

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO™ GET THAT JOB AND KEEP IT



CREATED BY

ALLIANCE
for **CHILDREN'S**
RIGHTS



Children's Law Center
of California

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO™ **GET THAT JOB AND KEEP IT**

This packet is meant to assist youth and their job coaches in the journey toward finding and maintaining a job.

You'll find helpful explanations, worksheets and links throughout the guide. This guide is best used in conjunction with a Google account and a supportive adult mentor that can serve as a Job Coach.

KNOWB4UGO.ORG



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GET THAT JOB



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO™ GET THAT JOB AND KEEP IT



WHO ARE YOU ONLINE?

Before you start your job search, make sure that what people see about you online is positive and professional. Employers may look for your profile and make a decision to interview you or not based on what they see. So let's get ready to get a job:

VOICEMAIL

Let's say that an employer calls you to schedule an interview. Your voicemail might be the first encounter they have with you. Make it sound professional! Record an outgoing message that sounds like this:

- Hello, you've reached Maria. I'm currently not available. Please leave your name and number and I'll be sure to get back to you as soon as possible.
- Hi, you've reached Miguel. I'm sorry that I am not available to answer your call at the present time. Please leave your name, number and a quick message at the tone, and I'll return your call as soon as I can.



SOCIAL MEDIA PRIVACY SETTINGS

Most people use social media. But you might not want potential employers to see everything you share online. Check your privacy settings to make sure you are only sharing publically things you would want employers to see.



LEARN MORE

[HOW TO MANAGE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRIVACY SETTINGS](#)

This article addresses privacy setting questions for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, LinkedIn, and Pinterest.

you might not want potential employers to see everything you share online

ONLINE PLATFORMS FOR EMAIL, STORAGE AND DOCUMENT CREATION

You probably already have an email account. What email name are you using? “Hotdogdude@hotmail.com” or “Silly-girl175849@yahoo.com” are not professional. If your exact name is not available, use some variation of your initials or middle name. Run ideas by your job coach if you are having trouble figuring out an available email name that sounds professional, such as: jasminessmith@gmail.com.

You also want to make sure that you’re using a reliable email service. [Gmail](#) is a good place to start and will help you make good use of this toolkit. If you don’t already have one, set up a Gmail account.



This toolkit includes Google templates that will help you search for a job. You can make copies of the templates and fill them out and share them with your job coach for feedback. Once you have a Gmail account, work with your job coach to explore the templates and copy them to your own Google Drive to keep track of them.

[Google Drive](#) is a great place for storing and editing documents you are using for the job application process, but don't store important legal documents or documents that include confidential information like your social security number or passwords there. Instead, if you check out [ifoster.org](#). They provide a free online "digital locker" where you can store scans of your birth certificate, social security card, and other confidential documents. security number or passwords. Instead, we recommend ifoster.org. They provide a free online "digital locker" where you can store scans of your birth certificate, social security card, and any other documents of this type. You can also use this digital locker to store copies of all your most important Google Docs, in case you

ever get locked out of your Gmail account. A reference should be someone who can tell an employer what kind of worker you are. It is best to ask people ahead of time if they would feel comfortable giving you a good reference. Be sure to let your references know the positions for which you applied so that they are aware they may be contacted.

References need to be updated since addresses, phone numbers, and job titles often change. It is best to use references who are working, rather than unemployed. The people who are your references need to have good telephone communication skills. They also need to have telephone numbers where they can be reached during "business hours." Most employers contact references by telephone during the day. Keep your resource contact list in a Google Doc so you have easy access to it from any smart phone or computer terminal. You should also let the people you have listed as a reference know they may be contacted about a job you applied for. You don't want them to be surprised and not prepared.



LEARN MORE

[CREATE YOUR GOOGLE ACCOUNT](#)

[GET STARTED WITH GOOGLE DRIVE](#)

[OVERVIEW OF GOOGLE DOCS, SHEETS, AND SLIDES](#)

[HOW TO MAKE A COPY OF A GOOGLE DOC](#)

[CONVERTING WORD DOCUMENTS TO GOOGLE DOCS FORMAT](#)

[DOWNLOAD A FILE FROM GOOGLE DRIVE \(FORMAT OPTIONS\)](#)



PREPARING TO LOOK FOR A JOB

REFERENCES

When you start looking for a job, you need a list of references. A reference is a person who can tell an employer what kind of worker you are. Think about who can be a reference for you. Ask them ahead of time if they feel comfortable giving you a good reference. Use references who are working, rather than unemployed. Be sure to let your references know what positions you are applying for so they aren't surprised if someone calls them to ask about you.

Make sure you have the right phone number, email address, and job title for anyone you ask to be a reference. The people who are your references need to have good tele-

phone communication skills. They also need to have telephone numbers where they can be reached during the day.

Make a document that lists all of the people who agree to be a reference for you, with their current email address, phone number, and job title. Keep your resource contact list in a Google Doc so you have easy access to it from any smart phone or computer.

Some examples of good references are (former) employers, (former) teachers and (former) trainers.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Lots of employers will run what's called a background check on you when you apply for a job, or after they give you what is called a conditional offer of a job.

It is important to address a hard question early on: do you have a criminal record?

If you do have a record, there are free, non-profit legal services organization that can help you seal your juvenile record and/or expunging your adult criminal record. Many of these organizations hold regular clinics to help people do this.

If a youth commits certain crimes, mostly violent crimes defined under WIC 707(b), those offenses cannot be sealed. In 2015,

it became law for a juvenile court in California to automatically seal a record (if it is sealable) when the person has completed the terms of probation and the court case is closed. If you think you might have a record, get a copy of your RAP sheet/arrest record. Ask a lawyer review the sheet to determine whether the offenses are sealable or not.

How should I reply to questions about criminal backgrounds on a job application?

Be truthful. If a job application asks if you have a criminal record, you should respond honestly. If you have a record, reply "yes" unless you juvenile record is sealed or the adult criminal record is expunged.

