generated
advanced	identified
altered	improved
answered	manufactured
attained	marketed
attracted	obtained



enforced

sponsored
supervisedawarded
benefited
builtpredicted
prevented
producedWords that imply **ORGANIZATION**arranged
analyzed
budgeted
calculated
coordinated
organizedplanned
prepared
recorded
reorganized
reported
scheduledchanged
combined
completed
constructed
dismantled
earned
eliminated
enlargedprofited
reduced
repaired
replaced
solved
tested
turned around
upgraded**RÉSUMÉ DOS AND DON'TS****DO:**

- Have a career counsellor review your C.V.
- Paperclip your C.V. instead of stapling.
- Use a laser printer
- Use quality paper like white, cream or light grey that will photocopy well
- Provide accurate information about yourself

DON'T:

- Include unnecessary information such as your birth date, SIN number, marital status, etc.
- Exceed two pages in length
- Write in paragraph format
- Use a dot-matrix printer
- Provide salary history in your C.V.
- Mention your reason for leaving a job
- Use abbreviations that may cause confusion to the readers that are not familiar with them

Before mailing out your **50** plus résumés a week, which is not an unreasonable amount in an aggressive search, you will have to document each company/name that you're targeting so that you can follow up appropriately. After one week, call **EACH** and **EVERY** employer to whom you've sent your résumé, and ask if they have had the opportunity to review your résumé. Do they have any questions that you may answer? Suggest that you meet in person to further discuss your qualifications. Employers are busy people, and despite their need to fill a particular position, it's not easy reading through a slew of résumés and letters from people claiming to be "the one".

Your advantage in following these simple steps is clear-employers rarely hear from most of the people who've submitted résumés, and it's the few who call afterward that are granted the interview. Following up displays interest in the position, confidence, professionalism and determination to succeed; combine these qualities with the above steps, and you'll be on your way to interviewing for the job of your dreams!





First Name and Last Name
 Address, Apt. #
 City, Province
 Postal Code
 Telephone No. (include area code)

Objective: _____

Highlights of Qualifications _____

Languages: _____

Computer Knowledge: _____

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Job Title _____ **Date-date**
 Company Name _____

- ◆ List job responsibilities here _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

Job Title _____ **Date-date**
 Company Name _____

- ◆ List job responsibilities here _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

Job Title _____ **Date-date**
 Company Name _____

- ◆ List job responsibilities here: _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Job Title _____ **Date-date**
 Company Name _____

- ◆ List job responsibilities here: _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____



Name

Page 2

EDUCATION

Degree & field of study _____
 Institution _____

Date-date

Degree & field of study _____
 Institution _____

Date-date

Degree & field of study _____
 Institution _____

Date-date

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Degree & field of study _____
 Institution _____

Date-date

Degree & field of study _____
 Institution _____

Date-date

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Job Title _____
 Organization _____

Date-date

- ◆ Responsibility or duty preformed _____
- ◆ _____

INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

Title, Organization _____

Date-date

Job Title, Organization _____

Date-date

Interests and hobbies: _____

References available upon request

Shelly Binch
5999 Monkland Apt. 808
Montreal Quebec
H4A 1H1
Residence: (514) 487-1700

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Four years experience in community and social service.
- Managed diverse case load.
- Solid academic background in Sociology
- Superior oral and written communication skills.
- Creative, adaptable, works well under pressure.
- Fluent in English and French.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Outreach Worker/Office Assistant

Services for Disabled Students-Concordia University, Montreal

1999-2002

- Adapted learning materials to meet the needs of visually impaired students.
- Transcribed exams and textbook articles into Braille.
- Co-ordinated work schedules
- Assisted special needs students with registration and classroom location.
- Counseled students with physical and learning disabilities.
- Provided support and advocacy in order for students to help themselves.

