

TEACHER JOB SEARCH

INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY CAREER CENTER
812.237.5000 INDSTATE.EDU/CAREER-CENTER 231 N. 6TH WALKWAY

Tips for Effective Resumes

Your resume is often your first contact with a prospective employer. It should present the best possible picture of your skills, abilities and interests. The purpose of a resume is to convince an employer to select you for an interview. Your ability to communicate in a clear, concise way is one of the most important aspects of your job search.

Here are some important suggestions as you develop your resume:

- **BE CONCISE** Employers do not need to know your life story. Therefore, choose your words carefully and present your most relevant experiences and accomplishments clearly. One page is recommended for most undergraduate students.
- **BE HONEST** The most crucial element in any job search is trust. There is little possibility of a job offer without it. Don't sell yourself short but never include anything in your resume that you cannot back up during an interview.
- **BE NEAT AND AVOID TEMPLATES** The resume will probably be the employer's first look at you. Start from a blank Word document with one inch margins. Ensure that the information on your resume is neatly organized. You will not get a second chance to make a first impression.
- **BE WELL ORGANIZED** A resume can either open or close a door for you. It is important that you organize the information carefully so that it best demonstrates your strong points at a glance, while emphasizing your skills and achievements. Readability is critical on a resume.
- **BE PROFESSIONAL** Cultivate a polished look. Use resume paper (standard size; white, pale gray, or cream) for your resume. Resumes should not be folded or stapled. Utilize a 10x13 envelope for mailing and paperclip your documents together. If you email your resume, send it as a PDF.
- **BE CAREFUL** Review your work. Does your resume say what you want it to say? Does it look professional? Does it present an image in keeping with the employer, field and position you are seeking?
- **EMPHASIZE** Accomplishments are more meaningful than just a list of job responsibilities. Use action verbs to make your accomplishments come alive. If you do not have any experience or are seeking to change careers, highlight your transferable skills.
- **DO NOT INCLUDE PERSONAL OR HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION** Your age/photo/Social Security Number/marital status/wages should not be listed on your resume. Exceptions do apply for certain majors such as Theater and Dance, as well as those applying for jobs in the federal government. Examples for these types of specialized resumes can be found on our website- career.indstate.edu. Also, do not include high school information.
- **TAILOR AND REVISE** Your resume should be tailored to the position for which you are applying. Larger companies will do a key word search of your resume to match their job description. Make sure your contact information is current with a phone number and email address where an employer can reach you during business hours.

Frequently Asked Resume Questions

Q: Is it ok to have a resume longer than one page?

A: Employers want and expect a one page, concise document. Nearly all students can fit their relevant information on one page with good editing and layout. The ISU Career Center can help if you need help fitting your experience on one page. Exceptions to the one page rule: Teaching candidate resumes may go to two pages and people with graduate education and extensive professional experience may have a longer resume. When your resume is longer than one page, include a footer with your last name and page number.

Q: Is it ok to use a creative format to make my resume more noticeable?

A: An employer will typically spend 15-30 seconds reading your resume. Keep the layout simple and clean. Avoid too many layers of indentation. Stick with one or two font sizes. Don't mix font types. The best way to stand out from the crowd is with high quality content. You don't want to stand out for the wrong reason.

Q: Should I put an objective on my resume?

A: An objective is an optional statement. If your resume is accompanied by a cover letter, you do not need an objective. If you do include an objective, it should state the industry in which you are interested, the type of position, and the skills you hope to utilize.

Q: What happens if I make a typo on a resume I submitted?

A: You have one chance to make a first impression. In many cases, your resume and cover letter are the only thing an employer has to form an impression of you. Many people believe that if you make a mistake on your resume, you will probably make mistakes on the job.

Q: I have heard there is a different resume for applying to jobs in the federal government?

A: Yes, there is a different resume format for applying for jobs or internships in the federal government. It is a longer, more detailed document, including things such as SSN, previous wages, and employer contact information. For more information, schedule an appointment or stop by the Career Center during Walk-in hours.

