



# MANAGEMENT RECRUITERS of READING

## CAREER GUIDE FOR JOB SEEKERS



*Good Luck in Your Career Search  
We Hope We Can Be of Some Help!*



**J. L. (Jeff) Burrige**

2921 Windmill Road

Reading, PA 19608

610.670.8008

[www.mrireading.com](http://www.mrireading.com) [info@mrireading.com](mailto:info@mrireading.com)

## Forward

An interviewer has just one objective: to decide whether or not to make you a job offer. While the interviewer will examine your work history and educational background, your strengths and accomplishments will also be important criterion. He or she is also interested in evaluating your level of motivation, values, attitude and personality. In other words, to find out if you're the right person for the job, what your potential is for promotion and whether or not you will fit into the company environment.

While it's true that an interview is an important screening tool for companies, it also allows you to learn those things you need to know about the position and the company so that you can make an intelligent decision about the job. Always approach an interview focused on your objective: getting a job offer.

As with many situations, preparation is the key to success. The job market is very competitive and you probably will not be the only qualified candidate a position. The deciding factor may simply be the way you present your skills for and qualifications relevant to the position and how well you conduct yourself during the interview.

This booklet has been made available for your use by your executive recruiter. It will help you prepare for and succeed at the interview. Take the time to review the material in this booklet. The tips and techniques outlined herein have been tested, and they work! They will improve your chances of receiving a job offer. Should you have any questions about your upcoming interview, the company, the opportunity, or the suggestions printed in this booklet, consult your StoneBridge Management / Management Recruiters of Reading Executive Recruiter.

## The Rise – and Rise – of Your Career



In some respects building a successful career is no different from any other project. Clear goal setting, thorough planning and effective execution are key ingredients in the recipe for success. Though expert advice can help you with the process, in the end it is up to you to formulate objectives, develop a plan, and follow through to realize your career goals. While you may enjoy your share of luck, success seldom falls in your lap. Furthermore, if you ignore the basic principles of career management, an unexpected setback could badly damage your long-term prospects. Take a good look at yourself. Understand your needs.

What is important to you? What are you passionate about? A career spans many years. It can be hard to maintain enthusiasm, excitement and energy unless you believe in what you are doing. Look for the right balance of career, earnings and fulfillment. Are you aiming for the top or is family more important? What are your unique talents and abilities? It makes sense to play to your strengths.

Think strategically and long-term about your career. Don't place too much emphasis on compensation early on. It may be more important to develop the skills and experience to "set you up." Don't ignore ongoing training. Acquiring the additional skills, knowledge and education needed for your new career is fundamental. Also consider getting some unique experience, which will help differentiate you in the market place. Seek ongoing career management. Continue to examine, evaluate and refine. The marketplace can change quickly. Be prepared for unexpected opportunities as well as setbacks.

## Interviewing Tips

*You want to work for the company, they've seen your credentials and they've asked you in for an interview. You want the job. Here are some suggestions that will help you make sure your interview goes as well as possible. Prepare for the interview. Thorough preparation is critical. It is great for your confidence in the interview room and it leaves a very positive impression with the interviewers.*

**Get the logistics right.** Time, location, interviewer's name and position title.

**Do your research.** Find out as much as possible about the company: size, scope, location of branches and offices, financial/share performance, range of products and services, etc. The company website and annual report are two very good sources.



**Do some more research.** Make sure you have key data in your head about your existing and most recent employers.

**Do even more research.** Ask former co-workers to tell you about your professional traits. What did they most admire? Try to find some faults as well. This leaves you more prepared for questions such as "what are your greatest faults" or "if I were working with you ...".

**Prepare questions.** The employer will be trying to work out whether you fit the available role. You should also take the opportunity to ensure that the company is right for you.

**Present yourself well.** Find out what the company culture is regarding business dress. If in doubt, go more formal, not less formal. Make sure you are well groomed on the day.

**Be descriptive.** Don't just answer "yes" or "no" to questions. But also avoid "over-answering." Make your answers colorful but not lengthy. It's also acceptable to admit you don't know the answer.

**Sell yourself** to the interviewer, but without exaggeration or telling lies. You are there to market yourself, "blow your own trumpet" and explain why you'd be right for the role. But don't come across as arrogant.

**Avoid negative remarks** about your current employer, or past employers or colleagues. This will only reflect on you in the interview.

**Be determined.** Make it clear that you want to get the job, even if you are given information in the interview that sheds a new light on the role.

**Be positive**, and then evaluate the opportunity again when you are away from the interview. Don't burn your bridges.

## Preparing For An Interview

### **Know Yourself**

- Can you honestly visualize resigning from your current position?
- What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?

- What are your short and long-term goals?
- Evaluate yourself in terms of the position you seek?
- Formulate responses by asking: "Why should they hire me?"
- Remember that you're there to sell yourself and secure a job offer.



## Research the Company

- Utilize the library to review annual reports, trade magazines and newspaper articles.
- The Internet for company information & industry statistics.
- Know the company's products and services.
- Be prepared to tell why their company is attractive to you.
- Talk with company employees.
- Talk to customers of the company.

## Items to Bring to the Interview

### *References*

Use three former supervisors who are familiar with your work.

Include their name and company as well as home and work phone numbers. Always consult with references for their approval and to ensure that their remarks are positive.

### *Resume*

Be prepared to discuss all points.

Always bring a resume copy identical to the one supplied to the interviewer. Bring along samples of your work, if possible. Never discuss or show proprietary information from previous companies.

### *Other Items*

Bring a folder and pen to the interview to jot down notes.

Prepare and review your questions as well as specific responses.

Bring directions to the interview location as well as the interviewer's phone number in case you're running late.

Bring along your recruiter's phone number to give immediate feedback after the interview.

## Arrival at the Interview

- Arrive no earlier than fifteen minutes before the interview (but **no** later than five minutes prior to the interview).
- Allow adequate time for traffic, parking and a last minute appearance check. If possible, scout out the location the day before the interview to avoid last minute problems.
- Review your notes and go in with confidence.
- If asked, complete an application. Complete the application in full and leave no blanks. Do not write "see resume" as a response to any application question. Respond to "expected salary" questions as "open" and "current salary" questions truthfully.
- List references if requested. Your recruiter's name should be your response to any "referred by" questions.

## A typical sequence of events are:

- Interview with personnel (general questions. review of the company and their benefits.)
- Interview with the immediate supervisor and peers.
- Interview with the hiring authority (manager, etc.).

- Shake hands firmly and maintain eye contact with the interviewer.
- Maintain a high energy level. Sit up with back straight. No coffee (to spill), and no smoking.
- It is to your advantage if subjects of mutual interest arises, but do not fake knowledge. Be yourself.
- Poise, confidence, and self-respect are of great importance.
- Plant Tour. Be an **active** participant: Ask questions, show interest, and interact!
- **REMEMBER:** Everyone gives feedback. So, be polite to secretaries, receptionists and all administrative staff.

