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MERCHANDISING YOUR JOB TALENTS

**JOB
SERVICE
OF IOWA** 

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Iowa Employment Service
1000 East Street
Des Moines, Iowa

Self-Appraisal

As the first step in merchandising your talents, you should decide exactly what your qualifications are. You need a detailed inventory of your background and experience so that you will know exactly what assets you have to offer an employer.

No matter what type of job you seek, your inventory will be a basic tool in your search. If you are marketing your skills for a professional or office position, it will contain the information you need to prepare your résumé. If you are looking for work in a skilled trade or other field in which résumés are not expected, your inventory will help you decide how to present your qualifications at a job interview and be your source for the facts, dates, and other information you will need to give an employer.

To prepare your inventory chart, follow the outline below. Write out, on a separate sheet of paper, all the data you think might help you in your job search. Later, you can weed out the list and select the assets that are relevant to the job you seek.

1. *Work history*

List all of your jobs, including part-time, summer, and freelance work. For each job, give the name and address of your employer, your job title, the details of your duties, and the dates you were employed. Then ask yourself:

What did I like about each job? Why?

What did I dislike about each job? Why?

Why did I leave?

2. *Skills and abilities.* Ask yourself:

What personal qualities do I have that make me good at certain work? Think back over your job experience and school and volunteer activities and try to be honest with yourself. Are your strong points initiative, imagination, leadership, ability to organize, willingness to follow orders, interest in detail, or ability to work with people?

What did I learn on the job that I can use in another position? (For example, operation of a machine or office equipment or blueprint reading.)

3. *Education.* List:

The schools you attended and the dates, the principal courses you took, and the degrees you received.

The business, vocational, military, on-the-job training, or special courses you took, the dates, and any certificates you received.

Then ask yourself:

What courses or training did I like best and why?

What courses or training did I dislike and why?

Now list your scholarships or honors and your extracurricular activities.

If you are a recent graduate, your activities may be a significant part of your job qualifications (for example, work on the school newspaper or campus radio station). Even if they are not directly related to a job, they may help you decide what your best talents and interests are. (For example, do you enjoy sports, recreation, and outdoor activities? Did you excel on the debate team? Are you good at organizing a group to do a job?)

4. *Interests, talents, and aptitudes.* Ask yourself:

What are my hobbies or volunteer activities?

What are my special talents or aptitudes? For example, can I fix a car? Play a musical instrument? Speak another language besides English? Am I good at drawing or painting? What do I learn most easily?

How can I relate my talents and interests to a job?

5. *Does my physical condition limit me in any way?*

6. *Is it necessary for me to change my field of work?*

7. *How long can I afford to be out of work?*

8. *Career goal*

What kind of work do I want to be doing 5 or 10 years from now?

What sort of job should I seek now in order to prepare for my goal?

9. *Jobs I want*

Considering all the information in your inventory, list the types of jobs you feel you are best qualified for and want. List them in order of your preference.

If you have completed your inventory, you are ready for the next step—either preparing your résumé or selecting your sources of job information. But perhaps you have considered all the factors in your background and still are not ready to answer the key question: What kind of job do I want? You may be just out of school or the service and know little about the sorts of jobs that are open to you. You may have decided that you are on the wrong track vocationally and want to switch to a new field. Perhaps you have been out of the labor force for years because of family responsibilities. Or for other reasons you are not sure what your job goal should be.

You need to learn more about different types of jobs. A good place to go is your local State employment service office. This office has information about jobs and the qualifications needed to fill them. You may

be given an appointment with a career counselor who will help you decide what sort of work is best suited to your abilities and interests. He can assist you in planning your career.

