

2017

The BTO Life Skills Program Workshop



JOB SEARCH & EMPLOYMENT



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SELF-ASSESSMENT

Your job search has a better chance of succeeding if you step back and assess yourself first.

What's in It for You?

- There are many reasons to do a self-assessment. Here are four:
- Understanding what you can do and like to do helps you target jobs and employers.
- Self-assessment alerts you to skills that need brushing up.
- Knowing your strengths will help you answer questions calmly and confidently in job interviews.
- For career changers, assessments can point to other fields where you can put your skills to work.
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What to Assess and How:

Assessments can be grouped into several broad categories:

Skills— your ability to perform a task or to carry out a responsibility. You can either write down your skills yourself or check them off from a list. Skill assessments let you easily match your skills with the jobs that require them.

Interests— topics or fields you that interest you or in which you like to participate. Interest inventories measure the fit between particular interests and specific jobs.

Personality— how you process information, make decisions, and interact with others

Work values and preferences—what you think is most important or worthwhile in a job. Values assessments help you decide the type of work environment you prefer.

Career Assessment – Free Websites for Tests

www.careeronestop.org

PERSONALITY TESTS –

- www.humanmetrics.com
- www.41q.com
- www.16personalities.com/free=personality-test
- www.colorquiz.com
- www.learnmyself.com
- www.similarminds.com

VOCATIONAL/SKILLS TESTS

- www.livecareer.com
- www.ipersonic.com/Career
- www.careerfitter.com/free_test/careerbuilder/
- www.assessment.com

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- www.yourfreecareertest.com

WHERE TO SEARCH FOR JOBS

- ❖ ONLINE :
 - Indeed.com, Monster.com, Job.com, CareerBuilder, Glassdoor
 - St.Louis Post Dispatch - <http://www.stltoday.com/classifieds/jobs/>
 - Employment Guide - <http://stlouis.employmentguide.com/>
- ❖ Networking:
 - Talk to friends or people who know someone or someplace which has a job opening
 - Local (job fairs etc.) – <http://jobfairsin.com/missouri>
 - Contact the company directly – ask at the front desk itself or via email.
- ❖ American Job Center
 - www.careeronestop.org
 - jobs.mo.gov
 - Find Job Center near your location using these websites
 - For example, below are job centers near Florissant

	Distance	Office Type	Hours	Address	Contact
St. Louis County-Florissant Job Center	2.31 mi	Main Office	Sunday: <i>Closed</i> Monday - Thursday: 8:00 am-4:30 pm Friday: 9:00 am-4:30 pm Saturday: <i>Closed</i>	4040 Seven Hills Drive, Suite 166 Florissant, MO 63033	Phone: 314-475-7900 Toll-free: 1-888-728-5627 Fax: 314-475-7911 florissant@ded.mo.gov
St. Louis County–The Crossings at Northwest	5.80 mi	Main Office	Sunday: <i>Closed</i> Monday - Friday: 9:00 am-4:30 pm Saturday: <i>Closed</i>	715 Northwest Plaza Drive St. Ann, MO 63074	Phone: 314-615-6010 Toll-free: 1-888-728-5627 wfd@stlouisco.com
St. Louis City-SLATE Job Center	12.85 mi	Main Office	Sunday: <i>Closed</i> Monday - Tuesday: 8:00 am-5:00 pm Wednesday: 9:00 am-5:00 pm Thursday - Friday: 8:00 am-5:00 pm Saturday: <i>Closed</i>	1520 Market Street, Room 3050 St. Louis, MO 63103	Phone: 314-589-8000 Toll-free: 1-888-728-5627 Fax: 314-589-6410 info@stlworks.com
St. Charles County Job Center	17.51 mi	Main Office	Sunday: <i>Closed</i> Monday - Thursday: 8:00 am-6:00 pm Friday: 9:00 am-4:30 pm Saturday: <i>Closed</i>	212 Turner Boulevard St. Peters, MO 63376	Phone: 636-255-6060 Toll-free: 1-888-728-5627 Fax: 636-255-6061 stcharles@ded.mo.gov

BASIC RESUME TIPS

Hiring managers spend just 11 seconds or less looking at a resume before deciding to move on.

Unfortunately, people still make the same mistakes over and over again in resumes, omitting the things they should include and including those they should leave out. This makes cutting the numbers easy for hiring managers, who will just trash the bad ones, but it makes life harder for you, because, well, if your resume is bad you're not going to get a job.

❖ DON'T

DON'T Lie. It can be tempting to make stuff up. **Don't.** The risks far outweigh the potential benefits. An applicant at Workopolis recently got caught in a lie mid-interview. It was embarrassing for everyone involved, but mostly for him. And if you're not actually in the room when you get caught, you won't ever know that's why they didn't contact you. They're not going to call you up to tell you they caught you in a lie.

DON'T Use clichés and buzzwords. Are you a "results-oriented team player who thinks outside the box with a proven track record?" Maybe you're a "proactive go getter?" Don't say that in your resume. Hiring managers hate being bombarded with meaningless hype terms.

