WORKFORCE READINESS GUIDE
(SECOND EDITION – AUG 2016)
Executive Summary

The Workforce Readiness Guide is a resource for businesses, educators, and individuals seeking employment. This guide provides educators with resources on how various career coaching/development programs can be organized and delivered to different groups of learners, including a breakdown of the different learning styles by age. This guide also caters to the job seeker, providing insights on how to write a resume, various interview tips and pointers including how to handle video interviews, group interviews, and other common interview formats.

In a survey conducted by the Workforce Readiness Council of Human Resource Professionals within the Upstate of South Carolina, results show that the top three skills that are lacking in candidates are communication skills, technical skills and interpersonal skills (conflict management) respectively. The survey also concluded that Interviewing and Professional Etiquette are the two most important trainings that job seekers should receive.

As the economy within the Upstate of SC continues to grow and create employment opportunities, our aim is to ensure that applicants are prepared with the interview techniques that will help them obtain that employment, and the soft skills and character traits to help them keep and in their careers.

This publication was compiled by the Greenville Society for Human Resource Management’s (GSHRM) Workforce Readiness Council. The Workforce Readiness Council was established in the fall of 2008 as a special committee of GSHRM with the vision of building a qualified workforce that can compete in a global economy. Made up entirely of volunteers who are working professionals, the mission and goal of the council is to prepare citizens to enter and compete in the job market by fostering collaborative relationships among community stakeholders, carrying the slogan “Shaping the Future.”

The Greenville Society for Human Resource Management (GSHRM) was founded in 1947. Since its inception, GSHRM has played a key role in increasing the knowledge and skills of HR professionals. GSHRM boasts of a membership base of 400 members representing a wide spectrum of employers in the Upstate of South Carolina.

This is the second edition of the Workforce Readiness Guide and was updated in August of 2016. It is copyrighted by GSHRM.
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Introduction / Overview

How We Can All Get Involved

Imagine a community where all students graduate from high school because they understand why education is relevant to their future. Individuals use their talents and skills in enjoyable, profitable careers that offer a good salary and benefits such as health insurance. Employers have an educated, well-trained workforce from which to select employees. Imagine a community that prospers from high wage jobs, educated citizens, an increased tax base and fewer citizens needing public assistance.

Business, education and community leaders come together to discuss career and workforce development and to determine courses of action to move the community forward. Business and industry have employees entering the workforce with higher skills, and students attend challenging classes with high expectations coupled with work site experiences that lead to successful and productive careers.

This Guide has been developed by members of the Workforce Readiness Council of the Greenville Society for Human Resource Management to assist Personal Pathways to Success, also known as the Education and Economic Development Act of 2005, to provide meaningful, extended learning experiences such as job shadowing, internships, apprenticeships and service learning opportunities.

The Guide has two sections: (1) Business Section and (2) Student & Educators' Section. Each section contains information pertinent to each audience. In addition, a tool kit is included for each section with examples, best practices, and links to additional information.

In June 2016, National SHRM released a study called “The New Talent Landscape: Recruiting Difficulty and Skills Shortages.” The study includes information about skills shortages in the United States as well as provides case studies and ways to address these needs. For the scope of that study, please visit https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/research-and-surveys/pages/talent-landscape.aspx.

Greenville SHRM:
http://greenvillehr.org
GUEST SPEAKER

Understanding Your Audience: Age Level Guide

Adult Learners: the less-traditional student and/or adult seeking career change
- is usually autonomous
- is usually a voluntary and self-directed learner
- has strong-rooted habits and opinions
- may range from having no formal schooling to having an advanced degree
- wants to connect content to their own experiences
- prefers information in small pieces rather than large chunks
- learns by doing and through application
- has first-hand experiences and likes to share them
- wants to improve him/herself

High School: the 9th – 12th grade student
- is willing to assist
- likes visual aids, graphics & handouts
- enjoys stories about personal experiences
- listens better when the speaker uses a varied tone of voice
- needs clear and concise answers
- needs information that is “meaningful to life”
- may look to peers for support and influence
- is bored with a lot of statistics
- is more engaged when a speaker varies type of instruction
- is pleasantly surprised when the guest speaker doesn’t just lecture

Middle School: the 6th – 8th grade student
- has an attention span of 30-40 minutes
- has a more extensive vocabulary than 4th / 5th graders, but still does not understand heavily technical terms
- understands academic and personal job skills and qualities
- needs an opportunity to ask questions about personal values and decision-making, education for the job, attendance, etc.
- enjoys seeing tools and other items used on the job
- profits from hands-on demonstrations and involvement

Elementary School: the 4th – 5th grade student
- has a strong sense of right and wrong
- understands consequences of their actions
- is easily discouraged
- is competitive in work and play and is afraid of failure
- is anxious to please
- is more interested in talking/listening than working
- is in one of the happiest ages
• has a strong sense of justice and wants the teacher to be fair
• needs schedules
• worships heroes
• needs a feeling of belonging and acceptance
• needs increasing opportunities for independence
• is discouraged by nagging, condemnation, and being talked down to

**Elementary School: the 1st - 3rd grade student**
• attempts to use tools and materials
• wants to be first, to be best, to be praised, and to win
• is interested in simple games and puzzles
• carries on long conversations
• usually likes his/her teacher and adults (established role models)
• may forget easily
• is concerned about being good
• may vary from being interested/alert to being noisy/argumentative
• understands time and money concepts
• needs frequent reminders about responsibilities
• is in need of adult praise and encouragement

**The Kindergarten student**
• wants to be helpful
• has short bursts of energy
• needs variety and structure
• needs repetition of information
• needs specific instruction and is unable to generalize
• changes from one activity to another with relative ease
• asks many questions about how things work
• enjoys cutting/pasting/creating things

**How Students of All Ages Learn**

Some students learn best by seeing; others learn best by listening; and a number of students learn best by doing. Understanding the different ways students learn will help make your presentation most effective for your audience. Since the audience will most likely be a mix of different types of learners, the best solution is to incorporate learning techniques that will reach each of these different types of learners. See below for some suggestions, and try to incorporate a few from each learning type into your presentation.

**Reaching Visual Learners**
• Use pictures, posters, diagrams, displays to visually “illustrate” your message
• Show a map of locations where your company operates
• Display an organizational chart to show jobs at your company and the hierarchy of
positions
- Have students write on post-it-notes as they brainstorm skills necessary for those jobs. Then stick the post-it notes on the wall for others to view.
- Show examples of products your company makes or works with so that students can make connections
- Bring examples of tools or job related equipment to pass around
- Provide hand-outs so students can take notes
- Have students draw pictures or make a collage related to the career

Reaching Auditory Learners
- Tell the students your company’s story or your personal career story
- Read any written information out loud
- Repeat important information again throughout your presentation
- Lead the class in discussion and allow students to talk through their ideas, one student at a time
- Pose questions and encourage the students to raise their hands to share an answer
- Use brainstorming to have students generate and share ideas about the jobs
- Use video or audio clips to enhance presentations

Reaching Kinesthetic Hands-On Learners
- Allow students to try out what they are learning
- Bring parts or products for students to build
- Prepare an experiment for students to complete in class
- Pass around objects related to the job for students to touch and examine
- Have students feel the difference between two types of production materials and describe the pros and cons to each one
- Prepare a role playing activity with props and a script
- Have students work through a problem related to the job
- Use a variety of presentation mediums to hold their attention (video, class discussion, hands on activity, etc.)
How to Make Interactive Presentations

Considering the audience age level and different learning techniques, and be creative with your presentation! Hands-on activities are very helpful in keeping interest, especially if they can be tied in to media/movie clips, or other interactive activities. Try to make the material as relevant to your audience as possible. For example, you may ask for audience participation as you talk about the following ideas:

- What can __________ do for you?
- What does __________ bring to our lives now?
- What can __________ bring to our lives in the future?
- How does __________ impact your current business?

  o Overview of company
  o Overview of workforce, such as jobs available, training, education
  o Products
  o Customers
  o Personal impact

Managing Distractions

Chances are you will experience at least one of these possible distractions during your classroom visit. Always remain calm, with a good sense of humor. Here are some tips on how to minimize the distractions and keep students attention.

Technology Failure

Tell the teacher ahead of time about any technology that your presentation will require. Ask the teacher to have the equipment set up before you arrive. This will save time and allow for any problems to be discovered and resolved before your presentation. Plan to arrive thirty minutes early. This is a good practice in order to “test drive” the equipment and the presentation. Bring copies of your presentation on both your laptop and a zip drive. You may also consider supplying handouts or copies of material for students just in case the presentation is not working properly. If technology failure occurs in the middle of your presentation, do not be afraid to ask the teacher or a technology-savvy student for help. This can be engaging and a good demonstration of problem-solving.

