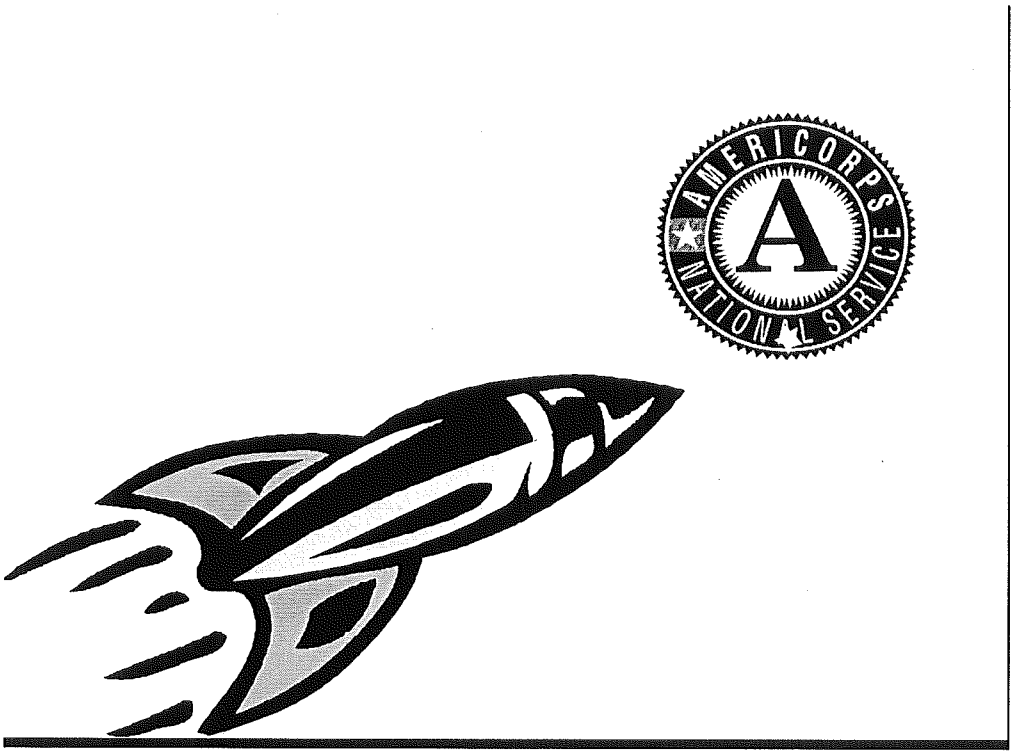
Where do you want to go?



Career Transitions Toolkit for National Service Participants

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Where do you want to go?

Taking Inventory

<u>Six Degrees of Separation:</u> Any two people in the world are connected to each other by a maximum of six relationships.

"We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects us all indirectly."
-Martin Luther King Jr.

Facts about Working and Education

Career Changes

Did your parents stay in one career their entire lives? In the 60's and 70's, that was the trend. Now the Bureau of Labor Statistics says in your working life, you can expect to change careers *9 times!* This means the workforce is becoming more flexible, that more people are returning to school for additional training, and that opportunities exist for advancement.

Feeling Undecided about Your Major or Career? You're not alone.

- Twenty to sixty per cent of first year college students are undecided about their majors.
- The average age of college students is increasing, and more students are entering post-secondary education.
- The average age of a community or technical college student is twenty-five.
- It is becoming more acceptable to change jobs every two to three years.

Colleges and Universities Recognize Your Achievements

Like employers, college and university admissions counselors want to attract the best and the brightest to their campuses. For this and other reasons, admissions counselors will award credit for life experiences like AmeriCorps. Awarding credit means surfing through the institution's bureaucracy, but you could receive free credit for AmeriCorps work.

U.S. News and World Report also suggests negotiating with admissions counselors for credit and reduced tuition. For more information about how to negotiate, for information about financial aid, and for rankings of graduate and undergraduate programs, go to this website: http://www4.usnews.com/usnews/edu/home.htm

Level of education *DOES* affect earnings!

Level of Education	Weekly Salary (before taxes)
Less than high school diploma	$374
High school graduate, no college	$488
Some college, no degree	$571
Associate Degree	$587
Occupational Program	$577
Academic Program	$599
Bachelor's Degree	$855
Master's or Professional Degree	$988
Doctoral Degree	$1,245

Education as Part of Your Benefits Package

Companies encourage employees to continue taking classes in order to update skills. In a job interview, make sure to ask employers about educational benefits!

TIME

Person of the Year

Personal Slogan:

All Aspects of Your Project (page 1)

All Aspects of a project is also known as "the big picture." Using All Aspects can also give you a "systems" view of your project. It can help you understand how meeting deadlines, knowing your customer, and effective money management all contribute to a successful project.

These are All Aspects of any project, job, business, or industry:

Planning: Who plans the activities that help your project team meet its goals and objectives? **What activities or duties need to be planned**? Think about who designed this project. What planning went into its design? Think about **all the people who will plan** during this project to make it happen. This includes you, as well as team members, teachers, advisors, and people in your community.

Management: How are **people, money, and materials** managed in this project? Is there a supervisor or is the project managed by the group? How can all workers be more involved in the **decision-making process** within the project?

Health, Safety, & Environment: What is the **work environment** like at the project? Are you working outdoors or indoors? What **health and safety concerns** are there? How does the project **interact with** and **impact** the **natural world?**

Technical & Production Skills: Look around you while you are working on your project. **Who is doing what** (including yourself)? What **project-specific skills** are needed to get all the work done?

Finance: **What is the cost of the project?** This includes cost of materials and wages to pay workers (teachers, advisors, students, etc.). **Who makes the decisions on how project money is spent?** If you are paid for your services, **how do you budget the money you earn?**

Labor Issues: What are the **project workers'** (and supervisors') **rights and responsibilities?** Also think about: **Who** within the project **is going to do what?** How will the team make sure everyone does their **fair share** of the work?

Underlying Principles of Technology: What **educational background** (language arts, math, science, etc.) **or technical training** (computer training, drafting, landscape technology, etc.) **do workers need** to do all the jobs within the project? Look around you while working on the project. **Who is doing what? What academic background or technical training does one need to perform these jobs well?**

Community Issues: **What is the impact of your project on the community?** What **service or benefit is the community receiving?** How are **other members of the community involved** in your project?

All Aspects of Your Project (page 2)

All Aspects of a project is also known as "the big picture." When you have an understanding of the big picture, you can better define and articulate your skills and accomplishments to potential employers.

Directions: Use the All Aspects definitions on the previous page to help you brainstorm all aspects of your project. Work individually or as a group to fill in each aspect below as it relates to your project.

The Project:

Planning:

Management:

Health, Safety, & Environment:

Technical & Production Skills:

Finance:

Labor Issues:

Underlying Principles of Technology:

Community Issues:

What is success?

According to the American Heritage Dictionary...

suc-cess **1. The achievement of something desired, planned, or attempted.**

Taking Inventory of Your Success

What do you feel positive about in your life right now?

What have you done recently that you're proud of?

Who do you have in your life that thinks you are important?

What have you done for somebody else in the past month that made you feel good?

What do other people tell you makes you unique or special?

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Adapted from *Close of Service Workshop: Participants Manual,* United States Peace Corps

Instructions: Review the list of skills and place a checkmark in the columns that apply to your knowledge and interest in that particular skill area.

	Possess	*Like to Use*	*Good At*	*Want to Work On*
Manual /Technical				
• Assemble/Install				
• Construct/Build				
• Fix/Repair				
• Reason mechanically				
• Work with animals				
• Use hand tools				
• Operate machinery or equipment				
• Drive vehicles				
• Move materials by hand				
• Work with plants				
• Landscape/Keep grounds				
• Possess physical stamina				
• Labor outdoors				
• Use hands well				
Analytical/Problem Solving				
• Analyze/Diagnose				
• Research/Investigate				
• Interpret data				
• Classify/Organize				
• Evaluate/Assess				
• Write scientifically or technically				
• Make logical decisions				
• Analyze finances				
• Reason mathematically				
• Use Facts				
• Separate important from Unimportant facts				
• Put facts, figures, or info into Logical order				
• Explore scientifically				
• Use logical or rational reasoning				

	Possess	Like to Use	Good At	Want to Work On
Innovative/Original				
• Use imagination to create				
• Design graphically				
• Use intuition				
• Design programs, events, activities				
• Originate ideas				
• Act/Perform				
• Write creatively				
• Think of many possibilities				
• Have artistic sense				
• Draw/Design artistically				
• Move creatively/Dance/Mime				
• Put facts and ideas together in New, creative ways				
• Innovate/Invent something New/different				
• Compose music, songs, lyrics				
Social/Interpersonal				
• Listen skillfully				
• Develop rapport, understanding				
• Counsel/Help/Guide/Mentor				
• Draw people out/Interview				
• Instruct/Train/Educate				
• Put others at ease				
• Facilitate groups				
• Communicate with tact				
• Serve/Respond				
• Provide info/Advise				
• Cooperate with others				
• Show warmth and caring				
• Support and cooperate				
• Heal/Nurse/Nurture/Cure				

