

JOB APPLICATIONS

Now that you've completed your Personal Fact Sheet and know where there may be some available jobs for you, it's time to contact some potential employers! Remember, the more employers you contact, the better chance you'll have of getting a job.

You will usually be asked to fill out a job application form and later meet with the potential employer (interviewer) to talk about your skills, education, and experience. Since your application will represent you, it's very important that you fill it out carefully. Here are some hints:

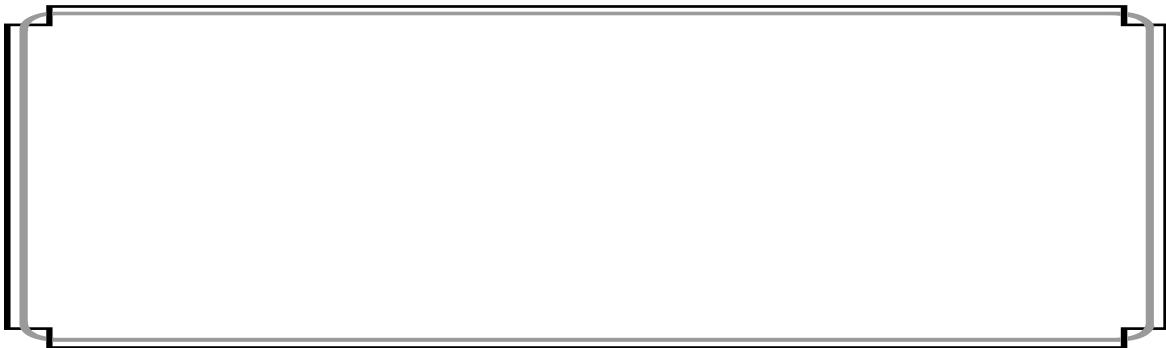
- Print neatly.
- Make sure you spell all the words correctly.
- Use correct grammar.
- Follow the directions.
- Don't leave blanks, if possible.
- Check to make sure the dates are correct.
- Don't forget to sign and date the application.

Consider the following example:

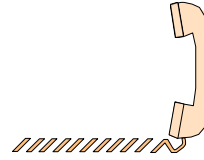
MARC

Marc has dyslexia and, therefore, difficulty with spelling. He does not feel comfortable filling out job applications because he is afraid to make errors.

Can you think of any ideas that might be helpful to Marc in his job search? If so, write them in the box below.



ANSWERING A WANT-AD BY TELEPHONE



Sometimes employers will ask that people answer their ads by telephone. When you make business calls like this, remember to:

1. Ask to speak with the person named in the ad.
2. Tell him or her what you are calling about.
3. Answer his or her questions about your background and experience.
4. Find out what you need to know about the job. For example: “Where is the business located?” “What are the hours?” “What work will you be doing?” “What is the pay?”
5. Be sure you get the name of the person you are supposed to see for the interview, the address, and the time. Write it down so you won’t forget. Have a paper and pen ready before you call.

Here is an example of a newspaper want-ad and a telephone call from a person interested in the job.

Help Wanted	The Globe
Ann Rynn _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	_____ Part-time work in department store. Sales, some stock work. After school and Saturdays. Call Mr. Harris, (617) 211-

Voice: Turner’s Department Store. How may I help you?
Ann: I’d like to speak to Mr. Harris, please. _____
Mr. Harris: This is Mr. Harris speaking.
Ann: Mr. Harris, this is Ann Rynn. I’m calling about the part-time job you advertised in the Globe. _____
Mr. Harris: Oh, yes. Are you attending school?
Ann: Yes, I am. I’m a senior at Tompkins High. _____



Mr. Harris: Any working experience?

Ann: Just baby-sitting. But I need a job and I am willing to work hard. _____

Mr. Harris: Well, the hours of this job are from 5:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. on weekdays, and 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. on Saturdays. Can you work those hours? I need someone who will be reliable and come in every day.

Ann: Those hours would be all right, Mr. Harris. What would I be doing on this job? _____

Mr. Harris: Selling jewelry and cosmetics, working the cash register, and also restocking shelves when you have time. No heavy work.

Ann: Fine. And what is the salary, please? _____

Mr. Harris: \$5.25 an hour. Are you interested?