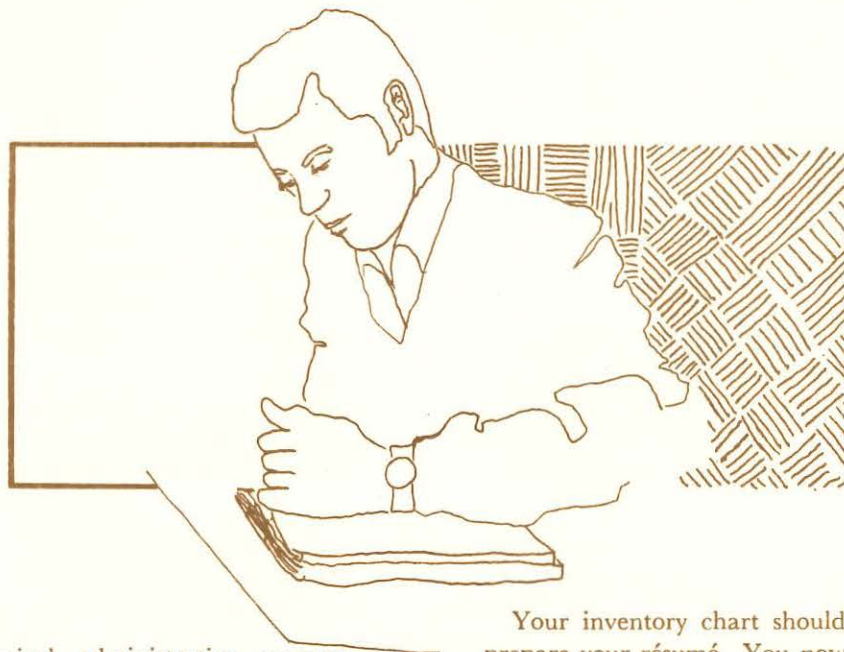
Another good source of information about various types of jobs is your local public library. You can find books that tell you about specific careers and consult the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, published by the U.S. Department of Labor. The *Handbook* gives the latest information about more than 850 occupations. For each, it tells about the work involved, where the jobs are located, what training and other qualifications are needed to fill them, and the chances for advancement. It also discusses earnings and working conditions and assesses future job opportunities for people in the field. And it tells you where to go for more information about any occupations of particular interest to you.

Once you have decided on your job goal, the employment service can give you other help—such as assistance in preparing your résumé and group training in job finding. When you are ready, it may be able to refer you to the sort of job you want.

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Preparing a Résumé

If you are seeking a professional, technical, administrative, or managerial job, you will need a résumé. One is also needed in applying for many clerical and sales positions. An effective résumé “gets your foot in the door.” It often leads to personal interviews that you might not otherwise have.



Your inventory chart should contain all the information you need to prepare your résumé. You now have to *select*, *arrange*, and *organize* this raw material in the way that best relates your background to the job you seek.

Your first task is to *select* the data you want to use. Ask yourself: Which parts of my training and experience are relevant to my job goal?

Which parts, if any, are unrelated? Give all pertinent details about the positions that relate to your goal. But be brief in listing unrelated jobs; they are of little interest to a prospective employer.

Next you must *arrange* the information you have selected. To catch an employer's attention, plan to list your best qualifications early in your résumé. Ask yourself: Is my work experience the most important part of my résumé? Or will an employer be more interested in my education and training?

You can *organize* your experience in one of two ways—by job or by function. You may want to look over the suggested outline and sample résumés before you decide which one presents your work experience better.

Your résumé should be detailed enough to give an employer the information he needs to assess your qualifications for his job opening. At the same time it should be concise. A busy employer wants the pertinent facts in as few words as possible. For example, in your work history the full sentence, "I was responsible for analyzing the cost sheets from the production department," can be condensed into a short phrase starting with an action verb: "Analyzed production cost sheets."

If you have more than one job objective, you have two alternatives.

1. You can list, in order of preference, the jobs you are qualified for. Your résumé should include all data relevant to each job. This will give you one all-purpose résumé. It has the clear advantages of simplicity and speed. You can prepare in advance as many copies as you think you will need and have one ready to pass out whenever you want it.

- If your job goals are in separate fields (for example, research assistant, copywriter, or English teacher).
- If you will approach several types of institutions, which may place more value on different aspects of your background. (For example, one may emphasize certain academic degrees, while a second is interested in a particular part of your job experience, and still another may be looking for clues to your personal traits, such as ability to persuade or deal tactfully with others.)

The details—They do make a difference. If possible, your résumé should be typewritten. If you can't type it yourself, having a copy typed is usually a good investment. You may need anywhere from two to 200 copies, depending on the type of job you seek, the supply and demand in your field, and the geographic area you wish to cover. If your distribution needs are large and you can use the same résumé without change for any employer, a good practice is to have enough copies duplicated for your anticipated needs. Avoid passing out carbon copies. They advertise the fact that you gave the original to someone else. If you need only a few copies, an alternate method is to print your résumé clearly in ink.

Suggested Outline For Your Résumé

1. *Personal data*

Begin with your name, address, and telephone number. Other personal data, such as your date of birth (optional) and your marital status and dependents, may follow or appear at the end of your résumé.

2. *Employment objective*

Indicate the kind of job you are seeking. If you are qualified for several jobs and are preparing one all-purpose résumé, list them in order of your preference.

