

Congratulations! You have invested a lot of time pursuing your degree and are now ready to find employment. Obtaining a teaching job requires preparation and knowledge. The goal of this booklet is to provide you with the tools necessary to successfully market yourself to school corporations.

Once a year the Education Department holds a panel discussion entitled “**Straight Talk With School Corporations.**”

Representatives from Fort Wayne area school corporations discuss what they desire in candidates. The following qualifications were identified as the most valuable in a candidate:

- Love for children and for teaching-get your passion across
- Understanding of what it means to be an effective teacher – *Harry Wong, Fred Jones*
- Subject matter understanding
- How to use technology to enhance classroom activities
- Current understanding of trends
- Classroom management skills
- Ability to connect with kids
- Timeliness
- Proper dress
- Proper language and diction – no slang or swear words
- Experience as a substitute
- Certification in more than one area
- Excitement about diversity
- Positive expectations of kids
- Up-to-date resume, address and phone number
- GPA in 3.0 range
- Willingness to volunteer, take on extracurricular activities

Rule of Thumb for Resume Showcasing

Pick up your resume. Where are your thumbs? They are probably at about the midpoint of the page. Most employers spend 20– 30 seconds when first examining resumes, actually see only the top half of your resume. Therefore, everything above your thumbs should be the most important information you want to convey to the employer and everything below your thumbs should support the message you are communicating.

In this short amount of time employers determine your strengths and if you have something to offer. If they feel that you do, they will look at your resume in more depth. If not, you will be filed away. You need to make sure that the employer knows what you are capable of doing. If you don't tell them, no one else will. Employers want to **QUICKLY screen you out**. Your goal is to get screened **IN**.

How do you fashion your resume so that it gets noticed? The employer doesn't have time to search your resume for pertinent information – you must serve it on a silver platter – easy to obtain and elegantly presented.

Take the time to write a resume that is an accurate reflection of you. Don't do it alone! Tap into book and web resources, and ask others for input. Remember, you have the final say on your resume's appearance – you must **like** it. When you look at it, you should say, "Wow, I'm good!!" Then please make an appointment with a career counselor for a resume critique.



What is a Resume?

IT IS NOT

- ❖ Your Autobiography
- ❖ Your Complete Obituary

IT IS

- ❖ A Document Stating Your Professional Credentials

ITS PURPOSE IS

- ❖ Not to Obtain a job
- ❖ To Obtain an Interview (**YOU** get the job)

YOUR RESUME IS YOUR ADVERTISEMENT

In most instances your resume is your first contact with an employer. Make sure that it gives a positive, professional impression. Your resume is your advertising tool and should provide:

- ❖ **A sense of purpose** (why are you sending the resume?)
- ❖ **Focus on achievements** (what separates you from everyone else?)
- ❖ **Accuracy** (Was it 2000 or 2002? Find out!!)
- ❖ **Clarity and Simplicity** (this is not the time to try to use the word *antidisestablishmentarianism* in a document)
- ❖ **An attractive package** (no jelly or coffee stains, please)
- ❖ **Salesmanship** (what measurable facts can you provide?)
- ❖ **A sense of person behind the resume** (this flat piece of paper needs to sing and dance so they want to meet you in person)
- ❖ **Credibility** (More than 80% of resumes contain some stretch of the truth. Don't be part of the 80%. If you lose your professionalism, it will be nearly impossible to get it back).

WHY DO I NEED A RESUME?

Resumes are used today more than ever. Employers are contacted by many applicants and have little time to thoroughly screen each one. Employers want to know exactly how you can be useful to them without having to read through excessive or unrelated details. A one page resume is ideal: two pages is the maximum.

Resumes should have a positive impact by being clear, accurate, relevant to the job objective, and focused on one school corporation or employer.

- ❖ **YOU** are the best person to write your resume
- ❖ In most cases resumes are the first contact you have with an employer
- ❖ Resumes are a communication tool. Real communication is being 100% responsible that a message is received. If your reader doesn't get the information, you didn't communicate it effectively.
- ❖ Resumes form an impression of who you are and what you can do
- ❖ Resumes make the decision to interview you or not
- ❖ Resumes focus on the employers needs, not on your needs

THE 20 SECOND RULE

The personnel directors of America's top corporations say again and again that *if you haven't presented the most important information about yourself in the top half of the first page of your resume, you can probably forget about getting the job.*

The head of personnel management for one of the largest and most prestigious employers in the Washington, D.C. area told the authors that she allows 20 seconds to scan each resume she receives. If in that brief time, she does not see anything that gets her attention, she rejects the resume.

Taken from The 110 Biggest Mistakes Job Hunters Make by Richard L. Hermann and Linda P. Sutherland

Carry resumes with you when you are canvassing school corporations for job openings. Leave them with your completed application. When you send a resume by mail, always include a cover letter to identify the job for which you are applying, and why the employer should hire you. If you haven't heard in 10 days, make a follow up phone call. Keep your resume in your car and have it available at a moment's notice.

Resume Formats

There are two basic resume formats that can be utilized to showcase your talents.

CHRONOLOGICAL

This format is good for people with extensive work experience either with one school corporation or several corporations, usually in the same field in which they are seeking employment.

Work and educational experience are listed in reverse order of occurrence beginning with the most recent dates and working backward.

Teaching duties are then listed under the job title, organization, and dates.

COMBINATION

This format is good for career changers, those with gaps in employment, and those who want to sell specific skills so employers can clearly see a person's specific talents. This format allows a person to use skill clusters, but also to list dates, places of employment, and (possibly) job responsibilities.

This resume format combines a chronological work experience with skill clusters. The work experience is organized in two separate sections:

- ❖ A skill clusters section, which highlights major areas of accomplishment from previous employment, also training and/or education programs. This allows you to organize skills in an order that most supports your job objective.
- ❖ A chronological listing in reverse order containing job title, organization for which you worked, and dates of employment.

