

# Find & Get the Right Job

## Student Guide

California Career



Resource Network



## 2 Find & Get the Right Job Student Guide

Make your job search successful by learning about the process from start to finish or skipping to the specific sections you need help with right now.

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### California Career Resource Network

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# Step 1: Preparing for Your Job Search

## Get Organized

Gather your supplies, paperwork, and tools before you start job searching. You need things like:

### Supplies

#### *Official Documents*

- An electronic copy of your official documents
- Copies of diplomas, licenses, certifications
- Driver's license or state or federal identification card
- Social Security card (or immigration papers)

#### *Equipment*

- Mobile phone
- Tablet or laptop
- Word processing & spreadsheet programs
- Printer
- Stapler

#### *Miscellaneous*

- Business cards with your name, contact information
- Thank-you cards
- Stamps
- Paperclips
- File folders and labels (optional)
- Professional-sounding email address

#### *Pens, Paper*

- 3-4 good black/blue-ink pens
- Resume paper & envelopes, standard colors are white, off-white, cream, and grey; 8-1/2 inches x 11 inches, bond, at least 24 lb. weight
- Blank, white paper, 8-1/2 inches x 11 inches, bond, 20 lb. weight
- Sheet of blank business cards (option to make your own)

#### *Calendar*

Your calendar can make or break your job search! You have to keep track of dates and details.

**Pick a style that works best for you:**

<b>Calendar Type</b>	<b>Advantages</b>
Sticky notes	Great if you like to organize your work visually
Digital calendar	Great if you need e-reminders
Paper calendar	Great for seeing scheduling conflicts & keeping your to-do list up to date
Spreadsheet	Great if you have trouble remembering to follow up

## **Recordkeeping Methods**

Decide what method you want to use to keep your records. Some examples:

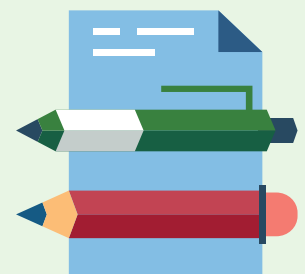
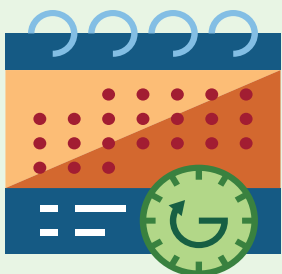
- ◆ Notebooks
- ◆ File folders/file boxes
- ◆ E-files

Pick one method, stick to it, and get in the habit of tracking your work—it'll make your job hunting so much easier and more successful.

### *Filing*

Keep hard copies or e-files of:

- ◆ Applications you submitted
- ◆ Letters you sent and received
- ◆ Resumes you sent
- ◆ Ads, job listings, or job descriptions you used



### *Tracking*

- ◆ Company Information
- ◆ Job Information
  - Title
  - Job listing number (if it has one)
  - Application submission deadline
- ◆ Date you contacted the company
- ◆ Whom you spoke with:
  - Their name
  - Job title
  - Email address
  - Phone number
- ◆ Why you contacted them. For example, to:
  - Request information
  - Set up an informational interview
  - Check the status of your application
  - Confirm interview arrangements

### *Submitting*

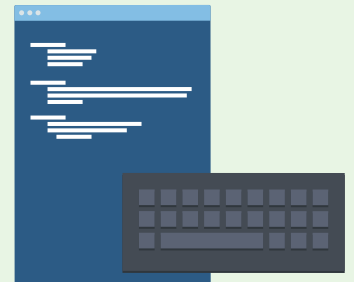
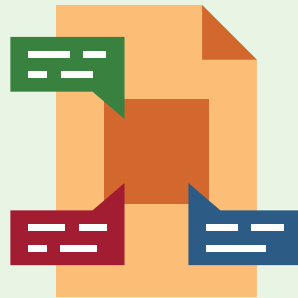
- ◆ Date you submitted your application.
- ◆ Person you sent your application to: their name, title, phone number, email address.
- ◆ How you submitted your application:
  - Online: write down the website address and the contact information.
    - Created an account? Write down your username and password.
  - Hand delivered: Write down the name of the person you gave it to.
  - Mailed: Write down who it's addressed to and the address you sent it to.
  - Emailed: Write down the name and contact information of the person you sent it to.



