

Interview Skills Survival Guide For Ex-Offenders

Preparation Is
The Key

2nd Edition
Completely
Revised and
Expanded



Louis J. Napoleon

www.ebooks-by-crooks.com

NAME OF FACILITY: _____

This Workbook Toolkit is the Property of:

_____ **DOC#** _____

Unit / Mod: _____

Issued: _____

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information with regard to the subject matter covered, with the understanding that the author is not engaged in rendering legal advice. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.

This Workbook Toolkit is available at quantity discounts with bulk purchases. For information, call 443-345-7970. Copyright ©2011, eBooks-By-Crooks. All rights reserved. Except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, no part of this Workbook / Toolkit may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission from the author. Please respect our copyright.

www.ebooks-by-crooks.com

Interview Skills Survival Guide For Ex-Offenders

An eBooks-By-Crooks publication / published with the permission
of

Louis J. Napoleon

The publication is made available to provide an outlet for
prisoners and ex-prisoners seeking to tell their stories.

All Rights reserved

Copyright © eBook-By-Crooks

Cover art by eBooks-By-Crooks

This publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part,
by any means without permission.

For information: eBooks-By-Crooks, 848 North Rainbow Blvd.,
#3143, Las Vegas, Nevada 89107

ebook version published by
eBooks-By-Crooks

QUICK READ, SOLID ANSWERS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

The proven interview techniques in this guide are the ex-offender's blue-print for the development of an interview strategy that will generate job offers. Comprehensive in scope, this powerful guide addresses the most crucial components of the offender interview process – attitude, skills' language, **evidence of rehabilitation** —and offers a practical framework for implementation and evaluation. A “how to” guide, this volume contains actual forms, practice interview questions, common and tough, worksheets, and explicit examples of interview scenarios, during which the “deal-breaker” question, “why should I hire someone convicted of a felony?” is answered.

After all, who wants to hire a convicted shoplifter, burglar, or robber? Not only must the applicant have the required skills and qualifications, he must also demonstrate **evidence of rehabilitation**—convince the employer that he has changed—not an easy task, absent the right interview skills' knowledge, strategy and preparation.

This interview skills survival guide will teach probationers and parolees a proven method for promoting themselves as qualified, rehabilitated job applicants, despite arrest records, prison time, and sporadic work histories. It covers all aspects of the interview, including pre-interview preparation, assessing criminal record barriers, assessing employer hiring barriers, eliminating barriers, developing strategies to minimize them, and the development of an interview skills action plan.

Probationers and parolees will learn how to deal with questions like: “why should I hire someone convicted of drug trafficking, Burglary? Theft? Assault?” These questions are analyzed in detail, and addressed with intelligent, feasible responses that demonstrate acceptance of responsibility, remorse, and clear **evidence of rehabilitation**.

CONTENTS

PAGE 7. INTRODUCTION

You must demonstrate evidence of rehabilitation to ace the interview!

PAGE 9. INTERVIEW BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Minimize, neutralize— remove employment barriers.

PAGE 11. EVIDENCE OF REHABILITATION

Prove It!

PAGE 12. POSITIVE INTERVIEW ATTITUDE

Nothing increases self-confidence like knowledge. Prepare yourself.

PAGE 13. INTERVIEW SKILLS LANGUAGE

Communicating with employers, speaking their language.

PAGE 18. RESEARCH—THE INSIDE TIP

Know more about the employer than he / she knows about you.

PAGE 19. HELP WANTED DESCRIPTIONS

Use them to develop interview skill language.

PAGE 20. YOUR PROFESSIONAL IMAGE

Move with confidence—70% of your communication is nonverbal.

23. INTERVIEW ASSESSMENT

Know thyself— and the employer's—barriers and strengths.

25. PRE-INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

Preparation, preparation! Anticipate all questions. Be prepared for every question.

27. YOU CAN ACE THE INTERVIEW

There is a magic formula, if you are prepared. Increase your chances significantly.

31. WHY SHOULD I HIRE AN EX-FELON?!*%@

This can be the deal-breaker, but can be effectively addressed.

32. SIX JOB SEARCH TOOLS

These are mandatory to your job search success.

38. EVIDENCE OF REHABILITATION

Convince potential employers that you have changed.

40. INTERVIEW “INFOMERCIAL”

In 30-seconds or less, tell the employer why he / she should hire an ex-offender.

41. RESUME COVER LETTER

Your calling card / 15-second commercial, and should highlight your most powerful skills.

42. THANK YOU LETTER

About 1% of job applicants send “thank you” letters. Separate yourself from the amateurs by demonstrating “uncommon professionalism.”

43. INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW REQUEST LETTER

Solicit informational meeting with management personnel for the purpose of accessing up-to-date career information, identifying specific skills needed, and building confidence for job interviews.

44. REJECTION LETTER FOLLOW-UP

Conveys your interest in future job openings.

45. POST INTERVIEW EVALUATION

Honestly evaluate your performance. Did you provide clear evidence that you are rehabilitated?

46. EX-OFFENDER JOB ASSISTANCE—ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations in place to assist with employability training, placement and reunification.

INTRODUCTION

Ace The Interview

The interview is the most important part of the job search process! So what, you're the best qualified person, the most skilled mechanic, with ten years experience and a truck full of certifications? Think about it. Who wants to hire a convicted burglar, robber, shoplifter, even if he / she is qualified to do the job? Bias? Unfair? Whoever said life was fair?

It is your challenge, your responsibility, actually, your only path to interview success, to effectively "prove" that you are rehabilitated. If, when you present yourself for an interview, you are unable to not only outline your skills and qualifications, but also demonstrate *clear evidence of rehabilitation*, you will simply be screened out as an undesirable applicant. You must know by now, the best-qualified applicant does not always get the job. But there is some good news: committed, dedicated, single-minded preparation, with the right strategies, will minimize, neutralize, even remove some of the barriers, and increase your chances. Ex-offenders can ace the interview!

The competition for jobs has never been tougher, but you can succeed because the competition is lazy, ill-equipped to conduct an effective job search, and forever seeking to cut corners. As an ex-offender, you cannot take anything for granted. You absolutely, without question, must be better prepared than other job applicants. This means understanding the job search process, particularly the interview, and how to re-invent yourself for it, turning your colorful background into an asset, a transformation employers will actually admire. With this guide you will learn to address the deadly question, "Why should I hire an ex-felon?"

In this, our second adult survival guide for prisoners and ex-offenders, you will learn how to orchestrate successful interviews, regardless of your previous level of related experience. You'll discover how you can effectively turn a negative into a positive, separating yourself from others who lack this vital information. Indeed, you can address tough questions about your conviction and time spent in prison or jails. Plus, you'll learn killer job search tips and techniques that will divert attention from your "colorful" background to your skills, qualifications, and your "new attitude."

