

JOB GUIDE
GETTING THE JOB

YOUR RESUME

Once you've decided on the job the next step is 'selling yourself' to potential employers.

Remember that the person reading your resume will be looking for key reasons to choose you for an interview.

Keep it brief and highlight the points that will make a good impression and make the reader want to find out more about you.

Your resume should be concise and to the point.

Some Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- ✓ Have your resume typed up on a word processor (keep a copy on disk for easy updating and new copies).
- ✓ Check all spelling.
- ✓ Ensure your resume looks tidy – don't be afraid of white space.
- ✓ Ask others to read your resume and give you their opinion.
- ✓ Include reference to specific things such as what you are experienced in, have knowledge of and the licences / tickets you hold.

DON'T

- ✗ Include reference to things such as your gender, religion and your general health.
- ✗ Use brightly coloured paper or printing on your resume.
- ✗ Exaggerate about your experience, education or capabilities.
- ✗ Send out the original copy of your resume - make sure you always have some copies on hand.
- ✗ Include a current work number on your resume if you can't discuss another opportunity in your work environment.
- ✗ Include any mention of salary.

Help with your resume

Help is only a phone call away. Ring the employment consultants from NEATO. They can assist in developing a resume.

They can also check your resume up against potential vacancies and see if you have included necessary experience and skills to do the job.

You may need to do further self-development. This would be your opportunity to come in and see NEATO staff. They are happy to give you assistance to get you a step closer to that ideal job.

SEARCHING FOR WORK

Many people think that reading Saturday's newspaper is the only way to go about looking for work. While this is still one of the most reliable ways of locating positions that interest you, it is not necessarily the only way. If supported by a few additional methods of job searching, the time it takes you to find a suitable position is likely to reduce. These methods may include:

- **Employment Agencies:** There are many employment agencies that deal in general or specialised occupations, labour hire, casual, full-time and part-time work. Simply by searching Internet or telephone directories, you will be able to locate the agencies that suit the work you are looking for. Register with as many suitable agencies as you can to widen your search for work
- **Newspapers:** One of the most traditional forms of advertising positions vacant
- **Internet:** The Internet is fast becoming the preferred means of 'doing business'. Many employment agencies have Internet websites. Simply by searching for keywords (such as: 'employment', 'recruitment', 'jobs', 'vacancies' and 'work'), you will locate sites that may interest you.
- **Centrelink touchscreens and Internet jobsearch site:** Your local Centrelink office will be advertising positions on job touchscreens for some employment agencies. They also advertise these jobs on an internet site with the address of: www.jobsearch.gov.au
- **Networking:** Making sure that family, friends and acquaintances know that you are looking for work, may mean you come across employment opportunities before they are even advertised. Personal testimony from your family, friends and acquaintances in securing the job may help. Sometimes it is 'who you know' not 'what you know'.
- **Canvassing Employers:** This is possibly the most courageous method of searching for work. Directly approaching employers over the telephone or in person is a successful method of locating available positions. You also have the opportunity to make a positive first impression. A modification of this technique is where a cover letter with resume is sent to the employer. Always request the employer to hold your information on file for consideration for any future jobs that come up.
- **Keep an eye on shop windows and noticeboards** in your local community, as employers will sometimes place advertisements for employees in these places.
- **Industry publications:** Depending on the occupation you are looking for, employers may advertise positions in industry magazines and newsletters.

As you can see, there are many ways to search for a suitable job. Employment Consultants at your nearest NEATO office will be able to assist you with specific queries you may have regarding the above approaches in searching for work.

MAKING CONTACT

Your first contact with any potential employer is your first and possibly your only chance to make a good impression.

If you are responding to any advertised job position, the advertisement will usually specify how you are to respond. Follow instructions, although if a phone

number is given make contact, introduce yourself and ask for any further information before applying.

On the telephone

Whether you are making an initial call or responding to an advertisement, here are some basic points to keep in mind:

- ✓ Have all your paperwork in front of you – resume and the job advertisement.
- ✓ Before you call, write down some questions what the job will involve and exactly what skills may be required.
- ✓ Make sure you have a paper and pen handy.
- ✓ Speak clearly, listen, if you don't understand something – ask again.
- ✓ Tell the person you are interested in the position and are keen to have an interview.
- ✓ If you are requested to send more information, check the correct spelling of person's name and company name.