## Step 2: Creating Your Master Job Application & Resume

Your Master Job Application and Resume contain all the information you need to complete most job applications. Having a Master Job Application means you won't have to go looking for the same information every time you want to fill in an application.

Create your Master Job Application and Resume at the same time with the [Job Central](https://mystuffjobcentral.org/) app. (<https://mystuffjobcentral.org/>)



### Master Job Application & Resume Content

[Job Central's Master Job Application/Resume Builder](https://mystuffjobcentral.org/)

(<https://mystuffjobcentral.org/>)

#### *Gather Your Info*

Go through your papers, calendars, school records, etc. to find the information you need:

- ◆ Personal Information
- ◆ Profile
- ◆ Experiences
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Skills
- ◆ Interests/Hobbies
- ◆ Awards, Achievements
- ◆ References

#### *Personal Information*

- ◆ Phone Number – Use a number that will be answered with a professional-sounding voicemail message.
- ◆ Email Address – Use a simple, easy-to-remember email address with your last name and initials as your username. If you don't have one, create one. Use the same email address for all your job applications.

### *Profile*

Your job goal and personal statement telling employers what you hope to achieve.

Write a general summary. Include:

- ◆ A strong personal trait
- ◆ Position you're applying for
- ◆ What you can contribute to the company
- ◆ Some relevant work experiences

Example:

Dedicated team player (*strong personal trait*) with proven leadership and communication skills learned while volunteering (*work experience*) at the California Food Bank. I am seeking to use my talents as a server (*position applying for*) at your restaurant. My experiences and skills will help the company achieve its customer service goals (*what you bring to the company*).

### *Experiences*

This section includes both paid and unpaid experiences (*paid jobs, volunteer work, clubs, societies, and/or teams*). For each experience, write down your:

- ◆ Job title or position you held
- ◆ Organization's name and address
- ◆ Supervisor's name, title, and phone number
- ◆ Start and end dates in that position (mm/yyyy)
- ◆ Your tasks/duties in the position
- ◆ Reason you left

### *Education*

There are lots of different types of education so think beyond your school. Include all your educational experiences. Include programs completed and certificates earned:

- ◆ Diploma, degree, or certification (earning or did earn)
- ◆ School's name, city, and state
- ◆ Dates you attended (mm/yyyy)
- ◆ Names of classes directly related to your work skills



### *Experiences & Education Pointers*

If you have limited experience or education, these strategies can put a positive spin on it:

- ◆ Limited Work Experience: Emphasize your non-work experiences.
- ◆ No High School Diploma: Highlight the classes you took, teams or clubs you belonged to and the skills you gained by participating.
- ◆ Poor Grades: Focus on extracurricular activities or how you managed your academic challenges.
- ◆ No College Degree: If you have college credits, list the college and leave the graduation date blank. Emphasize any training and workshops.

### *Skills*

List as many skills as you can think of. Appendices A and B will help you identify your skills.

### *Interests/Hobbies*

Include all you have.

### *Awards & Achievements*

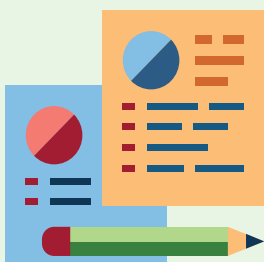
Include scholarships, honors, awards, internships, and extracurricular activities:

- ◆ List all awards and/or achievements you can think of.
- ◆ Include the name of and the date you received an award or completed an achievement.

### *Specific Skills*

Include all your specialized skills. Examples:

- ◆ Software (e.g. GoToMeeting, WebEx)
- ◆ Equipment (e.g. Computer)
- ◆ Language (Reading, writing, speaking)





### *References*

Job Central "Reference Letter Request" Form

(<https://mystuffjobcentral.org/>)

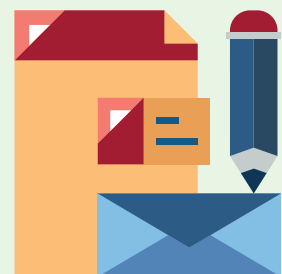
References are people who know you, your skills, and work ethic. They're willing to speak to employers on your behalf. Preparing people to be your reference takes time so get them ready before you need them!