Disruptive/Distracted Students

The teacher should be able to manage disruptive or distracted students. Avoid shouting over loud or talkative students. Instead, use the silent technique. Stand quietly and wait for silence before you begin talking. Students will notice and respond. Another technique is to turn the lights off and on. Once students get quiet, you can proceed. You may want to ask the teacher ahead of time what he/she recommends that you do if a student becomes disruptive. Students may be easily distracted by cell phones or tablets, so you may want to ask that they turn them off or put them away before your presentation. If you can, incorporate personal technology into your presentation because this could give an additional
hands-on element. It is highly recommended that you allow the teacher to handle any inappropriate student behaviors.

**Fire Alarms**
The teacher or another school staff member should be present to assist with this. Ask the teacher upon your arrival about appropriate emergency procedures. It’s important to help the students remain calm and exit the building in a safe and orderly manner. Usually the class will have a designated meeting spot outside the building where the teacher will take attendance and wait until the signal to reenter the building is given.

**Career Fairs**
Employers participate in career fairs to build awareness of their industry and career cluster among students and adults. Career fairs help students connect their areas of interest and pathways offered by employers. To be successful, schools need to effectively design the career fair experience, and employers must deliver a successful career discussion.

*Regardless of the setting, you will need to know several things prior to the event:*

- the physical setup and how much space will be provided
- number of representatives they recommend you bring and if they should be from certain segments of the company (accounting, operations, etc.)
- if giveaway items are expected or encouraged
- other literature requests, such as brochures, job descriptions, business cards, or even employment applications
- what time you need to arrive for setup and what time you are expected to depart

**Who to Bring**
Employer representatives who participate in any form of career fair should be knowledgeable, active, respectful and energetic. Attendees will show more interest in the career cluster and your organization with more interactive representatives.

In summary, planning for the career fair and having the appropriate participants are critical components and will ensure your time with the students is successful. Career fairs offer hiring managers the opportunity to get out from behind the desk and network, both with educators and potential future candidates.

There are different formats by which a career fair can be arranged. Some common formats include:

**Symposium / Classroom Format**
In this format, an employer gives a presentation to a group of students in a specific location. The advantage of this setting is that the employer can have interaction with the students and have their complete focus. It also allows the presenter to deliver structured content. The challenge of this setting is that students may see this as another “class” and not fully engage in the discussion. One way to alleviate this is to start the presentation off with a great deal of energy
and hands-on material to capture their attention from the beginning. A creative, interactive presentation will help this format be successful. Also, do not underestimate the power of success stories of former students that have excelled in your organization. If it is possible, bring your employee along to participate in the presentation.

**Exhibition Format**

This is generally a common area where multiple employers may speak individually with students. It is very similar to a job fair. The advantages of this setting are that students visit employer booths at their own pace, stopping intermittently for individual interaction with employers. The challenge of this setting is that all students may not stop at every employer’s booth. Also, employers’ time with each student is generally limited. A solution is to have something catchy at your designated space to attract students’ attention. Have a summary or pamphlet prepared to share the highlights of your company that they can take with them. Perhaps a raffle of some sort will encourage them to visit with the employer for the chance of a prize. A laptop with a running presentation should also draw attention to your booth. Another challenge of this format might be that students may not know what questions to ask. Be sure to have ways to get the discussions started. A poster could display some questions and answers. Finally, be prepared to move out from behind the booth to make interaction easier. Sometimes the volume of noise can make it difficult to have meaningful discussions.

**Job Discovery**

Perhaps the most valuable part of career exploration is the opportunity for students to actually see and participate in some form of structured investigation into jobs of interest. While career or guidance centers help students research potential careers, exposure to real life career experiences may be the most practical approach to affirming or ruling out possible pathways.

To move beyond career selection based on online research, educational descriptions, current trends, peer pressure, parental preference and teacher prodding, students must get a picture of what it is like to actually work on a day-to-day basis in their careers of interest.

Employers can help students accomplish this in a variety of ways, including but not limited to:

- Serving as guest speakers to provide career information to students and educators
- Attending school career fairs
- Developing and participating in career projects
- Encouraging student and employer participation in organizations such as Future Business Leaders of America
- Sharing “A Day in the Life” scenarios, where workers prepare scripts on what they do at work.
- Allowing visits from students and educators to job sites
- Granting informational interviews
- Providing opportunities for job shadowing
- Participating in a mentoring program
• Providing internships to interested students
• Offering apprenticeship programs

Job Discovery should begin as early as the elementary level and continue well into the high school years. There is nothing wrong with students changing their minds about careers. This development is one of the goals of job discovery. However, it also is critical for them to be able to perform necessary job duties in the field of choice. This takes skill, both natural and developed ability, and careful planning. Creating opportunities for Job Discovery will enhance students’ knowledge base and increase the chances of a good career fit, which benefits both students and employers.

**Serving as Guest Speakers to Provide Career Information**
Your company may be contacted by a school to visit a classroom, or you may contact the school directly to offer your involvement as a guest speaker. Teachers, guidance professionals and administrators in school will coordinate with your schedule as well as with their curriculum plan to arrange a classroom presentation at an appropriate time. Often they encourage students and parents to discuss whom they would like to have visit. In the toolkit, please refer to the “Career Speaker Tip Sheet”.

**Attending School Career Fairs**
School career days are important events that give students an opportunity to speak with a company representative, ask questions and gain an appreciation for what it takes to become an employee. A great difference exists between the day-to-day routine of a student and that of a worker. Learning what it will be like to work at a certain company is an invaluable and practical approach to developing a lifelong career.

**Developing and Participating in Career Projects**
Career projects in the classroom provide an excellent source of information about the working world to students. Educators work with students and guidance counselors to provide the best possible projects for students. Contact the schools if your company would like to create or collaborate on a classroom project. Real-life scenarios, case studies and hands-on projects greatly enhance students’ ability to connect education and employment.
For example, a classroom could be assigned to work on an advertising campaign. The class learns about the company and target audience for the campaign. The students get realistic experience on a business project, and the company receives a fresh idea for consideration.

**Encouraging Student and Employer Participation in Organizations**
Students can learn a great deal about careers when taking on a leadership role in a student club or group. Certain professional organizations sponsor and promote “student chapters,” such as SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) or FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) Student Organizations.
Currently SHRM has over 450 affiliated SHRM Student Chapters offering local activities on university campuses throughout the United States. The FBLA is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) education association with a quarter million students preparing for careers in business and business-related fields. The association has four divisions:

- Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) for high school students;
- FBLA-Middle Level for junior high, middle, and intermediate school students;
- Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) for postsecondary students; and
- Professional Division for business people, FBLA-PBL alumni, educators, and parents who support the goals of the association.

To contact SHRM Student Programs staff, email SHRMstudent@shrm.org. Visit FBLA’s website at http://www.fbla.org/. Find out if your company or organization can offer learning sessions to student groups, and let your local schools know you would welcome this opportunity.

**A Day in the Life Scenario**

Career center software programs and other programs are available where an employee shares his or her experience and history in his or her chose field on a streaming video. These programs are easy to arrange. With a little help from your IT department, companies can create their own video.

Select the key employees who are willing to provide a short testimony that includes:

- A brief introduction to the industry or job title
- How the employee became interested in this job and where he/she attended school
- What it is like to work in this job
- The skills and abilities that helped the employee succeed
- The salary the student can reasonably expect to make
- Daily pressures and problems
- The importance of “thinking on your feet”
- The interactions the employee has with customers, vendors, and other company representatives
- The amount of time spent in meetings
- The reports or written documents required for this job
- Any equipment or software used on a daily basis
- The importance of teamwork and effective communication
- The best way to prepare for a career in this profession

**Visits from Students and Educators to Job Sites**

Companies and organizations are encouraged to show their manufacturing or business processes, resultant products or services, and their people at work. However, some employers have security and confidentiality issues that may not allow them to provide access to guidance and career professionals or students. In these cases, educators, students, companies and their employees may need to work closely to create alternative solutions. In the process, lasting and trusting relationships may result, which may allow for further exchanges. Talk to your company’s
leaders about their expectations regarding hosting students and educators. Perhaps a relationship can be developed through clear communication of expectations and outcomes.

**Informational Interviewing**

Following are some key questions students may want to ask you when learning about your profession.