Drop-in Centre Worker

Concordia University, Montreal

1997-1999

- Provided support and guidance to clients.
- Implemented crisis management.
- Informed clientele of services available.
- Assessed clients' needs.
- Referred to appropriate services

Orientation Service Worker

Concordia University, Montreal

1995

- Provided guided tours of campus.
- Familiarized new students with classroom location and available services.
- Addressed new students questions and concerns.

OTHER EXPERIENCE**Cook**

Sir Winston Churchill Pub, Montreal

1999-2000

Hard Rock Café, Montreal

1996-1997**Schedule Co-ordinator****1993**

Ottawa City Hall, Engineering and Works Department, Ottawa

Circulation Clerk**1989-1991**

Gloucester Public Library, Gloucester, Ontario

EDUCATION**Bachelor of Arts, Sociology****1991 - 1994****Bachelor of Education program****1990 - 1991**

Concordia University, Montreal

ADDITIONAL TRAINING**Active Listening/Peer Helper Training****1992-1993**

Concordia University, Montreal

Standard First Aid Course**1993**

St. John Ambulance, Montreal

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Member-Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association, Montreal,

1997**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT****Homecare Worker**, CLSC N.D.G., Montreal, 1997.**INTERESTS AND HOBBIES**

Professional cooking, fine dining, reading: novels and biographies, skiing, rollerblading, pets.



References Available Upon Request



PART VI - PREPARING A COVER LETTER

You must always include a cover letter with your CV (résumé) because it is the only way an employer can know or remember what your intentions are.

The cover letter is almost as important – and perhaps even more important – than your CV.

The employer will form an impression about you before he/she has finished reading the second or third paragraph.

An influential cover letter will NOT start with "Dear Sir or Madam," because being the savvy professional that you are, you will have done your research and located the actual name and verified the spelling.

Your cover letter should sell the benefits of your credentials and let the employer know how you will solve their problems, save them money and/or improve productivity. Your cover letter should also contain the important, but often forgotten crucial question asking for an interview.

Your cover letter must **NOT** have any spelling or grammatical mistakes.

WHO YOU SHOULD SEND THE LETTER TO

Unsolicited letters should be addressed to the most appropriate individual within a company.

1. In a small company it is usually the president or owner who makes or approves all employment decisions.
2. In a larger company send middle management inquiries to the executive in charge of your departmental area (sales, finance, production or to the personnel director).
3. For a position at the entry level in a medium size or large company, address your letter to the personnel director.
4. If you know someone in the company that you are approaching, send your letter to that person.
5. At the clerical level, send your letter to the attention of the personnel department.
6. If your case is unusual (you are changing careers, for example) or if you have special credentials (education, background) that you think would be of interest to a top executive, send the covering letter and CV to him or her. Your letter will be routed to the proper department head.
7. If you are interested in working in a particular department, send your covering letter and CV to the head of that department, rather than to the personnel department.
8. Always address the cover letter to a specific person.

Call the company and make sure that you have:

1. The correct spelling of the person's name.
2. The correct title of the person.



THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN WRITING A COVER LETTER

1. **Address someone in authority** (by name and title) who could hire you. When it's IMPOSSIBLE to get that information, use a functional title ("Dear Manager") even if you have to guess ("Dear Selection Committee").
2. **Tell how you became attracted** to this particular company.
3. **Demonstrate that you've done some "homework"** on the company and can see THEIR point of view (their current problems, their interests, their priorities).
4. **Convey your enthusiasm and commitment** (even passion?) for this line of work.
5. **Balance professionalism with personal warmth and friendliness.** Avoid using generic, alienating phrases like "enclosed please find," or 'Dear Sir.': This is a **personal** letter.
6. **Identify at least one thing about you that's unique** - say, a special gift for getting along with all kinds of people - something that goes beyond the basic requirements of the position, that distinguishes you, **and** is relevant to the position. Then if several others are equally qualified there's a reason to pick YOU. *Make sure however, that you back it up with examples.*
7. **Be appropriate** to the field you're exploring - **stand out**, but in a non-gimmicky way.
8. Outline specifically what you are asking and what you are **offering**.
9. **Point directly to the next step**, telling just what **you** will do to follow through.
10. **Remain as brief and focused as possible.** Keep to one (1) page.
11. **Make sure** that there are no spelling or grammatical mistakes.





