

## **Unit Seven**

# **Showing Off Your Best Self:**

## ***Preparing to Interview***

# UNIT SEVEN: SHOWING OFF YOUR BEST SELF: PREPARING TO INTERVIEW

## *Suggestions for the Instructor*

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### **Pg. 7-7 -- Showing Off Your Best Self in Interviews – the Five Bs**

Tell students that in this unit they will be preparing for successful job interviews. Ask students to read the handout aloud, then review the key components to a successful job interview: be aware of employer concerns; be confident; be honest; be positive; be prepared.

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### **Pg. 7-8 – 7-12 -- Be Aware of Employer Concerns**

Tell students it is very important to understand why employers might be reluctant to hire formerly incarcerated people; the more students understand these concerns, the more prepared they will be to address them in an interview. Ask the class to brainstorm what the concerns of employers might be. Review the statements in the handout and ask students to discuss why an employer might express each concern and how a job applicant might respond. Then review and discuss the explanations on the following page.

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### **Pg. 7-13 -- Be Confident: Learning from Experience**

Ask students to think about jobs they would really like, and to imagine that they are asked to interview for the job. Have students write answers to the questions on the handout, then have them role-play the interview in pairs, using the questions and answers on the handout as a guide:

1. Write the job title and a short description of the job you would like to have.
2. Write a brief summary of an experience you have had that relates to this job.
3. Tell about what you learned from this experience and how you feel it helped prepare you for doing this job well. Be as specific as possible.

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**Pg. 7-14 -- Be Real: How Do You Feel About Yourself?**

Ask students to be “real” as they answer questions about their attitudes, self-knowledge and self-control. Ask them to share -- honestly -- how they evaluated themselves and why. Tell them this ability to be honest about their personal feelings is the first step toward changing those attitudes that interfere with their progress, and will prepare them for being honest in interviews.

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**Pg. 7-15 - 7-16 -- Self-Defeating and Self-Supporting Attitudes and Behaviors**

Ask students to assess the attitudes and behaviors they have that are self-defeating – that is, that serve as roadblocks to their own goals and aspirations, or that undermine their own best interests. Ask them to circle any of the attitudes and behaviors on the list they have exhibited and to add any that are not on the list. Ask volunteers to discuss how those attitudes and behaviors have interfered with their progress in the past.

Tell students that the ability to be honest about their strengths is also very important. Ask them to circle all of the self-supporting attitudes and behaviors they have now or have had in the past or add any others not on the list. Ask volunteers to share. As a group, discuss how self-supporting attitudes and behaviors can help people accomplish their goals and create positive changes in their lives.

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**Pg. 7-17 - 7-18 -- What You Do in an Interview Shows the Employer Your Attitude**

Use this handout to discuss with students how certain behaviors in the job search process can demonstrate attitudes that might discourage employers from considering an applicant. Applicants’ attitudes about work come through in how they behave, how they dress and how they express themselves; review the handouts as a group, discussing the attitudes illustrated by the behaviors listed.

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**Pg. 7-19 – Information You *Need* to Know**

This handout explains two programs designed to benefit formerly incarcerated people who are looking for work. Review this information with students so they will be prepared tell future employers about the Federal Bonding Program and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit when they interview for a job.

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**Pg. 7-20 – 7-21 -- Be Confident, Honest & Positive:  
The Incarceration Explanation Speech**

Read this handout aloud with students. Ask them if they agree with the assertion that interviews can be anxiety-producing and that being prepared to be confident, honest and positive can make the experience less worrisome. Ask them to read the example of an **Incarceration Explanation Speech** aloud. Discuss: what effect would such a speech have on a potential employer? Do you think this honesty would make an employer more or less trusting? Have you ever been honest in this way in an interview? If so, how did the employer respond?

Then ask students to write an **Incarceration Explanation Speech** in their own words. Tell them to use the example as a guide but **not** to copy it word-for-word. Tell them to use words that they would be comfortable using in a job interview. After they have finished, have students work in pairs or groups of three and read their speeches aloud a couple of times, until they are comfortable with the main points. Tell them they will have an opportunity to perfect their answers in practice interviews.