Avoid confusion: Some people are confused and answer incorrectly when a job application includes the words below. The term "judicially dismissed" used in this paragraph doesn't mean that the case was closed. It means that the case was expunged.

California: Applicants should not disclose any conviction for which the record has been judicially ordered sealed, expunged, or statutorily eradicated . . .; [or] any misdemeanor conviction for which probation has been successfully completed or otherwise discharged and the case has been judicially dismissed pursuant to Penal Code Section 1203.4.2 Calif. Code of Regulations § 7287.4(d)(1)(B)

Organizations that assist with sealing/expungements:

[ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS \(SEALING ONLY\)](#)

[PUBLIC COUNSEL](#)

[A NEW WAY OF LIFE](#)

[LEGAL AID FOUNDATION OF LOS ANGELES](#)

[NEIGHBORHOOD LEGAL SERVICES](#)



LEARN MORE

[SEALING YOUR JUVENILE RECORD](#)

[FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: HOW DO I GET AN EXPUNGEMENT?](#)

DRUG TESTS

Some employers require drug tests. If you do not pass the initial drug test, they will not hire you. Even if you have a Medical Marijuana licence, they still will not hire you. Some drugs stay in your system for up to 30 days, so do not apply for a job that requires drug testing if you are not ready.

THE JOB HUNT

Okay, you're ready to look for a job. Now what? First, make a plan with your job coach. The tools in this toolkit can help.

Finding a job can take time. Don't give up! Make sure you and your job coach talk about the websites, job fairs, and events that can introduce you to potential employers.



GET STARTED

[TEMPLATE: PLAN YOUR JOB SEARCH](#)



TWO-MINUTE PITCH

Create a short statement to introduce yourself to employers. Then practice saying it!

You can use a two-minute pitch to:

- make a good first impression in an interview or at a job fair.
- respond when someone says “tell me about yourself;”
- describe your skills and abilities, and
- explain where you see your career going.

Practice your two-minute pitch:

- say it enthusiastically;
- smile;
- make eye contact; and
- adjust it when you need to - the whole pitch may not be necessary in all situations .



GET STARTED ►

[TEMPLATE: PREPARING YOUR TWO MINUTE PITCH](#)

PREPARE, PRACTICE AND PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER

The more you hear yourself say what you want to say, the easier it will be - and the more confident you will feel.

PREPARE: Do what you need to do to get ready.

- To prepare for a telephone call, write a script and practice it. Know why you are calling (have notes). Prepare what you plan to say if you need to leave a message.
- To prepare for a face-to-face meeting, practice what you want to say. It is always helpful to visit the company website ahead of time.

PRACTICE: Practice what you want to say over and over and over.

- The more you hear yourself say what you want to say, the easier it will be – and the more confident you will feel.
- Ever think about smiling when you're on the telephone? Believe it or not, people can hear that confidence in your voice. People can determine friendliness from the tone of your voice. Concentrate on speaking clearly, be calm, and breathe!
- Prepare for meeting potential employers by practicing with your job coach, or with a friend. Have them ask you questions. Practice answering as you would in real interview. Typical questions include:
 - Tell me about yourself.
 - Why do you want to work here?
 - What are you good at?
 - What kind of things are hard for you?
 - Why should we hire you?

Prepare for meeting potential employers by practicing with your job coach, or with a friend.

PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER: Part of feeling confident is feeling good about yourself.

- If you feel good about your appearance, you tend to give your confidence a big boost!
- Good grooming and hygiene is important. Don't forget about those day-to-day essentials like showering, brushing your teeth, combing your hair, and using deodorant. Don't wear too much perfume or cologne.
- Dress the way you think the other person will be dressing. For example, if you're meeting someone in an office, and people usually wear ties, then you should wear a tie, too. If you're going to meet the head of a landscaping company and people usually wear jeans and t-shirts, go one step above and wear khakis and a button down shirt, if you have them.
- Bring a pen and a pad of paper. Your contact might say something really great and you'll want to write it down. It's always a good idea to take a resume with you, even if you're not meeting with someone for a job. It's a good way to leave someone with a reminder of your skills, talents, and experiences. After all, who knows what might happen? Also, ask the person to suggest additional people you could contact to learn more.

JOB SEARCH WEBSITES

There are many jobs out there; you just need to know where, and how, to look for them!

When you're trying to find information about job industries, an excellent place to look is the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). There you can find the tasks of a job, how to pre-

pare for it, salary information and future outlook.

Also, make sure that you have the [Know Before You Go \(B4UGO\) app](#). It has lists of Los Angeles area employers and jobs!

There are many jobs out there; you just need to know where, and how, to look for them!

If you're looking for a new job, check out these sites:

[CALJOBS.CA.GOV](#)

[USAJOBS.GOV](#)

[BEYOND.COM](#)

[INDEED.COM](#)

[SIMPLYHIRED.COM](#)

[CAREERBUILDER.COM](#)

[MONSTER.COM](#)

[LINKUP.COM](#)

[US.JOBS](#)

[JOB.COM](#)

[IDEALIST.COM](#)

[JOBS.APPOI.COM/SEARCH](#)

[LINKEDIN.COM](#)

[ZIPRECRUITER.COM](#)

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Now that you've planned out your job search, you're ready to start applying. Depending on the job that you're applying for, you'll likely have to submit an application, a resume, a cover letter, or some combination of those three documents. This section of the guide will provide you with information on how to get an application, fill out an application, create a resume and write a cover letter.

Work with your job coach to review your resume, cover letter, and applications that you fill out.