**Conduct yourself** with confidence and determination to get the job. You have other options, of course, and your interviewer knows this, but wants to think that you want a job with this company. Don't play coy. Sell yourself. This is your first meeting and the position, as well as future promotions, may depend on your presentation. Are you going to sell them on the idea of hiring you, or will they sell you on the idea that this job is not for you? You must present a positive attitude to the prospective employer.

**You must NOT** seem disinterested or appear to be job shopping. The interview should be a two-way conversation. Ask questions of the interviewers. This shows your interest in the company and the position, and enables you to gather the right information to make an intelligent decision afterwards. The questions you have prepared can be asked to the different people you see.

**Remember the objective** of the interview is to obtain an offer. During the interview, you must gather enough information concerning the position to make a decision.

## **Exploring Your Background – Questions to Ask Yourself**

Preparation is the key for a successful interview. Conversation is smoother because you have an idea of what you're going to say and as a result you'll appear more at ease with the interviewer and that's always a plus. Take a few minutes to formulate a response for each question. Remember to keep your answers brief and focused while exploiting opportunities to convey all relevant qualifications. One to three sentences will usually suffice. A volley of long-winded replies will only bore the interviewer. Be prepared to answer questions like:

### **Tell me about yourself.**

Answer these questions in terms of the qualifications required of the position.

Keep responses concise and brief and avoid being derogatory or negative about previous jobs and bosses.

"Tell-me-about-yourself" means, "Tell me about your qualifications." Prepare a one to two minute discussion of your qualifications. Start with education and discuss your experiences. Describe your performance (in raises, promotions, innovative designs, sales volume, increased profits, etc.)

### **What are your greatest strengths?**

Interviewers like to hear abstract qualities. Loyalty, willingness to work hard, eagerness, fast-learner, technical skills, politeness, and promptness, expressed in concrete terms are good examples. Avoid the simple generalization "I like people". It's not a good answer.

### **What are your greatest weaknesses?**

Don't be intimidated. The interviewer probably wants reassurance that hiring you won't be a mistake. This is not the time to confess all of your imperfections. (Do not state "not being able to go to work on Mondays", or "coming in late", etc.). Present your weaknesses as professional strengths, (i.e., "Sometimes work too hard to make sure things are done accurately").

**What do you do in your spare time?**

Workaholics are not always the best employees. Present yourself as a well-rounded person. Your answer gives you dimension. Name some hobbies

**How can you contribute to this company?**

Be positive and sell! Bringing strong technical skills, enthusiasm, and desire to complete projects correctly and efficiently are good responses.

**Why should I hire you for this position?**

Explain your qualifications and how they "fit" the available position. Address your interest in the job and the field and why it's work that you enjoy. Emphasize your ability to successfully perform the duties required.

**Why do you want to work for our firm?**

Make a compliment about what the company does, it's location, or it's people. Other positive remarks might be about the company's product or service, content of the position or possibilities for growth or advancement. Research about the company is important here.

**Where do you hope to be in five years?**

Use conservative growth positions that clearly show you plan to be there in five years, and that their investment in you will pay. Be sure that you know what can and cannot be achieved by the ideal candidate in the position. Never tell the interviewer that you feel you'll be more successful than they are. But do show a strong desire for promotions.

**What interests you most about this position?**

Teasing the interviewer with a truthful one or two-word answer such as, "the challenge" or "the opportunity", will force them to ask you to explain. Here again, you have a chance to demonstrate your knowledge of the company.

**What are your career goals?**

*Your answer should depend on a specific time frame:*

Short term - "I want to be the best in my current position, while learning additional responsibilities. This, in itself, will assure my commitment to the firm and raise me to the next level of responsibility and promotion. I see myself wanting to stay technical but learn the necessary skills to lead people and projects."

Long term - "After proving my abilities, I see myself in a firm with the possibility of moving into a level of management that allows me to keep my skills sharp."

**What are you doing to achieve your goals?**

"I look at continued learning as the key to success. I continue my education, as you see from my resume, by taking company educational courses, when offered, and college courses. I also read trade publications and magazines to keep me informed about the current and future directions in my field. When possible, I participate in professional organizations in my field."

**Why did you leave your previous employer?**

NEVER speak poorly about a former employer. Be pleasant, be positive and be honest.

Your answer will probably be checked. Mention your desire to work for a more progressive company that offers more growth opportunities and recognition.



**What did you like most about your previous job?****What did you like least about your previous job?**

An employer can evaluate the type of worker you will be by the items you choose. Cite specifics. You are also providing clues about the environment you seek. What you liked most can include a strong teamwork atmosphere, high-level of creativity, attainable deadlines. What you liked least should include any situations that you are unlikely to encounter in your new position.

**Why are you looking for another job?**

Again, be positive. I have to say that I have really enjoyed my years at \_\_\_\_\_ Corporation. There are a lot of good people over there. But I am looking for a more progressive organization with greater opportunities for growth, and recognition. I am looking for a team to join where I can make real contributions and advance my career.

**Are you applying for any other jobs?**

In your answer, show that your search is geared for similar positions. This demonstrates a well-defined, focused objective. Make it known that your talents are applicable to other businesses and that you have explored ways to maximize your potential and are serious about finding the perfect opportunity. Don't give an indication that you are just shopping.

**What kind of decisions are most difficult for you?**

Again, be truthful and admit not everything comes easily. Be careful what you do admit so as not to instantly disqualify yourself. Explain that you try to gather as much information and advice as you can to make the best decision possible.

**What causes you to lose your temper?**

Everybody has a low boiling point on some particular issue. Pick one of yours; something safe and reasonable. People who are late to meetings, blame shifting, broken appointments and office "back-stabbing" are suitable responses. Don't say that you never fly off the handle. You won't be believed.

**What are your greatest accomplishments?**

Be ready to recant one or two stories that demonstrate strong capabilities or achievements that will make you attractive to your new employer. A special project that you pioneered at your previous job, cutting department expenses, increasing productivity or receiving frequent promotions are a few examples.

**What kind of worker are you?**

Again, no one is perfect. Showing that you tackle every assignment with all of your energy and talents is admirable but mention that you also learn from your mistakes.

**What type of salary do you have in mind?**

Do not state a starting figure. A suitable reply: "I am looking for the right opportunity and I am confident that if you find me the best candidate for this position, you will extend me your best and most fair offer."

**What is your current salary?**

Answer truthfully. Remember that "salary" includes base, bonuses, commissions, benefits, and vacations as well as sick days and personal days. Also, if you are due a raise in the next three months, state the approximate percentage you expect.