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**Pg. 7-22 – 7-23 -- Steps to a Successful Job Interview**

Before doing practice interviews, review these steps to a successful job interview. Ask the students if they have done any of these steps in the past and how well they worked. Do they think these steps are necessary? Why or why not? What are some of the benefits of being prepared? Of practicing beforehand? You may also use the checklist to help evaluate students’ practice interviews: what did the role-play actors do well? What could they have done better?

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**Pg. 7-24 - 7-27 -- Be Prepared: Practice Job Interviews**

Have students prepare for mock interviews by writing answers to the questions they might be asked in an interview. Review their answers in advance or have them work in pairs or small groups to prepare their answers. Distribute the scenarios to use as a basis for practice interviews.

Divide students into pairs. Have each team choose one of the scenarios then take turns roleplaying a boss who is hiring and a person interviewing for a job. Have students use the questions and answers from the handout to guide the mock interview.

You may want to use the checklist on **Pg. 7-23 -- Steps to a Successful Job Interview** to help evaluate students' practice interviews: what did the role-play actors do well? What could they have done better?

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**Pg. 7-28 -- Sample Follow-Up Letter**

Tell students that it is very important to take the time to write a thank you letter after a job interview. Employers probably get very few follow-up letters, so the applicant who takes the time to write a short, polite letter (along the lines of the model) will be noticed and appreciated!

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## **Unit Seven**

# **Showing Off Your Best Self:**

## ***Preparing to Interview***

## **Student Activities**

# Showing Off Your Best Self in Interviews

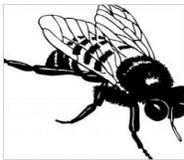


## The Five Bs



### **BE AWARE OF EMPLOYER CONCERNS:**

Recognize that employers may have concerns about hiring workers with criminal histories. Most employers have a financial bottom line to protect. It's very important for people with criminal backgrounds to understand that businesses need to be assured that workers are reliable and trustworthy, can make good judgments, can take responsibility for their actions and have learned from their mistakes.

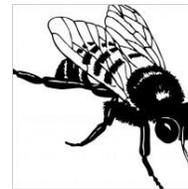


### **BE CONFIDENT:**

Confidence takes practice. Be yourself. Don't brag or boast or put yourself down; don't oversell yourself by saying you know how to do things you don't know how to do, but say you are willing and able to learn. Just be your own best self.

### **BE REAL:**

If you are asked about your past in an interview, be even if you haven't worked much, if you haven't all, if you have been fired or if you have served time in prison. Use those experiences to share what you have learned and to explain why you are a good candidate for the job now. Your honesty will be impressive.



honest --  
worked at  
in jail or



### **BE POSITIVE:**

Talk about the positive aspects of what you have done. Tell what you have learned, what your strengths are, what you have to offer and why you would enjoy the job you are interviewing for.

### **BE PREPARED:**

Take charge of the interview by planning and practicing in advance. Prepare for any question you might be asked.



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## Be Aware of Employer Concerns



1. *"I want an employee with a high school diploma or a GED."*

Why would an employer say this? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How should you respond to this concern? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. *"I want an employee with previous work experience."*

Why would an employer say this? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How should you respond to this concern? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. *"I want an employee who has good references from past employers."*

Why would an employer say this? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How should you respond to this concern? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. *"I want an employee who has stayed with his or her past jobs for a reasonably long period of time."*

Why would an employer say this? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How should you respond to this concern? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. *"I am concerned about hiring an applicant who was fired from a previous job."*

Why would an employer say this? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How should you respond to this concern? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. *"I am concerned about hiring an applicant who has problems with drugs or alcohol."*

Why would an employer say this? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How should you respond to this concern? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. *"I am concerned about hiring an applicant with a criminal record."*

Why would an employer say this? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How should you respond to this concern? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## **Be Aware of Employer Concerns**



### **1. "I want an employee with a high school diploma."**

Earning a traditional high school diploma or GED diploma shows the employer that the applicant has achieved a basic level of competence, that s/he has certain measurable skills and that s/he had the motivation and discipline to complete a program of study.