In this Interview Skills Survival Guide For Ex-Offenders, you will find the most thorough, comprehensive, and useful compilation of offender specific interview techniques available anywhere. It is easy to read, with checklists, worksheets, and examples tailored specifically to address the interview barriers you face. You will learn how to turn sour lemons into sweet lemonade, and make yourself competitive.

After reading about how to prepare for the interview, learning about “prove it” techniques that support your claim of rehabilitation, and completing related exercises, you can then use the companion CD / DVD video, *Ex-Offenders Can Ace The Interview*, and see exactly how to present your qualifications, and answer deal-breaker questions like, “why should I hire an ex-con?” and “how do I know you won’t commit more crimes?” The goal with the CD / DVD video is to provide you with a visual “how-to” that reinforces the information you learn in the guide.

Obviously, there is no magic wand to wave that would make every offender a successful interviewer, but we know the interview techniques in this guide, and those used in the mock interview, will greatly enhance every offender’s potential to demonstrate evidence of rehabilitation, and help employers to move into a comfort zone. Read this guide numerous times, study it, review the mock interview and master the presentation. They are your blueprint for the development of an interview strategy that will generate job offers.

Your career is in your hands entirely, not your parole officer, probation officer, caseworker, vocational rehabilitation counselor, workforce development specialist – YOURS! If you study this survival guide, internalize the information, and use it during your job search, you will be better prepared than most of your competition, including job applicants without arrest records and / or convictions. It’s up to you to apply what you learn.

Peace,

O.C. Harry (a.k.a. Oil Can)

Two Men Look Through Prison Bars - One Saw Mud, The Other Saw Stars!

INTERVIEW BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Employer Bias / Offender Stigma

I know you've had a lot of time to think about your goals, what you are going to do after release, your master plan and, of course, you would like for it all to start happening right away, beginning with a high-paying job. I hate to rain on your parade, but most often the doors to success you plan to blow right off the hinges probably will not open quickly enough to satisfy your great expectations. Most employers are cautious when interviewing ex-offenders. Some won't hire ex-offenders for any reason.



Questions about your arrest and conviction are going to arise again and again, so you need to anticipate them and be ready to respond with intelligent, well thought out answers. Rightly so, the employer is looking for clear evidence that you have changed, and it is your responsibility to convince him / her that you are rehabilitated.

According To Employer Surveys, the following are reasons employers give for not hiring ex-offenders:

- Inappropriate interview clothing (baggy pants, too much jewelry, tennis shoes instead of dress shoes, poor hygiene, or just generally sloppy)
- Attitude / poor social skills (hard prison-environment look, refusing to smile and show courtesy)
- No work history, or poor work history (nothing...) listed on job application, not even your prison work history)
- Too many jobs lasting less than one year
- No career plan / unsure of job goal ("I'll take anything. I just want a job)
- Lying about conviction, work experience, abilities
- Inability to show how you have changed (**EVIDENCE OF REHABILITATION**)

Additional Employment Barriers

Some of the reasons WE have for not finding work can be labeled barriers, and will prevent us from effectively seeking employment. Our attitude, the way we FEEL about the job search process shapes our actions. Let's look at how YOU perceive employment barriers.

	Agree	Disagree	Maybe
1. There are no jobs	—	—	—
2. They won't hire ex-offenders	—	—	—
3. You can't pass a drug test	—	—	—
4. You can't get interviews	—	—	—
5. You have misdemeanor arrests	—	—	—
6. You've been fired	—	—	—
7. You have a disability	—	—	—
8. You need transportation	—	—	—
9. You're too old	—	—	—
10. You give up looking too soon	—	—	—
11. Jobs are too far out	—	—	—
12. You've changed jobs a lot	—	—	—
13. They don't hire minorities	—	—	—
14. Too many people are applying	—	—	—
15. Your record is too bad	—	—	—
16. You lack the right education	—	—	—
17. Most Jobs don't pay enough	—	—	—
18. Your skills are outdated	—	—	—
19. You can't operate a computer	—	—	—
20. You don't have experience	—	—	—
21. They do background checks	—	—	—
22. Job applications are difficult	—	—	—
23. You can't explain your conviction	—	—	—
24. You don't have the right clothes	—	—	—
25. It takes to much time	—	—	—



EVIDENCE OF REHABILITATION

(“Restore to good condition...improved”)

Based on various studies and surveys, we know that employers have three basic expectations of applicants:

1. Appearance
2. Dependability
3. Skills

You must address these employer needs and expectations.

1. Look like the kind of person who can do the job.
2. Convince the employer that you are dependable, someone he / she can rely on.
3. Convince the employer that you can perform, that you have the skills and ability to do the job.



As an ex-offender there is **one more** expectation you must convey that is of **primary** concern to employers. When you have won the employer over with your appropriate interview clothes, your appearance, convinced the employer that you have the necessary skills, you must also clearly demonstrate **Evidence of Rehabilitation** before the door of opportunity will be opened.

Actually, it's a no-brainer. Who wants to hire a convicted robber, burglar, or thief, without clear "proof" that there has been a behavioral change, a transformation. You need to develop a "Prove It" Portfolio - a collection of documentation that proves your participation in programs and activities aimed at personal development and a successful transition into the mainstream. You must be an "armed and dangerous" interviewee, equipped with an arsenal of interview strategies that make your case.

POSITIVE INTERVIEW ATTITUDE

Okay, you've been invited for an interview. What kind of job seeking image will you project? Do you look like the kind of person who can do the job you are applying for? Can you project a winning, positive attitude that suggests you have the skills to do the job, that you are dependable and hard working? How you are dressed, the way you walk, the words you use to describe your qualifications will all create an image, and you want that image to be positive, one of confidence and competence. If you are not perceived as someone who knows what he can do, and has a definite career goal, you will likely be screened out – in favor of someone who more closely fits the profile the employer is looking for.

Be sure to fortify yourself with positive thoughts. Look at yourself in the mirror and say, "This will be my job. I'm qualified and I will give the interviewer valid reasons to hire me, despite my background." Throughout the interview, keep your comments and questions positive, refraining from negative statements about former employers or co-workers, even if you were dogged to the max. Maintain the high road, stay focused and professional, smiling from time to time, and answering questions with enthusiasm and optimism about your prospects of getting hired.

Many employers will have a wait and see attitude toward offender applicants, or even a negative perception. The worst thing you can do is to confirm any preconceived notions that all ex-offenders are dishonest, unreliable, lack social skills and self-discipline. Your challenge is to rise above these negatives by demonstrating uncommon professionalism, your honesty, personality, positive attitude, and motivation. This requires preparation, organization, understanding the interview process - and practice. Yes, it's time-consuming "work," but it will pay off in the form of gainful employment.