WRITING APPLICATION LETTERS

An application will usually consist of an application or cover letter; selection criteria (optional to employer's requirements) and resume (sometimes called a curriculum vitae). This topic will focus upon writing the actual application or cover letter.

How important is the application letter?

The application letter is extremely important. It introduces you to the employer and determines whether they will continue to read on to your resume. For that reason, some applicants have an eye-catching first paragraph to the letter. For example:

- 'I was so happy to see your advertisement for a _____ because I think I am perfectly suited to this position'.
- 'Yes! Look no further! This is the application you have been waiting for!'

Some applicants will even include anagrams of their name or crosswords that include positive terms about them. For example:

- Reliable
- Organised
- Business-minded
- Extroverted
- Respected
- Timely

Of course, not everyone is comfortable with having such forthright information in their application letters. The above suggestions are not essential in writing an interesting application letter and should only be used if you feel comfortable with them and they suit your personality.

What should be included in the application letter?

Your application letter represents the first time an employer will begin to learn about you. For that reason, you need to include information that will encourage them to continue reading your application and convince them that you are worth interviewing. The following is a minimum list of suggestions of information you should include in the application letter:

- Make sure you address the letter to the correct address and appropriate person. Also, the letter should be free from grammatical errors and preferably typed (unless a hand-written letter is specifically requested in the advertisement).
- You will need to describe your competency, skills and experience relevant to the position. This may include qualifications, education, previous experience, your abilities and knowledge.
- Because your application will possibly be competing with many others, you will need to write a letter that individualises you. To do this, try not to use a standard application letter or the same letter for every job you apply for. Tailor the letter to this position and employer.
- Make the letter concise and a maximum of one and a half pages in length.
- In the final paragraph, do not be afraid to request an interview and a date that you will follow up the application with the employer. Make sure you include how you can be contacted.
- Close the letter professionally with 'Yours sincerely' and include your name written/printed clearly under your signature (do not include your current position title – it will mean nothing to the prospective employer)
- Before sending the application letter, make sure you have proofread the letter and have included the requested attachments (resume, references, proof of qualifications, etc).

Employment Consultants at your nearest NEATO Agency be able to assist you with application letters as required.

THE INTERVIEW



Your hard work has now paid off and you've been given a date and time for the interview.

When you're agreeing on the date and time for your interview, there are a number of things you should find out to help your planning. These include:

- Who will be conducting the interview (ask for their name(s) and their position(s) within the company)
- Reconfirming the exact position you are being interviewed for
- Making sure you know exactly where you are going for the interview (ask for directions if necessary)
- Writing down the name and number of the person arranging or conducting the interview, in case of a problem on the day

PLANNING AHEAD

Your job interview resulted from all research you've done. Reading back on all your notes is a good way to prepare for the questions that you're likely to be asked.

PRACTICE – PRACTICE – PRACTICE

A lot of the questions will be predictable. Use the following list to write down questions that you might be asked.

Keep in mind that the person interviewing you has three key questions or concerns to answer. These are:

Can you do the job? This relates to your education/training, your skills and abilities.

Will you do the job? Are you willing to work, keen to learn and determined to succeed in the job?

Will you fit in? The interviewer will be trying to see whether you have the right 'chemistry' for the company.

It's a good idea to practice the sort of questions that they may ask.

Some commonly asked questions:

Tell me about yourself?

Remember... don't talk about your personal life. Talk about your accomplishments and your skills.

What interests you in this job/career/industry?

What skills or accomplishments will you bring to this job?

Focus on the requirements specified in the advertisement for the position. Remember... that if you don't really have any skills you do have a willingness to learn, as well as enthusiasm and a commitment to meeting the requirements of the position.

Why do you want to work for us?

Don't mention money. Talk about the reputation of the company, the opportunities and experience that you can gain from the company.

Why do you think you are the best person for this position?

Again, focus on your skills and achievements or, at least, on your ambition to learn.

And some tricky questions

Why did you leave your last job?

Always answer this question honestly. You should never criticize previous employers.

What is your greatest weakness?

The trick is to turn a 'negative' into a positive.

"I'm sometimes impatient with disorganized people," but you might say, "I'm highly organized and tend to come down hard on people who aren't. But now I'm seeing how I can teach others to be more organized for themselves."

Why have you been unemployed for such a long time?