If you don't yet have a diploma, plan to take classes to prepare to take the test and make sure to tell the employer of your plans.

### **2. "I want an employee with previous work experience."**

Work experience is the best indication an employer can have of how successful a worker will be at a job. Work experience provides evidence of whether the employee has done similar work, how well it was done and for how long and how dependable s/he was.

If you have work experience, be prepared to describe it in detail. Develop a list of related work experiences to share on an application and in the interview. If you don't have much work experience or if you are applying for a job that you haven't done before, be prepared to talk about your transferable skills and how what you have done in other work settings could relate to the new job. And don't forget to tell the employer about your experience working while incarcerated.. Jail and prison work experience counts! It shows that you can learn new skills and follow instructions. Describe how the work you did while incarcerated relates to the job you are applying for.

### **3. "I want an employee who has good references from past employers."**

Professional recommendations from people you have worked with go a long way to show employers that you have the skills they need and that you can be a reliable worker.

Identify one or two (or more) people who can attest to your ability to get to work on time, get along with others, do the job expected and work carefully. If you do not have work experience or positive references, consider using teachers in GED programs, prison personnel, faith-based workers or others who know you well enough to speak with confidence about your positive traits. And remember - one of the best reasons to get a job and perform well is to develop a set of references for the next job!

**4. *"I want an employee who has stayed with his or her past jobs for a reasonably long period of time."***

Because it is costly and time-consuming to hire and train new workers, employers are reluctant to hire people who have not lasted long on their previous jobs. The new employer will probably feel it is risky to hire a worker with a spotty job history.

Prepare to explain your irregular job history and convince the employer that you have learned from your mistakes, have important responsibilities and are motivated to stay with the job for a long time. Tell him you are eager to make a commitment to the new job because you recognize how long it takes to train new employees.

**5. *"I am concerned about hiring an applicant who was fired from a previous job."***

Just as an employer may not want to hire someone who has frequently quit his jobs, he will be afraid to hire someone who has been fired. He may be concerned that whatever problem you had to cause you to get fired may cause you to have trouble again on the new job – anger issues, criminal issues or difficulty getting along, coming on time, doing the work correctly, etc.

You will need to convince the employer that you have learned from your mistakes, have important responsibilities and are motivated to stay with the job for a long time.

**6. *"I am concerned about hiring an applicant who has problems with drugs or alcohol."***

If you have charges related to the criminal use of drugs or alcohol, an employer may worry that you will continue to have those issues while you are employed with her. If those problems affect your personal life, they may affect your ability to come to work on time and do the job safely and well. The employer is then left with the work you were expected to do not getting done and she has to go to the trouble of hiring and training someone new.

Make sure to assure the employer that you are taking steps to deal with addiction so that she need not be concerned about drugs or alcohol affecting the job. Make sure you are in a program or working with a professional if there is any risk of drug or alcohol use interfering with your success at work.

7. *"I am concerned about hiring an applicant with a criminal record. "*

If you have drug offenses, employers may assume you will continue to use or sell drugs. If you have theft convictions, they may be afraid you will steal from them or may be reluctant to hire you for a job that involves customer contact. If you have assault convictions, they might fear for the safety of the workplace. Employers may make assumptions when they learn that an applicant has been convicted of a felony. They may assume that the criminal behavior was part of a pattern and that you are more likely to get in trouble than an applicant who does not have a record.

Even if this isn't a fair assumption, it's a common one, and it's up to you to convince the employer that you have learned a lot from your previous experiences, you are motivated to do well from now on, and that you have so many positive attributes that they overshadow whatever mistakes you have made.

When employers express this concern, remember to tell them about the federal incentives available to them (like the **Federal Bonding Program** and the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit**) that are designed to make it easier for them to hire people whose backgrounds cause them concern.