3. *Work history*

You can organize this information in two ways. Choose the one that presents your work experience better.

a. *By job*

List each job separately (even if the jobs were within the same firm), starting with the most recent one and working backward.

For each job, list:

Dates of employment

Name and address of employer and nature of his business

Position you held

Then describe your job, showing:

Specific job duties—The tasks you performed, including any special assignments and use of special instruments or equipment.

Scope of responsibility—Your place in the organization, how many people you supervised, and in turn, the degree of supervision you received.

Accomplishments—If possible, give concrete facts and figures.

b. *By function*

List the functions (fields of specialization or types of work, such as engineering, sales promotion, or personnel management) you performed that are related to your present job objectives.

Then describe briefly the work you have done in each of these fields, without breaking it down by individual jobs.

4. *Education* (If this is your main selling point, put it before your work history.)

List your formal education, giving:

High school (can be omitted if you have a higher degree), college, graduate school, and other courses or training

Dates of graduation or leaving school

Degrees or certificates received

Major and minor subjects and other courses related to your job goal

Scholarships and honors

Extracurricular activities (if you are a recent graduate and your activities pertain to your job goal)

5. *Military experience*

List your military service if it is recent or pertinent to your job goal, indicating:

Branch and length of service

Major duties, including details of assignments related to the job you seek.

(Indicate any pertinent military training here or under your education.)

6. *Miscellaneous*

If appropriate to your field of work, give such information as:

Knowledge of foreign languages

Volunteer or leisuretime activities

Special skills, such as typing, shorthand, or ability to operate special equipment.

Membership in professional organizations

Articles published, inventions, or patents

7. *References*

Give the names, positions, and addresses of three persons who have direct knowledge of your work competence. If you are a recent graduate, you can list teachers who are familiar with your school work. When possible, you should obtain the permission of the persons you use as references.

The following examples show some of the ways that a jobseeker can organize his résumé. They are for use only as general guides.

Jane D. Jones
593 Ninth Avenue
Anytown, Ala. 35204
422-2824

(date of resume)
Age: 22
Marital status: single

EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE

Reporter, copy editor

EDUCATION

Standard State University, University City, Ala. B.S., cum laude, 1974
Major: Journalism, *Minor:* Psychology, Other courses: Beginning and advanced photography
Honors: Phi Kappa Phi
Extracurricular activities: Editor of college newspaper. Served earlier as copy editor and reporter.

EXPERIENCE

1973-74 school year. Correspondent in University City for *Anytown Gazette*, Anytown, Ala.

June—August 1973. *Anytown Gazette*. Although working as a copyboy, I received a number of editorial assignments. Besides covering meetings and writing obituaries, I did a feature series with photographs on the county arts group. (Attached is a one-sheet photostat showing clippings of stories I wrote for the *Gazette*.)

Summers 1971 and 1972. Wilder Men's Wear, 215 Main Street, Anytown, Ala. Sales clerk.

REFERENCES

Prof. J. W. Wynn, School of Journalism, Standard State University, University City, Ala. 34205

Mr. William T. Ryan, editor, *Anytown Gazette*, Anytown, Ala. 35204

Mrs. Dora Cohen, assistant professor of journalism, Standard State University, University City, Ala. 34205

Ruth A. Roe
487 Franklin Drive
Woodland, N.Y. 10124
561-2573

(date of resume)
Marital status: married, no children
Date of birth: October 21, 1947

EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE

Children's librarian

EDUCATION

Hunter College, B.S., 1969, *Major*: Elementary education, *Minor*: Child psychology

Columbia University, master's degree, 1974, library science

EXPERIENCE

1969-73, Woodland Elementary School, 231 Ritchie Lane, Woodland, N.Y. Taught fifth grade. A major objective was to stimulate pupils to do more independent reading. To this end, prepared displays and organized field trips to nearby libraries in connection with annual book fair; assisted part-time librarian in reorganizing instructional materials center to make it easier to use and more inviting in appearance; and took training course and for 2 years conducted a junior great books course for pupils at Woodland.

1968-1969 (part-time during school year and full time during summer of 1969). Bowen Library, 441 Playford Street, New York, N.Y. Library clerk. Located books for patrons and answered nonprofessional inquiries. Received, sorted, repaired, and shelved books.

Summer, 1968. Mobile Manufacturing Company, 24 W. Fifth Street Woodland, N.Y. Clerk-typist. Acted as secretary to vice president while regular secretary was on vacation.

Summers, 1966 and 1967. Highpoint Camp, Wilson Road, Adirondacks, N.Y. Taught arts and crafts and supervised bunk of 10- and 11-year-old girls.

