Chapter 13 Study Guide
Preparing Résumés and Application Messages

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1 Prepare for employment by considering relevant information about you as it relates to job requirements.

2 Identify career opportunities using traditional and electronic methods.

3 Prepare an organized, persuasive résumé that is adapted for print and electronic postings.

4 Utilize employment tools other than the résumé that can enhance employability.

5 Write an application message that effectively introduces an accompanying print (designed) or electronic résumé.

KEY CONCEPTS

Chapter 13 aids students in seeing the need for career planning, gathering information for a résumé, and arranging the information on paper or for electronic distribution. Additionally, students will learn to use traditional and electronic means to identify career opportunities and prospective employers to whom the résumé might be sent. The chapter discusses principles for writing a résumé using

appropriate organizational patterns, and it explores alternate delivery options for résumés, including text formats, scannable versions, electronic postings, and YouTube video résumés. The chapter also presents techniques for writing effective applications messages.

KEY TERMS

CHAPTER OUTLINE

CHAPTER REVIEW

1. **Where can you obtain information about the responsibilities, compensation, and career potential of a certain job?**

Ideal sources for learning about the duties and responsibilities of a certain job include (a) The Dictionary of Occupational Titles, (b) What Color is Your Parachute? b) A Practical Manual for Job

Hunters and Career Changers, and (c) Career Opportunities. Numerous electronic sources are available on the Internet.

2. **List five sources from which prospective employers' names and addresses may be obtained; include traditional and electronic sources.**

Sources of prospective employers' names and addresses include the following: printed sources, networks, career service centers, employers' offices, employment agencies and contractors, help-wanted ads, professional organizations, and online databases and websites.

3. **How can a job applicant conduct a successful job search without leaving home?**

The Internet allows the job seeker to locate a wealth of career guidance resources, locate job openings, post an online résumé to job banks or the employment section of employer websites, and post a résumé to a personal website.

4. **Explain the rise in popularity of the "career summary" section on résumés. How else have résumés changed in recent years?**

The "career summary" section can allow applicants with special skills or licenses to place that information in an eye-catching position high up in the format. The section also can allow applicants without specific relevant experience to outline their skills that might apply to a specific job. Currently, résumés are most often generated using a computer, which has "raised the bar" for appearance expectations. While years ago a photo was often a recommended addition to a résumé, information related to characteristics that might give rise to discrimination is now omitted. Longer résumés are now more acceptable, especially in some career fields, than in the past as employers realize that relevant experience will not always fit on one page.

5. **What are the standard parts of a résumé? What are some optional parts? How does a job candidate decide which parts to include?**

The purpose of the résumé is to present a concise, informative, easy-to-read summary of relevant qualifications that will get an interview for the applicant. The standard information on a résumé includes (a) identification, (b) job or career objective, (c) career summary (d) qualifications, (e) personal information, and (f) references. Optional parts include career summary, specialized education or work experience (foreign language, internships/cooperative education, military or community service), references, and others. These parts will vary depending on the applicant's specific qualifications, the job field and specific requirements, and the individual personality the applicant wishes to portray.

6. **Under what conditions might you choose to include or not include references on a résumé? Is obtaining permission from references necessary?**

References could be omitted if (a) you prefer to delay your present employer's awareness of your job-seeking efforts; (b) you are confident they will not be needed until after the interview; or (c) you have registered with the school's career services division, in which case your references will have sent recommendation letters already. Permission should always be obtained before listing persons as references.

7. **Describe the three organizational patterns of résumés and explain under what circumstances each would be effective.**

The chronological résumé is the traditional format for résumés that list education and experience in reverse chronological order; it is effective for applicants who have progressed up a clearly defined career ladder. The functional résumé presents the points of primary interest to employers—transferable skills—in major headings; it is probably better for applicants who have had little or no experience, since it allows the applicant to emphasize some qualities or attributes in which an employer would be interested. A chronological résumé might have the effect of emphasizing the lack of experience. The chrono-functional résumé combines features of the other two types; it is effective for giving quick assurance that educational and experience requirements are met yet still using other headings that emphasize qualifications.

8. **How does the format and content of a scannable résumé differ from a print résumé?**

Scannable résumés require the use of non-decorative fonts and limited print embellishments to improve the accuracy of the scanning process. Keeping the length to one page is not the issue with scannable résumés that it is with traditional ones. Scannable résumés should not be stapled or folded, considerations that are not relevant with traditional résumés.

9. **What safeguards should be taken when posting a résumé electronically?**

When posting an electronic résumé, one should limit personal information and post only to sites with password protection allowing release only to specific employers.

10. **Describe a job for which a video recording might be an effective résumé enhancement. What should the video include?**

A video recording would be an effective résumé enhancement when applying for any job in the video or broadcasting industry. For example, in television news broadcasting, a portfolio video would include sample stories or broadcasts as an anchor. Applicants should select only their best samples to include.

