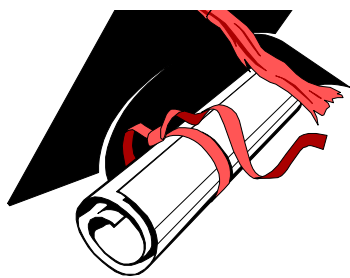


# The Student Job Search Guide



**Counseling and Career Services**  
**University of Maine at Presque Isle**  
Presque Isle, Maine 04769  
(207)768-9589



UNIVERSITY OF MAINE  
AT PRESQUE ISLE

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## **Introduction**

This pamphlet will help with the process of beginning a job search. It will cover key points, such as: where to look for further resources, writing résumés, interviewing, and dress.

## **Résumés**

There are two styles of résumés: chronological and functional. The chronological résumé lists job related experiences starting with the most recent and ending with the oldest. The functional résumé highlights specific accomplishments and skills and lists employment chronologically without going into detail. A résumé should be concise, preferably one to two pages in length. For most students, the chronological résumé is best. Take a look at figure 1 on page 1 that follows for an example of a chronological résumé and figure 2 on page 3 for an example of a functional résumé.

**James Butt**

21 Presque Isle Road  
Mapleton, ME 04757  
(207) 764-1243

**PROFESSIONAL  
OBJECTIVE**

Elementary Education

**EDUCATION**

University of Maine at Presque Isle, Maine 04769  
Bachelor of Science: May 2001  
Major: Elementary Education, Minor: Social Science

**CAREER  
RELATED  
EXPERIENCE**

**Student Teacher**, Fall 2000  
Gouldville Elementary School, Kindergarten  
Presque Isle, Maine 04769

- Taught writing process, phonics, math, and science
- Designed and implemented units on self-esteem.
- Facilitated Teachers Idea Exchange, a program for staff to exchange ideas on experimental teaching methods.

**Substitute Teacher**, Spring 2001  
M.S.A.D. No. 100, Grades 1-6  
Ashland, Maine 04732

- Taught language arts, math, social studies, science.

**ADDITIONAL  
WORK  
EXPERIENCE**

**Clerk**, 1999 to present  
The Motor Inn, Presque Isle, Maine 04769

- Provided information and referral for guests.

**ACTIVITIES**

Leader, Boy Scouts of America  
Volunteer, Aroostook Historical Museum

**HONORS**

Vice President, Student Senate  
Edith Schmidt Honor Scholarship

**SPECIAL  
SKILLS**

Fluent in German

**REFERENCES**

Will be furnished upon request from:

Office of Career Planning and Placement  
University of Maine at Presque Isle  
181 Main Street  
Presque Isle, Maine 04769  
(207) 764-0311 Ext. 447

**Figure 1** Sample of a chronological résumé.

**Jane Smith**

RFD 3, Box 29  
Fort Kent, Maine 04743  
(207) 868-3009

**CAREER OBJECTIVE**

Position teaching art fundamentals and appreciation.

**EDUCATION**

Bachelor of Fine Arts, 2001  
University of Maine at Presque Isle  
Presque Isle, Maine 04769

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Instruction**

- Planned and presented workshops: “Computer Applications for Adult Education Offices”, “Time Management” and “Writing Skills.”
- Wrote and illustrated self-instructional manuals for medical students using audio-visual equipment in a learning resources center.
- Six years experience teaching church school.

**Free-lance Art**

- Designed successful brochure for adult education and a mental health agency.
- Designed logo for university newspaper.
- Jointly organized and participated in art show; sold an entry.

**Special Skills**

- Computer application: computerized student registration and payroll procedures for adult education office; donor solicitation for non-profit agency; lecture presentations for medical staff.
- Fluent in French.

**WORK HISTORY**

Adult Education Secretary, Caribou, Maine, 1998-2001.  
Faculty Secretary, University of Maine Medical Center, Orono, Maine, 1997.  
Executive Secretary, Maine Mental Health Center, Bangor, Maine, 1995-1997.  
Secretary, ACME Agricultural Products, Presque Isle, Maine, 1993-1995.

**REFERENCES**

Available upon request

**Figure 2** Sample of a functional résumé.

## **Cover Letters**

A cover letter, consisting of a single page, accompanies the résumé. An application cover letter is used when applying for an advertised position. A letter of inquiry is used when exploring the possibility of employment with an employer. The cover letter contains an introduction, background information and a paragraph describing why you are qualified for the position. It ends by referring the reader to your enclosed résumé and informing him/her when and how to reach you for further information. See figure 3 on page 5 for an example of an application letter and figure 4 on page 6 for an example of a letter of inquiry.