# Be Confident: LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

Think of a job you would really like, and imagine that you are asked to interview for that job. Then, at the end of the discussion, the interviewer asks you to describe an experience you had, from which you learned something that will help you on the job.



*Answer the questions below to prepare for a job interview role-play. A partner will ask you the following questions:*

1. Write the job title and a short description of a job you would like to have.

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2. Write a brief summary of an experience you have had that relates to this job.

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3. Tell about what you learned from this experience and how you feel it helped prepare you for doing this job well. Be as specific as possible.

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## **Be Real: *How Do You Feel About Yourself?***

		No	Sometimes	Improving	Yes
1.	I am honest.				
2.	I like myself.				
3.	I can handle constructive criticism.				
4.	I appreciate helpful advice.				
5.	I am dependable and feel that people can trust me.				
6.	I think positively.				
7.	I live up to my potential.				
8.	I believe I am responsible for my own actions.				
9.	I am prepared to make wise decisions.				
10.	I bounce back if I make a mistake.				
11.	I trust myself.				
12.	I use my time wisely.				
13.	I have self-control.				
14.	I know what my skills, talents and gifts are.				
15.	I use my skills, talents and gifts to do good things.				

*Which of these feelings about yourself would you like to change? What could you do to work on these aspects of yourself?*

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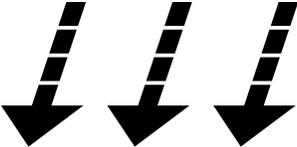


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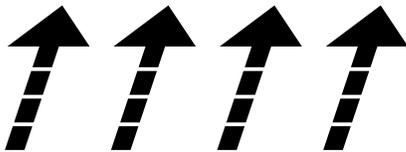
# Self-Defeating Attitudes and Behaviors

*Self-defeating attitudes and behaviors interfere with our ability to take good care of ourselves, make progress and do what we need to do. They harm rather than help us! Everybody has displayed self-defeating attitudes and behaviors at one time or another. Circle any of the attitudes and behaviors below that you have had. Add any others that are not on the list.*

Attitudes	Behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• jealousy</li> <li>• defensiveness</li> <li>• feeling resentful</li> <li>• feeling bitter</li> <li>• fear of expressing feelings</li> <li>• fear of saying “no”</li> <li>• being a perfectionist</li> <li>• fear of people in authority</li> <li>• unrealistic expectations</li> <li>• need to always be “in control”</li> <li>• fear of commitment</li> <li>• feelings of worthlessness</li> <li>• fear of responsibility</li> <li>• fear of being hurt</li> <li>• giving up</li> <li>• not forgiving yourself</li> <li>• not forgiving others</li> <li>• feeling inferior</li> <li>• fear of failure</li> <li>• fear of success</li> <li>• feeling unmotivated</li> <li>• feeling depressed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoiding responsibility</li> <li>• overeating</li> <li>• dieting excessively</li> <li>• eating too much junk food</li> <li>• drinking or using drugs to avoid problems</li> <li>• being disorganized</li> <li>• excessive daydreaming</li> <li>• not controlling anger</li> <li>• being consistently late</li> <li>• getting too little sleep</li> <li>• interrupting others</li> <li>• procrastinating</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>

# Self-Supporting Attitudes and Behaviors

*Self-supporting attitudes and behaviors help us take good care of ourselves, make progress and do what we need to do. Circle any of the attitudes and behaviors below that you have that help you feel good about yourself, and give you confidence to face challenges. Add any others that are not on the list.*

Attitudes	Behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• believing in yourself</li> <li>• trusting yourself</li> <li>• trusting others</li> <li>• not giving up</li> <li>• being patient with yourself</li> <li>• being patient with others</li> <li>• forgiving yourself</li> <li>• forgiving others</li> <li>• feeling comfortable with people in authority</li> <li>• understanding and accepting your own strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>• feeling ready to succeed</li> <li>• feeling confident</li> <li>• accepting and liking yourself</li> <li>• respecting yourself and others</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eating healthy food</li> <li>• getting enough sleep</li> <li>• exercising</li> <li>• taking care of yourself or seeking help if you are sick</li> <li>• seeking and maintaining positive relationships</li> <li>• asking for help when needed</li> <li>• finishing tasks</li> <li>• doing things you enjoy</li> <li>• being prepared</li> <li>• listening</li> <li>• doing what you say you are going to do</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>