Q: Is it acceptable for me to list an associate's degree I completed at a community college?

A: It is acceptable to list an associate's degree completed at a community college if it is related to the field in which you are looking to gain employment. Make sure that it is listed after the degree you are pursuing at ISU.

Q: Should I include related coursework on my resume and what should it include?

A: Related coursework is not required on a resume. If you do include a section or add it to the education section, make sure the courses are upper 300 and 400 level courses and classes that not every student in your major would have taken as part of the same degree. If you list related courses, be prepared to talk about them during an interview.

Q: What is a functional resume?

A: A functional resume emphasizes experiences and skills that may be transferable to several fields, rather than specific positions held. People who are considering changing careers often use this format. We recommend that most students and alumni use a chronological resume. If you are interested in more information on a functional resume, please visit the ISU Career Center Website, come in during Walk-in hours, or schedule an appointment.

Q: Is it ok to use a personal email address?

A: We recommend using your ISU email address, but if you are about to graduate or are an alumnus, using a personal email address is acceptable. Make sure it is professional looking and check it often.

Paul Edward Teacher

1346 Dougherty Oaks Court

Terre Haute, IN 47805

(812) 555-3333

pteacher@sycamores.indstate.edu**CAREER OBJECTIVE**

Obtain an elementary teaching position or a special education teaching position at Sycamore Elementary School, with an interest in coaching swimming and other academic activities.

EDUCATION**Bachelor of Science**, Elementary Education

Indiana State University

GPA: 3.76/4.0

December 2013

Terre Haute, IN

CERTIFICATIONS

- Indiana Elementary Education License, K-5, December 2013
- Praxis passed, December 2013
- CPR & AED Certification- American Red Cross
- Lifeguard Certification- American Red Cross

TEACHING RELATED EXPERIENCE**Student Teacher**, 1st Grade

Lost Creek Elementary School

August 2013-December 2013

Terre Haute, IN

- Supervised activities in a first grade classroom
- Prepared and taught lesson plans for all subject areas
- Prepared and implemented reading centers and reading groups
- Assessed student needs for individual instruction
- Provided one-on-one instruction in reading and mathematics for three students
- Assessed student progress throughout units

Intern, 2nd Grade

January 2013-May 2013

T.O.T.A.L. (Teachers of Tomorrow Advancing Learning) Program

Davis Park Elementary School

Terre Haute, IN

- Participated in full day experiences Tuesday-Thursday for ten weeks
- Participated in full day experiences and lesson planning Monday-Friday for six weeks
- Chaperoned field trip to the Indianapolis Zoo
- Prepared and taught less plans for multiple subject areas including writing, spelling, reading, mathematics, social studies, and creative writing
- Assessed student progress throughout lessons and units
- Attended SAT (Student Assistance Team) meetings
- Observed special education classrooms and reading recovery sessions
- Provided one-on-one coaching with a student in corrective reading

Practicum Participant

Vigo County School Corporation

August 2012-December 2012

Terre Haute, IN

- Taught lessons in various elementary classrooms in language arts, reading, math and social studies
- Taught and observed lessons in reading and math in the middle school and high school setting
- Assessed student progress throughout lessons and units
- Worked in special education classrooms

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Swimming Coach

North Montgomery Summer Swim

Summers 2009-2012

Montgomery, IN

- Created workouts and line ups for participants
- Taught children, K-12, how to swim (butterfly stroke, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle)
- Utilized computer programs to run and set up swimming meets
- Collaborated with adults and coaches from various schools to arrange meets

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Walk Now for Autism participant, 2010-Present

Big Brothers, Big Sisters of America, 2010-Present

Relay for Life, 2010-2012

Tips for Effective Cover Letters

An important but often misunderstood part of the job search process is the cover letter. Your resume tells employers about your qualifications, education, and experiences, but it is your cover letter that peaks their interest enough to read your resume. Your cover letter lets you emphasize information you want the reader to notice in your resume. It also gives you the opportunity to personalize and tailor your message and to highlight your written communication skills.