206 Academy St., Apt. 14  
Presque Isle, ME 04769  
May 6, 2001

Ms. Jane Jones  
Director of Personnel  
ACME Corporation  
Boston, MA 01832

Dear Ms. Jones:

I am applying for the position of Management Trainee as advertised in the April 30th issue of *The Star Herald*.

I have a Bachelors Degree in Business Management from the University of Maine at Presque Isle and four years of business experience. Your trainee program is particularly interesting to me as I have two years experience in retail management.

Currently, I am conducting research for a local business as a consultant through the Small Business Institute at the University of Maine at Presque Isle. I have leadership experience as President of the Business Club and have participated in the organization of Business Day at the University. I have supervisory experience. As a Resident Assistant, I currently supervise a floor of 24 students. Additionally, I have a background in accounting, finance and human relations, including a four month internship with ACE Industries of Caribou. I feel my business experience and academic background have prepared me to be a valuable addition to your staff.

Enclosed is my résumé. My letters of recommendation will be forwarded to you under separate cover. If you need further information, I can be reached at the above address or at the following telephone number: (207) 764-0001. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*(written signature)*

Mary Smith (typed)

**Figure 3** Sample letter of application.

610 First Street  
Caribou, ME 04769  
April 16, 2000

Mr. James Black  
Section Manager, ACME Electronics  
1123 W. Silicon Drive  
San Diego, CA 92717

Dear Mr. Black:

In May, 2000, I will be graduating from the University of Maine at Presque Isle with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mathematics with a Computer Science minor. I am writing to explore the possibility of employment as a systems analyst at your San Diego facility.

Early in my course work at the University of Maine at Presque Isle, I became interested in computer systems. After learning of the systems your company manufactures and later using them in our computer laboratories, I began to consider future employment with ACME Electronics.

Recently, I have read of your plans to explore agricultural applications of computer monitoring of environmental conditions. My field experience with the Maine Research and Productivity Center has included research into the application of computer technology in agriculture here in Northern Maine. Additionally, I have worked as a computer resource person for the Department of Academic Computing, providing troubleshooting and training for faculty and students. I believe that my academic and work experience have qualified me to begin my future at ACME Electronics.

Enclosed please find my résumé that will outline further my qualifications and experience. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how my qualifications would benefit Hewlett Electronics. I will contact you by phone within the next week to discuss the possibility of an interview. If you have any questions, you may call me at (207) 764-0101.

Sincerely,

*(written signature)*

John Brown (typed)

**Figure 4** Sample letter of inquiry.

## **Printing the Résumé and Cover Letter**

The résumé and cover letter should be printed on good bond paper of at least 20 lb. weight and the print must be letter quality. Print your letter on a laser printer or typewriter. Remember to sign it with a pen.

Photocopy the original résumé onto high quality bond paper, making as many copies as needed for your search. Laser printers are available in all the computer labs on campus, or you may choose to have your résumé printed at a professional printer. The envelope that accompanies the résumé and cover letter must also be on quality paper. The name and address must be typed and be the same as that in the cover letter.

## **The Interview**

### **Preparation**

The interview is the last step before an offer and consists of a face-to-face meeting with the employer. You will have an opportunity to discuss both the job and your qualifications. The interview may be formal with the interviewer asking most of the questions, or informal, more like a discussion. It is normal to feel nervous, but with practice and preparation, you will begin to feel more comfortable.

Begin your preparation by researching the company or organization you are interviewing with.

## **Researching the organization**

You can research an organization in several ways:

- Reading literature that is provided to the Counseling and Career Service office
- Doing an “Infotrac” search in the campus library. (This works only for large organizations like Wal-Mart)
- If you can't get any information on the organization, research the industry. For an Infotrac search, type in keywords. For example, “insurance” for the insurance industry. Find a few recent articles (less than a year old) on trends in the industry. This will give you helpful background information you can use during your interview.
- Talking with people who work for the organization.
- Calling or writing the company for information.
- Visiting the company for information.

## **Practice and prepare for interviews**

- Another useful activity is to participate in practice interviews with another person who will ask you several sample interview questions. Do this exercise for five to ten minutes at a time.