# What You Do in an Interview

## ◆●◆ Shows the Employer Your Attitude ◆●◆

*Don't do this...*

*Because it shows this attitude...*

Arrive late for an interview

\_\_\_\_\_

Disrespect the front office person

\_\_\_\_\_

Dress inappropriately

\_\_\_\_\_

Ask about salary first

\_\_\_\_\_

Put yourself down

\_\_\_\_\_

Mumble or give short answers

\_\_\_\_\_

Bad mouth your last employer

\_\_\_\_\_

Blame others for your faults

\_\_\_\_\_

Exaggerate or brag about your skills

\_\_\_\_\_

Lie about your background

\_\_\_\_\_

Text or talk on cell

\_\_\_\_\_

Interrupt

\_\_\_\_\_

Argue

\_\_\_\_\_

Stumble over your answers

\_\_\_\_\_

Avoid eye contact

\_\_\_\_\_

Avoid shaking hands

\_\_\_\_\_

Forget to say "thank you"

\_\_\_\_\_

Forget to follow-up

\_\_\_\_\_

*Do this...*

*Because it shows this attitude...*

Arrive on time for an interview \_\_\_\_\_

Treat the front office person respectfully \_\_\_\_\_

Dress appropriately \_\_\_\_\_

Let the employer bring up salary \_\_\_\_\_

Talk about your last employer with respect \_\_\_\_\_

Be honest about your faults \_\_\_\_\_

Be positive about your skills without bragging \_\_\_\_\_

Tell the truth about your background \_\_\_\_\_

Turn off your cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Listen without interrupting \_\_\_\_\_

Ask questions about the job \_\_\_\_\_

Answer questions clearly \_\_\_\_\_

Use good eye contact \_\_\_\_\_

Shake hands \_\_\_\_\_

Say "thank you" at the end \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up \_\_\_\_\_



# **Information You *Need* to Know**

## ***If you are a formerly incarcerated person looking for a job***

*When you go to a job interview, be prepared to tell future employers about two programs that will benefit them and make you a more attractive candidate. Prepare to talk about the Federal Bonding Program and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and/or bring a copy of this paper with you to the interview.*

### **The Federal Bonding Program**

The Federal Bonding Program provides fidelity bonding insurance coverage to individuals with criminal histories and other high-risk job applicants who are qualified but fail to get jobs because regular commercial bonding is denied due to their backgrounds.

#### **Federal bonding:**

- offers insurance to protect employer against employee dishonesty
- covers any type of stealing: theft, forgery, larceny, and embezzlement
- provides, in effect, a guarantee of worker job honesty
- is an incentive to the employer to hire an at-risk job applicant
- is a unique tool for marketing applicants to employers.

#### **For information on how to obtain Federal Bonding:**

- contact your local one stop career center (CareerSource) *or*
- call toll free: 1.877.US2.JOBS (1.877.872.5627)



pe0076117 fotosearch.com

### **The Work Opportunity Tax Credit**

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal tax credit for employers to provide an incentive to hire people with felonies.

For more information, employers may contact:

[www.floridajobs.org/business-growth-and-partnerships/for-employers/find-tax-credit-and-incentive-programs/work-opportunity-tax-credit-program](http://www.floridajobs.org/business-growth-and-partnerships/for-employers/find-tax-credit-and-incentive-programs/work-opportunity-tax-credit-program)

# **BE CONFIDENT, HONEST & POSITIVE:**

## **Preparing the Incarceration Explanation Speech**

The job interview is one of the most anxiety-producing experiences of the job application process. It's hard for everybody, but it's especially difficult if you are worried about how you will explain your time in jail or prison, and if you go into the interview thinking you probably won't get hired because of your incarceration.