*Demonstrate uncommon
Professionalism!*



You've got to talk the talk, and walk the walk, and this means you must be able to identify skills you have that match the job you are applying for, and you must be able to explain these skills and how they will benefit the employer. Many ex-offenders who have participated in various illegal enterprises, have street hustling skills that, if identified, cleaned up, and re-directed, can be transferred into the legitimate job market. Knowing that you have developed valuable skills outside the workplace (even in prison or "on the street") is important when you are developing your interview skills language, to persuade employers you are **qualified, AND rehabilitated**.

What is a skill? A skill is a developed aptitude of ability. A skill is something that you can do NOW! There are three types of skills.

1. **Self-Management Skills**—used to describe ourselves, our personal attributes, and how we will work with others. They suggest your level of dependability and trustworthiness.
2. **Transferable Skills**—including street, hustling skills that can be used in many different situations. If your previous “occupation” was dealing drugs, didn’t you use math skills to handle money, sales and marketing skills to set up plans for distribution, and customer service skills dealing with “customers,” thus developing many skills that are useful in the legal workforce. You have hundreds of transferable and self-management skills.
3. **Job Related Skills**—often found in job descriptions. This type of skill is directly related to your knowledge of a job , or of the industry. These are the skills you use to do the job, and may have been developed through education, special training, on the job training, past work experience, including prison work details.



*A firm handshake tells
the employer that you are
confident*

“Two Men Look Through Prison Bars , One Saw Mud, The Other Saw Stars.”

Self-Management Skills

Check the Self-Management Skills you have developed as a result of your conviction and/or time spent in prison / jail.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependable | <input type="checkbox"/> Reliable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hardworking | <input type="checkbox"/> Ambitious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> Mature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trustworthy | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> Assertive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic | <input type="checkbox"/> Logical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost-conscious | <input type="checkbox"/> Honest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meet deadlines | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Motivated | <input type="checkbox"/> Willing to learn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |

Now list your top four Self-Management Skills and write an example of how you will use the skills during your interview:

EXAMPLE:

Skill: Reliable

"I arrive at work 10 -15 minutes early to get organized for my shift and I'm always available to help on special projects, including overtime. You can count on me."

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Save this list! This is important "skill language" employers value highly.

Transferable Skills

Check the Transferable Skills you have developed as a result of your conviction and/or time spent in prison / jail.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate | <input type="checkbox"/> Read books |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write reports | <input type="checkbox"/> Plan agenda |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supervise others | <input type="checkbox"/> Follow directions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meet deadlines | <input type="checkbox"/> Speak in public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manage people | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Motivate others | <input type="checkbox"/> Budget expenses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |

Now list your top four Transferable Skills and write an example of how you will use the skills during your interview:

EXAMPLE:

Skill: Problem Solving

"While I don't have direct experience in air conditioning & refrigeration, I do have good mechanical skills, having learned small engine repair in prison. I repaired lawn mowers, kitchen appliances, inmate TVs, radios, and lamps. "

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

"We learn by doing."

Aristotle

Save this list! This is important "skill language" employers value highly.

Character Building Skills

Check the Character Building Skills you have developed as a result of your conviction and/or time spent in prison / jail.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compassion | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteering | <input type="checkbox"/> Tolerant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accept positive criticism | <input type="checkbox"/> Sincerity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Willing to learn | <input type="checkbox"/> Follow directions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pride in doing a good job | <input type="checkbox"/> Patience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helping people | <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take responsibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Motivate others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |

Now list your top four Character Building Skills and write an example of how you will use the skills during your interview:

EXAMPLE:

Skill: Helping people

"In prison I worked on the Toys For Tots Christmas committee, raising money for poor kids. The feeling I felt when we sent out a check to the Salvation Army was almost overwhelming. I had given something back. I like that feeling!"

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Save this list! This is important "skill language" employers value highly.

Job Related Skills

(skills you will use to perform the job you are applying for)

Check the Job Related Skills you have developed as a result of your conviction and/or time spent in prison / jail.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Operate tools | <input type="checkbox"/> Distribute products |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repair Cars / appliance | <input type="checkbox"/> Type / word process |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install windows / carpets | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain records |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vacuum floors / mop / strip | <input type="checkbox"/> Sell / persuade |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule appointments | <input type="checkbox"/> Read codes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Operate computer | <input type="checkbox"/> Drive forklift |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Operate equipment / machines | <input type="checkbox"/> Lift / load products |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ | |

Now list your top four Job Related skills and write an example of how you will use the skills during your interview:

EXAMPLE:

Skill: Cleaning

"I don't have a long work history in the community, but in prison I worked as a custodian for 4-years. I vacuumed, stripped, waxed, and buffed floors, mixed cleaning chemicals, and supervised a small crew of three. I also did repair work, fixing doors and windows, and I did some painting. I'm sure I can do this job well."

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Skill: _____

Example: _____

Save this list! This is important "skill language" employers value highly.

RESEARCH - THE INSIDE TIP

The More You Know

The right information is power. When you have identified a company you would like to work for, or have been invited to interview, it's time to do research. This is what will separate you from amateur job seekers. You need to know what products / services the company represents, its greatest strength, history, management style, number of employees, competitors, some idea of plans for the future, salary range for the position you are applying. Learn everything you can about potential employers. Know who you are interviewing with, what to say, and how to say it.

Obtain the above information from the following sources:

- Internet
- Public library
- Call to the company personnel or department heads
- Discussions with former employers
- Company Annual Report
- Chamber of Commerce Publications
- Local business magazines & newspapers
- Poor's Register of Corporations

QUICK TIP:

Job descriptions, as outlined in newspaper classifieds and company announcements, provide the job title, qualifications, physical demands, supervisory responsibilities, if any, and work environment. This kind of comprehensive detail and a clear understanding of a company's expectations about the job requirements allows you to set the stage for a good interview. Use company job descriptions to develop your interview skill language.

Take the time to prepare yourself



HELP WANTED DESCRIPTIONS

Word For Word

#1. Newspaper Ad: Professional Marketing Reps

Immediate Openings! Sears Home Improvement Products is Seeking Energetic Marketing Representatives to work at Sears Retail locations. Seniors and Retirees Welcome!

Requires:

- Professional & enthusiastic individuals with a positive attitude
- Great communication skills and the ability to approach customers
- Sales or customer service experience helpful but a great smile and personality are a winning combination!