E-MAIL A POTENTIAL EMPLOYER

- E-mail employers only when they specifically invites or instructs you to do so — via instructions on their website or in a job ad, or after you meet and talk to someone.
 - Don't send an e-mail randomly to someone saying "I'm not sure if you're the correct person, but I figured you could forward this..." Do your research, and say WHY you're writing to the person ("you were listed as the contact for the XYZ job fair").
 - Make the subject line of your email clear and meaningful to the recipient, as in: "Application for manufacturing position 84G11" or "Follow-up to our meeting of February 21 at Career Point job fair."
 - Remember that you will be judged on what you say and how you say it.
 - Use the spell-check feature.
 - Do not use emoticons.
 - Avoid using ALL CAPS in your email.
 - Introduce yourself and mention where your information came from regarding the job
- (My name is _____, and we spoke at XYZ Job Fair on June 11 regarding the _____ opening at your business.)
- Name a few skills, interests, and/or experiences you have had that would make you a good match for the job. In addition, attach a copy of your resume and cover letter.
 - Explain you would like to know more about the position, and what the next steps in applying would be.
 - Reread before hitting "send." Once you hit "send," there is no turning back! Make sure you include a greeting (Dear...) and a closing (Sincerely,).
 - Include your contact information — phone numbers and e-mail address.



Reread before hitting "send." Once you hit "send," there is no turning back!

FILL OUT AN APPLICATION

When you walk into a store or company to ask for an application, you should first make sure that you are dressed for the occasion. This is the employer's first impression of you. Tattoos should be covered; no heavy

makeup; and remove any piercings, except for small earrings.

To get the application, go to the main desk and ask for an application, politely. Make

sure that you remain polite to everyone you interact with.

Once you get the application, you should opt to take it home, if at all possible. This gives you additional time to fill the application out and takes away the pressure that comes from having to fill it out on the spot.

When filling out an application, fill it out completely and follow all directions. Make sure you are completely honest

If you need to cross anything out of the application, make sure to neatly use white-out to do so. You should keep the application as neat as possible. Remember, this is likely the only thing you're submitting to the employer, so make sure it represents you at your best.



LEARN MORE

[SAMPLE DOCUMENT: JOB APPLICATION](#)

When filling out an application, fill it out completely and follow all directions.

RESUME WRITING

A resume is a document that lists all of your prior jobs and your education. Work with your job coach to write a good resume.

Tips:

- Your resume should be about one page.
- Be consistent. If you do it for one, you should do it for all. If you give your high school's zip code, then you must give zip codes for all schools and jobs.
- Don't use slang words.
- Use action words; describe what you did at each job.
- Describe accomplishments and problem solving skills, not just duties.
- Be honest.
- State information in a positive way. List your strongest skills first.
- Do not include personal information such as date of birth, height, weight, etc.

- Include volunteer work, hobbies, and awards if they show experiences or skills.
- Use action words ending with “ed” for past jobs. Use action words ending with “ing” for present jobs.
- Make it perfect. Check for spelling and other mistakes.

Sending your resume:

Include a cover letter.

- If you are mailing it or taking it with you in person, print it on high quality, 8 1/2 x 11-inch white paper.
- If you are emailing your resume, save the document with a clear filename such as YourName_Date_Resume.doc and attach it to your email.
- Some companies ask you to upload your resume on their website rather than sending it by email. Follow the instructions.

ACTION WORDS FOR RESUME WRITERS

**Achieved
acquainted
activated
adapted
adjusted
administered
advertised
advised
advocated
aided
altered
analyzed
approved
arranged
assembled
assisted
assumed
attached
attained
authorized
balanced
built
calculated
catered
classified
coached
collected
combined
communicated**

**compared
completed
computed
condensed
constructed
consulted
controlled
converted
coordinated
counseled
created
decorated
delivered
demonstrated
designated
designed
detected
determined
developed
devised
diagnosed
directed
disclosed
discontinued
dispatched
displayed
distributed
documented
economized**

**edited
educated
eliminated
employed
encouraged
endorsed
engineered
established
estimated
evaluated
examined
exchanged
executed
expanded
experimented
familiarized
filmed
formulated
generated
governed
guaranteed
guarded
guided
hosted
illustrated
improved
increased
informed
initiated**

**inspected
instructed
interviewed
interpreted
introduced
invented
inventoried
investigated
lectured
located
maintained
managed
measured
merged
minimized
mixed
modernized
modified
motivated
notified
observed
obtained
operated
organized
originated
planned
prescribed
processed
procured**

produced
provided
publicized
published
recommended
recorded
reduced
refinished
regulated
remodeled
removed
renovated
reorganized
repaired
replaced

reported
researched
restored
scheduled
screened
selected
simplified
solved
stabilized
stocked
strengthened
suggested
supervised
surpassed
tailored

taught
tested
trained
transferred
transformed

transported
treated
unified
updated
utilized



GET STARTED ▶

[GOOGLE DOC TEMPLATE: EVALUATING YOUR RESUME](#)



LEARN MORE

[SAMPLE RESUME - HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE](#)

[SAMPLE RESUME - HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT](#)

[SAMPLE RESUME FOR A RETAIL SALES CLERK](#)

[SAMPLE RESUME - RECENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE](#)

WRITING A COVER LETTER

A cover letter is a letter that job seekers send along with a resume. The cover letter goes in front of the resume.

Your cover letter:

- States what position you are applying for
- Summarizes why you are a strong candidate for the job
- Requests an interview for the position you're applying for
- Tells the employer how to contact you
- Thanks the employer for considering you for the job

It's important that the letter is:

- Neat
- Professional
- Grammatically correct
- Free of spelling errors (have someone you trust proofread your letters)
- Short and to-the-point (never longer than one page)
- Clear about what you can offer them (skills, dependability, commitment), not what they can offer you!

The cover letter should be addressed to a specific person — “Dear Mr. (last name):” or “Dear Ms. (last name):” Since this is a formal business letter, you should not address the person by his/her first name. If you do not know the name of the person who will be reviewing the resumes, you have two choices:

Call the organization to try to find out the person's name

Address the letter to “Dear Sir or Madam:”

If you are emailing your cover letter make it is saved with a clear filename such as Your-Name_Business_CoverLetter.doc and is properly attached to your email.



