EN320 English in Job Application

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INSIDE SECRETS OF

Finding a Teaching Job

Step-by-step help—from the application to the interview!

- Succeed with real-world tips from teacher candidates.
- Create your resume using samples and tips from professional writers.
- Prepare for the most commonly asked interview questions.
- Showcase your teaching skills with a partfolio and demonstration video

New in this edition:

- Information on finding and applying for teaching jobs over the Internet
- Directory of Web resources for aspiring teachers
- Advice for people entering education from different fields



Jack Warner and Clyde Bryan with Diane Warner

INSIDE SECRETS OF Finding a Teaching Job

SECOND EDITION

The Most Effective Search Methods for Both New and Experienced Educators

Jack Warner and Clyde Bryan with Diane Warner



When a specific teaching vacancy occurs, it's advertised. Any applications or resumes received as a result are sent to the particular school's site administrator (usually the principal) for screening, along with the resumes in the district's active file. The site administrator then chooses the top five or ten applicants.

Depending on the school district's philosophy, these applications might be referred to an interview team for further screening before interviews are scheduled, or the site administrator might decide which of the candidates will be scheduled for interviews. Shared decision making is a popular philosophy these days, especially among the larger school districts, although some districts place great emphasis on giving the school's principal sole decision-making power.

An interview team, by the way, usually consists of the site administrator, teachers, parents, and school-board members or community residents. An interview might be conducted by an interview team (also known as an *interview committee* or a *hiring panel*) or solely by the site administrator.

Many large school districts have well-staffed personnel departments that do the initial screening of all applicants, whether they're applying for current or future vacancies. The personnel director and his or her staff make the first paper cut, placing the top applicants for each type of vacancy in active files that are delivered to the principals at schools where specific vacancies exist. The principals choose the top candidates from these prescreened files to be scheduled for interviews with a hiring panel or with the principal him- or herself.

Smaller school districts often bypass these initial screenings and refer all applicants' files directly to the principal at the school where an opening exists. This administrator does all the work: screens the files, makes the paper cut, and schedules the top candidates for interviews.

Whatever the district's philosophy, however, you won't be scheduled for an interview unless your file makes it past the initial screening process—and our goal is to help you do just that.

Teacher-Specific Resumes

There are many excellent books available on resume writing. One in particular stands out: *Expert Resumes for Teachers and Educators*, by Wendy Enelow and Louise Kursmark, published in 2002 by JIST Publishing. Several sample resumes from this book are included here in this chapter to help you get an idea of what an excellent teacher resume looks like. We'll also share our tips for writing an outstanding teacher resume that gets you past the initial screening and helps you get that all-important face-to-face interview with the hiring officials.

© JIST Works 47

Writing Outstanding Resumes

You might never have needed a resume until now, and the very thought of writing one might seem overwhelming. Your fears are understandable, but we guarantee that you'll feel much better about the whole thing after you've read through this section. We've tried to simplify the process of resume writing by giving you some clear, concise direction in a question-and-answer format.

What Is a Resume?

A resume is a concise, easy-to-read history of your life that includes your job objective, educational background, employment history, community service, work skills, and accomplishments. A resume (along with the application and letters of reference) is the tool most district personnel use to screen teacher candidates before scheduling interviews.

Why Is a Resume Important?

A resume is one of the most important tools you'll use in your job search. It's a representation of yourself—an indication of who you are. An outstanding, flawless resume can eventually land you an interview; likewise, a poorly written, sloppy resume will kill your chances. An effective resume should include the information most likely to impress the particular school or district to which you are applying. If you impress the screeners with your resume, as well as your application and letters of reference, they'll schedule you for an interview; you'll have made the paper cut. Unless you survive this initial screening process, you'll never make it to the interview table.

How Long Should a Resume Be?

If you're a recent college graduate with limited work experience, a one-page resume is ideal. If you have extensive related work experience, however, a page and a half to two pages should be the limit. If your resume is longer than one page, you're taking the risk that only the first page will be read, especially if the personnel office is swamped with applicants.

What Are the Common Resume Formats and What Is the Difference Between Them?

There are three basic resume formats: *chronological, functional,* and *combination*. Depending on your background and experience, one format might be better for presenting your qualifications than another.

• Chronological resumes list your employment experience in reversechronological order, starting with your most recent position and working backward in time. **Advantages:** Easy to write, easy to read, and widely accepted by school-district personnel.

Disadvantages: Not a good choice if you have little or no work history, if you've been a job hopper or are changing careers, or if you have had long lapses between employment.

• **Functional resumes,** also known as *skills resumes*, emphasize your skills, strengths, and accomplishments.

Advantages: A popular choice for recent college graduates and career switchers; provides a practical format for selling yourself by accentuating your strengths and transferable skills.

Disadvantages: Difficult to organize and to read unless very well formatted. Many employers see the use of this format as a red flag that the candidate has something to hide.

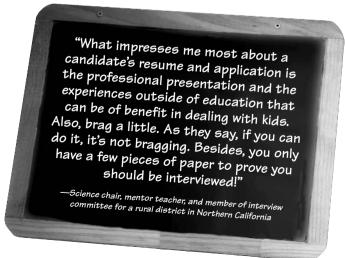
Combination resumes, also known as creative resumes, combine elements
of chronological and functional resumes. These are the most creative and
adaptable types of resumes and are the favorite choice of many teacher
applicants.

Advantages: Uses the best ideas from both styles: teaching experience, related experience, activities and distinctions, interests, skills, and educational background; allows for a great deal of creativity.

Disadvantages: More time-consuming to organize and difficult to read unless formatted very carefully.

What Do You Mean by "Formatting"?

Formatting is the way the information is laid out on the page. There are two basic styles of formatting:



- **Block style** has a clean, sharp appearance because all the headings begin at the left margin. The information under each heading is indented about an inch and a half, giving it an "airy" look with a lot of white space.
- Centered style uses full margins and wider lines. This is an excellent
 choice if you have a great deal of information to include on a one-page
 resume. However, it's not as crisp-looking as the block style and is more
 difficult to read.

What Is a Customized Resume?

A customized resume is one that's targeted toward a specific teaching vacancy. For example, if you're applying for a position as a high school social studies teacher with adjunct duties as cheerleading advisor, you'd want to include your high school and college cheerleading experiences, the fact that your cheerleading team at UCLA won first place in the Western Division finals, and your stints teaching at a summer high school cheerleading camp.

If you're applying for an overseas position teaching German to American students in Munich, you'd devote a large chunk of space to your mastery of the German language, the summer you lived with a German family in Bremen, and your knowledge of the German culture.

If you're applying for a position as a high school English and drama teacher who'll be required to direct two dramatic productions each year, you'll want to emphasize your Little Theater work, your summer experience directing a traveling production of *Our Town*, and the dramas you put together for your church youth program.

Obviously, a customized resume is a smart way to market yourself when you have transferable skills or experiences that match the special requirements listed in a particular job description. Because today's word-processing technology makes it so easy to make alterations to your basic resume, there's no excuse for sending the same canned resume in response to each vacancy you are interested in. Instead, target each resume to the particular job.

What Are the Basic Guidelines for Resume Writing? In a nutshell:

- Use $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ white or off-white paper, 20-pound bond or better.
- Never use the pronoun "I."
- Make all headings uniform—the same font and size.

- Font size for body text and headings should be between 10 and 12 points, except for your name, which can be in 14- to 24-point type to make it stand out.
- If the resume has two or more pages, number each page and include your name.
- Don't use a staple or paper clip.
- Don't print on both sides of the paper.
- Don't get too cute with too many novelty graphics, gothic fonts, shadowed letters, or fancy borders; this is not an art project. Above all, you want your resume to be readable, so avoid any special effects that clutter it up or make it look unprofessional.
- Prepare the resume yourself using a word-processing program so that you can update or customize the resume on short notice.
- Use a high-quality ink-jet or laser-quality printer, if possible.

How Long Does It Take to Write a Resume?

A simple chronological resume may take as little as two hours, but a functional or combination resume will take from 5 to 15 hours. You don't sit down over a cup of coffee and write your resume like you would a personal letter. It takes a great deal of thought, information gathering, creative writing, and editing. Many resume-writing experts even suggest that you work on it an hour or so at a time and then come back to it the next day. (You can see why professional resume writers don't come cheap.)

What Is an Unacceptable Resume?

A resume with any of these problems:

- Handwritten
- Typos or misspelled words
- Long sentences that ramble on and on
- Lack of organization
- Use of the pronoun "I"
- A "crowded" look with little white space
- Poor print quality
- Handwritten corrections
- A shopworn look (bent corners, creases, smudges, or stains)

A member of an interview committee for a suburban district in Michigan was asked what impressed him most about a resume or application, and this was his response: "Brevity—ability to get to the point."

What Makes a Resume Outstanding?

According to our research, these are the qualities school-district personnel directors hope to see:

- Brief and concise
- Easy to read
- No more than three to five headings
- Tasteful and moderate use of font sizes, italics, boldface print, underlining, and capital letters
- Uniform margins, preferably no smaller than an inch on all sides
- A crisp, clean, professional look
- Power verbs and teaching-specific keywords
- No amateurish gimmicks
- Skills, talents, and abilities that are transferable to the classroom
- No typos
- No misspelled words

We've emphasized these last two qualities because we heard them over and over again during our research, and we can't stress them enough! The personnel people who do the initial screening of applications and resumes expect perfection; they often feel that teachers, above all, should be able to spell and avoid typographical errors. So be warned: There's practically no room for error here.

Recently, a company called Office Team surveyed executives of companies nationwide and asked how they felt about these same resume flaws. The results of the survey show that standards in the business world are not very different than standards in the educational arena:

- The general attitude is "Two strikes and you're out," meaning that any
 combination of two typos or misspelled words disqualifies the candidate
 from further consideration.
- Nearly 45 percent of the executives polled said it takes only *one* of these errors to eliminate the candidate from the running!

A 2002 poll of professional resume writers and career counselors from the Career Masters Institute once again placed typos at the top of the list of cardinal resume sins.

Obviously, it's imperative that you avoid these errors, and this is what we recommend to ensure a flawless resume:

- Run a spell check. But remember that spell check won't catch it if you use the wrong word, such as using "affect" (a verb) when you meant "effect" (a noun).
- Use a dictionary to look up the spelling of *any* word in doubt.
- Give copies of your resume to several peers to review and edit.
- Read your resume backwards, beginning with the last word at the bottom of the page and ending at the top. This is a clever trick that catches typos and misspelled words that you often miss when reading normally, because it forces you to see only one word at a time. (Try finding the mistake in this sentence by reading it backwords and you'll see what we mean.)

What Are "Power" Verbs and Keywords?

Power verbs are what bring a resume to life. A power verb reveals an impressive ability or character trait in a single word and keeps your resume from being lifeless and repetitive. Use them throughout your resume. Here are some examples:

- Achieved
- Acquired
- Administered
- Advocated
- Analyzed
- Assessed
- Attained
- Authored
- Chaired
- Coached
- Communicated
- Completed
- Composed
- Conceived
- Conducted
- Coordinated
- Created

- Delegated
- Demonstrated
- Designed
- Developed
- Devised
- Directed
- Drafted
- Encouraged
- Enriched
- Established
- Evaluated
- Exceeded
- Executed
- Expanded
- Expedited
- Facilitated
- Formulated

- Founded
- Generated
- Guided
- Handled
- Helped
- Implemented
- Improved
- Increased
- Influenced
- Initiated
- Installed
- Instructed
- Interacted
- Interviewed
- Introduced
- Judged
- Led

- Maintained
- Managed
- Mentored
- Moderated
- Molded
- Motivated
- Negotiated
- Operated
- Organized
- Originated
- Perfected
- Performed
- Persuaded
- Pioneered

- Planned
- Prepared
- Presented
- Presided
- Produced
- Promoted
- Proposed
- Recommended
- Reorganized
- Researched
- Resolved
- Revamped
- Revitalized
- Scheduled

- Selected
- Solicited
- Solved
- Spearheaded
- Supervised
- Supported
- Taught
- Tested
- Trained
- Troubleshot
- Tutored
- Updated
- Utilized
- Wrote

Keywords (also known as buzzwords) are nouns that are used most often to describe the skills and experience that pertain to a particular profession. They demonstrate that you understand and have experience in the profession. Keywords are particularly important if you are applying to a large school corporation that might be scanning your resume into an electronic database of resumes. The more appropriate keywords your resume contains, the more likely it is that your resume will come up when the database is searched for candidates that match the hiring criteria. Some examples of education keywords, from Expert Resumes for Teachers and Educators, include the following:

- Accreditation
- Administration
- Athletics/coaching
- Classroom teaching
- Course design

- Instructional media
- Instrumental music
- Manipulatives
- Peer counseling
- Research

- Scholastic standards
- Standardized testing
- Student services
- Student teaching
- Textbook review

Should I List My References on My Resume?

The consensus of opinion is that you should not. There are several reasons for this:

 You don't want to unnecessarily subject your references to constant telephone calls.

- It takes up too much valuable space.
- Employers already know you have a list of references or letters of reference and will request a copy if they're seriously interested in you.

By the way, the jury seems to be out on whether or not to include this phrase at the bottom of your resume:

References available upon request.

Many feel it is a waste of space because employers already know this. Others might feel that because references are so important in the education field, you should let the school know that you have them and are ready to provide them.

Sample Resumes

Now that you have a handle on the basics, here is a collection of well-written sample resumes, from *Expert Resumes for Teachers and Educators*, that demonstrate these basics in a variety of styles. Choose the one that comes closest to your qualifications, interests, specializations, and experiences and then build from there, capitalizing on your own strengths and abilities.

RHONDA L. LeCOMPTE

202 Arborway Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Telephone: (617) 555-3571 E-mail: RLecompte@aol.com

CREDENTIALS:

- Certified to Teach Bilingual Education (K-8)
- Certified to Teach Special Education
- Certified to Teach Elementary Education (K-8)

EDUCATION:

M.A. Applied Linguistics (Bilingual, ESL Education) Summa Cum Laude, 1999

- University of Massachusetts, Boston, Massachusetts

B.S. Special Education Magna Cum Laude, 1990

Dual Major: Special Education, Mental Retardation & Elementary Education Concentration: Psychology

- University of Maine at Farmington 1986-1990

Université du Maine, LeMans, France
 Spring Semester 1987

- University of Maine, Orono 1985-1986

Academic Awards / Achievements:

Certificates of Award for Highest GPA in MR Major (1988, Spring)
 W Outstanding Academic Achievement (1988, Spring)

Alpha Lambda Delta / National Scholastic Honor Society for Freshmen UMO

Selected (1 of 3 Students at the University) to participate in a
 Special Education Delegation to the People's Republic of China
 UMF

OUALIFICATIONS:

- Bilingual (English & Spanish).
- Experience in one-on-one tutoring and group instruction of ESL.
- Experienced in client assistance working with the mentally retarded teaching living skills to adolescents and adults.
- Designed and implemented a new program for teaching life skills which is currently successfully being used in a high school setting.
- Experienced in conceptualization, consultation, and presentation of varied-level educational workshops/conferences.
- Serve as a teaching consultant to other teachers involved in the process of integrating students into other programs and classes.
- Published in Racenicity: The Whitewashing of Ethnicity by Pepi Leistyna (Chapter 6) / Publisher: Roman & Littlefield (forthcoming)

(Continued on Page Two)

This resume for a bilingual/special/elementary teacher was very effective in generating interviews for positions in highly competitive school districts (resume writer: Rolande LaPointe, Lewiston, ME).

Rhonda L. LeCompte

Curriculum Vitae (Page Two)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Bi-Lingual (Spanish) Special Education Teacher Fall 1999-Present

Cambridge High School (Cambridge, Massachusetts)

- Designed, implemented, and administer new Life Skills Program
- Mentor to several high school students

Spanish Instructor			Summer 1998
171 (1 0 0 D . 1)	•	 /17 / / 17 ID ID	

UMASS, Boston, Massachusetts / Veteran's Upward Bound Program

Substitute Teacher 1996-1999

Boston School System (Boston, Massachusetts)

ESL Instructor 1996-1998

Cambridge Center for Adult Education (Cambridge, Massachusetts)

Bilingual Special Education Teacher 1995-1996

Thomas Jefferson Elementary School (Boston, Massachusetts)

- K-3 Self-contained language room

Peace Corps Volunteer (Cuenca, Ecuador) 1993-1995

Special Education Teacher Consultant

Instituto Psicopedagogico Agustin Cueva Tamariz (Cuenca, Ecuador)

- Total program conducted in the Spanish language, grades K-6.
- Consulted with multiple teachers, classrooms, and students.
- Implemented/presented individual and classroom consultation programs for teachers.
- Demonstrated planning/presentation of lessons through model teaching.

Special Education Teacher (Behaviorally Impaired)

1990-1993

Montello Jr. High School (Lewiston, Maine)

- Self-contained classroom for 7th and 8th grade students.
- Supervised 1-2 Education Techs.
- Outstanding Teacher Award (1992-1993), Lewiston Teacher's Association.

LINDA QUI

1502 Lin Grove Blvd. #615 - Houston, TX 77087 - (713) 555-5555

OBJECTIVE: A full-time elementary school teaching position

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS:

- More than 8 years of successful work experience in an academic environment
- Bachelor of Fine Arts degree and currently working toward Master's degree in Education
- Experience working with preschool and elementary-age children
- Exceptionally creative with proven organizational, planning, and leadership skills

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE:

Teaching

KILLEEN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT - Killeen, IA
Student Teacher's Assistant for summer art program (Kindergarten through first grade)

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH - Southtown, TX

Vacation Bible School and Sunday School Teacher (Preschool through first grade)

UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND, THE HONORS COLLEGE - Richmond, TX

Academic Advisor, Orientation Advisor, and Retreat Counselor for students of the Honors College

Planning and Organization

UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND, THE HONORS COLLEGE - Richmond, TX

Coordinator – "Little Wrangler Day" in cooperation with the Richmond Independent School District. During this successful event, over 3000 elementary school students observed cultural exhibits.

Chairman - University of Richmond Annual Fiesta Association

(A student-run festival event benefiting community scholarship programs)

- Advised and oversaw all event committees.
- Created and produced the Annual Fiesta Policy Manual and the Annual Fiesta Gazette.
- Created recruitment programs and served as Scholarship Coordinator and Director of Community Relations.
- Held overall responsibility for event's \$126,000 budget.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND, THE HONORS COLLEGE - Richmond, TX

Administrative Assistant1996 to PresentChairman - Annual Fiesta Association1995 to 1996Assistant to the Scholarship Coordinator1992 to 1994

UNIVERSITY OF KILLEEN - Killeen, IA

Residential Clerk 1992

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS - Stafford, TX

Office Assistant 1988 to 1992

Without a teaching certificate, this individual used a functional style to show her experience with young children and was successful in landing a position with the school district's Alternative Certification Program (resume writer: Kelley Smith, Sugar Land, TX).

Linda Qui - Page 2

EDUCATION:

UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND - Richmond, TX **Bachelor of Fine Arts** (1997)

GPA 3.4 / Graduated with membership in The Honors College

Currently enrolled in coursework toward **M.Ed. in Educational Psychology**

Awards:

- Outstanding Senior Service Award
- Ambud of the Year
- Ambassador of the Year
- Areté Award

MEMBERSHIPS & CERTIFICATIONS:

- University of Richmond Alumni Association, Young Alumni Board of Directors
- Annual Fiesta Association, Chairman
- Honors College Student Governing Board
- Honors College Advisory Board
- Honors Advocates, Coordinator
- Richmond Livestock Show and Rodeo Committee
- Certified Alcohol Intervention Trainer

Excellent references and letters of recommendation available

ANNE C. ELLIS

210 Candlewood Court, Lacey, Washington 98509 ellisedu@earthlink.com 378-245-1256



OBJECTIVE

A position as an Elementary School Teacher that will utilize strong teaching abilities to create a nurturing, motivational, and stimulating learning environment to help children achieve their potential.