- Select your clothing to wear the day of the interview.
- Anticipate the unexpected. Familiarize yourself with the route and location of the interview.
- Remember to get plenty of rest ahead of time.
- Make a favorable impression the first time because you won't get another chance.

Interviewers look for assertiveness, enthusiasm, communication skills, a record of success, clear thinking, maturity, discipline, flexibility, and a positive reaction to pressure.

Specific job-related skills, abilities, cooperation, and an interest in the job are also important. Start the interview with a firm handshake. During the interview smile and maintain a relaxed posture. Maintain eye contact and be aware of nervous habits that might detract from the interview such as tapping your shoes or fingers.

### **Typical Interview Questions**

Some more commonly asked questions are: Why do you want to work for this company? What are your greatest strengths? What is your greatest weakness? Have you ever been fired? What has been your most difficult situation? Tell me about yourself.

By maintaining a positive attitude, you will be prepared for questions that interviewers (sometimes by mistake) should not be asking. Some questions that are unlawful for an employer to ask are: How old are you? What is your race? What is your marital status? Do you plan to have children? What nationality are you?

You may refuse to answer such questions or you could redirect such questions back to the employer. For example, if asked about your age you may say that you are over 18. Talk about your experiences relating to employment. If you are not quite sure how to answer these types of questions, you could ask, “Could you explain the relevance of that question to the position?” Review the pre-employment guidelines in figure 5 on page 11 for more information.

After the interview, write down the company's name, interviewer's name, and what you discussed during the interview. You will use this information to send the thank-you letter. Refer to figure 6 on page 12 for an example of an after interview form and figure 7 on page 13 for an example of a thank you letter.

**NAME:**

An applicant can be asked if they have ever worked for the company under a different name, or any information necessary to check work record.

**ADDRESS/RESIDENCE:**

An inquiry about anyone living with applicant is unlawful.

**AGE:**

Questions such as how old are you or what is your date of birth are unlawful.

**RELIGION:**

Inquiries into an applicant's religious affiliations are unlawful. An employer can ask the applicant if they are available for specific hours for work.

**RACE:**

Inquires into race, complexion or color of skin or eyes are unlawful.

**MARITAL STATUS/PREGNANCY:**

The length of time an applicant expects to work or anticipation of absences from the job must be made to both male and female applicants. Questions about marital status, pregnancy, child bearing plans, ages and number of children are unlawful.

**HANDICAP STATUS:**

Inquiries into physical, mental, or medical impairments which would interfere with your ability to perform duties in the job which you have applied are lawful. Under the American Disabilities Act, employers have to provide any accommodations that would be necessary in order for an applicant's participation in interviews.

**DRUG TESTING/PHYSICAL EXAMS:**

An employer may test an applicant who has been offered employment or an applicant who is placed on a roster of eligibility but not before hiring.

**CITIZENSHIP:**

United States citizenship may be required by an employer when the employer is bound by law requiring citizenship for the position. An inquiry into an applicant's lineage, national origin, descent, birthplace, how applicant acquired ability to speak a foreign language or any of these questions about family members is unlawful.

**ORGANIZATIONS:**

Inquiry into service, professional, union or trade organizations is lawful, but not lawful if applicant is asked for list of memberships which would reveal sex, race, religion, national origin, age, ancestry, handicap status.

**Figure 5** Guidelines for pre-employment inquiries.

**After Interview Form**

*Company name:*

---

*Address:*

---

---

*Interviewer's name and title*

---

---

*Areas of discussion:*

---

---

---

---

*Date of decision:*

---

**Figure 6** Example of an after interview form.

23 Houlton Road  
Littleton, ME 04730  
June 23, 2001

Mr. George Peyton  
Division Manager  
CTM Sales  
2325 E. 26th Street  
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Mr. Peyton:

I appreciated the opportunity to talk with you on June 2nd, 2001. The information you shared with me about CTM was excellent, and I am excited about the possibility of applying my education and experience to the position we discussed.

If I can provide you with any additional information, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

*(written signature)*

Ted Burrows (typed)

**Figure 7** Example of a thank-you letter.

## Business Dress

How you dress is just as important as your cover letter and résumé. To dress for success, it is important to dress conservatively, professionally and be neat.



Sample outfit for men.

### For men:

A suit of matching solid colors with a color coordinated silk tie, a white long sleeve shirt, dark socks and shoes, a brief case, simple jewelry.