LEARN MORE

[SAMPLE COVER LETTER - CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE](#)

[SAMPLE COVER LETTER - NO WORK EXPERIENCE](#)

[SAMPLE COVER LETTER - PRODUCTION OFFICE COORDINATOR](#)

[SAMPLE COVER LETTER - FIRST JOB](#)



INTERVIEWS AND JOB FAIRS

Congratulations! You've got an interview! The interview one of the most important steps in your journey toward getting that job.

Interviews help an employer figure out if you are the right candidate for them. The interview is your chance to really impress the employer and let your application/resume come to life. Interviewing well, like anything else, is something you have to learn how to do.

This section will help you figure out what to do to prepare for your interview, how to dress appropriately, how to act during the interview, what questions might be asked of you, and how to thank (or follow-up with) the employer. You and your job coach might want to try having a mock interview to help you prepare. Interviews become much easier once you've had practice.

DRESSING FOR INTERVIEWS: MEN

DO WEAR

Hair

- Clean
- Combed or pulled back

Clothes

- Clean collared shirts — white, solid color
- Dress pants — dark color, fitted
- Professional looking tie
- Sweater/jacket/blazer

Shoes

- Dark dress shoes — black, brown or rust
- Dark socks

Accessories

- Watch
- Fingernails are short and clean

DON'T WEAR

Hair

- Dirty
- Unkempt/messy

Clothes

- T-shirts, sweat shirts, jersey, or hoodie
- Jeans, shorts
- Baggy clothes
- Dirty or stained clothes

Shoes

- Sneakers
- Timberlands

Accessories

- Big necklaces with pendants
- Chain wallets
- Strong cologne or aftershave

DRESSING FOR INTERVIEWS: WOMEN

DO WEAR

Hair

- Clean
- Combed or pulled back

Clothes

- Skirts at or below the knee
- Dress pants
- Professional blouse or collared shirt
- Sweater/jacket/blazer
- Scarves

Shoes

- Enclosed toe professional shoes
- Heels that are an inch or two high

Accessories

- One simple pair of earrings
- Short clean nails painted without designs

DON'T WEAR

Hair

- Dirty
- Unkempt/messy

Clothes

- Mini skirts
- Skirts or dresses with wild patterns
- See through items or shiny materials
- Crop tops
- Deep cut necklines

Shoes

- Very high heels
- Flip Flops

Accessories

- Very large/hanging earrings
- More than one pair of earrings
- Nose rings, tongue rings or facial piercing
- Long acrylic nails
- Unusual nail color or designs
- Heavy make-up

QUESTIONS INTERVIEWERS MIGHT ASK

Practice your responses ahead of time.

Listen carefully to the questions asked and impress the interviewer with your careful and complete responses.

In a job interview, you'll often hear, "Tell me about yourself." The interviewer isn't looking for your whole life story. Talk about work experience and education and be prepared to describe your skills and what you are good at.

Listen carefully to the questions asked and impress the interviewer with your careful and complete responses.

Sample questions:

- Why are you interested in joining our company?
- Show that you know something about the company. Talk about your career goals and how they relate to the company.
- Make sure that your enthusiasm for this company comes through.
- What courses did you particularly enjoy?
- What qualifications do you have for this job?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Why should I hire you?
- What is your greatest strength?
- [What is your greatest weakness?](#)
- What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?
- What questions do you have?
- Always ask at least one question. Bring along a written list of questions and ask the ones which were not covered in the interview.
- You may also ask about the interview process: What is the next step in the decision-making process regarding this job? When can I expect to hear about your decision?

INTERVIEWING: STAR STRATEGY

Use the STAR strategy below to guide you in answering the sample interview questions, "Tell me about a time when you..."

Situation (or Task): Describe the situation that you were in or the task that needed to be accomplished. Be specific and give enough detail so that the interviewer understands. The situation could be from a previous job, a volunteer experience, school, or another relevant environment.

Action you took: Describe the action you took. Be sure to keep the focus on you! Even if you're discussing a group project or effort, talk about what YOU did – not the efforts of the entire team. Don't say what you might do or what you might have done. Say what you DID.

Results you achieved: What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

**Don't say what you might do or what you might have done.
Say what you DID.**

Use some of the following questions as prompts as a reference point to think about how you might use the STAR strategy:

- Tell me about a time when you did not agree with a teacher or supervisor. How did you handle the situation?
- Tell me about a time when you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
- Tell me about a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills.
- Tell me about a time when you used good judgment and logic to solve a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it.
- Tell me about a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
- Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and were required to prioritize your tasks.
- Tell me about a time when you were able to successfully deal with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).
- Tell me about a time when you tried to accomplish something and failed.
- Tell me about a time when you had to motivate someone.

THE INTERVIEW: THINGS TO REMEMBER

How you conduct yourself during a job interview determines how well the interview may go and if you are hired.

During the interview:

- Turn off your cell phone before you enter the room.
- Maintain positive eye contact. Remain attentive during an interview.
- Always give a firm handshake.
- Speak clearly and audibly so that you can be understood and heard.
- Always present a pleasant attitude, be friendly and smile.
- Clearly express your job goals and qualifications.
- Relax. Take a couple of deep breaths. Think about what skills you have and how you could use them in this job.
- Treat everyone with respect: the receptionist, the janitor, and the boss.
- Shake hands and look at the person while you are talking or while she is talking. Follow the conversation, think about what the other person is saying, don't just wait for your turn to talk.
- Show a cooperative, professional attitude. Be enthusiastic. Don't bad-mouth former employers. Don't tell jokes. Don't use rude language. Don't talk about personal problems.

At the end of the interview:

- After the interview, there are some very important things you should do.
- Stand up and shake the interviewer's hand firmly. Thank the interviewer for taking time.
- Tell the interviewer you are interested in the job and the company. Don't just assume the interviewer knows you want the job.
- Make sure you know what the "next step" is. Will they contact you? Or do they want you to contact them?