Your Interview Translation:

“Ms. Employer, I’m a highly motivated achiever, with broad sales and customer service experience. I have excellent communication skills and the ability to develop client relationships. My smile and personality come across quite prominently during sales’ calls.

I am confident of my ability to make an impact in a sales position requiring professionalism, enthusiasm, and a positive attitude. I’m prepared to start Immediately, if offered a position”

#2. Newspaper Ad: Medical Records Representative Case Worker, Medical Records Retrieval

Duties include calling medical facilities to obtain copies of medical records for insurance purposes. Flexible part-time positions, 35-hours a week. Earn \$8/hour plus incentive.

Requirements: Must type 20-25 words per minute, have good grammar, customer service, organizational and communication skills.

Your Interview Translation:

“I have excellent listening skills. I’m patient, organized, and calm under pressure—and I type 30 words per minute. My extensive telephone and interpersonal skills were developed over a three-year period, during which I was employed as a telemarketer in state industries, selling products and services to hospitals and medical professionals.

Mr. Employer, I have the knowledge and skills to assume the position of medical records representative with your company. When will you be making a hiring decision?”

YOUR PROFESSIONAL IMAGE

Dress For Success

Is your interview at a construction site? Healthcare facility? Restaurant? Auto Shop? Your sagging pants, sexy slit on your too short skirt, double-sized shirt, open blouse exposing cleavage, jewelry in your nose, cap turned backward, and multiple earrings may not be appropriate dress for all of the above, or none of the above. You get one chance to make a first impression.

Remember, the job search process is a game, designed by someone else, who has established the rules you must play by. Don't be influenced by peers and popular culture. The interview is not the occasion to make a social statement. Hip hop clothes are fine if you applying for an audition with Nellie or Master P, but most hiring managers are middle of the road Americans who, have had little or no contact with the lifestyle you know so well, and have adapted. If you really are a "playa," dress according to the "rules of the game," and your chances of getting hired will increase.

QUICK TIP:

What you wear for an interview depends on the type of job you are seeking. If you are not certain about the appropriate dress code, call and ask.

Women:

- No short, tight or sexy clothes: low-cut, sleeveless tops, sheer fabrics
- Jacket in solid color, coordinating blouse, skirt in appropriate length
- Simple jewelry (remove nose, eyebrow, tongue)
- Moderate make-up and perfume. Do not smoke or wear sunglasses
- Medium heel pumps; avoid open backs or toes showing

Men:

- Blue, gray, charcoal or brown slacks / pressed khakis and coordinating jacket, dress or sports shirt with a collar
- Simple jewelry (remove nose, eyebrow, tongue)
- Clean shaven, hair trimmed; beard, mustache neatly trimmed
- If you wear braids (may be interpreted by some employers as a cultural statement) make sure they are clean and well groomed.
- Do not smoke or wear sunglasses; use moderate cologne
- Black or brown shoes, with dark socks (tennis shoes not recommended)

Body Language

"What you do speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say"

Prisons and jails are brutal environments, and we adapt to survive. Often, in spite of ourselves, we take on negative attitudes and mannerisms. Facial muscles become tight as we continuously offer hard looks to peers, our foreheads develop wrinkles from frowns, and our eyes often become penetrating flame throwers as we establish ourselves as "one not to be dissed," a warrior who is ready for combat. Too often we bring that same attitude, defiant body swagger, to the street and, unknowingly sabotage our interviews with our body language. The courtesy and manners—if we ever had any—are usually gone, and our behavior, our social skills leave a *little* to be desired.

Be mindful that seventy percent of our communication is nonverbal, through body movement, the way we walk, sit, shake hands, our eye contact, or lack of eye contact. This gives the interviewer nonverbal information about your work attitude, values, and self-image, which often determines whether you get hired.

Make The Right Moves

1. Play the game. Your physical appearance, the way you are dressed, speaks loud and clear. Dress to kill.
2. Maintain good eye contact. Interviewers will use this interaction to evaluate your enthusiasm, interest in the job, as well as looking for indications that you may be misleading them.
3. Leave the slang (your street language) on the street corner. Speak clearly and use the King's English (good grammar) as best you can. The interviewer will evaluate your communication skills.
4. Do not offer a wimpy handshake. Shake hands the same with men and women.
5. Be aware of your body language. Avoid nervous gestures: twisting your pen, tapping with your fingers, or patting your foot. You do not want to appear impatient, bored, or doubtful. Avoid folding your arms over your chest. Be natural and relax.
6. Do not slump in the chair. Sit erect, lean forward, smile, nod, listen and respond with interest.
7. Arrive 10-15 minutes early, ready to complete an application.
8. Make a positive first impression with the receptionist.
9. Do not place anything on the interviewer's desk.

First Impression

The first impression is powerful. People make assumptions about you based upon your appearance at your first meeting. Within seven (7) seconds to three (3) minutes an employer decides whether to seriously consider you for employment. You get one chance to make a first impression, and you want that first impression to be positive and memorable. Your goal is to make the interviewer like and trust you, so you must appear open and friendly.

It can be helpful to understand how other people see you when you first meet. Check (x) every word from the following list which you believe describes you.

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thoughtful | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservative | <input type="checkbox"/> Funny |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serious | <input type="checkbox"/> Polite | <input type="checkbox"/> Impatient |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calm | <input type="checkbox"/> Nervous | <input type="checkbox"/> Angry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Happy | <input type="checkbox"/> Shy | <input type="checkbox"/> Outgoing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Impulsive | <input type="checkbox"/> Cautious | <input type="checkbox"/> Lazy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional | <input type="checkbox"/> Casual | <input type="checkbox"/> Modest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hardworking | <input type="checkbox"/> Honest | <input type="checkbox"/> Candid |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth Talking | <input type="checkbox"/> Mature | <input type="checkbox"/> Organized |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Motivated | <input type="checkbox"/> Laid Back | <input type="checkbox"/> Confident |

When meeting someone for the first time—a stranger—it is important that we know how we come across, positive or negative. Now circle the 4 words you believe best describes the First Impression you make on employers.

Add any words you think describe you that are not in the above list:

Rank four of the words listed above in order of importance to the First Impression:

Note: _____

INTERVIEW ASSESSMENT

COMPANY: _____

POSITION: _____

Reasons This Company Might Give For Not Hiring Me:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____



Interview Assessment Continued—

Things I Can Do For This Company:

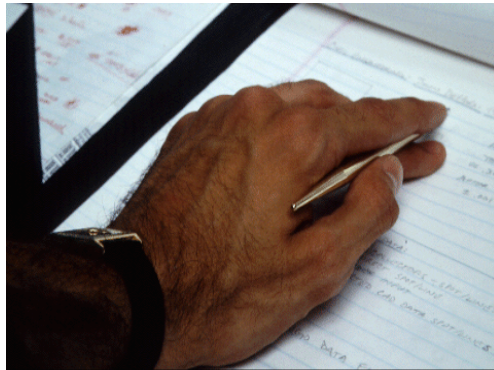
- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

- 4. _____

- 5. _____



And This Above All, To Thine Own self Be True....