	Possess	Like to Use	Good At	Want to Work On
Managing/Influencing				
• Administer program or resources				
• Direct/Supervise others				
• Make business-related decisions				
• Negotiate/Contract with groups				
• Sell/Persuade/Influence				
• Convince others through force of personality				
• Oversee programs, projects, activities				
• Organize/Set group goals/Plan				
• Undertake entrepreneurial activities				
• Organize and manage activity, task, or project				
• Exercise leadership in a group				
• Take risks in a public setting				
• Negotiate deals or transactions				
• Coordinate people and activities to work together				
Detail/Data				
• Work with numerical data				
• Proofread/Edit/Write technically				
• Inspect/Examine/Inventory				
• Type/Word processing				
• Follow directions accurately				
• Be careful and accurate				
• Do math quickly and accurately				
• Schedule/Organize activities				
• Complete details on schedule				
• Keep track of data or numbers/Accounting				
• Categorize/Sort/Place items in right places				
• Remember specific facts				
• File/Classify/Record/Retrieve				

Work Values

From Corporation for National Service (1997) Life After AmeriCorps

Instructions:

Read the definitions of the work values categories below. As you read, think about how they are relevant to you. Then, rate them using the following scale:

Number	Definition
1	Unimportant to me in my career choice.
2	Somewhat important in my career choice.
3	Very important in my career choice.

Place the corresponding number in the box to the left of each work value.

Work Conditions:

_____ Independence/Autonomy: Doing what you want to do without much direction from others
_____ Time Flexibility: Arranging your own hours, working according to your own time schedule.
_____ Change/Variety: Performing varying tasks in a number of different settings.
_____ Stability/Security: Performing regular, predictable tasks in a job you are sure of.
_____ Physical Challenge: Performing dangerous tasks that challenge your physical capabilities in risky conditions.
_____ Physical Demands: Performing physically strenuous work in safe conditions.
_____ Mental Challenge: Performing demanding tasks that challenge intelligence and creativity.
_____ Pressure/Time Deadlines: Performing in a highly critical environment with time crunches.
_____ Precise Work: Performing prescribed tasks that leave little room for error.
_____ Decision making: Making Choices about what to do and how to do it.

Work Purposes

_____ Truth/Knowledge: Pursuing knowledge and understanding.
_____ Expertise/Authority: Seeking recognition as an expert or leader in an area.
_____ Creativity/Innovation: Developing new and different ideas, programs, and/or structures.
_____ Aesthetic Appreciation: Seeking out the appreciation of beauty in all of its forms.
_____ Social Contributions: Seeking to improve the human condition.
_____ Material Gain: Accumulating money or other material objects.
_____ Achievement/Recognition: Seeking public recognition for your work contributions.
_____ Ethical/Moral: Acting according to a set of moral and ethical standards.
_____ Spiritual: Looking beyond the ordinary to a more spiritual plane.

Work Relationships

_____ Working Alone: Doing assignments with minimal contact with other people.
_____ Public contact: Interacting in predictable ways with people.
_____ Close Friendships: Developing strong relationships with the people you work with.
_____ Group membership: Belonging to a group with a common purpose or interest.
_____ Helping Others: Assisting other people directly to obtain information or resolve problems.
_____ Influencing Others: Affecting others in ways designed to change attitudes or opinions.
_____ Supervising Others: Being in a position to oversee the work of other employees.
_____ Controlling Others: Maintaining some control or power over the destinies of others.

List below you top four work values according to category:

Work Conditions:

1._____ **3.**_____

2._____ **4.**_____

Work Purpose

1._____ **3.**_____

2._____ **4.**_____

Work Relationships

1._____ **3.**_____

2._____ **4.**_____

Getting the Most out of Your National Service Experience

My personal goals for my year of service are: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Three new skills I want to gain this year are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

One talent that I can teach to someone is:

_____

One project or new activity that I want to try out this year is:

_____

_____

Improving the following skills and abilities will help me in my future career or educational path:

_____

_____

Marketing Your Skills

Employers and college admissions counselors want to hear that you are resolute in what you want to do. A personal career mission statement can help convey that message quickly. As you progress through your life and career, this mission statement will change and become more specific.

In fourteen words or less, using dynamic, stimulating verbiage, create...

Your Personal Career Mission Statement:

- I am seeking a position that will enable me to...

> "The luckiest people in the world get to do all year long what they like to do on their summer vacation."
>
> - Mark Twain

Where do you want to go?

Exploring Career Options

Finding a Job that is Right for You

In your public library's reference section, there may be a book that describes occupations and job titles. If you open the book, you'll find hundreds of occupational titles! How can you find the one job title that fits you? Here are some other methods of researching satisfying jobs.

Informational Interview – Contact someone in a job you're curious about and talk with them about their job for a half hour. This is a great way to find out about the occupation and what skills/credentials you'll need in order to gain employment. In this book, we talk about how to conduct an informational interview. Use personal contacts to get informational interviews.

Job Shadowing – Team up with a person doing a job you're curious about and follow them through their routine. This gives you a first-hand look at the position. Job shadows can last three hours or a few days. Use personal contacts to arrange job shadows.

Internships – Work for an employer in a job similar to one that interests you. A supervisor or mentor will help you during the internship. Employers like internships because they see how well you work before hiring you full time. You sometimes receive pay for internships. Check a college or university career center for internship possibilities, or call the company's human resource department.

Volunteering – Check on a for-profit or non-profit business by volunteering. Employers recognize your abilities, and you can see if you fit into the organization. In very competitive fields, it is not uncommon for aggressive job seekers to offer to volunteer for an employer in their cover letters. Check community bulletin boards or newspapers for volunteer opportunities.

Temporary Jobs – More employers are hiring people through temporary agencies. Temporary agencies match your skills to employers' needs. Temporary jobs now cover the entire range of occupations. This is a great way to check out companies that may hire you. Check your phone book for a list of temporary agencies.

Part-time employment – While doing a job search, you may need to work in order to pay bills! Part-time employment helps you do that, and introduces you to an employer who may hire you full time. Remember, most employers will hire people they know and trust over more experienced and trained outsiders!

Collecting Career Input

Your Name: _____

My Skills	My Talents	My Experiences
1.	**1.**	**1.**
2.	**2.**	**2.**
3.	**3.**	**3.**

Some Career Possibilities. . .

1.	**4.**	**7.**	**10.**
2.	**5.**	**8.**	**11.**
3.	**6.**	**9.**	**12.**

Tips for an Informational Interview

- Enter smiling. Extend your hand. "I'm _____. Thanks for making time to see me."
- After exchanging pleasantries, say "I have several questions to ask you that I'm hoping will help me decide my future career path." Explain your AmeriCorps experience.
- Ask if you can take notes. Open your network notebook or contact log. Find the page you've used for this person and begin asking them questions.
- Keep track of time. Informational interviews usually last about 15 minutes. Check in with the interviewee to see if he/she can spare more time.
- At the end of your time together, thank the interviewee. Ask them if you can call on them in the future.
- Collect a business card and offer one of your own. Tape the card to his/her page in the contact log or network notebook.
- Write a thank you note within 48 hours. Make it meaningful. State something specific you learned.

After the Informational Interview...

1. Ask yourself the following questions and write the answers in your contact log or notebook.
2. What new information did I learn from this person?
3. Am I interested in exploring this field further? Rate this 1-10.
4. What values, skills, and interests of mine fit/don't fit this type of work?
5. What are my next steps from here?

Questions for Informational Interviews

- How did you get where you are now? What education or experience is required?
- Why did you choose this type of work?
- What is the purpose of this department/job?
- What do you do in a typical day?
- What are the most/least rewarding things about your work?
- What types of employers generally hire people in this line of work?
- What is the typical career path?
- What is the turnover rate?
- What skills and abilities are most valued in this type of work?
- How much variety is involved in your work? (or pick any of your own individual work values to ask about.)
- What is the range of entry level salaries?
- What is the financial potential?
- Are there peak hiring seasons?
- What important challenges is your department or organization facing?
- What's the best way to conduct a job search in this field?
- If you could begin your work life again, is there anything you'd do differently?
- Who else do you recommend I speak with?

Where do you want to go?

Filling the Toolbox

What works for your job search?

1. Knowing what you want, researching employers, then applying...
   works for 86 of 100 people.
2. Applying to an employer without doing research...
   works for 47 of 100 people.
3. Asking friends for work...
   works for 34 of 100 people.
4. Going to employment agencies...
   works for 25 of 100 people.
5. Answering newspaper ads...
   works for 25 of 100 people.
6. Mailing resumes out by the bushel...
   works for 8 of 100 people.
7. Using computer listings...
   works for 4 of 100 people.