SAMPLE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

Jane E. Student

1000 Anywhere Boulevard
Fort Wayne, IN 46000
219-436-1000
studentj01@holmes.ipfw.edu

- Objective** To teach in an elementary level classroom, K-5.
- Education** **Bachelor of Science, Elementary Education** December 2001
Kindergarten Endorsement
Indiana University, Fort Wayne, IN
Major GPA: 3.7/4.0 Cumulative GPA: 3.5/4.0
- Course Highlights** Literature for Children Language and Society
Manual Communication Early Literacy Development
Language Processing Cognitive Development
- Skills** Emphasis in early reading and language skills
Experience in direct and indirect instruction for emergent and developing readers
Training in cooperative learning, writing, storytelling, brain growth, and problem solving
- Reading Internship** **Lincoln Elementary**, Athens School Corporation Spring 2001
Multi-age Classroom
- Developed, administered, and scored an Individualized Reading Inventory and Standardized Reading Inventory
 - Assisted developing readers by using guided reading instruction, including conferences and journaling activities
 - Used reader's workshop strategies for developing readers using trade books and individual conferences
 - Designed and maintained progress charts and conducted case studies
- Student Teaching** **Salmon Elementary**, Athens School Corporation Fall 2000
5th Grade Classroom
- Collaborated with teaching teams in social studies, language arts, and math
 - Organized and created learning centers stressing technology applications
 - Assisted students in developing Hyper studio presentations and taught QuickTake camera use for student computer demonstrations
- Related Activities** **Private tutor, reading/math**, Athens Summer Academy 2000
Hospital pediatrics volunteer, University Hospitals 1997-2000
Member, Athens Area Reading Council 1998-1999

SAMPLE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499
219-481-6595

John Doe

1410 Anywhere Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46800
219-481-1000
doej01@holmes.ipfw.edu

- Objective** Position as a High School or Middle School teacher with an opportunity to coach either volleyball or basketball.
- Education** **Bachelor of Science, Secondary Education** May 2000
Indiana University, Fort Wayne, IN
Endorsements: Social Studies (U.S. History, Government, and World History) & English
Major GPA: 3.7/4.0 Cumulative GPA: 3.2/4.0
- Relevant Experience** **Student Teacher, Grades 11 and 12** Spring 1999
North Side High School, Fort Wayne, IN
- Attended World Affairs Conference
 - Demonstrated proficiency in U.S. History and Government instruction
 - Involved with Junior Achievement economics program; North Side team won the competition
 - Helped coach intramural volleyball team
- Substitute Teacher** Summer 1998
Southwest Allen County School Corporation, Fort Wayne, IN
- Utilized speaking, time management, and strong leadership skills in middle school teaching
 - Incorporated various forms and styles of written communication
 - Conveyed positive self-image to others
- Field Experience** Fall 1998
North Side High School, Fort Wayne, IN
- Lectured and participated in classroom activities
- Field Experience** Spring 1998
Lakeside Junior High School, Fort Wayne, IN
- Worked with individual students and the entire class
- Work Experience** **Curriculum Lab Assistant** 1996-2000
Indiana University - Purdue University Fort Wayne
- Taught students to use computer systems and word processing software applications
 - Created bulletin board manual as reference material

Sample Combination Resume

Jane M. Doe

123 Sesame Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46804
(219) 555-1212
e-mail:jdoe@aol.com

Objective

To obtain a marketing position with IPFW

Summary of Qualifications

- Motivated marketing professional with 12 years of proven success.
- Demonstrated ability to assess and address client needs to develop strong client loyalty.
- Recipient of two "Employee of the Year" awards
- Strong team player with 8 years of management experience.

Professional Experience

Marketing

- Generated a \$1,000,000 new client base.
- Developed "The Leading Edge" television campaign for Rocko Sports.
- Created the Nike "swish."
- Successfully maintain an existing client base of over 100 Fortune 500 companies.

Accomplishments

- Promoted to Lead Marketing Manager after 6 months in current position.
- Recognized by peers and clients for outstanding service, for two consecutive years.
- Consistently exceed marketing plan goals by 10 percent per year.

Management

- Train and supervise a team of 20.
- Interviewed, selected and trained 100 volunteers.
- Conduct performance reviews and professional development activities.

Work History

Lead Marketing Manager Market Yourself, Inc., Fort Wayne, IN	2000-Present
Marketing Manager Markets-R-Us, Fort Wayne, IN	1996-2000
Marketing Coordinator American Red Cross, Fort Wayne, IN	1994-1996

Education

BA, Anthropology and Sociology, Indiana University, Fort Wayne, IN

Volunteer Experience

Big Brothers/Big Sisters Habitat for Humanity	1998-Present 1996-1999
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Resume Building Tips for Success

- ❖ Remember that there is no one correct way to compose a resume. What one person likes, others may not.
- ❖ Ask for a lot of input before deciding on the resume that's right for you.
- ❖ Keep it to one page unless you have significant experience in your field. If you do have a two-page resume, make sure they are two relatively complete pages.
- ❖ Try to avoid gaps in employment. Employers will wonder why there are gaps. If there are gaps, be prepared to explain them.
- ❖ If you will be moving soon, use the two-address format.
- ❖ Keep typeface simple. It's best to use Times-Roman or Arial, and 11 or 12 point type.
- ❖ 8 1/2" x 11" white or light colored (ivory is a good choice), good quality paper is best. Avoid flashy "look at me" colors. Use matching paper for cover letter and avoid folding your resume into a mailing envelope. Send it in a 9" x 11" mailing envelope.
- ❖ Justify the left margin, but not the right. It's easier to read.
- ❖ Highlight important information (your name, address, and titles of jobs, major categories) with **boldface** type.
- ❖ Do not use graphics.
- ❖ Save it on a computer disk. It's easier to update and/or change this way. Keep the disk safe, and make a back-up copy.
- ❖ Saving your resume also lets you make targeted resumes for specific positions or school corporations to which you are applying.
- ❖ Be able to discuss everything you put in your resume without having to refer to notes or ask for time to respond to a question.
- ❖ Bring extra resumes to your interview; even if you are sure your interviewer has a copy.
- ❖ Use action words when describing what you have done. Examples include: created, managed, developed, revised, presented, etc.
- ❖ Proof. Proof. Proof. One mistake generally means you're out the door. The quality of your resume reflects the quality of your work and professionalism. If you make a mistake on your resume, will you make a mistake in your job? Employers will think so.
- ❖ List your grade point average if it notes that you are graduating with honors.
- ❖ If you are still working on your degree, list it as "expected" or "anticipated" along with the date.