## Questions to Ask the Interviewer

Your interviews, however, should be a two-way conversation. You must ask questions and take an active role in the interview. This demonstrates the importance you place on your work and career. Asking questions gives you a chance to demonstrate your depth of knowledge in the field as well as to establish an easy flow of conversation and relaxed atmosphere between you and the interviewer. Building this kind of rapport is always a plus in an interview.

Remember, you are not just there for the interviewer to determine if you are right for the position but your questions can help you determine if this job is right for you. Some of your questions should evolve from research you've done on the company in preparing for the interview. Following are some guidelines for your questions as well as some examples.

- Don't cross-examine the employer.
- Ask questions requiring an explanation. Questions, which can be answered with a “yes” or “no”, are conversation stoppers.
- Don't interrupt when the employer is answering YOUR question.
- Ask job-relevant questions. Focus on the job-- the company, products, services, and people.
- Prior to the interview, write your list of Interest Questions and take them with you.
- Ask about your potential peers, subordinates, and superiors. Take notes.
- Ask the employer how he/she got where they are today.



### **Why do you want someone for this job?**

Force the interviewer to explain why this job can't be done by one of his current employees.

### **Why isn't this position being filled from within the company?**

You may discover that nobody in this organization would accept it or that your future fellow employees are a weak lot.

### **How many people have held this job in the last five years?**

Were they promoted or did they leave the company? If the turnover has been high, you have a right to suspect that the job may leave something to be desired. Or it could mean that you could expect to be promoted quickly.

### **How did you get started in the company?**

### **What are examples of the best results produced by people in this job?**

### **What would my responsibilities and duties be?**

### **Describe a typical day on the job?**

### **What are the most difficult aspects of the position?**

### **Describe the department's / company's growth in the next 2 years?**

### **What is the philosophy on training and development here?**

### **Has there been downsizing within the company? How is it handled?**

### **How do you think I'd fit into the job and into your organization?**



# The Behavioral Interview – What – Why – and How to Prepare

Many employers are aware that employing somebody on the basis of two short interviews can be a risk if they do not ask the “right” questions in an interview. That’s why “behavioral” interviewing has become very popular with many managers. What is behavioral interviewing?

It is a style of interview that forces you to answer questions that demonstrate your competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) by giving specific examples from your past experiences. The focus of the interview is less about what you can or could do, and more about what you have done in specific situations in the past.

Prior to the interview, the interviewer will define the competencies for the position, and will then develop a series of questions that allow him/her to find out if you have those competencies. Behavioral interviewing is based on the assumption that your past performance (in previous roles) is an excellent predictor of your future performance.

What sort of questions should you expect? If your interviewer decides to conduct a behavioral interview, you can expect questions that will focus clearly on how you handled situations in the past, such as:

- Give me an example of how you have ...
- Tell me about a situation where you ...
- How did you deal with a situation in your past role where you had conflict with ...

How should you prepare for a behavioral interview? You can best prepare by taking the following steps:

1. Look closely at the position you are applying for. Get hold of a job description. What specific skills are the employers looking for?
2. Analyze your past work experience and background. Match the skills that you have with those the employers are looking for. Don’t forget competencies that you have developed outside of the work environment (eg, leadership or organizational skills through not-for-profit activities, etc.)
3. Now identify specific examples/situations that demonstrate those skills. You need to be able to explain an entire situation – tell a story to show how you actually used a particular competency. It pays to illustrate the level of involvement you had in resolving a situation, and to quantify the results. If there are situations where you applied a competency but things didn’t work out, use them as examples and explain what went wrong. What did you do to resolve it?
4. Try the STAR approach to answering questions. State the SITUATION you faced. Tell about the TASK you brought to bear on the situation. Identify or outline the ACTION you took to resolve the problem. And finally explain and quantify the RESULTS you achieved. Practice on these typical BBI questions:
  - Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
  - Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills.
  - Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
  - Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to meet or achieve it.
  - Tell me about a time when you had to use your presentation skills to influence someone's opinion.
  - Give me a specific example of a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
  - Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
  - Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and you were required to prioritize your tasks.

- Give me an example of a time when you had to make a split second decision.
- What is your typical way of dealing with conflict? Give me an example.
- Tell me about a time 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 difficult decision you've made in the last year.
- Give me an example of a time when something you tried to accomplish and failed.
- Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.
- Tell me about a recent situation in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or co-worker.
- Give me an example of a time when you motivated others.
- Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.
- Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to solve a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you missed an obvious solution to a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.



## The Telephone Interview

Perhaps you're a pro at selling yourself face-to-face. How comfortable, though, are you at interviewing over the phone? Telephone screening interviews are becoming more commonplace as companies seek to cut hiring costs and streamline the selection process. A hiring manager can spend an hour and a half screening three candidates over the phone, then invite the most impressive one to the company for a lengthier interview.



"Telephone prescreening is extremely cost effective because 75% to 80% of the unqualified candidates can be easily eliminated without the time and expense of a face 2 face interview." More companies will make use of phone interviewing for this reason.

Given this trend, your job search may involve more telephone interviewing. Whether you are talking to headhunters or company recruiters, the more convincingly you make your case over the phone will determine further interest in you as a job candidate.

Phone interviewing is unique. You can't count on visual stimuli such as good looks or power suits eye contact or body language, to aid your presentation. Neither can you rely on visual signals to interpret the interviewer's response. In this context, faceless conversation takes on an added dimension of importance. Both strengths and weaknesses, as conveyed by voice, are magnified through the phone. Your voice personifies everything about you.

Headhunters, in particular, listen for a relaxed style that communicates confidence, enthusiasm and intelligence. This is reflected in a smooth conversation flow devoid of clichés or verbal catchalls to stall for time as well as other negatives.

### **PREPARATION**

The success of a telephone interview begins with mental preparation and setting the stage with the interviewer.

The first order of business is to establish a clear time frame for the conversation. By mutual agreement, this should be at least thirty minutes when both parties can be free of interruptions and distractions.

If you're currently employed, arrange for a phone interview in the evening rather than during the workday. Confidentiality and discretion may be at risk if you interview during working hours; you never know who might barge into your office unannounced or overhear something by accident. In the privacy of your home, you can be more at ease and in control of your surroundings.

Being clear on the interview format gives you an edge in preparation. Before the actual interview, it will help to know the topics to be covered, objectives to attain and the basic information regarding the position to be discussed. It also helps to rehearse: Try to think as the employer, what key information is the interviewer looking for? What questions is he likely to ask? What things do you hope he doesn't ask?