PROFILE

- Highly motivated, enthusiastic, and dedicated educator who wants all children to be successful learners.
- "Believe in the impossible"; continually research educational programs and procedures to benefit students.
- Committed to creating a classroom atmosphere that is stimulating and encouraging to students.
- Demonstrated ability to consistently individualize instruction, based on student's needs and interests.
- Exceptional ability to establish cooperative, professional relationships with parents, staff, and administration.

EDUCATION

B.S. in Elementary Education, Troy State University, Troy, Alabama

2000

- Summa Cum Laude President's Honor List Kappa Delta Phi
- National Collegiate Education Award Winner
- · Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges
- Participated in the Test for Teaching Knowledge field project, 2000

A.A. in Arts and Sciences, Pierce College, Tacoma, Washington

1995

CREDENTIALS

Elementary Education: 1-6:

Alabama License (Pending) — Washington License (Pending)

STUDENT TEACHING

Student Teacher, Harrand Creek Elementary School, Dothan, Alabama

Fall 2000

 Completed 200 hours hands-on teaching; resulting in a total of 488 hours experience in a first grade classroom. Utilized children's literature to teach and reinforce reading, writing, grammar, and phonics.
 Coordinated and taught math lessons and activities. Collaborated with teacher in planning, preparing, and organizing thematic units. Observed the use of teaching techniques to meeds of visual, kinesthetic, and auditory learners for all subject areas. Assisted in the quarterly grading.

Classroom Intern, Harrand Creek Elementary School, Dothan, Alabama (60 hours)

2nd Grade, Reading, Clover Park Elementary School, Dothan, Alabama

4th Grade, Reading, Science, Social Studies, Headland Elementary School, Dothan, Alabama

4th Grade, Math, EastGate Elementary School, Dothan, Alabama

5th Grade, Art & Social Studies, EastGate Middle School, Ozark, Alabama

1st Grade, Reading Tutor for student at-risk program, Troy State University, Alabama

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Director, Kinder-Care Learning Center, Lacey, Washington

1993 to 1995

Oversaw day-to-day operations of child care center for 65 children. Ensured all local, state, and federal rules and regulations were adhered to.

AFFILIATIONS

Member, National Council for Exceptional Children

Leader, Girl Scouts of America

This resume for a newly qualified teacher makes a strong visual impression through the use of unusual fonts and a striking graphic (resume writer: Teresa L. Pearson, Fort Rucker, AL).

AUGUST JAGGER

10 Front Street, Santa Monica, CA 90403 ◆ (310) 934-6673

OBJECTIVE To secure a position in elementary education teaching grades K-6

CERTIFICATION California State Provisional Certification, N-6

EDUCATION State University of California at Santa Monica, Santa Monica, CA

Bachelor of Science, Elementary Education, May 2000

-with a concentration in Psychology; Dean's List - Fall 1998/1999 and Spring 2000

TEACHING STUDENT TEACHER, FIRST GRADE
EXPERIENCE MASON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, Deer Ridge, CA

1/00 - 5/00

9/99 - 12/99

1/98 - 3/98

• Demonstrated excellent classroom management skills and a passion for teaching.

 Employed an integrated approach towards teaching by incorporating multiple teaching methods that included: cooperative learning, story mapping, compare and contrast, math manipulatives, sequencing, charting, prediction, discussion, music, and arts and crafts.

Conceptualized an integrated unit on Earth Day that provided students with an
understanding and appreciation for their global environment through hands-on
experiments and project-oriented exercises in all subject areas.

 Taught time and money concepts, and created a math learning center to develop students' higher-level thinking skills at an appropriate pace.

Utilized computers and visual aids as educational tools to further students' understanding
of course material, and to develop/reinforce computer and keyboarding skills.

STUDENT TEACHER, FOURTH GRADE

JUNIPER INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, Deer Ridge, CA

• Assisted in preparing students for upcoming English Language Arts test.

 Developed and implemented lessons in all subject areas, and accessed students' prior knowledge through a combination of KWL charts and semantic mapping.

• Directed reading groups with full responsibility for the selection of all materials.

 Successfully used enrichment activities and behavior modification techniques as a motivator for completing homework and projects, and for improving overall class conduct.

· Attended various conferences, meetings, and reading workshops.

3/98 - 6/98 VOLUNTEER TEACHER'S ASSISTANT, SECOND GRADE

TEACHER OBSERVER, SECOND GRADE SOUTHERN WAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, Deer Ridge, CA

Assisted in all aspects of classroom management and chaperoned students on class trips.

♦ Observed teaching methods with a focus on lesson content and teacher-student interaction.

9/95 - present PRIVATE MATH & READING TUTOR

 Provide one-on-one tutoring to third, fourth, and sixth grade students to achieve and sustain target levels in areas of reading, writing, division, and multiplication.

WORK HISTORY Customer Service Representative, Partners, Deer Ridge, CA, 1994 - present

SPECIAL INTERESTS

SKILLS

Avid collector of new and classic children's books for personal and professional use.

Enjoy sharing books with students and bringing in "Student Selections of the Week."

COMPUTER Windows 95, Word Perfect, MS Word, MS Works, Internet Research

Jump Start, Little Bear, Freddie Fish, Thinking Adventures, School House Rock, Madeline

This concise resume for an elementary educator is enlivened with an appropriate graphic and diamond-shaped bullets (resume writer: Ann Baehr, Brentwood, NY).

Rhoda Peterson

502 Madison Avenue ◆ Leonia, NJ 07605 ◆ (201) 522-6442 ◆ rhoda9@aol.com

SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATOR

— Key Qualifications -

- ✓ Proactive teacher with diverse background from educational, corporate, and military sectors.
- ✓ Experienced in training student teachers and orienting new staff members.
- ✓ An effective presenter, who conducts monthly chapter meetings for teaching staff.
- ✓ Demonstrated leadership potential, advancing to rank of staff non-commissioned officer in military.

"Your demeanor and patience lend themselves in creating a positive learning environment....You take the profession of teaching seriously on a daily basis." (Principal's Evaluation, 2000)

EDUCATION/CERTIFICATIONS:

William Paterson College, Wayne, NJ - MS Degree/Multicultural Education

State University at Oswego, NY - Courses in Education, Math, and Student Teaching

University of California, Los Angeles - BS Degree/Computer Science

- Graduated Magna Cum Laude
- New York State Secondary School Mathematics, 1999
- New York City Mathematics in Day High Schools/Junior High Schools, 1999
- New York State Provisional Teaching Certification in Secondary School Mathematics, 1995

CAREER EXPERIENCE:

G.W. CARVER HIGH SCHOOL, New York, NY

1995-Present

Mathematics Teacher

Teach full spectrum of secondary school math curriculum (7th-12th grades) to a multicultural student body at this comprehensive high school, focusing on math and science. Scope of position covers prealgebra through pre-calculus courses, including instruction to ESL students.

- Initiated use of graphing calculators as a way to incorporate technology into program.
 Demonstrated transition from manual to computerized calculations.
- Utilized math manipulatives such as geoboards and tangrams as well as varied assessment tools to supplement structured curriculum.
- Participated in Saturday and after-school tutoring programs, gaining a high student attendance rate. Produced above average scores on Regents Exams, with 97% passing Trigonometry exam.
- Selected to train student teachers and help new math teachers acclimate to program.

VARIOUS HIGH SCHOOLS AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS, New York, NY

1993-1995

Student Teacher

Covered Jr. and Sr. High School curriculums, including consumer math and investing.

COMPUTER SYSTEMS CO., New York, NY

1989-1993

Systems Analyst

Part of team for confidential project involving design, development, and testing code for mainframe operating system (MVS).

Made regular presentations at team meetings on technical topics.

Continued

This resume rounds out a strong Key Qualifications section with a testimonial taken from a recent performance evaluation (resume writer: Vivian Belen, Fair Lawn, NJ).

Rhoda Peterson

Page 2

(201) 522-6442

CAREER EXPERIENCE (Continued):

US NAVY

1983-1987

Corporal

Advanced through ranks, attaining level of non-commissioned officer during four years of active duty. Served abroad as well as in US.

 Participated in many leadership programs. Gained valuable experience supervising personnel and making presentations.

Sergeant

1987-Present

Continue in Reserves, leading logistics team.

Awards/Medals

- Letters of Achievement

- National Defense Medal

- Good Conduct Medal

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE:

- Chapter Leader/United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Elected to this position, acting as liaison with UFT headquarters, maintaining communications with staff, and orienting new staff members
- School Supporter One of the most avid staff participants at Urban High School, taking a highly
 visible role in all school community events such as field trips, PTA functions, and athletic
 competitions.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Seminars & Inservice Programs

- The Dale Carnegie Course in Effective Speaking and Human Relations
- Thinking Math: Secondary School Summer Institute
- Demystifying Technology in Education
- Using Manipulatives in High School Classrooms
- Significant Math Topics for Grades 7-10
- Writing in Math

Affiliations

- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Attended educational conferences.
- Association of Mathematics Teacher of New York State Attended educational conferences.

References available on request.

RICHARD OLSON

3605 North 86th Street Superior, Wisconsin 54880 (715) 555-1692 or olson@cc.com

OBJECTIVE:

Elementary or Middle School Social Studies Teacher

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS:

- Numerous practica experiences in local schools.
- Total commitment to students, district, school, and community.
- Highly effective communicator.
- Compassionate and sensitive to needs and emotions of children.
- 11 years' experience coaching boys' baseball. Expertise in both on-field coaching and off-field administration of game.
- Committed to personal lifelong learning as well as offering quality education to children.

LICENSE:

Wisconsin teaching license. Certified to teach elementary education and Social Studies Grades 7 – 9.

EDUCATION:

University of Wisconsin - Superior (UWS)

BS, Elementary Education with Social Studies minor, May 2000.

GPA: 3.79. Involved in Future Teachers Association.

AWARDS:

UWS, Dean's List of Academic Achievement, 1998 – 1999; Fairbrother Academic Scholarship, 1999 – 2000; Lakehead Pipeline Company, Incorporated, Academic Scholarship, Spring 1999; Maurice Brown Academic Scholarship, 1998 – 1999; and UWS Foundation Academic Scholarship, 1997 – 1998.

PRACTICA:

Social Studies Methods, Lester Park Middle School, Duluth, MN, Spring 1999
Language Arts Methods, St. James Elementary School, Superior, WI, Fall 1998
Reading Methods, St. James Elementary School, Superior, WI, Fall 1998
Physical Education Methods, Cooer Elementary School, Superior, WI, Spring 1998

COACHING:

Baseball, Boys Legion (ages 16-18), Great Falls, MI, Youth Baseball Association, 1987 – 1994
Baseball, Boys Senior Little League (ages 13-15), Great Falls, MI, Youth Baseball Association, 1984 – 1986

- American Legion Baseball Program experienced phenomenal growth during tenure. Player enrollment increased to such an extent as to necessitate need for Junior Varsity Club. Promoted Legion baseball in community, raising awareness of it to higher level.
- Assisted several players to continue playing in college through on-site coaching and personal contacts with college coaches.
- Effectively assisted American Legion Club members in securing funds for program allowing for expenditures to be used in more beneficial manner.
- Work, tireless commitment, and knowledge of game earned me position with Atlanta Braves as Associate Scout.

There is a lot of information packed into this resume for a newly qualified teacher. It was important to include coaching and employment activities that gave him lots of experience working with children (resume writer: Linda Wunner, Duluth, MN).

Richard Olson Page 2

EMPLOYMENT:

School District of Superior, WI

Intern. January - June 2000

Interning in 6th grade classroom at Great Falls Elementary School. Assume responsibilities of regular classroom teacher: recording attendance, teaching all subjects, administering and correcting tests, and exercising needed discipline. Already employed as substitute teacher where I have interacted with other teachers and school employees in various capacities.

- Coordinated 6th grade fundraiser that raised over \$2,000.
- □ Co-director of district-wide spelling bee that involved communications with district principals and teachers.
- Participated in after-school "Math Olympiad" program, a supplemental math activity for students seeking additional challenges.
- Assisted in school's participation in nationwide oration and writing contests.

University of Wisconsin-Superior

Game Management, 1997 - Present

Administer smooth, effective execution of all sports programs. Welcome visiting teams and provide necessary assistance. Secure and supervise workers for events.

- Key player in significantly improving UWS's hospitality image through hard work, effective planning, and personable communication.
- □ Successfully assisted in staffing 2000 NCAA Division III Men's Hockey National Finals Tournament.

VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), Superior, WI

Summer Associate, May - August 1999

Strived to improve literacy of at-risk students. Created and learned about several literacy assessment tools used to select appropriate literacy experiences and assessed impact of total summer school experience on students. Served as resource person for paraprofessionals and helped prepare resource materials for other tutors.

- Effectively tutored 4 primary grade students in reading and writing daily.
- Developed evaluation tools including rubrics, surveys, and other assessments that were used as beforeand-after measures for program.
- □ In conjunction with other summer associates, developed recruitment and training plan.

City of Great Falls Parks Department, Great Falls, MI

Park Maintenance Worker, Summers 1994 – 1997

Resurrected and maintained beauty of 22-acre city baseball complex.

Sheridan Lanes, Great Falls, MI

Assistant Manager, 1986 – 1997

Successfully ensured customer satisfaction for business by establishing rapport and communication.

Managed leagues and maintained facility.

- Reestablished vouth bowling leagues.
- Successfully managed/hosted annual tournaments.
- Remained loval during several ownership changes.

THOMAS B. KLEIN

89 Kensington Road • Manahawkin, NJ 08050 • 609-612-8985

High-School English Teacher for Your Most Challenging Students — Football Coach —

SUMMARY

Spirited, optimistic education professional with an excellent reputation for spurring dramatic improvements in the classroom performance, behavior, and attitude of lower-track high-school students deemed "unteachable." Able to gain the trust and respect of youngsters and convey confidence in their abilities. Successful in using innovative, unconventional approaches to engage students' interest, strengthen reading and writing skills, develop an appreciation for literature, and achieve high passing rates on standardized proficiency tests. Initiator and manager of a unique, highly effective in-school suspension program. Extensive coaching background.

SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Classroom Teaching

- Consistently sought the challenge of teaching and inspiring lower-track high-school students.
- Achieved outstanding success in strengthening their reading and writing abilities, building life skills, and
 motivating them to consider job / career goals; 25% of students pursued higher education.
- Encouraged students to become active classroom participants and join in the decision-making process.
- Attained an HSPT passing percentage in the upper 80% range among students who had previously failed.
- Effectively used comic books and other unconventional resources to build grammar and punctuation skills.
- Organized spirited debates on controversial topics.
- Sparked students' interest in literature through role playing and lively discussions.
- Arranged for monthly guest speakers to address career topics.

Behavior Management / Counseling

- · Achieved one of the lowest rates of discipline problems in the school.
- Created a fun, free-spirited environment in which students adhered to stated rules of conduct.
- · Worked closely with parents to reinforce behavior management.
- · Developed trusting relationships with students and frequently served as a sounding board for problems.
- Helped them develop a better outlook and a solution-oriented approach to dealing with challenges.

Program Development and Management

- Initiated the introduction of a learning-based in-school suspension program to deal with a high rate of daily suspensions; later instituted the program at a middle school based on outstanding results.
- Coordinated each student's assignments with classroom teacher and provided one-on-one instruction in all subject areas. For the first time in the school's history, required suspended students to perform schoolwork.

Coaching

- · Coached several undefeated football teams, including one that went on to win the state championship.
- Helped sharpen the skills of many players who later played college football.
- Oversaw the entire football program for 6 Pop Warner teams; interacted with local school coaches to integrate their philosophies into the program, so players are well-prepared for high school football.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Pomeranz High School, Newark, NJ:
Director of In-School Suspension Program / Teacher (1996 – Present)
English Teacher, Grades 9 - 12 (1971 – 1995)
Assistant Football Coach (1982 – 1990) / Head Football Coach (1975 – 1978) / Head Baseball Coach (1974)
Assistant Coach, Football / Baseball / Wrestling (1971 – 1974)

COMMUNITY SERVICE / AWARDS

Football Commissioner, Angels Athletic Association / Pop Warner Football, Manahawkin, NJ (1994 – Present) Football Coach, Pop Warner Football, Manahawkin / Newark, NJ (1976 – 1994) Community Service Award, Kaitland County Chamber of Commerce (1999)

CERTIFICATION / EDUCATION

Certification as Teacher of High School English, State of New Jersey
B.A., English / Communications, 1971 • Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
Graduate Credits in Curriculum and Administration • Monmouth University, W. Long Branch, NJ

This high school teacher wants to take on a school's "most challenging students," and the functional Skills and Accomplishments list effectively highlights his ability to do so (resume writer: Rhoda Kopy, Toms River, NJ).

TONY C. RICHARDSON

328 Shattauck Avenue Palm Bay, FL 32907 (321) 725-5135

PURSUING A POSITION IN TEACHING

Certifications and Endorsements: K-12 Physical Education, Health, and Science 6-12

SUMMARY OF OUALIFICATIONS

Professional committed to achieving favorable results in education through a positive impact on the children of today and the future. Recognized leader for professional, academic, and community contributions. Experience and academic training include:

- Teaching Practices
- Management Info. Systems
- Personnel Evaluations
- Future Planning
- Classroom Evaluation
- Curriculum Inquiry
- Violence in Schools • Time Management
- Leadership
- Athletic Coaching
- Measurement & Evaluation
- Educational Systems
- Classroom Dynamics
- Curriculum Evaluation
- Community Relations

FDUCATION

M.S. in Educational Leadership, Florida State University - 12/99; GPA: 3.88 B.S. in Human Performance Dynamics; Concentration in Teaching K-12, University of South Florida — 12/96: GPA: 3.68

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE & SKILLS

Curriculum Development / Inquiry

- Developed curriculum for student teaching projects for health and social sciences.
- Researched the effectiveness of utilizing different styles of tests as assessments of learning.
- Wrote paper on preparing teachers for dealing with issues on mainstreaming, classroom behavior, perceived ability to teach special needs, classroom management, and academic development of the special needs child.

Educational Measurement

- · Examined various assessment methods, tools, techniques, processes, and procedures in evaluating student performance for Measurement and Evaluation in Education.
- · Completed a project on student learning styles to ascertain the prevalence of oral and visual learners and their related study habits.

Teaching / Presentation

- · Developed strong presentation and teaching style by utilizing a variety of educational tools including games, team-building exercises, use of videos, lectures, and alternative activities.
- · Skilled speaker, comfortable in presenting to groups as a manager and community volunteer.

VOLUNTEER / EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Volunteer

- Student Teacher, University High School, Orlando, FL 1999 to 2000
- Coach, Volunteer, Youth Football League of Sanford, FL 1996 to Present
- Den Leader, Boy Scouts of America, Orlando, FL 1995 to Present
 Coach, Volunteer, Youth of America, Orlando, FL 1994 to 1997
- Park Supervisor, Seminole County Recreation Department, Orlando, FL 1990 to 1993

Employment

- Operations Manager, B.J.'s Wholesale Warehouse, Merritt Island, FL 1997 to Present
- Department Supervisor, B.J.'s Wholesale Warehouse, Merritt Island, FL 1994 to 1997
- Sales Associate, B.J.'s Wholesale Warehouse, Merritt Island, FL 1993 to 1994

With no teaching experience but lots of pertinent volunteer and coaching activities, this individual highlighted his relevant experience and skills to add weight to his qualifications (resume writer: Laura DeCarlo, Melbourne, FL).