After the interview (within 48 hours):

- Write a short thank you letter or email to the people you met. Doing this:
 - Shows that you are genuinely interested in the job.
 - Shows that you have good follow-through.
 - Demonstrates that you're willing to work. Writing a thank you letter to a prospective employer shows that you're willing to "go the extra mile."
 - Allows you to "sell yourself" one last time before the interviewer makes a hiring decision. In a thank you letter, you have an opportunity to tell the interviewer again why you're the person for the job.
 - Makes the interviewer feel special. Everyone likes to be thanked.

ATTENDING A JOB FAIR

Job fairs are excellent places to meet employers, learn about companies and find a job. To find out about job fairs, contact your local workforce center.

When you plan to attend a job fair, get to know the employers in advance. Look over the list of employers who will be there. Research them before the job fair.

At the job fair, you may meet a number of different employers. Be ready to tell each one why you want to work for them.

Show you are interested in the employers by preparing some questions in advance. A good example of a question to ask an employer is, "What are you looking for in an applicant?"

Be prepared to fill out an application or have an interview on the spot. Be prepared with your two-minute speech to quickly sell your skills, talents and experiences because you may be offered an interview at the job fair.



Be prepared with your two-minute speech to quickly sell your skills, talents and experiences because you may be offered an interview at the job fair.

More tips for attending a job fair:

- Bring at least 25 resumes.
- Dress up. Be one step above the competition with a dressy, professional outfit and excellent hygiene.
- Act in a professional way. Give a firm handshake when you meet someone.
- Don't use a job fair to catch up with your friends. An employer will be more impressed if you are responsible enough to approach them by yourself.

KEEP THAT JOB



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO™ GET THAT JOB AND KEEP IT



Your first day on the job is exciting. This section will help you prepare. Go over the worksheet for your first day with your job coach.

KEEP THAT JOB SELF CHECKLIST

1. Be early.

- Use an alarm clock.
- Set an alarm on your phone.
- Plan reliable transportation.
- Take traffic into account.
- Prepare your clothes, food, etc. for work the night before.
- Get a good amount of sleep the night before.

2. Follow company rules. Follow safety rules.

- Ask for a copy of company rules.
- Make sure you know how/where to document hours (time-sheet, punch clock, etc.) so you get paid properly and on time!

- Take time off only when really needed — many absences could make you lose your job.
- If you are going to be late or are not going to make it to work, call your supervisor as soon as possible to let them know.

3. Do your job well.

- Have a positive attitude.
- Learn from others.
- Be open to feedback from your supervisor.



GET STARTED ▶

[TEMPLATE: YOUR FIRST DAY WORKSHEET](#)

4. Wear clothes appropriate for the job.

- Follow the same rules as for a job interview.
- If a uniform is required, make sure it is clean and put together the proper way.

5. Cooperate and compromise with your co-workers. Don't argue or fight.

- Try to see the opposing person's side.
- Get help from a supervisor when you feel stuck, rather than making things worse.

6. Don't use drugs or alcohol.

7. Get along with your supervisor.

- Ask questions.
- Offer help/volunteer to take on tasks.
- Listen and act upon suggestions.

8. Be honest.

9. Keep professional and personal lives separate.

- Don't gossip.
- Don't take or make personal calls.
- Don't text.
- Turn off your cell phone!

10. If you aren't sure what to do or how to do it, ask your supervisor

**Try to see the opposing person's side.
Get help from a supervisor when you feel
stuck, rather than making things worse.**



STAYING PROFESSIONAL ON THE JOB

Figuring out how to act in the workplace is one of the hardest parts of any job. What should you do? What should you not do? Keep in mind that you want to make a positive impression on everyone you work with. That’s how you get positive references and move forward at work.

This section covers professionalism and how to act on the job. If you have questions about situations that arise in the workplace and you don’t know what to do, you should talk to your job coach.

PROFESSIONALISM

Throughout our working lives, most of us will have many different jobs, each requiring a different level or set of skills. All of these jobs have one thing in common: in order to succeed and move ahead, you need to be professional at work.

Professionalism does not necessarily mean wearing a suit or carrying a briefcase; rather, it means acting with responsibility, integrity, accountability, and excellence. It means communicating effectively and appropriately and always finding a way to be productive.

Professionalism is a combination of qualities. Regardless of the job or industry, professionalism is easy to spot. A professional worker will work hard and manage time effectively, including arriving and returning on time from breaks. A professional worker in a customer service setting will speak clearly and politely to customers and colleagues and have neat and clean appearance. In an office setting, an employee with professionalism will work productively with others and strive for a high standard and constant improvement.



BEHAVIOR: TWENTY TIPS TO HELP YOU MAKE A GREAT IMPRESSION

1. Have a positive attitude.
2. Dress professionally. Follow the company dress code.
3. Show your team spirit. Share recognition with your team.
4. Learn your co-workers' names.
5. Ask questions. Ask for help.
6. Take notes. (It will help you have already been taught/told.)
7. Be a self-starter; take the initiative to ask for more work.
8. Learn everything about your new employer, even things that don't have to do with your position.
9. Work full days. Arrive on time or a bit early. Return on time from breaks. Don't leave early.
10. Don't handle your personal business while you are at work.
11. Be friendly and get to know your co-workers.
12. Listen more, Talk less.
13. Track your accomplishments.
14. Show appreciation. Say thank you to those who help you..
15. Find a mentor who can help you develop.
16. Get and stay organized. (Keep track of your work, your schedule, meetings, deadlines, etc.)
17. Keep your boss informed — of everything (Meet regularly and make sure she/he knows you are a self-starter and hard-worker.
18. Do not complain. If there is a problem think of alternative solutions or talk to your supervisor.
19. Get to know key people at work.
20. Don't worry about being perfect.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Your attitude toward your job will be judged in part by your nonverbal communication.