The best way to handle interview anxiety is to be prepared. Careful preparation can help you develop **confidence** to talk about your experience in a way that is both **honest** and **positive**.

Most interviewers will ask one of the following questions: *Can you tell me about yourself? Why haven't you worked for the past year? Have you ever been incarcerated?* This is the perfect opportunity to present your **incarceration explanation speech**.

### **Example:**

There is something you have the right to know. I've made some mistakes and I was incarcerated for \_\_\_\_\_. At the time I made a bad decision and did something stupid. I'm sorry about it. I admit I made an error in judgment. But while I was incarcerated, I used the time to re-evaluate my life and I decided I wanted to make positive changes. I took advantage of the time to take classes in \_\_\_\_\_ and have learned a great deal from the experience.

I am highly motivated to do well on this job because I have important responsibilities. I can't afford to get in trouble because I have to (take care of / be a role model for) my (family / children / wife / mother / nieces and nephews). I am inspired to do well because I have people counting on me.

I have a number of strengths that I think will benefit you if you hire me. I have experience \_\_\_\_\_ and I have worked as a \_\_\_\_\_.

There are some advantages you are eligible for if you hire me. First, I am bondable at no cost to you. Second, if you hire me, your company would be eligible for a Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC).



# Steps to a Successful Job Interview



## *Prepare in advance.*

- Make sure you have clean, appropriate clothes.
- Review your resume.
- Review commonly asked interview questions and how you will answer them.
- Role-play the interview with a friend.

## *Prepare the day before.*

- Call to confirm the time and location of the interview.
- Gather together your resume, information for the application, licenses, pen and pencil, and blank paper to take notes.
- Get clothes ready.
- Plan your transportation.
- Review your resume again.
- Review commonly asked interview questions and how you will answer them.
- Role-play the interview again.
- Get a good night's sleep.

## *The day of the interview:*

- Get up early. Eat breakfast.
- Take a shower. Dress neatly and conservatively. (*No bling.*)
- Collect your resume, information for the application, licenses, pen and pencil, and blank paper to take notes.
- Leave early for the interview.
- Arrive early. Introduce yourself to the person in the front office and tell him or her you are here for your interview.



## ***Steps to a Successful Job Interview, continued***



### ***At the interview:***

- Shake hands with the interviewer.
- Make good eye contact with the interviewer.
- Listen carefully to questions. (*Think before you answer.*)
- Speak clearly.
- Communicate confidence and self-respect. (*No need to brag.*)
- Be positive about yourself. Communicate your strengths.
- Be honest. Tell about mistakes you've made and lessons you've learned. (*Nobody expects you to be perfect.*)
- Ask a few questions.
- Try to relax and smile.
- If you are interested in the job, tell the interviewer you are and why.
- Ask when you may call back to ask about the job.
- Shake the interviewer's hand.
- Thank him or her for the interview.

### ***Follow-up after the interview:***

- Send a thank you letter to the person who interviewed you. (*This will be noticed.*)
- Follow-up with a phone call if you said that you would.



**◆◆◆◆ Be Prepared: Practice Job Interviews ◆◆◆◆**

1. Tell me about yourself. What kind of person are you?

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2. Why should I hire you?

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3. Why would you like to work for our company?

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4. What type of work do you like to do best?

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5. Tell me about the last two jobs you had and the skills you used on those jobs.

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6. What are your strengths?

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7. What are your career goals?

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8. Tell me about a difficult problem you had on a job and how you handled it.

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9. What do you do and say if your work is criticized?

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10. Have you ever been fired? If so, why?

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11. Have you ever been convicted of a felony or incarcerated? Please explain.