TONY C. RICHARDSON

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With no teaching experience but lots of pertinent volunteer and coaching activities, this individual highlighted his relevant experience and skills to add weight to his qualifications (resume writer: Laura DeCarlo, Melbourne, FL).

Gecilia M. Diaz

55 Magnolia Lane, Oakland, NJ 07436 201-405-5555 • cmdiaz@net.com

Career Target

Middle School Science Teacher in a child-centered school district.

Summary

- ☑ Highly motivated, energetic educator with 15 years of middle school teaching experience.
- ☑ Strong track record of fostering student curiosity, creativity, and enhanced learning.
- ☑ Enthusiastic, warm, and caring professional, sensitive to students' specialized and changing needs.
- ☑ Demonstrated ability to deliver individualized instruction, appropriate to each student's abilities.
- Ability to act as liaison, harmoniously and effectively, between parents, school, and community.

Key Skill Areas

Instructional Strategies

- Designed and developed integrated, thematic physical science curriculum for middle school students, aligned to meet core content and state standards.
- Use cross-curriculum, cooperative learning, motivational environment, team planning, and "real-world" examples to stimulate learning and learner retention.

Learning Styles

- Achieve educational goals by incorporating learning modality principles into all instruction. First special-service teacher incorporated into an inclusion class.
- Emphasize an active learning environment, high student expectations, and individualized instruction in a student-centered, heterogeneous classroom.

Educational Technology

- Championed innovative physical science programs and activities utilizing instructional media to enhance the scope and quality of education.
- Accomplished in the use of hands-on materials, manipulatives, and technology (electron microscopes, research on the Internet, video cameras, software).

Leadership

- Pioneered "Scientists in the Classroom" Program, partnering with local companies to provide scientific demonstrations and Q&A sessions.
- Selected as judge for state-run program, "21st Century Science" 3 years.

Student / Parent Relations

- Fostered parent involvement through regular communication (telephone calls or notes daily) and invitations to participate in classroom activities and events.
- Natural gift for getting young students excited about learning.

Certifications and Education

New Jersey Permanent Certification K-8 Elementary New Jersey Permanent Certification K-12 English

1991 M. Ed., Stockton State College, Stockton, NJ

1979 B.S., Elementary Education & English, Clemson University, Clemson, SC

Continuing Education:

1997 Meteorology Course, Union College, School of Meteorology 1994 Certificate, Computer Educator, Passaic County College, Passaic, NJ 1992 Materials Science Conference, sponsored by Rutgers University 1988 Cooperative Learning, Conference on Scientific Curriculum

Computer Skills

Macintosh PCs Claris Works MS Word 97 MacGrade MS Works Internet Netscape Navigator E-mail

This two-page resume devotes as much attention to activities leadership as it does to teaching descriptions. It also uses a broad Key Skill Areas section to emphasize relevant achievements (resume writer Susan Guarneri, Lawrenceville, NJ).

Cecilia M. Diaz

201-405-5555 Page 2

Experience

1985 - present Morris County Middle School, Morristown, NJ

Science Teacher - 8th Grade

- Teach Chemistry, Physics, Geology and Meteorology as well as enrichment classes for 3 classes daily, with up to 30 students per class, utilizing curriculum compacting and tiered instruction with 5 tiered teams in a block-scheduling system.
- Designed self-learning and small-group cooperative learning activities as well as hands-on science activities such as the Cliffton House archeological excavation.

Central State Middle School, Harrison, NJ 1999 Substitute Teacher - Physical Science

Oakland Township School District, Oakland, NJ 1984 - 1985

1980 - 1984Tiny Tots Pre-school, Rahwah, NJ Kindergarten Teacher / Director

• Full administrative, staffing, and budgeting responsibility for this mini-school within the district, with 13 teachers, aides, cook, and school bus driver, in addition to duties as kindergarten teacher.

Activities

1985 - 1997

Advisor, MCMS Newspaper: The Tiger Ledger

Substitute Teacher - K-12, primarily 6th Grade

- Provided proactive leadership for this student-run newspaper. Introduced students to assignments as cartoonists, reporters, photographers, proofreaders, and editors.
- Collaborated with Morristown News to meet quarterly production deadlines. Upgraded original cut and paste layout to computer layout. Forged parent partnerships for fundraising activities.

1985 - 1996Advisor, MCMS Video Imaging Program Production

- Led creative team of student volunteers in the design, editing, and production of an annual 8th grade video production, a reprise of their 8th grade year, which was shown to parents, faculty, administration, and students at the end of the school year.
- Spearheaded successful fundraising campaign that raised \$10K within one year for multimedia equipment. Spun-off to become the MCMS TV Studio, a fully functioning studio with a network of TV monitors installed in every classroom.

1985 - 1991Advisor, MCMS Yearbook: The Tiger

 Oversaw this student-run production by 7th and 8th graders, culminating in a hardcover yearbook. Students learned photography, layout, cropping, editing, and the entire production process. Raised funds to support this annual activity.

Committees

& Awards

Discipline Committee - established demerit system

Mission Statement Committee - Morristown Township "Millennium Mission"

Who's Who in American Education

Board of Education Honoree - for contributions to MCMS newspaper

Professional Associations

National Education Association (NEA)

New Jersey Education Association (NJEA)

New Jersey Science Teachers Association (NJSTA)

DUNALD GUNDEKSEN

500 Bird Court ■ Canoga Park, CA 95555 ■ Tel: 818-551-7830 ■ FAX: 818-551-7831

CAREER OBJECTIVE — Science Teacher — High School Level

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Seasoned entrepreneur with a Bachelor of Science Degree and more than 15 years' experience in:

Agricultural Sciences
Market Identification & Penetration

Operations Management Financial Management

Business Development Inventory Management

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- Adept at managing multiple tasks, problem isolation and resolution Achieved an efficient balance
 of organizational requirements and employee needs, whether managing corporate operations or
 agricultural workers.
- Multilingual communication skills (English/Spanish). Sensitivity in dealing with multicultural and diverse socio-economic topics and situations. — Hired and directed work forces of up to 50 farm workers as well as professional and support services staff without experiencing attrition problems.
- Strong analytical and writing abilities. Developed business plans, loan proposals, bids, and market surveys for own business and for other agricultural brokerages.
- Computer proficiency in business and accounting software including Word, Excel, Internet Explorer, and Peachtree.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Agriculture

California Polytechnic State University, Pomona, California Additional coursework in Biology, Chemistry, Animal Sciences, Zoology, and Microbiology

CAREER HISTORY

- PRESIDENT/OWNER: CalAsia Trading Company Los Angeles, California (1992 Present)
 Founded a produce brokerage that grosses \$4 \$5 million in annual sales. Oversee
 financial/inventory planning, acquisition, and management. Design and implement productmarketing campaigns. Recruit and train 6 sales staff.
- BROKERAGE DIVISION HEAD: Finest Produce Company Los Angeles, California (1991-1992)
 Created a national brokerage division. Planned and directed distribution of California and Arizona produce to terminal markets nationwide.
- PRODUCE BROKER: Venice Distributing Company Los Angeles, California (1986 1991)
 Located commodity markets. Bought produce from primary sources. Negotiated sales between the sources and the markets. Performed sales analysis and reporting. Revised marketing strategies according to sales performance.
- SALESMAN: Acme Fresh Vegetables San Jose, California (1983 1986)
 Developed and maintained accounts with wholesale markets, terminal market, and chain stores for Dole vegetable products. Provided customer support and account troubleshooting. Completed public speaking training.
- OWNER: Gundersen Farms San Jose, California (1971 1983)
 Operated a 500-acre farm, growing vegetable crops. Initiated capital and inventory procurement.
 Planned annual budgets and secured operating funds from lenders. Interviewed, evaluated, scheduled, trained, and supervised 50 seasonal workers and 6 full-time employees.

-References furnished upon request-

This resume was written for a seasoned business professional transitioning to a career in teaching (resume writer: Roleta Fowler Vasquez, Fillmore, CA).

Ann Thomas	10 Henry Street, Wycoff, New Jersey 07401 H: (201) 886-1125 — E-mail: Athomas@Yahoo.com				
OBJECTIVE	A position as a Middle School Mathematics Teacher where I can create an energized learning environment that focuses on individual understanding and expression.				
PROFILE	Dedicated, talented, resourceful teacher skilled in building rapport and respect with students. Possess the ability to establish a creative and stimulating classroom environment. Experienced in using innovative computer software to enhance learning process. Background includes: tutoring in high school, student teaching in high school and middle school, and serving as a mathematics teaching assistant at the college level.				
SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS	 Over 8 years' experience as a mathematics teacher and tutor. Introduced "Studio Calculus" at Dover Institute of Technology (DIT) as a new teaching tool utilizing Maple Software. Received award for "Outstanding Teaching Assistant" from DIT student body. Tutored students in high school and college in mathematical principles. Able to make subject material "come alive" for students through enthusiasm and creativity. 				
EDUCATION 1996-Present 1993-96	DOVER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, Jersey City, NJ Ph.D. work in Mathematics. Stanley Fellowship recipient. Master of Science in Applied Mathematics (GPA 4.0)				
1990-93	WILLAM PATTERSON UNIVERSITY, Wayne, NJ Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education (GPA 4.0), magna cum laude				
EXPERIENCE 1994-Present	DOVER INSTITUE OF TECHNOLOGY, Jersey City, New Jersey Teaching Assistant/Lecturer Prepared curriculum and materials for Freshmen Precalculus and Calculus courses. Served as recitation instructor for Mathematical Analysis up to senior level. Recitation instructor for Logic and Discrete Mathematics. Explained solutions, administered tests and quizzes, and fielded questions about material. Recipient of "Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award" from student body for both 1994-95 and 1995-96. Utilized Maple Computer Software to implement "Studio Calculus." Presented statistics paper on "Time Series Analysis" to faculty and guests.				
1993-94	SHARPE CAPITAL, New York, New York Researcher Responsible for encapsulating financial news in fact sheets for client use.				
1991-93	WILLIAM PATTERSON UNIVERSITY, Wayne, New Jersey Mathematics Tutor Tutored in university's "drop-in" math-help center.				
CERTIFICATIONS	New Jersey Teaching Certificate in secondary education.				
AFFILIATIONS	American Mathematical Society (AMA) Mathematics Association of America (MAA) American Statistical Association (ASA)				
COMPUTER SKILLS	Proficient in Microsoft Word 7.0, Microsoft Excel 5.0, PowerPoint 4.0, Maple Software (mathematical software package), C++, and FORTRAN				

This is an efficient one-page format for an experienced teacher. Note the effective Profile and Summary of Qualifications (resume writer: Igor Shpudejko, Mahwah, NJ).

SHARON WELLS

4344 East Franklin Street, Apt. 5 New Haven, Connecticut 06525 (203) 336-8041 Email: germanteach@home.com

GOAL:

High School German teacher, In-service Instructor, or Computer Technician.

EDUCATION:

Southern Connecticut State University B.A. Education – Anticipated 2001 Major: German Minor: Educational Computing & Technology Certificate – May 1998

GPA: 3.31

Coursework for the Educational Computing & Technology Certificate included: The Computer in Education, Teaching with Technology, Utilizing Technology for the Administrative Tasks of Teaching, Current Issues in Computers and Educational Technology, and Advanced Educational Media Production.

COMPUTER SKILLS:

Hardware

Public access terminals, Apple Macintosh microcomputers with Ethernet LAN connections, Sun workstations running UNIX operating system, X-terminals, laser and color printers, scanners, video phones, video conferencing, and digital cameras.

Software

WordPerfect, Claris Works, Claris Home Page, Hyper Studio, Avid Videoshop, Fetch, PageMill, Top Class, PageMaker, QuarkXpress, PhotoShop, Swivel 3D, Director, Illustrator, MiniCad, Excel, FileMaker Pro, Telnet, Netscape, Fetch, and TurboGopher.

LANGUAGES:

German. Intermediate to advanced proficiency. Able to read, write, speak, and understand

VOLUNTEER:

Taught English as a Second Language at the New Haven Adult Learning Center, Fall 1997. Worked in small groups with adults with various languages and 2 Bosnian students.

EXPERIENCE:

1996 – Present: **DELI CLERK** Gala Jubilee, Hamden, CT

Merchandise products, order food, and work events. Relate well to a wide variety of people.

1994 - 1996: WAITRESS/CASHIER

Bonanza, West Haven, CT

Sold more side orders than anyone previously at restaurant. West Haven Bonanza rated top in nation. Performed other tasks as needed.

1993 - 1995: VISUAL SPECIALIST MERCHANDISER

J.C. Penney, West Hartford, CT

Promoted from Hamden store because of excellent merchandising skills.

Ordered merchandise via computer. Maintained a monthly budget that varied seasonally.

Worked cooperatively with other merchandisers in store as well as district managers.

Continually planned for future events/seasons.

Utilized self-management skills. Managed 2 employees.

1993 - 1995: SALES ASSOCIATE

J.C. Penney, Hamden, CT

Sold in various departments. Merchandised store products.

An unusual format makes this attractive, well-organized resume stand out. For a soon-to-bequalified teacher, education and volunteer activities are as important as work experience (resume writer: Linda Wunner, Duluth, MN).



Jason Lipman

192-37 35th Avenue Flushing, NY 11351 718-555-9003

Athletic Achievements

Played two years of semi-pro football for the Elkin Eagles

Tried out for the Giants and the Buffalo Bills

Defensive Line Coach for Hofstra University Bengals Football Team

Hofstra University Strength Training Coach

College Football:

Azalea Bowl MVP NAIA National Playoffs Senior Year Team Captain First Team, All-American First Team, All-District

High School Football:

All-American All-State All-County All-Long Island All-League

Physical Education Teacher (K-12)

- Eager to bring students into the twenty-first century using a unique combination of high-caliber physical education experience and athletic achievement. Will utilize teaching knowledge and over fifteen years background as successful business owner to parallel the development of athletic abilities with the understanding of real-life skills.
- Dedicated to enthusiastic and dynamic teaching as a means of creating a lifelong love of sports and learning in children and young adults.
 Create an energizing educational experience that motivates students to enjoy physical, academic, and personal accomplishment.
- Trained for a teaching career, but in response to family need, reluctantly
 put plans aside and joined family business after college (worked in
 business from age of five). To stay in teaching, took substitute teaching
 assignments while running business. After fifteen years of profitable
 business management, have sold business to teach full-time.

Education and Certification

Post-Graduate Coursework

Currently attending Master's in Elementary Education program St. Joseph's College, Brooklyn, NY

Three-credit Education Course State University of New York at Stony Brook

Bachelor of Science in Health and Physical Education

Tennessee State University, Yarrow, TN 1983 (attended on full football scholarship)

Undergraduate Coursework

Jefferson Rangle College, Lincoln City, MD (attended on full football scholarship)

Certification (Provisional, pending renewal) NY State Physical Education K-12

Key Qualifications

- Experienced college-level coach; worked for five years as defensive line and strength training coach at Hofstra University. Experienced substitute teacher with ability to motivate students in difficult situations.
- As coach and teacher, incorporate learning modality principles into group and individual instruction. Plan, prepare, and instruct in each skills area using wide variety of motivational and implementation strategies to engage students in active learning and accomplishment.
- Possess unique ability to break down components of athletic training into easily assimilated units. Students struggling with techniques become successful after this instructional coaching.

This excellent resume incorporates numerous design elements with a high degree of originality. It is well written, well organized, and easy to skim, despite being fairly text-heavy (resume writer: Deborah Wile Dib, Medford, NY).

Jason Lipman

2

Employment in Education

Substitute Teacher (grades 1-12), New York, NY

1989 to present

- · New York City Schools
- · Sewhanaka School District
- St. Kevin's Elementary School, Elmont, NY

Teach academic subjects and all physical education activities including indoor baseball, wiffle ball, basketball, and volleyball. Handle difficult assignments by developing a mutual respect with students and deflecting natural aggression towards substitutes. Utilize personal style of instruction that enhances motivation and reduces opportunities for student disruption. Create an energized atmosphere that generates interest and participation.

Defensive Line Coach for Hofstra Bengals Football Team Weight Lifting Coach Hofstra University

1983 to 1988

As Defensive Line Coach, taught techniques and form; made up daily practice schedules and routines; set up film appointments for players and graded players by films. Reviewed game plans, incorporating defense and offense. Handled scouting and recruiting for New York and New Jersey teams; wrote scouting reports and attended team meetings. Taught visualization techniques for instinctive, reactive play.

As Weight Lifting Coach, attended NSCA convention; learned and incorporated cutting-edge conditioning strategies into workouts that encouraged college athletes to do total-body conditioning between sets. Developed jump-rope program that dramatically increased athletes' adility.

Student Teaching

Health and Physical Education (grades 7-12) Johnstown Middle School and High School, Raleigh, ND

983

Offered permanent position; declined due to family responsibilities. As student teacher, instructed students in football, weight training and track. Used motivation and skills coaching to develop shot put ability in student struggling with technique; student qualified for state championship.

Health and Physical Education (grades K-12) Hopewell School, Hopewell, TN

1983

Business Ownership

Owner/Partner/Operator All-State Carting, Maspeth, NY

1983 to 2001

Recently sold business to a major public company in waste management. All-State was a six-partner waste management company with its own transfer station facility and was aggressively involved in the management/disposal of recycling, municipal solid waste, and construction/demolition debris.



Note: Keep a record of every resume you send out or hand deliver, and be especially careful to save a copy of any resume that you have customized for a specific job vacancy.

If after looking at these samples you still feel unsure about writing your own resume, contact your college career placement office. There you'll find professionals trained to help you.

Impressive Cover Letters

You should never send an application or a resume without a cover letter. Not all applicants know the importance of cover letters (also known as "letters of intent"), but if you take the time to include one with your application, the extra touch of professionalism will increase your chances of making the paper cut. All else being equal, the principal will select those applicants from the applicant pool who make the most professional presentations. An impressive cover letter will help you be one of those applicants.

Here are some general guidelines to use when composing a cover letter:

- The letter should be the original (no copies) and should be printed on a quality printer. *Never send a handwritten letter.*
- Use high-quality white or off-white $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ paper.
- Use perfect grammar.
- No typos or misspelled words are allowed.
- Never address the letter "Dear Sir," "Dear Madam," or "To Whom It May Concern." Make a telephone call to find out exactly who should receive your letter, along with the person's title and the correct spelling of the person's name.

The following is a template for the suggested content of the letter:

Your Name Your Address Today's Date Name of the Administrator or Personnel Director Name of School District Street Address or P. O. Box City, State, ZIP Code Dear State the purpose of the letter (to be considered for any positions that may become available, or for a specific position that has been advertised). Tell them what your status is now and why you feel you would be especially well qualified for this position. (This is a chance to tell them about one of your strengths.) This paragraph should include one or two brief sentences that emphasize your passion for teaching and your love for kids. If possible, it is always nice to personalize your letter by saying something positive about the community or school district and why you would like to work there. (When you call to ask for the name of the person to whom the letter should be sent, ask if the district or city has a Web address. If so, this will tell you what the city and district have to offer.) Let them know that you have arranged to have a copy of your transcript and letters of reference forwarded to them. Thank them for their time and consideration. Sincerely, Your Name

Your cover letter, like any business letter, should be tailored to each specific job vacancy. The sample cover letter that follows was written by Karen McCrae. She has tailored her letter to a specific job vacancy: "High school history and social studies teacher; assistant coach—girls' varsity basketball."