- What prompted you to pick your career
- How long did it take you to get hired?
- What are the most important lessons you learned and mistakes you made when you first started in this job?
- Tell us what you do on a day-to-day basis.
- What do you like most about your job? What do you like least?
- How many times would you say you felt you needed more education?
- What advice do you have for me based on our conversations?

Be prepared to share experiences to help students discover practical aspects of your work and industry.

**Job Shadowing**

Arranging to shadow a person of interest is a great way for students to learn what it would be like to work in a career field. Let the schools know if your organization is available for job shadowing. If you set up job shadowing for your company, consider the following:

Safety and confidentiality issues need to be covered when arranging for a job shadow experience

- Assure adequate time is available for the shadowing experience.
- Pick the supervisor or worker to be shadowed.
- Communicate expectations with the educator, student, company and worker or supervisor.
- Provide feedback to the school after the job shadowing is completed.

**Participating in a Mentoring Program**

The local community and professional organizations, as well as certain companies in the area, will sponsor mentoring programs. The mentor will meet with the student to be mentored, and a program of sharing will commence. During these meetings, the mentor will provide encouragement, interest and motivation. Also, specific careers of interest can be explored during one-on-one mentoring sessions.

In many cases, lifelong friendships may develop and a bond may form between the two parties. Today, there is strong support for mentoring programs, and much national
Attention has been drawn to the subject.

Determine your organization’s position on this subject. If you already have a mentoring program available, consider whether it could be expanded to include students of all ages.

**Offering Internship Opportunities**

Another great way for a student to learn about a career is to take an internship with a specific company of interest. While this practice is common in the college setting, internships can also be arranged for high school and technical school students. The following items cover some aspects to consider when arranging for an internship program.

- Gather as much information from your company leadership to assure adequate time and support for an internship program.
- Decide which department or division would benefit most from the services of an intern. Select an intern supervisor and speak with this person to ensure interest. Select someone with the patience and disposition to work with a young person and confirm they are willing to take on this added responsibility.
- Meet with a representative from the school to discuss preliminary plans for setting up the internship. Find out what specific responsibilities your company will have during the internship.
- Consider whether the internship will be a paid internship, and if so, how you would arrange payment. Decide on the length of the internship. Create a job description for the intern, and coordinate this with the school.
- Contemplate what the employer will do when the internship ends. For example, will additional time be provided to continue to train the intern? Will the intern be employed on a full-time basis when they graduate?
- Once arrangements have been solidified with the school, review applications of intern applicants and arrange for interview time. Ensure all questions are answered for both the intern and the supervisor.
- Select the intern using the standard company process for bringing in a new employee. Be certain the status of the intern is clearly defined for all parties.
- Set up an orientation program to cover general company rules and regulations.
- Monitor attendance patterns, and be available to provide information to the school. Meet with the intern’s supervisor to determine progress, and gather feedback on the intern’s performance.
- Some intern programs require the intern to keep a journal or diary of projects and daily work. If the school does require a record of projects performed, ask the intern supervisor to make sure the student intern is keeping this document.
- When the internship ends, determine if your company will provide a letter of recommendation, and if so, ask the intern supervisor to complete this letter.
- Thank the intern and the intern’s supervisor for their time.
- Review the program to decide if you want to make any changes before committing to a new intern.
Participation in Apprenticeship Programs

A Youth Apprenticeship begins in the eleventh grade for students who are age 16 and older. This activity combines classroom instruction (at both secondary and post-secondary levels) with one to two years of on-the-job learning and results in a “certification of mastery” of specific technical skills. A youth apprentice may matriculate to a registered apprenticeship program after high school. These types of apprenticeships may or may not include financial compensation.

Registered Apprenticeship is an adult educational program that is registered with the US Department of Labor’s Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training. The traditional apprenticeship program is designed for adults, but may be linked to an approved youth apprenticeship program in grades 11-12. Apprenticeships are formal relationships between an employer and employee during which the worker, or apprentice, is paid while learning a specific occupation in a structured program.

For more information on federal resources that may be available to support your Registered Apprenticeship program, visit www.doleta.gov/oa/federalresources/playbook.pdf

For information on apprenticeships available in South Carolina, visit Apprenticeship Carolina: http://www.apprenticeshipcarolina.com/

For more information on the benefits of registration and how to register:
» Remember to contact your state apprenticeship representative for help with the registration process
» Review the list of state tax credits available to businesses that sponsor apprenticeship programs
» Access boilerplate documents to help with the registration process
» Review the AMP Playbook for Setting up a Registered Apprenticeship Program

Professional Development Opportunities for Educators

Businesses may offer professional development opportunities to educators to keep them abreast of the rapidly changing world of business so that they can more effectively advise and educate students on future careers and the requirements to pursue those careers. Such opportunities allow the teacher to link what they teach in a school setting to the workplace in creative and productive ways.

Many of these opportunities are at little to no cost for the business, but may have a long-term impact in educating the future workforce. The primary cost to the business is the time invested. Such opportunities allow the business to link real life requirements to what is taught in schools and to shape the workforce of the future. Professional development opportunities for educators allow businesses to be good corporate citizens in the local community.

Sample professional development opportunities in the workplace for educators include educator field studies and tours, seminars and workshops, hands-on opportunities and job
shadowsing.
If your business can offer any of these opportunities to educators, please contact your local school system.

**Educator Field Studies and Tours**

**Educator Field Studies and Tours** bring together educators and business people for a day or partial day of in-depth learning about a specific cluster. Educators spend time visiting one or more work-sites and hearing firsthand from professionals. During the field studies, professionals discuss the skills students need for tomorrow's careers. Educators gain the knowledge to make their curriculum more relevant, useful and meaningful for students as they learn how content area ties to the world of work.

**Seminars and Workshops**

Inviting educators to **seminars or workshops** offered at the workplace provides teachers with the opportunity to observe why business matters and to enhance classroom learning. Plus, educators have an opportunity to attend classes for personal development. Topics may include job seeking and retention skills, dressing for success, customer service, real world math and science concepts such as leadership development, change management, stress and time management, continuous improvement, lean manufacturing, computer skills for hardware and software, first aid, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, and other business principles.

**Hands-On Opportunities and Job Shadowing**

Teachers are introduced to the workplace through hands-on opportunities or job shadowing.

**Mentoring**

Educators may work with an employer who **mentors** them at the business or in an industry. This opportunity calls for teachers to take a practical approach to understanding the world of work. Each teacher spends time in a challenging position in business and industry in order to get hands-on experience with the skills needed to be successful. Teachers can draw on the experience to infuse practical knowledge about the world of work and necessary job skills into their classrooms.

**Externship**

Another opportunity is a **teacher externship** where educators participate in a one-day, work-based experience within a business or industry. Even though the externship is quite brief, it helps teachers to better understand how their subject matter applies to the world of work. Teachers who complete externships take back to their classrooms a number of real work experiences they can connect with their teaching and share with their students.

**Mini-Sabbatical**

The **mini-sabbatical** can assist experienced teachers in learning how to create meaningful curricula and instruction for school-to-career programs. It helps teachers break out of the traditional classroom and its subject-specific instructional approach. During the mini-sabbatical, teachers engage in a range of learning
experiences in the workplace, usually during the summer months. They learn valuable information about the workplace that they can translate into meaningful learning experiences for their students. Teachers can then require students to apply practice and problem solving to real-life situations. Teachers who take part in a mini-sabbatical can expect increased knowledge of work practices; information for integrated curricula; and adoption of teaching roles to support applied, real-life learning. This sabbatical could be paid or unpaid, thus providing the employer additional headcount and an outside perspective on the business.

**Case Studies and Continuous Improvement Activities**

Another opportunity is the involvement of educators in case studies or continuous improvement activities. Cases that portray important aspects of real-life situations are frequently used in areas such as business and law to bridge the gap between basic knowledge and actual practice. However, they can also offer teachers opportunities to apply knowledge in reality-based teaching scenarios and allow greater personal reflection than didactic coursework or trial and error methods. Continuous improvement activities allow the educator to see inside the business and give the business an outside perspective. Educators participating in case studies and continuous improvement activities at workplaces may improve their problem-solving and decision-making skills, while giving them an opportunity to view business in a realistic mode.

**How Can An Employer Ensure Confidentiality?**

Although it is not to be minimized, confidentiality should not be a barrier to work-based learning. Across the country, agencies and individuals, such as physicians, lawyers, psychiatrists, counselors, ministers, banks, and credit unions, have identified meaningful learning activities for students while at the same time protecting client confidentiality.