SPECIAL SKILLS

Spanish: Good reading, writing and speaking knowledge.
Operate various types of visual equipment.

REFERENCES

Dr. Margaret Martin, Professor of Library Science, Columbia University, New York, N.Y. 10027

Mr. Wilbur Miller, Principal, Woodland Elementary School, 231 Ritchie Lane, Woodland, N.Y. 10123

Mr. Walter Snyder, Chief Librarian, Bowen Library, 441 Playford Street, New York, N.Y. 10009

John W. Doe
304 Amen St.
San Francisco, Calif. 94102
778-0000

(date of resume)

OBJECTIVE

Sales executive

SALES PROMOTION

Devised and supervised sales promotion projects for large business firms and manufacturers, mostly in the electronics field. Originated newspaper, radio and television advertising and coordinated sales promotion with public relations and sales management. Analyzed market potentials and developed new techniques to increase sales effectiveness and reduce sales costs. Developed sales training manuals.

As sales executive and promotion consultant handled a great variety of accounts. Sales potentials in these firms varied from \$100,000 to \$5,000,000 per annum. Was successful in raising the volume of sales in many of these firms 25 percent within the first year.

SALES MANAGEMENT

Hired and supervised sales staff on a local area, and national basis. Established branch offices throughout the United States and developed uniform systems of processing orders and sales records. Promoted new products as well as improving sales of old ones. Developed sales training program. Developed a catalog system involving inventory control to facilitate movement of scarce stock between branches.

MARKET RESEARCH

Devised and supervised market research projects to determine sales potentials, as well as need for advertising. Wrote detailed reports and recommendations describing each step in distribution, areas for development, and plans for sales improvement.

SALES

Retail and wholesale. Direct sales to consumer, jobber, and manufacturer. Hard goods, small metals, and electrical appliances.

ORDER CLERK

Received, processed, and expedited orders. Trouble shooter, Set up order control system which was adopted for all branches.

FIRMS

1964-1974	B. B. Bowen Sales Development Co., San Francisco, Calif.	Sales Executive
1955-1963	James Bresher Commercial and Industrial Sales Research Corp. Oakland, Calif.	Sr. Sales Promotion Mgr.
1950-1955	Dunnock Brothers Electronics Co., San Francisco, Calif.	Order Clerk, Salesman, Sales Mgr.

EDUCATION

University of California, B.S. 1949; *Major:* Business Admin.

PERSONAL DATA

Birth date, January 4, 1924. Married, three children

Letter of Application



In many fields of work, writing a letter of application is the customary way to ask for a personal interview. This is particularly true in the following cases:

1. When the employer you wish to contact lives in another city or town.
2. As a cover letter when you are mailing résumés.
3. When you are answering a want ad.

The following guidelines may help you write a letter of application:

1. Type neatly, using care in sentence structure, spelling, and punctuation.

2. Use a good grade of letter-sized white bond paper.
3. Address your letter to a specific person, if possible (use city directories or other sources).
4. State exactly the kind of position you are seeking and why you are applying to the particular firm.
5. Be clear, brief, and businesslike.
6. Enclose a résumé.

Letters of application will vary considerably depending on the circumstances in which they are used. The sample on the following page illustrates one way of writing such a letter.

- economists, librarians, statisticians, correctional services personnel, and engineers and scientists.
 - Provide placement service at national professional conventions.
 - Offer counseling and career consultation.
 - Provide aptitude and proficiency testing.
 - Have daily contacts with thousands of employers.
 - Accumulate and distribute local, statewide, and national labor market information.
 - Charge no fees.
2. School or college placement services
 - A productive source for professional openings.
 - Usually available only to students and alumni of the school.
 3. Want ads in newspapers, professional journals, and trade magazines
 - Provide a broad range of definite openings.
 - A large share of listings in magazines devoted to your field are likely to be for jobs you are qualified to fill.
 - Descriptions of jobs may not be detailed enough for you to decide whether you are qualified.
 - Analysis of the ads provides information about the extent of employment activity in your field throughout the area.
 4. Industrial and craft unions
 - Have exclusive hiring authority for some firms.
 - Each deals with a limited number of occupations.
 - Productive source for members, particularly those with seniority.