DON'T Say "responsibilities" or "duties included." Remember what we were saying about action words? Use those to describe your previous positions.

DON'T Share your personal information, including your date of birth, marital status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or religion. The European CV often includes this type of information. The North American resume doesn't. Yes, employers can often get a lot of this information from your social media. But don't include it in your resume.

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❖ DO

Make your contact information easy to see. Put your contact information up top, where they can't miss it. It might seem like a small thing but it makes everyone's life easier.

Have a summary. Sum yourself up in a few words, focusing on your strengths and qualifications.

List your experience in chronological order. When you're missing the required experience, a career coach may tell you to use a "functional resume," which focuses on skills rather than experience. Only do this as a last resort. Most hiring managers will see right through the functional resume and will immediately know you don't have what they're looking for.

Provide dates. Don't think you can fudge things by just listing the places you worked and leaving out the dates. Hiring managers will most likely scrap a resume without dates.

Proofread. Hiring managers are sticklers for spelling, grammar, and clean copy. Typos and spelling mistakes are among the first reasons they will toss your resume.

Customize your resume to the specific position. Create a resume that suits the specific post. Many people make the mistake of creating one all-purpose resume and customizing only the cover letter. But there is a very good chance, thanks to the standard use of applicant tracking systems, that nobody is going to read your cover letter. Customize the resume.

List specific accomplishments. Demonstrate the value you will bring to the position by saying what you achieved in each previous role.

Use action words. "Created," "Improved," "Increased," "Devised," "Initiated..." Use words that demonstrate that you get things done.

Include transferable skills. If it's not clear how your retail sales experience applies to the Event Manager position for which you're applying, spell it out. Don't expect the employer to do the work for you. They won't.

Use a professional font. Stick to Helvetica/Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman. Resumes aren't the time to get cute with Comic Sans or Bauhaus 93.

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Use a professional email address. Many think addresses like sexygirl89@whatever.com are a thing of the past. They would be wrong. This makes you look ridiculous to employers. Use your name or a variation of it in some way.

WHAT TO PUT IN A RESUME

Contact Information

- Contact information should be placed on top of your resume. It should be easy and quick to read.
- Name and address
- E-mail address. Avoid using unprofessional e-mail address such as banana_buns or hottie4u.
- Phone numbers. Remember to check your outgoing voice mail message for loud background music, slang, or improper language.

Elizabeth (Lisa) Smith
1443 Minnesota Lane
City, Minnesota 55555

651.123.4567 (home) * 612.123.4567 (cell)
esmith@email.com

Employment History

You can present your work experience in a variety of ways. The most straightforward way is the chronological format. List your current or most recent job, and work backwards in time. Include your job title, your employer's name, the city and state in which it is located. Also list the start and end dates (month and year) of your employment. For each position, add a summary of your responsibilities and accomplishments.

Administrative Assistant (January 2009-Present)
ABC Financial Services, Minneapolis, MN

- Supported three department managers with word processing, scheduling, and filing.
- Generated reports to summarize monthly activities.

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Education

List your educational accomplishments, starting with your most recent or highest degree. Include the name and location of the institution attended, your degree, and field of study/major.

Other Information

Include relevant information that relates to the job to which you are applying. This may include memberships to organizations, volunteer work, military experiences, computer skills, awards, and hobbies. Avoid mentioning religious, political, or controversial affiliations unless they directly relate to the job you want.

Don't include references on your resume. Employers assume that you can provide them with these.

COVER LETTERS

Cover letters are one page documents that you send with your resume when applying for a job. It is meant to: Introduce yourself to the hiring manager. Argue why you'd be a good fit for the job.

The basic elements of a cover letter:

1. Greeting: Address your cover letter to the proper person.
2. Opening: Write a personable, inviting opening paragraph that highlights how your skills are a perfect fit to the job.
3. Hook: Highlight your past achievements as they relate to the job you're applying for.
4. Skills: Highlight additional relevant skills, such as computer languages or certifications.
5. Close: Briefly recap your strengths as a candidate, and include your contact information.

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Template as a guide to writing your cover letters

Your Name
Street Address
City, State Zip Code
Phone Number

Date

Individual's Name
Job Title
Name of Organization
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. _____:

First Paragraph: State the reason for writing. Name the specific position or type of work for which you're applying. Mention how you learned of the opening.

Second Paragraph: Explain why you're interested in working for this employer and specify how you fit this position. Don't repeat the information on your resume. Include something special or unique about yourself that will benefit the employer. Remember, the reader will consider this an example of your writing skills.

Third Paragraph: Mention that your resume is enclosed and indicate your desire to meet with the employer. You may want to suggest alternate dates and times, or simply advise them of your flexibility to meet. Include day and evening contact information. Include a statement or question that will encourage the reader to respond. Be sure to communicate your plan to follow up. You might state that you'll be in the area on a certain date and would like to set up a meeting, or you'll call on a certain date to set up a meeting. Finally, thank the employer for his/her time.