Employers interested in working with students, but concerned about protecting confidentiality, should consider the following:

**Train to Build Awareness**

If students are going to be exposed to confidential information, employers should provide them with the same confidentiality training that regular employees receive. Because confidentiality can be a complicated matter, it may be necessary to spend more time with students than with adult workers to review training tapes, presentations, or written material on the subject. To ensure that students have a true grasp of the issues related to confidentiality, employers can design tasks in which the student, under close supervision, is required to demonstrate an understanding of how to handle confidential matters.

**Gauge Maturity Level**

No matter how clearly confidentiality is explained, not all students will have the maturity to grasp it. After observing and talking with the student, employers should use their best judgment to gauge if he or she is mature enough to understand and apply appropriate behavior regarding confidential information and procedures.
**Educate Customers**
Customers may not be comfortable with the idea that a student is exposed to confidential information unless they understand that the student has received the necessary training. Employers should explain to customers that the student is in a learning situation and has been properly trained to handle confidential matters.

**Respect the Student’s Confidentiality**
Just as the student has a responsibility to the employer, the employer has a responsibility to the student. Through conversations with school staff about the student’s business participation, an employer may learn personal information about the student. It is important that this information be kept in confidence and not shared with others at the school or the workplace.
TOOLKIT

Student & Educator’s Section

Introduction and Overview
Imagine a community where all students graduate from high school because they understand why education is relevant to their future. Individuals use their talents and skills in enjoyable, profitable careers that offer a good salary and benefits such as health insurance and retirement plan options. Employers have an educated, well-trained workforce from which to select employees. Imagine a community that prospers from high wage jobs, educated citizens, an increased tax base, and fewer citizens needing public assistance.

Business, education and community leaders come together to discuss career and workforce development and to determine courses of action to move the community forward. Business and industry have employees entering the workforce with higher skills, and students attend challenging classes with high expectations together with work site experiences that lead to successful and productive careers.

For South Carolina and the Upstate, we are making this ideal a reality. As a collective group of hiring professionals, the Greenville Society for Human Resource Management http://greenvillehr.org would like to share best practices from the Workforce Readiness Council. The following guide has been developed for agencies, educators, and counselors as a resource to support their efforts in assisting students and adults in the career exploration process. In this section, you will find information related to how to engage with prospective employers, tips for networking and interviewing, along with information on how to make a great first impression. These insights will serve as a foundation and assist in addressing many of the barriers to effective employment.

See also SCDEW’s 20 Largest Employers in Greenville at web address (https://lmi.dew.sc.gov/lmi%20site/CommunityProfiles.html) or view your local employment and workforce website to identify top employers in your region.

Engaging Employers in Extended Learning Opportunities

Career Fairs and Classroom Presentations
What to Communicate to Employers
Formal invitation requesting their attendance, as well as two follow up confirmations either by phone, email or letter

The type of physical setup and how much space will be provided
The number of students / adults they can expect and career tracks that have been
identified
The number of representatives you recommend they bring and if they should be from certain segments of the company (accounting, operations, etc.) or if HR can represent it all
Names of other companies who will be represented
Let them know if giveaway items are expected/encouraged
Other literature requests you may have, such as brochures, job descriptions, business cards, or even employment applications
Inform them what time you need them to arrive for setup and what time they can expect to depart; help keep them on schedule – they may have other meetings to attend.

Tips on Planning Career Fairs
- Research and recruit the right employers to ensure they have viable backgrounds for your students/adults to learn about
- Target a defined number of employers to obtain their commitment to attending so you have adequate representation
- Develop a relationship with these employers
- Send out formal invitations and reminders
- Call them more than once asking if they need anything
- Communicate the students/adults are looking forward to hearing their representation
- Prepare a brochure highlighting the companies
- Meet, greet and escort the employer to where they will be presenting
- Some employers may need to use a laptop so have electrical power cords and perhaps a projector available.
- Have helpers available to assist setting up/tearing down displays
- If held in a common area, have tables set up ready for the employers’ use, with company names displayed
- If held in a common area, also have employers grouped by career clusters so students can easily move from table to table in their area of interest
- Keep teachers or representatives involved and accessible for any issues that may arise
- If held in classroom setting, provide guidelines to employer on how to handle distractions (ie. Fire alarm, medical emergency, disruptive child)
- Thank each employer for their participation and escort them out of the building
- Send thank you cards to each employer for taking the time to meet with your students/adults, and ask for feedback for future career fairs.

Networking
“Networking” is a useful skill for people who want to build relationships that may help them pursue their personal or professional goals. The term “networking” can sound so formal, but it simply refers to the act of building and maintaining relationships with people that may become mutually beneficial for both parties. Regardless of whether you are a student, pursuing goals, or looking to change careers, the following tips can assist you.
Building your Network:

- Strengthen relationships you already have. Get in touch with old friends, distant relatives, and people you went to school with. This is a great method for people who are “shy” because you are reaching out to people who are not complete strangers.
- Identify current opportunities you have to “network.” For example, you may know people through your children’s school activities, coaching and sporting activities, church, neighbors, the supermarket, or current friends and coworkers.
- Pursue interests and activities that you are passionate about. Attend local events, social clubs, school clubs, political organizations, civic groups, and meetings that pertain to your interests. Participating in volunteer or charity work is a great way to build relationships with other people who share similar interests.
- Attend career-related conferences or association meetings. Often times, even if you are not a member of an association, you can attend a meeting for a relatively low fee.
- You can network easily online in a number of ways. Social networks, such as Twitter and Facebook, as well as business networks such as LinkedIn can help you connect to people and associations. Additionally, you can join forums that give you broader access to people and groups that you may share common interests with and that will enable you to exchange ideas. However, be mindful of what you include on a social networking site as that is the snapshot of you that you hold out to others.
- Get involved with the local Chamber of Commerce.

Online Resources for Networking with Professionals:

- Linked In: World’s Largest Professional Network
  https://www.linkedin.com/
- STEM Premier: Career Exploration
  http://www.stempremier.com/

Networking with Strangers:

- Networking takes place in a variety of contexts that include people you know and strangers. You may be nervous to initiate a conversation with a stranger. Avoid immediately flashing a business card or discussing your services or ambitions with people to be effective because relationship building takes time. Prepare by doing the following:
- Be up-to-date on current events through reading articles or watching the local and/or national news prior to a “networking event,” such as an association meeting, so that you can have general information to discuss during a conversation.
- Be prepared to answer the question, “What do you do?” with a seven-second introduction. Nierenberg advises that you should make it general enough that allows someone to ask questions. For example, instead of saying, “I’m a chiropractor,” one might say, “I help people sit and walk comfortably.”
- Introduce yourself to others rather than waiting for others to come to you.
Look for people who are alone at the networking event, who may appreciate being approached by you.

Smile and be approachable! Put away your cell phone. It is often a distraction and makes you seem too busy to mingle.

When you are having a conversation with someone, find out what they do for a living, what they do during their “free time”, as well as what their spouse or significant other, nearby family members, and close friends do for work and recreation. These “networks” of people may be able to help you help someone else who needs assistance in the future. Listen and ask clarifying questions.

Invite people to meet with you, preferably one on one! It is a good idea to go out for coffee, lunch, or drinks to catch up casually, or, invite them to do things that are related to your interests. Establish connections that people may find memorable and that will allow you to learn more about the person and so that they can learn more about you!

Think about how you can help others! Being sincere allows you to establish good relationships with people and open connections that can be mutually beneficial. There are ways of helping people that include good listening skills, and other gestures of kindness and generosity. A person who may have looked to you as someone to vent to may be the key to finding you the job of your dreams in the future!

When you receive someone’s business card write a note on the back of it that will help you remember the person. If going to association meetings on a regular basis, it is a good idea to review business cards of those you have received in the past, in an effort to remember their names and have follow-up conversations with those individuals.

Follow-up: Find ways to maintain contact with people who you connect with such as connecting on social media. Examples may be sending an article to them that they may find useful, sending a note on their birthday, or calling them if you find out that a negative event happened in their vicinity or the vicinity of someone they know, just to check on them. Designate time each week to call one person you haven’t had contact within the last 90 days.

For introverts, a good practice is to imagine that this is your event, and it is your duty to make sure everyone has a good time. Go through the room with that in mind and you will be less intimidated with starting a conversation.

**Cluster Specific Networking Associations**

There are dozens of organizations in the Upstate that meet regularly. Each industry may have multiple organizations that would apply to an individual’s career path. It is advised that job seekers utilize the internet to seek out these organizations. If job seekers need further assistance, they may reach out to their local librarian, guidance counselor, Chamber of Commerce, or SCWorks counselor.
Resume Writing

Remember that your resume is the first thing that recruiters and managers will see. If your resume is not well formatted, or does not highlight the skills and qualifications for the job you are applying for, they will NOT continue reading your resume. So always have the most important and relevant skills, technologies and attributes at the top of your resume.