William Shakespeare

PRE-INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

1. **Complete A when invited for an interview**
2. **Do B - C in preparation for the interview**
3. **Do D - F when you have an interview**

A. **Research:**

- Call the company anonymously and ask questions about the position
- Research the job description, required qualifications, and company through its Web Site (if any), Annual Reports, Chamber of Commerce & Business Directories at the Public Library

B. **Assemble “Prove It” Portfolio:**

- Federal Bonding Information (handout)
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit Information (Form)
- Wage Reimbursement Information (veterans)
- Workforce Development On-The-Job Training Information (handout)
- Certificates of Completion & Achievement (copies to handout)
- Letters of Support & Recommendation (copies to handout)

C. **Prepare For Interview:**

- Mock Interviews with friends and family
- Review Interview Questions (practice questions & answers)
- Review your “Prove It” Portfolio
- Review Interview Skills Survival Guide (after you have read it, understood it, and completed all worksheets)
- Study “Ex-Offenders Can Ace The Interview” video for minimum of 4-hours
- Prepare questions to ask interviewer
- Make at least five copies of your Resume
- Take your own pen, black ink.
- Know the name of the interviewer & how to pronounce the name
- Plan to arrive 10-minutes early; make sure you know how to get there

D. **During The Interview:**

- ATTITUDE – make sure you are thinking POSITIVE, like a winner!
- Do not try to encourage sympathy
- Never say anything negative about a previous employer
- Give examples of your work to support your statements
- Be friendly, enthusiastic, and professional
- Mention a project about the company you learned from your research
- Use good eye contact, but do not stare
- Ask for the job, if you want it
- Thank the interviewer for taking time to meet with you

Pre-interview Checklist Continued

E. Responding to Questions About Your Conviction:

- Introduce “Prove It” Portfolio & Financial Incentives
- Certificates of Completion & Achievement (copies to handout)
- Letters of Support & Recommendation (copies to handout)
- Federal Bonding Information (handout)
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit Information (brochure handout)
- Wage Reimbursement Information (veterans)
- Workforce Development On-The-Job Training Information (handout)

F. Post-Interview:

- Send a “Thank You” Note / Letter, Handwritten or Typed after Each Interview
- Consider what you might have done better

Telephone—the most cost effective way of reaching potential employers



Notes: _____

YOU CAN ACE THE INTERVIEW!

Typical Interview Questions

The following Typical Interview Questions will help you prepare for your interview. These are questions you will likely be asked from interview to interview. Later we will review a list of tough questions, including the deal-breaker, “why should I hire an ex-felon?” You've got to practice how you will present yourself.

1. Q: “Tell me about yourself?” Remember, the employer wants to know just one thing, “What’s In It For Him / Her?”

If you have any “years of experience,” the first thing that should come from your mouth is “I have ___ years experience,” then tell the employer about your skills—job related, character building, self-management, and transferable. Character is always a concern, so mention character building traits like “dependable, honest, get along well with co-workers and supervisors.” Point out examples of work experience (including prison details) to support your statements.

YOUR RESPONSE: _____

2. Q: “Why do you want to work here?”

As a professional job seeker, because you have done your research, mention things you have learned about the company, its products, services, and good reputation in the community and industry. Explain to the employer how your skills fit the position.

YOUR RESPONSE: _____

3. Q: “Why do you think I should hire you?”

Again, tell the employer how many years experience you have. Clearly and specifically point out your **CHARACER BUILDING, TRANSFERABLE, SELF-MANAGEMENT, AND JOB-RELATED SKILLS**. Talk about successes in past jobs, even prison assignments, and describe yourself as hardworking and dependable. Let the employer know that you are particularly interested in working for his / her company and the position open. This is a good time to mention any related training and job related skills you developed in prison.

YOUR RESPONSE: _____

Typical Interview Questions Continued

4. Q: What is your biggest weakness?

A: Employers don't really expect you to come clean and really admit anything damaging, but they do want to see if you can think on your feet, so to speak. Offer something that would really be considered a positive, like: "I am extremely committed to the work I do and the people with whom I assist. Perhaps more than I should, I allow myself to get pulled into their problems, requiring quite an investment of time. Lately, though, I'm learning to be a little more objective, while still providing a high level of service."

YOUR RESPONSE: _____

5. Q: What would you like to be doing in five years?

A: The employer wants to know if you plan to stay with the company (until you are old and gray). Assure the interviewer that you would expect to be with the company in five years, growing professionally and making a contribution.

YOUR RESPONSE: _____

6. Q: Tell me about your last job?

A: Do not say anything negative about a previous employer. If you had problems, accept responsibility for your part, point out the valuable lessons you have learned, and why it would be different today.

YOUR RESPONSE _____

7. Q: How would your former supervisor describe you?

A: If it is true, state positive qualities and give specific examples to back up what you say. For example, you could say, "I was very dependable. He would tell you I was never late and was always willing to work overtime, and that my performance always exceeded company expectations."

YOUR RESPONSE: _____

"Practice is the best instruction of them all."

Typical Interview Questions Continued

8. Q: What is your biggest strength?

A: Don't be shy about saying great things about yourself. Describe positive job related, character building, transferable, and self-management skills. Give examples that describe you as dependable, honest, hardworking, and creative. For example, you might say, "I learn new systems quickly. In my last job my supervisor had me learn all the tasks in our department and then supervise a small crew of four."

YOUR RESPONSE: _____

9. Q: What do you consider your greatest accomplishment?

A: This is your opportunity to reinforce your claims of rehabilitation. **Describe how you took full advantage of** all training, classes, and treatment programs in prison, and how they changed your outlook, giving you a chance to start over, clean and law abiding. Mention character building skills you now have

"Prove It" - Evidence of Rehabilitation

You must answer the employer's real concern by providing **EVIDENCE OF YOUR REHABILITATION**, such as your skill-building prison work history, self-development classes you have taken, offering certificates of achievement you have earned, and letters of support praising your efforts to become a good citizen. Provide well thought out, practical answers to the following questions.

10. Q: "On your application, you indicated that you have been convicted of a felony. Why should I hire a felon?"

YOUR RESPONSE: _____

11. Q: "How do I know that you have changed and won't commit more crimes?"

YOUR RESPONSE: _____

12. "We have not hired anyone with a prison record before. How can I be sure?"

