

# JOB READINESS – Your Job Search Tool Kit

(June 2020)

*"Take responsibility for where you stand today in your professional life and you can begin changing all your tomorrows". Martin Yale; www.knockemdead.com*

**BE PATIENT! DON'T GIVE UP! GETTING A JOB IS A PROCESS, NOT A MIRACLE!**

<b>40 – 50</b>	<b>4 – 5 / 10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7 – 10</b>
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Most people that live and work in the United States work about 40 – 50 years before they can afford to retire. During that 40 – 50 years of working,

- They will change jobs about once every 4 – 5 years (which works out to about 10 job changes in their career)
- They will change occupations (start working at one type of job, and then perform a different kind of job) 3 times during their career.
- They will deal with a recession every 7 – 10 years, without fail.

## EVERYTHING CHANGES

*in your personal life, and in your career.*

### ALL JOBS ARE TEMPORARY

Even if you stay at the same job for many years, sooner or later you will stop working at that job. If you'll still need a job anyway, will you be ready to deal with a job loss?

### BE PROACTIVE – PLAN AHEAD

Since you know that things will change in your career (both good and bad changes), you should think about where you're at right now in your career, and where you'd like to be if something drastic happens.

### MANAGE YOUR CAREER LIKE A BUSINESS

Keeping a company successful takes a lot of thought, preparation, and hard work. The same thing is true for your career.



## 3 AREAS WHERE YOU FOCUS YOUR ATTENTION AND EFFORTS IN A JOB SEARCH

### SELL YOURSELF

If you want a job somewhere, you have to show relevant **JOB SKILLS** and relevant **CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS** in your background in order to get an employer's interest; otherwise, they won't want to give you a job.

### RESEARCH

To know what employers want in exchange for giving you a job at their company, you have to

- Research the **JOB(S)** (starting with the job posting) and **COMPANIES** (go to their web site and click "about us") to know what it will take for someone to do a specific job successfully at a specific company; and
- Research **YOURSELF** to find out if you have the relevant **JOB SKILLS** and relevant **CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS** that employers are looking for.

### TIME

You have to use your time wisely and productively to *find job leads, complete applications the right way, compose an effective resume, and do your best in a job interview.*

## SELLING YOURSELF

To get any job and perform it successfully, you have to have the relevant JOB SKILLS and relevant CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS to prove to employers that you deserve the job more than anyone else.

You have to research YOURSELF (your background: *Education, Training, and Work Experience*) to determine your job skills and career accomplishments.

While many American workers are *multi-skilled* (they can successfully do more than one kind of job because they possess several kinds of HARD SKILLS), all workers have to have SOFT SKILLS to get any kind of job and keep it.

The necessary skills (SOFT SKILLS) to get (and keep) any job:

1. Show up every day on time – don't abuse your leave
2. Put in an honest day's work
3. Dress appropriately according to the dress code
4. Follow directions and listen carefully
5. Take the job seriously
6. Keep busy by staying productive, and offer to help others
7. Get along with others
8. Have a good attitude – leave your personal problems at the doorstep
9. Be able to take constructive criticism
10. Maintain a professional demeanor

### OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO REMEMBER

What do employers want from anyone they hire?

- Responsibility, dependability, honesty
- Adaptability and flexibility
- Interpersonal skills (people skills)
- The right attitude (do what you're asked, as long as it's legal and moral)

What else do employers want from all employees?

- They want their employees to
  - Help the company make a lot of money in the shortest possible time
  - Find ways to save money on the job
  - Find ways to save time on the job
  - Solve problems they face on the job

Finally, always remember:

- Employers can't read your mind. You have to ask for the job and prove that you deserve to be hired.
- If you've been successful for previous employers, you'll be successful for your next employer.

- If employers are unable to reach you, they won't spend time trying to find you. You must always provide correct, reliable contact information.

## YOUR JOB SEARCH SALES TOOLS

### MASTER APPLICATION (see pages 9 – 10)

A master application can help you save time when you complete any application, plus it keeps information handy that's used when you compose a resume.

(<https://>)

### RESUME BASICS

Resumes are *sales brochures* for job seekers. They show your *top selling points from your education, training and experience* that prove to the employer that you can do the job successfully and you deserve to be hired.