Your resume should be well laid out and easy on the eyes, the different sections of your resume should be distinct, and equally spaced. Use different fonts and sizes, underline and bolds to mark out the sections.

Here is what your resume should be/do:

- Paint a picture of your background to the reader with a clear established timeline.
- Cause the reader to want to find out more about your successes or experiences.
- Differentiate you from everyone else that is applying.
- Convey confidence; a well laid out and formatted resume shows that the candidate is organized and earnest in the job search.

Here is what your resume should NOT be/do:

- Be a laundry list of tasks.
- Be too long. If you are a fresh graduate, your resume should only be one page long. If you are an experienced candidate, the length of your resume should reflect your tenure, but not longer than 3 or 4 pages. But remember to keep the most important information at the front, as the last few sections will get less attention.
- Written once and left alone. Your resume is a living document, which you should update and tailor to specific positions.
- Raising questions instead of answers. If you have a work history with gaps, or have changed careers, seek to explain that in your resume or cover letter.

Steps to writing a resume from scratch:

- Find a resume template that you like.
- Enter in all personal information, including your email and best phone number.
- Enter in your highest level of education, and work history starting with your most recent position.
- Use descriptive verbs to write about the task you perform at different positions. Include any software or process used; SAP, Six-sigma, Quickbooks etc.
- Always try to quantify your tasks; answered more than 50 calls daily, managed accounts payable of up to $50,000, supervised a team of 7 members, etc.
- Look over the whole resume, and rearrange sections to ensure that your best skills and qualities are in the first third of your resume; if you are a recent graduate, make sure your education is high up before your work history. If you are an experienced candidate, have your work history before your education, and highlight any technical skills or technologies in a summary profile.
- Read through every word of your resume to ensure that are no spelling mistakes or formatting inconsistencies.
- Have someone else read through your resume and provide feedback.
A sample resume is located in the appendix, and you can find additional templates online.

**Tips and tricks to resume writing**

- Start looking at job boards and read through different job descriptions. When you find a position that you are interested in, identify the tasks/responsibilities of that job that you have experience in, and include it in your resume.
- Remember managers are always trying to build a timeline. If you are a fresh graduate from school, state the year of graduation, and elaborate any projects that are related to the position you are applying to. Do not list all your part-time college jobs in your resume, unless they are relevant to the position, or can show good tenure (3+ years).
- The Profile / Career Objectives section at the top of your resume is a good way to include key skills and technologies that you have used, or are interested in getting involved in. Remember companies now use software to filter through their resumes, the more key words you have in your resume, the higher your resume will rank in their results.
- Repeat key technologies or skills at least 3 times throughout your resume.
- If you have involuntarily changed positions resulting in a disjointed resume, you may want to include a "reason for leaving" line under a position to explain the transition.
- Ask recruiters for feedback on your resume. Recruiters look at hundreds of resumes weekly, and are more likely to give you feedback and ideas for your resume than the Technical hiring manager.

**References**
A majority of employers would conduct reference checks prior to hiring a candidate. You may choose to state at the end of your resume that “References will be provided upon request”. If you have references that are Senior Managers or Leaders in the community, you can include a reference section at the end of your resume with their contact information.
Always check with and inform your references that you will be using them as a professional reference, even before applying for positions, as some online applications would require you to enter in references to complete the application. Please avoid wherever possible listing friends or relatives as references, and be sure to have accurate and up-to-date contact information to provide.
See Appendix for Sample Resume

**Resume Builder Resources:** Free online resume-builder-
https://www.livecareer.com/resume-builder
The Cover Letter
The purpose of the cover letter is to distinguish you from other candidates and get an interview. This is a freeform area where you can showcase your writing skills, and knowledge of the organization, job, or industry for which you are applying.

Cover Letter Tips:
- The cover letter should be a customized letter, and should give as much attention to your potential employer as it is to you.
- Research the company to which you are applying to, and try to address or acknowledge the company culture, job description, responsibilities and qualifications.
- If there are gaps in your work history, your cover letter is a great place to explain those time gaps.
- If you are changing career paths, your cover letter will allow you to explain why, as well as highlight the technical knowledge and soft skills that are transferable to the position you are applying for.
- Proofread! Employers tend to view grammatical and spelling errors as a sign of carelessness. This is often your first impression. Use the spell-check on the computer, but do not rely solely on spell check. Ask others to review the cover letter as well.
- A cover letter should be no longer than a page.
- People changing careers and new graduates should remember to emphasize skills learned through volunteer experiences if appropriate.
- Do not overuse “I” when beginning a sentence.
- A cover letter should capture what your resume does not. You can give examples of prior accomplishments that would make you a good candidate for the role.
- If you are emailing in your application, you should paste your cover letter in the body of your email, and send it as an attachment.

Tips for completing online applications
- Always have a word version of your resume open when completing online job applications, as the online application would be asking for the similar information on your resume.
- If you are required to create a login or ID apart from your email address, choose a professional login (example: “first.lastname.1”).
- If you must include a cover letter, type in/attach your prepared cover letter customized and specific to the role you are applying to.
- Always upload a PDF version of your resume; that would ensure that the formatting of your resume is kept.
- Enter in the required information in the application; education history, work history. You should be able to copy this information from your resume. Do not write “see resume” on an application where they are asking for work history; if an employer is asking you to complete an application then you should make the effort to complete the application in full.
- As a best practice, be sure to have accurate contact information on your
application for your former employer: address, phone number, and supervisor’s full name. Listing that you worked for “John” at “McDonald’s” and not specifying the location or last name of your supervisor will make it difficult for a recruiter to verify your employment and may appear unprofessional.

- If asked about salary expectations, you should always provide a range you are comfortable accepting. You can also research the pay ranges of similar positions in your geography online. Take into consideration that if your salary demands are too high that may disqualify you as a candidate so keep salary to what is standard in the field in which you are applying.
- Make sure that the information on your online application is similar to your resume. Inconsistencies in information will cause doubt on your profile.
- Save a copy of the job description for positions you have applied to.
- Always remember that companies should not be requesting your personal information at the time of initial application; Social Security number, bank account numbers, date of birth, etc.
- After you have successfully started a new job, you may want to log into all your job applications and unsubscribe to the job alerts.
Job Interviews

Behavioral Interviews
What is a behavioral interview? Behavioral based interviewing is interviewing based on discovering how the interviewee acted in specific employment-related situations. The logic is that how you behaved in the past will predict how you will behave in the future (past performance predicts future performance).

Traditional Interview vs. Behavioral Interview
In a traditional interview, you will be asked a series of questions that typically have straightforward answers like, "What are your strengths and weaknesses?" or "What major challenges and problems did you face? How did you handle them?" or "Describe a typical work week."

In a behavioral interview, an employer has decided what skills are needed in the person they hire and will ask questions to find out if the candidate has those skills. Instead of asking how you would behave, they will ask how you did behave. The interviewer will want to know how you handled a situation, instead of what you might do in the future.

Questions in a Behavioral Interview
- Behavioral interview questions will be more pointed, more probing and more specific than traditional interview questions:
- Give an example of an occasion when you used logic to solve a problem.
- Give an example of a goal you reached and tell me how you achieved it.
- Describe a decision you made that was unpopular and how you handled implementing it.
- Have you gone above and beyond the call of duty? If so, how?
- What do you do when your schedule is interrupted? Give an example of how you handle it.
- Have you had to convince a team to work on a project they weren't thrilled about? How did you do it?
- Have you handled a difficult situation with a co-worker? How?
- Tell me about how you worked effectively under pressure.
- Follow-up questions will also be detailed. You may be asked what you did, what you said, how you reacted or how you felt.

Preparation for the Potential Behavioral Interview
What's the best way to prepare? It's important to remember that you may not know what type of interview will take place until you are sitting in the interview room. So, prepare answers to traditional interview questions.
Identify six to eight examples from your past experience where you demonstrated top behaviors and skills that employers typically seek. Think in terms of examples that will exploit your top selling points.
Half your examples should be totally positive, such as accomplishments or meeting goals. The other half should be situations that started out negatively but either ended positively or
you made the best of the outcome.
Vary your examples; do not take them all from just one area of your life.
Use fairly recent examples. If you're a college student, examples from high school may be too long ago. Accenture, in fact, specifies that candidates give examples of behaviors demonstrated within the last year.
Try to describe examples in story form and/or PAR/SAR/STAR.

