



Northwest Youth Careers Expo Job Search Tips



WHAT EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR

Employers say today's work place requires employees to have not only the standard academic skills, but also other key basics as a foundation for building broader, more sophisticated job-related skills.

1. **Learning To Learn** – the ability to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to learn effectively, no matter what the learning situation.
2. **Listening** – the ability to heed the key points of customers', suppliers', and co-workers' concerns.
3. **Oral & Written Communication Skills** – the ability to convey information and ideas adequately in conversations, emails and business communications.
4. **Problem Solving** – the ability to think on one's feet.
5. **Creative Thinking** – the ability to come up with innovative solutions.
6. **Self Esteem & Confidence** – the ability to have pride in oneself and self-assurance in your own skills, knowledge, abilities, capacities and judgments.
7. **Goal Setting**– the ability to know how to get things done & manage tasks.
8. **Personal and Career Development Skills** – the awareness of the skills needed to perform well in the workplace.
9. **Interpersonal skills** – the ability to get along with customers, suppliers, and co-workers.
10. **Teamwork**- the ability to work with others to achieve a goal.
11. **Negotiation** – the ability to build consensus through give and take.
12. **Organizational Effectiveness** – the understanding of where the organization is headed and how one can make a contribution.
13. **Leadership** – the ability to assume responsibility and motivate co-workers when necessary.

INTERVIEW TIPS

1. Remember, an interview is not an oral exam. This is your opportunity to find out about the company as well as their opportunity to find out about you. Asking questions will help you decide if you want the job if they offer it to you. It also shows that you're really interested in the company.
2. Take the time to do some research about the company—check out their website for their mission, leadership, etc. You'll be able to ask informed questions and show that you've done your homework.
3. Make sure you're at your best for the interview. Get a good night's sleep but don't sleep too late, and eat a good breakfast and (if your interview is in the afternoon) lunch. Then brush your teeth.
4. Keep in mind the importance of a first impression. Make sure you're dressed appropriately.
5. Arrive ten to fifteen minutes early. Don't show up half an hour in advance, but don't come rushing in at the last minute. Arriving late is the kiss of death for any interview—if you're two minutes late for one critical meeting, how does the interviewer know you won't be fifteen minutes late to work every day?
6. Bring an extra copy of your resume and your references. Find something neat to carry them in, such as a folder or a portfolio with a note pad to take notes.
7. Use your best business manners—give a firm handshake and wait to be asked to take a seat. Once you're seated, sit up straight and try not to fidget or wiggle. AVOID: scratching, pulling up your socks or hose, adjusting any part of your clothing (do that before you come in), touching your face or mouth, playing with your hair or a pen.
8. Make lots of eye contact to convey honesty and confidence—but remember it's not a staring contest.
9. Exude professionalism. Pay attention to the interviewer; be self-confident (if you don't toot your own horn, there's no brass section behind you to fill in), polite, and articulate.
10. Follow up is critical. Send a thank you note to the interviewer by a means appropriate to the job (if it's computer-centered, e-mail may be acceptable; for other kinds of jobs, go with nice stationery or note cards).

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK AT THE INTERVIEW

*Toward the end of most job interviews, the interviewer will give you the opportunity to ask questions. You **must** ask at least one question; this shows the interviewer that you are interested in the job or the company. On the other hand, do not ask questions where the answer is obvious or readily available – or when the topic has already been thoroughly discussed in the interview. And never ask about salary and benefit issues until those subjects are raised by the employer.*

- Can you describe a typical day for someone in this position?
- What is the top priority of the person who accepts this job?
- What are the day-to-day expectations and responsibilities of this job?
- How will my leadership responsibilities and performance be measured? By whom? How often?
- Can you describe the company's management style?
- Can you discuss your take on the company's corporate culture?
- What are the company's values?
- How would you characterize the management philosophy of this organization? Of your department?
- What is the organization's policy on transfers to other divisions or other offices?
- Are lateral or rotational job moves available?
- Does the organization support ongoing training and education for employees to stay current in their fields?
- What do you think is the greatest opportunity facing the organization in the near future? The biggest threat?
- Why did you come to work here? What keeps you here?
- How is this department perceived within the organization?
- Is there a formal process for advancement within the organization?
- What are the traits and skills of people who are the most successful within the organization?
- What have been the primary reasons for persons leaving this position or this company?
- Why did the person who held this position most recently leave?
- What would you like done differently by the next person who fills this job?
- What are some of the objectives that you would like accomplished in this job?
- What is the most pressing? What would you like to have done within the next one to two months?
- What are some of the longer-termed objectives that you would like completed?
- What freedom would I have in determining my work objectives, deadlines, and methods of measurement?
- What are some of the more difficult problems that one would have to face in this position?
- Where could a person go who is successful in this position and within what time frame?
- In what ways has this organization been most successful in terms of products and services over the years?
- What significant changes do you foresee in the near future for the company?
- How is one judged? What accounts for success?

THANK YOU NOTES

After an interview is completed, sending a thank you note is a very effective way to show your interest in the position and express your appreciation for the interview. A thank you note reminds the employer about you. It brings positive attention to you one more time. If there are many people applying for the same position, a thank you can bring your name up to the top of the list, or get your resume out of the stack of applications and on to center stage once again.

It is also appropriate to send a thank you note after an impromptu conversation with an employer who took time out from work to talk to you about the company and opportunities, or give you referrals to other businesses

The note should either be mailed, emailed or hand delivered as soon as possible after the interview while it is fresh in the employer's mind. If you interviewed for a position in the morning and the employer plans on making a decision in the afternoon, hand deliver or email the thank you note right away. If you are told a decision will be made in a week or more, send a note through the mail telling them you would be available for a second interview.

A thank you note tells an employer that:

- You are courteous and thoughtful
- You appreciated the time the interviewer took to interview you
- You are interested and excited about the job opening
- You are available for a second interview
- You are able and willing to start to work

SOCIAL MEDIA

LinkedIn is a career related website commonly used by recruiters and employers. Because LinkedIn contains "resume like" information and formatting on all of your work and volunteer experience and manages your contacts, it is particularly useful in job search. Here are a few suggested to help you get started:

- ✓ Complete your profile and have someone review it.
- ✓ Have a goal of 50 professional connections.
- ✓ Ask and give Recommendations.
- ✓ Join Groups that interest you, like comments and make comments to join conversations on subjects which interest you.
- ✓ Follow Companies you are interested in learning more about or working for. Organizations will broadcast openings with hope of generating interested candidates.

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