Ann: I certainly am. May I come down and see you about it? Where is your store located? _____

Mr. Harris: At the corner of Fifth and Elm. Can you come down about five o'clock?

Ann: (*writing down name, address, and time*) Turner's Department Store, Fifth and Elm, five o'clock. Thank you, Mr. Harris. I'll be there on time! _____

In the conversation above, Ann followed the rules for answering a want ad by telephone. On the lines to the right of her conversation, write in the number of the rule that she followed.

THE INTERVIEW

Helpful Tips

- Plan ahead for your interview.
- Be sure you know the name of the person who is going to interview you.
- Ask for directions if you are not certain of the location of the interview.
- Gather together everything you'll need: your Personal Fact Sheet or your resume, a pen, some paper, the directions, etc.

- Figure out how you'll get to the interview (bus, car, etc.).
- Make sure you will be on time, even five to ten minutes earlier, if possible.
- Plan when you should leave your home.
- Take special care to look your best and dress the way you would if were working for this company.
- Go alone. Don't take your friends with you.
- Try to find out all you can about the job and company. Be familiar with its products and services.
- Remember your qualifications and be positive about your abilities to do the job well!



During the Interview

- Be confident as you enter. You're there for a purpose: a new job!
- Ask for the interviewer by name.
- Try to make a good first impression. You might shake hands with the interviewer.
- Sit up straight, don't slouch.
- Make good eye contact, but be careful not to stare.
- Be polite.
- Speak clearly and directly, do not mumble or ramble.
- Try not to fidget. Do **not** tap your feet or your fingers, play with or twirl a pen, bite your nails, play with your hair, etc.
- Do not smoke or chew gum during the interview
- Use proper grammar, not slang.
- Try to relax and smile!
- Never be shy about your good points: talk about your skills, training, and experiences that will make you a good employee. (However, don't *beg* for the job.)
- Address the interviewer as Ms. / Miss. or Mrs. or Mr. Do not use his or her first name unless he or she asks you to.
- Say positive things about other employers, fellow workers, your teacher, etc.
- Be a good listener.
- Wait for the interviewer to bring up the subject of salary and benefits. Only ask about salary and benefits if the interviewer does not bring them up.
- Be prepared to ask a few good questions. Asking questions shows to the interviewer that you have been paying attention.

Good Luck!
Good Luck!

**ACTIVITY**

Consider the following examples:

1. BEN

Ben has been looking for a job for the past three weeks. He hasn't had any luck. As he walks home from a basketball game, he sees a Help Wanted sign in the window of Giovanni's Restaurant. Ben is about to go in and get an application, when he suddenly realizes he is wearing shorts and a dirty T-shirt. He is afraid that if he does not go in and ask for an application now, the job might not be available by the next time he can come back

What would you do?

2. AARON

Aaron got an interview at the grocery store after answering a want ad in the local newspaper. Before the interview, Aaron had to go to the dentist. The dentist's office was pretty crowded and Aaron had to wait for a while. As he finally sits down in the dentist's chair, he realizes that he will be late for his interview.

What would you do?

3. APRIL

April's guidance counselor helped her to get an interview at a bakery. When April arrived, she suddenly felt very nervous. When the store manager asked her questions, she felt as if she had a knot in her stomach and could barely speak.

What would you do in a situation like April's?

4. MICHAEL AND PETER

Michael stops by Peter's house to ask him to come along to the movies. Peter tells him that he can't go because he is just about to head off for a job interview at a gas station. Michael is surprised and asks Peter if he is going to change his dirty jeans and over-sized T-shirt before the interview. Peter replies that he isn't about to change. He tells Michael that people should