Karen McCrae 2117 Bennington Way Taylorville, IL 60005

May 3, 2002

Dr. Richard Fagan, Principal Laketown High School Laketown, IL 60048

Dear Dr. Fagan:

Please consider me as an applicant for the 11th-grade history/social studies position that will be available this coming fall. I learned of this vacancy from my college placement office at Lincoln University, where I will earn my bachelor's degree on June 5 with a major in history and a minor in French.

I notice that your job announcement includes adjunct duties as girls' assistant basketball coach. This is of great interest to me, not only because of my past experience playing and coaching women's basketball, but because it would give me one more opportunity to fulfill my passion to make a difference in students' lives by showing them respect and building their self-esteem. When my students are my age, I want to be the one who stands out in their memories because I really cared.

Although I have visited Laketown several times, I never knew until recently of your high school's fine academic reputation. I notice that 89 percent of your graduates go on to college. The community must be very proud of its high school, and rightfully so.

I look forward to hearing from you soon and meeting with you personally at your convenience. I can be reached at (708) 555-1908.

Sincerely,

Karen McCrae

If you were Dr. Fagan and had a tall stack of applications sitting on your desk, wouldn't this well-written cover letter catch your attention? It would be especially impressive if none of the other applicants had bothered to include one.



Winning Applications

After all the work you've done up to this point—assessing your strengths and weaknesses, preparing your mission statement, and writing your resume—the application itself might seem like a piece of cake. Unfortunately, it is not.

Your application, like your resume, is a representation of you—serious stuff! If a district's personnel office receives more than 100 applica-



tions for a teaching vacancy (which is common in many school districts), the staff has only so much time to scan each one in the stack. These people are sharp, however: Their eyes are trained, and they are able to rule out many applicants after only a quick glance at the applications. They do this based not only on the content of the applications but on how neatly and carefully they were prepared. Therefore, you want your application to make the best impression possible so that it will work for you rather than against you.

The following sections show you how to make yours a winning application.

Gather the Information You Will Need

The first step is to gather up all the information you will need to fill out the application:

- Educational background, with dates attended and graduated, GPA, honors, and so on
- Professional experience, with dates and addresses
- Other work experience, with dates, addresses, and reasons for leaving
- Teaching credentials held and their expiration dates
- Professional references, including addresses and telephone numbers
- Personal information, including Social Security number, passport number, driver's license number, and so on
- Honors, awards, and fellowships you have received
- Special skills or related experiences

As you gather this information, enter it on an actual application form; that way, you'll have everything together in one place when you need it. The following is a sample application you can use for this purpose.

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Be positive and creative as you enter the information on the application form. For example, when entering previous job titles, responsibilities, and reasons for leaving, use the most glowing terms possible without compromising the truth. You should also use as many power verbs as possible (see the list earlier in this chapter).

Say, for example, you worked one summer emptying trash and wetmopping the halls of an office building after closing time each business day. You might say: "Maintained and secured building." (Surely, you locked up when you left, didn't you?) The words "maintained" and "secured" are power verbs.

If you have a gimmicky, cute message on your answering machine, replace it with something more professional, like this: "You have reached 555-9085. Please leave a message at the beep." The reason is obvious: When schools start calling to set up interviews, you don't want to make a bad impression before they even meet you.

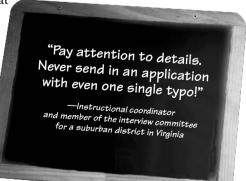
Another good idea is to target your application in much the same way as you would a resume, by including any skills, training, awards, work experiences, or activities that match the job vacancy you want to fill. This is a way to "load" the application in your favor so that you appear more qualified than other applicants.

As you indulge in this "creative writing," always choose your words carefully and never use more words than necessary—they clutter up the page.

Completing the Application

It's always best to type an application, if you can get your hands on a typewriter these days. Otherwise, print as neatly as you can, using a black or dark-blue ball-point pen. If you're visiting various schools and personnel offices as part of your school survey and are handed an application to fill out, take it home with you

instead of filling it out on the spot. That way, you'll be able to take your time to complete it and proofread it carefully before actually submitting it. As a precaution, we suggest making a copy of the application, filling out the copy first as a rough draft, and then recopying your information onto the original form.



However, if time is of the essence and it's imperative that you complete the application then and there, be sure to print, using an erasable dark-black pen. (If you're lucky, a typewriter might be furnished for you to use.) Always carry an erasable pen and your sample application in your briefcase so that you'll be prepared with the information and tools you need in case you can't bring the application home with you.



Tip: Many school districts have their applications available online at their Web sites. If this is true for the school district to which you are applying, go to its Web site and complete the application on the screen. Then you can either print it to submit with your resume in person, or you can submit it online. Some districts also offer the option of pasting your own resume into their form online.

Whether you type or print your application, be sure it's error-free and has no misspelled words. An application that has every section completed in a clear, easy-to-read way, with no typos or misspelled words, has an excellent chance of making the paper cut.

We've included two applications that were filled out by Karen McCrae. Her first application was very poorly prepared. Not only was it handwritten, it was messy and incomplete. There were several errors, including her experience and the information about her teaching credential. Her second try was much better: neatly typed, complete, and error-free.

If you were the personnel director of a large school district, which one would you put at the top of the pile?

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Karen's messy application form.

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A much neater and more acceptable version of Karen's application.

Sterling References

You'll need four to six letters of reference for your job search. Typically, these are written by people who can attest to your character and teaching ability. They're usually sent to your college or university career placement office to be included in your professional file. That way, they're all together in one place, ready to be sent out when a potential employer requests them.

You have a right to see any and all references placed in your professional file. If there are any of questionable value, you may have them removed. Your placement office staff will help you evaluate all the letters that come in. If it's determined that a letter is to be removed, you must follow your placement center's procedures. An undesirable letter might be removed from your file and destroyed, or it might be placed in an inactive file where it will not be sent with your other letters of recommendation.

There are two kinds of reference letters: professional and personal. The following sections discuss each type.

Professional Reference Letters

Early in your career, professional letters of recommendation usually are written by people who have direct knowledge of your student-teaching ability. These include college professors, college supervisors, and master teachers. As you gain experience, these letters will be replaced with new letters written by department heads, principals, superintendents, and fellow teachers.

Personal Reference Letters

Personal letters of recommendation are an important part of your file, especially when you're just getting started in your career. They generally are written by people who know you well and can share insights into your character and values. These could include former teachers, counselors, coaches, administrators, members of the clergy, neighbors, and leaders of youth organizations.

Professional letters of recommendation are written by people who are familiar with the process; they have typically written many of these letters and they know exactly what is expected in the way of content and format. This might not be the case with personal letters. When you ask someone for a personal letter of recommendation, pay careful attention to the person's response. If the person seems hesitant or isn't quite sure how to go about it, offer to furnish copies of the letters you've already received. These will be a big help in terms of wording and format.

When your professional file is full of reference letters, it's up to you to maintain the file by periodically requesting new or updated letters of recommendation. This way your file is always fresh and up to date.

By the way, one of the biggest mistakes new teacher candidates make is to wait until the last minute to request these reference letters. Be aware that people don't always write them on a moment's notice, even if they have the best intentions of doing so. Some procrastinate because they're on overload at the moment and don't have time to write a letter; others are forgetful or might lose your original request.

Also, it's important to remember that a professor or supervisor might have 20 other letters to write, so be considerate. And then there's always Murphy's Law, which says that when you need to reach someone the most, that person is on hiatus, traveling down the Amazon, or recovering from surgery and not due back in the office for six weeks. So make your requests as early as possible; you'll be glad you did.

When your references are in, make a few extra copies to slip into your portfolio so that you'll have them with you during your interviews. You typically won't hand these out at interviews, or even be asked for them, but who knows? It can't hurt to have them handy.

If you pass the paper cut with your application and resume, *these letters will be requested.* Their content might determine whether or not you make it to the interview table.

Business Vocabulary in Use

Bill Mascull

Cambridge Professional English



A Recruitment

The process of finding people for particular jobs is recruitment or, especially in American English, hiring. Someone who has been recruited is a recruit or, in American English, a hire. The company employs or hires them; they join the company. A company may recruit employees directly or use outside recruiters, recruitment agencies or employment agencies. Outside specialists called headhunters may be called on to headhunt people for very important jobs, persuading them to leave the organizations they already work for. This process is called headhunting.

Applying for a job

Fred is a van driver, but he was fed up with long trips. He looked in the situations vacant pages of his local newspaper, where a local supermarket was advertising for van drivers for a new delivery service. He applied for the job by completing an application form and sending it in.

Harry is a building engineer. He saw a job in the **appointments** pages of one of the national papers. He made an application, sending in his CV (curriculum vitae – the 'story' of his working life) and a covering letter explaining why he wanted the job and why he was the right person for it.

Note: **Situation**, **post** and **position** are formal words often used in job advertisements and applications.

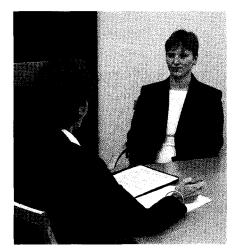
BrE: CV; AmE: résumé or resume BrE: covering letter; AmE: cover letter

C Selection procedures

Dagmar Schmidt is the head of recruitment at a German telecommunications company. She talks about the selection process, the methods that the company uses to recruit people:

'We advertise in national newspapers. We look at the backgrounds of applicants: their experience of different jobs and their educational qualifications. We don't ask for handwritten letters of application as people usually apply by email; handwriting analysis belongs to the 19th century.

We invite the most interesting candidates to a group discussion. Then we have individual interviews with each candidate. We also ask the candidates to do written psychometric tests to assess their intelligence and personality.



A job interview

After this, we shortlist three or four candidates. We check their references by writing to their referees: previous employers or teachers that candidates have named in their applications. If the references are OK, we ask the candidates to come back for more interviews. Finally, we offer the job to someone, and if they turn it down we have to think again. If they accept it, we hire them. We only appoint someone if we find the right person.'

3.1 Complete the crossword. Use appropriate forms of words from A, B and C opposite.

5	3				2	
	L					
	6	7	Electronic on the control of the con	 		. in Kodil
	8	712	100		Authorner (

Α	CI	rc	S	S

- 5 I phoned to check on my application, but they said they'd alreadysomeone. (9)
- 6 This job is so important, I think we need tosomeone. (8)

Down

- 1 and 2 I hope she, because if she the job, we'll have to start looking again. (7,5,4)
- 4 They've finally a new receptionist. (5)
- 7 Computer programmers wanted. Only those with UNIX experience should(5)

- **3.2** Now divide the words in 3.1 into two groups:
 - 1 what a company personnel department does.
 - 2 what a person looking for work does.
- **3.3** Replace the underlined phrases with correct forms of words and expressions from A, B and C opposite.

Fred had already (1) <u>refused</u> two job offers when he went for (2) <u>a discussion to</u> <u>see if he was suitable</u> for the job. They looked at his driving licence and contacted (3) <u>previous employers Fred had mentioned in his application</u>. A few days later, the supermarket (4) <u>asked him if he would like the job</u> and Fred (5) <u>said yes</u>.

Harry didn't hear anything for six weeks, so he phoned the company. They told him that they had received a lot of (6) requests for the job. After looking at the (7) life stories of the (8) people asking for the job and looking at (9) what exams they had passed during their education, the company (10) had chosen six people to interview, done tests on their personality and intelligence and they had then given someone the job.

Over to you



If you work ...

How did you get your job? Was it advertised? Were you interviewed for it? Was the selection process very long?

If you don't work ...

Have you applied for any jobs? Were you interviewed? How did it go? What's the usual process for getting your first job in your country?

4 Skills and qualifications

A Education and training



Graduates

In AmE, you also say that someone graduates from high school (the school that people usually leave when they are 18).

Margareta: The trouble with graduates, people who've just left university, is that their paper qualifications are good, but they have no work experience. They just don't know how business works.

Nils: I disagree. Education should teach people how to think, not prepare them for a particular job. One of last year's recruits had graduated from Oxford in philosophy and she's doing very well!

Margareta: Philosophy's an interesting subject, but for our company, it's more useful if you train as a scientist and qualify as a biologist or chemist – training for a specific job is better.

Nils: Yes, but we don't just need scientists. We also need good managers, which we can achieve through in-house training courses within the company. You know we have put a lot of money into management development and management training because they are very important. You need to have some management experience for that. It's not the sort of thing you can learn when you're 20!

Skilled and unskilled

A skill is the ability to do something well, especially because you have learned how to do it and practised it.

Jobs, and the people who do them, can be described as:

highly skilledskilledsemi-skilledunskilled(e.g. car designer)(e.g. car production manager)(e.g. taxi driver)(e.g. car cleaner)

You can say that someone is:

skilled at, or skilled in ...

+ noun customer care electronics computer software

+ -ing communicating using PCs working with large groups

you can also say that someone is:

computers

figures

people

C The right person

These words are often used in job advertisements. Companies look for people who are:

- self-starters, proactive, self-motivated, or self-driven: good at working on their own.
- methodical, systematic and organized: can work in a planned, orderly way.
- **computer-literate**: good with computers.
- **numerate**: good with numbers.
- motivated: very keen to do well in their job.
- **talented**: naturally very good at what they do.
- **team** players: people who work well with other people.

- 4.1 Correct these sentences about Ravi, using words from A opposite. One word is wrong in each item.
 - 1 At 18, Ravi decided to stay in full-time training and went to Mumbai University.
 - 2 Ravi *qualified* three years later with a degree in philosophy and politics.
 - 3 He taught for a while, but didn't like it. He decided to educate as an accountant at evening classes.
 - 4 He qualified for an accountant and joined a big accountancy firm in its Mumbai office.
 - 5 When he started, he needed to develop other skills, which would come through experiments.
 - 6 He received managers' training to help him develop these skills.



4.2 Are these jobs generally considered to be highly skilled, skilled, semi-skilled, or unskilled? Each expression is used twice.

	_	
1	teacher	

5 office cleaner

2 brain surgeon

6 labourer (someone doing basic work on a building site)

3 car worker on a production line 7 bus driver

4 airline pilot

8 office manager

4.3 Complete these extracts from job advertisements using words from C opposite.

ı	You'll need to be, as	
	you'll be working on financial budgets	.

We need _ _ _ _ iournalists who are very good at their job and extremely _ _ _ _ to find

out as much as they can.

_	
2	As part of our sales team, you'll be
	working independently, so you have
	to be self and
	colf-

5 You'll be researching developments on the Internet, so you have to be _ _ _ _ -____. You must be _ _ _ _ _ , able to work on your own initiative, and a ____ . But as part of a team of researchers, you need to be a good _ _ _ - - -

3 We're looking for someone who can work on ten projects at once. You must

and the second s

Over to you



If you work ...

What sort of people does your organization look for in its recruitment? What sort of person are you?

If you don't work ...

Does your educational institution prepare people for specific jobs?

5 Pay and benefits

A Wages, salary and benefits

My name's Luigi and I'm a hotel manager in Venice. I get paid a salary every month. In summer we're very busy, so we work a lot of extra hours, or overtime; the money for this is quite good. Working in a hotel, we also get nice perks, for example free meals!

I'm Ivan and I work as a waiter in Prague. I like my job even if I don't earn very much: I get paid wages every week by the restaurant. We get the minimum wage: the lowest amount allowed by law. But we also get tips, money that customers leave for us in addition to the bill. Some tourists are very generous!

I'm Catherine and I'm a saleswoman based in Paris. I get a basic salary, plus commission: a percentage on everything I sell. If I sell more than a particular amount in a year, I also get extra money – a bonus, which is nice. There are some good fringe benefits with this job: I get a company car, and they make payments for my pension, money that I'll get regularly after I stop working. All that makes a good benefits package.

Compensation 1

My name's Alan. I'm a specialist in pay and benefits. Compensation and remuneration are formal words used to talk about pay and benefits, especially those of senior managers. Compensation package and remuneration package are used especially in the US to talk about all the pay and benefits that employees receive. For a senior executive, this may include share options (BrE) or stock options (AmE): the right to buy the company's shares at low prices. (See Unit 36) There may be performance-related bonuses if the manager reaches particular objectives for the company.

C Compensation 2

Compensation is also used to talk about money and other benefits that a senior manager (or any employee) receives if they are forced to leave the organization, perhaps after a boardroom row. This money is in the form of a compensation payment, or severance payment. If the manager also receives benefits, the payment and the benefits form a severance package.

In Britain, executives with very high pay and good benefits may be referred to as fat cats, implying that they do not deserve this level of remuneration.



- **5.1** Xavier and Yvonne are talking about Xavier's new job as a photocopier salesman. Complete the conversation, using words from A opposite.
 - 1 X: I get paid every month.
 - Y: I see. You get a salary, not wages.
 - 2 X: I usually have to work late: I don't get paid for it, but I get a percentage for every photocopier I sell.
 - Y: So you don't get, but you do get That's good.
 - 3 X: The people in production get a if they reach their targets.
 - Y: Oh right. They get an extra payment for producing a certain amount.
 - 4 X: The company pays for medical treatment too, and the company restaurant is fantastic.
 - Y: Wow! The sound very nice.
 - 5 X: And they've given me a to go and visit clients.
 - Y: So you don't have to buy a car, then.
 - 6 X: What's more, the company pays in money for us to get when we don't work any more.
 - 7 X: The total is brilliant.
 - Y: Yes, all that extra stuff is really worth having.
- **5.2** Which expressions from B and C opposite could be used to continue each of these newspaper extracts?

FAILED AIRLINE BOSS GETS MASSIVE PAYOUT

Shareholders are angry that despite very poor results, Blighty Airlines' CEO, Mr Rob Herring, is leaving with £3 million in his pocket. They say it is ridiculous to 'reward' bad performance with this sort of ...

(2 possible expressions)

2

MEGAFONE CEO GETS £10 MILLION 'THANK YOU' AFTER TAKEOVER

The directors of Megafone, the world's largest mobile phone company, yesterday voted to give Mr Chris Ladyman, its chief executive, a special payment of £10 mil-

lion for negotiating the company's takeover of Minnemann. The directors referred to this as a ...

(1 possible expression)

MULTILEVER'S EXECUTIVE PAY

It was today revealed that Mr Carl Lang, head of consumer foods giant Multilever, earns a basic salary of \$22 million with stock options potentially worth an additional \$10 million. Other payments bring to \$35 million his total ...

(2 possible expressions)

Over to you

ANGRY SHAREHOLDERS ATTACK EXECUTIVE PAY

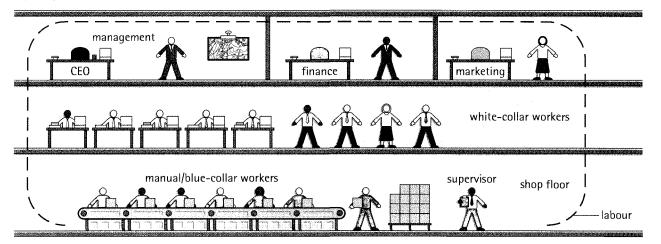
National Energy's shareholders yesterday attacked the directors of the company for paying themselves too much. Profits fell by 30 per cent last year, but directors are being paid 30 per cent more. 'They should be paid 30 per cent less,' said one shareholder. 'These people are just ...'

(1 possible expression)

Do you think top executives are too highly paid? Or do they deserve what they earn?