Also,

- It should be written by you in your own words.
- It should be one to two pages in length if possible.
- It should have plenty of white space and be easy to read.
- The font size should be 10-12 points, with 3/4" – 1" margins.
- It should be written logically and be easy to follow.
- It should be neat and clean, without errors/corrections.
- It should not be written in first person (it's OK to write in sentence fragments); you should start sentences with an **action verb** as much as possible.
- It should be printed on white or neutral color paper that is 20-25 weight bond or linen.

When you compose a resume,

- Be honest, specific, positive and brag about yourself, but never exaggerate.
- Avoid jargon, abbreviations and acronyms.
- Target your information to the job you're applying for and to what the employer is looking for.
- If appropriate, also use sections for Additional Training, Volunteer Experience (if relevant), Internships, and Languages.

### AN EXCELLENT BOOK ABOUT WRITING RESUMES:

Robin Ryan – *Winning Resumes* (2nd Edition); Wiley;  
ISBN-10: 0471263656 / ISBN-13: 978-0471263654  
(Check with your local library for book availability (don't forget to ask about an inter-library loan)).

## COMMON RESUME FORMATS – THEIR ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

### CHRONOLOGICAL

#### Advantages:

- Widely used; logical flow, easy to read.
- Showcases growth in skills and responsibilities.
- Shows promotions and impressive titles.
- Shows company loyalty.

#### Disadvantages:

- Can emphasize gaps in employment.
- Can highlight frequent job changes.
- Might not emphasize skill development.
- Might emphasize lack of related experience and career changes.
- Points out demotions or setbacks.

#### Chronological resumes are best used by:

- Individuals with steady work histories and experience that relates directly to the position.

### FUNCTIONAL

#### Advantages:

- Emphasizes skills rather than employment.
- Organizes a variety of experience (paid/unpaid work, other activities).
- Disguises gaps in work history or a series of short-term jobs.

#### Disadvantages:

- Viewed with suspicion by employers due to a lack of information about specific employers and dates.
- De-emphasizes growth / job titles.

#### Functional resumes are best used by:

- Individuals with no previous employment.
- Individuals with gaps in employment.
- Frequent job changers ("job hoppers").
- Individuals who have developed skills from other than documented employment.

### COMBINATION

- Combines the best elements of the chronological and functional resumes in a way that gives you the opportunity to highlight your skills and accomplishments, supplemented by a brief chronology of your work experience.
- Shows that you've done research on the job and company, and your information clearly points out how your background matches the employer's needs.
- A little harder to write in some cases, but it has greater potential for success.

Combination resumes are best used by almost everyone, because most employers want to see this format used by candidates.

### TIPS FOR ANY RESUME FORMAT:

- Dates for Professional Experience (and Education) can be left off if you are concerned about age discrimination.
- Education can be left out if you have no college degree / high school diploma; however, this is not recommended.
- Think it over carefully before you drop employment dates or an Education section – employers expect to see that information.
- If you had jobs while in prison, list those on job applications and resumes. List the State or the prison as your employer.
- Say more with less, and use only the most relevant information that proves you deserve to be hired.

### ONLINE RESOURCES FOR RESUME ACTION VERBS

- Listed alphabetically: <https://www.livecareer.com/quintessential/action-alpha>
- Listed by skill categories: <https://www.livecareer.com/quintessential/action-skills>

### NOTES

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## A GENERAL RESUME TEMPLATE

For all formats:

### 1. CONTACT INFORMATION

- Name
- Address
- City, State, ZIP
- Telephone number(s) (including area code)
- Email address

For all formats:

### 2. CAREER (OR JOB) OBJECTIVE

- The job title

For all formats:

### 3. SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Write four to six bulleted, short statements that summarize why you would be good at your job.
- Prioritize the statements in this section so the most relevant one comes first.
- Write broad statements about your greatest attributes with detailed examples.
- Show that your skills and experience match the employer's needs.
- Highlight your relevant strengths drawn from your skills and experience.
- Demonstrate Actions = Results – what you did and what were the results.

For Functional or Combination formats:

### 4. SKILLS SECTION(S)

For Each Major Skill:

- Write two or more bulleted statements about your relevant job duties and the results.
- When discussing results discuss how you positively affected the organization, improved the bottom line, or helped your boss, co-workers, or customers.
- Mention relevant on-the-job awards or commendations that you received.

For Chronological or Combination formats only:

### 5a. WORK HISTORY

For the last 5 – 15 years:

- List most recent job first: Job Title
- Company Name; City / State; for dates: Year to Year, or Month/Year to Month/Year; or if still employed state present.
- Write two or more bullet statements about your relevant job duties, and about what you learned or accomplished.
- When discussing results, show how you positively affected the organization, improved the bottom line, or helped your boss, co-workers, or customers.
- Mention relevant on-the-job awards or commendations that you received.
- Do the same for each job.