It's also advisable to prepare for possible scenarios that might unfold. Hypothesize a bit; suppose the interviewer asks questions that make you feel uncomfortable. How do you handle that? Suppose he rambles, is easily sidetracked and doesn't allow you to sell yourself. How do you subtly take control of the conversation and target pertinent issues? As a worst-case scenario; suppose the interviewer doesn't call at the agreed time. If it's an evening interview, and you have other engagements, how long should you wait by the phone? If it's a daytime interview, should you assume the interviewer "forgot" and call him directly? Or do you await his call at some other, unspecified time? *Solution:* don't panic. The employer will call to set up a new time if he had some crisis. If you are working with a recruiter, he/she will handle the problem and schedule an alternate time.

Finally, clear a work area near the phone and keep the following tools handy to aid your fact gathering and information sharing:

- A copy of the version of the resume sent to the interviewer.
- A note pad and pen.
- Five or six carefully worded questions you'll want to ask.
- Company literature with pertinent sections highlighted.
- A calendar.
- A watch or clock.



Preparation will increase your confidence level and ability to focus on the conversation during the interview as well as enabling you to make a favorable impression.

## **YOUR PHONE “PERSONALITY”**

The need to make a good impression on the phone cannot be overemphasized. The telephone screening interview is a make-or-break proposition, your one chance to convince the interviewer that you are worth serious consideration. The interviewer will be listening carefully to determine three factors: your sincere interest in the job, how you verbalize your qualifications and how aggressively you pursue the position.

Voice reflects personality. A well-modulated, controlled voice communicates authority and heightens the verbal impact you want to make. The quality, pitch and tempo of your speech convey a certain attitude, energy level and enthusiasm.

"Enthusiasm and excitement are the biggest selling points of candidates talking on the phone". "This translates

directly over to their performance and work ethic" *Here are some practical tips to enhance your phone "personality" and overall presentation:*

**DO NOT use your cell phone unless you can guarantee your battery will not die and your call will not get dropped for any reason.** Need we say more on this?

**Talk directly into the mouthpiece.** Hold the receiver approximately three inches from the mouth, not below your chin or above your nose. Speak in a relaxed, conversational style as though the other person were in the same room, not on the other side of the planet.

**Avoid sitting in a hunched position,** grasping the phone in a vise-like grip. This will add a note of stress, and your voice will communicate that uneasiness. Try standing, it opens your diaphragm to a smoother airflow and imparts a feeling of liveliness. Getting up and moving around introduces an element of action, which instills a relaxed, conversational manner and reduces fatigue. A cordless phone will allow maximum mobility.

**Pay attention to the interviewer's voice patterns;** does he speak slowly or rapidly? Try to match the cadence so that the conversation flows smoothly.

**Sound upbeat.** If you had a lousy day and came home to find your spouse and kids arguing, put it out of your mind. Genuine enthusiasm is contagious. Smile to show a sense of humor. After all, the interviewer may have had a bad day too.

**Be a conversationalist.** Listen carefully to get the big picture and to avoid saying something that indicates any momentary mental distraction. Allow the interviewer to complete questions without you finishing his train of thought or blurting out answers prematurely.

**Handle any trick questions in stride.** The interviewer may throw in several to test your alertness or mental keenness. Showing verbal adeptness is a sign of how quickly you can "think on your feet." Be cautious: the interviewer may say something that puzzles you or that you firmly disagree with. Show enough respect to voice your thoughts in a professional manner. A defensive posture or argumentative tone is the surest way to alienate the interviewer and eliminate your candidacy.

## **THE INTERVIEW ITSELF**

Establishing rapport at the beginning of the phone conversation sets a favorable tone. During the first few minutes mention something that shows commonality of interest or similarity in background. This helps both parties feel more comfortable as the conversation progresses.

Get to know the person behind the voice. Does he show a sense of humor? Is she direct and forthright in supplying information? Does his speech sound "canned", or does it exhibit freshness of thought and expression? Just as importantly, does she actively listen to you, or merely wait for the chance to ask her next question? The interviewer may be a personnel official or a hiring manager. If the individual is someone with whom you will be working, pay all the more attention to her explanation of the job and what potential it offers.

Your prepared list of questions will indicate that you have given careful thought to the prospect of joining the firm. Even though you don't know everything about the position at this point, convey the impression that it's something you are interested in and competent at handling.

Only in a face-to-face interview can you totally sell yourself. The purpose of the phone interview is to identify areas of mutual interest that warrant further investigation. In other words, whet their curiosity and give them good reasons for wanting to invite you to the company location.

Basically, what the interviewer needs to hear and conclude is that you can get the job done. Mentally, he is making the connection between the company's problems and you as a problem solver. Don't overwhelm him with facts and figures; he's only going to remember so much.

You can best make your point by reciting memorable stories that document your ability to analyze a dilemma, weigh alternative responses and choose the appropriate action. By selectively highlighting turnaround situations you spearheaded, you are communicating a willingness to tackle similar problems for his company.

As you glance over your notes and keep an eye on the clock, there may be additional important points to cover in the pre-allotted time frame. Tactfully take control and introduce the subject matter that needs to be discussed or further elaborated. Example: "That's a good point. Can we come back to it a little later? I have some additional thoughts on the subject we were discussing a moment ago."

As the conversation winds down, become less talkative and give more thought to what you say. Your final words will generally have greater impact and be remembered longer. Careful word choice and voice inflections will under-score the significance of your remarks. By contrast, a machine-gun volley of words will likely put the listener on the defensive or turn him off altogether.

## **THE HOME STRETCH**

After 30 minutes, both parties should know how much of a "fit" there is. Provided the job interests you, express your desire to proceed to the next step: a company visit.

The interviewer may extend an invitation at that point. With calendar nearby, suggest several available days and times that agree with your agenda. Should the phone interview go well but end without a specific invitation to visit the company, state your desire to investigate the opportunity further. Example: "I'd be very interested in such a challenging position. I would be available to come in for a personal interview and discuss my abilities in greater detail on (day)."

He may then mention the likelihood of an onsite interview once he confers with other officials. Your assertiveness will be remembered. If you hear nothing within 48 hours, follow up with a call.

## **HANDLING THE \$\$\$ ISSUE**

*A final concern:* the interviewer may ask a salary range that you're expecting (don't introduce the issue yourself). It's best to mention that at this point you are not altogether certain what the job is really worth. Example: "I would feel more comfortable discussing a salary figure after meeting the key people I would be working with and knowing more about the position." If the interviewer continues to pressure you for a figure, specifically ask, "What salary range are you working within?" Chances are 50/50 that he will tell you.

Respond by indicating that your desired salary is in that range (if that is correct). If the dollars are a little low, don't despair or defend what you feel you are worth. For an absolutely sterling candidate, most companies can flex the purse strings and make a very attractive offer.