### *Setting Up References*

- ◆ Make a list of three to five people who:
  - Know you well
  - Aren't related to you
  - Have positive things to say about your character and/or skills
- ◆ Ask each person if they will be a reference for you.
- ◆ Tell them prospective employers may contact them.
- ◆ Give them a copy of the job description for the job you're applying for.
- ◆ Suggest to your reference some of your qualities and abilities you'd like them to include.
- ◆ Ask your reference if they'll write a letter for you (if one is required).
- ◆ Send them a thank you note after they've helped you.

### *Getting Reference Info*

- ◆ Name
- ◆ Their job title
- ◆ Their employer (if employed)
- ◆ Daytime phone number
- ◆ Email address
- ◆ Their relationship to you (avoid using relatives)



### *Creating Your Resume*

#### [Job Central Resume](https://mystuffjobcentral.org/)

(<https://mystuffjobcentral.org/>)

Your resume should be brief and easy to read: use bullet points, not paragraphs. Try to keep it to one page.

- ◆ Using Correct Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation. Your resume has to be error free. Proofread carefully! Then have others proofread it for you.
- ◆ Using Action Verbs. Use verbs like “developed,” “achieved,” or “created”.
- ◆ Avoiding Pronouns. Avoid using pronouns like “I,” “me” or “my”. Example:
  - Do write: Helped leadership set team goals.
  - Don’t write: I helped him set team goals.

*Word Choice.* Don’t use slang, texting acronyms, or jargon **unless** the employer uses it in the job announcement/job description.

### *Tailoring Your Resume*

#### [Job Central Resume](https://mystuffjobcentral.org/)

(<https://mystuffjobcentral.org/>)

Review the job announcement and description to see which of your experiences, education, skills and abilities match what they’re asking for or is related to what the company does.

Take keywords from the job announcement or description and put them in your resume. Use the exact words they use: If they write MS Suite, you write MS Suite—don’t write Microsoft Suite.

Be honest: most employers check what you say. You set yourself up for failure if you get hired based on untruths.



### Step 3: Job Search

These job search methods help you find jobs to apply for. As you find openings, you'll need to do some research to decide if this is a good job for you. The information you'll need includes:

#### *About the job*

- ◆ Job duties
- ◆ Typical tasks
- ◆ What you need to know to do the job
- ◆ Detailed job information: [California CareerZone](https://www.cacareerzone.org/) (https://www.cacareerzone.org/) and [Occupational Outlook Handbook](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/) (https://www.bls.gov/ooh/)

#### *About the employer*

- ◆ Company's mission and values
- ◆ Their clients, products, services
- ◆ In the news and recent events

Your research should help you decide if the position is one you are really interested in. Your research can make the difference between getting an interview or not being noticed.

Keep track of your research results with the recordkeeping method you chose in Step 1.



### Job Searching Methods

There are at least 6 methods used in job searching and the more methods you use, the better your chances of finding a job you'll like. Methods include:

1. Networking
2. In Person
3. Company Websites
4. Internet Job Boards
5. Job/Career Fairs
6. Contacting Potential Employers

*About Methods*

1. **Networking:** Is talking to people who know about the type of work you're interested in. Ask if they have information that can help you or if they know someone who does. Talking with people builds your network and helps you get referrals, information, advice and support.

Networking also gives you access to the "Hidden Job Market", which includes jobs that don't get advertised or posted online but can be known to people in your network.

2. **In Person:** Is walking into businesses and asking to leave an application or resume.
3. **Company Websites:** Looking at company job pages. Even if there are no job openings, find out who you can call or email. Contact them and ask if any job openings are coming up. Follow up your conversation by sending your electronic resume. If possible, fill out the online application on the company's website.

If you send your resume through email, your email message should sound like a cover letter (cover letter details in Step 4).