11. **Is it possible for a candidate to "try too hard" when preparing a résumé? Explain your answers.**

Candidates need to be conscious that what they put on their résumé is the only information an employer will see about them. Including too much information that is not relevant may seem like a cover for a lack of experience. Candidates also need to be aware of the ramifications of "stretching" the truth on a résumé that can result in no interview or even in losing a job in the future.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Chapter 13—Preparing Résumés and Application Letters

TRUE/FALSE

1. A job applicant should complete an assessment of the career field and the particular job before preparing a résumé.

   ANS: T   PAGE:229

2. Even though the majority of jobs are advertised, networking is still the best resource for finding a job.

   ANS: F   PAGE:231

3. Networking both electronically and in person is important to gaining job leads and career counseling.

   ANS: T   PAGE:232

4. On the initial scan, an employer typically reads each résumé carefully, looking for reasons to pursue the applicant.

   ANS: F   PAGE:233

5. A career summary section on your résumé has become a standard section in today's information age.

   ANS: T   PAGE:234

6. Jobs included in the work experience section of a résumé may be listed in chronological order or in order of job relatedness.

   ANS: T   PAGE:235

7. Friends, relatives, and neighbors make good job references because they know the candidate well and can personalize their recommendations.

   ANS: F   PAGE:237

8. When preparing a scannable résumé, it is advisable for the applicant to use creative formats that simulate catalogs or newspaper columns to set the résumé apart visually from many others that will be received.

   ANS: F   PAGE:245

9. A scannable résumé can be categorized and ranked by the employer based on the number of key word matches found.

   ANS: T   PAGE:245

10. Portfolios are primarily used for job seekers who are writers or artists.

    ANS: F   PAGE:246

11. Both paper and electronic résumés should be accompanied by an application message or cover letter.

    ANS: T   PAGE:249

12. A letter of application should be biographical and trace the accomplishments (education, jobs, etc.) of the applicant in chronological order.

    ANS: F   PAGE:251

13. An effective résumé summarizes the career-related strengths and weaknesses of the job applicant.

    ANS: F   PAGE:254

14. A one-page resume is usually sufficient for a person just graduating from college.

    ANS: T   PAGE:255

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Completing a self-, career-, and job analysis will assist you in the employment process by
   a. identifying your qualifications as they relate to an employer's needs.
   b. ensuring that you have selected the right career.
   c. comparing your qualifications to the duties and responsibilities of the job you are seeking.
   d. achieving all of the above.

   ANS: D   PAGE:229

2. Which of the following is *NOT* one of the steps in the research phase of a job search?
   a. Gather relevant information for decision-making.
   b. Prepare a company/job profile.
   c. Send application letters to prospective employers.
   d. Identify key qualifications that enhance your marketability.

   ANS: C   PAGE:229-232

3. What is the best attitude to have regarding finding a job?
   a. Finding a job is a process.
   b. Finding a job is a matter of luck.
   c. Finding a job is an event.
   d. Finding a job is not necessary; one will come to you.

   ANS: A   PAGE:230

4. Which of the following is the longest-used method for locating a job?
   a. Electronic networks
   b. Monster.com
   c. Employment agencies and contractors
   d. Corporate websites

   ANS: C   PAGE:231

5. Which of the following statements *BEST* summarizes the role of online job searching?
   a. Job seekers in the current job market can give up traditional means of searching for jobs and concentrate solely on online job search techniques.
   b. Online employment search capabilities extend the range of possibilities previously available to the job seeker.
   c. Online job searching is a trend that can be expected to further lose popularity over time.
   d. Online job searching is important for technical job seekers in computer-related fields, but not for mainstream job seekers.

ANS: B   PAGE:232

6. Electronic job searches are popular with human resource departments because
   a. the search costs are lower than traditional methods.
   b. job candidates are more anonymous.
   c. jobs can be filled more quickly.
   d. interviews are unnecessary.

   ANS: A   PAGE:232

7. Which one of the following statements is *FALSE* concerning a job objective?
   a. A job objective helps the interviewer determine if what you have to offer matches the job the company has to offer.
   b. A job objective should be specific to one job.
   c. Some experts say that a job objective may limit your job opportunities.
   d. A job objective should reveal your career goal.

   ANS: B   PAGE:234

8. Which of the following descriptions of duties in the work experience section of a résumé is most effective?
   a. Responsible for all point-of-sale floor displays.
   b. Set up floor displays.
   c. Created eye-catching floor displays with minimal financial resources.
   d. My merchandising team constructed point-of-sale floor displays.

   ANS: C   PAGE:233

9. Including complete information about your references on a résumé
   a. is necessary, since employers check references before scheduling interviews.
   b. is optional, since a list of references can typically be provided after a successful interview.
   c. is inappropriate, because the list takes up needed space.
   d. is illegal since contacting persons for recommendations before an interview is an invasion of privacy.

   ANS: B   PAGE:238

10. Which of the following is *FALSE* concerning the chronological résumé?
    a. It is the traditional organization format for résumés.
    b. Reverse chronological order for dates is typical in this type of résumé, although it is not always effective.
    c. It is especially effective for applicants who have gaps in employment or who have held various types of jobs.
    d. It can emphasize either education or experience.