## THE END IS THE BEGINNING

On the phone, your job is to entice a buyer, not to close a sale. Salary negotiation will fall into place at the right time. End the conversation on a positive note. Thank the interviewer for the information shared, let her know again that you look forward to visiting the company. After all, if the position discussed is not the ideal job for you, something else there might be.

If you are sincerely interested in the position and are satisfied with the answers given, you should ask the interviewer if he/she feels that you are qualified for the position. This gives you another chance to review points that may need clarification. Illustrate confidence in your abilities and convince the interviewer that you are capable of handling the position successfully.

Ask for the job. Make a positive statement about the position. Emphasize that this is exactly the type of opportunity you've been looking for and would like to be offered the position. Ask when you should expect an answer. A typical conclusion might be:

"Thank you for this meeting, \_\_\_\_\_. I like what I've heard today and I'd like to join your team. I know I'd be an asset to you/your department because you need someone who can \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. As you know, I have (match your qualifications with the employer's "hot buttons"). Before I leave, do you have any more questions about my background or qualifications or can I supply you with any more information? On a scale of 1 to 5, how do I compare to the other candidates you've interviewed? I can start as soon as you need me." The farewell should also include a smile, direct eye contact, a firm but gentle handshake.

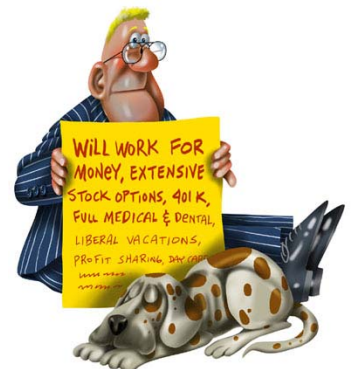
Immediately following the interview, call your employment recruiter. It is very important to convey your impressions of the position and the company. Let the recruiter know whether you are interested in the position or not and if there were questions you forgot to ask at the interview, express them at this time. Only after we get your feedback about the interview and the company do we contact the employer for theirs. And finally, we follow-up with you regarding the employer's thoughts.

## The Absolute Most Important Part of Each and Every Interview

Every good salesperson knows that one of the keys to success is to ask for the order. We've all dealt with salespeople who are engaging, know the product they're selling, present it with enthusiasm and point out why we can't live without it, are likable, gain our confidence and do everything right...except they don't ask us to buy. So we don't.

The same situation holds true for the job seeker. The credentials you bring to a position might be perfect for it. You make a good appearance, answer all the questions smoothly and with substance, yet don't get the job because, like the salesperson above, you haven't asked for it.

There are many ways to ask for a job without sounding overly aggressive. Actually, asking for a job you want is a continuous process. The thank-you letter you send after the first interview should also include a statement of your continuing interest in the job for which you're being considered – a line such as, "I have even more interest in the position now that we've had a chance to meet and talk about it," or "I would like very much to further pursue the possibility of my working for you and the company, and look forward to a chance to discuss that in the near future."



If, after your final interview, you're convinced that you want to work for the company, say so. I remember years ago when an applicant for a controller's job was told he wasn't right for it and my Client Company suggested that I might find him a good position with another company. He looked them straight in the eye and said, "I want to work for *you*, and will consider any position you might be able to offer me." The end result was that they did find a spot for that person, and he turned out to be a loyal and productive employee for many years.

**Mere Human Beings:** Because employers and interviewers are simply human beings, they deal from the same base of insecurities that you, the job seeker, does. Some are reluctant to offer a job because they don't want to be turned down. Some employers operate on the assumption that a candidate must make it plain that he or she wants the job before it will be offered. If you don't say that you want the job, you'll never get an offer from this type of employer.

Avoid high pressure. You can gracefully ask for the job by saying, "I understand that you have a number of good candidates to consider, Mr. Smith, but I do want you to know that I would like very much to work for you here at the XYZ Company. I know I'll be able to contribute something positive, and I assure you that if you do hire me, I won't let you down."

I guarantee you one thing: If you take this type of approach with a job you really want, you'll stand out, because unless all the candidates you're competing with also read and *followed* the advice of this article, very few will be that direct in asking for the job.

Asking for what you want should not be confined to getting a job, however. People fail to achieve many things, personally and professionally, throughout their lives because they simply don't make clear what it is that they want. People mumble an order to a clerk in the deli and then complain that they got mustard instead of mayonnaise. When people in a relationship fail to let each other know what it is that they need and want they seldom get it and as a result, the relationship suffers because of it.

In business, an employer can't be expected to be a mind reader. If you feel that you deserve a raise or a promotion, and you have the tangible evidence of performance to back you up, you must ask for it. The worst that can happen is that your request is denied, but it will stay in your boss's mind and perhaps trigger a future raise quicker than you would have gotten otherwise. If a new position opens up within the company that you would like to be considered for, you must make your desire known to those that can help you achieve your goal.

In line with asking for what you want is being sure that you communicate your needs and wishes properly. Again, the need to sharpen our communication skills comes into play. Most people make their wishes known in an indirect, circumspect manner and then don't understand why their request isn't acted upon. How many letters do we receive in a lifetime that are filled with vague, unnecessary phrases and go on at length, the actual reason of the letter buried somewhere in all the verbiage? An effective letter begins with a simple statement of the purpose. Then it goes on to provide additional information to substantiate the request.

The same holds true in speech. It's so frustrating to sit with someone who wants something that could be stated in six to eight words, yet wastes minutes getting to the point. That doesn't mean you have to be blunt or rude. But do be direct and let the other person know what you want. If it's a job, say that you want it. Your chances of getting it will be greatly enhanced.

The exact language you use in asking for the job will vary from person to person and in each situation. Obviously, a direct statement will be handled nicely by some people. For others, it might be a signal of desperation. Here are a few other ways to ask for a job that not only accomplish the goal but also indicate to the

employer your level of confidence and enthusiasm:

“I’d just like to say that if I’m hired, I won’t let you down.”

“You’ll always be able to count on me.”

“I’ll work hard to exceed your expectations.”

“Hire me and I can assure you I’ll do an excellent job.”

“I’m anxious to prove to you that I can handle this job. This position fits my qualifications and abilities perfectly. I could start immediately.”

**If You Really Want the Job  
Ask for it!**

## Weighing the Job Offer

A number of factors come under consideration when you’re making a decision about a job offer. Obviously there’s “the package” – but putting the monetary value of the position aside for one moment, there are other aspects of the job to evaluate.

### **The Position:**

Why is it available, and how long has the position been open for?

What happened to the previous employee?

Have you seen a detailed job description? What are the specific responsibilities?

Can you perform the responsibilities set out for the role?

Do the daily activities actually appeal to you?

Is there an opportunity for you to develop new skills?

Are the goals set for the position fair, realistic and achievable?