YOUR RESPONSE: _____

Questions You Might Ask The Interviewer

Ninety-nine percent of all employers will ask if you have questions about the position or company. They almost expect that someone really interested in working for them would at least have a few questions. The most effective questions will show that you have researched the company. Below are examples you may want to tailor to positions you apply for.

- **Are there other special duties related to this job?**
- **What kind of training opportunities come with this position?**
- **When will you be making a hiring decision?**
- **What type of person were you looking for?**

QUICK TIP:

Here's a bonus, "Knock Their Socks Off" question: "In your company's Annual Report, the president, Ms. _____, talked about new product development. How will the new products affect the department where I am applying?"

Research the company! Find a new development - something - significant they are doing - and use it to demonstrate your preparation and motivation. Your competition is weak and lazy; you simply need to outwork them!

Do not ask about salary or benefits. Let the interviewer bring up the subject. (As a *professional job seeker*, you will have investigated the salary range beforehand)

Notes: _____

WHY SHOULD I HIRE A ?!*%#@ EX-FELON?!*%#@

How many times have you been arrested? Stood before a judge? A prosecutor? Sat across the table from a classification board? A parole board? Or protested your innocence with a police officer? How many times have you come out of these encounters better than you thought you would, having used your highest level of intellect, persuasion, and your best self-management and transferable skills. You had beat the odds - again!

1. The judge sentenced you to 2 years, instead of 50
2. The classification board transferred you to minimum 1-year early
3. The parole board (you still can't believe it) granted parole
4. The cop let you go (but you did it)

It doesn't get any more stressful than this, when your freedom is on the line! You have experience, operating under pressure with heavy penalties at stake, so why be unduly nervous over an interview. You have survived real drama. Take a deep breath, relieve yourself of the pressure, implement your action, and ace the interview.

A 3-Step "Prove It" System

You must provide clear evidence that you have been rehabilitated, demonstrating a change of character and attitude. This section will help you to prepare and practice for your interview. The value of practice is immeasurable.

1. **Turn your conviction and time served into a positive:**
 - Express remorse
 - Explain how you accepted responsibility for your actions
 - Point out how you used your time productively - taking advantage of rehabilitative programs and activities
2. **Tell the interviewer specifically what** classes, job training, job assignment, counseling and educational programs you completed, and how you benefited from each.
3. As you are naming the character building activities you have completed, **present your certificates of completion, one at a time, repeating the benefits.** The interviewer needs to see "proof" that you used your time wisely, devoting yourself to self-improvement.

SIX JOB SEARCH TOOLS

Detailed preparation is the key to your job search success. Because you are an ex-offender, you must go the extra mile, be better prepared, better organized and more determined. You must make it happen, not wait for it to happen. Consider the following your mandatory job search tools.

- **LETTERS OF SUPPORT**—DEMONSTRATES EVIDENCE OF REHABILITATION AND HELPS THE EMPLOYER INTO THE "COMFORT ZONE." (Someone else has already endorsed you).
- INFORMATION ON **FEDERAL BONDING** — YOU MUST BE ABLE TO EXPLAIN THE FEDERAL BONDING PROGRAM, HOW IT WORKS, AND HOW IT BENEFITS BOTH YOU AND THE EMPLOYER. (Additional information available from Workforce Development Office or Toll Free 1-888-BONDJOB).
- INFORMATION ON **WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT-** YOU MUST BE ABLE TO EXPLAIN THIS TAX CREDIT, HOW IT WORKS, AND HOW IT BENEFITS BOTH YOU AND THE EMPLOYER. (Additional information available from local Workforce Development Office or (202) 693-2786).
- LIST **RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE**—YOU OBTAINED WHILE IN PRISON
- **PROOF OF PRISON ACCOMPLISHMENTS**— POSITIVE ACTIVITIES YOU COMPLETED THAT SUGGEST EFFORTS TO REHABILITATE.
- **MASTER JOB APPLICATION** - CARRY IT WITH YOU EACH TIME YOU APPLY AND YOU KNOW THAT YOUR DATA IS ACCURATE AND CONSISTENT - SPEEDS UP THE APPLICATION PROCESS.

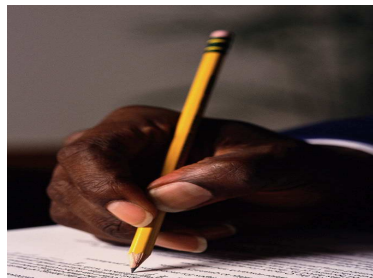
#1. *Letters of Support and Recommendation*

Make yourself competitive. Use letters of support as ammunition, to establish credibility, and respond to tough questions about your honesty. Who do you think may write a letter of support, to help you get a job (former employers or supervisors, parole or probation officer, case manager, judge, counselor, minister, trainers, others)? Collect as many letters as you can prior to your release or immediately upon arriving in the community. Letters of support from reputable people could very well mean the difference between early job search success or a long, drawn out battle to get your foot in the door.

Ask your supporters to address their letters, on business letterhead, to you, or "To Whom it May Concern." In it they should mention how you are working to turn your life around and become gainfully employed.

Now, jog your memory. List anyone who might write a letter, even long shots.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____



Contact the individuals you have listed above right away and ask for their support letters. Tell them you will need the letter prior to release or soon thereafter, for your job search. Note the following examples:

Sample Letter of Support and Recommendation
Skills / Qualifications Reference

January 1, 20XX

Dear Ms. Martin:

I have known Bobby Jones through his work experience with our company, in our production department. Our personnel records indicate that he was a conscientious worker with an excellent work ethic, and showed the kind of initiative which is necessary to be successful over the long-term.

With regard to his ability to get the job done, I can recommend him without reservation. He was well liked by supervisors and co-workers. I wish him well as he seeks new career challenges.

If you have any questions about his qualifications as a machine operator, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Jason Robart, Production Supervisor
Acme Enterprises



Sample Letter of Support and Recommendation
Character / Integrity Reference

January 1, 20XX

Dear Ms. Martin:

I am delighted to respond to Bobbie Jones' request for a reference. During the past five years, I have had the pleasure of seeing her blossom, both academically, as she took advantage of our vocational classes and, personally, as she immersed herself in cognitive thinking groups and self-motivation programs. Her desire to learn—and change— was unmistakable.

I have no reservations about recommending Bobbie highly—for her ability to deal with people, her record of accomplishment while incarcerated, and her enthusiastic approach to turning a mistake into an asset. If I can provide additional information, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,
Harold Kohl

#2. Federal Bonding Program

The Federal Bonding Program offers a business insurance that reimburses employers for financial loss when employees commit theft. Most other insurers refuse to bond employees they deem too great a risk, such as previously incarcerated individuals, individuals in recovery, individuals with bad credit histories, and individuals with limited or no work records.