4. **Internet Job Boards:** Employers post jobs on recruiting and general websites like:
  - ◆ LinkedIn
  - ◆ Indeed
  - ◆ Monster
  - ◆ CareerBuilder
5. **Job/Career Fairs:** Attend in-person and online job/career fairs. Some may be specific to the kind of work you're looking for or some may cover a broad range of jobs. Find events to attend on company and professional association websites.
6. **Contacting Potential Employers:** Calling employers directly can reveal job openings that haven't been advertised and it'll also add a professional contact to your network.



### *Talking with potential employers*

Whether you're talking with potential employers on the phone, at the worksite, or at a career event, these conversations show potential employers if you're:

- ◆ A good communicator.
- ◆ Really interested in the job.
- ◆ Worth interviewing.

Be prepared before any conversations

- ◆ Review your notes about the company.
- ◆ Have your resume with you.
- ◆ Have pen and paper.

Be engaged during your conversation

- ◆ Identify yourself immediately.
- ◆ If you are on the phone, explain why you're calling and call during regular business hours.
- ◆ Be brief—show consideration for the person's time.
- ◆ Speak clearly and listen closely. Take notes.
- ◆ Before finishing the conversation, verify the contact information is correct.
- ◆ End promptly with something like, "I'll let you get back to your work".

After your conversation

- ◆ Write up your notes and any to do items or important dates.
- ◆ Send a thank you note to the person you spoke with, thanking them for the time and information they gave you.



## Step 4: Applying for a Job

A successful application packet will show you know about the company, how the job you're applying for fits into it, and whether or not you think the job is a good fit for you.

Your research findings will help you write an attention-grabbing cover letter, a resume tailored to the position, and an application that shows you're the right person for the job.

To apply for a job, you'll need to know how to:

- ◆ Complete the job application.
- ◆ Use online tools.
- ◆ Put together and submit an application packet.

### *Application Completion*

- ◆ Read the job announcement carefully to identify the job requirements.
- ◆ Determine which skills and qualifications you have that are relevant to that job and list them on your application.
- ◆ Use keywords or phrases from the job announcement.
- ◆ Have all the information you need before you start filling in the application. If you have one, open your Job Central app—it has everything you need.

### *Application Pointers*

- ◆ Read directions carefully.
- ◆ Complete every section. Write 'N/A' (not applicable) if something doesn't apply to you.
- ◆ Be honest.
- ◆ Application and resume information should be the same.
- ◆ Proofread your application: it must be error free. Be neat.
- ◆ Keep a copy of it.

### *Submitting Online*

You'll need

- ◆ Electronic device
- ◆ Internet access
- ◆ Email account
- ◆ Flash drive

### *Email Address*

If you don't have a professional email address, create one and use it on all your job applications. Make it simple with your name and/or initials.

- ◆ Your email address should not be suggestive, flirtatious, generic, silly, or funny.
- ◆ It should be professional and easy to remember.
- ◆ It should include your name.
- ◆ It should be a personal email address, not one shared with others.
- ◆ Try not to use numbers or underscores.

### *Follow Up*

- ◆ Follow up a week after submitting your application to make sure they got it.
- ◆ When you follow up:
  - Identify yourself and the position you applied for.
  - Ask if they need anything else from you.
  - Ask when they'll start scheduling interviews.



### *Application Packet*

Your potential employer may require both a job application and resume. When submitting an application packet, a cover letter should be included. Your cover letter is your introduction, sales pitch, and request for action. It's one of your most valuable tools for communicating with potential employers.

[Job Central](https://mystuffjobcentral.org/) Cover Letter template  
(<https://mystuffjobcentral.org/>)

### *Cover letters explain*

- ◆ Your employment objective
- ◆ Experiences and skills you want to point out to the employer
- ◆ How you'd contribute to the company
- ◆ Why you want to work there

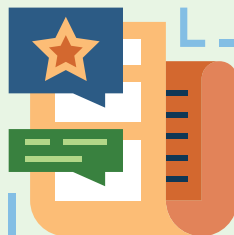
Your cover letter should convince them to interview you.

### *Successful cover letters*

- ◆ If someone referred you, mention them and their title in the first sentence.
- ◆ Uses direct, simple language and action verbs.
- ◆ Includes something you know about the company that shows you did your research.
- ◆ Focuses on how your skills and abilities can help the employer.
- ◆ Are neat, concise, professional and courteous.
- ◆ If available, are digitally signed.