What is the growth potential in this role? Will it be a stepping stone to your next desired role?

How does this position fit with your long-term career goals?

### **The Company:**

The Company sit in its own market? Who are its competitors? What is its market share?

How is business? Is the company growing, maintaining its size or shrinking?

What is the potential of the company, and how will that affect your role?

How experienced/respected are its management, and how long have they been there?

Does the company have a high retention of people, or is there a problem?

Is the company culture (and its values) compatible with your own?



### **The Boss:**

How long has this person been in this position, and what are his/her reporting lines (upwards)?

What is his/her background, including previous work experience?

What is his/her next likely career step?

Do you get along with this person, and do you think you could work effectively with him/her?

## Resigning from Your Job

Taking on a new role encourages people to look ahead – planning the next months and years of their lives. So with a new job offer in hand, it's not surprising that some people put little time or effort into making sure they resign from their previous job on a good note. Here are our tips.

**Prepare:** Think of resignation as you would a job interview. Put time and thought into it. Prepare what you are going to say, in what order, and to whom. You can do serious damage to working relationships if you tell the wrong people first (even in confidence) and somebody influential finds out second hand.

**Be honest:** Don't withhold the truth from your employers and colleagues. Tell them up front that you are leaving.

**Be succinct:** Whether telling your boss in person or in writing, get straight to the point. Explain why you are leaving, but try to avoid expressing negative feelings.

**Be flexible:** If you can, negotiate a finishing date that suits your employer as well as you. Cooperate fully in handing over the files, documents, projects and clients you are working with prior to leaving.

**Be realistic:** If your resignation is coming "out of the blue," expect a reaction from your employer. Allow time for the reaction to your news. If your manager becomes aggressive, confrontational or upset, don't respond with similar behavior. Revert to your prepared comments.

**Be diplomatic:** If you think it is important to express your negative experiences, do it face to face. Don't do it in writing. Again, use your prepared comments rather than doing this off the cuff.

**Be appreciative:** Thank your employers for past training and other opportunities. Thank your colleagues for what you have learned from them. Accentuate the positives – find something good to say.

**Follow up in writing:** Always send a letter of resignation to confirm – in writing – when you are leaving the organization.

**Don't burn your bridges:** You might need to rely on your previous employer for references, advice or even a job! You also never know where people from your current place of work may end up in five or ten years' time.

**Look after number one:** Make sure you know what you are entitled to when you leave, such as unused vacation or sick time. Get someone senior in the company to give you a reference.

## Opening and Closing / Cover Letters and Thank You

The cover letter today is usually an e-mail. Treat them both the same way. In fact if your are sending a resume attached to an e-mail it is preferred you make the e-mail text be the cover letter to avoid 2 attachments. Besides most recruiters and employers will open the resume first and often never read the attachment cover letter.

Cover letters / e-mails should be short and to the point. 3 paragraphs of 2 to 3 sentences max each.

1. Why I am writing.

2. My skills & accomplishments tied to the job description thru the attached resume
3. Expression of your interest in the opportunity, How you will follow-up and how you can be contacted.

It is always a good idea to send a short note or e-mail of appreciation to thank the employer or interviewer for their time.

- **Renew** your interest in the position and the company
- **Reinforce** your ability to do the job.
- **Remind** them of the skills and accomplishments you have had as they apply to this job
- **Review** any areas of the interview you felt were strong points for you
- **Restate** your qualifications and confidence in performing the job.
- **Recover** by addressing any areas of the interview or statements you made that you felt you did not handle well

Be sure to send your correspondence the following day. This is a good way to keep your name current in the interviewer's mind.

## **An Illustration of the Counter-offer or “Put up your hands, this is a resignation!”**

Suppose, just for a moment, that I had a loaded 45 pistol and I stuck it between your eyes. Do you think you would ever forget me? Of course you wouldn't!

Now, suppose I ask you to promise me certain things or I would pull the trigger. You would probably agree to about anything I wanted, wouldn't you?

Now after extracting your promise, suppose I unloaded the gun and threw it out the window. Tell me how good would your promises be then?

**That is exactly how a counter offer works.** When you go into your boss to resign, that letter of resignation is a gun pointed at his head and at that moment he is likely to promise you almost anything to get you to drop it. In other words, he is likely going to make you a counter offer.

Now, if you accept it, it's like throwing that gun out of the window. One, he will never forget you pulled it on him and two, he will look for ways to get out of his promises as soon as it is to his advantage.

**You understand what we are saying, don't you?**



## **Dealing with a counter-offer**

A recruiter has approached you, or you've answered an ad. Or, a colleague you spoke with at an association meeting, shared information that caused you to look into another opportunity. You've gone through the

interviewing process and received a great offer—and a better opportunity with a better company. You’ve analyzed and agonized over the decision to leave your current (good or bad) job, for what appears to be a better one, and you’ve accepted (or decided to accept) the offer.

However, upon resigning, your current boss asks you to stay and makes you a counteroffer. Career changes are tough enough as it is, and anxieties about leaving a comfortable job, friends and location and having to reprove yourself again in an unknown opportunity can cloud the best logic. But just because the new position is a little scary doesn't mean it's not a positive move. Since counteroffers can create confusion and buyer's remorse, you should understand what's being cast upon you.

**Counteroffers are typically made as some form of flattery, e.g.:**

*“You're too valuable. We need you.”*

*“You can't desert the team/your friends and leave them hanging.”*

*“We were just about to give you a promotion/raise, and it was confidential until now.”*

*“What did they offer? Why are you leaving? and what do you need in order to stay?”*

*“Why would you want to work for that company?”*

*“The President/CEO wants to meet with you before you make your final decision.”*



**Counteroffers usually take the form of more money:**

*A promotion/more responsibility*

*A modified reporting structure*

*Promises or future considerations*

*Disparaging remarks about the new company or job*

Apart from a short-term, band-aid treatment, nothing will change within the company. After the dust settles from this upheaval, you'll be in the same old rut. A rule of thumb among recruiters is that more than 80% of those who accept counteroffers leave, or are terminated, within six to 12 months. And half of those who accept counteroffers reinitiate their job searches within 90 days.

When you make your decision, look at your current job and the new position as if you were unemployed. Which opportunity holds the most real potential? Probably the new one—or you wouldn't have accepted it in the first place.

But in good times, or bad, the dictum remains constant. Counter-offers should never be accepted....EVER! Those few rare instances where accepting one is beneficial occur about as frequently as being struck by lightning.

**The Right Perspective:**

A counter-offer is an inducement from your current employer to get you to stay after you've announced your intention to take another job. It doesn't include instances when you receive an offer but don't tell your boss, or when you tell your employer about an offer you never intended to take in a classic "they-want-me-but-I'm-staying-with-you" ploy.