Sincerely,
(Your Signature in blue or black ink)
Your name

Enclosure

INTERVIEW BASICS

1. Conduct Research on the Employer, Hiring Manager, and Job Opportunity

Success in a job interview starts with a solid foundation of knowledge on the jobseeker's part. You should understand the employer, the requirements of the job, and the background of the person (or people) interviewing you. The more research you conduct, the more you'll understand the employer, and the better you'll be able to answer interview questions (as well as ask insightful questions - see #8)

2. Review Common Interview Questions and Prepare Your Responses

Another key to interview success is preparing responses to expected interview questions. First, ask the hiring manager as to the type of interview to expect. Will it be one-on-one or in a group? Will it be with one person, or will you meet several members of the organization? Your goal is to try to determine what you'll be asked and to compose detailed yet concise responses that focus on specific examples and accomplishments. A good tool for remembering your responses is to put them into a story form that you can tell in the interview. No need to memorize responses (in fact, it's best not to), but do develop talking points.

3. Dress for Success

Plan out a wardrobe that fits the organization and its culture, striving for the most professional appearance you can accomplish. Remember that it's always better to be overdressed than underdressed and to wear clothing that fits and is clean and pressed. Keep accessories and jewelry to a minimum. Try not to smoke or eat right before the interview and if possible, brush your teeth or use mouthwash.

4. Arrive on Time, Relaxed and Prepared for the Interview

There is no excuse ever for arriving late to an interview. Arrive about 15 minutes before your scheduled interview to complete additional paperwork and allow yourself time to get settled. Arriving a bit early is also a chance to observe the dynamics of the workplace.

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The day before the interview, pack up extra copies of your resume or CV and reference list. If you have a portfolio or samples of your work, bring those along too. Finally, remember to pack several pens and a pad of paper to jot notes. Finally, as you get to the offices, shut off your cell phone. (And if you were chewing gum, get rid of it.)

5. Make Good First Impressions

A cardinal rule of interviewing is to be polite and offer warm greetings to everyone you meet from the parking attendant to the receptionist to the hiring manager. Employers often are curious how job applicants treat staff members and your job offer could easily be derailed if you're rude or arrogant to any of the staff. When it's time for the interview, keep in mind that first impressions - the impression interviewers get in the first few seconds of meeting you - can make or break an interview. Make a strong first impression by dressing well (see #3), arriving early (see #4), and when greeting your interviewer, stand, smile, make eye contact, and offer a firm (but not bone-crushing) handshake. Remember that having a positive attitude and expressing enthusiasm for the job and employer are vital in the initial stages of the interview; studies show that hiring managers make critical decisions about job applicants in the first 20 minutes of the interview.

6. Be Authentic, Upbeat, Focused, Confident, Candid, and Concise

Once the interview starts, the key to success is the quality and delivery of your responses. Your goal should always be authenticity, responding truthfully to interview questions. At the same time, your goal is to get to the next step, so you'll want to provide focused responses that showcase your skills, experience, and fit with the job and the employer. Provide solid examples of solutions and accomplishments but keep your responses short and to the point. By preparing responses to common interview questions (see #2), you'll ideally avoid long, rambling responses that bore interviewers. Always attempt to keep your interview responses short and to the point. Finally, no matter how much an interviewer might bait you, never badmouth a previous employer, boss, or co-worker. The interview is about you and making your case that you are the ideal candidate for the job.

7. Remember the Importance of Body Language

While the content of your interview responses is paramount, poor body language can be a distraction at best or a reason not to hire you at worst. Good body language includes smiling, eye contact, solid posture, active listening, and nodding. Bad forms of body language include slouching, looking off in the distance, playing with a pen, fidgeting in a chair, brushing back your hair, touching your face, chewing gum, or mumbling.

8. Ask Insightful Questions

Studies continually show that employers make a judgment about an applicant's interest in the job by whether or not the interviewee asks questions. Thus, even if the hiring manager was thorough in his or her discussions about the job opening and what is expected, you must ask a few questions. This shows that you have done your research and that you are curious.

9. Sell Yourself and then Close the Deal

The most qualified applicant is not always the one who is hired; the winning candidate is often the jobseeker who does the best job responding to interview questions and showcasing his or her fit with the job, department, and organization. Some liken the job interview to a sales call. You are the salesperson and the product you are selling to the employer is your ability to fill the organization's needs, solve its problems, propel its success. Finally, as the interview winds down, ask about the next steps in the process and the timetable in which the employer expects to use to make a decision about the position.

10. Thank Interviewer(s) in Person, by Email, or Postal Mail

Common courtesy and politeness go far in interviewing; thus, the importance of thanking each person who interviews you should come as no surprise. Start the process while at the interview, thanking each person who interviewed you before you leave. Writing thank-you emails and notes shortly after the interview will not get you the job offer, but doing so will certainly give you an edge over any of the other finalists who didn't bother to send thank-you notes.