You can be bonded, insured, at no cost to the employer, up to \$25,000, in \$5,000 increments.

#3. Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

The WOTC is a job development tool designed to help people move from tax users to tax payers, by reducing employers' federal income tax liability for hiring difficult to place job seekers.

Employers gets a \$2,400 tax credit for hiring qualified ex-offenders who have been convicted of a felony, are members of low-income families, and are hired within one year of conviction date or release from prison. There is minimal paperwork needed to claim this tax credit, and there is no limit to the number of new hires who can qualify an employer for the tax savings. The employer makes the hiring decision.

#4. Relevant Prison Work Experience

Listed on your job application and resume, and highlighted during the interview.

"I don't have a long work history in the community, but in prison I worked as a custodian for 4-years. I vacuumed, stripped, waxed, and buffed floors, mixed cleaning chemicals, and supervised a crew of three. I also did repair work, fixing doors and windows, and I did some painting. I'm sure I can do this job well."

#5. Prison Rehabilitation /Accomplishments

Copies Of Certificates: G.E.D., Diploma, Parenting Classes, Cognitive Thinking, Job Readiness Training, School Transcript, Etc., classes you have taken, certificates you have earned.

All employers are from the "show state," so don't expect them to take your word that you participated in every rehabilitative program; you **MUST present something tangible**, that they can see, hold, feel, and read.

#6. Master Job Application

**Complete The Application
Take It With You Every Time You Apply For A Job**

If you have NO work history, print in large letters: Will discuss skills and aptitude during interview

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Date: _____

Name _____ Social Security# _____

Phone No. _____ E-mail _____

How did you hear about this opening? _____

EMPLOYMENT DESIRED

Position _____ Date you can start: _____ Salary desired _____

Are you currently employed? Yes No

EDUCATION	SCHOOL LOCATION	YEAR ATTENDED	DATE GRADUATED	SUBJECTS STUDIED	
High School					
College					
Trade School					

Citizen of U.S. Yes No

In case of emergency, notify:

Date Month / Year	Name & Address Of Employer	Salary	Job Title Description/Duties	Reason For Leaving
FROM:				
TO:				
FROM:				
TO:				
FROM:				
TO:				
FROM:				
TO:				

REFERENCES

Three persons not related to you, whom you have known for at least one year. Do not list family or friends. No one will believe them.

Name	Address	Business	Phone

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? Yes No If yes, please explain
A Reminder: Do Not Explain! Simply say, "would like an opportunity to explain during interview." The nature of your crime should only be mentioned, if then, doing the job interview. Loose lips sink ships!

I hereby certify that all statements made in connection with this application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand and agree that any misstatements or omissions of material fact herein may cause forfeiture on my part of all rights to employment.

Date: _____ Applicant Signature: _____

EVIDENCE OF REHABILITATION

Anyone From Missouri - The "Show Me" State?

EMPLOYER:

"I know you *SAID* you were honest, hardworking, new and improved. But, I'm from Missouri, the 'Show Me' state. How can I be sure that you have changed?"

This is a tough question for an amateur job seeker, but by now you are moving into the professional ranks. No interview question is too tough if you are prepared. Because you knew this would be asked and have prepared an effective response, you don't even blink.

YOU:

"Mr. Employer, that certainly is a legitimate question. I spent 3 1/2 years in prison and it was a blessing in disguise, the most productive period of my entire life. I used the time to discover skills that may have gone unnoticed except for that experience.

"PROVE IT"

I obtained my G.E.D., worked in the prison library, learning how to catalog books, do research, and provide valuable information to others.

I also completed all of the prison's self-improvement classes and treatment sessions, such as workforce readiness, cognitive thinking, anger management, substance abuse, group and individual counseling. For your records, I would like to leave copies of the certificates of completion I received, teacher evaluations, and tests results."

At this point, you should methodically, one at a time, hand the interviewer your certificates, transcripts, your proof that you have changed. Now it's "slam dunk" time. Introduce your letters of support.

“PROVE IT”

"Also, Mr. Employer, I have seventeen letters of support from people who know me and have witnessed the changes in my life. Many have seen my job skills and know my qualifications for the position I'm seeking. Others have seen me make every effort to become a respected citizen. I would also like to leave these letters of support and recommendation with you."

Above you have given the employer legitimate "proof" that the criminal "system" can work, that his / her hard earned tax dollars are, at least in your case, being used effectively and producing positive results. But you're not finished. You can offer additional leverage:



Financial Incentive

YOU:

"Also, when I start to work for you, you can take advantage of the *Work Opportunity Tax Credit*, which allows you a \$2,400 tax credit for hiring a highly motivated ex-offender. I would like to leave this information with you." Leave the employer a (WOTC) brochure, which you can obtain from the local Workforce Development Office.

Federal Bonding Program

YOU:

"Additionally, if you have any concerns about my honesty, I can be bonded, up to \$25,000, if necessary. There is a *Federal Bonding Program* that provides this service to employers. Here is information on how it works." Leave the employer a copy of the bonding guidelines, which you can obtain from the local Workforce Development Office.

Ask for the job, if you want it.

YOU:

"Mr. Employer, I believe my skills, aptitude, and career goals are a good match for the position, and I would love to work for you. I'm available to start right now. When will you be making a hiring decision?"

"The man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it"

INTERVIEW "INFOMERCIAL"

The job interview is the most critical part of the job search process. If, when you sit across from the interviewer, you can not effectively outline your skills, your qualifications, and why you are the best candidate for the job, you will simply be screened out along with less qualified individuals. The best qualified applicant does not always get the job.

You not only must convince the employer you can and will perform but that you are also rehabilitated and are not likely to commit another crime. As I continue to emphasize, preparation is the key. Below, using Character Building, Transferable, Self-Management, and Job-Related Skills, create a 30-second Infomercial that addresses the question, "Why should I hire an ex-felon?" Memorize it!

EXAMPLE:

"Mr. Employer, "I'm really not the same person. I had a chance to look at myself, set goals and consider possibilities for the future. I consider the time I spent in pison a productive experience."

YOUR RESPONSE:

My Infomercial

You must convince the employer that you are rehabilitated



RESUME COVER LETTER

Below are Sample Resume Cover Letters you may use to help you design and personalize your own:

Sample Letter

June 18, 20XX

Dear Mr. Dawson:

If Acme Enterprises requires a high-energy customer care representative, with a no-excuses attitude and is up to any task, then I'm the person you're seeking. I cope well with high-stress situations and can manage a variety of projects simultaneously. My specific proficiencies include listening and problem-solving.