Since you may not know exactly what situations you will be asked about if it's a behavioral interview, refresh your memory and consider some special situations you have dealt with or projects you have worked on. You may be able to use them to help frame responses. Prepare stories that illustrate times when you have successfully solved problems or performed memorably. The stories will be useful to help you respond meaningfully in a behavioral interview.

To cram for a behavioral interview right before you're interviewed, review your resume. Seeing your achievements in print will jog your memory. In the interview, listen carefully to each question, and pull an example out of your bag of tricks that provides an appropriate description of how you demonstrated the desired behavior. With practice, you can learn to tailor a relatively small set of examples to respond to a number of different behavioral questions.

Finally, review the job description, if you have it, or the job posting or ad. You may be able to get a sense of what skills and behavioral characteristics the employer is seeking from reading the job description and position requirements. Take a look at what employers are advised about developing the job posting for a behavioral interview on the About Human Resources site.

During the Behavioral Interview
During the interview, if you are not sure how to answer the question, ask for clarification.
Then be sure to include these points in your answer:

A specific situation
The tasks that needed to be done
The action you took
The results (what happened)

It's important to keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers. The interviewer is simply trying to understand how you behaved in a given situation. How you respond will determine if there is a fit between your skills and the position the company is seeking to fill. So, listen carefully, be clear and detailed when you respond and, most importantly, be honest. If your answers aren't what the interviewer is looking for, this position may not be the best job for you anyway.
Lunch and Dinner Interviews
Interviews are often stressful - even for job seekers who have interviewed many times. Interviewing can be even more stressful when you are expected to eat and talk at the same time. One of the reasons employers take job candidates out to lunch or dinner is to evaluate their social skills and to see if they can handle themselves gracefully under pressure.

Dining with a prospective employee allows employers to review your communication and interpersonal skills, as well as your table manners, in a more relaxed (for them) environment. Table manners do matter. Good manners may give you the edge over another candidate; so, take some time to brush up your dining etiquette skills.

Interview Dining Tips
- Are you really nervous? Check out the restaurant ahead of time. That way you'll know exactly what's on the menu, what you might want to order, and where the rest rooms are located.
- Be polite. Remember to say "please" and "thank you" to your server as well as to your host.
- Is the table full of utensils? My British grandmother taught me an easy way to remember what to use when. Start at the outside and work your way in. Your salad fork will be on the far left; your entree fork will be next to it. Your dessert spoon and fork will be above your plate.
- Liquids are on the right, solids on the left. For example, your water glass will be on the right and your bread plate will be on the left.
- Put your napkin on your lap once everyone is seated.
- Remember what your mother spent years telling you - keep your elbows off the table, sit up straight, and do not talk with your mouth full!

During the Meal
- Don't order messy food - pasta with lots of sauce, chicken with bones, ribs, big sandwiches, and whole lobsters are all dangerous.
- Don't order the most expensive entree on the menu.
- Do order food that is easy to cut into bite-size pieces.
- The polite way to eat soup is to spoon it away from you. There's less chance of spilling in your lap that way too!
- Break your dinner roll into small pieces and eat it one piece at a time.
- If you need to leave the table, put your napkin on the seat or the arm of your chair.
- When you've finished eating, move your knife and fork to the "four o'clock" position so the server knows you're done.
- Remember to try and relax, listen, and participate in the conversation.
- To Drink or Not to Drink:
- It's wise not to drink alcohol during an interview. Interviewing is tough enough without adding alcohol to the mix.
After the Meal
- Put your napkin on the table next to your plate.
- Let the prospective employer pick up the tab. The person who invited you will expect to pay both the bill and the tip.
- Remember to say "thank you." Consider also following-up with a thank you note that reiterates your interest in the job.

Group Interviews
A group interview, sometimes known as a panel interview, is different than a one-on-one interview because it is conducted by a whole group of people. If you know you are facing a group interview or if you think it might be a possibility, learning more about what you can expect from a group interview is a good idea.

Types of Group Interviews
In a candidate group interview, you will most likely be put in a room with other job applicants. In many cases, these applicants will be applying for the same position that you are applying for. During a candidate group interview, you will definitely be asked to listen to information about the company and the position, and you may be asked to answer questions or participate in group exercises.

In a panel group interview, which is much more common than a candidate group interview, you will most likely be interviewed individually by a panel of two or more people. This type of group interview is almost always a question and answer session, but you might also be asked to participate in some type of exercise or test that simulates your potential work environment.

Why Companies Use Group Interviews
An increasing number of companies are using group interviews to screen job applicants. This change could be attributed to the desire to reduce turnover and the fact that teamwork is becoming more critical in the workplace, but the easiest way to explain it is that two heads are almost always better than one. When there is more than one person doing the interviewing, the chances of a bad hiring decision being made are reduced.

What Group Interviewers Look For
Group interviewers look for the same things other interviewers look for. They want to see a strong candidate who knows how to work well with others and behave properly and competently in a work environment. Specific things that group interviewers scrutinize:

Your Appearance. Attire, hygiene, and anything else that relates to your physical form will be judged. If you wear too much make-up or cologne, at least one of the interviewers will notice. If you forgot to put on deodorant or match your socks, at least one of the interviewers will notice.

Your Presentation Skills. Interviewers will be paying special attention to how you present yourself. Do you slouch or fidget? Do you make eye contact when you converse? Did you remember to shake hands with everyone in the room?

Your Communication Skills. No matter what type of job you are applying for, you will
need to be able to communicate. Specific skills that group interviewers look for is your ability to listen, follow instructions and get your ideas across.

**Your Interest Level.** From the time the interview starts until it ends, interviewers will be trying to assess how interested you are in the job you are applying for. If you seem bored and unengaged during the interview, you will probably be passed by for someone else.

**Tips to Help You Ace Your Group Interview**
- Preparation is the key to success in any interview, but this is especially true for group interviews. If you make any mistakes, at least one of your interviewers is bound to notice. Here are a few tips that will help you make the best impression possible:
- Greet all of your interviewers individually. Make eye contact, say hello, and, if possible, shake hands.
- Do not focus on any one individual. You should make an effort to engage everyone in the group when you are asking or answering questions.
- Do not show surprise or annoyance when faced with a group interview.
- Prepare for the group interview by making a list of questions that you may be asked and practicing how you might answer them.
- If you are interviewed with other candidates it is better to lead than to follow. Interviewers may not remember you if you blend into the background.
- Skills you will be expected to demonstrate during group interview exercises include leadership skills, your ability to handle stress and pressure, teamwork skills, and how well you take and give criticism. Be sure to keep this in mind when you complete the exercises.
- Thank everyone who interviewed you and remember names and titles so that you can send a written note afterwards.

**Second Interviews**
You passed the first interview with flying colors and you just got a call to schedule a second interview. Here are suggestions on how to use your second job interview to help secure an offer.

**Get the Agenda**
Sometimes, a second interview can be a daylong interview. You may meet with management, staff members, executives, and other company employees. Ask the person who scheduled the interview for an itinerary so you know upfront what to expect. For example, at Microsoft the second interview process involves meeting with people from different product groups. Candidates usually meet with four or five people who are geared to provide an idea of what it's really like to work for Microsoft.

**Research, Research, Research**
Learn everything you can about the company. Review the “About Us” section of the company web site. Use Google and Google News (search by company name) to get the latest information and news. Visit Message Boards to research what's being discussed. If you have a connection, use it to get some insider information on
management and staff, as well as the company in general.

**Review Interview Questions and Answers**
You may be asked the same questions you were asked during the first interview. So, review the questions you were asked in the first interview and brush up your responses. Like the first time around, it’s good to take some time to practice interviewing so you are comfortable with your answers.

**Dress Professionally**
Even if the workplace is casual you will want to dress in your best interview attire until you get the job unless you are told otherwise. If the person scheduling the interview mentions dressing down, business casual attire would typically be most appropriate.

**Telephone Interviews**
Employers use telephone interviews as a way of identifying and recruiting candidates for employment. Phone interviews are often used to screen candidates in order to narrow the pool of applicants who will be invited for in-person interviews. They are also used as a way to minimize the expenses involved in interviewing out-of-town candidates.

While you’re actively job searching, it’s important to be prepared for a phone interview on a moment’s notice. You never know when a recruiter or a networking contact might call and ask if you have a few minutes to talk.

**Be Prepared to Interview**
Prepare for a phone interview just as you would for a regular interview. Compile a list of your strengths and weaknesses, as well as a list of answers to typical interview questions. In addition, plan on being prepared for a phone conversation about your background and skills.