5. U.S. Civil Service Commission
 - Handles U.S. Government civilian jobs.
 - Fills jobs in a wide variety of professional, technical, clerical, craft, and other occupations.
 - Positions are located in Washington, D.C., throughout the United States, and overseas.
 - Jobs are filled on a merit basis as determined by the results of examinations and ratings of experience and education.
 - Examinations are given several times a year in cities throughout the Nation. Tests for entry-level professional positions are conducted at many universities and other schools.
 - Most post offices have application forms and information on job opportunities. You can also write for information to the U.S. Civil Service Commission, Washington, D.C. 20415.
6. Private employment agencies
 - Usually specialize in a few occupations.
 - Some charge applicants a fee for registration or placement; others collect fees from employers.
7. Yellow pages of telephone directory, industrial directories, and Chamber of Commerce lists
 - Sources of names of firms that employ workers in your field and other information useful in applying to them.
8. Professional associations
 - Useful for specialized occupations.
 - Listings available at libraries.

Planning Your Time

Even if you are under no economic pressure to find a job quickly, starting your search promptly is a wise policy. Delays may hurt your chances of finding the job you want. If you have just finished school, for example, you are competing for similar positions with other new graduates in your field. Moreover, a long delay between school or your last job and your application for work may give an employer the impression that his office is one of your last stops in a long and fruitless job search.

Once you start your search, you should treat it as a full-time job. Looking for work can become discouraging at times; but sustained effort usually pays off.

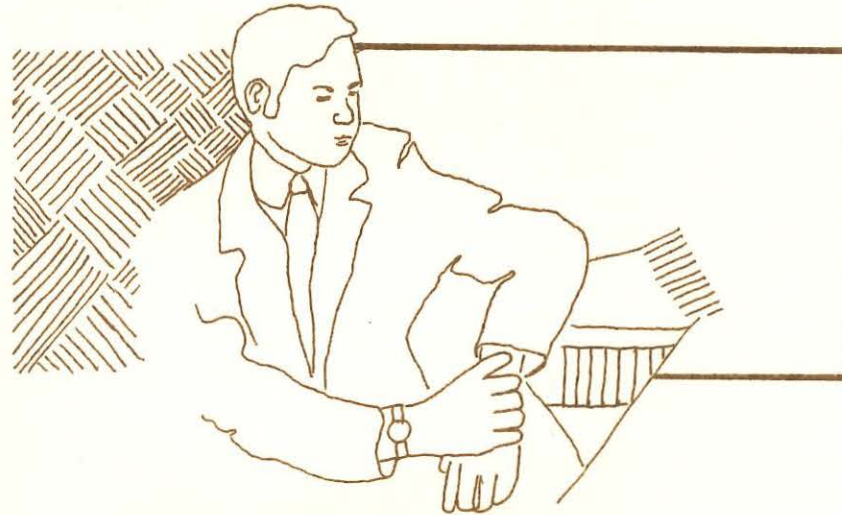
The following suggestions may help you plan your time for an efficient job search:

1. Plan and start your search as soon as you know you will need to find a new job.

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Des Moines

2. Make your job hunting a full-time project. You work a 40-hour week for your employer; you should work no less for yourself.
3. Once you start your search, do not allow yourself little vacations.
4. Apply early enough in the day to allow time for multiple interviews, tests, or other hiring procedures that may be required.

5. Be on time for appointments.
6. Before approaching a firm, try to learn the best time and day of the week to apply for a job.
7. Follow up leads immediately. If you learn of a job opening late in the day, call the firm to arrange an appointment for the next day. The employer may postpone a hiring decision until he talks to you.



Job Interview

A job interview is your showcase for merchandising your talents. During the interview an employer judges your qualifications, appearance, and general fitness for his job opening. It is your opportunity to convince him that you can make a real contribution to his firm.

Equally important, it gives you a chance to appraise the job, the employer, and the firm. It enables you to decide if the job meets your career needs and interests and whether the employer is of the type and caliber you want to work for.

Before each interview, though, you should assume that the job you are applying for is precisely the one you want—because it may be. To present your qualifications most advantageously, you will need to prepare in advance. You should have the needed papers ready and the necessary information about yourself firmly in mind; and you should know how to act at the interview to make it an effective device for selling your skills.

Preparing for the interview

- Assemble in easily available order all the papers you need to take with you. The principal one is your résumé—unless you have submitted it before the interview. If you have not prepared a résumé, take your school records, social security card, and work records, with the names of your employers and dates of employment. (Prepare your own list if you have no formal records.) You may also need any licenses, union card, or military records you have. If your work is the sort that you can show at an interview, you may want to take a few samples (such as art or design work or published writing).
- Learn all you can about the company where you are going for an interview—its product or service, standing in the industry, number and kinds of jobs available, and hiring policies and practices.
- Know what you have to offer—what education and training you have

Job Service Offices are conveniently located in the following cities:



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