    ANS: C   PAGE:238

11. An employer is likely to interpret a writing style or punctuation error on your résumé or letter of application as an indication that
    a. you pay little attention to detail and do your work hastily.
    b. you have shortcomings in basic education.
    c. you lack pride or respect.

d.   all of the above are true.

ANS: D   PAGE:239

12. To accommodate different employers' preferences for the presentation and delivery of résumés, a person should prepare
 a.   a paper résumé.
 b.   an electronic résumé.
 c.   a computer scannable résumé.
 d.   all of the above.

ANS: D   PAGE:239

13. When formatting a scannable version of your résumé,
 a.   italicize business, school and college names.
 b.   use shading to differentiate the sections of the résumé.
 c.   stay with a plain design with no special formatting.
 d.   keep white space to a minimum and a small font to keep to one page.

ANS: C   PAGE:245

14. Which is true concerning the format for electronic résumés?
 a.   Some employers prefer that you send your résumé as an inline document rather than an attachment.
 b.   Unless a certain software format is specified, it's best to send the document as a plain text version.
 c.   You should send yourself and a couple of friends a copy of the résumé to see if it looks correct on different computers.
 d.   All are true.

ANS: D   PAGE:245

15. While e-portfolios and employment videos are helpful in communicating a person's qualifications and abilities, their use may also
 a.   enable the potential employer not to stereotype.
 b.   eliminate potential illegal discrimination.
 c.   encourage the potential employer to focus on your physical characteristics.
 d.   result in all of the above.

ANS: C   PAGE:248

16. Which of the following is the *BEST* suggestion for preparing an employment video?
 a.   Avoid segments that reflect you in a variety of activities.
 b.   Avoid talking about your skills.
 c.   Do not advertise your employment video to protect your privacy.
 d.   Make sure the video has a professional appearance that compliments you.

ANS: D   PAGE:249

17. A résumé summarizes information related to a job's requirements; the application message
 a.   adds exact details needed for processing payroll and benefits.
 b.   summarizes how the company can benefit the applicant.
 c.   should be omitted unless specifically requested.

d. interprets the résumé in terms of employer benefits.

ANS: D   PAGE:249

18. A letter of application or application email message ideally should be addressed to
    a. a specific individual.
    b. the human resources department.
    c. whom it may concern.
    d. the company.

    ANS: A   PAGE:250

19. By sending unsolicited application letters,
    a. you decrease the possibility of finding employers who have employment needs.
    b. you save on your copying and postage costs of job searching.
    c. you alert employers to needs not previously identified for someone with your abilities.
    d. you are able to be more specific in the opening paragraph.

    ANS: C   PAGE:251

20. The organizational plan for an application message is most like that of a
    a. routine news message to staff about a company matter.
    b. congratulatory message to a colleague or customer.
    c. request for colleagues to contribute to a charity.
    d. good-news message to customers concerning a price reduction.

    ANS: C   PAGE:251

21. Which of the following would be the **BEST** opening sentence for an application letter for a sales trainee job that was advertised on a company website?
    a. Your job posting for an entry-level salesperson describes my background and education quite accurately.
    b. I believe that my education (I majored in marketing) and work experience (I worked as a sales clerk the last three summers) come fairly close to the qualifications that you listed in your job posting for a sporting goods salesperson.
    c. Please consider me a candidate for the sales trainee position you posted on your career opportunities web page.
    d. After reading about the exciting opportunity available at KayStar, I am determined to join this exciting team and desire the chance to convince you that my educational background, leadership abilities, and internship experience qualify me for a sales position with your firm.

    ANS: D   PAGE:251

22. Which of the following is the **BEST** way to respond in your application letter to requested information related to salary expectation?
    a. I expect to make between $40,000 and $45,000 due to my education and experience.
    b. At my interview, we can discuss salary and other benefits.
    c. While I am aware that the starting salary for account auditors in the southwest region is $42,000, we can discuss specifics concerning what my qualifications are worth to you at the interview.
    d. As I have not yet held a full-time position, I'm not sure what would be a fair salary.

    ANS: C   PAGE:254

SHORT ANSWER

1. List three ways to organize a résumé and describe when each résumé is appropriate.

   ANS:
   A résumé can be organized in the following ways:
   A. Chronological résumé: Used for applicants who have progressed up a clearly defined career ladder and want to continue along this path.
   B. Functional résumé: Used for applicants who either consider themselves well qualified in many areas or whose education and experience are scant.
   C. Chrono-functional résumé: Combination of chronological and functional résumé that combines the best features of the two types of résumés above.

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2. Describe three steps in the research phase of a job search.

   ANS:
   1. Gather relevant information for decision-making. This includes a complete self-assessment of your own qualifications related to the job and an analysis of the career field that interests you.
   2. Prepare a company/job profile. This helps to determine whether there is a possible match between and the potential job.
   3. Identify unique selling points and specific support. This allows you to determine your key qualifications and accomplishments that will enhance your marketability.

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