For Functional format only:

### 5b. WORK HISTORY

- For the last 5 – 15 years:
- List most recent job first.
- List employment by Job Title; Company Name; City / State and Month/Year to Year or Month/Year or if still employed state present.

For all formats:

### 6. EDUCATION

- List University and Community College information before you list your high school.
- Degree, major, school, city, state, and completion date.
- List GPA only if at least 3.0 on a 4-point scale.
- You can also list any scholastic achievements / recognition, especially if directly related to career goal.

For all formats (optional):

### COMMUNITY SERVICE OR VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE (if relevant to your career goal)

- List the organization's name, position held and the dates.



## INTERVIEW PREPARATION

A job interview is the goal of everything that you do in a job search. Your preparedness for job interviews will determine whether or not you'll get a job offer.

Types of interviews:

- One-on-one
- Panel (more than one interviewer)
- Telephone
- Traditional (open-ended questions are used that require more than "yes" or "no" answers)
- Stress
- Group (more than one job candidate goes through the interview at the same time)
- Behavioral (questions seek answers about a candidate's past employment behavior – usually conducted by a panel)

Behavioral interviews are frequently the type of interviews that you should expect, because employers have a greater chance of hiring the right person when they use behavioral interviews. An example of a behavioral question: **"Tell me about a time when you dealt with an angry customer. What did you do to solve their problem?"**

### PREPARE YOUR ANSWERS

#### GENERAL ICE-BREAKER QUESTIONS TO EXPECT:

- "Tell me about yourself" – don't tell your life story! Prepare a short (3-5 minutes) answer that ties together your top selling points of your background and what the employer wants for the job.
- "What do you know about our company?" or "Why do you want to work for our company?" - prepare a short answer that ties together your top selling points of your background and how they match what the company does or how they meet the needs of the company for that position.

#### BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

("Tell me about a time when..."; "How would you handle a situation like...") - Formulate an answer using the S.T.A.R. format:

- **S: Situation on a job** - describe a situation that you've faced on a job; or
- **T: Task you performed on a job** - describe a work task;
- **A: Action(s) you took** - what you did;
- **R: Result(s) you obtained** - positive (or, sometimes negative) results of your actions.
- Most of the time you'll be questioned about positive things that you did to help a former employer be successful. **You should, however, expect at least one question to come up about something negative in your career, so be prepared.**

#### OTHER POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What qualifications do you have for this job?
- What is your greatest strength?
- What is your greatest weakness?
- Why did you leave your previous job(s)?
- If you were hired, what ideas / talents could you contribute to the position or our company?

- What would you do if...?
- Could you give me an example of how you did...?
- Give me an example of how you handled a difficult situation on a previous job.
- Give me an example of one of your most successful projects.
- Give me an example of one of your least successful projects –what did you learn from this experience?
- Tell me about your education.
- Why have you chosen this particular field?
- Describe your best / worst boss.
- **GOOGLE "BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS" FOR MORE EXAMPLES**

#### QUESTIONS YOU MAY WANT TO ASK AT THE END OF YOUR INTERVIEW

- What is a typical workday like for someone in this position?
- What are the key challenges or problems of this position?
- What characteristics does a successful person within your company possess?
- What are the company's short and long-term objectives?
- How would you describe your corporation's personality and management style?
- What is the structure of this position's department?
- How is success measured for this position?
- What are the areas in the job that you'd like to see improved?
- What goals or objectives need to be achieved in the next six months? Next year?
- When will a hiring decision be made about this position?

DO NOT ASK ABOUT SALARY OR BENEFITS UNLESS  
THEY OFFER THE JOB TO YOU!

If you're offered the job...

- Don't state a specific dollar figure for your desired salary - let the employer state it;
- Or, ask them "How much money is in the company budget for this position?";
- Or, ask them "How much money do you think someone with my qualifications deserves for a salary?"

WHEN THE INTERVIEW IS OVER...

- If you want the job, ask for it.
- If you don't want the job, don't ask for it.
- After you leave, send a short thank-you note to the interviewer - remind the interviewer about your strongest selling points and why you deserve to be hired.