6 People and workplaces

A Employees and management



The people who work for a company, all the people on its payroll, are its employees, personnel, staff, workers or workforce. But these words can mean just the people carrying out the work of a company, rather than those leading it and organizing it: the management.

Note: Workforce, work-force and work force are all possible.

Management and administration

A company's activities may be spread over different sites. A company's most senior managers usually work in its head office or headquarters (HQ). Some managers have their own individual offices, but in many businesses, most employees work in open-plan offices: large areas where many people work together. Administration or, informally, admin, the everyday work supporting a company's activities, is often done in offices like these by administrative staff or support staff. For example, those giving technical help to buyers of the company's products are in technical support.



An open-plan office

C Labour

Labour is spelled **labor** in AmE. **Labor unions**, organizations defending the interests of workers (AmE) are called **trade unions** in BrE.

When workers are not happy with pay or conditions, they may take industrial action:

- **a strike, stoppage** or **walk-out**: workers stop working for a time.
- **a go-slow:** workers continue to work, but more slowly than usual.
- **an overtime ban:** workers refuse to work more than the normal number of hours.

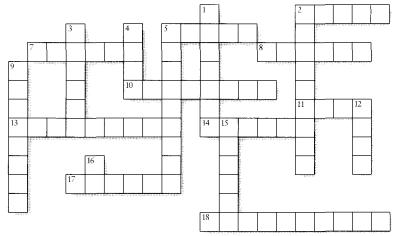
D Personnel and human resources

In larger organizations there is a human resources department (HRD) that deals with pay, recruitment, etc. This area is called human resources (HR) or human resource management (HRM). Another name for this department is the personnel department.

6.1 Look at A, B and C opposite to find the answers to the crossword.

Across

- 2 and 17 Office workers may wear this. (5,6)
- 5 All the people working for a company. (5)
- 7 workers use their hands. (6)
- 8 When people stop working to protest. (6)
- 10 One of the people working for an organization. (8)
- 11 Occasions when workers stop working to protest: walk-...........(4)
- 13 Another name for the human resources department. (9)
- 14 Workers seen as a group. (6)
- 18 and 15 down Various forms of protest at work. (10,6)



Down

- 1 Everyone working for a company is on this. (7)
- 2 Everyone, or everyone except top managers. (9)
- 3 These are trade in the UK and labor in the US. (6)
- 4 and 17 across Manual workers may wear this. (4,6)
- 5 The place in a factory where the production lines are. (4, 5)
- 9 When people stop work to complain about something. (8)
- 16 and 12 When workers intentionally produce less. (2,4)

6.2	Manuel Ortiz is the founder of a Spanish computer sales company. Use the words in
	B and D opposite to complete what he says about it.

I founded Computadoras Creati	was 20 years ago. We started with a small
(1) in Madrid. Our (2	2) , our (3)
is still here, but now we have sit	tes all over Spain, with about 500 employees. Many
of the offices are (4)	: everyone works together, from managers to
(5)	, as well as people selling over the phone, and
people in technical (6)	giving help to customers over the phone.
Recruitment is taken care of in	Madrid, by the (7)
or (8)	

Over to you



Think about the company you work for or one you would like to work for. Where is its head office? How many sites does the company have? How many employees? Is it better to have everyone on one site or to have different sites with different activities? Do people have their own offices or are there open-plan offices? Which type do you / would you prefer to work in?

В

A A job for life

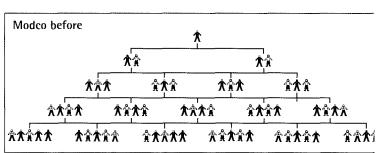
Many people used to work for the same organization until they reached retirement: the age at which people retire, or end their working life. Career paths were clear: you could work your way up the career ladder, getting promotion to jobs that were more senior, with greater responsibility. You would probably not be demoted: moved to a less senior job.

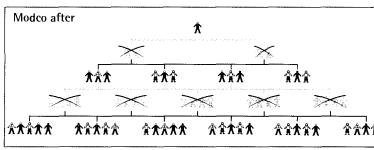
To leave the company, you could resign or hand in your notice.

A job for now

Modco has downsized and delayered. The number of management levels in the company hierarchy has been reduced from five to three, and many managers have lost their jobs. Modco has reorganized and restructured in order to become flatter (with fewer layers of management) and leaner (with fewer, more productive employees).

They did this to reduce costs, and increase efficiency and profits. Employees said the company used words like 'restructure' to make the situation sound positive and acceptable.





In-house staff or freelancers?

Modco has outsourced many jobs previously done by in-house personnel: outside companies clean the offices, transport goods and collect money from customers. This allows Modco to concentrate on its main business activities. Modco uses more freelancers, independent people who may work for several different companies, and they employ people for short periods on temporary contracts. Modco expects flexibility, with people moving to different jobs when necessary, but for many employees, this means job insecurity, the feeling that they may not be in their job for long. The way that they are doing their job is discussed at performance reviews: regular meetings with their manager.

Note: You say freelancers or freelances.

D Losing your job

If you do something wrong, you are ...

- dismissed
- **■** fired
- sacked
- terminated

If you've done nothing wrong, you are ...

- laid off
- made redundant
- offered early retirement

Employees who are made redundant may get advice about finding another job, retraining, etc. This is called **outplacement** advice.

7.1 Complete the tables with forms of words from A, B and C opposite. You may wish to refer to a dictionary.

Noun	Verb	Noun	Adjective	
	retire	seniority		
demotion			freelance	
lay-off		redundancy		
	dismiss		insecure	
	terminate		flexible	

- **7.2** Match the sentence beginnings (1–5) to the correct endings (a–e). The sentences all contain words from A and B opposite.
 - 1 Career paths aren't what they used to be;
 - 2 He worked his way up from
 - **3** The new management have delayered the company,
 - 4 We used to do printing in-house,
 - 5 Workers are afraid their organizations will be downsized
- a and they will be replaced by temporary workers.
- b companies won't take care of us for life any more.
- **c** but now we outsource it.
- **d** factory worker to factory manager.
- e reducing five management levels to three.
- **7.3** Carla used to work for an Italian magazine publishing company. She talks about how she lost her job. Choose the correct form of the words in brackets to complete the text.



Edizione Fenice is a big magazine publishing company, and a very nice company to work for. I was director of a magazine called Casa e Giardino.

Then, Fenice was bought by an international publishing group. We had to have regular performance (1) (review/reviews/reviewer) with one of the new managers. After a few months they started laying staff (2) (off/on/out). Our own journalists were put on temporary

 $(3) \ \ (contracts/contractual/contracting) \ or \ replaced \ by$

(4) (freelancer/freelancers/freelanced).

Then they started (5) (laid/lying/laying) off more senior people like me. The new owners said they wanted to make the company (6) (flat/flatter/flatten) and

(7) (lean/leant/leaner). So I was made (8)

(redundant/redundancies/redundancy). They offered to help me to find another job with

(9) (outplacement/outplaced/outplacing) advice, but I refused.

Over to you



If you work ...

Do you have performance reviews? What are the advantages and disadvantages? Has your organization been restructured? What aspects of the business does your company outsource?

If you don't work ...

Would you prefer a job for life or a more flexible career? Would you like regular performance reviews?

Part 2

Interviewing for Teaching Jobs

Chapter 6: Preparing for the Interview

Chapter 7: Sharpening Your Personal Appeal

Chapter 8: Your Conduct During the Interview

Chapter 9: After the Interview

Preparing for the Interview

The first step in preparing for an interview is knowing as much as you can about the schools and the surrounding community where you're interviewing. This knowledge serves two purposes: It helps you determine whether you really want to work in a given school or community, and it puts you at an advantage during the interview itself.

These are important considerations. The former can keep you from accepting a job you'll hate. The latter gives you an edge over other candidates. Interview committees are favorably impressed by candidates who take the time to research their schools and communities. It shows that you're willing to put in extra effort and that you're genuinely interested *in them*. Conversely, they'll know very quickly if you've just popped in and don't have a clue about them or their district.

This chapter also clues you in on the top 21 questions that you will probably be asked at your interview. You need to think ahead of time how you will answer them. You can also rehearse your answers and practice role-playing, possibly with the help of a support group of other teacher candidates, which is discussed later in the chapter. And finally, when you think you've got it all together, you can videotape yourself in a mock interview and see how you will come across to the interview panel. What you see might surprise you.

Do Your Homework

There are many places to find out the information you need before your interview. You should research and visit the community, the school district, and the individual school. The following section gives you tips on the most effective ways to conduct this research.

Research the Community

There are several ways to become familiar with a community. If you can visit the prospective community, the job becomes much easier.

If the school is located in a city, try to determine its attendance area (the area from which the school draws its students). In the case of elementary schools (grades K through 6), the area probably will be relatively small. Typically, urban elementary pupils live within one to two miles of their schools. A middle school or junior high school (grades 6 through 8 or 7 through 9) might serve the graduates of many elementary schools, making its attendance area much larger. Finally, a senior high (grades 9 or 10 through 12) might serve the graduates of one or two junior high schools. Sometimes, in fact, a rather large city will have only one high school.

If the school is located in a rural area, it might have a large attendance area covering many miles. In such situations, there might be only one elementary school and one high school serving pupils living 10 or more miles in all directions.

After you've determined the attendance area, drive or bicycle through it. Talk with people or students you meet. Are they friendly and helpful? Ask how youth-oriented the community is. Do they provide parks, recreational facilities, and programs for their young people? Take note of the general appearance of the community. Are the houses and yards reasonably neat and clean? If you meet someone who really impresses you, try to remember his or her name.

Spend half a day wandering around the area and you'll get a good feel for the community. It'll be warm, friendly, and trusting; cold, unfriendly, and suspicious; or something in between. By the end of your tour you'll probably have a definite opinion about the community and its residents.

If you're unable to visit the community before the interview,

Of the teacher candidates in our survey, 49 percent said they had researched the communities where they were scheduled to be interviewed.

you can still find out something about it by contacting the Chamber of Commerce and requesting relevant information. If there is no Chamber of Commerce, try the local Visitors' Bureau or subscribe to a local newspaper for a month. Of course, one of the best sources of information is the city's or town's Web site, if one exists. Although these sources won't substitute for actually being there, they can provide worthwhile information.

Of the teacher candidates in our survey, 21 percent

tried to learn as much as

possible about the policies

of the school district where

they were scheduled to be

interviewed.

In chapter 2 we talked about doing school surveys as part of your research for finding job openings. Although the research you do here is similar, there's one big difference: The school surveys were part of your general job search strategy; the research you're doing now is to prepare you for a scheduled interview for a specific position. Your motivation for researching the community takes on a new, and more exciting, meaning.

Research the School District

In addition to researching the community, you should research the school district and the particular school where you'll be working if you are hired.

There are many sources of information on schools and school districts:

- You should start with the state schools directory for your state. This resource is available in your college library or placement office and lists each county office of education for the state and the districts and schools within each county or parish, along with each school's address, telephone number, size, grades taught, and administrators.
- Another source is the **county schools directory**, which includes more detailed information, such as each school's staff and grade assignments.
- Access the **school district's Web site**, which should include specific information about each of the schools within the district. You can also read a specific school's report card by accessing the Web site of your state's board of education (see the appendix) and then clicking on the link to school report cards. These report cards contain a brief description of the school, including its location, the community it serves, its size, grades taught, and ethnicity, plus other interesting information (see the following list).

To locate the school district's Web site, go to your favorite search engine and type the name of the district. The district's Web site should be at the top of the list of finds.

• Finally, the most comprehensive source of information on a particular school is the **school's directory** or handbook, which is available at the school itself.



When you've gathered all these resources, you'll have the information you need about a given school or district.

Here are some other items often included in a school report card:

- Student attendance
- Amount of money spent per student
- Type of textbooks used
- Salary information
- Current training and curriculum projects
- Leadership provided
- Results of student achievement tests
- Description of the facilities
- Classroom discipline and climate for learning
- Teacher evaluation policy
- Student support services offered

These reports provide useful information for comparing one school to another.

Visit the School

Finally, the ultimate school research opportunity is a visit to an individual school campus. Most administrators welcome nonintrusive visits from teacher candidates. Notice that we said "nonintrusive." Keep in mind that the school's primary function is to educate students, and your visit should interfere as little as possible with that function.

Call the school in advance and explain why you'd like to visit. Your evaluation of the school begins with this phone call. Chances are you'll talk with the

school secretary—usually a school's "initial image." How were you received? How efficiently did the person deal with your request?

Assuming you're given permission to visit, be sure to show up on time. You should dress appropriately—as if you were coming for an interview: no shorts and tank tops; no scuffed tennis shoes *sans* socks. You get the idea.



As you drive up to the campus, check out its general appearance. Are the grounds free of litter? Does the landscaping look good?

Next, check out the building itself. Is the paint in good condition? Is there litter or graffiti? Are the windows and doors clean? The age of the building shouldn't affect the learning going on inside its walls; in fact, an old building that's clean and well-maintained will almost always house an educational program superior to that of a newer building that's dirty and poorly maintained. The physical appearance of a school tells volumes about its students, staff, and program.

As you enter the building, what do you see? Are signs posted giving clear directions to the office, or are you greeted with blank walls and left to figure it out for yourself? Go to the office immediately, by the way, because administrators don't like strangers wandering around the campus.

As you enter the office, are you met with a warm greeting and a smile? Or do you feel like you're entering a war zone? Do you sense a cold, "What do you want? Can't you see we're busy here?" attitude? In most cases, you'll be received with a warm greeting. School secretaries, we've found, are almost always friendly and helpful.

At this time you'll be given directions for your visit. You might have an opportunity to visit briefly with the principal, or the secretary might direct you to a particular classroom. If you visit a classroom, the general rule is to enter without knocking. If the teacher is presenting a lesson or working with a group of students, move to the back of the room and wait for the teacher to come to you. If the teacher is not occupied with students when you enter, approach him or her and introduce yourself. The teacher will then tell you where to sit during your observation. It's usually best to observe from the rear of the classroom so that you don't distract the students.

Try to talk with any staff members you meet during your visit; they'll help you form an opinion of the school. Visit the playground and the staff room during breaks, and the student dining area and faculty lounge during lunch.

If you spend only three hours on a campus (say, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.), you won't know everything about a school, but you'll "Talking to teachers in the district (where I was to be interviewed) got me headed in the right direction."

—Middle-grade science teacher in North Dakota

know considerably more than most candidates for the position.

Before leaving the campus, check back at the office and thank those responsible for your visit. You might also send a thank-you note later that day. This is a classy touch that makes you stand out from other candidates.

Taking time to research a community and its schools won't assure you a job; however, it will enhance your chances of being offered a contract—and it just might keep you from signing a contract you would regret later.

Network with Other Teacher Candidates

In chapter 2, we discussed networking as a process of making contacts and establishing relationships as part of the job search. The kind of networking we're talking about here is the same concept, but on a much smaller scale. It involves forming a network of a half-dozen or so of your teacher-candidate friends. This cozy little group, in effect, becomes a support group as much as a networking team, so it's important to find people who share some basic qualities with you, including these:

- They have a sense of humor.
- They're seeking jobs close to the same grade level.
- They share common ideas about the job search.
- They buy into the philosophy of small-group networking.

Although it's best to have at least five or six members, if you can find only three or four who meet the criteria, go ahead and form a group. The group's closeness and compatibility are more important than the number of members.

Here are some ways you and the members of your network group can be helpful to one another:

- You can share ideas and information about job leads and job search tips.
- You can give and receive advice and constructive criticism. (Remember, this should always be done in a good spirit.)
- You can encourage each other as much as possible.
- You can do mock interviews and role playing, and respond to hypotheticals and possible interview questions (more about these later in this chapter).

Of those responding to our survey, 52 percent said they networked with other teacher candidates, sharing tips and lending support.

- You can discuss strategies of the interview process, like these:
 - Questions that candidates should ask during the interview
 - Questions to avoid during the interview
 - Body language
 - Social skills
 - Voice, grooming, and attire
 - Attitude

As members of the group sign teaching contracts, they should be encouraged to stay with the group as long as they can, offering support, encouragement, and constructive criticism, especially during mock interviews.

One note of caution regarding these networking groups: Remember that your small "Networking with other teacher candidates led me to pursue job openings of which I was originally unaware."

—Secondary social studies teacher in New Jersey

support group is only one part of your total networking effort. Don't let your cozy little group become so warm and comfortable that you neglect your other job search efforts.

Later, we'll talk about a couple ways to put your group to work, specifically as you prepare for the interview itself. You'll find suggestions for using a video camera during your meetings, which will boost your confidence when it comes time for real interviews. You'll also see why we listed "a sense of humor" as an absolute necessity for each member of the group. It should be fun, so read on.

Prepare Responses to Possible Interview Questions

When you walk into an interview room, you'll have about 30 minutes to sell yourself. During this brief time you might be asked only 8 or 10 questions. Your responses to these questions are crucial. Because you don't know which questions will be asked, you need to be prepared for anything.

The fact that you were called for an interview—that you made the paper cut—means that they like you so far. Now it's up to you to impress them with your excellent responses to their questions. Your responses should be

clear and concise; don't ramble on and on. Make your point and go on! If you're asked a straightforward question, give a straightforward answer. On the other hand, if you're asked an open-ended question, always take it as a valuable opportunity to tell the interview panel what you want them to know. This might be a good time to work in some of your special skills and talents or to share something from your portfolio. Sell yourself!

As we gathered information for this book, we asked interviewers what questions they typically ask at the interview table. We also asked newly hired teachers what questions they were asked during their interviews. We combined these two lists, discarded any questions that related to isolated situations, and grouped the remaining questions into two categories: The top 21 questions asked during interviews, and other frequently asked questions.

The Top 21 Questions Asked During Interviews

Be prepared to respond to these questions, because you'll undoubtedly hear many of them during your interviews. Practice your responses with a friend or in front of your networking group. Ask for their constructive criticism of your answers and then polish your performance until you can respond in a natural way without hesitation.

We have given you some help on this priority list of questions by offering comments about What They're Really Asking and Tips to help you prepare.

1. What is your greatest strength as a teacher?

What They're Really Asking

- How do you perceive your talents and abilities as a teacher?
- Will you be an asset to our school and our students?

Tips

- They're crying for you to sell yourself here; don't let them down.
- Have six or seven responses written and ready on a 3×5 card.
- Don't blow smoke.
- Be "confidently humble."

2. What is your greatest weakness?

What They're Really Asking

- How honest are you being with us and with yourself?
- How realistic are you?

 What skeletons do you have in your "teaching closet" that we should know about?

Tips

- Review the section in chapter 1 on ways to present a weakness as a positive.
- Don't sell yourself down the river with your response.

3. What can you tell us about yourself?

What They're Really Asking

- What makes you special?
- Why should we hire you?
- How organized and concise are you?
- How confident are you?
- What might you bring to our children?
- Who are you? Do we want you to work with our children?

Tips

- Use most of your response time selling yourself.
- Have several powerful selling points ready for this one.
- Give a brief, concise response in less than two minutes.
- This is an open-ended question, a chance for you to impress them.
- This is no time for humility, but don't step over the line of arrogance, either.

4. What is your philosophy of classroom discipline?

What They're Really Asking

- Do you have a plan?
- How will you implement your plan?
- Do you think this is important?
- Are you going to be able to control kids?

Tips

- Be ready to give an example of a discipline "ladder" or plan.
- Be prepared to tell why you like it, and give examples of how it's worked for you.

 Discipline is one of the most important areas of concern in schools today. Handle this subject well!

5. What steps would you take with a student who is disruptive in your classroom?

What They're Really Asking

- Do you have a classroom discipline plan?
- Can you handle most discipline problems yourself, or will you send students to the principal's office at the drop of a hat?
- What is your general philosophy of classroom discipline?