Career Transferable Skills

- ❖ **INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SKILLS:** ability to...
 - sort data and objects
 - compile and rank information
 - apply information creatively to specific problems or tasks
 - synthesize facts, concepts, and principles
 - understand and use organizing principles
 - evaluate information against appropriate standards
- ❖ **DESIGN AND PLANNING SKILLS:** ability to...
 - identify alternative courses of action
 - set realistic goals
 - follow through with a plan or decision
 - manage time effectively
 - predict future trends and patterns
 - accommodate multiple demands for commitment of time, energy, and resources
 - assess needs
 - make and keep a schedule
 - set priorities
- ❖ **RESEARCH AND INVESTIGATION SKILLS:** ability to...
 - use a variety of sources of information
 - apply a variety of sources of information
 - identify problems and needs
 - design an experiment, plan, or model that systematically defines a problem
 - special needs or problems
 - formulate questions relevant to clarifying a particular problem, topic or issue
- ❖ **COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** ability to...
 - listen with objectivity and paraphrase the content of a message
 - use various forms and styles of written communication
 - speak effectively to individuals and groups
 - use media formats to present ideas imaginatively
 - express one's needs, wants, opinions, and preferences without offending the sensitivities of others
 - identify and communicate value judgments effectively
 - describe objects or events with a minimum of factual errors
 - convey a positive self-image to others
- ❖ **HUMAN RELATIONS AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:** ability to...
 - keep a group "on track" and moving toward the achievement of a common goal
 - maintain group cooperation and support
 - delegate tasks and responsibilities
 - interact effectively with peers, superiors, and subordinates
 - express one's feelings appropriately
 - understand the feelings of others
 - use argumentation techniques to persuade others
 - make commitments to persons
 - be willing to take risks
 - teach a skill, concept, or principle to others
 - analyze behavior of self and others in group situations
 - demonstrate effective social behavior in a variety of settings and under different circumstances

- work under time and environmental pressures
- ❖ **CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS:** ability to ...
 - identify quickly and accurately the critical issues when making a decision or solving a problem
 - identify a general principle that explains inter-related experiences or factual data
 - define the parameters of a problem
 - identify reasonable criteria for assessing the value of appropriateness of an action or behavior
 - adapt one's concepts and behaviors to changing conventions and norms
 - apply appropriate criteria to strategies and action plans
 - take given premises and reason to their conclusion
 - create innovative solutions to complex problems
 - analyze the interrelationships of events and ideas from several perspectives
- ❖ **MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION SKILLS:** ability to ...
 - analyze tasks
 - identify people who can contribute to the solution of a problem or task
 - identify resource materials useful in the solution of a problem
 - identify one's own values
 - motivate and lead people
 - organize people and tasks to achieve specific goals
- ❖ **VALUING SKILLS:** ability to ...
 - assess a course of action in terms of its long-range effects on the general human welfare
 - make decisions that will maximize both individual and the collective good
 - appreciate the contributions of art, literature, science, and technology to contemporary society
 - identify one's own values
 - assess one's values in relation to important life decisions
- ❖ **PERSONAL/CAREER DEVELOPMENT SKILLS:** ability to ...
 - analyze and learn from life experiences--both one's own and other's
 - relate the skills developed in one environment (e.g. school) to the requirements of another environment (e.g. work)
 - match knowledge about one's own characteristics and abilities to information about job or career opportunities
 - identify, describe, and assess the relative importance of one's needs, values, interests, strengths, and weaknesses
 - develop motivational personal growth goals
 - identify and describe skills acquired through formal education and general life experience
 - identify one's own strengths and weaknesses
 - accept and learn from negative criticism
 - persist with a project when faced with failure, unless it is clear that the project cannot be carried out, or is not worth the time or effort needed to complete it
 - recognize when a project cannot be carried out or is not worth the time or effort required to complete it
 - generate trust and confidence in others
 - take risks
 - accept the consequences of one's actions
 - "market" oneself to prospective employers

Action Verbs

Management Skills

administered
analyzed
assigned
attained
chaired
contacted
consolidated
delegated
developed
directed
evaluated
executed
implemented
improved
increased
organized
oversaw
planned
prioritized
produced
recommended
reviewed
scheduled
strengthened
supervised

Technical Skills

assembled
built
calculated
computed
designed
devised
engineered
fabricated
maintained
operated
overhauled
programmed
remolded
solved
trained
upgraded

Communication Skills

addressed
arbitrated
arranged
authored
corresponded
developed
directed
drafted
edited
enlisted
formulated
influenced
interpreted
lectured
mediated
moderated
motivated
negotiated
persuaded
promoted
publicized
reconciled
spoke
translated
wrote

Teaching Skills

adapted
advised
clarified
coached
communicated
coordinated
developed
enabled
encouraged
evaluated
explained
facilitated
guided
informed
initiated
persuaded
set goals
Stimulated

Research Skills

clarified
collected
critiqued
diagnosed
evaluated
examined
extracted
identified
inspected
interpreted
interviewed
investigated
organized
reviewed
summarized
surveyed
systematized

Financial Skills

administered
allocated
analyzed
appraised
audited
balanced
budgeted
calculated
computed
developed
forecast
managed
marketed
planned
projected
researched

Creative Skills

acted
conceptualized
created
designed
developed
directed
established
fashioned
founded
illustrated
instituted
integrated
introduced
invented
originated
performed
planned
revitalized
shaped

Helping Skills

assessed
assisted
clarified
coached
counseled
demonstrated
diagnosed
educated
expedited
facilitated
familiarized
guided
referred
rehabilitated
represented

Clerical or Detail Skills

approved
arranged
catalogued
classified
collected
compiled
dispatched
executed
generated
implemented
inspected
monitored
operated
prepared
processed
purchased
recorded
retrieved
screened
specified
systematized
tabulated
validated

Resume Worksheet

In order to effectively showcase the product (YOU), you must be able to identify your strengths, skills, and abilities. Take some time to identify these on the following worksheet:

Name:

Address:

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Web Page:

Objective:

Education

Endorsements:

Honors:

Activities:

Teaching Experience:

Other Experience:

Skills and Abilities:

Availability:

Make Sure you're resume don's have mistakes *by Robert Half*

Robert Half, founder of the California based personnel service Accountemps, has collected resume bloopers from his Resumania file for more than 40 years. Some excerpts:

- ❖ “Extensive background in public accounting. I can also stand on my head!”
- ❖ “Education: College, August, 1880 – May 1984.” (Must have been a tough curriculum.)
- ❖ “Cover Letter: Thank you for your consideration. Hope to hear from you shortly!” (Hey, let's not get personal.)
- ❖ “Work Experience: Dealing with customers' conflicts that arouse.”
- ❖ “Strengths: Ability to meet deadlines while maintaining composer.” (Would that be Mozart, or Beethoven?)
- ❖ “I am a quick learner, dependable and motivated.”
- ❖ “Education: B.A. in Liberal Arts.”
- ❖ “Please disregard the attached resume – it is terribly out of date.”
- ❖ “I am a rabid typist.”
- ❖ “Work Experience: Set up entire offices including furniture, lighting, computers, filing cabinets and office procedures. Also have a flair for floral arrangements and catering.”
- ❖ “Here are my qualifications for you to overlook.”
- ❖ “Skills: Operated Pitney Bones machine.”
- ❖ “I perform my job with effortless efficiency, effectiveness, efficacy and expertise.” (And an eye on the “e” section of the dictionary, evidently.)
- ❖ “Personal: Married 20 years; own a home, along with a friendly mortgage company.”
- ❖ “Insufficient writing skills, thought processes have slowed down some. If I am not one of the best, I will look for another opportunity.”
- ❖ “Seek challenges that test my mind and body, since the two are usually inseparable.”
- ❖ “Work Experience: Responsibilities included checking customers out.” (And then did he rank them on a scale of one-to-ten?)
- ❖ “My compensation should be at least equal to my age.”
- ❖ “Personal Qualities: Outstanding worker; flexible 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.” (It's Gumby!)
- ❖ “I don't usually blow my own horn, but in this case, I will go right ahead and do so.”

Resume Critique Checklist

- _____ Material fits neatly on one page, two pages if there is enough relevant experience.
- _____ No spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors. Typing is neat, clean, and professional-looking.
- _____ Name, address, telephone, and e-mail are at the top and easy to locate.
- _____ Margins at sides and bottom are not less than one-half inch.
- _____ Layout and design are easy to read and pleasing to the eye.
- _____ Important titles are emphasized by using text enhancements where appropriate (caps, bolds, underline, italics), but not overdone.
- _____ Indentations or appropriate symbols are used to organize information logically.
- _____ Overall appearance invites one to read it.
- _____ Action words are used to communicate accomplishments and results.
- _____ Extraneous personal information (height, weight, age, sex, etc.) has been left out.
- _____ If using a career objective, make sure it is specific, clear, and targeted.
- _____ Remember the RULE OF THUMB- the most important information is in the first half.
- _____ Use conservative colors like white, off-white, beige, or gray parchment.
- _____ Avoid graphics and colorful paper unless you are in the design field.
- _____ Always use reverse chronological order.
- _____ Employment that is older than 15 years is not listed.
- _____ Language specific only to the company in which you worked has been translated to apply to other areas.
- _____ Strongest statements are at the top, working downward.
- _____ Dates of employment and education are included and accurate.
- _____ "References Available Upon Request" has been substituted with more skills.
- _____ Quantities, amounts, and dollar values are used to enhance the description of your job.
- _____ References are listed on a separate sheet of paper.
- _____ Addresses and phone numbers of previous employers are omitted.
- _____ Hobbies or social skills are not listed unless they are related to the job target.
- _____ The word "I" is used only in the cover letter.

RESUME CRITIQUES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE ACADEMIC COUNSELING
AND CAREER SERVICES OFFICE, KT 109, 481-6595

Cover Letter

By Catherine McGinnis, Coordinator of Employment Services
Academic Counseling and Career Services, IPFW

The purpose of a cover letter is to introduce you to an employer, give them a frame of reference, and provide a sample of your writing ability. Some employers focus on the cover letter, others focus on the resume. Make sure you invest time in developing both, and you will present yourself in a more professional light.

Once you have developed a cover letter you are happy with, hang on to it with both hands. The body of the letter will always highlight and showcase the key points you wish to stress. Then, all you will need to do is personalize it to fit an employer's specific requirements. Keep the following things in mind when developing your cover letter:

Be Specific

Always address your letter to a specific person or title. "To Whom it May Concern," or "Dear Sir or Madam," just doesn't cut it anymore. Call the school corporation to find out who to address the letter to. Ask how to spell the person's name, what his/her title is, and if you aren't sure, if the person is a he or a she (ex: Chris Smith). It's always better to err on the side of caution.

I work with a gentleman named "Doug" who has received mail addressed to "Dough." It is good for an office laugh, but the person will never get an interview after a mistake like that. We all like to see our correct name and title in print. Play to the employer's vanity, and by doing so, you will set yourself apart from other job seekers. If you can't find out who to send the letter to, (the company is not mentioned), address it to a specific position, such as "Director of Certified Personnel."

Sum It Up

Make your cover letter short, sweet, and to the point. Many times people go on and on in a cover letter, even though the average amount of time it will be in the employer's hands is 8 seconds. Prove that you can showcase your abilities, skills, and strengths concisely. The employer will appreciate it.

Writing Skills

Unlike a resume, a cover letter requires complete sentences, which sometimes makes it more challenging to write. Don't rely on spell check and grammar check. Getting a few different people to look at your cover letter (and resume, while you're at it) is invaluable.

Use business letter format, typed in an eye-pleasing, easy-to-read font, printed on the same bond paper used for your resume. Use words you are comfortable with, and that reflect who you are. Don't try to make yourself sound like someone else.

What about e-mail?

If you are e-mailing your resume, you still need to introduce yourself by way of a cover note (unabridged version of the cover letter). The same rules apply and you need to follow them to get noticed.

Additional Resource to Explore

Cover Letters for Dummies by Joyce Laine Kennedy covers a wide variety of cover letter information.

Cover Letters - In General

- Cover letters should be tailored to the individual organization/person to whom you are applying for a job. The resume can stay the same; cover letters must be more specific, pointed, and personal.
- Their life expectancy in a recruiter's hands is about 8 seconds.
- Therefore, cover letters should be brief, to the point, and accurate.
- They should connect your qualifications to the needs of the job.