Focus on what you have achieved during that time: "I've been studying" or "I've been concentrating on finding the right opportunity".

Questions you should ask

You will be asked questions but you should also prepare some questions to ask about the job.

Here are some suggestions that can help develop your own questions:

- How does this position fit into the overall company structure?
- Who would I be working with?
- What would be my responsibilities?
- What would I be expected to accomplish in the first six months?
- Is on-the-job training provided?
- What is a typical working week or day like?

THE BIG DAY



The day of the interview has arrived, make sure you've got everything you need. The following checklist will help:

- The exact address and directions to the interview.
- The name and telephone number of the interviewer, in case something happens.
- A few copies of your resume.
- Your list of questions that you want to ask about the job.
- A few copies of your references – you don't want to give away originals.
- A pad and pen to note down anything you need to in the interview.
- Write down the name of the interviewer and remember to use his or her name a few times during the interview.

3 TOP TIPS



Dress appropriately

Look tidy, clean and well dressed for the interview. The key is to reflect the 'culture' of the company and dress as if you're already one of the team.

Don't be late

You don't get a second chance to make a good first impression. Plan to arrive early so you can sit quietly for a few minutes before going to the specified place right on time. If you know you're going to be late, ring the interviewer as soon as you can.

Be confident

If you're properly prepared, it will be easier to be relaxed and confident. If you believe you're the person for the job, others will too.

Smile!

MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION

A firm handshake, a smile and making eye contact will go a long way. Always wait to be offered a seat or wait for the interviewer to sit down before you do.

You should let the interviewer guide the conversation and answer questions briefly and positively.

Even if you feel you haven't excelled in the interview, you should try to end on a positive note. Thank the interviewer for his or her time, you may even ask how your qualifications and background meet the requirements of the position. Finally, ask your interviewer about the next step and how soon you can expect to hear from the company.

SOME INTERVIEW DO'S AND DON'TS

DO:

- ✓ Answer questions directly and briefly
- ✓ Listen carefully
- ✓ Take a moment before you answer
- ✓ Maintain eye contact
- ✓ Sound thoughtful
- ✓ Be honest in your answers
- ✓ Engage in a conversation
- ✓ Smile

DON'T:

- ✗ Ramble or 'over answer'
- ✗ Talk over the interviewer
- ✗ Rush
- ✗ Stare
- ✗ Sound mechanical
- ✗ Exaggerate
- ✗ Argue
- ✗ Look too serious

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

It's always a good idea to send a follow up letter following your interview. Personally addressed to the person who interviewed you – or to each person if there was more than one – this brief letter should:

- ✓ Thank the person/people for the interview;
- ✓ Restate your interest in the position;
- ✓ Mention any specific issues/highlights that came up in the interview;
- ✓ Mention anything you forgot/make clearer; and

Indicate you hope to hear from the company. Take the time to think about the goals for both your life and your career as they are very closely related.

THE JOB OFFER

It may not happen the first time, but keep trying, sooner or later you'll hear the words you've been waiting for:

YOU'VE GOT THE JOB

Job offer over the telephone

When accepting a job verbally, you should confirm the starting date, the salary and any other benefits and working conditions.

Accepting the offer

If you receive a written job offer and you've decided it's the job, you should write a letter of acceptance, to reconfirm the starting date.

If you've been talking to other employers, it's good form to write them a letter thanking them for their interest in you and letting them know that you have accepted a job elsewhere.

STARTING OUT

Congratulations. You're hired!!!

One of the best ways to approach your new start is simply to be yourself and to look and listen to what's happening around you.

Meet as many people in the workplace as you can. With different perspectives of the company, you'll soon develop your own picture.

However you feel about your job, it's important to keep thinking about your career path and where you want to go next. Look ahead and be prepared!

- Is this job right for me?
- Am I enjoying my work?
- Do I fit in with the company and the people I'm working with?
- Is the job providing enough challenges?
- Am I learning new skills and accomplishing new things?
- Are the opportunities that I want going to happen in this job? And how can I make them happen?

Give yourself a career checkup every year and you'll soon be on your way to the future that you want.

GOOD LUCK!

There is no book that can give you all the secrets but we hope that the information and guidelines provided in this guide will help get you started. And remember... you don't have to do it all on your own. When you need a helping hand, come in and talk to one of the team at **NEATO**.

Check the Contact Page in the website to find the NEATO office nearest you.