Here are some suggestions:

- **JOB DESCRIPTION** Use the job description to create your cover letter. Carefully review the position description and relate your experiences to the employer's job posting.
- **SELL YOURSELF** Get the reader interested in you and your experiences.
- **BE ASSERTIVE** If the purpose of sending your cover letter is to get an application or arrange an interview, say so. Many candidates write sentence after sentence without getting to the point in their cover letters.
- **MEET THE EMPLOYER'S NEEDS** Many large companies will do key word searches of your cover letter and resume to filter the candidates that most closely match their job description. Speak to the requirements of the job and use the correct industry language and buzzwords. Also, tell the employer not just how you will do the duties of the job but how you will add value to the organization. Provide at least one concise example of how you have applied an important skill in previous position or school project.
- **MAKE IT PERFECT** Spell correctly and watch your grammar. The ISU Career Center has Walk-in hours every day where you can come in for a 15 minute appointment to have your document(s) reviewed. Do not indent paragraphs.
- **MATCH YOUR RESUME** Make sure to use the same paper, color and font style.
- **PROPERLY ADDRESS YOUR COVER LETTER** Find out the name and title of the person to send your cover letter. If you cannot get this information online, you may have to call the employer to find out. Make sure to spell their name correctly and do not confuse their job title. Beginning your cover letter with "To whom it may concern" or "Dear sir or madam" is not recommended. If you are unable to identify the proper contact, use "Dear Hiring Official" in your greeting.
- **GET TO THE POINT** Brevity is key. Employers do not have time to read long cover letters. Keep it to one page. In the first sentence of your cover letter, explain what the letter is about and why you are writing it. Be concise and make your letter easy to read.
- **DO NOT OVERUSE THE WORD "I"** After completing the first draft of your cover letter, take a pencil and circle every sentence that begins with "I". Vary sentence structure and use compound sentences to reduce the number of sentences that begin with "I". Read the cover letter out loud to yourself to ensure it flows well and sounds professional.
- **CONVEY THE RIGHT IMAGE** Never be negative or speak poorly about a previous employer. Also make sure your language is conveying a confident tone. Instead of saying I feel and I think, try saying I know. It leaves the reader with a much more positive impression.
- **CUSTOMIZE** Every cover letter should be tailored to each company, industry and position. Research the company ahead of time and use industry language so they know how interested you are in **their** company.

Cover Letter Template

Your Street Address
City, State Zip Code
Telephone Number
Indiana State Email Address

Month, Day, Year

Mr./Ms./Dr./First Name Last Name
Title
Name of Organization
Street or P.O Box Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name:

Opening paragraph: This is your introduction paragraph. State why you are writing the letter, the specific position or type of work you are applying for, and how you learned of the organization or position (Career Center, name of publication or website, friend, employment service, etc.). Additionally, you may choose to include basic information about yourself, such as your education background.

Body Paragraph (s): (One to two paragraphs) In this section, describe why you are interested in the employer and this specific position. Demonstrate that you know enough about the employer or position to relate your background to the employer or position. Mention specific qualifications that make you a good fit for the employer's needs. This is also an opportunity to explain in more detail relevant items in your resume. If possible, describe how you have used important skills in at least one specific accomplishment or project. Do not restate full sections of your resume, but rather give concrete examples of how you possess specific qualities and skills. Examples will indicate to the employer the type of work you will perform for them in the future.

Conclusion Paragraph: In the closing paragraph, indicate that you would like the opportunity to interview for the position. Refer the reader to the enclosed resume or application, which summarizes your qualifications, training, and experience. Repeat your contact information and offer any assistance that will help promote a speedy response and that you would be glad to provide the employer with any additional information needed. State what you will do to follow up, such as telephone the employer within two weeks. Thank the employer for his or her consideration.

Sincerely,

(Your handwritten signature [on hard copy])

Your name typed
(When emailing a cover letter, your contact info appears below your printed name, instead of on top.)

Enclosure(s) (refers to resume, portfolio, demo etc.)