Tips for Success

- Always send a cover letter - even if one isn't required. It's the professional thing to do.
- Use good quality business stationery that matches your resume.
- Use a laser printer.
- Address the letter to a specific person whenever possible.
- If you have a copy of the job description/advertisement, refer to it and the duties/qualifications listed in your letter.
- Address your letter to the person who has the power to hire you.
- Be sure of the person's proper title (i.e., Mr., Ms., Dr., etc.)
- If you don't know who to address the letter to - a simple phone call to the organization's Personnel/Human Resource Department will help.
- Keep the letter short - 4 paragraphs at the most.
- Your letter should highlight your qualifications for the position but not repeat information contained in your resume.
- Keep a copy of each letter you send. They help when you write follow-up letters.
- As with your resume - Proof! Proof! Proof!
- Employers will be using your cover letter to assess your communication and writing abilities. Make sure there are no typos or grammatical errors.
- If you think your cover letter will be fed into a computerized scanning system, follow the guidelines for scannable resumes.

Sample Cover Letter

1000 Anywhere Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46805

April 25, 2001

Dr. Wonderful Employer
Fort Wayne Community Schools
1230 S. Clinton Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46808

Dear Dr. Employer:

In May 2000, I will be graduating from Indiana University Fort Wayne with a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education.

I have enclosed a copy of my resume for your reference and would like to receive an application form for employment with Fort Wayne Community Schools. I have been a resident of Allen County all my life and have an understanding of the socio-economic structure, political issues, and concerns of a diverse population.

During my years at IPFW, I have been exposed to several perspectives of education and have had an opportunity to explore new methods of teaching. While pursuing my degree, I have taught a Sunday School class and assisted with a Brownie Troop. These experiences, coupled with action assignments and student teaching, have exposed me to a variety of age groups and have allowed me to broaden my teaching abilities.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how my education and experiences would meet the needs of Fort Wayne Community Schools. Upon receipt of the application form, I will return it for your records and contact you by phone to discuss the possibility of an interview.

Sincerely,

Ima Student

Enclosure

References - Why Have Them?

- They know people who can help.
- People who are evaluating your candidacy may know them.
- They indicate the breadth of your experiences (professional, academic, personal, etc.)

Who Should Be Included?

- Current Practitioner - Someone who is doing what you're applying to do. Do you have what it takes to do the job? This person should be able to say an unqualified YES!
- Academics - Someone who can attest to your academic proficiency.
- Work - Someone who can speak to your qualities as an employee and worker.
- Personal - Someone who can speak about you as a person.

Who You Should NOT Include

- Relatives and/or parents
- Brothers and/or sisters
- People who don't know you
- "Big Name" people who you don't know

Reference Page

- It's a good idea to develop a page that lists your references.
- This page should be included with any application material you submit.
- It should be done on the same paper as your resume, and should have your name at the top.
- You never know who knows someone else.

Sample Reference Page

Jane Doe

1000 Anywhere Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46805
219-481-6000
Doej01@holmes.ipfw.edu

References

Mr. Larry Rothenhofer
Director of Field Services
School of Education
Indiana University - Purdue University Fort Wayne
2101 E. Coliseum Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499
(210) 481-6000

Mr. John Doe
Principal
Such and Such Elementary School
1000 School Boulevard
Fort Wayne, IN 46000
(219) 492-1001

Ms. Karen Schoolteacher
5th Grade Teacher, Student Teaching Supervisor
Such and Such Elementary School
1000 School Boulevard
Fort Wayne, IN 46000
(219) 492-1000

Credentials for Teacher Candidates

What are Credentials?

Teacher candidates are often asked to submit their "credentials" when applying for teaching positions. This term can be confusing, because credentials as they were originally intended are seldom used today.

The terminology came from a time when all education majors were required to maintain credential files in their college or university's Placement Office (often called a Career Services Office today). A few years ago, however, the federal government passed legislation making closed credential files illegal. We still create credential files for candidates, but you can also maintain your own credential file and mail the information directly to school districts.

What Should be Included When Credentials are Requested?

It is very important to recognize that every school district's application procedures are different. Follow their instructions precisely. Failure to follow directions may cause your application to be eliminated. Typically a vacancy announcement specifies the following materials to be included:

- A letter of application, often called a cover letter
- A resume
- A list of professional references with addresses and telephone numbers
- Copies of letters of recommendation from principals and/or other school administrators. Newly certified candidates are most frequently asked for evaluations from their student teaching cooperating teacher(s) and university supervisor(s).
- A copy of official transcripts
- A separate application form (if required by the school district)

What if the School District Will Not Accept Credentials Mailed by Candidates?

Occasionally, you may come in contact with an employer that is not familiar with the concept of self-credentialing and may not want to accept materials directly from the candidate. If this occurs, please contact our office to establish a credential file with us. We will maintain and mail your credentials to the school district.

Critical Information to Know about School Districts

In your interviews with K-12 school district administrators, it is very important that you know as much as possible about the school, district, and community in which you might be employed. Also, you should be prepared to ask about concerns and issues related to your employment that are of interest to you. The following are topics about which job applicants typically have questions.

District

- Type of district (elementary, high school, or unit)
- History and development of the district
- Characteristics of the student population and community
- Size of the district (number of elementary, junior high/middle school, and high schools)
- Central office administrators and their roles
- Grades included at each level of education

Curriculum

- Courses in the curriculum in your discipline and their content, sequence, pre-requisites, and status as electives or required courses
- Typical schedule of courses in the curriculum (first and/or second semester courses)
- Textbook and supplementary materials, the recency of their adoption, and district adoption procedures
- Availability of AV materials and equipment for classroom use
- New and/or innovative curriculum developments in your discipline in recent years
- Curriculum developments currently being planned

Students

- Type and size of student body in which a position is available
- Typical class size
- Procedures for student placement (i.e., homogeneous, tracked)
- Characteristics of entering and exiting students (i.e., number or percentage who are enrolled in vocational and college preparatory curricula and the number or percentage who enroll in college upon graduation)

