



ONLINE RESUME AND JOB SEARCH

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Preface

Welcome to Online Resume and Job Search

To compete in today's complicated job market, you must prepare a selling resume—a resume designed for electronic as well as hard-copy submission. A job opportunity is your *window of opportunity*, but it isn't open for long. To catch an employer's eye, you must build a resume that matches your skills to the needs of the job.

The activities in this book are fully integrated with our Web site at **online-resume.swep.com**. At this site you will find example job descriptions, resumes, forms, and hyperlinks to valuable online job-search information. If you don't have Web access, you can obtain the materials you need to complete the activities from our CD-ROM.

You will learn how to compile a personal database and how to select the right data so you can tailor your resume to a specific job description. You will also learn three important resume formats: chronological, functional, and targeted. To practice matching your skills to particular jobs, you will search for job descriptions online and analyze them for the key skills employers are looking for. You will also learn how to prepare a scannable resume, so that your resume will “make the cut” when the employer's computer scans for keywords.

At our Web site, you will practice filling out an actual interactive job application form. You will learn how to adjust your resume to other forms of electronic transmission as well, such as email, fax, and Web posting.

Say you've had an interview, and you really want the job. Now what? We'll show you how to prepare follow-up correspondence that will increase your chances of winning that job.

Features

The ten chapters in this book include

- An easy, step-by-step approach to preparing a personal database, searching for and analyzing job descriptions, and tailoring your resume to fit each job.
- Hands-on activities that lead you through preparation of your own resumes, application correspondence, and follow-up correspondence.
- Integration of the activities with online resources, to give you practice in using the Web to search for jobs and job-related information and to learn about electronic forms of resume submission.
- Employment tips that cover useful topics such as using search engines, different ways to get Internet access, free email accounts, showcasing yourself to employers through a personal Web page, using action words to make your resume dynamic, and more.

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Opening Windows of Opportunity

Focus

- Discuss reasons why writing quality resumes and application correspondence is a critical, lifelong skill.
- Assess your interests and abilities in a personal inventory.
- Develop a list of job contacts.
- Research careers using the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* online.

Building Powerful Resumes

To get a good job, you must compete. Often, there are more applicants than there are jobs!

Job openings are *windows of opportunity*. They open for a short time and then close as jobs are filled. If you know how to build a powerful resume, you can turn the odds in your favor.

A *resume* is a summary of your qualifications. It is an organized collection of data that will help “sell” your skills to an employer. A resume, and its accompanying application correspondence, are likely to be the most important documents you will create. They are advertisements that get you noticed in the crowded, competitive job market. They represent you and pave the way for a job interview.



Figure 1 A good resume paves the way for an interview.

Online Resources

In some ways, searching for job opportunities has never been easier. The World Wide Web has opened windows of opportunity never before available. You can use the Web to find job descriptions, locate current job openings, and distribute your resume to potential employers. It can also help you build a winning resume and prepare for a job interview.

While you can use this book solely to prepare your paper or hard-copy resume, it can help with your job search in other ways, too. In each of the ten lessons, you can join us on the Web to explore the many job-search resources available online. Come visit our interactive Web page at online-resume.swep.com. There you will find information and links to help you complete the

activities in this book. Plus, you will find additional links to online job-search resources that will help you learn how to use the Internet to research, apply, and even interview for a job.

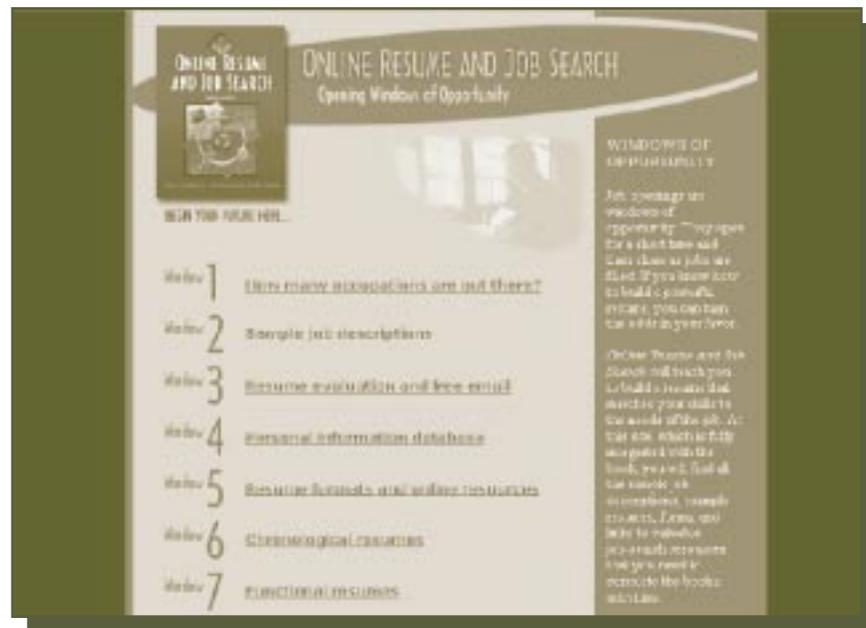


Figure 2 Home page for this text

Resume Building: A Lifelong Process

A generation ago, it was common to work for a single company throughout your career. This type of job stability is no longer possible in today's volatile business climate. Once on your chosen career path, most of you will end up making *at least* a half-dozen major job changes in a lifetime of work.