Tips

- This question is similar to question 4; be ready to describe a discipline plan and how you plan to implement it.
- Reaffirm your philosophy of discipline.
- Again, the subject of classroom discipline is a major concern for most hiring panels.

6. What kind of classroom-management plan do you like best? How would you implement it in your classroom?

What They're Really Asking

- If we walk into your classroom, what will we see going on?
- How will your lessons be planned?
- Will your students be on task and challenged?

Tips

- You need to explain your management plan briefly, completely, and in an organized way.
- Interview committees are not looking for a morgue setting; nor do they
 want the center ring of a three-ring circus. They're looking for an
 intellectually stimulating, organized, respectful environment in which
 students do well academically and socially.
- Explain how you'll implement your plan in terms of behavior; recall your teacher-education classes and your student-teaching experiences.
- You'll almost certainly be asked a question similar to this because it's a critical area of importance in most school districts.

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7. Why do you want to be a teacher?

What They're Really Asking

- How dedicated are you?
- Do you have a passion for children and the teaching profession?
- How will our children benefit by having you as their teacher?

Tips

- If you have a passion for kids, this one should be easy. Don't get carried away, though; keep it simple and to the point.
- Stay away from a response like, "Most of my family members have been teachers." This won't get you very far.

8. Why do you want to teach in this district/school?

What They're Really Asking

- Do you care where you teach?
- Did you take the time to research our district/school?
- Are you right for our schools and our children?

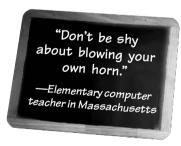
Tips

- This is a great PR question. If your school survey showed this district to be high on your list, the answer will come easily. Without overdoing it, tell them how great they are!
- Tell them that you do want to work for them!

9. Why should we hire you for this position?

What They're Really Asking

- Can you convince us that you're the one?
- Can you sell your "product"?
- How much confidence do you have in yourself?



Tips

- Be ready to make a powerful statement of your value to the school or district.
- This is no time for humility, but don't be arrogant, either.

10. What are your goals in education? Where do you see yourself five years from now? How does this position fit into your career plans?

What They're Really Asking

- Do you want to stay in one position for the long haul, or will you be here a year and move on?
- Are you a stable person?
- Have you set goals for yourself?
- Have you given any thought to your future?

Tips

- They want another perspective on you.
- They might not want to hire someone who will be moving down the road in a year or two.
- There's nothing wrong with simply saying that you have one goal in mind right now, and that is to become the best teacher possible.

11. What would we see if we walked into your classroom?

What They're Really Asking

- What is your philosophy of education?
- What kind of a teacher are you?
- Do you have a well-managed classroom?
- Are your students interacting with you and the other students?

Tips

 This is a good time for name-dropping. Show off your knowledge of new and proven methods and trends (for example, grouping of students, Cooperative Learning, and use of manipulatives and hands-on teaching materials).

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- You might say: "You would see the students arranged in groups; a
 pleasant atmosphere; a room that is comfortable and pleasing to the eye;
 students who are under control, yet busy with a healthy amount of noise
 going on; children learning in different modalities: visual, auditory, and
 kinesthetic."
- Avoid the tendency to go into too much detail. They might be interested
 in the way you'll arrange the students' desks, but they don't really want
 to know what's inside each desk.

12. What are some trends, issues, and methodologies in education that relate to your specific curriculum area or grade level?

What They're Really Asking

- Do you know what's going on in education today?
- Do you have a passion for the profession of teaching?

Tips

- Read educational journals and periodicals regularly.
- Familiarize yourself with current trends and buzzwords in education.
- Talk with your peers and other educators in your field.
- Visit schools as often as you can to observe the latest teaching methods.
- Join a professional organization.

13. What book are you currently reading or have you read recently?

What They're Really Asking

- Teachers should be avid readers; are you a reader?
- What are your interests?
- How well-rounded are you?

Tips

- This question is often asked, so be ready for it.
- If you've lost the recreational reading "bug" because of your hectic schedule, take some time to read a variety of fiction, nonfiction, and professional books.

14. What are some of your hobbies or leisure-time activities?

What They're Really Asking

- How well-rounded are you?
- What do you do outside of school that would transfer positively into the classroom?

Tips

- Here's another opportunity to sell yourself; take advantage of questions like these.
- Emphasize any of your hobbies or leisure-time activities that could carry over to your classroom.
- The interview committee is trying to find out more about you, and they know your life outside the classroom can tell them a lot. So don't just *answer* questions; *respond* to them.

15. What special skills or talents will you bring to your classroom?

What They're Really Asking

- How well-rounded are you?
- Do you have a wide variety of interests and experiences that will make you an exciting, stimulating teacher?

Tips

- Yes! This is your time to shine.
- Be prepared to state in an organized, succinct fashion any skills or talents you'll bring to their school, but be careful that you don't overdo it.

16. How would you involve the community in your classroom?

What They're Really Asking

• Are you willing to reach out and seek community expertise?

Tips

- Be familiar with this concept.
- Be prepared to give examples of community members visiting the classroom, as well as local field trips you might have taken.

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17. Would you be willing to teach at a different grade level (elementary) or teach a different subject (secondary)?

What They're Really Asking

- Are you flexible?
- Do you have enough confidence to consider other grade levels or subject areas?
- How's your attitude?

Tips

- You need to think about this possibility in advance. The committee
 might have already found the right person for the advertised position,
 and now they're looking for someone who can adapt to their needs if
 another position becomes available. Administrators like to have options,
 and they're always looking for teachers who are flexible and versatile.
- A positive response here might give you a leg up on your competition!

18. Would you be willing to pursue an extra certificate or credential?

What They're Really Asking

- How is your attitude?
- How flexible are you?
- Are you a teacher who will increase our staffing options?

Tips

- School districts are frequently required to employ teachers who have special credentials or certificates in order to qualify for special program funds. If you have certain specialized credentials or certificates in addition to your basic teaching credential, you become more valuable to the district.
- If all things are equal, the position will go to the candidate who is willing to pursue one of these "extras."
- This is a perfect time to tell the hiring panel "how important professional growth is to me."

19. What is your philosophy of team teaching?

What They're Really Asking

- Are you flexible?
- Do you work well with others?
- Do you have experience in team teaching?
- Do you know anything about the methodology of team teaching?

Tips

- Be prepared to talk about this concept in a favorable way.
- Share a few positive points in favor of team teaching, such as these:
 - Team teaching is a powerful and efficient method for dealing with a large number of students.
 - It's very effective for teachers to work together and share their ideas.
 - ➡ You might say, "I haven't had the opportunity to be involved in a teaming situation yet, but I understand it can offer a more efficient use of time in the classroom." Or, "If teachers at my grade level have determined that team teaching would better the learning process of our students, I'm very willing to try it. I enjoy working and sharing with other teachers, and I want the best for our kids."

20. What were you hoping we would ask you today, but didn't?

What They're Really Asking

• Is there anything special about yourself that you want us to know?

Tips

- Speak up—sell yourself.
- This is a great opportunity to "show and tell" one more time, using materials from your portfolio to convince them how valuable you'll be to their district. Go for it!

21. Do you have any questions for us?

What They're Really Asking

- Are you interested enough in our district to ask questions?
- How prepared are you to ask questions?
- Have you given this some thought?

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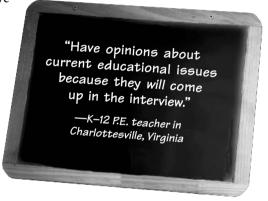
Tips

- See "Questions You Should Ask" in chapter 8.
- Be sure you have at least one question ready to ask, or have five or six listed on a 3 x 5 card. The panel will be impressed that you came prepared.
- Never say, "No, you've answered all my questions."

Other Frequently Asked Questions

Read through this list of questions and decide how you'll respond to each one in an interview. Ask yourself, "What are they really asking?"

- 22. At what point do you involve the principal in a discipline matter?
- 23. What is your description of an ideal teacher?
- 24. What are your plans for professional growth?
- 25. If you were hired to teach starting this September, how would you go about setting up your reading program?



- 26. Do you prefer homogeneous or heterogeneous grouping? Why?
- 27. In which curriculum areas do you feel particularly strong?
- 28. Would you be willing to coach a sport, advise an organization, or assist with extracurricular activities?
- 29. What experience do you have with this age group?
- 30. Do you see yourself as a "team player"?
- 31. How would you motivate a student who won't even try?
- 32. Describe a time when a lesson was not going well; what did you do about it?
- 33. How would you compare the Whole Language approach to reading to a Phonics-based approach?
- 34. How would you implement Cooperative Grouping in your classroom?
- 35. What are some ways you would communicate with a parent regarding a student's progress?

- 36. While in high school and college, in which extracurricular activities did you participate? Did you hold an office?
- 37. How would you integrate language arts across the curriculum?
- 38. What community projects or organizations have you been involved with?

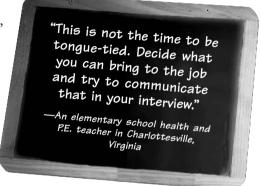


- 39. How would your best friend describe you?
- 40. How do you spend your spare time?
- 41. Who are some people who have had a great impact on your life?
- 42. What would you like to share about your student-teaching experience?
- 43. What do you think are the critical skills required to be a successful teacher?
- 44. Do you involve parents in your classroom? How?
- 45. What kind of principal would you like to work for?
- 46. What do you know about our school district?
- 47. How do you go about deciding what should be taught in your classroom?
- 48. What provides you the greatest pleasure in teaching?
- 49. What is your philosophy and practice of the teacher's role as a "member of the school staff"?
- 50. How would you go about grouping your students in mathematics?
- 51. What does Individualized Instruction mean to you?
- 52. Which evaluation techniques or testing procedures would you use to determine student academic growth?
- 53. How effective is it to call parents for a conference when a problem has developed with their son or daughter?
- 54. Describe a belief you hold about education. How would you implement it in the classroom?
- 55. What are some of the new teaching textbooks and materials being used in your grade level or in your subject area?

- 56. What is your philosophy regarding the Thematic Approach in teaching the curriculum?
- 57. At which grade level do you feel you would do the best job?
- 58. Have you had any back ground in designing lesson plans with Behavioral Objectives in your teaching? How do you feel about them?
- "During the interview be confident, relaxed, professional, knowledgeable, and willing to work as part of a team."

 —Music teacher and department chair for a small school district in Washington
- 59. Are there any undesirable things about teaching that you can think of?
- 60. What is the worst thing that ever happened to you in the classroom?
- 61. Do you feel your job as a teacher goes beyond the three-o'clock bell? How?
- 62. How much time, if any, would you be able to spend working on after-school projects or programs?
- 63. What should the job of principal entail?
- 64. How would you handle varied reading abilities in the content areas?
- 65. An experienced teacher offers you the following advice: "When you are teaching, be sure to command the respect of your students immediately and everything will go well." How do you feel about this?
- 66. How will you go about determining your students' attitudes and feelings toward your class?
- 67. What would you say to a parent who complains that your teaching is irrelevant to his or her child's needs?
- 68. What would you do with a student who is obviously gifted or talented in a particular area?
- 69. What are some ways a student can show mastery of a concept?
- 70. What is meant by Diagnostic and Prescriptive Learning?
- 71. What are Negative Consequences and Positive Reinforcement, and the effects of each?
- 72. What steps would you take to turn a habitually tardy student into a punctual student?
- 73. How do you motivate students to develop self-discipline?

- 74. What are some ways to let parents know about the positive things going on in your classroom?
- 75. What would you tell a parent who complains that you don't give his or her child enough homework?
- 76. If we asked your closest teaching associate to tell us how well you get along with children and adults, what would that person say?
- 77. How did you happen to choose your college major?
- 78. What kind of relationship should teachers develop with their students?
- 79. How would you establish and maintain positive relationships with students, parents, staff, and others in the community?
- 80. Briefly describe your philosophy and practice of the teacher's role as a Director of Learning.
- 81. What do you understand the Inquiry Method to be in the areas of science and social science?



- 82. What is your attitude toward Individual versus Total Class discipline?
- 83. If you started teaching in the middle of the school year, how would you get to know the students and their parents?
- 84. What do you think is wrong with education today? What is right?
- 85. If another teacher was habitually late relieving you on yard duty, what would you do?
- 86. What do you believe is the major purpose of a teacher's evaluation by a principal?
- 87. What are some personality characteristics you find unbearable in people?
- 88. If students constantly complained to you about another teacher, what would you do?
- 89. If we were to contact your current supervisor or evaluator about your student-teaching performance, what would that person say?
- 90. What professional association meetings have you attended within the past year?

- 91. How would you teach Critical Thinking to your students?
- 92. How would you use Authentic Assessment?

A Few Final Words of Advice

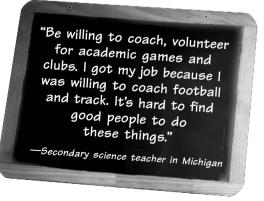
Here are a few final general tips to keep in mind while interviewing:

- Don't let your responses sound "canned" or rehearsed; pause before responding to a question, as if giving it serious thought.
- Keep your best skills and traits in mind as you respond to questions; be ready to work them into the dialogue in a natural way.
- If you're a new teacher and can't respond to some of the panel's questions based on past classroom experience, emphasize your many job-related skills that can be transferred to the classroom. Also let the panel see your enthusiasm, motivation, and passion for children and for the teaching profession.

A Word About Coaching

Many teacher candidates in our survey reported being asked whether they would be willing to coach a sport in addition to teaching their regular classes. Coaching isn't for everyone, obviously, but if you have an interest in athletics in general, or in one sport in particular, you should definitely consider pursuing this "extra" for these reasons:

- If the district needs someone to coach a sport in addition to teaching a regular single-subject curriculum, this could very well land you the position. This is especially true in smaller schools.
- You would ordinarily be compensated for your coaching. An extra \$1,500 to \$2,000 each year could be very attractive.
- Coaching can create special contacts with kids. Most coaches would agree that the coach/athlete relationship can be powerful and make a lifelong, positive impact on a young person's life. Stepping out of your role in the classroom and onto the playing field can break down barriers that inhibit a child's trust of you.



Coaching can be, and often is, a lot of fun. We have spent many hours
after school in the gym or on the playing field. If you're considering
coaching as one more way to market yourself, don't overlook the "fun
factor."

Rehearse Role-Playing and Hypotheticals

Thirty-eight percent of the teacher candidates in our survey were asked to role-play or respond to hypotheticals during their interviews; only 20 percent of them had prepared for it ahead of time.

First, let's look at the difference between role-playing and hypotheticals. In dealing with a hypothetical, you must explain how you would handle a given scenario the panel has set up for you. Here's an example: "How would you deal with an angry parent who comes into your classroom during a class session and demands your immediate attention?"

In role-playing, you assume the role of the teacher and the interview panel plays the "devil's advocate," such as a group of parents who want to confront you over a particular issue. For example, you, as the teacher, must defend your position on Whole Language versus Phonics-based reading. The hiring panel will take the position of the parent group that opposes your view. This is playacting, and it takes most of us out of our comfort zone in a heartbeat. For this reason, it's important to rehearse role-playing with your friends. Our survey shows that it's not often required during an interview, but it does happen, so you need to be prepared.

As you practice role-playing and responding to hypotheticals, you need to picture possible interview settings. One setting would be a one-on-one interview in which the principal sits behind a desk and you sit directly in front of it. If an interview panel is conducting the interview, panel members usually sit at a large table and you sit at a desk or smaller table 10 to 15 feet in front of them.

Of the teacher candidates in our survey, 38 percent reported being asked to role-play or respond to hypotheticals during an interview, but only 20 percent of them had rehearsed ahead of time.

The atmosphere of the interview can be formal or informal, depending on the administrator or the makeup of the interview team. Most interviewers try to promote a relaxed atmosphere in the hope that you'll feel free to be yourself so that they can see the "real you."

It's natural to be a little nervous during an interview, but to this we say, "Trust us." We can't think of a single interview we've been involved in that was an unpleasant experience. So as you prepare for your interviews, remember to relax, be yourself, and enjoy the experience. Try to have a positive mind-set as you practice role-playing and responding to hypotheticals.

Some Common Hypotheticals and Role-Playing Scenarios

Here are some of the most common hypotheticals or role-playing scenarios presented during interviews. You'd be asked to respond to each scenario:

- One of your students becomes disruptive.
- A student reveals some very personal concerns and then withdraws and says nothing further.
- One of your students becomes violent.
- A parent becomes very angry during a parent-teacher conference.
- One of your students doesn't respond to your discipline plan.
- Take a position on Whole Language or Phonics and defend it.
- You suspect a project turned in by a student was completed by someone else.
- After you've given an assignment, you notice a student quietly crying.
- Two of your students are fighting.
- A student refuses to salute the flag or observe certain holidays.
- You observe a student cheating on a test during class.
- A student reveals a situation at home that makes you think she may be the victim of some kind of abuse.
- You disagree with your principal's method of handling a given situation.
- One of your students becomes belligerent and defies you.
- A student brings you some money, says he found it, and then wants to know if he can have it later to keep.
- You feel your principal is not supporting you in a difficult situation.
- A student has an accident on the playground; he's on the ground and unable to move.

This is by no means a complete list of the scenarios you may encounter during an interview. One thing you can count on, however, is that a significant number of scenarios will involve either a confrontational situation with a parent or a discipline/behavior problem with a student.



Tip: It's obvious that school districts place a tremendous emphasis on discipline and classroom management. And you only have to read the newspapers to see why. They want to feel confident that you, as a new teacher, have a good, sound, fair method of class management; you can't wimp out in this area. So, before you go into the interview, be sure you have a specific discipline plan in mind. Review what you learned in your teacher training courses and from your reading. You may also want to consider the solid, practical ideas in our first book, *The Unauthorized Teacher's Survival Guide*. In chapter 7 of that book, we suggest many discipline methods and ideas of our own, as well as those of experts in the field.

Practicing with Your Networking Group

As we discussed earlier, it's helpful to network with other teacher candidates as you prepare for interviews. It's especially helpful to rehearse your role-playing and responses to hypotheticals with this group. Members of the group can tell what scenarios have been presented during their past interviews and the group can reenact them during your networking time together.

It's also a good idea for someone in your networking group to throw in a real ringer once in a while, such as this one, which was actually asked of one of our survey participants:

Billie is passing around pamphlets denying the Holocaust. What do you do?

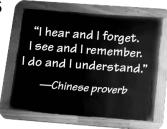
Wow! What *do* you do? We remember when the toughies would be something like, "Suzie has an eraser stuck up her nose," or "Jason threw up in the back of the bus."

If you're asked a really sticky question (like the preceding Holocaust question), you can always tell the hiring panel that you would seek the advice of your site administrator. And if the interview committee throws you a very difficult hypothetical, remember that there could be several appropriate responses, and what they might *really* want to know is how you think and react on the spot.

That's why it's so important for you to practice role-playing and reacting to hypotheticals *before* your first interview.

Videotape Mock Interviews

Now that you've prepared your responses to interview questions and practiced role-playing and responding to hypotheticals, it's time to videotape a mock interview. You will find this to be the most valuable thing you can do in preparation for the real thing.



Get together with some of your networking buddies and find yourselves a *very* private room where you can get down to the serious business of videotaping one another. We know this is an intimidating exercise for some people, but—trust us on this one—you'll be rewarded at the interview table. Participation in mock interviews, especially if you can see yourself on videotape, will improve your confidence level, your use of body language, your voice level and speech patterns, and your ability to articulate responses clearly and concisely.