Instructional Assignment

- Reasons why the position is available (i.e., enrollment increase, retirement, resignation, etc.)
- Number and type of teaching preparations (i.e., self-contained classes or team taught classes)
- Other instructional assignments (i.e., coaching)
- Methods and frequency of teacher evaluation
- Availability of summer employment
- Assignments on department, school, or district committees
- Duties in the supervision/sponsorship of student activities
- Starting and ending dates of employment
- Contract length (i.e., 9, 10, 11 or 12 months)

Faculty

- Number of administrators in the building and their responsibilities
- Size of the faculty within departments and the building
- Number of new teachers hired each year

- Special interests and/or expertise of faculty

Student Services and Activities

- Student clubs, organizations, and sports
- Counseling and guidance personnel and services
- Social worker, school nurse, librarian, and other support staff and their roles

Community

- Community support for education
- Involvement of parents and other community members in the school program
- Recreational and other facilities in the community
- Demographic information about community residents
- Cost of living and housing in the community

Salary and Fringe Benefits

- District salary schedule
- Pay for extracurricular responsibilities
- Reimbursement policies for graduate study
- District requirements for continuing professional education
- Vacation and sick leave, personal leave, and other leave policies
- Substitute teacher procedures
- Payroll schedule
- Medical insurance

Personnel Selection Procedures

- Number and type of interviews that job candidates can expect
- Individuals involved in the preliminary screening of candidates, interviews, and the final selection (personnel director, building principal, department head, or other)

Other

- District requirements for residency of staff

Final Suggestions

- Be certain to read your employment contract carefully before signing it
- You might want to visit the district while classes are in session to visit the department and building in which you might be working. If at all possible, try to meet the department head and/or building principal by whom you would be supervised.

Education Interviews

Before the Interview

Your success in interviewing depends on how convincingly you can convey your ability to teach. In order to answer questions effectively, you need to do your homework about yourself and the district you are considering. You need to understand the different types of interviews school districts use so that you can prepare for the interview in the best way possible.

Self-Assessment

Identifying your own strengths and weaknesses is important interview preparation. Make a list of the things you know you do well, and those which you would like to improve. Learn to describe your skills in terms familiar to employers. (For example, dependable, quick-learner, competent, dedicated, and enthusiastic.) Understand that employers recognize that beginning teachers still have much to learn. Honest assessment of your shortcomings will also help you to prepare questions for the interview.

Research Potential Employers

Learn as much as possible about the districts or schools that you are targeting in your job search. When you request teaching applications, ask for brochures or other printed information about the district. Check with your career services office to see if they have files of informational or promotional videotapes about the districts you are considering. Local chambers of commerce are another valuable source of information about communities and schools. Write or call to request a packet of information.

As you accumulate this information, you will discover that not all districts are equal. You can use the results of your research to disqualify districts that do not match your career aspirations.

First Interviews

Districts generally use first interviews to select final candidates from large pools of applicants. These interviews may take place on campus, at job or career fairs, or by telephone. Some districts will use graded or standardized interviews while others may use standardized selection instruments. Regardless of the location or exact type of interview, you should understand that first interviews are generally used to eliminate candidates who do not match the profile and qualifications a district may seek. You can often determine the types of interviews that are used by simply inquiring at the central office. The following is a brief description of each type of interview:

Graded or Standardized Interviews

These are similar to oral examinations and follow a definite process. Fortunately, most candidates have faced similar situations in courses they have taken. All candidates are asked the same question, and their responses are recorded and scored. This individual interview grade is added to each candidate's other grades, which may include such items as application materials or institution of education and degree. The final scores are tallied and then the finalists are selected from those with the highest scores.

Standardized Selection Instruments

These are paper and pencil examinations that are quite extensive. They pose questions that focus on situational incidents, teaching goals, essays about parent/student complaints, teaching topics, and candidate accomplishments.

Telephone Interviews

This type of interview has become more common as candidates apply for positions located great distances from their colleges. These interviews offer an economical way to bring a candidate and interviewer together for a conversation. You should be aware of your voice inflections, articulation, and the way you word your responses when you participate in a telephone interview. You will not have the opportunity to use body language and gestures.

Second Interviews

Potential teachers are selected from a small group of finalists during second interviews. Almost two-thirds of all teacher candidates will meet with the superintendent during second interviews. Many will meet with school board members, curriculum supervisors, and selection committees.

Second interviews may also include going out for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. It is wise to order something you can eat gracefully if you are faced with such an occasion.

If you are invited for a second interview, use this opportunity to clarify any unresolved questions you may have. If you receive a verbal or written contract offer at the conclusion of the interview, you should be prepared to give an answer or to ask for a reasonable period of time to consider the offer.

Practice, Practice, Practice

Participating in mock interviews is a good way to prepare for real ones. You can practice with a friend or with a career services professional. If you have the opportunity, participate in a videotape session, which can give you an idea of how well you are doing with gestures, body language, maintaining eye contact, and the clarity and diction of your answers. Invest in your own career success by practicing until you are comfortable and confident.

During the Interview

Arrive on time or early and know where you are supposed to be. If you are unsure of the location, check that out several days prior to the interview.

Introduce yourself to the receptionist and explain why you are there. Be courteous to the office personnel. They are often asked for their impressions of candidates, and it would be unfortunate to lose a job offer because you were rude to the secretary.

Greet your interviewer with a smile and firm handshake. The interviewer will control the course of the interview, but you need to control your own body language and answers.

Because interviews are often subjective, your enthusiasm, self-confidence, eagerness and believability will affect the outcome. Remember that your nonverbal and visual signals speak as loudly as your words.

Interviews most often include a greeting, a period of employer's questions and candidate's responses, and an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions, and a conclusion. Be ready to ask a number of questions.

At the conclusion of the interview, restate any points you feel are important and merit additional emphasis. Always ask your interviewer for a business card, and ask whom you should contact to check on your candidacy. Be sure to ask when the selection decision will be made so you will know how long you may be a candidate. This also enables you to determine when or whether the position was filled.

After the Interview

Proper follow-up is critical. This is an opportunity to punctuate your interest in a position and to express your gratitude for the interview. Sadly, only a small number of candidates send thank-you letters to interviewers. This courtesy can make a difference, and perhaps give you an edge over other candidates. A good practice to follow is to mail your thank-you letter the same day as your interview.