Detailed on the enclosed resume, you will find a solid background in customer service experience which, I believe, provides the necessary experience you require. I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you in person about career possibilities with your company. I will be contacting you to follow up on the status of my application.

Sincerely,

*Joe Hardy
(212) 555-1212*

Sample Letter

June 18, 20XX

Dear Mr. Jones:

I believe I am an excellent candidate for the position of grounds caretaker. Please accept the enclosed resume as my application for the position. I believe that you will find, and previous employers will verify, that I exhibit intelligence, common sense, initiative, maturity, and stability.

I would welcome an opportunity to discuss my qualifications, and assure you that this would be time well spent. In advance, I thank you for your consideration and look forward to meeting with you in the near future. I will be contacting you to request an interview.

Sincerely,

*Joe Hardy
(212) 555-1212*

THANK YOU LETTER

Professional job seekers **always** send “thank you” letters after being interviewed. Set yourself apart from the competition. This kind of follow-up identifies you as someone who is courteous and professional, and reminds the employer that you are interested in the position for which you have interviewed. Below are Sample Thank You Letters you may use to help you design and personalize your own:

Sample Letter

June 18, 20XX

Dear Ms Jones:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to interview for the position of office support assistant. I believe my skills and 3-years experience make me well qualified for this position, and I am even more enthusiastic about it after meeting with you and hearing about your company. I feel that I could make a valuable contribution to your team.

I look forward to meeting with you again, and will call in a few days hoping that you will have reached a favorable decision for both of us at that time. If you have further questions, you may reach me at (212) 555-1212.

Sincerely

Joe Hardy

Sample Letter

June 18, 20XX

Dear Ms Jones:

I appreciated meeting with you on June 1, 20XXX, and learning more about Acme Enterprises. I believe I am the person for the job.

As you get closer to the decision of whom to hire for this position, I would like to restate that skill and adaptability are the first two words that come to mind when asked to describe my qualifications. "Can Do" and "Will Do" are the watchwords that describe my attitude.

Thank you again for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely

Joe Hardy
(212) 555-1212

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW - Request Letter -

Most people do not mind being asked their opinion, when they have the time. Make a list of companies you would like to join and obtain the name and title of the hiring manager in the department you would work in, if hired. Now write a letter requesting a 20-minute *informational interview*, explaining that you're researching his / her field of expertise for future employment opportunities.

Sample Letter

June 18, 20XX

Dear Ms Jones:

I have a passionate interest in Public Relations and I am leaning toward a career as a publicist. I have continually heard and read many favorable reviews of Acme Advertising.

As a leader in the industry, with firms in six states, your company is ahead of the curve and establishing new trends. I cannot think of a better place to obtain real-world, practical advice and counsel about high profile public relations, future growth of the industry, and the skills and qualifications needed to acquire an internship.

I am seeking career development information. Over the past two years, I have acquired strong interpersonal and communications skills, through extensive self-study and a correspondence course, and would appreciate "real-world" advice on the next steps to take.

I trust that you will have an appreciation for my pro-active approach and allow me a twenty-minute informational meeting. I will call in a week to request a date and time. In advance, thank you for any consideration you extend.

Sincerely,

*Joe Hardy
(212) 555-1212*

REJECTION LETTER
- Follow-up -

Overcoming rejection with persistence. No does not always mean no. Don't hesitate to reapply. At the very least, send a "rejection letter" follow-up, thanking the interviewer again for his / her consideration, and pointing out your continued interest in the position or a related position.

Sample Letter

June 18, 20XX

Dear Mr. Dawson:

Once again, I would like to thank you for the chance to interview for the appointment setter position with Business Fundamentals. Although I am disappointed I was not chosen, I enjoyed meeting with you and learning about your company.

I am still interested in a possible opportunity with Business Fundamentals and would appreciate it if you would keep me in mind for future openings. Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joe Hardy
(212) 555-1212

.....

Sample Letter

June 18, 20XX

Dear Mr. Jones:

Thank you for visiting with me last Tuesday regarding your current opening. Although I regret not being chosen for the secretarial position, I found the interview process very informative, and I would like to be considered for upcoming projects.

I have enclosed an additional copy of my resume for your files. Thank you again for your consideration. I will contact you again in the future to inquire about suitable opportunities.

Sincerely,

Joe Hardy
(212) 555-1212

POST INTERVIEW EVALUATION - Make Copies -

Company Name: _____ Date of Interview: _____

Name of Interviewer: _____

Date to Call Back: _____

1. Was I On Time? Yes No

2. Did I Dress Appropriately Yes No

3. Do I Need To Send Additional Information? Yes No

• Resume Or Application Yes No

• References Yes No

• Work Samples Yes No

4. Did I Divert Attention From Gap(s) In My Work History Or My Time Spent In Prison / Jail? Yes No

5. Did I Give A Positive Indication Of My Interest In The Job? Yes No

6. Did I Mention Who Referred Me? Yes No

7. Did I Offer Financial Incentives? Yes No

8. Did I Effectively Present "My Prove It" Portfolio? Yes No

9. What Additional Information Have I Learned About This Company?

10. What Can I Do To Improve My Interview Skills?

11. What Was The Interviewer's Impression Of Me?

12. What Point, Skill Or Qualification Did The Interviewer Discuss Most?

INTERNET RESOURCES

Listed below are online interview resources, recruiters and companies posting job openings on the Internet, and some online guides that provide tips, pointers and other resources available nationwide. Most of these web sites have links to various types of job search information

- www.careerlink.com
- Monster <http://www.monster.com/>
- NationJob.com - search jobs, careers, work & employment ...
- Hot Jobs <http://www.search-job-listing.com>
- <http://www.virginia.edu/~career/?handouts/interview.html>
- CareerBuilder.com Jobs <http://www.careerbuilder.com/>
- Careerbuilder.comcareer.comadsearch.com
- <http://danenet.wicip.org/jets/jet-9407-p>.
- BrassRing: Job Search for Job Seekers <http://www.brassring.com/>
- <http://www.joblink-usa.com/interview.htm>
- www.worktree.com
- <http://www.odsolutions.net/interviewgenerator/>
- Wantedjobs.com
- jobbankUSA.com
- Careerweb.com
- Careersite.com
- join.yahoo.com
- Spanish Jobs / Bilingual - <http://www.latpro.com/>
- Vault.com career research
- employersonline.com
- Americanjobs.com We Keep America Working
- [Http://careers.yahoo.com](http://careers.yahoo.com)
- Careers.org
- [Http://jobfindersonline.com](http://jobfindersonline.com)
- Job-Hunting.org
- Directory.excite.com/careers
- Manpower.com
- joboptions.com
- Salary.com - to help you determine the average job salary range