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## **Be Prepared: Practice Job Interviews, *continued***

*In the following scenarios, one student will play the boss who is hiring and one will interview for the job. The employee should choose the job s/he would like to apply for. Use the questions and answers on the handout to guide the mock interview.*

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**CONCRETE MASON:** You own a concrete company and need an employee who can pour concrete, lay foundation and pave driveways and roads. Your company is licensed and insured. You need a worker who comes on time and works well as part of a team. Because employees have to operate heavy machinery, they have to pass periodic drug tests. You hired a formerly incarcerated person in the past and got burned when he stole a laptop from a site where he was working. You have a lot of applications to choose from, and many of the applicants have high school diplomas; some have associate's degrees.

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**COOK:** You manage a large cafeteria and need a cook who can work from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. You need someone willing to learn on the job who is reliable and capable of following instructions and working under pressure. You prefer to hire someone who has a culinary certificate but you are willing to hire someone with on-the-job training. You are reluctant to hire someone with a felony because other restaurant owners have told you that people with prior convictions can't be trusted.

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**STOCK CLERK:** You manage a large department store and need someone to stock inventory. The job involves working in the warehouse and in the store, re-supplying items on shelves and filling out orders for new items. You need someone you can trust to fill out paperwork accurately and to handle a large amount of merchandise without stealing. The hours are flexible; work schedules are posted every week.

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**HOUSEKEEPER:** You manage a large motel and need someone to clean motel rooms and bathrooms, change beds, vacuum and dust. The job involves careful, physical work. You need someone who is capable of following instructions and working quickly. You need someone who can learn on the job and get along well with other employees. Applicants must undergo background checks before they can be hired.

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## ***Be Prepared: Practice Job Interviews, continued***

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**MAINTENANCE WORKER:** You run the maintenance department of the local university. You need someone to clean classrooms and laboratories, using various equipment and chemicals. The worker must be able to work alone late at night or early in the morning. You need someone who is responsible and reliable and can be trusted with keys to multiple rooms. Shifts are from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 3 a.m. to 8 a.m., Monday through Friday. Because staff is paid by the state, they must undergo mandatory monthly drug testing.

\*\*\*\*\*

**RETAIL CLERK:** You manage a local pharmacy and need a sales clerk who can manage the front counter, use the cash register, resupply stock and take inventory. You need a worker who can open the store, work from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday and occasionally on weekends. The employee must be able to learn quickly and work well with others. You need someone you can trust to fill out paperwork accurately and to handle a large amount of cash and merchandise without stealing. You have a large stack of applications to choose from, and many of the applicants have high school diplomas; some have associate's degrees.

\*\*\*\*\*

**CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT:** You manage a large nursing home and need workers who can assist elderly patients from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. and from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. You need someone who is capable of following instructions and working quickly. The nursing assistant needs to be able to work closely with nurses and other aides, and to help patients eat, get dressed, bathe and go to the bathroom. You need someone who can learn on the job and is willing to acquire a CNA certificate. Applicants must undergo background checks before they can be hired.

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**LANDSCAPER:** You manage a small landscaping company and need someone to operate lawn equipment and pruning tools. The job involves working with three other workers outdoors in all weather, at people's homes, and at businesses. You have hired people with felonies in the past; some have been successful but others have quit or re-offended and it has cost you money, so you are reluctant to train another formerly incarcerated person. You need a worker with a valid driver's license and a clean driving record.



# **SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP LETTER**

*It is very important to take the time to write a thank you letter after a job interview. Employers probably get very few follow-up letters, so the applicant who takes the time to write a short, polite letter (along the lines of the model) will be noticed and appreciated!*

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Joseph Freeman  
123 Independence Road  
Tallahassee, FL 32222  
freemanj23@yahoo.com  
850-222-5654

Mr. John Markson  
Sampson Electronics  
222 Appleyard Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 34457

May 23, 2015

Dear Mr. Markson:

Thank you very much for taking the time to meet with me on Friday, May 21. I appreciated the opportunity to talk with you and learn more about Sampson Electronics. The front office manager position we discussed interested me greatly. I believe I have the qualifications to do the job well and hope you will consider me for the position.

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

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_ (sign your name)

Joseph Freeman