Keep a job-search journal with consistent notes about your progress on each job opening. After each interview, summarize in your journal what transpired, who you met, and any other thoughts for future reference.

Do not be surprised if you do not hear from the district following your interview. School administrators are very busy and are unable to call or write every individual they meet. If you do not hear from a district within two or three weeks following an interview, call them to inquire about your status as a candidate. Offer to provide any additional information necessary to assess your candidacy. If you do not receive an offer, courtesy and professionalism may keep the door open for a future opportunity.

Adapted from a handout prepared by Central Michigan University

Sample Interview Questions for Educators

Personal Opinions and Background

1. Why do you want to teach?
2. Do you plan to make teaching a career?
3. What do you hope to gain by pursuing a teaching career?
4. What gives you the most satisfaction as a teacher?
5. Why do you want to teach in this district or community?
6. Do you have any misgivings about the position for which you are applying?
7. What is/are the most important characteristic(s) of the successful teacher?
8. What characteristics separate the above-average teacher from the average teacher?
9. What characteristics do you possess that will enhance your abilities to teach?
10. Do you have a genuine interest in helping students learn?
11. What do you expect of your students?
12. What is/are the most important contribution(s) you can make to your students?
13. Do you accept the responsibility of being a good example?
14. What is the school's responsibility for preparing students for out-of-school experiences?
15. What can you contribute to the success of our school system?
16. What are the characteristics of your ideal school?
17. What can you contribute to the profession?
18. Tell me about your personal background.
19. What are your hobbies and interests? What are your professional plans or goals?
20. Tell about the person you most admire.
21. Describe the one person that influenced your decision to become a teacher.
22. What is your philosophy of education?
23. How do you rank values, facts, and concepts in importance?
24. Why do you think you will be a successful teacher?
25. What is/are your strongest trait(s)/ Your weakest trait(s)?
26. How competent are you?
27. Why should we employ you?
28. How would you prefer to be evaluated?

29. What are your attitudes toward extra-duty activities?
30. Will you teach any place in my district?
31. Will you follow school policy?
32. What are your attitudes toward professional organizations and militancy?
33. What are your attitudes regarding minorities?
34. What do you believe to be the greatest problem facing American public education?
35. What is your impression of today's youth?
36. What information do you have about the district?
37. Will you be happy living in this community?
38. Are you willing to work?

Ability to Get Along with People

1. Do you get along well with most people?
2. What quality in other people is most important to you?
3. Can you get along with other faculty members?
4. What do you believe your role and obligations to be toward other faculty members?
5. Would you enjoy team teaching?
6. When you get upset what do you do?
7. Describe your perception of your relations with the building administration.
8. What are your attitudes toward supervision?
9. How much loyalty do you believe that you owe the administration?
10. Give an example of how you successfully communicate with students.
11. If one of your students were to describe you, what would be said?
12. What techniques do you use in developing rapport with students?
13. What evidence can you provide that you can establish a good working relationship with students in the age group you will be teaching?
14. Give an example of how you dealt with an irate parent.

Teaching-Learning Process

1. How do you handle curricular content in classes of students with many levels of ability?
2. Are you prepared to individualize instruction (including diagnosis and preparation)?
3. How would you individualize instruction in your classroom?
4. What do you consider to be the most worthwhile innovations in your particular area?
5. What ideas or innovations do you plan to use in your teaching?
6. What do you consider to be the ideal learning environment?
7. What are the ingredients of an effective learning program?
8. Describe the role of the teacher in the learning process.
9. What can you do to improve learning opportunities in your particular area?
10. What teaching techniques are effective for you?
11. What are the major problems that you have faced in the classroom?
12. What are the objectives that you hope to achieve in your area?
13. How would you organize and what would you include in a unit lesson plan?
14. What is/are the developmental state(s) of a child in the ___ grade?
15. Explain the term "mainstreaming".
16. What impact did Public Law 94-142 have on public schools?
17. What are some points to consider when integrating a handicapped student?
18. What signs would indicate that a student is gifted?
19. How involved should parents be in the education of their children?
20. How do you expect to motivate students?
21. How will your teaching benefit the students?

Education and Experience

1. What subjects are you qualified and/or certified to teach?
2. Why did you choose your particular area of preparation?
3. Do you believe that your university/college has prepared you for a career in teaching?
4. What was/were the greatest highlight(s) of your college career?
5. Name and evaluate two professional books that you have read within the last six months.
6. What kinds of experiences have you had which will be of help when you begin teaching?
7. What out-of-school experiences have you had working with children?
8. Do you have experience with disadvantaged or minority students?
9. What kinds of work experience have you had other than teaching?
10. Tell me about your student teaching or previous teaching experience.
11. Based on your student teaching or previous teaching experience, how do you evaluate yourself as a teacher?
12. Were you successful in your student teaching or previous teaching experience?
13. What is a special project you planned during student teaching?
14. What do you have to offer that no other candidate has?
15. Why are you leaving your present position?
16. Have you ever been discharged? Why?

Classroom Control

1. What is your philosophy of discipline?
2. How would you handle discipline problems?
3. Can you maintain good classroom discipline?
4. Do you anticipate any difficulty in classroom control?
5. Who would you turn to if you felt you had lost control of a situation?
6. How successful have you been in your previous experience in maintaining good discipline?
7. What procedure(s) work(s) best for you in maintaining discipline?
8. What type of classroom atmosphere would you establish to prevent discipline problems?
9. What incident would constitute a telephone conversation with a parent?

What is a Thank You Letter?

A thank you letter is one of the most important yet least used tools in a job search. It is used to establish good will, to express appreciation, and/or to strengthen your candidacy. The basic rule of thumb is that everyone who helps you in any way should receive a thank you letter. When used to follow up on employment interviews, thank you letters should be sent within 24 hours to each person that interviewed you. Also, be sure to send thank you letters to each of your contacts who granted you information interviews and to people who provided references for you.

Hints for a Thank You Letter

- Make it very brief.
- Thank-you notes are appropriate if you feel you have a personal relationship/friendship with the person with whom you interviewed.
- They are “required.” If you don’t do one, people will remember.
- Note the date of your interview in your letter. It will help the recipient remember who you are.
- Highlight a key point from your interview that you believe the interviewer will remember, and therefore remember you.
- Re-state your strong interest (if you have one) in the position, and highlight your qualifications once again.
- Try to be specific about why you are interested and how you are a good fit for the organization.
- Thank everyone with whom you interviewed.