Tips for Creating a Reference Sheet

How and where to list references:

- **DO NOT STATE “References available upon request” on your resume.** It is often a waste of valuable space because most employers assume you can supply references.
- References are not listed on your resume; they are on a separate document.
- Use the same heading on your reference page as you did on your resume.
- Skip a few lines after your heading and write the word “References”. Below that is where you will list your contacts.
- The average number of references is 3-5.

When to give your reference list to a prospective employer:

- Provide reference information when you are asked to. If you have reached the interview stage and have not been asked for reference information, you may consider offering it.
- Do not send reference information with your resume unless it has been requested.
- For most undergraduates, employers will not be contacting references prior to interviewing you.

How to select references:

- Ask people who have a positive opinion of you and who can describe your work-related qualities and personal characteristics.
- Past and present employers usually know about your reliability, initiative and ability to work with others. This information is valuable, even if your employment was/is not career-related.
- Faculty members know about your academic ability, productivity, timeliness and perhaps have observed how you work with others.
- Advisors and coaches may be aware of information about you that could be relevant to a potential employer, such as maturity, initiative, interpersonal skills or leadership qualities.

Getting permission:

- **Never give someone’s name as a reference without securing that person’s permission in advance.**
- Specifically ask if they will serve as a “positive” reference.
- Verify spelling of names, titles and all contact information for your references.
- Give each person who agrees to serve as a reference a copy of your resume. This lets your references know about abilities, interests and experiences they may not have observed.
- Keep your references posted on activities and progress in your job/internship search. Tell your references the names of persons and organizations to which you have given their names.
- When possible, give them a copy of the job description for the positions for which you are applying. This helps your references be prepared for phone calls and emails they may receive.
- Thank each reference in writing for his/her assistance.

Reference Sheet Sample

Paul Edward Teacher

1346 Dougherty Oaks Court

Terre Haute, IN 47805

(812) 555-3333

pteacher@sycamores.indstate.edu

References

Name
Company/Organization
Title
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone Number
Email Address

Name
Company/Organization
Title
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone Number
Email Address

Name
Company/Organization
Title
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone Number
Email Address

Portfolio Development

The Educator's Professional Portfolio can be paper-based or in an online format. The portfolio is often used during an interview to illustrate one's talents, experience and abilities. It also serves as a great reference while responding to questions. Principals and interview teams often want to see a portfolio while the majority of human resources directors prefer not to. There is no standard design for a portfolio; however, portfolios often contain but are not limited to the following information:

- A. Credentials
 - a. Resume
 - b. Teaching License
 - c. Related Certifications
 - d. Transcripts
- B. Awards/Honors
- C. Philosophies
 - a. Educational Philosophy
 - b. Classroom Management Plan
- D. Samples
 - a. Sample Individual Education Plans
 - b. Samples of homework, assessments, exams, projects
 - c. Sample Unit Plan
 - d. Sample Lesson Plans which show:
 - i. Accommodation of Learning
 - ii. Styles and Demonstrating
 - iii. Evaluation and Motivational
 - iv. Methods
 - e. Photos of bulletin boards, field trips, etc.
- E. Student Teaching Evaluations
- F. Letters of Appreciation from Parents and/or Students
- G. Letters of Recommendation
- H. Professional Development
 - a. Professional Memberships
 - b. Presentations and/or Publications
 - c. Conferences Attended
- I. Evidence of Community Involvement

Checklist for Organizing & Utilizing Your Portfolio

1. At the end of each semester, evaluate experiences, achievements, special training and workshops, and unique abilities. Choose only the best for your portfolio.
2. Collect documentation to give evidence of accomplishments and to illustrate experiences.
3. Change your portfolio to meet the specific needs of a particular school system.
4. Relate accomplishments and abilities to employer needs.
5. Use concise statements; make brevity the key when developing your portfolio.
6. In an interview, offer to show your portfolio; don't push it.
7. Recognize the appropriate opportunity to show it.
8. Use a three-ring binder.
9. Use clear page protectors and tabbed dividers.
10. Use duplicates and store originals in a safe place.
11. Consider creating a mini portfolio (limit 10 to 15 pages) or handout to leave with the interviewer.