## DON'T FORGET TO SELL YOURSELF WITH YOUR COMPUTER SKILLS

Computer skills are a requirement for many jobs – these are free web sites where you can learn more about computer skills:

- <http://www.gcflearnfree.org/>
- <http://www.meganga.com/> - free computer lessons for seniors and beginners
- <http://www.youtube.com/> - check for free computer skills (and job skills) videos

## MAKE THE BEST USE OF YOUR AVAILABLE TIME

- Set up a job-search routine that works for you.
- If something doesn't work in your job search routine, try something different.
- The more time (and days) you spend searching for a job will help you reduce the amount of time that you're unemployed.

For example:

- *I can put in \_\_\_ hours per day, \_\_\_ days per week until I find another job.*
- *My job search schedule will usually be from \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. until \_\_\_\_\_ p.m., \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_.*

## BE PREPARED TO RETURN TO WORK

- Do you own a reliable car?
  - If you do not own a car, how will you get to your job – on foot, bicycle, get rides from others, or take the bus?
  - What is your emergency back-up plan for transportation?
- Do you have your childcare arrangements made?
  - If they are school-aged children, who will take them to school and pick them up after school?
  - Who will watch them during school holidays?
  - What are your back-up plans for every possible kind of situation or emergency?
- Other items to get ready immediately – Do you:
  - Have an alarm clock? Will you shower / bathe the night before, or when you get up before going to work?
  - Have enough clean and suitable clothing for the first week of work?
  - Know what you will do about meals? Will you prepare your meals the night before, or after you get up before going to work?
  - Need to reschedule doctor or other appointments to a date before the job begins, or several months ahead in the future? It is not a good idea to start taking time off right after you start a job (you'll probably be on probation).

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO TO GET READY TO RETURN TO WORK?

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## JOB LEAD SOURCES

Internet (don't spend more than 5 hours per week on the Internet!)

- Useful job search web sites:
  - [www.WorkInTexas.com](http://www.WorkInTexas.com)
  - [www.wspanhandle.com](http://www.wspanhandle.com) in Amarillo (Jobs Now 2020)
  - [www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com)
  - [www.simplyhired.com](http://www.simplyhired.com)
  - [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)
  - [www.glassdoor.com](http://www.glassdoor.com)
- [www.usajobs.com](http://www.usajobs.com)
- [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)
- [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)
- [www.linkup.com](http://www.linkup.com)
- [www.us.jobs](http://www.us.jobs)
- [www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org)
- [www.snagajob.com](http://www.snagajob.com)

### Other sources for job leads:

- Newspaper (check Wednesdays and Sundays for new listings)
- Social media (like company Facebook pages if you'd like to work there) *(clean up your Facebook page!)*
- Job fairs (the Amarillo Job Fair is held twice a year, in April and October – check [amarillojobfair.org](http://amarillojobfair.org) for information)
- News reports in the media (television, radio, newspaper, magazines)
- Cold calls in person – go to companies and ask for a job, complete an application or submit your resume

### JOB LEADS THROUGH EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

Workforce Solutions – Amarillo

1206 S.W. 7th Avenue

Amarillo, TX 79101

806-372-5521 Fax: 806-371-9519

- **Elwood Staffing**; 2630 S.W. 34th; 806-359-1539
  - **Express Employment Professionals**; 6605 I-40 West; 806-467-2562
  - **Kelly Services**; 7102 I-40 West; 806-355-5239
- **PeopleReady**; 121 Westgate Parkway, Suite 80; 806-373-6400
  - **Manpower Temporary Services**; 1616 S. Kentucky, Suite #325; 806-358-6221
  - **Spherion**; 4209 S.W. 21st; 806-359-1111

### NETWORKING – THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO GET A JOB

- Only 15–20% of all open jobs gets advertised on the Internet or in the newspapers – most are found through networking.
- If you get a great job lead, you're likely to get it from your network of contacts (friends, family, people you know professionally, people you know at church, etc.).

### MY JOB SEARCH NETWORK:

	Name and title	Employer / Company	Contact Information	Notes
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

Make a list of the companies where you'd like to work, and start your research on them. Don't forget web site addresses, telephone numbers, and names of contacts.