DO make eye contact

DO assume a pleasant facial expression

DO sit up straight and lean forward slightly

DO shake hands firmly

DON'T slouch

DON'T put your feet up

DON'T smack or crack chewing gum

DON'T sigh loudly

DON'T check your phone for messages or texts

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE WORKPLACE

Most people use social media — putting photos, videos, and comments online for everyone to find. What you put online can affect you at work. Check your privacy settings and make sure that you aren't showing the whole world your personal business. Remember that anything your boss and your coworkers see about you online can affect how they see you at work. You want to keep a professional image.

When you are at work, avoid texting or using social media. You want to show your employer that you are completely focused on work when you are at work. And avoid posting pictures or comments about your job or your co-workers. Doing so can cause problems at work and even result in losing your job.

**When you are at work,
avoid texting or using social media.**



TIME MANAGEMENT

Showing up to work and meetings on time is one of the most important parts of working. It's also one of the top reasons employees get fired from their jobs. So make sure that you have ways to make sure you're always on time. If you need to take an earlier bus because one is always late, then that falls on you. If you struggle getting to work on time, maybe you and your job coach can brainstorm ideas to fix the situation.

TIME MANAGEMENT PERSONALITY TYPES

The key to time management is knowing yourself.

Which of the following time management "types" are you? This time management exercise may provide you with some clues for more effective time management.

The Fireman – For you, every event is a crisis. You're so busy putting out fires that you have no time to deal with anything else —

especially the boring, mundane things such as time management. Tasks pile up around you while you rush from fire to fire all day. Typically seen — Running to car.

The Over-Committer – Your problem is you can't say 'No'. All anyone has to do is ask, and you'll chair another committee, take on another project, or organize yet another community event. You're so busy

you don't even have time to write down all the things you do! Typically seen — Hiding in rest room.

The Aquarian – There is such a thing as being too “laid-back” — especially when it starts interfering with your ability to finish tasks or bother to return phone calls. Getting to things when you get to them isn't time management; it's simple task avoidance. Typically seen — Hanging out with feet on desk.

The Chatty Kathy – Born to socialize, you have astounding oral communication skills and can't resist exercising them at every opportunity. Every interaction becomes a long drawn out conversation — especially if there's an unpleasant task dawning

that you'd like to put off. Typically seen — Talking on cell phone.

The Perfectionist – You have a compulsion to cross all the “t's” and dot all the “i's,” preferably with elaborate whorls and curlicues. Exactitude is your watchword, and you feel that no rushed job can be a good job. Finishing tasks to your satisfaction is such a problem, you need more time zones, not just more time. Typically seen — Hunched over latest project.

Maybe none of these time management personality profiles is a photograph of you! But perhaps these descriptions will provoke some thought about the different ways we manage or mismanage time.

TEN TIPS OF TIME MANAGEMENT

1. Make a to-do list, and then prioritize your list. Schedule your priorities.

2. Be flexible as things change. Adjust your list as needed; the list is just a guide to help you use your time efficiently.

3. Don't let things become urgent. Figure out a way to avoid living crisis to crisis.

4. Focus on your goals. Use your time to work towards your goals.

5. Figure out where you waste time and how you can spend that time more efficiently.

6. Know when to quit. If something is not working, don't be afraid to make a new plan.

7. Don't waste time holding on to or worrying about things you can't change. Use your time to change what you can.

8. If you share work with someone else, be sure you share it with the right person and check in to make sure they are making progress and the work is getting done. Not everyone will do things the same way you do, so accept that the outcome might be a little different than if you had done the work yourself.

9. Learn to say 'no'.

10. Take time for you. You can't work efficiently if you are not taking care of yourself.

JUGGLING WORK, SCHOOL, AND SECOND JOBS

Being late for work is one of the biggest reasons people lose their jobs. Sometimes the stress of juggling a job (maybe even two jobs), school, family, and your living situation can be overwhelming.

Here are top four tips for managing your time:

1. Communicate

Talk to your employer when issues arise. If you show commitment, consideration, and honesty, your boss is more likely to be supportive and flexible with your schedule. Talk to a job coach/supportive adult if you are having trouble juggling your schedule.

If you show commitment, consideration, and honesty, your boss is more likely to be supportive and flexible with your schedule.

2. Prioritize

Busy, successful people understand what they can do each day and what can realistically be accomplished. Build a daily calendar that assigns a specific time to important tasks rather than hoping they will happen at some point. Get smart when prioritizing tasks so that 'hang out with my friends' does not have the same weight as 'get to work on time.' Build in buffer time for anything that might make it hard for you to stay on schedule, like traffic, late buses, etc.

3. Focus

Don't be distracted when things don't go according to plan. Learn from mistakes, move on and try not to repeat them. Learning is a lifelong project: you won't be judged by one mistake alone.

4. Sleep

When schedules fill up, sleep is often the first thing you give up. But lack of sleep actually makes it much harder to work: your mental health, physical health, stress levels, and schedule are all affected. Make time for sleep and relaxation.

A photograph of three office workers in a meeting. On the left, a man with glasses and a goatee, wearing a purple checkered shirt and tie, is smiling and looking towards the center. In the middle, a woman with blonde hair and glasses, wearing a purple blazer, is smiling and looking towards the right. On the right, a woman with dark curly hair, wearing a purple blazer, is smiling and looking towards the center. They are sitting at a desk with a computer monitor in the background. The image has a purple overlay at the bottom.

WORK RELATIONSHIPS AND CONFLICT ON THE JOB

Getting along with people at work is a tricky part of having a job and being a professional. Learn how to deal with conflict before it happens.

This section of the manual covers good relationships at work, including how to identify your known triggers, how to deal with conflict, and how to focus on the positive. Being a professional, means staying in control of yourself no matter what the situation.

When tricky situations at work come up or you need to deal with that annoying coworker, you might want to consult with your job coach.