Add to this figure the number of times that you'll be competing for promotions (which often requires an updated resume). There's a lot of applying, building resumes, and writing application correspondence in your future if you want to advance your career.

Before you focus on a specific career, you'll probably work at a number of other jobs. These jobs will pay the bills while you are in school or preparing for career-track employment. Most of these positions will also require a professional presentation—at least a resume and often a letter or email applying for a job.

The job market is highly competitive. You must fight for the job you want. To be successful, you'll need to know how to create a professional resume.



Making Your Resume Stand Out

How long do you suppose an employer looks at the average resume? It may surprise you to learn that most employers will spend *less than 34 seconds*.

In some situations, a computer may actually scan your resume. If your resume doesn't list certain skills and abilities, a human being may never read it! What can you do, then, to make your resume stand out from the crowd?

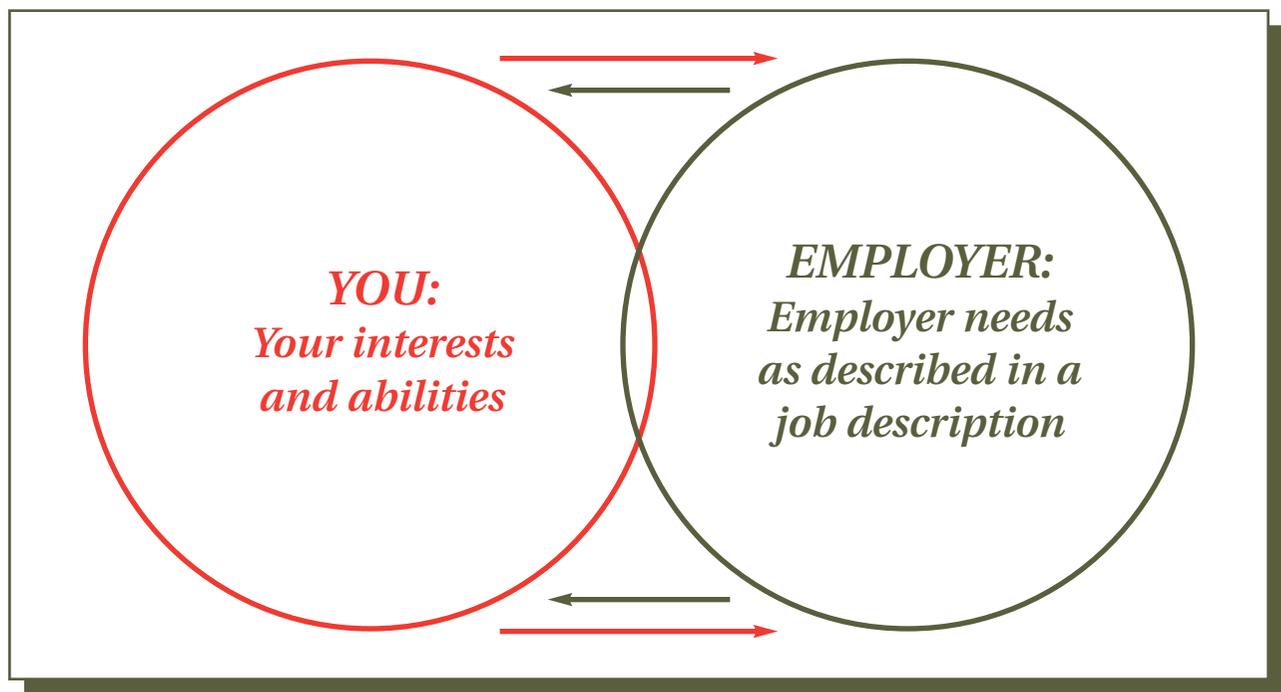


Figure 3 **Your interests and abilities must match the employer's needs.**

Your resume must clearly state your skills. It must be professionally written and tailored to the specific needs of the employer. It must be attractive, flawless, and concise. If your presentation is rambling, carelessly put together, or sloppy, it will convey a bad first impression, and you probably will not be considered for the job—even if you are qualified!

You must effectively market yourself—demonstrating your skills and value to your potential employer. You have to show why you are the best choice, why an employer should pick you over someone else. An employer is more likely to choose you if your skills and abilities closely match those required for the job.

Assess Your Skills . . . Then Make a Plan

What do you want from a job? What do you have to offer an employer?

Self-evaluation is an important early step in your job search. You need to examine your interests to determine the kind of job you want. Be honest in assessing your strengths and weaknesses. If you know your strengths and weaknesses, you can focus on your assets and downplay your limitations. You can then position yourself in the best light and come up with a game plan.

If you aren't directly qualified for the job, are you indirectly qualified? Rarely does anyone fit an employer's job description perfectly. If you have gaps in your preparation, what can you do to eliminate them or minimize their effect? Do you need to take some classes or get into a training program? Simply being in a training program may give you the edge you need.