### *Unsuccessful cover letters*

- ◆ Have errors or typos.
- ◆ Repeat the information in your resume.
- ◆ Have negative comments.
- ◆ Use diminishing words like but, just, although, etc.





### Step 5: The Interview & Testing

Successful interviewing requires preparation, knowing some common questions you'll be asked, and being prepared to ask your own questions.

*Interviews can be in-person, online, or by one-way video.*

- ◆ An in-person interview means you'll be in a room with one or more people who'll ask you questions.
- ◆ An online interview is similar to in-person except your interviewers will not be in the room with you.
- ◆ A one-way video interview means you'll answer pre-recorded questions that'll be reviewed by the employer. You won't interact with another person.

#### Interview Preparation

*Verify*

- ◆ The type of interview it'll be: in person, online, or one-way video.
  - If it's in person, confirm the location and directions to the interview site.
  - If it's online or one-way video, confirm you have the technology, link, and/or web address required to access the interview space.
  - Confirm the start time.
  - Documents you should bring (identification, writing sample, etc.).

*Dress for Success*

- ◆ Wear the right clothes for the job you're applying for.
  - Dressing like an employee on the job is a great way to demonstrate that you are a strong candidate.
  - If you're not sure what's appropriate for the job, research to find what employees wear at the workplace and use that as a guideline.
- ◆ Wear the right clothes even for an online or video interview.
- ◆ Wear little or no jewelry.
- ◆ Wear close-toed shoes.



*Bring*

- ◆ Extra resumes and copies of your reference list.
- ◆ Any documents they asked you to bring.
- ◆ Pen and notebook.
- ◆ Your questions.

*Don't Bring*

- ◆ Never bring another person to the interview! If someone gives you a ride, have them wait out of the employer's view.
- ◆ Drinks.
- ◆ Reading material.
- ◆ Skateboards, bicycles, etc.

*Before the Interview*

- ◆ Go to the restroom.
- ◆ Turn your phone off and put it away.
- ◆ Be pleasant to everyone you meet.
- ◆ Introduce yourself and why you're there.

**The Interview**

## When the Interview Starts

- ◆ Make eye contact.
- ◆ Sit down after you're invited to sit down.
- ◆ Take out your pen and notebook.

## Common Interview Questions

- ◆ Tell me about yourself.
- ◆ What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- ◆ How would you describe yourself?
- ◆ Describe a difficult work situation and what you did to overcome it.
- ◆ Give an example where you set and achieved a goal.
- ◆ Why do you want to work for us?
- ◆ Why should we hire you?
- ◆ Do you have any questions?

### *Answering Pointers*

- ◆ Ask the interviewer to repeat or rephrase the question if it would be helpful to you.
- ◆ If you need time to think, say “Let me think for a minute”.
- ◆ Keep your answers brief but complete.
- ◆ Say, “I don’t know” when you don’t know.
- ◆ Be honest, don’t exaggerate or lie.

### *Asking Questions*

During an interview, you’ll likely have an opportunity to ask questions. Limit yourself to 2 or 3 questions. Examples

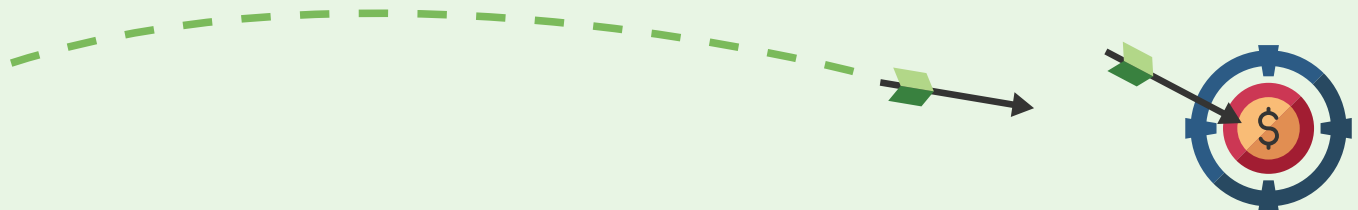
- ◆ What do the day-to-day responsibilities of the job look like?
- ◆ What does success look like in this position?
- ◆ What will be the biggest challenge for the person filling this position?