Sample Thank You Letter – Block Format

1000 Anywhere Boulevard
Fort Wayne, IN 46805

April 30, 2000

Ms. Principal
Fort Wayne Community Schools
1230 S. Clinton Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46808

Dear Ms. Principal:

I want to thank you very much for interviewing me yesterday for the 2nd Grade Classroom teacher position. I enjoyed meeting you and learning more about your school.

My enthusiasm for the position and my interest in working for Fort Wayne Community Schools were strengthened as a result of the interview. I think my education and related teaching experiences fit nicely with the position requirements, and I'm sure that I could make a significant contribution to the district over time.

I want to reiterate my strong interest in the position and in working with you and your staff. You provide the kind of opportunity I seek. Please feel free to call me at 219/492-0000 if I can provide you with any additional information.

Again, thank you for the interview and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Student

Teaching Portfolios

What is a Portfolio?

A portfolio is a reflective summarization of your career as an educator and a collection of the work that you have produced. Teaching portfolios are constructed by teachers to highlight and demonstrate their knowledge and skills in teaching. Your portfolio is a collection of your progress, achievements, contributions, and efforts. Ideally, it is a document which reveals, relates, and describes your duties, expertise, and growth in teaching.

What is Included in a Portfolio?

- Statement of teaching philosophy and goals
- Student teaching evaluation
- Written examinations: National Teacher's Exam, State licensure tests
- Copy of license (if available)
- Descriptions of classes you have taught
- Graded student work such as tests, quizzes, and class projects
- Implemented lesson plans and handouts
- Photographs of bulletin boards, chalkboards, or projects
- Video tape of classroom teaching
- Colleague observation records
- Documentation of effort to improve one's teaching: recently attended graduate classes, in-service seminars, programs, etc.
- Letters of recommendation
- Honors received

Do Employers Really Look at the Portfolio??

- School administrators in Fort Wayne have stated that they “don’t have time” to look through your portfolio at the interview.
- Ask prior to the interview if you should bring your portfolio with you.
- Give the employer the option of looking through it.
- Use it as an illustration of your abilities, not as your only selling tool

Web Resources for Education Students

Academic Employment Network (<http://www.academply.com>)

A directory of positions listed by state. Positions include teaching at all levels (including higher education).

American Association for Employment in Education (AAEE) (<http://www.ub-careers.buffalo.edu/aaee/>)

Direct links to teaching vacancies and certification information.

American School Directory (<http://www.asd.com>)

A directory of school districts across the nation, listed by state.

Best Practices in Education (<http://www.bestpraceduc.org/>)

A not-for-profit organization dedicated to working with American teachers to find effective educational practices from other countries to adapt and apply in United States schools.

Education Jobs (<http://www.education-jobs.com/>)

A job search site for professionals in education jobs.

Education World (<http://www.education-world.com/>)

Information on educational resources, school district directories, employment listings, as well as curriculum and lesson planning.

K-12Jobs.com (<http://www.k12jobs.com>)

This web site concentrates in posting job opportunities available at Kindergarten, Elementary Schools, Junior High, High Schools and Vocational Schools. Each job posting has complete information, including; school's name, location, deadline, salary, contact information, school's e-mail, and school's web site.

Indiana Department of Education (<http://ideanet.doe.state.in.us/>)

Educational news and information from the Hoosier state.

Michigan Teacher Network (<http://mtn.merit.edu/>)

A clearinghouse for Michigan educators. Many useful links to web pages and school districts across the state.

National Association of Colleges and Employers - National School Data Base

(<http://www.jobweb.org/search/schools>)

A directory of school districts across the nation. Information on school districts only, not jobs posted.

National Educators Employment Review (<http://www.thereview.com/>)

National monthly publication featuring K-12 job positions. Lists information about subscription costs and terms as well as featuring some articles about issues in education.

National JobNetwork in Education (<http://www.nationjob.com/education/>)

Mostly jobs in higher education.

Overseas Schools Advisory Council (http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/schools/wide.html)

Information about elementary and secondary teaching opportunities overseas.

Petersons.com: Private Schools Search (<http://www.petersons.com/pschools/>)

Database of information about private schools.

The Private School Employment Network (<http://www.privateschooljobs.com/>)

Private and independent school vacancies across the country and around the world.

Project Connect (<http://careers.soemadison.wisc.edu/>)

A web-based search mechanism. Schools that are recruiting teachers post their positions with Project Connect, and students from member schools use a password and login name in order to access the screens. Thousands of positions are posted with Project Connect, and candidates can even list their resume electronically and submit it for consideration. IPFW's login is: (teacher) and the password is: (aswan). Do not type in the parentheses when you enter the login and password.

Schools Online (<http://www.schools.com/>)

Browse school and contact information on 289 boarding schools in the U.S., Canada, and Overseas from The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS).

South Texas Region One (<http://www.schoolwork.esc1.net/index.html>)

Opportunities and information regarding teaching positions in the South Texas area. Electronic resume submission permitted and encouraged.

SPeNSE: Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (<http://www.spense.org/>)

A national study of shortages of high-quality personnel to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

Teach English in Taiwan (<http://www.hess.com.tw>)

An opportunity for college graduates to live, work, study and travel abroad by teaching English in Taiwan.

Teach for America (<http://www.teachforamerica.org/>)

We are the national corps of outstanding and diverse recent college graduates, of all academic majors, who commit two years to teach in under-resourced urban and rural public schools.

Teacher Magazine (<http://www.teachermagazine.org/>)

News, curriculum and legal issues of the profession.

Teachers @ Work (<http://www.teachersatwork.com>)

An on-line recruiting and job searching mechanism for teachers, administrators, and school districts. Find schools in which you're interested, create your resume electronically, submit your resume for consideration, and more.

U.S. Department of Education (<http://www.ed.gov>)

Guide to school districts, using technology in the schools, grant opportunities, safe schools, etc.

Web66 International School Web Site Directory

(<http://web66.coled.umn.edu/http://www.d.gov/du/schools.html>)

A school web page directory for districts throughout the world.