Job Search Resources

I. Education Position Listings

- A. **Sycamore Career Link** (<http://www.indstate.edu/career-center/CareerLink.aspx>) provides access to alumni and employers, as well as job postings and registration for campus interviews, career fairs, workshops and events.
- B. **Career Shift** (<http://www.careershift.com/?sc=indstate>) provides job listings from job boards and company job postings, also provides current contact information for millions of companies.
- C. **Education America Network** (www.educationamerica.net) provides a reliable means for teachers and education sector personnel to connect with employers who are seeking high qualified employees.

II. Helpful Websites

- A. **Teach.org**- provides videos and testimonies related to the teaching profession, licensing and certification information, supply and demand information, job posting, etc.
- B. **Teachaway.com**- provides information regarding teaching abroad as well as more information about teaching regulations overseas.
- C. **Teach.com**- provides information about salary ranges, testimonies, graduate school preparation, etc.
- D. **TeachforAmerica.org**- provides information and opportunities for teaching in low income areas.

III. Campus Interview Opportunities/Job Fairs

- A. **ISU Career Opportunity Fairs**- Held at ISU during the Fall and Spring semester. Check the ISU Career Center website for announcements.
- B. **Other Job and Career Fairs** – many states and large school districts are conducting their own career fairs. Check the education web sites of states and school districts in which you are interested.

IV. The American Association for Employment in Education (AAEE) Job Search Handbook for Educators

- A. This **AAEE ANNUAL** includes the topics; how to locate your first teaching position; teacher supply and demand; interviewing; job search timetable; etc. (Includes Directory of State Teacher Certification Offices and advertisements) Giveaway copies are available while supply lasts.

Researching a School District

Before an interview, research the school, district, community and position for which you are applying. This information will allow you to present your qualifications in the most effective way and will provide a basis for asking good and insightful questions.

WHERE DO I LOOK FOR INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL DISTRICTS?

- Check websites of school districts or of specific schools
- Alumni who are presently teaching in district

QUESTIONS TO RESEARCH

District

- Type and size of district (elementary, high school, or unit)
- History of the district
- Characteristics of the student population and community
- Central office administrators and their roles

Curriculum

- Courses in the curriculum in your discipline and their content, sequence, pre-requisites and status as electives or required courses
- Typical schedule of courses in the curriculum
- Adoption date and district adoption procedures for textbooks and supplemental materials
- Availability of A-V materials and equipment for classroom use
- New and/or innovative curriculum developments

Students

- Type and size of student body
- Typical class size
- Characteristics of students (for example, number or percentage who are enrolled in vocational and college preparatory curricula and number and percentage that enroll in college upon graduation)

Instructional Assignment

- Number and type of teaching positions (self-contained classes or team taught classes)
- Instructional assignments
- Methods and frequency of teacher evaluation
- Duties in the supervision/sponsorship of student activities

Faculty

- Number of administrators and/or faculty members in district, school and departments
- Number of new teachers hired each year

Student Services

- Student clubs, organizations and sports
- Counseling and guidance personnel and services

Selection Procedures

- Number and type of interviews that job candidates can expect
- People involved in preliminary screening, interviewing and the final selection of candidates

Community

- Involvement of parents and other community members in the school program
- Recreational and other facilities in the community
- Cost of living and housing in the community

When a job offer is made you should ask about the following:

- District salary schedule and fringe benefits
- Pay for extracurricular responsibilities
- District requirements for continuing professional education
- Reimbursement policies for graduate study
- Payroll schedule

Be certain to read your employment contract carefully before signing.

Guidelines for Dress

Prior to going on an interview, you will need to purchase interview attire. While the climate of the organization should be considered, it is generally preferable to dress in a conservative manner. You should purchase your interview attire much before the actual interview to allow yourself time to have any alterations made. It is also a good idea to have multiple interviewing outfits since you may have multiple interviews with any one company. Below are some guidelines to help you prepare your attire.