CAREER EXPLORATION WEB SITES: <http://www.texascareercheck.com/> <https://www.mynextmove.org/> <https://www.onetonline.org/>



# MASTER APPLICATION

## CONTACT / OTHER INFORMATION

First Name	M.I.	Last Name	Daytime Phone (    )
Mailing Address	City	State	Zip
Email Address(es)			
Driver's License – State	Class	Endorsement(s)	
<i>Cell phone numbers: professional message for voicemail, plus room for new voicemails    Social Security / Driver's License Numbers - MEMORIAL</i>			
<i>Email address: professional; use caution with numbers    Online application: "https", lock icon to ensure web encryption for Social Security numbers</i>			
Are you a U.S. citizen?    Yes ___ No ___	If not, are you legally able to work in the U.S.?		Yes ___ No ___
<i>Legal work status: gather paperwork to verify your work status</i>			
Do you have a criminal conviction? Yes ___ No ___	If yes, please explain		
<i>Convictions: Texas employers can check for misdemeanors and felonies – prepare explanations before job interviews (turn negatives to positive)</i>			

## COMPUTER / OFFICE SKILLS

Computer operating system(s) (include versions)
Software applications
<i>Consider listing all software that you can successfully use (either from experience on your home computer or from your jobs)</i>
Computer / office equipment you can operate
Typing ___    10-key ___    Copier machine Yes ___ No ___    Fax machine    Yes ___ No ___    Multi-line phone Yes ___ No ___    Postage    Yes ___ No ___

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

ENGLISH			SPANISH			OTHER _____		
Speak	Exc ___ VG ___ G ___		Speak	Exc ___ VG ___ G ___		Speak	Exc ___ VG ___ G ___	
Read	Exc ___ VG ___ G ___		Read	Exc ___ VG ___ G ___		Read	Exc ___ VG ___ G ___	
Write	Exc ___ VG ___ G ___		Write	Exc ___ VG ___ G ___		Write	Exc ___ VG ___ G ___	

## MILITARY SERVICE

Branch	From	To	Branch	From	To
Type of discharge	Duties		Type of discharge	Duties	
Special training			Special training		
Awards / recognition			Awards / recognition		

## LICENSES / CERTIFICATIONS

Type	Date	Type	Date
Issued by		Issued by	
Expires	Number	Expires	Number
Type	Date	Type	Date
Issued by		Issued by	
Expires	Number	Expires	Number

## EDUCATION

HIGH SCHOOL	VOCATIONAL	COMMUNITY COLLEGE	UNIVERSITY
Name _____	Name _____	Name _____	Name _____
City, ST _____	City, ST _____	City, ST _____	City, ST _____
From _____ To _____	From _____ To _____	From _____ To _____	From _____ To _____
Graduated? Y ___ N ___	Graduated? Y ___ N ___	Graduated? Y ___ N ___	Graduated? Y ___ N ___
Awards _____	Major Awards _____	Major Awards _____	Major Awards _____

*GED = High School Diploma. List GPA only if at least 3.0 on a 4-point scale.*

## REFERENCES

Name _____	Name _____
Title _____	Title _____
Telephone _____	Telephone _____
Email _____	Email _____
Name _____	Name _____
Title _____	Title _____
Telephone _____	Telephone _____
Email _____	Email _____

*Best references to use are PROFESSIONAL and EDUCATIONAL. Don't use family members for PERSONAL references. Contact references and ask for permission to use them as references. Explain to references (1) Job(s) you're applying for, and (2) Why you deserve to be hired.*

## WORK HISTORY

*List most recent employment first, followed by other employment in reverse chronological order.*

Company name _____		Telephone ( ) _____
Address _____		Supervisor _____
Employed from _____ to _____	Job title _____	Still employed ___ Quit ___ Fired ___ Laid off ___
Major responsibilities _____		
Accomplishments _____		
Company name _____		Telephone ( ) _____
Address _____		Supervisor _____
Employed from _____ to _____	Job title _____	Still employed ___ Quit ___ Fired ___ Laid off ___
Major responsibilities _____		
Accomplishments _____		
Company name _____		Telephone ( ) _____
Address _____		Supervisor _____
Employed from _____ to _____	Job title _____	Still employed ___ Quit ___ Fired ___ Laid off ___
Major responsibilities _____		
Accomplishments _____		
Company name _____		Telephone ( ) _____
Address _____		Supervisor _____
Employed from _____ to _____	Job title _____	Still employed ___ Quit ___ Fired ___ Laid off ___
Major responsibilities _____		
Accomplishments _____		

1. READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE YOU COMPLETE AN APPLICATION. 2. Make copies of this page if you have more than 5 jobs in your work history. 3. Bring two ink pens with you when you are completing applications in person at companies. 4. Prepare your answers ahead of time about negatives in your background (criminal conviction, fired, long periods of unemployment, too many jobs in a short period of time).