The Rules

Here are the ground rules:

- You'll need one video camera, plus one videotape per person.
- Take turns being "it" while the rest of the group plays the part of the interview panel, asking questions and presenting hypothetical scenarios for you to respond to.
- After each candidate's performance, replay the tape and immediately participate in an open, honest, *constructive* critique. Make notes of the problem areas you want to work on before your next videotaping session.
- Take turns until you've all had your 15 minutes of fame.
- Schedule another group taping session as soon as possible, preferably within two weeks.
- Take your tape with you so that you can watch your performance once more in the privacy of your home. Study the tape carefully and work on your flaws before the next session.

Schedule a third and final taping session to which everyone wears their interview attire. By this time you'll be familiar with our tips for sharpening your personal appeal (listed in chapter 7) and be able to share some helpful advice. This final session is a good time to present a mini-lesson in front of the camera. Although only 6 percent of the teacher candidates in our survey said they were asked to plan or present an impromptu mini-lesson during an interview, it doesn't hurt to be prepared, just in case.

Have fun with these mock interviews. Be prepared to laugh and be laughed at in a good-natured way. When we first discussed these networking groups earlier in the chapter, you might recall that a sense of humor was listed as a necessary attribute for each and every member; now you know why. There's no way to get through these mock interview sessions without cracking up at some point, but it's all part of the experience.

Of the teacher candidates in our survey, 6 percent said they were asked to plan or present minilessons during their interviews.

By the way, you might want to do two rounds of taping during the first session, one round of questions and responses followed by a round of role-playing and responding to hypotheticals. This way you won't be constantly shifting gears between the two interviewing styles.

It's Painful, but Worth It

What is the value of all this? Why suffer through such an uncomfortable exercise? Because there's no way to really know how you come across during an interview until you see yourself on videotape. This means laying your pride aside and putting your ego on the line as you watch yourself make the mistakes we all make under the pressure of a camera and in front of our peers.

You might be surprised to see yourself as others see you: twirling a ring around and around on your finger as you speak, saying "you know" every other sentence, or crossing your arms in front of you when asked a question (a nonverbal, defensive sign that you resent the question or dislike the interviewer). However, by detecting these flaws ahead of time, you can make some changes: to hold your hands still; to stop saying "you know"; and to replace your negative, closed position with a warm, positive, open posture.

The value of these sessions is great, although you might not realize it until you get to the interview table, where you'll feel ready for just about anything. We realize, of course, that you might be asked a few questions that are worded differently than those listed earlier in this chapter. But the underlying motives for the questions will be the same, and the confidence you gain through the mock interviews will be immeasurable.

And here's a special word of encouragement for you, if you're one of those people who say, "I just don't interview well," or "I choke when I get to the interview table." You'll find that by participating in these mock interviews, your fears will dissipate substantially (although they probably won't disappear altogether). Just remember that everyone who sits on a hiring panel expects to



see a certain amount of nervousness at the interview table. For that matter, we've had several personnel directors, principals, and other members of interview committees tell us that *they* get nervous or uncomfortable when conducting an interview.

So, don't let the butterflies in your stomach make your head spin, too! By participating in mock interview sessions; accepting the friendly critique of your networking peers; and continuing to practice, practice, practice; you'll reduce those butterflies considerably and be able to walk into any job interview with confidence.

CHAPTER 7

You have only one

chance to make a first impression.

Sharpening Your Personal Appeal

Your interviews are drawing near, and you're probably feeling pretty confident after all those mock interview sessions and role-playing rehearsals. That's good, because what you say during the interview is crucial. There's something else to consider, however, and that is what you don't say. This is known as the silent language or subtext. Subtext is a powerful force that can contradict what you say; likewise, it can reinforce your statements.

Your subtext is revealed through your posture, eye contact, subtle gestures, the sound of your voice, the rhythm of your speech, your handshake, your dress, your facial expressions, and your personal grooming. This silent language is so dynamic that it can actually alter the hiring panel's perception of you.

To give you a graphic illustration, observe any court trial and you'll notice that the defense attorney has altered the defendant's subtext to sway the jury. If a man has been accused of rape, for example, you can be sure he will appear in court wearing a beautifully tailored, conservative business suit, a pressed white shirt, and a "sincere" tie. His hair will be cut and styled, his fingernails will be clean and trimmed, and his nose stud will be stuffed into one of his pockets. He'll also appear to be relaxed and confident, from his posture to his eye contact. The result of all this manipulation, his attorney hopes, is that at least one person on the jury will say, "He sure doesn't *look* like a rapist!"

In fact, many studies have concluded that any attractive, well-dressed defendant is favored by the jury because they are *perceived* as less likely to be guilty.

Or there is the example of a girl who attended a large city high school. She ran with a gang of girls she called "punks," who all spiked their hair, wore

blue lipstick, and pierced their tongues. None of them was doing well in school. The girl wondered whether her grades would improve if she changed her image, so she took some drastic measures. Not only did she do away

with the hair spikes, blue lipstick, and tongue jewelry, but she toned down her wardrobe. Bingo! Her grades began to improve. Her efforts changed her image not only in the eyes of her teachers, but in her own eyes as well. Smart girl!

Our purpose in this chapter is to make you aware of the subtle messages conveyed by your silent language, especially as they relate to your job interviews. You want members of hiring panels to like you at "first glance," from the moment you enter the room. Studies have shown, in fact, that your first impression will be a lasting impression: How you are perceived during that first 10 seconds is what people remember!

Dress and Grooming

Men should dress conservatively, in a business suit or a coordinated sport jacket and slacks. You should always wear a tie, but nothing faddish or novel.

Women should wear a conservative suit or a dress, preferably with a classic line. A coat dress or one with a jacket is a good choice. Avoid anything that's too frilly, trendy, or "cute." Don't wear a

"Dress as if you were seeking a promotion or a raise."

—Instructional coordinator and member of the interview panel for a suburban school district in Virginia

pantsuit, because it might give the impression that you're not taking the interview seriously. (You'll have plenty of chances to wear them after you're hired.) Also, avoid miniskirts and blouses that are frilly, off-the-shoulder, or low-cut.

Colors

Avoid bright colors or extremes. For men, dark blue and charcoal gray project a subtext of strength and competence. Black is considered too formal for a teaching interview; and tan should be avoided because it doesn't project confidence. Light gray is a possibility, depending on your coloring. A classic navy blazer with darkgray slacks is always a safe choice.

Men's shirts should be white, light gray, or blue. The tie should be tastefully muted in stripes, pin-dots, or a paisley. Be aware of your own coloring and choose a tie that gives you a feeling of self-confidence.

If you wear suspenders or braces, they should match the color of your tie (although they should be completely covered by your jacket).

The most important thing is that you select something that makes you feel good about yourself. If you feel good about yourself and you like the way you look, this image will be projected to the hiring panel.

Women can choose from a range of conservative colors. If you're undecided, you can't go wrong with navy blue. Feeling good about yourself is the most important factor, so try on several outfits before the interview and then choose the one that creates the strongest self-image.

Shoes

Be sure your shoes are shined and in good repair. Don't wear shoes with rundown heels or a worn, "cracked" look. Be sure your shoes go with your dress or suit. And don't let your shoes "dress you down." By that we mean that the style of your shoes should be as dressy as the clothes you're wearing. A pair of sandals, for example, would destroy the classic look of a conservative business suit.

Jewelrv

Go easy on the jewelry. For men, a ring and a wristwatch are plenty. Women should wear conservative gold, silver, or pearl earrings; avoid anything dangling or faddish. One ring on each hand is fine, plus a bracelet and a watch.

If you wear an earring or a stud in your nose, lip, cheek, or tongue, you might want to think about removing it for the interview. What you wear and where you wear it is up to you, of course, but you might want to give this some thought.

Cleanliness

Your body should be squeaky clean and odor-free, and your clothes should be clean as well. Don't wear anything to the interview that has a spot or a stain (including sweat stains).

Before the interview, examine your clothes carefully in a strong light; if you have the slightest doubt about whether a spot will show, have the garment laundered or dry-cleaned. Also look for any tears or moth holes that should be mended.

This is all just common sense, of course, but it's amazing how many stories we've heard of candidates who wore crumpled, soiled clothing to interviews. One interviewer told us about a woman who came to the interview wearing a dress that had both armpits torn out—not a great first impression!

Men's fingernails should be trimmed and clean. Women should trim their nails to a conservative length, at least for the interview, and wear a neutral color of nail polish. Avoid bright reds, bright pinks, greens, blues, blacks, and nail art.

Hair

Men should have their hair cut or trimmed before the interview, including beards or mustaches. Facial hair is fine, but keep it groomed.

Women should wear their hair in a conservative style and make sure it's clean and shiny. If you have very long hair, it might be a good idea to tie it back or pull it up onto your head for the interview. Most image experts advise against wearing long hair down over a business suit.

Makeup

Women should use makeup conservatively for the interview. Avoid too much eyeliner, mascara, and blusher, and wear lipstick in a pink, coral, or red—something that coordinates with your outfit. Stay away from blues, greens, blacks, and purples.

Body Language

In the course of our surveys, we had a very interesting interview with a behavioral specialist who sits on interview committees for a suburban school district in New Hampshire. Her insight is enormously valuable because it applies her expertise as a behavioral specialist to the field of education. When asked what she learned from a teacher candidate's body language during interviews, she answered this way:

I look for body language that demonstrates self-confidence. I want strong eye contact, a firm handshake, and open posture. I look for movement that indicates uneasiness when new information is presented. I like it when I am able to read the applicant's reaction to information I present. Often, when job duties or responsibilities are presented, the candidate's mouth is saying "yes," but the body

language clearly indicates that he or she is not receptive to the job. This helps in screening out some candidates.

I also like to see how the body responds under pressure. The body language at the interview will give me insight as to what I can expect in the future. In addition, a friendly smile is always welcome. After all, they will be working with children and we don't want the children to be frightened.

"The more nervous and 'fidgety' applicant will almost never get the job. Those who appear at ease, comfortable, and relaxed will always come out on top."

—Director of bands and music curriculum and member of the interview committee for a rural school district in Texas

Eye Contact

We communicate with one another in many ways, but none is more important than eye contact. Eyes hold a world of emotions that are easily read.

When you're responding to a question during an interview, maintain eye contact with the members of the panel. Don't focus in on only one of the interviewers, but look from one to another. Direct eye contact implies honesty and sincerity. On the other hand, if your eyes are darting around the room as you speak, you take on a "shifty-eyed" look, which implies dishonesty. And whatever you do, don't stare at the ceiling because that will send the message that you're bored.

Maintain direct eye contact with each panel member who is speaking, as well. This shows that you're interested and attentive to what the person is saying.

If you're one of those people who finds it difficult to look someone *straight* in the eye, talk to the person's eyebrows—no one will ever know the difference.

Facial Expressions

Did you know that your facial expressions can cause physiological reactions in your body? This was proven in a study by a team of psychologists at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. If your face is screwed up tight with a look of anxiety, you'll feel anxious. Likewise, if you concentrate on relaxing the muscles in your face, your body will react by relaxing all over. It's a cause-andeffect thing, with one feeding off the other.

Other facial expressions to avoid are frowns, "tight" lips, and squinted eyes; these all convey distrust or dislike for what is being said.

The bottom line is that you should work on keeping your facial expressions pleasant and relaxed, always ready for a smile when appropriate. A smile is a wonderful thing. An honest, sincere smile can convey enthusiasm, confidence, and control,

"Making eye contact is important. Also, how a person stands or walks can give hints to possible strengths or weaknesses." —Instructional coordinator and member of the interview committee for a suburban school district in Virginia

even if you feel anything but enthusiastic, confident, or in control of the situation. It will also go a long way toward masking your nervousness and insecurities, and will put the interviewer at ease. A smile says, "I like you," "I agree with you," and "I'm happy and comfortable to be here."

The Handshake

There are three kinds of handshakes: limp, firm, and vice-grip. Obviously, a firm handshake is what you want to work on.

A limp handshake evokes many subtexts, none of them good: disinterest, insecurity, weakness, and nervousness. And the old-fashioned Victorian handshake that extends only the fingers is the most distasteful of all because it says, "I don't really want to touch you because I don't trust you."

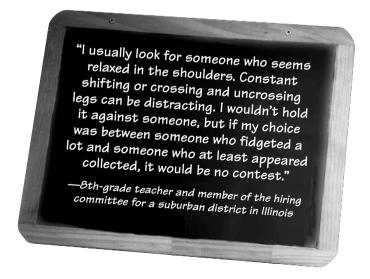
A bone-crushing handshake, on the other hand, evokes a subtext of aggression and wanting to take control.

A proper handshake is one in which you extend your entire hand, grasp the hand of the other person "skin-to-skin," give it one firm shake, and then let go. Be sure to return the same amount of pressure as you're given; and don't hang on too long, or you'll give the impression that you're "taking over."

"I can feel the twinkle of his eye in his handshake." —Helen Keller, after being introduced to Mark Twain

If shaking hands is awkward for you, now is the time to develop a firm, impressive grip. To do this, you'll need to practice. Your small networking group (see chapter 6) is a good place to start because all of you are in the same predicament, and you can all use the practice. If you make it a habit to shake hands with one another every time you get together, you'll eventually feel comfortable with it. At that point you'll be ready to graduate to the next step, which is to look the person in the eye and call him or her by name as you shake hands.

Keep practicing until it becomes second nature.



Posture

As you walk into the interview room, stand straight with your head held high; this shows that you're confident and happy to be there. On the other hand, if you enter the room slowly, with a shuffle and a lowered head, you give just the opposite impression.

The ideal posture during an interview is to sit up, lean forward with arms open, make eye contact, and smile, if appropriate. This is known as an "affirmative posture." A "negative posture" is one in which the interviewee slouches down in the chair, head down, arms crossed tightly at the waist, making no eye contact.

If an interviewer leans back as you're speaking, do the same. This indicates you might be coming on just a little too strong. But be ready to lean forward again if you suddenly feel excited or passionate about something that's being said, or as soon as the interviewer leans forward and resumes an affirmative posture.

Hand Gestures

Hand gestures have a subtext all their own. Here are some common gestures you should avoid during a job interview:

- Stroking your chin
- Twisting your ear
- Scratching yourself—anywhere
- Biting your nails
- Cracking your knuckles
- Pushing back your cuticles as you speak
- Jingling anything (keys, coins, and so on)
- Unwinding paper clips
- Fidgeting with or tapping a pen or pencil
- Playing with your rings, bracelet, earrings, or necklace
- Picking up anything and laying it back down
- Grooming yourself in any way (for example, smoothing your clothing or picking lint off your sleeve)

- Smoothing your hair back
- Rubbing your eye
- Tugging at your collar
- Straightening or smoothing the knot in your tie
- Placing one hand on the back of your neck
- Crossing and uncrossing your fingers
- Fingering your throat
- Leaning back and placing both hands behind your head
- Clasping and unclasping your fingers
- Holding your fingers in front of your mouth
- Wringing your hands

These gestures are distracting and annoying, and they send dozens of different negative messages: nervousness, doubt, distaste, or the indication that you might be lying. One way to control your hands, of course, is to keep them tightly clasped together throughout the interview, but that isn't the best idea either, although it is a solution in extreme cases. The best thing is to let your hands fall

"What I learn from an interviewee's body language is whether he or she really seems interested in the position or not."

—Science chair, mentor teacher, and member of the interview committee for a rural school district in Northern California

naturally on the arms of the chair, or on the table if you're leaning forward, or (best of all) hold a pen in one hand, poised over your notepad.

Head Gestures

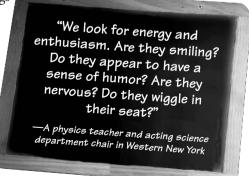
Head gestures are telling as well. A nod of the head sends a positive subtext: "Yes, I agree with what you're saying," or "I like you." A shake of the head, on the other hand, gives the impression that you don't like the person, or you don't like what is being said. Be careful that you don't nod your head constantly, however, or you'll send a senseless subtext. Wait until you agree with something that's being said and then nod. The head nod is very effective if used with discretion.

Feet and Leg Gestures

Here are some feet and leg gestures to avoid during an interview:

- Shuffling your feet back and forth
- Shuffling your foot in and out of a shoe
- Tapping a foot
- Swinging a crossed leg back and forth
- Crossing and uncrossing your legs

If you're sitting at a table during the interview, feet and leg gestures aren't nearly as obvious as your hand and head gestures. Be aware of them, however, and try to keep your feet and legs still.



Voice and Speech

You'll be doing a lot of talking during your interview, so it's important that you have a pleasant, well-modulated voice. When you're being interviewed for a job, there's a natural tendency for your pitch to get higher and higher; so make a concerted effort to lower your voice to a richly modulated tone. Then raise your voice off and on to make a point, always returning to the lower pitch. Whatever you do, don't speak in a monotone.

Speed of Speech

Nervousness not only causes your pitch to rise, it causes "fast talk," too. The more nervous you are, the faster you'll talk. Rushing your words will reveal insecurity with your answers, embarrassment, awkwardness, or a message that you "just want to get this interview over with as soon as possible." Conversely, someone who speaks slowly conveys confidence, sincerity, and a feeling of being comfortable with the interview.

"An interviewee's body language tells me how comfortable he is, what really excites him, if he is unsure of himself. A person who knows what he's talking about and is excited about it leans forward, smiles more, and makes eye contact." -A member of an interview committee for an inner-city school district in Detroit

Patterns of Speech

Everyone has a certain cadence or pattern to their speech, punctuated with pauses, which are often effective, or with annoying fillers, which are not. Common fillers include phrases like, "You know," "Uhhh," "I mean," and clearing of the throat. Chances are you use fillers when you speak and don't even realize it. The only way you'll know for sure is to listen to yourself on an audio- or videotape; you'll probably be surprised at all the fillers. Try to eliminate them as much as possible before you start interviewing. Ask your family, friends, and the members of your networking group to point them out if they sneak in without you realizing it.

Use the information in this chapter to sharpen your personal appeal. Of course, you won't know what needs sharpening until you see yourself as others see you, and this is where your networking group comes in. Use the videotaped mock interviews (see chapter 6) to scrutinize your dress, grooming, body language, and voice patterns. When you're aware of your flaws, it won't be difficult to correct them.

CHAPTER 8

Your Conduct During the Interview

We could compare the job search to running a 1,500-meter race...four laps around the track. By the end of the first lap you've located the job openings; by the end of lap two you've completed the paperwork; and if you survive the third lap of the race, you've made the paper cut and you're ready for that final gut-wrenching lap: the interview itself.

If you're one of eight contestants in the race, your chances of winning the gold medal depend on one final thing—how you conduct yourself during the interview.

A Positive Attitude Is the Key

Walk through any bookstore and you'll see dozens of books on the impact of a positive attitude, including the ever-popular *The Power of Positive Thinking*, by Norman Vincent Peale. Countless motivational speakers have touted the virtues of a positive attitude for decades. There's a reason for this: Your attitude is the key to your success.

Jack Nicklaus in his book *Golf My Way* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998) even tells us that positive imaging can improve your golf game. For example, if you picture your ball lying 250 yards off the tee, right in the center of the fairway, it's much more likely to happen than if you scold yourself with negative talk, such as, "Don't lift your head" or "Don't top the ball." This kind of

"Tell yourself that you are the best applicant and then go with confidence to the interview feeling prepared to be their next new hire!"

—Science chair, mentor teacher, and member of the interview committee for a rural district in Northern California

talk, in fact, produces exactly the result you didn't want, because it's the last thought you have before hitting the golf ball.