General Tips and Guidelines

Regardless of the type of attire, the following guidelines should always be followed:

- Properly iron clothing (pants creased, shirts neatly pressed).
- Have your clothing items for important interviews or meetings dry cleaned and ready to wear.
- Wear properly fitting attire; avoid tight clothing or too big/loose.
- Walk and sit in your clothing to ensure comfort.
- Belt and shoes should match.
- A black leather portfolio for note-taking or carrying resumes.
- A black or brown shoulder bag or briefcase is appropriate.
- In the case of uncertainty, err on the side of too formal.
- Once you are hired, be sure to gather as much insight into appropriate attire as possible through a company's dress code by observing what other employees are wearing.

Women's Attire

- Subdued hair, makeup, jewelry and nails (becomes less stringent in business casual).
- Skirts should fall at the knee.
- Avoid provocative clothing that shows too much skin.
- Avoid knee-high boots, stilettos and open-toe shoes.
- Shoes comfortable for walking and standing are preferred.
- A small black or brown handbag is appropriate but consolidating all items into a single bag is ideal.

Men's Attire

- Pants should hit the shoe and never touch or drag on the floor.
- Socks should be calf-length and neutral colors matching your pants (black, navy, brown, gray or tan).
- Earrings are typically no appropriate.

Interview Attire

- Black, navy and dark gray suits with little or no pattern (i.e. pinstripe or plaid).
- Well-pressed, long-sleeved white collared shirts (Light, subdued colors like pale blue may be appropriate, but classic black or dark colors with white is preferred).
- Simple ties with minimal patterns and subdued colors are best.
- The focus is to look clean-cut and professional by sticking to a traditional look.

Wear interview attire to an interview, formal business meeting and/or presentation in which first impressions are extremely important. This style will allow the focus to be on you while your attire simply accentuates your professionalism. Interview attire is a safe bet when you are unsure which attire is most appropriate.

Professional Attire

- Blazers and pants that coordinate but are not matching colors as with suits fit into this category.
- Suite jackets are not required; a nice shirt or blouse with or without a tie is appropriate.
- Generally the sleeves are long but some short-sleeved pieces may be appropriate.
- Less formal materials (for example tweed).

Wear professional attire to an established job, and when the job atmosphere allows for more freedom in attire. This attire is appropriate for meetings and presentations that are less formal.

Business Casual Attire

- The most relaxed style.
- Formal suits and ties are not required.
- Polo shirts, khakis, and sweaters are appropriate. No t-shirts.
- Short sleeves are more common and appropriate.
- Colors, patterns, and materials have the most freedom.
- Do not become too relaxed (i.e., maintain proper fit and be certain to iron).

Wear business casual attire when the company dress code allows it or when it is clear that all members of the organization are wearing a business casual style. It is still best to wear your more formal styles to important meetings or presentations.

Behavioral-Based Interviews

Behavioral based interviewing is a common style of interviewing that most companies use in their hiring process. The basic premise behind behavioral interviewing is past situations predict future performance. These types of questions are more probing and boil down to three main areas:

Can you do the job?

Will you love the job?

Can we work with you?

C-A-R Strategy for Answering Questions

CIRCUMSTANCE

- Describe a specific situation you were directly involved in and recount it as it occurred. What and who was involved? Tell the interviewer about a particular situation that relates to the question. Use examples from past internships, work experience, classes, team involvement and community service.

ACTION

- What needed to be done? What did you do to solve the situation? Always emphasize your strengths and your specific actions. Have success stories prepared ahead of time that represent your skills, qualities and characteristics.

RESULT

- What happened as a result of your behavior? What did you learn from the situation?