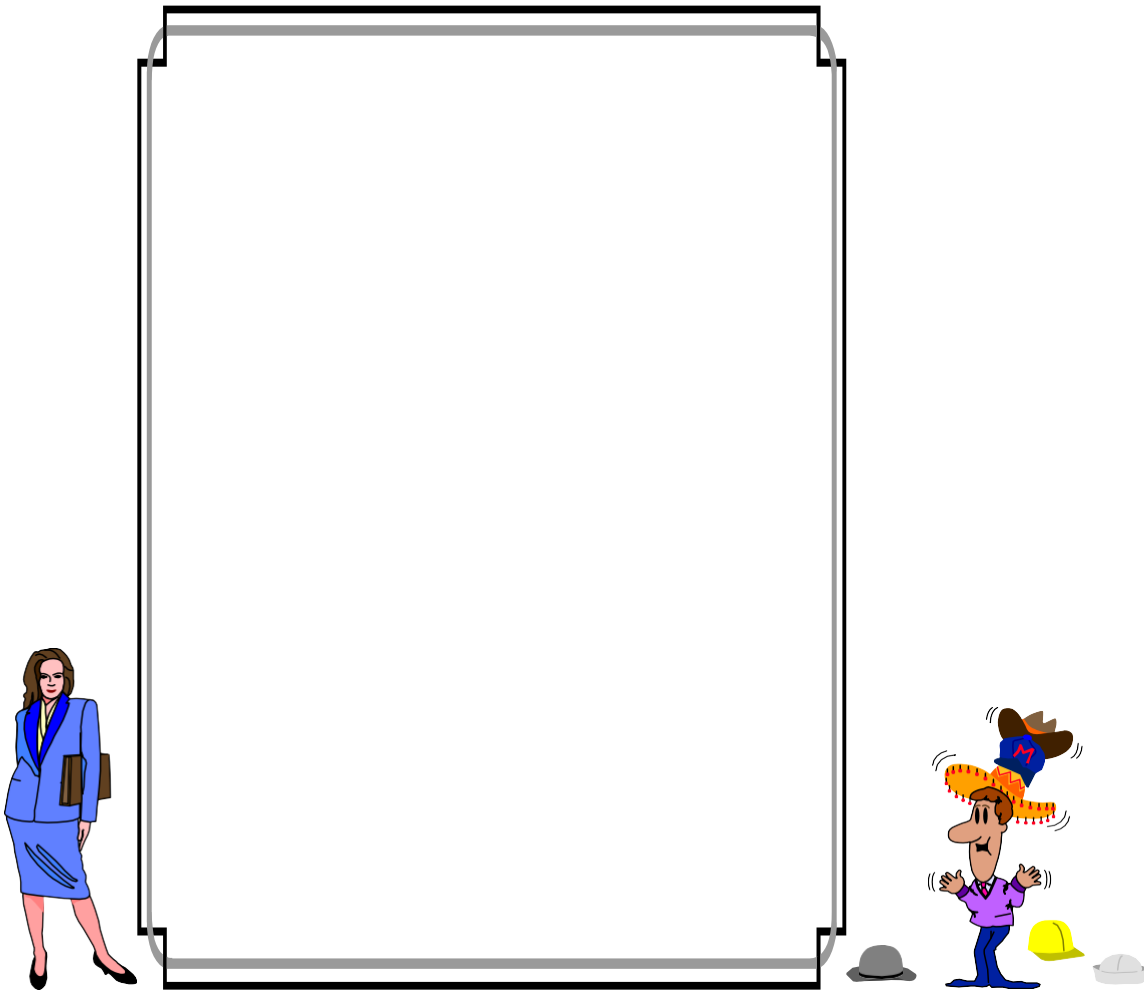
appreciate him no matter what he wears, and says that the work he would be doing would get him dirty anyway. Michael tells him that a good first impression with an employer is important and even though work at a gas station might be dirty, he should still wear clean and appropriate clothing to the interview.

Who do you think is right? Why?



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Take an inventory of your clothes. What would you wear for a job interview?



WHAT TO EXPECT



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Here are some questions that you just might be asked at an interview. Try answering them in the spaces provided. You might also want to practice having your foster parent, program staff, social worker, or friend act like the interviewer. Answer as you would if you were actually being interviewed.