Your Personal Inventory

A *personal inventory* is a written self-assessment of your interests, skills, and abilities. Preparing a personal inventory can help you focus your job-searching and resume-writing efforts on the type of job that is right for you. In a personal inventory, you analyze your:

- *Interests*: Examine what you want from a job.
- *Abilities*: Determine the personal qualities and skills you have that would make you a good employee.

Let's start by taking a close look at what makes a job interesting to you.

Employment Tip

Myths about Resumes

- True/False? An effective resume lands you that job.
False: An effective resume gets your foot in the door.
- True/False? An effective resume lists all your qualifications.
False: An effective resume highlights your key skills and abilities.
- True/False? A resume will be thoroughly read.
False: A resume will be glanced at.
- True/False? An effective resume has lots of information.
False: An effective resume has enough data to pique your reader's interest.



Activity 1-1: Personal Inventory—Interests

If you could choose any job . . .

1. What would be your ideal job?

2. Name the best job you ever had. Then list the qualities that made it the best. (If you've not had a "best job," list the qualities that would make any job enjoyable for you.)

3. What do you want from a job (for example, security, money, challenges, travel, leadership opportunities, recognition, power)?

4. What positive challenges should a job have?

5. What personal development should a job demand?

6. What type of environment would your ideal job have?

7. List three general areas in which you would like to work.

- 
8. Briefly explain why these areas of employment interest you.

9. If you know of a specific job that you would like, list it here.

Activity 1-2: Personal Inventory—Abilities

Identify the valuable skills you have.

1. List five things you have done in your life that you are most proud of (such as working with children with disabilities, fly fishing, belonging to the swim team, running a marathon, or raising a family).

2. List five skills you have that an employer would value (for example, organizing activities, solving problems, working with computers, or working with others). For each skill, give a specific example that demonstrates that you possess this skill (for example, for *organizing activities*, you might note that you organized a fundraiser for a new neighborhood playground).



3. List any schools and special training (classes) you have attended.

4. List any jobs that you have had, including volunteer work.

5. List five personal qualities that you have that an employer would value (for example, honesty, a good work ethic, promptness, loyalty, or self-reliance). For each quality, give a specific example that demonstrates that you possess this quality (for example, for *honesty*, you might note that you returned an overpayment to a customer).

Activity 1-3: Developing Job Contacts

It's time to network.

It's surprising how many good job leads come from people you know. Friends, family, acquaintances, teachers, and counselors can become your **personal network**—a rich source of job-related information and referrals. In this activity, you will begin to build a list of job contacts. Consider it a running list. Add names to it later as you think of them.

1. List your very best friends, including your closest business associates.



2. List other friends, business associates, and neighbors.

3. List teachers and guidance counselors.

4. List adults in your immediate and extended family.

5. List acquaintances, including business contacts.

6. List people you know who are in the field that interests you.

7. List people who might be helpful from old address books, Rolodexes, etc.



Activity 1-4: The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* Online



The Internet opens windows of opportunity.

The Web is an outstanding resource for job seekers. One important resource you can find online is the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. The *OOH* is a publication of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics that describes hundreds of jobs. You can search the *OOH* online, or find it in almost any school or public library.

1. If you have Internet access, go to online-resume.swep.com, the site for this book, and open **Window #1**. Read the instructions and select the link to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. If you do not have Internet access, obtain a copy of the *OOH* from your instructor or from your school or public library.
2. Look through the index to get an idea of the many jobs that people actually do!
3. Select three to five jobs from the index that interest you. In a word processing file, write a brief description of each. Include as much of the following information as you can find:
 - What kind of work the job involves
 - Working conditions
 - Qualities and skills you need to get the job and advance in it
 - Job outlook
 - Earnings
 - Related occupations, including advanced positions
 - Sources that you can contact for more information
4. Save and print your file.

Employment Tip

What If I Don't Have a Web Connection?

Get one *now!* A connection to the Internet is an essential tool for a job seeker. You can buy your own connection for less than \$22 per month in most parts of the country. You can terminate the connection as soon as your job search is over, so the overall cost may be minimal. If getting your own connection would be difficult, consider these options:

- Many schools and libraries allow job seekers a guest account.
- Certain government employment services may let you access their Web connections while you look for work.
- A former employer may allow you access to the company Web connection while you are looking for a new job.
- A friend may have a connection you can use.



Activity 1-5: Interview a Professional

If you don't know what a career field entails, ask!

It never hurts to learn from a working professional. Interview someone in a vocation that interests you. You might interview a parent, friend, teacher, relative, or neighbor. Or, you could politely contact the human resources department of a company and ask to speak to someone in a job that interests you. Ask your interviewee the following questions:

1. What tasks does an employee in this job perform?

2. What is the career path for an entry-level employee in this field?

3. What educational background would you need to work in this field?

4. What work experience would you need for a job in this field?

5. What specific skills are required to compete for a job in this field?

6. What could you do to prepare for a job in this field?