- Keep your resume in clear view on the top of your desk or tape it to the wall near the phone so it’s at your fingertips when you need to answer questions.
- Have a short list of your accomplishments available to review.
- Have a pen and paper handy for note taking.
- Turn call waiting off so your call isn’t interrupted.
- If the time isn’t convenient, ask if you could talk at another time and suggest some alternatives.
- Clear the room - evict the kids and the pets. Turn off the stereo and the TV. Close the door.
- Unless you’re sure your cell phone service is going to be perfect, consider using a landline rather than your cell phone to avoid a dropped call or static on the line.

**Practice Interviewing**
Talking on the phone is not as easy as it seems. It can be helpful to practice. Have a
or family member conduct a mock interview and tape record it so you can see how you sound over the phone. Any cassette recorder will work. You will be able to hear your "ums" and "uhhs" and "okays" and you can practice reducing them from your conversational speech. Also rehearse answers to those typical questions you may be asked.

**During the Phone Interview**
- Do not smoke, chew gum, eat, or drink.
- Do keep a glass of water handy, in case you need to wet your mouth.
- Smile. Smiling will project a positive image to the listener and will change the tone of your voice.
- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly.
- Use the person's title (Mr. or Ms. and their last name.) Only use a first name if they ask you to.
- Do not interrupt the interviewer.
- Take your time - it's perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.
- Give short answers.
- Remember your goal is to set-up a face-to-face interview. After you thank the interviewer ask if it would be possible to meet in person.

**After the Interview**
- Take notes about what you were asked and how you answered.
- Remember to say "thank you." Follow with a thank you note that reiterates your interest in the job

**Video Interviews**

Video interviews are becoming more commonplace in the workplace. As hiring becomes more global, both for employers and candidates, video interviewing is a way to expedite the interview process. Hiring managers and recruiters can conduct first round interviews more quickly, save on transportation costs, and get the interview process started much faster using video conferencing than they can scheduling in-person interviews.

**Video - The Next Step in the Recruiting Process**

Companies hiring at all levels, from entry-level to experienced professionals, are more comfortable using technology (as you can see from the growth in Internet recruiting) and video interviewing is becoming the next step in the online recruiting process for many recruiters and employers. For the job seeker though, it can be a little intimidating. It's hard enough to interview face-to-face, let alone in front of a camera and microphone. It can seem like a scary proposition, even for those of us who are familiar with technology and use it on a regular basis.

**Tips for Video Interviewing**
• Advance Planning
• Make sure that you send any materials (resume, etc.) that the recruiter needs in advance.
• Arrive early so you have time to get situated.
• Ask for assistance if you’re not sure how to use the equipment. Actually, even if you think you can figure it out, it's good to ask for a quick overview.
• What to Wear
• Dress professionally. Wear the same interview attire you would for an in-person interview.
• Do not make the same mistake one candidate did! He wore a suit jacket, dress shirt, and tie, presuming that only the top half would show. However, when he stood up the interviewer saw a full-length view, including the jeans he was wearing.
• During the Video Interview
• Make sure the table is clean and neat. You do not want to distract the interviewer.
• Be aware that the microphone picks up all the noise in the room. Do not tap your pen or shuffle papers.
• Make eye contact with the camera. If you do not the camera will be focused on the top of your head.
• Use the Picture-in-Picture feature so you can see how you appear.
• The Interview Process
• The interview process will be the same as an in-person interview. The interviewer's objective (to screen candidates for employment) is the same.
• You will be asked the same type of interview questions. Also, be prepared to ask questions, as well.
• If you're not sure about how the interview is proceeding, it's fine to ask the interviewer how you are doing.
• What's most important is to remember that this type of interview is just as important as if you were meeting the interviewer in his or her office. The value, for you as well as for the hiring manager, is equivalent, and interviewing successfully, however it takes place, is the key to getting hired.
• Knowing what kinds of questions might be asked will help you prepare an effective selection of examples.
• Use examples from internships, classes, school projects, activities, team participation, community service, hobbies, and work experience-- anything really -- as examples of your past behavior. In addition, you may use examples of special accomplishments, whether personal or professional, such as scoring the winning touchdown, being elected president of your Greek organization, winning a prize for your artwork, surfing a big wave, or raising money for charity. Wherever possible, quantify your results. Numbers always impress employers.
• Remember that many behavioral questions try to get at how you responded to negative situations. You'll need to have examples of negative experiences ready, but try to choose negative experiences that had positive outcomes.
• Once you've snagged the job, keep a record of achievements and accomplishments so you'll be ready with more great examples the next time you go on a behavior interview.
Resources for Interviewing

Sample Interview Questions
https://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/tools-and-samples/interview-questions/Pages/default.aspx

Sample Behavioral Interview Questions
https://www.livecareer.com/quintessential/sample-behavioral
http://careerplanning.about.com/od/jobinterviews/a/beh_int_ln.htm

Additional Resources
With Behavioral Event Interviewing, the Job Applicant’s Past May Predict Future Performance
http://www.nfib.com/object/IO_16988.html

Best Impressions
Communication Techniques and Personal Appearance

Voice Mail Etiquette

The following tips will allow you to distinguish yourself from others by having good “voice mail” etiquette. Additionally, following these tips allows you to leave a positive and professional impression with the person that you are calling.

- Always leave your full name. Do not assume that the person will recognize your voice.
- Always leave your phone number twice.
- Even if the party has your phone number, chances are that they won’t have it right in front of them. This will eliminate the need for the person to look for your phone number and allow the person you are calling to jot it down on a piece of paper.
- Leave your phone number at the beginning of the message and once at the end.
- Speak clearly and slowly.
- Convey a positive and enthusiastic attitude through a positive tone of voice.
- If you are making the call on a cell phone, do not assume the reception is great.
- Do not chew gum or eat while leaving a message on a voice mail system.
- Turn off background noise when possible that may interfere with the person’s ability to concentrate on your message.
- Be brief and to the point.
- Plan what you are going to say prior to making the phone call. Take notes.
If you need to.

- If there is something specific that you want from the person, tell them what it is. For example, “I just wanted to know when the project will be completed. If I am unavailable when you return my call, please leave the answer on my voicemail,” versus, “Call me back.”
  - If you are specific in your message, it allows the person you are calling to prioritize the phone calls that they need to return.
- If you need to talk to the individual personally, give them a number of time frames that you would be available to speak to the person.
- Be polite - say thank you at the end of the message.

E-mail Etiquette

- The following are tips that will increase your etiquette when using electronic mail in the workplace. Depending on your employer’s policies, remember that e-mail in the workplace may not be private, and you should avoid emails regarding personal information unrelated to work.
- When writing e-mail messages, use traditional spelling, grammar, and punctuation rules.
- Avoid common acronyms such as “LOL” for “laugh out loud.” Your audience may not be aware of the e-mail slang used oftentimes among friends.
- Avoid using ALL CAPITAL LETTERS because it gives the reader the impression that you are yelling at them. Using all lower case letters gives the appearance that you are lazy.
- Use bold face formatting or asterisks to emphasize points when needed.
- Avoid using various colored fonts because not everyone has a program enabling them to read them.
- Keep messages brief and to the point.
- Do not use e-mail to avoid an uncomfortable situation. An e-mail is not an appropriate means of communication if the content is emotionally based, confusing, or “a long story.”
- Use bullets or numbered lists when there is more than one point to make, in an effort to make your message more “user friendly.”
- Remember that e-mail is not private! Workplace e-mail can be retrieved and used in a court of law. E-mail can be forwarded or accidentally sent to audiences who you wouldn’t want to read it. Never put anything in an e-mail that you wouldn’t write on a postcard.
- It is a good idea to avoid filling out the “To:” heading of the e-mail until you are done writing and proofreading the e-mail. This will help you avoid accidentally hitting the “send” button prematurely.
- Do not send chain letters or other “junk” e-mail. Personal e-mail should be directed to your “home e-mail” if needed.
- Convey a positive “tone” in an e-mail and include your contact information at the end.
- Face to face communication gives opportunities for elaborating on a point you want
to make using an appropriate tone of voice. Additionally, when communicating with someone personally, there is an ability to use non-verbal communication to emphasize your points. E-mail does not afford you the ability to do either of these things, and, therefore, it is only through your words that you can minimize being misinterpreted.

- Try not to respond to an e-mail if you are angry. Do not put anything in an e-mail that you would not say to the person's face.
- Always start with a greeting, such as "Hello."
- Respond to e-mails in a timely manner, as is expected when you respond to phone call messages.