WHAT YOU SHOULD SAY IN THE COVER LETTER

Date

Company Name
Their address

Attention: Their full name
 Their title

Dear Salutation (Mr./Ms.) Family name:

INTRODUCTION: In your opening paragraph you would state your intention as well as how you became interested in this company. How did you find out about them - who referred you, or where you saw the ad. Remember to include the position name, department and company name.

MAIN BODY: In the middle paragraphs, make the best possible match between your background and the company profile and/or job requirements. This way, you will demonstrate that you have done some research on the company. Mention some specific relevant experiences or achievements. Tell the employer why you are the best candidate for the job. Convince them now, it's your last chance.

ENDING: In the last paragraph use a selling approach by convincing them to meet with you. Request an interview, followed by your telephone number. State your intention to follow-up within the next several days.

Sincerely,

Your full name

Angela Jones
414 Notre Dame. Montreal (Quebec) H7W 2L9
Tel: (514) 878-7729

June 25, 2002

Catholic Community Services
859 De Maisonneuve, Room 224
Montreal, Quebec
H3X 1T4

Att: Mr. James Smith, Director of Community Services

Dear Mr. Smith:

In the interest of learning about any opportunities that exist within your organization, your advertisement for the position of Guidance and Community Involvement Animator in the June 23, 2002, Gazette came to my attention. I have enclosed my curriculum vitae, which outlines my professional and educational background for your review and consideration.

My professional experience, during the last ten years, is diversified and progressive and I have acquired excellent human relations and interpersonal skills. I consider myself to be self-motivated when working autonomously, yet enjoy working as part of a multidisciplinary team. I have the knowledge, skills and motivation required to provide strong support to your Student Services Center. My counseling and leadership skills are my major attributes and have contributed in motivating my clients to achieve their career goals and life objectives.

At this point in my career, I have chosen to pursue a position within the public education sector, where I can continue to work directly with youth and empower them to become more spiritually self-confident and prepared for integration into the community. I have always strived to stay current with new evolving educational concepts and I feel confident that I can be a valuable asset to your organization.

If my qualifications are of interest to you, I would appreciate the opportunity of meeting you, so we may further discuss how my qualifications can contribute to the continued success of the **Catholic Community Service**.

I thank you in advance for your interest on this matter, and I look forward to speaking with you personally, in the near future. Please call me at (514) 555-5555 to further discuss the position and my qualifications.

Sincerely,

Angela Jones



DON'T FORGET THE THANK-YOU LETTER

If, after the interview, your interest in the position remains strong, it is advisable that you send the interviewer a thank-you note. The contents of your letter may include the following:

- An expression of appreciation for the interviewer's time
- A reference to the interview date and position for which you are a candidate
- A statement of how your interest in the job had been enhanced as a result of information supplied by the interviewer
- A reiteration of your qualifications, including any relevant details about your background you neglected to mention during the interview
- An indication that you are looking forward to hearing from the interviewer

Your letter should be mailed as soon as possible after the interview, preferably within 24 hours. It should be brief, error-free, and typed.

Sample Thank-You Letter

February 3, 2004

Mr. Archie Weatherby
California Investments, Inc.
25 Sacramento Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Weatherby:

Thank you for taking the time to discuss the insurance broker position at California Investments, Inc., with me. After meeting with you and observing the company's operations, I am further convinced that my background and skills coincide well with your needs.

I really appreciate that you took so much time to acquaint me with the company. It is no wonder that California Investments retains its employees for so long. I feel I could learn a great deal from you and would certainly enjoy working with you.

In addition to my qualifications and experience, I will bring excellent work habits and judgment to this position. With the countless demands on your time, I am sure that you require people who can be trusted to carry out their responsibilities with minimal supervision.

I look forward, Mr. Weatherby, to hearing from you concerning your hiring decision. Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Oakley