These are merely positioning tactics that can reinforce your worth by letting your boss know you have other options. Mention of a true counter-offer, however, carries an actual threat to quit. Interviews with employers who make counter-offers, and employees who accept them, have shown that accepting a counter-offer tempting

as it may be - is tantamount to career suicide.

**Consider the problem in its proper perspective. What really goes through a boss's mind when someone quits?**

- “This couldn’t be happening at a worse time.”
- “He’s one of my best people. If I let him quit now, it’ll wreak havoc on the morale of the department.”
- “I’ve already got one opening in my department. I don’t need another one right now.”
- “This will probably screw up the entire vacations schedule.”
- “I’m working as hard as I can and I don’t need to do his work too.”
- “If I lose another good employee, the company might decide to ‘lose’ me too.”
- “My review is coming up and this will make me look bad.”
- “Maybe I can keep him on until I find a suitable replacement.”
- “We’re working with a skeleton crew already. If I lose this one, we’ll all be working around the clock just to stay even.”

**What will the boss say to keep you in the nest? These comments are common:**

- “I’m really shocked. I thought you were as happy with us as we are with you. Let’s discuss it before you make your final decision.”
- “Aw gee. I’ve been meaning to tell you about the great plans we have for you, but it’s been confidential until now.”
- “The VP has you in mind for some exciting and expanding responsibilities.”
- “Your raise was scheduled to go into effect next quarter, but we’ll make it effective immediately.”
- “You’re going to work for who?”
- “How can you do this in the middle of a major project? We were really counting on you.” (They’re always in the middle of one.)

**Just a small tactic.**

Let’s face it. When someone quits, it’s a direct reflection on the boss. Unless you’re really incompetent or a destructive thorn in his/her side, the boss might look bad for allowing you to go. It’s an implied insult to his management skills. His/her gut reaction is to do what has to be done to keep you from leaving until he/she’s ready. That’s human nature.

Unfortunately, it’s also human nature to want to stay—unless your work life is abject misery. Career change, like all ventures into the unknown, is tough. That’s why bosses know they can usually keep you around by pressing the right buttons.

**Before you succumb to a tempting counter-offer, consider these universal truths.**

Any situation is suspect if an employee must receive an outside offer before the present employer will suggest a raise, promotion or better working conditions.

No matter what the company says when making it’s counter-offer, you’ll always be a fidelity risk. Having once demonstrated your lack of loyalty, you will lose your status as a team player and your place in the inner circle.

Counter-offers are usually nothing more than stall devices to give your employer time to replace you. Your reasons for wanting to leave still exist. They'll just be slightly more tolerable in the short term because of the raise, promotion or promises made to keep you.

Counter-offers are only made in response to a threat to quit. Will you have to solicit an offer and threaten to quit every time you deserve better working conditions?

By accepting a counter-offer, you have committed the unprofessional and unethical sin of breaking your commitment to the prospective new employer making the offer.

Decent and well-managed companies don't make counter-offers...EVER! Their policies are fair and equitable. They will never be subjected to counter-offer coercion, which they perceive as blackmail.

## **Common Mistakes Made by Job Seekers**

**"Insert Job Here":** Most job seekers are looking broadly at any available position that fits within their interests and skills set. Therefore, they send out undirected résumés and, even worse, form cover letters differentiated only by the value in the "insert job here" space. Spend a few extra minutes to learn about the organization, and personalize your letter and resume reflecting what makes your candidacy special.

**Think About the Message You Send:** Rehearse the voice mail message you plan to leave. Consider a more serious e-mail address. Does your home voice mail play strange music or have a silly outgoing message? Is your résumé printed on purple paper? All of these things factor into an indelible, first impression.

**Poor Résumé:** The really good ones grab attention and get read. The really bad ones list tasks and skills, rather than accomplishments and results. Stop writing about your hobbies; start writing about the change you brought to an organization and the constituency it serves. If a paragraph is more than about 5 lines long fix that. Use bullets and incomplete sentences are ok despite what your 10<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher told you.

**Spell Check:** Nine out of ten résumés claiming that the applicant is "detail oriented" have a typo on it somewhere. Some of these typos are tricky, like extra spaces and missing hyphens.

**Dream, Within Reason:** If your resume crosses a desk for jobs way out of your range, people won't be inclined to believe your interest or fit when you apply for something perfect. Of course you can move into increasingly senior positions – just don't try to skip too many rungs on the corporate ladder or you might become the boy who cried wolf.

**Know Your Weaknesses:** No candidate ever has everything the search committee wants. But no one is ever inclined to consider applicants who are imperfect but think they are the best thing going. If you are missing a key skill or some years of experience, own the weakness, but then describe how your other skills and experiences will help you compensate or catch up quickly. Never lie in an interview, on a resume or worst of all to a Headhunter.

**Curiosity is Key:** Nothing saddens a recruiter more than a candidate who seems ideal at first, but then asks no questions about the organization. If they aren't curious about the position or the group, then we begin to second-guess whether they are really the right fit. Once a hiring manager's excitement is dampened, it's hard to get it back. Note: questions based on the salary or benefits do not count. Now the reverse of that is curiosity is a

killer. If you are just curious, not serious about making a career change, just kicking the ole tires cause the boss yelled at you today, never reply to an opportunity. It's that wolf thing again only when you truly need and want help one day it will not be there. Recruiters have large memories and even larger networks.

**Thank You Notes:** Thank you letters or e-mails are the perfect opportunity to remind your interviewer why you should be hired, or for you to insert into the equation a key fact that you forgot to mention when you met.

**This is the Bonus round:** When you see a job posting on the Internet, read the whole thing and if you don't meet the requirements don't apply. The worst way you can respond is to "Apply On Line". Unless it is your only contact option, personalize your response with a cover e-mail and your resume attached as a Microsoft Word document [.doc]. Not Word Perfect [.wps] nobody uses that and not an Acrobat [pdf.]. And if you have an AOL e-mail address send only one attachment or AOL will zip the files.