BUILDING AND KEEPING GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Getting to Know Your Co-workers

- Introduce yourself, so you know the person's name.
- Say hello and be friendly.
- Get to know the person before you ask personal questions or tell personal things about yourself.
- Respect people's personal space and boundaries. Not everyone is comfortable sharing details about their personal life.

Building Good Relationships With Coworkers

- Make an effort to get to know your co-workers.
- Spend time talking during breaks and after work.
- Have friends outside of work.
- Never hang around when your work day is done and someone else is still working.
- Be clear, honest, and thoughtful when you communicate at work.
- Follow through on what you promise.
- Try to resolve conflicts quickly and completely.
- When people share information in confidence, keep it confidential! Be loyal to your team.

Building a Good Relationship with Your Supervisor

- Keep your word. Do what you say you will do.
- Be flexible. Make adjustments if you need to in order to get your work done.
- Take initiative. Don't wait to be told what to do. Step in and get the work done.
- Stay focused on your work. Avoid distractions during the work day.
- Communicate openly and respectfully with your supervisor.
- Take responsibility if you make a mistake.
- Learn to work independently. Your supervisor is busy too and can't always watch over you.
- Always behave in a professional way at work.
- Be positive. If you identify a problem, try to come up with a solution.
- Say thank you when your supervisor gives you training or recognition for a job well done.

HOW TO HANDLE HAVING A BAD DAY

Everyone has a bad day sometimes. Learn how to control your reactions when something makes you angry or upset. When you feel upset, try these techniques to relax and avoid conflict:

1. Take 10 deep breaths. Count slowly to ten.
2. Think about the different options you have.
3. Use the power of imagination. Picture everything working out.
4. Don't react quickly in the moment.
5. Use your personal time to exercise, pray, listen to music, play a game, or whatever calms you down.
6. Talk to someone you trust.
7. Make yourself feel good by helping someone else.
8. Tell yourself that you can deal with this; you are resilient.
9. Ask for help. DON'TS

DEALING WITH CONFLICT

Conflict is a part of life, even at work. You want to stay professional and handle conflict in a positive way. If you need to work out a problem with someone else at work, try these tips:

Giving Feedback

DO'S

1. Describe the behavior that bothers you. "It bothers me when you finish my sentences for me."
2. Talk to the person right when things come up. Don't wait too long.

3. Use "I" messages. Own your feelings. "I feel bad when you finish my sentences for me."
4. Check for clarity. "Do you understand what I mean when I say that?"
5. Describe the consequences if behavior continues. "If you interrupt me, I am not able to share my thoughts."
6. Only bring up behaviors that the person can do something about.
7. Be ready to listen to the other person's point of view.

DON'TS

1. Don't accuse the person. "You always interrupt me."
2. Don't bring in third parties. "John also says that you interrupt a lot."
3. Don't take for granted that the person understands what you are saying.
4. Don't give vague consequences. "That kind of behavior is going to get you in trouble."
5. Don't bring up behaviors that the person can't help. "The way you breathe really bothers me."
6. Don't deny the other person's feelings.

Receiving Feedback

At work, you will get a lot of feedback. Your supervisor and coworkers may tell you what you do well, and what you could do better. Feedback is a chance to improve, so listen carefully! Here are some tips to making the most of feedback at work:

1. Listen to the feedback without getting defensive.
2. Paraphrase the feedback to make sure that you understand correctly what is being said to you.
3. Remember: all feedback is helpful, because it lets you see how others view your work.
4. Follow through on the areas of improvement that are discussed.

10 TIPS TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT

- Be assertive, not aggressive (state your case but keep your cool).
- Pick a good time and a comfortable place to talk.
- Deal with the current conflict, don't bring up the past.
- Get the facts. Ask questions so you can see how the other person sees things.
- Avoid words like "always" and "never"
- Try to understand your own feelings and the other person's feelings
- Stay calm.
- Show a sense of humor. Be kind and gentle in your comments.
- Keep things in perspective. This is just one situation, not the end of the world.





INCOME AND TAXES

You might get money from different places: your job, public assistance, financial aid, and more. A paycheck is unique because the government withholds taxes, so your gross pay (what your employer pays you) and your net pay (what's actually in your check) are different.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PAYSTUB

What is the difference between your gross pay and net pay? Deductions. Deductions are items your employer takes out of your paycheck. Some are deductions for taxes—federal, state, and city. Some deductions are for Medicare and Social Security called FICA (Federal Insurance Contributions Act). Some deductions are for benefits like health insurance. Paycheck stubs include information about all of your deductions and benefits. Your job coach can help you figure out your net pay.

According to law, everyone who receives a paycheck is required to submit a tax return to the [IRS](https://www.irs.gov) by April 15th every year. Employ-

ees receive a form, called a W-2, in January of each year. The W-2 includes the information you need to complete your tax return.

In some states, you are required to pay local and state personal income tax in addition to the federal. You have the right to use a variety of deductions and exemptions to reduce your overall taxes. Figuring out your deductions and exemptions can be complex and you might want to go to an accountant for help if you have a lot of expenses to deduct.



LEARN MORE

[SAMPLE DOCUMENT: PAYCHECK STUB](#)

[SAMPLE DOCUMENT: W-2](#)

[A TAXING SEASON FOR FOSTER YOUTH](#)

[VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE](#)

[UNITED WAY: MYFREETAXES](#)

WORKING AS A CONTRACTOR

Some jobs might hire you on a contract, rather than as an employee. The difference is that if you are paid on a contract, your employer is not have any tax withheld from your check. Working as contractor means that you are responsible for paying taxes on that income. You should set aside some money each month to pay for taxes so you aren't surprised at what you owe when April rolls around.

If you anticipate owing over \$1000 in taxes in a 3 month period then you must pay your taxes quarterly rather than once a year. It can be confusing working as a contractor, so always ask questions and talk to a tax professional if you are unclear.

Some examples of employers that pay you as a contractor include: TaskRabbit, Lyft, and Handy. Other examples of contract work include day rate work as a production assistant or speaking engagements.