Sample outfit for women.

### For women:

A suit of matching solid colors, plain hosiery, dark shoes, simple jewelry, a purse or attaché case but not both.

## **Job Search**

How do you go about looking for jobs? The Placement Office on campus, faculty and staff, friends or family, trade publications and newspapers are just a few of the resources available to help you with your job search.

## **Counseling and Career Services**

The Office of Counseling and Career Services receives job opportunities, and they are available to anyone conducting a job search.

The office also maintains a campus-wide computerized posting of student information available on the university computer network. These postings are found by logging into “Gopher Space” and selecting “Student Information.” The postings cover such topics as information on the job search process, upcoming events, and employment opportunities. Talk with the computer assistant on duty in the labs for instruction on using “Gopher Space.”

## **Recruiting Consortium**

The Office of Counseling and Career Services participates in the Maine Recruiting Consortium. Two Job Fairs are held yearly. One scheduled for December in Bangor and the other in Portland during February. Ninety-nine percent of students who participate in the consortium get interviews and approximately 30% receive job offers. The deadline for participating in the consortiums is shortly after the beginning of the semester so you must prepare

for it soon after you begin the fall semester. Contact the office for more information about registering and participating companies.

## **Employment Agencies**

Employment agencies account for 10% of job offers. They maintain listings of job opportunities they receive from companies or organizations and charge a fee for matching a candidate with an employer. Most often the employer pays-the agency, but some agencies may ask you to pay the fee. You should be careful to insure that the agencies are credible and actually are working for you. Avoid agencies that require you to pay the fee.

There are also state employment agencies that have local, regional, and statewide listings of job opportunities. State government funds these agencies and does not charge a fee.

## **Newspaper Ads**

Newspaper advertisements of job opportunities account for 14% of all job offers. They cover local, regional, and national job markets and can be found at your local public libraries or campus libraries.

Suspicious ads may be found in these listings. They are the ads that sound too good to be true. A questionable ad might say "Management Trainees needed, rapid promotion" with no job description given. The ad also would not give a company name or address, just a P.O. box. Reputable companies always

provide this information.

## **Personal Contact Network**

“Networking” accounts for 68% of job offers. To start a network, you contact friends, family, business associates and let them know that you are looking for work. Then instead of just one person (you) looking for job opportunities, you have several people looking for you. Ask them for the names of people you may call to ask for information about their company and any job opportunities available. The purpose of networking is to gather information about the company. The information you receive will be helpful to you later when applying for a job.

## **Conclusion**

You now have the information that you need on writing résumés, cover letters, interviewing skills, dress, and locating resources to aid you in your job search. The Placement office staff and faculty are more than willing to help you with any questions that you may have about job searches. Don't forget to use the checklists in the back of this pamphlet as a reminder as you continue your job search.

## **Résumé Checklist**

Have you?

- ❖ Specified your job objective?
- ❖ Described your education?
- ❖ Completed a work experience section?
- ❖ Positioned your strongest information first?
- ❖ Edited and proofread résumé?
- ❖ Printed and copied résumé on quality paper?
- ❖ Printed multiple copies of your résumé?

## **Cover Letter Checklist**

Have you?

- ❖ Answered why are you writing?
- ❖ Answered why are you interested in working for this employer?
- ❖ Answered why the employer should hire you?
- ❖ Summarized your qualifications, training and experiences?
- ❖ Asked for an interview?

## **Interview Checklist**

Have you?

- ❖ Researched the company and the industry?
- ❖ Rehearsed answers to anticipated questions?
- ❖ Selected appropriate dress?

## **After the Interview Checklist**

Have you?

- ❖ Filled out an after interview form?
- ❖ Written a thank you letter?
- ❖ Reviewed your job search plan and identified new contacts?

## **For More Information**

For more information on writing a résumé, a cover letter or on improving interviewing skills please stop by the Career Services Office located in the Emerson Hall Annex to browse through our resource room or to speak to a staff person. Detail handbooks are available on interviewing, writing résumés and cover letters. Each is a step by step guide with tips and samples. There is no charge for the handbooks.

The resource room also contains announcements of current job vacancies, career development information, company information, testing information and graduate school selection information. You may browse alone or ask for help from the staff.

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Yate, M. J. (1990). *Knock 'Em Dead*. (4th Ed.). Massachusetts: Bob Adams, Inc.

Edited by: Beverly Butt, Career Services Intern