Facts about resumes and want ads...

- There is one job offered for every 1470 resumes received.
- Employers read your cover letter and resume in less than 30 seconds. That means they decide on your qualifications for the job in that amount of time.
- Within 48-96 hours after an ad appears, an employer will typically receive from 20-1000 resumes and will screen out 95-98% of them.
- On average, 75-85% of employers do not hire any employees from help wanted ads.

Job Search Steps:

A Somewhat Linear Process:

- Take Inventory on your experiences and wants
- Explore and research opportunities and ideas
- Network
- Get your toolbox together
- Conduct informational interviews
- Do job shadows
- Review listings in newspapers and the Internet
- Research organizations
- Send cover letters and resumes
- First interview
- Second interview
- Negotiate salary, start date, etc. (if possible)
- Accept a position

A Zen process:

Although your job search will narrow your choices, avoid adopting too narrow perspective. Trust yourself and your beliefs. Be open to opportunities! Opportunities will present themselves when you least expect them, so be ready.

> "Let the intellect alone, it has usefulness in its proper sphere, but let it not interfere with the flowing of the lifestream...The fact of flowing must under no circumstances be arrested or meddled with, for the moment your hands are dipped into it, its transparency is disturbed, it ceases to reflect your image which you have had from the beginning and will continue to have."
>
> -Zen Master Daisetz Suzuki

Your Coat of Arms

A coat of arms was a way to visually represent yourself to the world. The coat of arms uses symbols that meant something and were an important part of the bearer's life. In ancient times, the bearer would carry the coat of arms on a shield into battle. Let's not dabble in war metaphors too much.

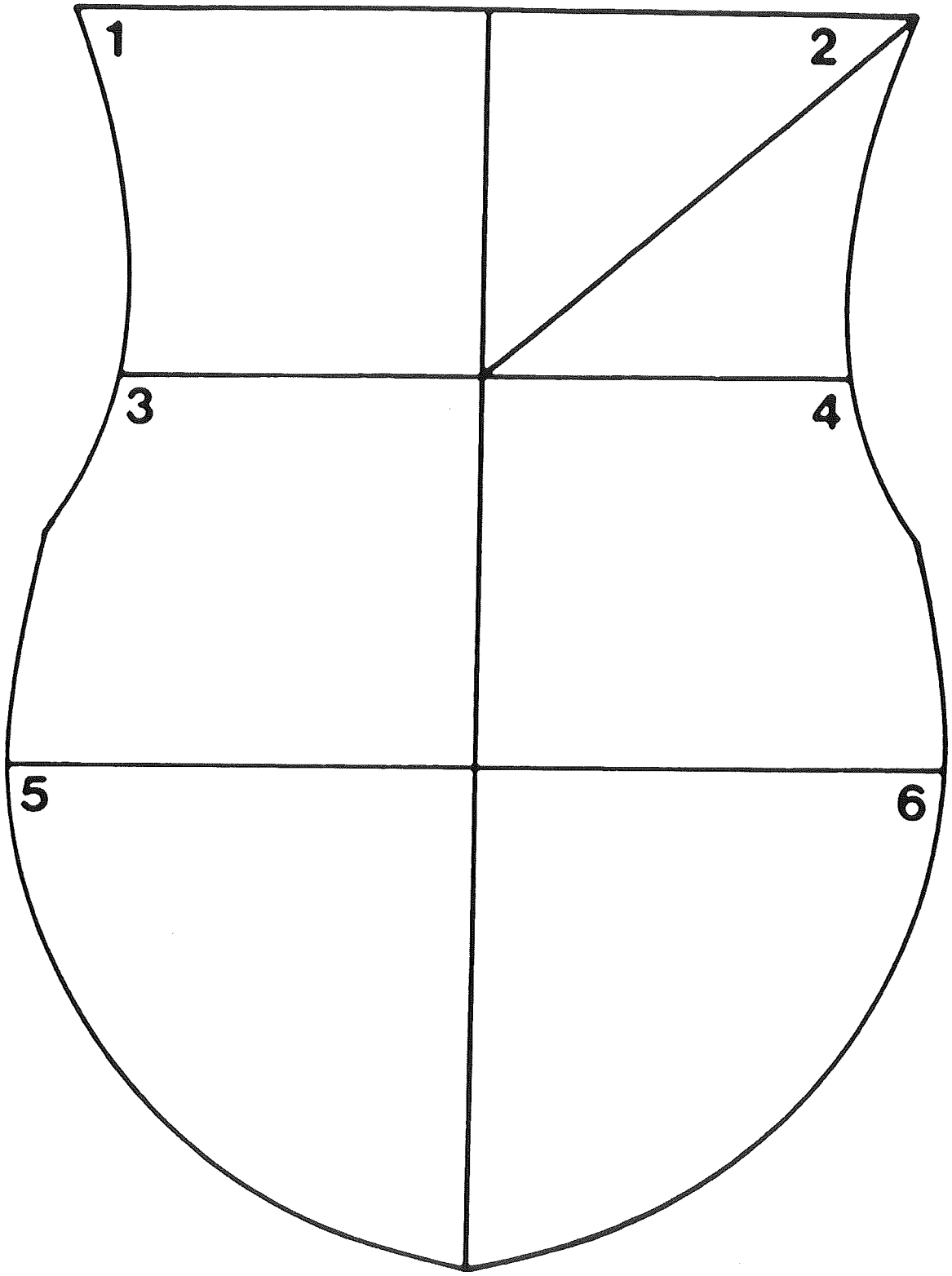
When searching for careers, it is important to create representations of your history and talents. We call this your "toolbox," and you'll have to learn how to talk about your toolbox when networking and interviewing.

Take a few moments to think about your AmeriCorps experience and begin sketching out your coat of arms. The shield is divided into six sections.

Section 1: What's the most important thing you will take from your AmeriCorps experience?
Section 2: Draw or identify two people who have influenced you the most in the past year or two.
Section 3: Draw a picture of your greatest accomplishment.
Section 4: Draw a picture of your biggest learning experience.
Section 5: Draw a symbol or portrait of your AmeriCorps experience.
Section 6: Describe what you like the most about the place you did your AmeriCorps experience.

After you're done, look around for a partner and describe the symbols you chose and why you chose them.

Your Coat of Arms



What skills are they looking for??

In 1992, the U.S. Department of Education and Department of Labor wanted to determine the skills workers needed to be successful in the 21st century. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) polled educators and employers about necessary skills. The SCANS skills are now recognized nationally. An abbreviated SCANS list is below. When identifying the skills you have, you may want to use SCANS verbiage. Skills are broken down by category.

Category: *Resources*	**Category:** *Interpersonal*
Manages time- Selects relevant, goal-related activities, ranks them in order of importance, allocates time to activities, and understands, prepares, and follows schedules.	**Participates as a Member of a Team-** Works cooperatively with others and contributes to group efforts.
Manages Money- Uses or prepares budgets, including making cost and revenue forecasts; tracks budget.	**Teaches Others-** Helps others learn needed knowledge and skills.
Manages Material and Facility Resources- Makes best use of space and materials.	**Serves Clients/Customers-** Works with clients/customers to satisfy expectations.
Manages Human Resources- Assesses knowledge and skills, distributes work accordingly, evaluates performance, and provides feedback.	**Exercises Leadership-** Communicates to justify a position, encourage, persuade, convince, or motivate individuals or groups.
	Negotiates to Arrive at a Decision- Works towards an agreement that may involve exchanging resources or resolving conflicts.
	Works With Cultural Diversity- Works well with men and women from a variety of ethnic, social, or educational backgrounds.

Category: *Information*	**Category:** *Systems*
Acquires and Evaluates Information- Identifies a need, obtains, creates, and evaluates data.	**Understands Systems-** Knows how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operates effectively with in them.
Organizes and Maintains Information- Selects and analyzes information and communicates results to others using oral, written, graphic, pictorial, or multimedia methods.	**Monitors and Corrects Performance-** Predicts impacts of actions on system operations; diagnoses deviations in a system/organization, and takes action to correct performance
Uses Computers to Process Information- Employs computes to acquire, organize, analyze, and communicate information.	**Improves and Designs Systems-**Makes suggestions to modify existing systems in order to improve the quality of products or services and develops new or alternative systems.