Before the Interview

1. Research the school district/organization prior to the interview.
2. Acquire as much information as possible about the position for which you are applying. What skills are required for this position?
3. Analyze your skills relating to your job objective. Focus on job-related issues and qualifications.
4. Identify examples from your past experience where you demonstrated those skills. You should tell a story, explaining the **circumstances** for which you were responsible, the **action** you took, and the **results** of your actions. If possible, quantify your results.
5. Develop a Portfolio (see page 8).
6. Be prepared to provide examples of when results didn't turn out as you planned. What did you do about it?
7. Identify 2 or 3 of your top selling points that you think will make you stand out above other candidates that are interviewing for this job, and determine how you will convey these points during the interview.
8. Remember that the interview is a two-way exchange of information. You need to discover if the school district is a good fit for you, as much as the district needs to know if you are a fit for them. Be sure to ask questions about the position.
9. When you are well prepared, participate in a Practice Interview at the Career Center.

Day of the Interview

1. Bring extra resumes, cover letters, notepad, writing utensils, portfolio and questions for the interviewer.
2. Dress professionally.
3. Arrive early.
4. Be gracious and professional to EVERYONE you encounter.

During the Interview

1. Shake everyone's hand.
2. Look your interviewer in the eye in a confident manner.
3. Be ready to professionally admit you do not know the answer to a question. Do not pretend or make up an answer.
4. Thank everyone for the opportunity and their hospitality.
5. Smile.
6. Be an active listener.
7. Be sensitive to both verbal and non-verbal messages.
8. Remember to send a thank you card to everyone who interviewed you after the conclusion of the interview. Restate your interest in the position and your appreciation for their time and consideration. Letters should always be typewritten and should be mailed within 24 hours of the contact or interview.

The Phone Interview

Many companies conduct phone interviews in order to save on the costs of on-site interviews. Take the phone interview just as seriously as you would an on-site interview; keep in mind the basic interviewing tips. There are some additional tips to keep in mind for the phone interview.

- Schedule the interview for a time when you will not be disturbed.
- Have all documentation in front of you (resume, cover letter, portfolio, job description, etc.).
- Try to use a land line so you do not risk your cellphone losing service.
- Before the appointment access the room to make sure there are no distractions.
- Dress professionally. Even though the interviewers cannot see you, this prevents you from becoming too relaxed and helps you maintain a professional state of mind.
- Sit up straight. Similarly to dressing professionally, sitting up straight will help you get in the professional voice if you are sitting up straight.
- Smile!

Interview Questions for Teacher Candidates

To market yourself during an interview, you need to know your skills and abilities, tie them to the needs of the school district, and be able to communicate your qualifications to the interviewer. Past performance is the best indicator of future performance; employers may seek demonstrated examples of your performance from your past experiences. These examples may come from work experience, internships, campus involvement, volunteer work, educational projects and class work.

Getting to Know You

1. Why did you choose this profession as a career?
2. What makes you the best candidate for this position?
3. Describe a personal experience which had an impact on your teaching.
4. If I asked the people who know you for one reason why I shouldn't hire you, what would they say?
5. What are your long term career goals and how do you plan to achieve them?
6. What new ideas would you bring to our school?
7. Give an example of a time you went above and beyond to accomplish a task.
8. What do you think the teacher's role should be outside of the classroom?
9. What is your educational philosophy?
10. Do you believe you should build rapport with students? If yes, how?
11. How important is collaboration and building camaraderie with other staff members? And how would you go about this?
12. What is the role of homework?
13. What would you do if a student has been absent from your class for several days?
14. What is the role of the student within your classroom?

Instruction

1. What instructional strategies have you found most effective?
2. What are the components of an effective lesson plan?
3. Describe a lesson which was particularly successful by walking me through each stage from planning through delivery.
4. Describe how you have differentiated a lesson to accommodate varying student needs.
5. What would you do to actively engage your students?
6. What do you do when you see some students are not learning?
7. How would you motivate the reluctant learner?
8. What would you do with students who fail continually to complete homework?
9. How do you give your students recognition? Do you think a student can have too much recognition?
10. How do you encourage students to learn? Can a student be forced to learn?
11. What if your students don't "get it"? In other words, if a lesson is not working for all your students, do you have a plan for remediation? How do you carry out that plan?
12. What strategies would you use to help prepare students for high-stakes test?
13. How would you use standardized test data to improve classroom instruction?
14. In what ways would you involve parents in the learning process or in your classroom activities?
15. How do you individualize learning in your classes?