So, the key is to have a positive attitude, always expecting the best to happen. But how can this help you during your job interview? Well, what works in golf also works in life. If you picture yourself doing well and being chosen to fill the position, it's more likely to happen.

Most candidates enter the interview room feeling like they're going on trial—as if the interview panel will sit in judgment of how they perform. If there's a table between the candidate and the panel—which there usually is—it creates an even greater barrier. However, the truth of the matter is this:

You are not on trial!

- The table that sits between you is only a *perceived* barrier.
- The panel wants to *help* you.
- They want you to sell yourself.
- They want you to be the one they hire.

You see, they're on your side; it's not an adversarial situation. They want to find a terrific teacher to fill the vacancy, and they *hope* you're the one.

As you sit in the lobby waiting for your turn to be interviewed, remember that you must make a great first impression—there are no second chances. Think of how you feel sitting in an audience when an entertainer or comedian steps on stage; it takes only 10 seconds to know whether or not you like the person.



It's the same way with a job interview. You have to make them like you in the first 10 seconds—no retakes, no do-overs. So visualize yourself doing just that, and then, as your name is called and you walk into the interview room, stand straight, hold your head high, shake hands, and smile as you look each panel member straight in the eye.

Questions You Should Ask

At some point during the interview, you'll be expected to ask questions of your own. Often, interviewees take a somewhat defensive role, merely listening and responding to the questions asked by the panel. Depending on how comfortable you are, you might not feel like breaking in with a question of your own. Then again, depending on how things are going, you might feel at ease to ask a question at any point.

In either case, you definitely want to have questions prepared beforehand. If your questions are not answered in the course of the interview, be sure to ask them before you conclude. Typically, toward the end of the interview, the panel will ask whether you have any questions. At this point an answer such as, "No, I think you've answered them all" or "No, I can't think of anything" is not going to

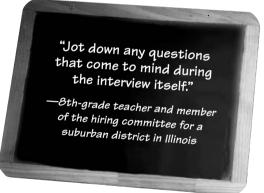
"Don't be afraid to ask questions. Prepare some, even on a card, so that you appear to be well-prepared."

—8th-grade teacher and member of the hiring committee for a suburban district in Illinois

look good. They expect you to be curious about things, and if you've thought this out in advance, it will impress them.

Don't rely on memory for these important questions. Practice asking them out loud before the day of the interview and then jot them down on a 3×5 card and bring the card with you to the interview. The interview panel will be impressed that you put some forethought into the interview process.

Before getting into examples of questions you might want to ask, we want to caution you on being *too* aggressive with your questioning. Keep in mind that you are the interviewee. Yes it's true, you are interviewing them, too. You want to find out whether the job is a good fit. And using your mission statement as a guide, there are certain things you must learn about the position, the school, the



district, and so on. But remember to ask your questions in such a way that you don't give the impression you're "taking over" the interview.

Also, there are certain kinds of questions we recommend avoiding; these we'll talk about a little later in this chapter.

Ask Questions That Showcase Your Talents

Back to the questions you'll want to ask: There's a little twist that can work for you just as well as it works for the interview panel. We mentioned in chapter 6 that interviewers' questions often have underlying purposes. For example, when

they ask, "What are your strengths and weaknesses?" or "Tell us about yourself," what they really want to know is, "Why should we hire you?" Well, there's no reason your questions can't have an underlying purpose as well: that is, to showcase your talents. Here are a few examples of questions you might ask:

- I've had some experience working on a school yearbook, and I really enjoyed working with the students. Do you have a yearbook?
- I've always considered myself a team player and feel it's important and more productive when staff members can put their heads together. Do the teachers at this school plan or work on projects together?
- I have experience in choral music and theater production and would like to be involved in that in some way. Does your school offer any music or drama for the kids or the community?

The underlying purpose of these questions is to show that you have talents that can be of benefit to the school and the community. They also demonstrate that you are an enthusiastic team player, willing to give more time and energy than any of the other candidates the panel is interviewing.

There are other questions you can ask that might impress the panel. These questions demonstrate your knowledge, enthusiasm, and interest. When we asked interview panel members what questions they felt teacher candidates should ask during an interview, we got these suggestions:

- 1. In what ways do the parents get involved with the school?
- 2. What kinds of cross-cultural activities do you offer to the kids and the community (assuming an ethnic diversity exists)?
- 3. What new innovations or programs has the school or the district implemented (for your grade level or subject area)?
- 4. Does the school or district have a general discipline plan (for example, Canter & Canter, *Assertive Discipline*)?
- 5. Does the school or district have a mentor-teacher program?
- 6. Are the classrooms self-contained or departmentalized?
- 7. Is there team teaching?
- 8. Do you offer professional growth opportunities for new teachers?
- 9. What are the strengths of this school/district?
- 10. How do administrators offer teacher support if the need arises?
- 11. How would you characterize school morale?
- 12. When will you be notifying candidates of your hiring decisions?

This is not an exhaustive list; it's meant to suggest some ideas for you to consider. Some might not seem important or applicable to you, but because they were suggested by members of hiring panels, we think they should be given some weight.

Direct Your Questions Appropriately

One great piece of advice came from a school principal we interviewed, who said that the teacher candidate should *never* address a specific member of the panel. For example, you should never ask, "Ms. Johnson, what is your district's policy regarding bilingual education?"

"Don't ever ask a direct question of a certain individual sitting on the hiring panel. It puts the person on the spot."

California school administrator and member of the hiring panel

This is a mistake for several reasons. First,

Ms. Johnson might not know about the policy, or there might not be a specific policy. Also, Ms. Johnson might not agree with the district's philosophy of bilingual education, which could result in a very awkward moment for everyone. The results of this kind of questioning leave Ms. Johnson looking bad and feeling embarrassed, which means the candidate scores badly.

If you think a question is legitimate, you should ask it, of course; but direct it to the entire committee. One word of advice: Always ask sincere questions that are *important to you*. If your questions impress the interview committee or give you a chance to tell them something more about yourself, that's simply an added bonus.

The important thing to remember is this: You should come prepared with a few well-thought-out questions; that will impress the interview panel.

Questions to Avoid

Just as important as the questions you ask are those you don't. There are some questions you should simply avoid asking. Most of these are fairly obvious. But, according to our hiring panel contacts throughout the United States, a few words should be mentioned here about indiscreet, inappropriate questions. Then there are those questions that are not necessarily indiscreet or inappropriate, but that, in a subtle way, can put you on thin ice and work against you.

Before we list the questions to avoid, however, let us mention one caveat that applies to your whole demeanor, including your questions of the hiring panel: the matter of *attitude*. If your attitude is perceived as even slightly questionable, it probably will undo all the positives you've worked so hard to develop and communicate. We don't want you to mess up a good thing because of a slip of the tongue or an indiscretion. So avoid any question that makes your attitude

suspect. If there's something you think you really must ask and you're unsure how it will be taken, use your own judgment; but conventional wisdom would say—"forget it." Or reword it so that the attitude factor is taken out of the mix. You get the point.

Sometimes it's not so much the question itself, but something in the inflection or tone of your voice or in your body language that might tip your hand in the minds of the panel and work against you. You get only one shot at this stuff, so choose your words *and your tone* carefully.

With that sermonette preached, let's move on to a list of questions or topics we think should be avoided. Most of them have come from principals, mentor teachers, curriculum personnel, and others who sit on hiring panels in their districts.

The most obvious topics to avoid are at the top of the list:

- 1. Anything related to salary
- 2. **Benefits** (School office personnel, your teacher association representative, or a teacher handbook can fill you in on this subject.)
- 3. **School hours** (This information can be obtained from the school secretary or by asking other teachers. Most schools have a standard school day: start at 8:30 or 9 a.m.; dismiss at 3 or 3:30 p.m.)
- 4. **Time off for personal family consideration** (Don't ask the members of the panel; get a copy of the school's teacher handbook.)
- 5. **Breakdown of ethnicity of the community** (An exception is, of course, if you're a bilingual teacher and this information is necessary.)
- 6. Anything remotely sexist
- 7. Any question that could be interpreted to mean that you're not totally committed to the teaching profession (For example, "Do you expect your teachers to take work home often?")
- 8. **Over-stressing concerns regarding discipline** (Don't ask question after question about discipline-related issues.)
- 9. Any questions that pertain to the religious, political, or socioeconomic breakdown of the community (You get into touchy areas here, and the chances are too great that your questions will be misread. This information is available through other sources.)
- 10. **Questions regarding the "bargaining unit"** (You're talking to the wrong folks if you bring up unions or teachers' associations here.)

- 11. **Extracurricular responsibilities** (Don't ask anything that might cause the panel to question your work ethic or attitude.)
- 12. **Prospects of transferring to another grade level or department** (Wait until you're hired; then pursue this concern at the appropriate time.)

37 Ways to Turn Off an Interview Committee

We asked every interviewer who took part in our survey 20 or so questions, including this one: "What is the biggest turn-off during an interview?" Some of the answers were what we expected to hear, but others were quite surprising. Here are the answers we got.

1. Inappropriate Clothing/Dress

Women will never go wrong wearing a nice dress or suit; men should wear slacks and a sport jacket or a business suit, depending on the school district, always with a tie. We were shocked at the number of times "unshined shoes" cropped up. Don't just dust them off—shine them!

2. Giving Pat, Canned, or Insincere Answers

Interview committees can read these like a book. We suggest you practice pausing at least a second or two before responding to any question. This gives the impression that you are thoughtful, relaxed, and poised. Practice responding to the sample questions listed in chapter 6 until your answers sound as natural and unrehearsed as possible. Finally, be honest.

3. Poor Communication of Ideas

One cause for this is a lack of practice at responding to possible panel questions. Even if you have thought out a response in advance, you might still be unable to articulate it clearly. Again, we suggest practice, practice, practice.

4. Blaming Students for Their Failure to Do Well

It's hard to imagine that teachers would blame students for their lack of success when one of their jobs is to motivate students. The school and teacher can and do make a difference. Don't be an "elitist-defeatist."

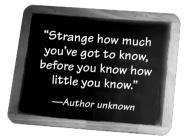
5. Not Knowing When to Close or to Stop Talking

Often, the more you ramble on, the more you paint yourself into a corner. By rambling on and on, you reveal one of the following:

- You don't really know the answer, but with enough tries you hope to stumble upon it.
- You're unable to express yourself succinctly.

Hiring committees are seldom interested in soliloquies. They appreciate a brief, concise, well-articulated response.

6. Chewing Gum or Smoking During the Interview



While this is hard to believe, interviewers tell us it does happen. Gum chewing might be an oversight; ditch your gum before you leave home. Two thoughts about smoking:

- If you can't make it through an interview without a smoke, how are you going to teach for hours at a time?
- If teachers are role models, what example are you setting for students when you smoke?

7. An Attitude That Is Too Relaxed and Informal

It's good to be relaxed, but familiarity can be overdone and work against you. You don't want to appear disinterested in the questions or disrespectful to the panel members.

8. Answers That Are Too Defensive or Aggressive

Either of these creates an awkward, uncomfortable interview. Interviews are not meant to be confrontational. Don't come to the interview with an "attitude."

9. Dangling Earrings or Long, Brightly Painted Fingernails

We found that many interviewers aren't crazy about either one of these. In one case, a teacher with long, painted nails was being interviewed for a kindergarten position. None of the panel members could picture her working with 5- or 6-year-olds, so they hired someone else. As far as earrings go, you might opt for a pair of conservative gold or silver studs instead.

10. Being a Know-It-All

Don't go by the old expression, "If you've got it, flaunt it!" Your responses will reveal your command of the subject matter. Trying to unduly impress the interview committee with boundless knowledge, giving the impression that you're an expert on all educational topics, will just turn them off. "Selling yourself" has its limits—don't carry on *ad nauseam*. The committee can tell the difference between a phony and the real thing. A little knowledge can be dangerous, so play it safe.

11. Indications That You Think Your Methods and Philosophies Are the Only Ones

This is closely related to number 10, and the same advice applies: Watch it, or you'll appear arrogant. Don't insult the panel: They've been around much longer than you have. You must have opinions and some understanding of teaching methods, but remember: You're just getting started in this profession.

12. Lack of Membership in Professional Organizations

Memberships in professional organizations are very impressive. They show you have interest, enthusiasm, and professionalism. Most professional organizations are there to help you; get acquainted with them. (We've included a list of such organizations in the appendix.) Be prepared to drop a few names, if possible. This is definitely an opportunity to give yourself a leg up; take advantage of it.

13. Candidates Who Think They Have Finished Learning Because They're Out of School

This kind of attitude displays inflexibility. Learning should be a lifelong mission for everyone—especially those in the teaching profession. This attitude also calls your work ethic into question.

14. Bragging; Going Beyond Reasonable Selling of Yourself; Flaunting Yourself

Again, if you're good, you don't have to prove it through arrogance or a haughty manner. Rest assured, the interview committee knows the difference between confidence and an overbearing, obnoxious "sales job."

15. Badmouthing

Don't criticize or badmouth another school, district, or person, including a previous employer. This has never helped anyone get a job—in *any* profession. Everything you say might be true, but it doesn't help your cause. The committee will simply assume you'll badmouth their school if they hire you.

16. Not Knowing Current Educational Trends, Methods, and Issues

Being new to the profession, you won't be expected to know *all* the new and current things going on, but you should definitely know the "hottest" ones. Be prepared to mention the latest educational buzzwords on occasion. A "clueless look" in response to a question will be a red flag to the committee.

17. No Knowledge of the School or Community

Do your homework: Know something about the basic demographics of the school and the community (see chapter 6).

18. Displaying Stupidity in Questions Asked and Responses Given

Never ask questions about salary and benefits. And avoid asking questions that reveal you know nothing at all about the school district or the community. If you're asked a question and you know absolutely nothing about the subject, don't wing it; it's better to say you don't know the answer than to insult the committee by blowing smoke.

19. Poor Grammar

Is your grammar adequate? If your best friend won't tell you, ask someone else—someone who'll be completely honest. If colloquial family or regional grammar problems crop up in your speech, you need to be aware of and correct them. Poor grammar can be a *real* handicap.

20. Poor Personal Hygiene

If that smell wasn't there before you arrived, and if it disappears when you leave, you're in big trouble. Poor personal hygiene is inexcusable. Most people are offended by it. We can't imagine a candidate coming to an interview with bad breath or body odor, yet it happens. Don't be one of these losers. You'll never get that job—count on it.

21. Lackluster Performance

If a member of the committee checks your vital signs at any time during the interview, assume you're not doing well. Be upbeat and positive. A little nervousness is normal, but put that adrenaline to good use. Schools need intelligent, dynamic teachers. Present that image.

22. Negative Body Language

As we discussed in chapter 7, negative body language can include everything from a closed position to poor eye contact, slouching, a defensive posture, or a scowl. Sit in a relaxed, comfortable fashion. Make eye contact with the person asking the question; then make eye contact with the rest of the members of the panel as you answer the question. Be pleasant and sincere.

23. Being Unprepared

In addition to being prepared to answer the panel's questions, bring your portfolio to the interview, along with 3×5 cards that have questions to ask at the end of the interview. Also bring a pen and note paper, preferably affixed inside a manila folder. And plan to arrive at least 10 minutes early for your interview.

24. No Questions for the Interview Panel

If you're *really* interested in working at a particular school, you should have some specific, intelligent questions to ask about that school. Your questions will show the panel that you're interested in knowing more and will give them a chance to brag a little—definitely good PR.

25. Negativity by the Candidate

Interview panels *do not* enjoy interviewing negative candidates, and negative candidates almost *never* get the jobs. Schools are looking for positive, upbeat teachers. Avoid negativity.

26. Body Piercing

If you normally wear a ring or a stud in your tongue, lip, nose, or eyebrow, you might want to remove it before an interview. Although this is a fashionable trend and you're certainly entitled to pierce your body if you want to, you should be aware that, at least in our survey, body piercing is often a major turn-off to interviewers.

27. Inflexibility

Because teachers work in an environment with so many variables, they must be flexible. Schedules change, interruptions happen, equipment fails, employees don't show, children get sick—the list is endless. If you appear to be a team player who isn't easily flustered, you'll have a much better chance of being hired.

28. Lack of Self-Confidence

It's natural to feel apprehensive and a little short on confidence in a stressful, unfamiliar setting; and interviews certainly fall into that category. To overcome this, we suggest you come to the interview as prepared as possible. Spend time in advance rehearsing your responses to questions you might be asked, and practice role-playing a few mock interviews (see chapter 6). These exercises will help you feel more confident during the interview.

If your self-confidence is still a little shaky when you arrive for the interview, you can usually give the *impression* of confidence by replacing your anxious frown with a sincere smile.

29. Tardiness

To land a job, you need every advantage—and the last time we checked, tardiness wasn't one of them. First impressions are lasting impressions; being late makes a bad first impression.

We suggest that you arrive early enough to visit the restroom and check your appearance. (You never know—you might have a piece of spinach hanging from a tooth, smudged eye shadow, or something unbuttoned.) Remember, tardiness is a form of rudeness. Don't be rude.

30. Playing Politics

Members of an interview committee act collectively. Even if you know a member of the committee—or you know someone who knows someone who knows someone on the committee—you must not skirt the process by trying to influence an individual panel member. This puts that person in an awkward position and might well backfire on you. Go through the process like everyone else and avoid the temptation to make political contacts to better your cause.

31. Haughty, Arrogant, or Superior Manner

To mask insecurity, some people *act* haughty, arrogant, or superior; others *are* haughty, arrogant, and think they're superior. Whichever the case, such behavior will count as a strike against you. You need to be a bit humble in this situation, even though you are trying to sell yourself. Remember: You don't have a job—they do.

32. More Interest in the Compensation Package Than the Kids

Unless the interview committee brings it up, *never* ask about salary or fringe benefits. These are public knowledge and readily available by other means.

33. "Not My Job" Syndrome

You're interviewing for a position that has certain expectations. If you make it a point to tell the committee which duties you would rather not perform, they'll be relieved to hear about them—so that they can hire someone else. Hiring panels are looking for workers, not shirkers.

34. Telling the Committee What You Think They Want to Hear

If you're so desperate for a job that your answers reflect only what you think they want to hear, rather than what you really feel, you might end up with a job you're unhappy with; and the district ends up with an employee they wish they hadn't hired.

35. Not Sticking to the Subject

When answering questions, be concise; resist the temptation to impress the panel with your wealth of college knowledge. Stick to the subject and don't say anything that doesn't improve upon the silence.

36. Lack of Passion for Kids and Teaching

Teaching is not just a job—it's a way of life. When you talk to the interview committee, they should see someone who's excited about the profession. Your body language should show it; your words should tell it; your eyes should flash it. Good teachers are usually good performers, too. Show some passion!

37. Poor Social Skills

Review the "don'ts" from chapter 7, including poor eye contact, "dressing down," and covering your mouth as you speak. Work on a firm, steady handshake.

At the End of the Interview

In this chapter we've given you lots of "do's" and "don'ts." Be aware of the latter, but don't dwell on them. Emphasize instead the "do's" and remember: You're a strong candidate or you wouldn't have made it this far.

If you run this final lap in style—if your attitude is great, your questions appropriate, and your responses impressive and tactful, you're sure to win the race.

Finally, at the conclusion of your interview, stand, smile, thank the panel for the opportunity to interview, and walk confidently from the room with visions of the gold medal that will surely be yours when the race results are posted.

You might think you're done now, but you're not. You still need to follow up after the interview to help clinch the job. See chapter 9 for hints on doing this effectively.