Category: *Technology*	**Category:** *Basic Skills*
Selects Technology- Judges which sets of procedures, tools, or machines, including computers and their programs, will produce the desired results.	**Reading-** Locates, understands, and interprets written information to perform tasks; learns from text; identifies relevant details and facts; infers the meaning of unknown or technical vocabulary; and judges accuracy, appropriateness, style, and plausibility.
Applies Technology to Task- Understands the intents and the proper procedures for setting up and operating machines, including computers and their programming systems.	**Writing-** Communicates thoughts and information in writing; records information accurately; uses language, style, organization, and format appropriate to the subject matter, purpose, and audience; and edits for information, emphasis, form, and grammar.
Maintains and Troubleshoots Technology- Prevents, identifies, or solves problems in the machines, computers, and other technologies.	**Mathematics-** Approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from mathematical techniques; uses quantitative data to construct logical explanations for real world situations; expresses mathematical ideas and concepts orally and in writing; and understands the role of chance in the occurrence of events.
	Listening- Receives, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues such as body language in ways that are appropriate.
	Speaking- Organizes ideas and communicates oral messages appropriately.

Category: *Critical Thinking*	**Category:** *Personal Qualities*
Creative Thinking- Generates new ideas by making nonlinear or unusual connections and imagining new possibilities; and uses imagination freely, combining ideas or information in new ways.	**Responsibility-** Exerts a high level of effort and perseverance towards goal attainment; works hard to meet high standards by attending to details, working well even when assigned an unpleasant task, and displaying a high level of concentration; and displays high standards of punctuality, enthusiasm, vitality, and optimism in approaching tasks.
Decision Making- Specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, and chooses best alternatives.	**Self-Esteem-** Believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view of self, demonstrates knowledge of own skills and abilities.
Problem Solving- Recognizes a problem; identifies possible causes, and implements and evaluates an action plan to resolve it.	**Sociability-** Demonstrates understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in new and ongoing group settings.
Mental Visualization- Sees things in the mind's eye by organizing and processing symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, or other information.	**Self-Management-** Accurately assess own knowledge, skills, and abilities; sets realistic goals; monitors progress; and exhibits self-control and responds to feedback well.
Knowing How to Learn- Uses and adapts learning techniques to apply skills situations; knows and applies personal learning styles and learning strategies.	**Integrity/ Honesty-** Recognizes when being faced with an ethical dilemma and chooses an ethical course of action.
Reasoning- Discovers a principle underlying a relationship and applies it in solving a problem.	

Your Career Portfolio

Port-fol-i-o 1a. A portable case for holding material, such as loose papers, photographs, or drawings. 1b. The materials collected in such a case, especially when representative of a person's work.

A portfolio is:

- a collection in progress
- a place where you store things related to your training, work and service experience, contributions, and special accomplishments
- a tool to help *you* understand and remember your talents and accomplishments
- a tool to help you communicate your talents and accomplishments *to others*
- used at some point during a job interview
- contains only relevant material to the job for which you are interviewing
- will change and evolve over time

A portfolio is useful because it:

- is *cumulative documentation* of your career development
- gives you a sense of accomplishment
- encourages you to hold yourself accountable for your life
- emphasizes what you *can* do, rather than what you cannot do
- requires self-reflection
- is a tangible product

When should you start pulling your portfolio together?

NOW!!!

Artifacts

ar-ti-fact 1. Any object made by human work; especially a simple or primitive tool, weapon, or vessel. 2. a wahtchuhmuhjing. 3. a thingy 4. a physical representation of your highly competent achievements.

An *artifact* is that which you put in your portfolio, such as....

- Pictures of people you helped, land you worked, things you built
- Certificates you earned through training
- Charts or statistics of program changes you brought about
- Flyers or promotional material from an event you organized
- Agendas from meetings you coordinated or attended
- Reports you wrote that were disseminated
- Newsletters you wrote, edited, or formatted
- Copies of commendations for work well done

Portfolio Timeline

Now is the time to start pulling together your career or service portfolio. With the planning timeline below, just one activity per month will put you on the road to portfolio completion.

MONTH	ACTIVITY
One	Find a box or accordion file. Label it "Portfolio Stuff"
Two	Save your AmeriCorps orientation and training agendas. Put them in the "portfolio stuff" box.
Three	Did you have to write an application essay, conduct a self-assessment, do a visioning activity as part of your introduction to the program? Save that and toss it in the "portfolio stuff" too.
Four	Bring a camera to your AmeriCorps project. Take at least 10 pictures. They can be of students, nature, finished projects – as long as they represent your work.
Five	Collect at least three artifacts that represent three different service projects you've completed with AmeriCorps. If you are at one site for the whole year, think of the different things you do at your site.
Six	Collect at least one letter of commendation from a site supervisor, community Member, team leader, or other professional contact. If you get a good evaluation from a supervisor, save it to include in your portfolio.
Seven	Collect two more letters of commendation from other people and at least three more artifacts.
Eight	Begin assembling your portfolio. Use three-ring binder or other format. Make sure you have at least 10 potential "artifacts."
Nine	Review the artifacts and materials you have assembled so far. Determine what you want to be sure to add in the final few months of your AmeriCorps experience.
Ten	Write an introduction to your portfolio. This can help you focus what you include and if you want to look for additional materials.
Eleven	Put together your portfolio in its "final" version. Include final commendations from supervisor or others.
Twelve	Ask two or three people to review your portfolio and make suggestions for improvement. Revise as you like.

Portfolio Table of Contents

Artifact _____

Artifact _____

Artifact _____

Artifact _____

Artifact _____

Artifact _____

Artifact _____

Artifact _____

Artifact _____

Artifact _____

Letters of Commendation From:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Recommendations

You're not in this job search alone. In the interview, you may be a soloist, but you have a choir of people, your professional network, to back you up and recommend you.

From the American Heritage Dictionary:

com-mend 1. To represent as worthy, qualified, or desirable. 2. To express approval or praise.

Choosing your choir and teaching them to sing your praises.

1. Recruit five or six references. Two should be personal references, but not family members. Four should be professional references, and at least two should be supervisors.
2. Teach them the tune. Talk to your references about what you would like them to say and *not* to say about you. Talk to them about your skills, talents, experiences, and mission statement.
3. Writing the Song. Ask your references to write letters of recommendation that you can keep on hand for distribution. Sometimes, your references will ask you to write your own recommendation letter especially if you need it quickly!
4. Whistle While You Work. Continually update your letters of recommendation while you are working. Periodically ask supervisors to update their letter of recommendation for you.
5. Avoid Overbooking Your Group. If employers don't ask for references, don't offer them. In an extensive job search, you will be contacting many employers. If all the employers called your references, your choir might lose its voice!
6. Keep in Contact. Call references to update them on your career search and your applications. If an employer wishes to contact them, try to contact your references first to alert them of the impending call. This will make them more comfortable.

Singing Your Own Praises

Write Your Own Letter of Recommendation!

1. Pair up with someone else.
2. Help each other write one or two letters of recommendation.
3. You can pretend it is a letter you will get over the next year, or a letter you received from a previous job or project.
4. A good letter of recommendation includes a descriptions of your work experience, skills and talents. Examples of letters of recommendation are in the appendix.
5. When we get back together as a large group, we'll hear from some of you.

There will be a prize for whoever writes the funniest letter and whoever writes the best serious letter.

Recommendation Letter #1

Recommendation Letter # 2

Contact Log

Contact	Contact Info	Referred by	Results

Contact Log

Contact	Contact Info	Referred by	Results

Your Resume

From American Heritage Dictionary

re-su-me 1. A brief account of one's professional or work experience or qualifications. often submitted with an employment application.

An employer will read your resume in less than 15 seconds.

Resumes are...

- sent to employers with cover letters, but are never paper clipped or stapled to the cover letter
- typically printed on fancy "bond" or "linen" paper that you can get at a local copy shop
- one page long
- posted on the internet through services you pay for and on personal webpages so that employers can recruit you
- contain "punchy," bullet points
- contain succinct examples of your skills, talents, experiences
- very fashionable. There are hundreds of "How to" resume books on the market, in your bookstores, and at your local library
- changed frequently to be relevant to the job for which you are applying.

There are two basic types of resumes:

- Chronological: Focuses on your work history from present to past and the skills, talents, experiences used at each position.
- Functional: Focuses on the transferable skills or specialty areas that cut across all positions and coursework.

Resume Template: Functional

Your Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Telephone Number with Area Code in Bold Print

Objective

Write your professional mission statement here

Profile

Choose five bullet points that represent your talents, skills, and experiences

Example:

- Demonstrated talent at assessing volunteers' skills and making appropriate placements.

Relevant Experience

Write four or five subject headings here
Support these headings with skill, talent, and experience statements using killer verbs.

Example:
Communication and Public Relations

- Coordinated placements of seventy-two volunteers over sixteen state park sites.
- Mediated scheduling and other conflicts between volunteers and park staff and administration to maintain harmonious working relationships.
- Chaired State Parks' Waste Management Sub-Committee.

Work History

Write your chronological work history here, beginning with most recent job.

Example:

1997-present	AmeriCorps Member	Montana Conservation Corps

Education

Write any degrees or occupational certificates held here.

Example:
B.S. Degree, Geology—Clark University, Worcester, MA

Resume Template: Chronological

Your Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Telephone Number with Area Code in Bold Print

Objective

Write your professional mission statement here

Profile

Choose five bullet points that represent your talents, skills, and experiences

Example:

- Demonstrated talent at assessing volunteers' skills and making appropriate placements.