Interpersonal Skill

1. How would you facilitate collaboration between home and school?
2. If confronted by an angry parent on an issue, how would you best respond?
3. How would your students know that you genuinely care about them?
4. How would you respond to a student who asked for your advice on a difficult personal situation?
5. How will you react when you enter the faculty lounge and hear another teacher ridiculing a student; especially one with whom you have had success?
6. If a student said he/she thought you were the worst teacher she ever had, how would you react and what would you say?
7. If a student came to you and said, "None of the other students like me," what would you tell that student?
8. How would you handle making a difficult phone call to a parent?

Assessment

1. How do you measure student success?
2. What would you do to improve student achievement?
3. How do you know whether your curriculum is appropriately matched to your students' needs?
4. What is your system for evaluating student work?

Classroom Management

1. How would you set up a student management system?
2. How do you handle children who are difficult to manage?
3. Describe the toughest discipline situation you encountered and how you handled it.
4. If you were having classroom management difficulties when and who would you ask for help?
5. Discuss your philosophy of discipline.
6. What do you expect from the administration when you sent a student to the office?
7. It is the first day of class, you are writing something on the board and a paper wad hits you in the back, what would you do? Later the same day, if all the students drop their pencils, what do you do?
8. How do you handle the different ability levels of students in classes?

Self-Analysis

1. Describe a time that you were in a difficult situation and explain how you resolved it.
2. If you were doing something for students that you knew was right and your principal told you to stop, what would you do?
3. Describe in detail your best and worst days in a classroom.
4. Describe a challenge you encountered during student teaching. What did you learn from it?
5. What was your most rewarding experience (greatest disappointment) while student teaching?
6. If I was your principal and we were setting goals for next year, what would they be?
7. Describe for me a lesson you taught that went very well. Why did the lesson work so well?
8. Describe a lesson plan that you have developed. What were the objectives, format of the lesson, and how did you evaluate whether or not the objectives were achieved?

Questions Asked by the Candidate

Remember that interviews are two-way conversations with a purpose. Thus, you need to ask well-formulated, intelligent questions that demonstrate your knowledge, maturity and interest in the organization. Equally important, you need to ask questions that will help you assess your fit with an organization. It is important to do your homework and avoid asking questions that are readily answered in organization literature or websites. Avoid questions related to benefits/salary until after the position has been offered. Here are some examples:

1. What are you most proud of about your school?
2. What would faculty, students and parents say are the strengths of your school?
3. What were you school's goals for last year and were they accomplished?
4. How do teachers integrate technology into the classroom?
5. What priorities would you have for me as a new faculty member?
6. Do you offer a mentoring program?
7. How does the school district support professional development?
8. What issues or concerns are facing your school?
9. Why do you enjoy working for this school?
10. What professional development opportunities are available?
11. What is the relationship of this school with the community?
12. What resources would I have to do this job?
13. What do you wish you had known about this school before you began working?
14. From your perspective, what is the greatest challenge that the school faces during the next year?

Illegal Interview Questions

What to do?

It can be uncomfortable when asked an inappropriate question during an interview. It is important to assess what kind of information an employer is seeking in asking these questions. For example, if an employer asks if you are planning on having children, they may be interested in whether or not you will be able to travel or have flexibility in the job. You can address this issue without having to answer the question. For instance, a possible reply could be "If you are worried about whether or not I will be available for business trips the answer is yes, I will be able to travel." It gives the employer the necessary information and also directs the line of questioning away from the initial question.

Additional Examples of Illegal Questions

- What is your birthdate?
- Are you or other family member's naturalized citizens?
- Where were you and your parents born?
- What is your religious affiliation or denomination?
- Who do you live with?
- What is your marital status?
- What is your race?