**Shaping Your Professional Image**

The modern business environment is changing and rules can often seem confusing or undefined. However, for all the confusion, there remains several key guiding principles central to an appropriate work wardrobe.

**Remember:** No one style is appropriate in every instance. The key is to develop a style that fits the company's culture. Develop a *conservative, professional style*. For men that usually means suits, and for women it can be skirts, suits, or pantsuits.

**MEN**
- Black, Navy, or Gray Suit
- Long sleeve shirts
- Coordinating tie
- Undershirt
- Dress Shoes
- Belt
- Socks
- Trimmed, Clean Nails
- Shaved, trimmed facial hairs
- Minimal to no jewelry
- Clean, styled hair
- No Cologne

**WOMEN**
- Coordinated Suit
- Solid colored blouse
- Sweater Set
- Dress pants or Skirt
- Matching Shoes
- Stockings/Trouser Socks
- Clean, short, manicured nails
- Natural shade of makeup
- Businesslike hairstyle
- Natural Hair color
- Limited (Small) jewelry
- NO PERFUME

Some organizations provide more flexibility in dress and call it business casual, but this is not acceptable on an interview. **Never** wear your scrubs, even though they are worn professional once hired, it is not considered professional on an interview. The key to professional dress is modest, well-fitting but not too tight, clean, pressed, and neat clothing. Clothes do not have to be expensive to project
Dressing to Impress

One of the first impressions you make to a potential employer is based upon how you dress for the job interview. Of course, the way you should dress for an interview is determined by the corporate culture of the company you are seeking to work for. For example, if you were interviewing to be a disc jockey in a radio station, a suit and tie may not be appropriate. If you are unsure as to how to dress for the job interview, call the human resource manager prior to going on the interview. In general, it is best to err on the side of dressing conservatively.

Dressing for the Job!

The need to dress appropriately extends beyond the job interview and into the workplace. Remember that you are representing the organization to all of its stakeholders. Many organizations have a dress code. The reason for a dress code is to set a standard protocol that promotes safety in the workplace, and providing a positive work environment.

All organizations have different standards of what is and what is not appropriate to wear. For example, a t-shirt may be appropriate if you are working as a DJ for a radio station, but may be inappropriate if you are working in a corporate setting. Become familiar with your organization’s culture!

General Guidelines for “Dressing for Success” While In the Workplace:

- Know the dress code and dress according to it. Depending upon your workplace, clothing guidelines also have safety considerations. If the dress code is vague, assume the following rules.
- Clothing should be fit in such a manner that it does not expose the abdomen, chest, buttocks, or more than ¼ of a person's back. Exposure should not take place while the employee is standing straight or during movement such as kneeling, sitting, or bending down.
- All sleeveless shirts should cover most of the top of the shoulder. (No tank tops, halter tops or spaghetti straps).
- Undergarments should not be exposed (i.e. Panties, bra, and boxer shorts).
- Transparent (see-through) clothing that exposes undergarments, abdomen, breasts, or back are not recommended. An example of transparent clothing includes material that is sheer, netting, or mesh.
- If possible, cover tattoos.
• Avoid wearing tee shirts or clothing that have sexually related references, racially offensive language, foul language, or language/pictures that are derogatory in nature toward any gender, nationality, race, sexual preference, age, or religion, or that suggest or promote the use of illegal drugs or other illegal activity such as violence.
• Do not wear baseball caps or hats unless designated in the dress code.
• Keep nails trimmed neatly. Ensure appropriate nail length because some organizations, such as health care organizations, limit nail length for health reasons.
• Wear safe shoes. Some organizations prohibit opened toe shoes and limit heel height for safety reasons.
• Nose rings, lip rings, and tongue rings are generally inappropriate unless it is appropriate for the job. Check with the employer.
• If the employer’s dress code designates that shorts, dresses, and skirts are appropriate, it is best to keep them no more than 1” above the knee.

For some examples of interview-appropriate attire and looks to avoid, go to https://www.allbusiness.com/slideshow/office-dress-code-dos-and-donts-15642063-1.html.
### The Expressway
- Dress for the job you want
- Be a leader
- Get involved in organizations/clubs that interest you (avoid diluting your resume with activities just to have activities)
- Make good connections so you have strong references
- Be motivated academically (finish High School)
- Works towards Achievements
- Participate in Activities that help gain transferable skills
  - Plan events/activities
  - Delegate responsibility
  - Motivate others
  - Assess/evaluate your own work and the work of others
  - Solve problems
  - Multi-task
  - Manage your time
  - Practice writing
  - Give presentations/Speak Publicly
  - Repair Equipment or Machinery
  - Keep records
  - Accept criticism/complaints
  - Coordinate fundraising
  - Coach, train, or teach
  - Research
  - Build or construct
  - Design
  - Manage finances
  - Learn a foreign language or sign language
  - Learn new computer skills or software
  - Identify and manage ethical issues

### The Dead End
- Posting inappropriate images or wording on social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, or other (these are public sites)
- Presenting yourself unprofessionally through:
  - Visible body art
  - Extreme body piercings
  - Extreme hair styles or colors
  - Poor hygiene
  - Attire (see below)
- Unprofessional attire:
  - T-shirts with offensive language/images
  - Short or mini-skirts
  - Revealing clothing
  - Shoes- avoid flip-flops, open-toed shoes (in some environments), and heals that are too high
  - Pajama pants
  - Excessive jewelry
- Unprofessional email addresses
- Unprofessional voicemail messages, greetings over the phone, and ring-back tones
- Failing to disclose criminal background when prompted (even older convictions)
- Substance abuse
- Attitude:
  - “I’m not changing to please anyone.”
  - “I don’t care”
- Failing to arrive on-time or early
- Failing to prepare:
  - Know the job
  - Know the company
  - Know why you want to work there or participate

The decisions that you make today can impact your success in a job interview years from now.
Conclusion

The members of the Workforce Readiness Council of the Greenville Society for Human Resources would like to thank you for using our “Workforce Readiness Guide.” While comprehensive in scope, the guide by no means cover every situation that prospective employees, employers, and educators need to know regarding the employment process; however, using the guide and implementing its suggestions should make the process simpler and more effective.

We would like to wish everyone success in their employment journey!

The Workforce Readiness Council 2016
Appendix: Sample Resume

John Grant
201 Oak Road, Milwaukee, WI 53219  jgrant@ymail.com  Cell: 414-000-000

Supply Chain Manager

Career Objective

Senior position in supply chain management drawing on extensive experience in manufacturing and material requirements planning (MRP). Work in a team-based environment where continuous improvement, dedication, creativity, and commitment to quality are encouraged.

Summary of Qualifications

- Hands-on professional with 20+ years’ experience in high-volume purchasing ($18 million buy in 2008), domestic and global supply chain management, purchasing management, inventory control, production planning, warehouse management, transportation and plant management in an ISO 9001 environment.

Industry-Related Experience

Senior Buyer/Expeditor, Company B, Milwaukee, WI, Jan 2011 – Present
- Managed purchasing for two-division consolidation coupled with total migration from existing to new ERP software.
- Ran MRP and discrete shortage reports on a daily basis. Drove on-the-spot high-dollar purchasing while expediting production floor shortages.

Buyer, Company A., Greenville, SC, Jan 2008 - Dec 2010

Reason for Leaving: Relocation to Milwaukee

Education & Certification

Bachelor of Science, Clemson University
Major: Management
Ongoing study toward the Certification in Production and Inventory Management (CPIC) through the Association for Operations Management. Expected completion 5/2011.

References available upon request.
Resource Page

Employment and Training Resources:

Apprenticeship South Carolina: http://www.apprenticeshipcarolina.com/
Goodwill Industries: http://www.goodwillsc.org/
Greenville Literacy: http://www.greenvilleliteracy.org/
Jobs Corp: http://www.jobcorps.gov/Home.aspx
SC Department of Commerce: http://sccommerce.com/node/2308/regional-workforce-advisors
SC Vocational Rehabilitation: http://scvrd.net/
SC Works: https://jobs.scworks.org/
Share: http://www.sharesc.org/
United Ministries of Greenville: https://www.united-ministries.org/

Local Colleges and Universities:

Bob Jones University: http://www.bju.edu/
Furman University: http://www.furman.edu/
Greenville Technical College: http://www.gvltec.edu
North Greenville University: http://www.ngu.edu/
The University Center of Greenville: http://greenville.org/

Additional Resources:

Department of Social Services: https://dss.sc.gov/
Greenville Chamber of Commerce: http://greenvillechamber.org/
Greenville County Library System: http://www.greenvillelibrary.org/
United Way of Greenville County: http://www.unitedwaygc.org/