Professional Experience

Write you employment history here, in chronological order beginning with the most recent position. Beneath each position, write skills gained and talents cultivated.

Example:

1997-present **AmeriCorps member** Bozeman, MT

- Coordinated placements of seventy-two volunteers over sixteen state park sites.
- Mediated scheduling and other conflicts between volunteers and park staff and administration to maintain harmonious working relationships.
- Chaired State Parks' Waste Management Sub-Committee.

Education

Write any degrees or occupational certificates held here.

Example:
B.S. Degree, Geology—Clark University, Worcester, MA

Your Experiences & Learning

Everyone's work history is different. Even within AmeriCorps programs, people work in different capacities to "Get things done" in communities. Prior to AmeriCorps, you may have worked in a formal setting, like in a for-profit or non-profit business, and/or in an informal setting, as a caregiver in your home. You may have considerable experience and training in one field, or you may have some experience in several fields. The same is true for your personal growth within your work. You may have grown considerably by completing a project, or you may feel like you've learned little by working at a job.

Employers and college admissions officers want you to talk about your experiences, the challenges you faced, and what you learned because this tells them a lot about you and gives them insight into your problem-solving process. It doesn't matter whether you were "successful" or not in these experiences, the employer or college admissions officer is only concerned about your approach and what you learned.

The chart on the next page will help you begin talking about your work history. Think of some projects you worked on and the challenges you faced, and begin filling in the information.

The Activity (What was the activity and why did you do it?)	*The Challenge* (Why was this a challenge for you?)	*Successful?* (Why? How could you tell?)	*How did you solve it?*	*Lessons Learned* (How did you grow? What skills were gained?)
Example: Trained and supported Eighth grade reading mentors to work with second graders at Lange Elementary School	• Never worked with middle or elementary school children • Needed to learn about child development. • Needed to learn about reading acquisition. • Needed to write curriculum and support the kids.	Yes! Teachers and students love the program and want it to continue. Kids' are reading independently Eighth graders' reading scores have increased some.	Covered a team meeting between my program director, school reading specialist, and teachers involved. Brainstormed ideas and action steps to develop a peer mentoring model. Created a plan to show the principal and delegated action steps. Used technology to contact other AC members running similar programs. Found out how they did it. Worked with reading specialist to train eighth graders.	Learned about politics of starting a School program. Many people have to be involved from the beginning and support it. Management skills. Learned how to "manage up" because I had to get supervisors to do tasks. Learned to "manage down" because I had to support the kids. Childhood development knowledge. Early childhood literacy knowledge. Became a better teacher. Saw how kids responded when they were an authority and had to apply what they learned. They can do it and they enjoyed it!
2.				

The Activity (What did you do and why did you do it?)	***The Challenge*** (Why was this a Challenge for you?)	***Successful?*** (Why? How could you tell?)	***How did you solve it?***	***Lessons Learned*** (How did you grow? What skills were gained?)
3.				
4.				

The Activity (What did you do and why did you do it?)	***The Challenge*** (Why was this a Challenge for you?)	***Successful?*** (Why? How could you tell?)	***How did you solve it?***	***Lessons Learned*** (How did you grow? What skills were gained?)
5.				
6.				

Killer Verbs

Resumes, cover letters, and portfolios talk about your experiences, talents, and skills. When communicating with potential employers about your skills, talents, and experiences, use action verbs to catch their ears.

A
achieved
addressed
adjusted
administered
assembled
assessed
authored

B
briefed
budgeted
built

C
chaired
checked
coached
collaborated
communicated
compared
conducted
coordinated
created

D
decided
defined
delegated
demonstrated
designed
determined
developed
directed
discovered
drafted

E
eliminated
ensured
established
evaluated
examined
expanded

F
filed
finalized
financed
fixed
fostered
functioned

G
generated
governed
guided

H
handled
helped
hired

I
identified
implemented
improved
increased
informed
initiated
instructed
interpreted

L
launched
led
located

M
maintained
marketed
managed
mediated
modeled
modified
monitored

N
negotiated
nominated

O
observed
obtained
organized

P
participated
performed
piloted
planned
prepared
presented
prevented
produced
provided

R
recognized
recommended
recorded
recruited
reduced
refined
represented
reorganized
researched
restored

S
saved
selected
served
simplified
solved
spearheaded
spoke
streamlined
strengthened
supervised
supplied

T
trained
transferred
transformed
translated
treated

U
updated
upgraded
used

W
worked
wrote

Your Cover Letter

Cover Letters

- *always* accompany your resume
- should not be attached to the resume with a paper clip or staple
- should be seen by a prospective employer first when he/she opens your envelope
- are your best opportunity to express your personality, your drive, your knowledge of the company or institution, your knowledge of the position
- should aggressively sell your ability to do the job.

Employers will read your cover letter in less than 15 seconds!

How to write a good cover letter:

1. Be sure to address it to the person who could hire you. Use their name. If it's impossible to get their name, use their functional title (like "Dear Selection Committee") but never use "Dear Sir or Madam."

2. Show you know about the company, their products, and services.

(continued on next page)

Your Cover Letter (continued)

3. Express your interest and enthusiasm in the position.

4. Show your warmth, enthusiasm, and personality while still being professional.

5. Avoid phrases like "Enclosed you will find..."

6. You're unique—Express that! Identify at least one thing about you that is unique that specially qualifies you for this position.

7. Be specific. Make it clear which position you are applying for and what experience or skill qualifies you for that position. Use the position number (if there is one) and exact position title in the first paragraph of the letter.

8. Take the initiative. End the letter by saying you will call their office to follow up on a specific date to set up an appointment or to get a better sense of the hiring timeline.

9. Keep it brief. One page only.

10. Back to basics. Follow a business letter format, check grammar, and spelling. Ask a friend to review and edit the letter before you send it.

11. Nice Paper. Use nice, bond or linen paper available at your local copy shop.

Sample Cover Letter

Your Street Address
Your City, State, Zip
Date

Name of Contact
Position of that Contact
Organization Name
Organization Street Address
Organization City, State, Zip

Dear Mr./Ms. XXXXXX

This letter is in response to your advertisement in Sunday's Sun Times seeking a volunteer coordinator, position number twenty-five. I was excited when I read your ad since I've had a long-time interest in literacy, volunteer management, and non-profit management.

My resume reflects my experience as an AmeriCorps member and literacy volunteer. Service to community has become an important part of my life, and coordination of United Way's volunteer program is a wonderful opportunity to engage more people in service to this city. Through AmeriCorps, I assisted program directors to plan and implement an effective volunteer recruitment, education, and evaluation program. I studied the United Way National's training designs and feel comfortable in duplicating this program as you begin operations in this city.

I would be delighted to talk with you in person about this position, and look forward to hearing from you soon. I can be reached at XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

Your printed name

Sample Thank You Letter

Your Street Address
Your City, State and Zip
Today's Date

Name of Contact
Title of Contact
Organization Name
Street Address
City, State and Zip

Dear Mr./Ms. XXXXX

Thank your for the opportunity to interview with you yesterday for the volunteer management position. I enjoyed meeting you and learning about the many programs coordinated and supported by the United Way. I was especially impressed with your progressive stance regarding personnel issues.

Your organization appears to be moving in a direction that parallels my interest and career goals. The interview confirmed my initial positive impressions of the United Way, and I want to reiterate my strong interest in working with you. My experience in managing volunteers, plus my experience in marketing, will enable me start-up, coordinate, and evaluate your training program and become a productive member of your team.

Again, thank you for your consideration. If you need any additional information from me, please feel free to call.

Sincerely,

Your printed name

Certificate of Completion

This certifies that

_____

successfully completed "Career Development" training on _____, 200 , and can officially tout the titles of

- *career artifact collector*
- *career go-getter*
- *captain of my destiny*

Where do you want to go?

Resources

esources

The following is not an exhaustive list of resources, but you might find some of these books, Web sites, and organizations helpful in your career search.

Free Career Information

AmeriCorps Alumni Association: A network of AmeriCorps alumni you can call for advice, informational interviews and survival tips. Michael Meneer, executive director, is at (202) 729-8180 or mmeneer@pointsoflight.org
Local Public Library: Contains career information resources in the reference section.
College or University Career Guidance office: Contains position announcements, names of companies recruiting on campus, and career information guides.
Listservs: Post your resume or ask questions about careers on listservs you belong to.
Internet: Public, private, and non-profit organizations have Web sites that often contain links to employment opportunities in the organization.
Search Engines: Keyword searches can unearth contacts and information.
Career Centers: Career counseling and job postings are often located here.

eb sites:

*Visit the AmeriCorps Network NW Web site for up-to-date career links at www.nwrel.org/ecc/americorps/resources

AmeriCorps Alumni: www.americorpsalums.org
Career Fair listings: www.careerfairs.com/
On-line Career Center: www.occ.com
Resume samples, advice, and postings: www.resumepls.com/
Riley Guide: www.jobtrak.com
Purdue University: www.purdue.edu (go to "Student Services" and "Career Info and Help")
U.S. Department of Labor: www. doleta.gov
U.S. Department of Labor job vacancies: www. ajb.dni.us
U.S. Office of Personnel Management: www.usajobs.opm.gov
What Color is Your Parachute?: www.washingtonpost.com/parachute
Montana State University Career Center: www.montana.edu/~wwwcp/

** Most colleges and Universities now have web addresses that contain college application forms, financial aid forms, admissions requirements, program information, and deadlines. You can go to *www. yahoo.com* for college listings.