LEARN MORE

[INCOME TAXES FOR SELF-EMPLOYED BUSINESS OWNERS AND INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS](#)

[MYTHS ABOUT QUARTERLY TAXES FOR THE 1099 TAX FORM](#)

[PENALTIES FOR NOT FILING A 1099-MISC IRS FORM](#)

[QUARTERLY ESTIMATED TAX PAYMENTS: WHO NEEDS TO PAY THEM, WHEN, AND WHY](#)

[AM I AN EMPLOYEE OR AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR?](#)

[DID YOU JUST GET A \\$500 FREELANCE ASSIGNMENT? THE CITY MIGHT BILL YOU \\$30,000](#)

[CITY OF LOS ANGELES BUSINESS TAX APPLICATION](#)

PLAN THAT FUTURE



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO™
GET THAT JOB AND KEEP IT



HOW TO QUIT A JOB PROFESSIONALLY

Once you get a job, it is always possible that you won't like it or that you will be offered a better position somewhere else. Whatever the reason, it is important that you follow a few guidelines when quitting a job.

It is extremely important that you do not quit your current job before finding a new job. Lapses in employment are not good for several reasons. It does not look good on your resumé and it will be stressful to have no money to pay bills.

You should give your direct supervisor a letter of resignation, which will include your reason for leaving. Try to be as positive as possible. You do not want him/her to give you a bad reference.

Always give at least two weeks notice. This will give your employer an opportunity to begin a search for your replacement. This will also help make sure your employer gives you a good reference after you leave.

Remain as positive as you can. Again, you do not want to leave on bad terms. This may mean biting your tongue rather than saying something you would regret later.

Don't switch jobs too often. Your early work experiences are suppose to be a time to explore possible jobs/careers for the future. However, having too many past jobs will make employers wonder if it's worth hiring you.





EXPLORING CAREERS

WHAT DO YOU VALUE?

Figuring out who you are and what you value can help you find the right career. This worksheet will help you figure out what you value, so that you can make better-informed career choices and know what to think about when contemplating different careers.

What are your goals for the future? Take some time to decide for yourself where you might want to be ten years from today. Below, there are some questions to help guide you.

- Are you working in your target career?
- Do you enjoy your work?

- What significant things have you accomplished on the job?
- Have you advanced in your career in recent years?
- Where are you now in your career? Satisfied? Burnt out? Trying to move up?
- What company or organization do you work for? Do you want to stay?
- What would you like to be able to tell people about your work?
- Ten years from now do you see yourself married or single?
- Do you see yourself having a family?
- What kind of lifestyle do you want ten years from now?



GET STARTED

[TEMPLATE: VALUES WORKSHEET](#)

Take some time to decide for yourself where you might want to be ten years from today.

WHAT CAREER SHOULD YOU PURSUE?

This section will provide you with resources to figure out what career might be best for you and start a career plan with your job coach.



LEARN MORE

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS: FASTEST GROWING CAREERS

When thinking about a career choice, you should consider the demand. If it's a dying career, you might want to reconsider.

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

Includes information on the tasks of a job, how to prepare for it, and salary information.

CAREER QUIZ: THE PRINCETON REVIEW

MY NEXT MOVE O*NET INTEREST PROFILER

PYMETRICS

BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TEST

Take a few of the above quizzes and discuss the results with your Job Coach

CREATING A CAREER PLAN

A career plan can show you the way to the future you want. In your plan, be sure to list the education you need to get in order to have the career you want. What kind of job will you look for in the meantime? What are the steps it takes to get where you want to be?

You should set an end goal for yourself and figure out smaller goals that you need to accomplish on the way. When mapping out your plan, you might want to do it in a timeline format or an outline, whichever works best for you. Your career plan is something you can keep and reference for years, throughout your career journey.



BE YOUR OWN BOSS

Many people want to be their own boss. It takes a lot of drive, energy and business knowledge to be successful as your own boss. Work with your job coach to think through the benefits and risks of self-employment.

RISKS AND REWARDS OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Working on your own comes with high risk. There is not a weekly paycheck, health insurance, paid vacations and sick days, or an office to go to everyday. You need to find and keep customers on your own. It takes a lot of organization, stability and ingenuity to be successful as your own boss.

Taking an idea and growing it into a sellable service, product, or business can be rewarding both personally and financially. The trick to success is to weigh the pros and cons, start small (perhaps as an add-on to a

full-time job) and don't jump in until a solid foundation is in place.



FREELANCING + ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Many businesses hire freelancers to work on big and small, short and on-going, and individual or team based projects. The range of freelance work is anything that can be done on a computer – from web and mobile programming to graphic design and writing. But, understand that as a freelanc-

er you are self-employed, running your own business. You need to understand your obligations to file business and personal taxes, getting licenses if required, keeping track of your time, billing, collections, and more.

Research what business are looking for, what the competition is offering, and how you can offer something people want to pay for.

Tips for working as a freelancer:

- Research what businesses are looking for, what the competition is offering, and how you can offer something people want to pay for.
- Develop a resume, personal statement, website, and other materials that explains who you are and what you are offering. Be clear about the image you want to project, the services you are offering and back up your claims with client references/quotes.
- Tell everyone you know about your business. Websites such as [UpWork](#), [Freelancer](#), [Outsource](#), [Elance](#), [Guru](#), [TaskRabbit](#), and [Peopleperhour](#) all are platforms for connecting freelance workers with clients. Before you join and start taking work on these sites makes sure you read all the fine print and understand what their terms are for using their platform.
- Praise from people you've worked with brings more work. Be very careful to get projects done on time and on budget. When you start working for multiple clients, remember not to overcommit yourself, so you can deliver on what you promise.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO™ GET THAT JOB AND KEEP IT

Like this toolkit?
Want to learn more about money,
health, jobs, and your legal rights?

Check out the KnowB4UGo.org
website and the [B4UGO mobile app!](#)

KNOWB4UGO.ORG