### *End of Interview*

- ◆ Ask for business cards.
- ◆ Look them in the eye and tell them you want to work with them.
- ◆ Ask them to describe the next steps in the process.
- ◆ Thank them for their time.
- ◆ Leave—don’t hang around.

### *After the Interview*

- ◆ Write out your notes (names, contact information, things you need to remember).
- ◆ Send a thank you note within 24 hours after your interview.
  - It can be handwritten or typed (handwritten makes a better impression).



## Testing

### *Pre-employment Testing*

Before you're hired, you may be asked to take a test online or at the worksite.

### Some Test Types

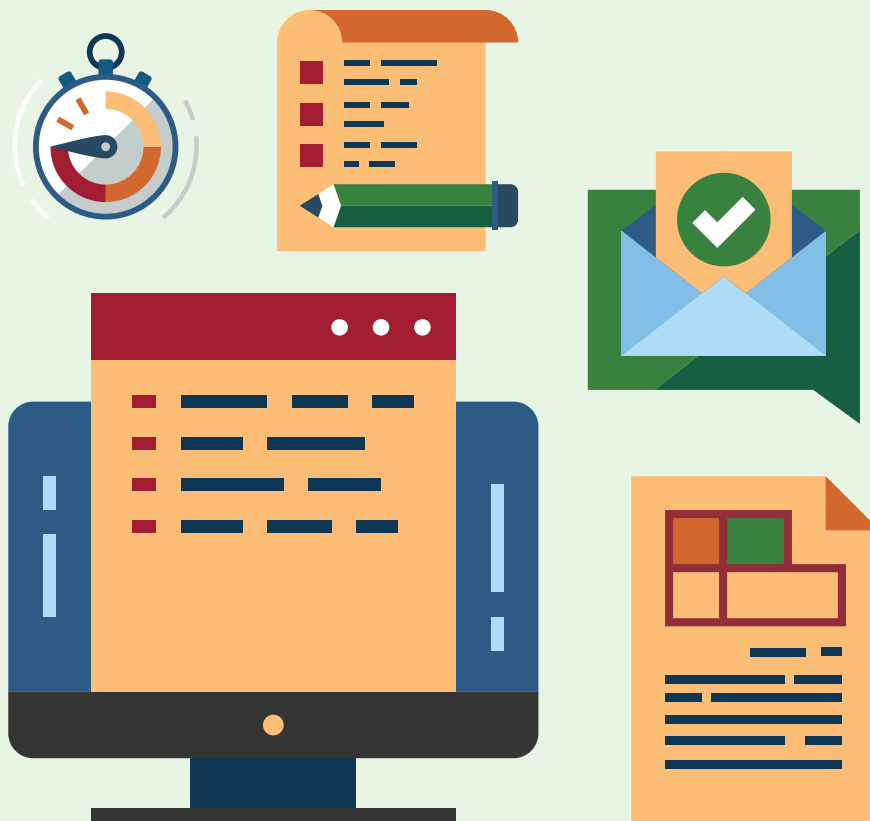
- ◆ Drug
- ◆ Knowledge/Proficiency
- ◆ Background Check

### *Before the test*

- ◆ Complete a practice test if available.
- ◆ Plan enough time to take the test so you don't have to rush to finish.
- ◆ Relax and approach test taking as just another step in the hiring process.

### *During the test*

- ◆ Read all the instructions carefully before you start.
- ◆ Read each question twice to be sure you understand what they're asking for.
- ◆ Answer honestly.



## The Right Job for You

### Is it the right job for you?

Take time to evaluate the job to see if it fits into your career goals before you accept an offer of employment.

Knowing whether or not a job fits into the future you want can help you decide which job offers to take and which ones to bypass.