Print Materials

Aburdene, Patricia, and John Naisbitt (1992) . *Megatrends for Women.* New York: Fawcett Columbine.

Boldt, Laurence (1993). *Zen and the Art of Making a Living.* New York, Penguin Books.

Brady, John (1976). *The Craft of Interviewing.* New York: Vintage Books.

Covey, Stephen (1989). *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Geisel, Theodor (Dr. Seuss) (1990). *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* New York: Random House.

Hartzell, Nedra Klee (1997) *Life After AmeriCorps: Next Steps.* Washington, D.C.: Corporation for National Service.

Helgesan, Sally (1990). *The Female Advantage.* New York: Doubleday.

Koonce, Richard (1994) *Career Power.* New York: Amacon.

McAdam, Terry 1986). *Careers in the Non-Profit Sector.* Washington, D.C.: Taft.

Parker, Yana (1996). *The Resume Catalog.* Berkeley: Ten Speed Press.

Senge, Peter (1990). *The Fifth Discipline*. New York: Doubleday Currency.

Sinetar, Marsha (1987). *Do What You Love, The Money Will Follow.* New York: Dell.

nding the Perfect Non-Profit Job: A Personnel Manager's Top 10 ips

By Janet Haddad

10 things that job applications should avoid:

1. Using a confusing functional resume
2. The cover letter blues
3. Not knowing about the organization
4. Making a poor first impression
5. Being unprepared for the most common, first interview question
6. Not having a response to the most common closing interview question
7. Too much, or too little, follow-up
8. Hitting the salary wall
9. Poor selection of references
10. Pretending to be someone you're not

Before the Interview

1. Using a confusing functional resume. Most of the human resources people I know hate reviewing a functional resume. We suspect that candidates who use them are trying to hide something like gaps in employment, frequent job changes or lack of a required degree. My advice would be to submit a two-page onological resume that includes your volunteer experience. Keep a functional summary to use as you epare for the interview.
And, while we're on resumes, don't use a professional service to do one. We've seen enough of them to tell when you've not written it yourself. More importantly, it's to your advantage to tailor your resume to each position and organization.
Finally, please don't overwhelm the human resources director with enclosures, but bring relevant samples with you to the interview.

2. The cover letter blues. You've spent several weeks polishing your resume and, if you do say so yourself, it's fantastic! So you just throw together a quick cover letter to attach to your masterpiece or, worse yet, you put the resume in the mail without a cover letter. You've wasted your time. In a larger nonprofit, there may be several positions available and we want to know which one you're interested in. The cover letter is the place where you can summarize your skills and briefly explain your interest and experience; think of it as a tool which guides the reader to a better understanding of your resume.

And, please, no typos, either of the spelling/grammar variety or, equally bad, word processing mistakes. You'd be surprised at the number of applicants who use word processing software for their cover letters and then forget to change the name of the company in the body of the letter. Have a friend review and proofread your resume and cover letter before sending it off.

3. Not knowing about the organization. Private sector companies are all different. In the non-profit sector, this holds true as well. Too frequently, individuals who have experience in a non-profit organization view t experience as global, not realizing that nonprofits differ from each other even if they are dealing in the ne interest area. Interested in housing and homelessness? There's a vast difference between the National

Coalition for the Homeless, an advocacy network dealing in public education, policy advocacy and technical assistance; Habitat for Humanity, which actually builds affordable homes in partnership with the community; and So Others Might Eat, which provides food for homeless individuals. Within any issue, different groups on the same side take different approaches, have different agendas and cultivate different cultures. Try to figure out where you best fit.

The point is that it's essential to do your research prior to going to an interview. Get a copy of the organization's annual report (call up and ask for it and, while you're at it, ask for a position description if you are applying for a specific job!), check them out on the Web, go to the library and look them up, talk to people. Do what you need to do to get answers to at least some of the following questions:

- What are the key issues that the non-profit addresses?
- What is the organization's size? Working for a large nonprofit is very different from working for a community-based organization.
- Where does the organization get its funding? Federal funds? Foundation grants? Do they do private and/or corporate fundraising? Is there a stable funding base?
- What is the organization's history? How long have they been around?

When you know what the organization is trying to accomplish and how it does it, you can assess your own needs against that benchmark.

The Actual Interview

You've done your homework and you actually have an appointment for an interview; now comes the hard part. Take some notes on the skills you have that directly relate to this position-this is where that functional resume comes in handy as a research tool! Bring extra copies of your resume, the relevant work samples that we've already discussed, a notebook or portfolio for your notes, a pen...and don't make the next three "mistakes."

4. Making a poor first impression. First impressions really do count. There seems to be an impression that life in the non-profit lane is slower, that we operate in our own time zone because time isn't as important. This is simply not true-in fact, one of the surprises to many new non-profit employees is how long our hours are and how hard we work. So, while your skills may be topnotch and your resume impressive, you may never recover from arriving even a few minutes late for your interview. You don't want to be remembered as that talented woman in the green suit who kept us waiting for 10 minutes. Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes early for your interview and arrange your morning or afternoon so that you won't have to rush. Be certain of your appointment time; a response of, "I thought the appointment was at 2:30, not 2:15," at best, shows a lack of attention to detail, something that may very well be required on the job. Not exactly sure where the office is, how to get there or where to park? Make a trial run over the weekend, realizing that weekday traffic may add to your time.

Still in the category of first impressions, make sure you know the culture of the organization before you decide what to wear for the interview. Don't arrive for an interview in your Birkenstocks only to find that you are being screened by a panel that includes members of the Board of Directors wearing business suits. I particularly remember a candidate for the position of Executive Director for a very small nonprofit who was not taken seriously during the interview, despite his credentials, because he did not wear a jacket. The panel

that he exercised poor judgment in his choice of clothing and hypothesized that he might make the same choice when, if selected, he met with members of the business community as their representative. Always dress professionally even if you know that, on the job, you'll be able to take a more casual approach.

Don't forget that it's important not to come across as arrogant. Although you may be fresh and idealistic-and we want that-understand that some of the people who are talking with you have been working on this problem for many years and, if there was a simple answer, they would have already found it.

5. Being unprepared for the most common first question: "Tell us something about yourself." It seems like such an easy question. After all, who knows more about you than you? But I'm not really asking you to spend 20 minutes telling me your entire life story. Don't go back to your childhood and elementary school education unless it has some relevance. For example, if you have a developmentally disabled sibling and are applying to an organization that provides training in this area, talk about it. Otherwise, prepare and rehearse an answer to this question that briefly goes over your background (yes, I have your resume, but I want to hear it from you and in your own words) and focuses on how your skills and interests led you to this position.
Use your judgment as to how much to say at this point. You want to make sure that you have an opportunity to tell about the research you have done and what you know about our issue and programs. Do you care about this issue? Just saying so isn't enough-someone may ask what you have done to demonstrate your concerns. Make sure you talk about any volunteer work (the more recent, the better) as well as any current readings in the field. If you don't have a chance to talk about these things during the normal course of the interview, you can always add it at the end.

Not having a response to the most common closing question: "Do you have any questions for us?" Or, worse, only asking questions about salary and benefits. No matter what else you have said during the interview, no matter how much you have stressed your interest in our issue, if you have no questions at the end, or only ask about salary and benefits, you've blown it. This is where your research comes in handy; let the interviewers know you've done it. Say something like "I've read your most recent annual report and I'm curious as to whether you expect to retain your grant from the Whomever Foundation" or "I looked up your Website and was impressed with the number of private donors that contribute. Do you have a separate fund-raising arm?"
Some ideas for questions are (and only use the ones that are appropriate in your situation and that have not already been answered):

- Why is this position open and what, if anything, would you like done differently by the person you hire?
- What is the most crucial part of this job? If I am selected, what would you like me to have accomplished in the first three months?
- To whom does this employee report?
- How would you describe the organizational structure and culture?

At this point, and when you're sure the interview is coming to an end, it's OK to ask what the next steps are in the interviewing process. See if you can get a sense of the timing for other interviews and when they expect to fill the position. Always close the interview by reiterating your interest in the position and your belief that you can make a contribution to the organization!