1. What can I do for you? _____
2. How did you learn about this job? _____
3. Why are you interested in working for this company? _____

4. Why do you feel qualified for this job? _____
5. Have you ever done this kind of work before? _____



6. Why do want this job? _____
7. What do you think you would like about this job? _____
8. Have you had any special education for this job? _____
9. Tell me about your education. _____
10. What subjects do you like best? _____



11. What subjects do you like least? _____
12. Tell me about your other jobs. _____
13. Which job did you like the best? Why? _____
14. Which duties did you like best? Why? _____
15. What duties did you like least? Why? _____

16. Which of your job supervisors did you like the best? Why? _____

17. Which of your job supervisors did you like least? Why? _____

18. Why have you changed jobs so many times? (Skip this question if it doesn't apply.)

19. How do you get along with your co-workers? _____

20. Can you work flexible hours? _____



21. What skills do you have that will help you do this job? _____

22. Why did you leave your last job? _____

23. Have you ever been fired or asked to resign? Why? _____

24. What are your career goals? _____

25. Is there anything else I should know about you? _____



26. Is there anything you would like to change on your job application form? _____

27. What salary do you have in mind? _____

28. What is the lowest salary you would accept? _____

29. Are you still interested in working for us?

30. When can you start? _____

31. Do you have any questions for me? _____



Be enthusiastic!

You can ask the interviewer if you may call to find out about the hiring decision or you can ask when you will be notified about the decision. At the end of the interview, thank the interviewer for his time and shake hands.

INTERVIEW DYNAMICS

Job interviews are a vital part of the employment-seeking process. A good interview can be as important as the qualifications listed on a job application or resume and will often determine who will get the job. Therefore, the anticipation of job interviews can create a high level of anxiety for everyone. You want to make a good impression on the interviewer, but even though you are prepared (appropriate dress, manners, possible questions, etc.), you are not sure of exactly what s/he is looking for in an employee. S/he may prefer someone who is quiet and serious-minded or a person who is outgoing and friendly.

Most of you are aware that words, body language, dress, and behavior can convey messages and are therefore important to consider during job interviews. Furthermore, your self-perception can have an influence on the interviewer. If you have a positive perception and feel good about yourself, you will come across with confidence.

Young people who are culturally and linguistically diverse, physically or emotionally challenged, and/or gay or lesbian often have additional concerns about how they will be perceived by an interviewer. A key to these concerns is to be aware that although stereotyping and prejudices do still exist, the individual can do much to dispel any preconceived ideas and positively influence the interview by presenting him/herself with a willingness to work, readiness to learn and adapt to job expectations, and a confidence in self that says, *“I can do this job well.”*

Before you describe your interviewing style and develop strategies on how to improve it, utilize the following exercises/questions to further consider interview dynamics.

Consider the following:

Carlos has been looking for a job for the past three weeks and has put in many applications. Today, the manager of a retail store at the local mall called him back to invite him for an interview for a sales position. Although Carlos is happy that he has the opportunity to interview, he is also very anxious and nervous. Carlos isn't sure what to expect. The only job he ever had before was at the Hispanic grocery store around the corner from where he lives. Carlos tries to imagine how he would answer possible interview questions like, ***“Why do you think you are qualified for this position?”*** Carlos thinks that he has good communication skills, though he mainly communicates with his Hispanic friends and family. The manager could also ask him about his career plans. Carlos would like to become a social worker in an Hispanic social service agency, but he is not sure if this would be a good answer to give during the interview.

How do you think Carlos' cultural background influences his feelings about the job interview?

What possible assumptions do you think the interviewer could make about Carlos if he presents himself as anxious and unsure?



What kind of cross-cultural dynamics could take place in the interview?



What advice would you give Carlos to help him prepare for the interview?



The dynamics of cultural differences are the results of diversity in values, perceptions, assumptions, and communication styles. Different things may be important to different individuals; the key is to understand your own heritage and values and respect those of others.

Can you think of values which are influenced by your cultural background?



Do you think that your values might sometimes be different from the values of others? If so, describe below:

While some youth like Carlos think about the potential impact of cross-cultural dynamics, other youth might not be aware of them or choose to ignore them.

Consider the following:

Monique, who immigrated into the US two years ago, got an interview at a fast food restaurant after looking for a job for four weeks. When she talks to her best friend about the upcoming interview, Monique states that she is just going to say what is on her mind and will not change her dress or communication style just to make a good impression on the interviewer. She believes that she can do the job and her presentation (dress, language, behavior) should not matter.

Do you think that Monique’s plan could cause a communication problem for the job interviewer?

What advice would you give to Monique?

The perception youth have about themselves and their abilities greatly influences their self-esteem, communication styles, and reflections on their good qualities/strengths.