## **A Dozen Reasons Why They Will Reject You:**

1. **Poor attitude.** Many candidates come across as arrogant. Show interest and sincerity the moment you walk through the front door.
2. **Appearance.** First impressions are quickly made in the first three to five minutes.
3. **Lack of research.** It's obvious when candidates haven't learned about the job, company or industry prior to the interview.
4. **Not having questions to ask.** Asking questions shows your interest in the company and the position. *Prepare a list of intelligent questions in advance-but don't put the interviewer on the defensive by over interrogating.*
5. **Not readily knowing the answers to interviewers' questions.** Anticipate and rehearse answers to tough questions about your background, such as a recent termination or an employment gap. Practicing with your spouse or a friend before the interview will help you to frame intelligent responses.
6. **Relying too much on resumes.** Employers hire people, not paper. Although a resume can list qualifications and skills, it's the interview dialogue that will portray you as a committed, responsive team player.
7. **Too much humility.** Being conditioned not to brag, candidates are sometimes reluctant to describe their accomplishments.
8. **Not relating skills to employers needs.** A list of sterling accomplishments means little if you can't relate them to a company's needs.
9. **Handling salary issues ineptly.** *Candidates often ask about salary and benefit packages too early.* If they believe an employer is interested, they may demand inappropriate amounts and price themselves out of the jobs. Candidates who ask for too little undervalue themselves or appear desperate.
10. **Lack of career direction.** Job hunters who aren't clear about their career goals often can't spot or



commit to appropriate opportunities.

11. **Lack of interest and enthusiasm.** Don't play hard to get! If you like what you hear, say so *and* ask for the job!

12. **Apathetic plant/company tour.** Often candidates appear disinterested when touring facilities. Ask questions, show interest and interact. Don't appear unenthusiastic by walking with your hands in your pockets.

## Resumes – Your Most Important “Tool”

### CRONOLOGICAL RESUME

Chronological resumes provide a job by job listing of each job you've held starting with your most recent job and going backwards. Up until the last few years, the chronological resume has been the most popular resume style. Many employers still say they want chronological resumes but in fact respond very well to functional resumes. If you have a consistent work history, your job titles are supportive of your job objective, and they create an image that matches the salary you want - a chronological resume may be a wise choice for you. If your career search however is moving in both directions it is probably in your best interest to compose both types of resumes and use each in the appropriate interview or job application situation.



### Chronological Format Selector

- You have a strong work history and have worked for each employer 2 years or more and you have gaps of only a few months between each job.
- You have several years of employment in the field or type of position you seek.
- Listing job titles or the companies you have worked for creates an image that presents you as qualified for your objective and the salary you seek.
- The positions you have held show growth in your desired field.

## IMAGREAT CANDIDATE

224 Your Address Avenue  
Home: (610) 555-1212

E-mail: professionalwords@aol.com

Anywhere, ST 12345  
Cell: (610) 555-1212

### *PROFILE SUMMARY AND AREAS OF EXPERTISE*

Senior Financial Manager with 22 years of experience in the consumer product, energy and retail food service industries. I am a creative problem solver with strong analysis, decision making and team implementation skills. My strengths and resulting successes include:

Annual Budgets Financial Reporting and management	Cash Flow Management	Cost Analysis Systems Planning Materials Management	Risk Management Purchasing	Training
---	----------------------	---	-------------------------------	----------

### *Professional Experience*

**Your Current Company Inc.**

Their Town, Their State

YOUR TITLE..... YEAR – Present

First: in 1 sentence describe your company, their industry, markets, size or what they were known for.

Then: describe your responsibilities (ie: from the job description) in 1 or 2 sentences. Finally list in bullets you major activities, actions, results and quantification of results.

- Cost Analysis: Identified and implemented cost savings during first 90 days which will increase income by \$270,000 over the next three years.
- Financial Reporting: describe what you did, what you accomplished and if possible express the results of your activities quantifiably.
- Risk Management: Keep repeating these in bullet format for the significant accomplishments you had. Tie them in title and experience and result to the strengths listed in you Profile above but every strength does not need to be addressed in each company you work at. Prioritize and go with the top 3 to 5 in order of their importance or significance.

**XYZ Stone (Formerly ABC Stone, Inc.)**

Their Town, Their State

YOUR TITLE..... YEAR – Present

<i>EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION</i>
---

- Duquesne University; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Masters in Business Administration
- St. Vincent College; Latrobe, Pennsylvania
- Bachelor Science in Accounting.
- Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania
- Certified Employee Benefits Specialist (CEBS) Program – anticipated certification 2005

**FUNCTIONAL RESUME**

Many people making a career change or moving up in their careers must use skill based resumes. The term "skill based resume" refers to either a functional or functional/combo resume. A functional resume uses skill headings but does not include a work history. A functional/combo resume uses skill headings but also includes a work history. If you need to draw an employer's attention to your skills instead of your employment history this is your best format. The only time a skill based resume may not be a good choice is if you have a very stable work history and your job titles really do match the job you want.

**Functional / Skills Based Format Selector**

- You have an erratic work history.
- You have gaps in employment.
- You are making a career change and your past work history and job titles don't match your job objective or salary level.
- You have used the same skills in many positions and a chronological resume would be redundant.
- You have a short work history (i.e.: college grad) and a chronological resume will emphasize.
- Older experience qualifies you for your job objective and a chronological resume will draw attention to the fact that this is older experience.

- Most recent experience doesn't support your objective and a chronological resume will start with weak and unrelated experience.

## I M A G R E A T   C A N D I D A T E

224 Your Address Avenue  
Home: (610) 555-1212

E-mail: professionalwords@aol.com

Anywhere, ST 12345  
Cell: (610) 555-1212

### PROFILE SUMMARY AND AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Senior Financial Manager with 22 years of experience in the consumer product, energy and retail food service industries. I am a creative problem solver with strong analysis, decision making and team implementation skills. My strengths and resulting successes include:

Annual Budgets Financial Reporting and management	Cost Analysis Systems Planning Cash Flow Management	Risk Management Purchasing Materials Management	Training
---	---	---	----------

### SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

NOTE: list in bullets you major activities, actions, results and quantification of results in order of significance, independent of which company they occurred at and covering your entire career to date.

- Cost Analysis: Identified and implemented cost savings during first 90 days which will increase income by \$270,000 over the next three years.
- Financial Reporting: describe what you did, what you accomplished and if possible express the results of your activities quantifiably.
- Risk Management: Keep repeating these in bullet format for the significant accomplishments you had. Tie them in title and experience and result to the strengths listed in you Profile above and every strength should ideally be addressed in at least one bullet.

### Professional Experience (or CAREER OVERVIEW)

**Your Current Company Inc.** Their Town, Their State  
 YOUR TITLE..... YEAR – Present  
 First: in 1 sentence describe your company, their industry, markets, size or what they were known for.  
 Then: describe your responsibilities (ie: from the job description) in 1 or 2 sentences.  
 Optional: in 1 or 2 sentences highlight you greatest accomplishments at this company with quantified (if possible) results.

**XYZ Stone (Formerly ABC Stone, Inc.)** Their Town, Their State  
 YOUR TITLE..... YEAR – Present

### EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

- Duquesne University; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Masters in Business Administration
- St. Vincent College; Latrobe, Pennsylvania
- Bachelor Science in Accounting.
- Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania
- Certified Employee Benefits Specialist (CEBS) Program – anticipated certification 2005