After the Interview

7. Too much, or too little, follow-up. Again, this is a hard ball to balance. You want to make sure the interviewers know that you're interested but that you realize they are also trying to do the rest of their job. From my perspective, these are the eight "do's and don'ts" of follow up:

- Do call to see if your resume has been received if you haven't heard anything within 10 days (I admit we're sometimes remiss in acknowledging applications, a mistake for nonprofits who should always want to keep you in our good graces...but that's a topic for another day) but don't keep calling back to check the status.
- When I do call you to set up an appointment for an interview, do call back as soon as possible. Try to get all the information you'll need-time, place, directions, what to bring, who will do the interviewing-in one call so you don't have to keep calling. If you find that you need additional information, see if the person who answers the phone can help you.
- Do write a thank-you note after the interview, expressing your appreciation for the interview and your continuing interest in the position, enclosing any additional information that was requested and briefly adding any clarifying comments which you think may help.
- Don't call once a week to see what progress is being made. An occasional call shows interest-more than that is excessive.
- Even if you do not get the job, do send another letter indicating your disappointment but wishing us well in our mission. You never know, another job may be in the wings.

8. Hitting the salary wall. It's true: nonprofits are generally not known for their high salaries. If your primary goal were money, you probably would not be applying to work for a nonprofit. On the other hand, the non-profit world needs to be competitive in order to attract high caliber employees. I find it particularly frustrating to finally find the person that we really want to hire and, despite my best efforts at discussing salary early in the game, discover at the time that I make an offer than our maximum salary and her minimum requirements have nothing in common. It's not advisable for you to discuss money too soon, particularly if this sounds like the job of your dreams. You should, however, have a realistic idea of salary and benefit possibilities before you come in for a second interview. Ask for the salary range of the position. Check out the benefit programs. If the compensation package is so far removed from what you would accept, say so; I'd rather find out now rather than after we've spent weeks coordinating schedules and getting consensus from the hiring team. Who knows, if you're really good, perhaps something else will open up that is more suited to your needs and I'll remember that you didn't waste your time and ours.

9. Poor selection of references - You're almost there; you've been asked to furnish three references. Please think about the job you're applying for before deciding which names to supply. A general guide is to provide the name of one immediate supervisor, one "customer" (someone to whom you provided service) and a "wild card"-perhaps a former supervisor, a coworker, a subordinate, but someone who knows you well and can speak to the particular skills that the job calls for. It's impressive to have an authority in the field as a reference but, if that person taught you 15 years ago and cannot distinguish you from any of her other students, it doesn't help.

It's important for you to call your references before giving out their names for several reasons. First of all, you want to give them a "heads up" so that they will expect my call. Second, tell them something about the job requirements and the organization so that they can think of relevant things to say. Finally, make sure that they are willing to give you a positive reference and that you have their current telephone number and

'dress-don't ask the human resources department to do your work for you.

11. **Pretending to be someone you're not.** Keep in mind that an interview is a two-way street. While the organization is trying to evaluate you, your skills and your ability to do the job, you should be evaluating them to determine if this is really where you want to work and the job is one you are prepared to do. Be yourself. See if you fit in to the culture of that particular nonprofit. What kind of a commitment are they asking you to make and are you prepared to make it? Make sure that you understand what is expected-be prepared, in many cases, for long and unusual hours, last minute travel, tasks that seem to have nothing to do with what you were told at the interview. Be choosy-know who you are, what you want and what you are prepared to give. Trust your intuition and don't accept a position that doesn't feel right for you. But if you know that this is the one, go for it!

Janet Haddad has many years of human resource management experience in the public, non-profit and private sectors. She is currently the Executive Director of The Family Life Center, a community-based nonprofit providing affordable mental health counseling services in Howard County, MD.

Haddad, Janet. Landing the perfect nonprofit job: a personnel manager's top 10 tips. [On-line]. www.accessjobs.org/articles/landingjob.html

Non-profit Sector Trends and Careers

By Deron Lovaas

Work in the non-profit sector increasingly involves partnerships. Different partners bring different pieces to the community development puzzle. Habitat for Humanity's organizing philosophy of "partnership housing" embodies this concept, with wealthy people contributing cash and working alongside people with low incomes who contribute "sweat equity" to the building of their small house. In these days of government budget austerity, every aspiring entrant into the sector needs to familiarize herself or himself with the strategies of creative non-profit/private/public sector "partnerships."

Yet, even with tools such as the ability to form new partnerships, forging a career path in a sector which derives its strength from Americans' willingness to take (and fund) voluntary action is a challenging venture. The Peace Corps summed it up best-"the toughest jobs you'll ever love" can be found in the non-profit, or independent, sector.
And things are getting tougher...

The "Big Picture"

The non-profit sector, as defined by INDEPENDENT SECTOR in the 1996-1997 Nonprofit Almanac: Dimensions of the Independent Sector, includes those organizations which are classified by the IRS in the U. S. Tax Code as 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4). The difference between (c)(3)s and (c)(4)s is in the amount of lobbying in which they can engage. Permissible (c)(3) lobbying is limited, but (c)(4)s can lobby as much or as little as they please.
Using IRS and survey data, the Nonprofit Almanac provides various ways of measuring growth in the sector:

1) Number of organizations:
Currently, there are 1.03 million nonprofits in existence (including religious organizations). This amounts to 4.2% of the total number of organizations in the United States (for-profits = 93.8%; government = 0.4%). While this is below the peak of 4.6% in 1977, in absolute numbers its a high water mark for the sector, with 501(c)(3)s leading the way. (C)(3)s have grown by over 70% since 1977, from 406,000 to 689,000 (as of 1992).

2) Employment:
Since 1977, the sector has increased its employment from 5.3% of the total (for-profit = 75.0%, government = 17.3%) in 1977 to 6.7% of the total in 1994. Growth was slower from 1992 to 1994, mostly due to federal budget cuts.

3) Earnings:
As noted by INDEPENDENT SECTOR in the Almanac, in 1994, Americans' actual earnings from paid work were $3.75 trillion. From 1977 through 1994, total earnings from paid work grew faster in the independent sector (338%) than in business (228%) or government (198%).

This general summary is somewhat deceptive, however, since growth was actually slower than that of the for-profit sector from 1992 to 1994. Growth in number of organizations, employment, and earnings has generally been steady since 1977. But the lagging periods in the eighties and from 1992-1994 point to a disturbing reality: Much of the sector is dependent on federal funding. As this funding becomes scarcer and scarcer, is it inevitable that growth trends will level out, and perhaps head downward for the first time.

Snapshot of Earnings by Profession

Presumably you're reading this article to help you decide where you could fit into the non-profit sector. To help you make your choice, let's see how salaries stack up by profession in the sector.
In a recent survey of over 40,000 employees in 1,761 nonprofits of "widely differing types," Abbott, Langer, and Associates, a management consulting firm in Crete, IL, released median salaries classified by professional categories. At the top of the scale, of course, are the nation's non-profit chief executive officers (CEOs). Although salaries of non-profit executives are coming under increased scrutiny, three-quarters of CEOs of large nonprofits make under $135,000, one-half under $61,000, and one-quarter under $42,000. Some other median salaries include:

- Chief Legal Officers $89,795
- Directors of Government Relations $65,000
- Field Staff Directors $52,000
- Directors of Marketing $51,272
- Corporate-Giving/Foundation-Giving Managers $45,000
- Training Generalists $29,563
- Grant Proposal Writers $26,000

- Food Service Managers $25,975
- Caseworkers $22,687
- Secretaries $21,736
- Medical Assistants $16,702
- Day Care Teachers $16,450
- Cooks $15,213

In a less comprehensive survey, Towers Perrin, an employee benefits consulting firm in Alexandria, VA, looked at a cross-section of 380 nonprofits of all sizes about recent trends and salaries in the sector, finding that "among all non-profit employees, salaries increased by an average of 4.3 %..." Average, as opposed to the median, salaries for some position descriptions similar to those above include:

- Top legal position $125,100
- Top government relations position $106,800
- Top field-services position $82,200
- Top marketing position $78,900
- Fundraising/grant position $51,500

The End of Big Government

Having sketched out "the big picture," let's move in closer and take a look at some individual pieces. Robin Garr, formerly with the Louisville Courier-Journal, traveled around the country absorbing nonprofits' experiences and has compiled a terrific survey of activity in the sector in his book, Reinvesting in America.

In the book, he describes the work of organizations such as San Antonio's Project Quest, which puts $3.7 million of federal and state funds to good work training and placing six hundred low-income Latinos a year. This is the best possible role for government, argues Garr. The first of his ten principles for effective social change in times like these is to "establish partnerships between federal, state, and local governments and non-profit organizations, ensuring that every community has competent programs delivering a complete range of services that foster individual self-reliance."