Ask yourself, "Is it the right job for me?" These questions can get you started:

- ◆ Does the job help you build skills you'll need in your career?
- ◆ Is the job a good stepping stone to another job in your career? Are there promotion opportunities?
- ◆ Can you thrive in the job's work environment? For example, is it:
  - Quiet or noisy?
  - Independent or teamwork?
  - Indoors or outdoors?
  - Sitting all day or physically active?

Don't let anyone push you into accepting a job until you have time to consider how well the job fits your needs and goals.



You have to identify the tasks you've done and your skills to complete a job application. These appendices will help you translate your experiences into skills and tasks.

## **Appendix A: Your Work-related Experiences**

You have to identify tasks and duties you've had to fill in job applications. Use this partial list of tasks to help you remember the tasks, duties, and skills you've used in the past.

*Have you ever...*

- ◆ Communicated with customers by phone or email?
- ◆ Interacted with customers in person?
- ◆ Solved customer questions or complaints?
- ◆ Prepared food in a fast food restaurant?
- ◆ Worked with machines like cash registers and mobile ordering systems?
- ◆ Used math skills? (For example, adding, subtracting, making change, counting money, balancing a cash drawer, depositing business money in the bank.)
- ◆ Worked on a computer? (For example, word processor, spreadsheet, or database?)
- ◆ Used graphic design programs?
- ◆ Created databases?
- ◆ Communicated your opinion using social media? Maintained a blog?
- ◆ Written business letters, memorandums, or other business documents?
- ◆ Tracked deadlines for a project or class?
- ◆ Met attendance requirements for a class or job?
- ◆ Performed housekeeping tasks such as vacuuming, cleaning, dusting and so on?
- ◆ Performed yard care tasks? (For example, mowing, edging, or trimming.)
- ◆ Assisted a disabled or elderly person with daily living tasks? (For example, grooming, dressing, or eating?)
- ◆ Taken care of children?
- ◆ Volunteered in a government agency?
- ◆ Coordinated or volunteered for a community program or event?
- ◆ Harvested local commodities? (For example, lumber or food products.)

- ◆ Developed leadership skills through participation in a Career Technical Education organization (HOSA, FFA, FBLA and so on), scouts, community organization, or faith group?
- ◆ Used hand tools? (For example, hammers, wrenches, pliers, screwdrivers and so on.)
- ◆ Used or repaired power tools? (For example, drills, lawn mowers, vacuums and so on.)
- ◆ Worked as part of a team to accomplish a project?
- ◆ Acted in plays or played a musical instrument?
- ◆ Used lab equipment? (For example, a microscope, scale, test tube and so on.)
- ◆ Provided leadership to a group? (For example, team captain, club officer and so on.)
- ◆ Made a presentation to a group?
- ◆ Completed a research project?



## Appendix B: Which Employability Skills Do You Use?

Employability skills are abilities, skills, and personal qualities essential for job success. Which of the following can you put on your resume?

### General Skills

Adaptability

Attention to detail

Collaboration

Creative

Critical thinking

Curious

Customer service

Diplomacy

Enthusiastic

Friendly

Handling conflict

Honest

Initiative

Integrity

Inventive

Leadership

### Technical Skills

Accounting

Bilingual

Bookkeeping

Budgeting

Child care

Cloud computing

Computer programming

Customer service

Digital marketing

Driving

Event planning

Event promotion

Equipment use

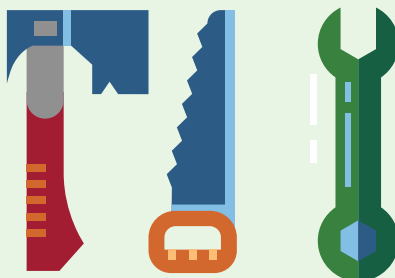
Fund raising

Graphic design

Hand tool use



General Skills	Technical Skills
Listening	Heavy equipment use
Organized	Machine operation
Persistent	Machine repair
Positive attitude	Mathematics
Problem-solving	Microsoft Office
Punctual	Photoshop
Reliable	Project management
Responsible	Public Speaking
Self-motivated	Scheduling
Takes initiative	Social media
Team player	Search engine optimization
Time management	Social media platforms
Verbal communication	Typing speed
Written communication	Video creation
Work ethic	Writing and editing



## Notes