Consider the following:

Jonathan applied for a job at a large warehouse. The manager called him back to set up an interview for the position of stock-person. Now Jonathan is very nervous before the interview because he is overweight. He worries that others might think he won’t be able to perform the job duties and might be too slow.

What is Jonathan’s perception about himself? How could his perception influence the outcome of his interview?

Consider the following:

Jack was in a car accident five years ago. He lost the use of both of his legs and is confined to a wheelchair. Jack has applied for a job as a clerical assistant. Although he thinks he can do the job, he is nervous because he thinks that others might think that his handicap might prevent him from doing the work. He is not sure if he should follow through with the interview.

What is Jack’s perception about himself?

Do you have any advice for Jack?

Our perception about ourselves greatly influences the messages we convey to others. We all have good qualities as well as shortcomings. Try to be positive! If you have a good perception about yourself, you will appear more confident and motivated not only during the job interview, but also in your work.



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Practice interviewing by role-playing with your foster parent, social worker, or group care staff. Use the feedback to evaluate the messages you convey, your sense of self, and how you would address possible issues related to diversity.

How would you describe your interviewing style?

How do you perceive yourself?

How might you enhance your self-perception?



ACTIVITY

Develop strategies with your foster parent, social worker, or group care staff on how to improve your interviewing skills.

My Strategies Are:

As stated earlier, even those adolescents and adults who are well prepared for the job search might have to apply many times before finding employment.

How would you feel and what would you do if you were not hired after an interview?



A rejection might be difficult. Don't take it personally and don't get discouraged. Rejection is a part of everyone's job hunting experience. Keep trying!

What would you do if you were offered a job after the interview process?



Make sure that you evaluate the pros and cons (wages, responsibilities, benefits, location, hours). If you decide to take the job, write a letter of acceptance and make sure you set a starting date with your employer.

FOLLOW-UP LETTERS

You should always send a thank you letter following an interview to express your appreciation to the interviewer for talking with you. In addition, your letter will remind the interviewer that you are still very interested in the job and keep your name in the interviewer's mind until a decision is made.

The follow-up letter will also give you the opportunity to answer questions you needed more time to think about and could not answer during the interview. If you want to use the letter to sell yourself a little more, take the time to tell the interviewer once again why you want to work for his or her company and what you have to offer.



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Look at the following example of follow-up letters and then try writing a letter to an employer who has given you an interview.

1283 Spring Street
Gardner, MA 01213

June 4, 2000

Ms. Patricia Smith
Personnel Director
Tazre Department Store
287 Lincoln Street
Wakefield, MA 01880

Dear Ms. Smith,

Thank you very much for interviewing me on June 3, 2000 for the cashier's position. I enjoyed meeting you and learning about your store's employment program. I am very interested in working at Tazre's Department Store.

If you would like to receive any other information or references, please call me at (508) 278-1234.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Daniel Lawrence
Daniel Lawrence

*1080 East Street
West Boston, MA 02100*

June 10, 2000

Mr. John Walsh
Personnel Manager
Sunrise Bakery
2101 Cake Lane
Boston, MA 02100

Dear Mr. Walsh,

Thank you for the considerations you have given me in your interview yesterday morning.

The opportunity to meet you and other staff at Sunrise Bakery has convinced me that I would be happy working at your company. If I am given the job, I will do my best to meet the expectations of employment.

Sincerely,

James Bradley

James Bradley

726 Mills Road
Boston, MA 02100

July 3, 2000

Ms. Kathryn Butler
Personnel Office First Bank
Boston, MA 02100

Dear Ms. Butler

As you requested during our interview yesterday morning, I have asked my guidance counselor to send you a transcript of my grades.

When you asked me if I would be interested in starting as a filing clerk, I was not sure. After considering the option, I decided that being a filing clerk would be a good way to learn the ins and outs of office work.

Thank you very much for the interview. The more I heard about First Bank, the more I wanted to work there. I was a little nervous during the typing test; however, you will see from my transcript that I can do good work. If I am hired as a typist or filing clerk, I am sure I will do a good job.

Sincerely,

Joyce Martin

Joyce Martin

ACTIVITY

Complete your practice letter in the following space.

