

JOB READINESS INFORMATION

Check out some materials taught in the job-readiness training in these cities.

- [Job Search Tips](#)
- [Resume Writing](#)
- [Writing Effective Cover Letters](#)
- [Interviewing Techniques](#)

Job Search Tips

- A positive attitude is the most powerful weapon that you have.
- Understand that what you get from work experience will help you build a strong career foundation for your future.
- Make sure that you dress your best and represent you and your family in a positive way.
- Let everyone know that you are looking for an opportunity to land your first job. Tell them that you want to learn the value of work and what it means to be successful and gainfully employed.
- Don't quit looking for your first job. If one employer says no, then go to the next. There is a job out there for you. You are only one interview away from landing your job.
- It is important to gather information about the companies you are targeting.
Research sources include:
 - The public library to perform the bulk of your research. Your local librarian will be happy to guide your search.
 - The internet is fast becoming an important part of your job search arsenal. Most local libraries offer internet access if you don't have access at home.

Source: HoustonWorks USA, www.houstonworks.org

Resume Writing

- A resume is a document, typed and typically one page in length, that you create to give potential employers and others facts about your education, skills and work experience, including volunteer and community service activities.
- The primary objective of your resume is to generate job interviews, which lead to jobs!
- Even if a company only requires that you complete a job application, bring your resume with you!
- It is always a good idea to tailor your resume and list any skills you have that were specifically called for in the posting for the job for which you are applying.
- Update your resume each time you obtain a new job or title so that you don't have to go back and try to recall prior job duties and dates years later.
- Have a second — and even a third — set of eyes proofread your resume before you send it to a potential employer!
- One of the best ways to start writing your resume is to look at samples. Many major online job sites post free career tips, often including sample resumes and cover letters.

Source: Youth Ready Chicago, www.youthreadychicago.com

Writing Effective Cover Letters

Guidelines

- Address someone in authority by name and title.
- Tell how you became attracted to this particular company.
- Demonstrate that you have done your "homework" on the company and see its point of view.

- Convey your enthusiasm and commitment.
- Balance professionalism with personal warmth and friendliness.
- Identify at least one thing about you that is unique.
- Be appropriate to the field you are exploring.
- Point directly to the next step, telling just what you will do to follow through.
- Remain as brief and focused as possible.

Contents

You should customize each cover letter for the employer and the situation; however, the following elements should be found in all your cover letters:

- Introduction – this is the purpose of the letter. Explain how you learned of the job opening.
- Review the requirements – review the job requirements and be sure you understand the employer’s needs. Then, state your training accordingly, and sell your skills as a qualified person.
- Refer to your resume – indicate in your letter that you are enclosing a resume, transcripts or other documents for the employer’s consideration.
- Request an interview – state that you are available for an interview at a time and place convenient to the employer.
- Contact Information – do not forget to write “I may be contacted at” (telephone number and address).

Source: WorkForce Solutions, [More job readiness tips](#)

Interviewing Techniques

Prepare – Things to do before your interview

- Learn about the company/organization – research the company online/visit the company website.
- Know the specific position you will be interviewing for or, if one was not stated when you applied/were contacted, have one in mind that matches your skills and interests.
- Be prepared to talk about your specific qualifications relevant to the job; things such as good communication skills, bilingual, hardworking, enjoy customer service and working with other people, enjoy trying new things and can follow direction well, etc.
- Think about answers to broad questions about yourself – where do you see yourself in one year, five years? What are your plans for your future, your career?
- Practice interviewing with a friend or family member.
- Arrive 10 to 15 minutes before the scheduled time of your interview.

Personal Appearance

- Be well-groomed – showered, hair combed, clean shoes and nails, non-wrinkled clothes.
- Dress appropriately – don’t be afraid to ask the interviewer what is appropriate attire. Do not chew gum, eat or smoke during the interview.

During the Interview

- When interviewing make sure that you show up early, bring a great smile, sit up straight, speak clearly, and look the interviewer in the eyes. Yes sir, No sir, Yes ma’am, No ma’am will take you a long way. Use good manners.
- Make eye contact when listening and talking. Learn the name of your interviewer and shake hands as you meet.
- Relax, be friendly, and answer each question briefly and directly.
- Use proper English and avoid using slang.
- Be cooperative and enthusiastic.
- Remove ear pieces and cell phone extensions.

- Thank the interviewer and shake hands again when you leave.
- Follow-up with a typed or nicely handwritten thank you note to the interviewer, letting them know you appreciate their time and expressing interest in the job and company.

What to Bring – Documents to bring to your interview:

- Social security card
- Government-issued identification (driver's license, state ID, etc.)
- Resume

Source: Youth Ready Chicago, www.youthreadychicago.com