The idea that government should research and replicate success stories in the non-profit sector is a good one. However, it is profoundly at odds with the reality and trends. As INDEPENDENT SECTOR explains in the Nonprofit Almanac, "Accelerating competition for contributions among independent sector organizations and for contracts for services at the state and local levels with for-profit businesses may lead nonprofits to form coalitions at the local level, to merge, and, in some cases, to close. The government funding pie, especially at the federal level, is getting smaller and smaller."

This is the main reason identified by INDEPENDENT SECTOR for the slower growth experienced between 1992 and 1994. Is this a passing trend?
I don't think so. The data between 1977 and 1994 appears to show a "swinging pendulum" dynamic in the sector, with strong growth in earnings and employment 1977 to 1982 and 1987 to 1992, and anemic growth 1982 to 1987 and 1992 to 1994 (See chart). The times of anemic growth are signs of times of austerity in terms of funding availability in the Reagan and Clinton Administrations. However, unless "the era of big government" makes a comeback, it looks like the pendulum has become embedded in the clock wall.

Paul Rosenberg highlights an ironic driving force behind cutbacks in a book review for The Christian Science Monitor: "Recent Republican attacks on government have been accompanied by a call for turning over governmental functions to private philanthropy and the non-profit sector." So part of the justification for government cutbacks is that the non-profit sector would be a more efficient, closer-to-the-client place for governmental functions to be carried out. While this sounds reasonable in theory, unless cutbacks are coupled with increased funding, "far from being 'crowded out' by government they [nonprofit entities] would be crushed by the burden of taking over governmental responsibilities."

Perhaps Congress will cover this angle; it certainly expresses unrivaled zeal for "block granting" and "privatizing" any governmental function it lays its hands on. However, if past trends during times of austerity provide any guide, Rosenberg's use of the term "crushing" is an apt one.

What's next?

Some compass points. In the Nonprofit Almanac, INDEPENDENT SECTOR holds that "Cuts in federal funding will affect all non-profit organizations, and some subsectors disproportionately, particularly in the

as of community and regional development, international affairs and social services." In a sector known its creativity and innovation, however, there is another path available. This path involves new alliances between nonprofits, corporations, and citizens. There is evidence that it's already being taken by the non-profit sector.
There are two compass points that can help orient you along this path.

Point one: Corporate citizenship

Calls for greater corporate stewardship over America's communities and ecosystems aren't just coming from former top Clinton Administration figures such as Robert Reich. In the National Green Pages, Co-op America, a Washington, DC non-profit consumer education group focusing on social responsibility, points out that "consumers weigh the reputation of a company as one of their top five purchasing considerations."

Novus Corporation, the makers of the Discovery Card, provided resources and hundreds of volunteers to help build a kid-designed playground in San Antonio. Microsoft, Disney, and Levi Strauss contribute in-kind resources, employee time, and direct financial support to non-profit entrepreneurs through Youth Service America's Fund for Social Entrepreneurs. Robin Garr highlights two other non-profit/for-profit arrangements in Reinvesting in America:
Cities in Schools [a national nonprofit] builds partnerships between schools and the business community, with the goal of improving education by strengthening families.

In New Orleans, the nation's fourth-largest utility company, Entergy Corporation, donated $80,000 worth of computers and software to the Orleans Parish Community Correctional Center.
en the realities of declining federal funding for non-profit work, this is the future: strategic partnerships between nonprofits and for-profits. Those who garner the skills to develop these partnerships (i.e., development staff, fund-raisers) will go far.

Point two: Voluntary Action Former Senator Bill Bradley claimed in his recent book, Time Present, Time Past, that we are coming out of a "cold war slumber" of the intellect. Despite a slight decline in volunteering between 1992 to 1994, the Nonprofit Almanac quotes Everett C. Ladd, a reviewer of research on citizen participation, as claiming, "America in its post-industrial era is a vigorously civic America." Indeed, it's worth quoting the authors further:
At the very heart of the independent sector and its voluntary associations is enhanced citizen participation, voluntary service, and responsibility. Such is one of its unique roles and with this role lies its future.

Ron Heifetz, director of the Leadership Education Project at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, pointed the way to where we should be headed in an interview with Yes! A Journal of Positive Futures, Fall 1996, saying, "thinking about nurturing our families and contributing to our local communities. We are at a juncture where we critically need small communities, local living, mediating structures like cities, that we invest in and get passionate about." True, he points out, "It is a hopeful time in history, but there will be plenty of chaos and conflict associated with it."

In the same interview, perhaps Daniel Chemise philosopher/mayor extraordinaire of Missoula, MT, summed up the task for the non-profit sector. "We must re-instill in people the forgotten notion that a citizen is neither a "taxpayer", a "customer", or a "client." He or she is a "city-zen", who has "a reciprocal relationship t flows from gratitude," he said.

Those who can best challenge people waking from the slumber referred to by Bradley will also do well in the sector: organizers, membership development staffers, marketing personnel, and the like.

The last word: Partnerships

Whatever you want to call them: alliances, coalitions, relationships, etc., in this era of chaos, of realignment, and of government downsizing, those who can make them happen will succeed in the non-profit sector.

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Lovas, Deron. Nonprofit sector trends and careers. [On-line]. www.accessjobs.org/articles/trends.html

CAREER FIELDS

Accountant	Clothes designer
Actor	Coach
Actuary	College teacher
Administrative assistant	Commercial artist
Admissions director	Computer operator
Advertising worker	Computer programmer
Affirmative action speaker	Computer service technician
Agricultural extension agent	Consultant
Airline ticket agent	Congressional aide
Animal care worker	Construction worker
Announcer	Consumer protection worker
Architect	Copywriter
Activist	Cosmetologist
Artist	Counselor
Athletic trainer	Court reporter
Auctioneer	Criminal investigator
Auditor	Customs worker
Automobile salesperson	Dancer
Bank manager	Dean of students
Bank teller	Dental hygienist
Bicycle shop owner	Dentist
Biologist	Designer
Blacksmith	Detective
Bookbinder	Dietician
Bookkeeper	Disc jockey
Border patrol agent	Display worker
Broadcast technician	Diver
Building manager	Drafting worker
Bus driver	Dressmaker
Buyer	Driver
Cafeteria manager	Drug counselor
Camp director	Boy/Girl scout executive
Caterer	Ecologist
Chamber of commerce manager	Economist
Chef	Editor
Chemist	Elementary school teacher
Child care worker	Farmer

Fashion designer	Locomotive engineer
Fast food restaurant manager	Logger
Financial planner	Machine tool operator
Fire fighter	Machinist
Fishing worker	Magician
Food scientist	Mail carrier
Foreign service officer	Management consultant
Forester	Management trainee
Funeral service director	Market researcher
Gardener	Marketing manager
Geologist/earth science	Mechanic
Government worker	Medical assistant
Guard	Mental health worker
Guidance worker	Merchant marine sailor
Health worker	Metal worker
High school teacher	Military service person
Historian	Miner
Home/motel manager	Mining engineer
Illustrator	Motion picture producer
Industrial designer	Museum worker
Industrial relations worker	Musician
Information clerk	News reporter
Insurance adjuster	Nuclear technician
Insurance salesperson	Nurse
Interior designer	Nursing aide
Interpreter	Nutritionist
Investment counselor	Occupational therapist
Job analyst	Oceanographer
Journalist	Office manager
Judge	Optometrist
Juvenile counselor	Packaging engineer
Labor union official	Painter
Landscape architect	Park ranger
Lawyer	Parole officer
Legal aide	Pathologist
Legislator	Performing artist
Librarian	Personnel officer
Linguist	Pest control worker
Locksmith	Pharmacist

Photo grapher	Sales manager
Physical education teacher	School principal
Physical therapist	Secretary
Physician	Security/protective services worker
Physicist	Self-employed entrepreneur
Pilot	Shoe repairer
Placement director	Singer
Planning officer	Social science researcher
Playwright	Social worker
Police officer	Sociologist
Political campaign consultant	Soil scientist
Post office clerk	Special education teacher
Press officer	Speech or hearing therapist
Political campaign consultant	Sports management worker
Post office clerk	State police officer
Press officer	Statistician
Prison guard	Store owner
Probation worker	Surgeon
Professional athlete	Surveyor
Property appraiser	Systems analyst
Psychologist	Tax consultant
Public housing manager	Teacher
Public relations worker	Teacher aide
Purchasing officer	Telephone operator
Radio or TV broadcaster	Teacher of English as a foreign language
Railroad worker	Theatre operator
Real estate agent	Title examiner
Recreation worker	Training officer
Recruiter, for new employees	Transportation worker
Rehabilitation counselor	Travel agent
Rental car worker	Truck driver
Reporter	Urban planner
Restaurant manger	Vending machine technician
Retail store salesperson	Waiter/waitress
Retail store supervisor	Weather forecaster
Roofer	Welfare counselor
Safety engineer	Writer
Sales person	YMCS/YWCA
Sanitation worker	Youth worker