



# **How To Connect With a Trades Job in Saskatchewan**

**Your guide to landing a job**



SaskColleges.ca



## How To Connect With a Trades Job in Saskatchewan

First Canadian Edition

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# INTRODUCTION

Construction is a dynamic, rewarding career path that you can have the opportunity to enjoy and find gratifying. There are a wide variety of skilled trade positions that are engaging and can provide you with a secure livelihood for years to come.

Year after year, the demand in the construction industry only continues to grow. You can easily adapt your training, skills and education to find the right fit in construction and be on the path to a fulfilling career in the trades. This manual will explain step by step what you need to do to be on your way to a lucrative career in construction. To learn more details about the exciting opportunities that are available today please visit: <http://www.thinkconstructionsask.ca/>

Conducting an effective job search in Construction depends upon knowing and implementing a series of learned skills. There are many aspects of this process that are very important, as a job search is a systematic progression, not a fragmented assortment of functions. Each step in the job search process works with the next step to provide the job seeker with the best opportunity for success.

This progression for an effective job search is reflected in the organization of this manual. Chapters 1 through 3 deal with the tools required to conduct a job search and creating an effective resume and cover letter. The middle portion of this manual focuses on how to research and assess appropriate Saskatchewan job markets, and readers will learn where in Saskatchewan construction companies are recruiting for employees. Later in the manual, we will explain how to overcome common barriers to meaningful employment in Saskatchewan and will show how to make a Job Search Plan that will provide the step-by-step direction a job seeker must take to obtain employment. Subsequent chapters will deal with the job interview, salary reports, and accepting or declining a job offer.

The manual will conclude with the steps that the job seeker should take to obtain a promotion once they are settled in their job.

# CHAPTER 1

## GETTING YOUR JOB SEARCH TOOLBOX TOGETHER

### ***BEFORE YOU BEGIN***

To be able to effectively conduct your job search, you will need some common items that everyone in the 21<sup>st</sup> century uses to find work. Before you start your job search, you need to prepare your employment toolbox.

These job search tools will allow you to distribute your Construction resume to many employers and help you to find a job. Fortunately, this equipment will be accessible to you at a very low cost, most likely from the convenience of your own home or at a facility nearby.

There are a variety of crucial tools that you will use to conduct a job search. Primarily they include:

- Computer
- Internet Access
- Telephone
- Fax Machine
- Photocopier
- Post Office
- Web Camera
- Pen and Paper
- Work Area and Files

Using these tools to their best advantage will be covered later in this book and in the upcoming chapters. But for now, let's look at the benefits of having these items in your Job Search Toolbox.

## ***COMPUTER***

A computer is an excellent tool for a job search. You can use the computer's word processing software to generate your cover letter and Construction resume. The computer can be used to research jobs and industry information on the Internet. You can also use the computer to email your cover letter and Construction resume and maintain communication with employers.

## ***INTERNET***

The Internet is one of the best resources for your job search. With thousands of websites and web pages at your fingertips, you will be able to conduct a thorough job search, find new professional associates to network with, and research licensing and credential requirements for your profession. If you have Internet access from your home, library or school, you can start right away. If you have to purchase Internet time from a café or other establishment, to save money you should write a list of the items you are going to research before logging on and the fee for your Internet time begins. By having a list of the items that you need to research for that day, you can save yourself money and save yourself time as well.

## ***TELEPHONE***

At some point, you will be speaking to an employer on the telephone. Make sure that you have access to a telephone to accept and make calls so there are no delays when you want to speak to an employer. Remember to have a professional-sounding voice message on your telephone's answering machine or answering service. Your professional image starts with the first impression you make when the employer telephones you.

## ***FAX MACHINE***

While some view the facsimile (fax) machine as outdated, it is still an effective job search method to receive and send information to employers.

While not an essential tool to have for your job search, it is advantageous to have access to a fax machine if you do not own one. Some computers may have a “built-in fax machine” too.

Sometimes an employer will prefer to send or receive a document via fax.

## ***PHOTOCOPIER***

This is a very handy machine to have access to. If you are expecting to circulate your Construction resume to many different employers, being able to print lots of copies of your complete Construction resume at one time is inexpensive and time-saving. Although generally out of the reach for most people to purchase, photocopiers are readily available at a wide variety of local copy and printing stores, office supply stores, and schools and libraries in your community for your self-serve use, often for less than ten cents per page to print.

## ***POST OFFICE - MAIL***

On your Construction resume, you will need to have a mailing address for an employer to mail information or documents to you. You can use your home address as the address to receive mail or you can rent a mail box from the post office.

## ***WEB CAMERA***

Holding Web cast interviews is a growing new trend with employers, particularly with those who are interviewing out-of-town applicants. Although you do not need to own a web camera, it may be convenient to have access to one, as an employer may request to have a webcast interview. It is a good idea to know

where there is a web camera available for use in your town. Some Internet cafes or stores may rent the webcams as part of their Internet service, usually on an hourly basis.

### ***PEN, PAPER AND GENERAL WORK SPACE***

It is helpful if you can designate a specific workspace – preferably an office desk or table - as your job-hunting area, and include a small filing system to keep your job search materials organized.

Try to find a place that is distraction-free so that you can spend an hour or two every day on your job search. As you will be spending a considerable time in this area, try to make it as comfortable and pleasant as possible with a sturdy chair and good lighting. Make sure that you have plenty of paper and pens to make notes on the research information you compile while conducting your job search. Remember to keep a record in your filing system of all the employer and professional contacts that you make. More information on recording your job search will be covered later in this book when we explain how to create your own Job Search Journal.

# WORKSHEET

## TOOLS NEEDED FOR THE JOB SEARCH

To conduct the best job search possible, it is advisable to have access to the following job search tools. In this worksheet, you can record where you can find the item you will need for the job search, when you can use the job search tool and how much it will cost to use. This worksheet will assist you to keep organized and prepared with your job search tools.

<b>THE TOOLS YOU WILL NEED:</b>	<b>WHERE YOU CAN USE IT? WHEN CAN YOU USE IT? HOW MUCH WILL IT COST TO USE IT?</b>
<b>COMPUTER</b>	<b>HOW MUCH WILL IT COST? WHERE? WHEN?</b>
<b>INTERNET</b>	<b>HOW MUCH WILL IT COST? WHERE? WHEN?</b>
<b>TELEPHONE</b>	<b>HOW MUCH WILL IT COST? WHERE? WHEN?</b>

<b>FAX MACHINE</b>	<b>HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?</b> <b>WHERE?</b> <b>WHEN?</b>
<b>PHOTOCOPIER</b>	<b>HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?</b> <b>WHERE?</b> <b>WHEN?</b>
<b>POST OFFICE</b>	<b>HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?</b> <b>WHERE?</b> <b>WHEN?</b>
<b>WEB CAMERA</b>	<b>HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?</b> <b>WHERE?</b> <b>WHEN?</b>
<b>GENERAL WORK SPACE</b>	<b>HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?</b> <b>WHERE?</b> <b>WHEN?</b>
<b>OTHER TOOLS YOU MAY NEED FOR YOUR JOB SEARCH:</b>	

## CHAPTER 2

# PREPARING AND CREATING AN EFFECTIVE CONSTRUCTION RESUME

The following chapter will address one of the most important elements of your job search: creating an effective Construction resume.

### ***THE SEARCH BEGINS***

Even the most patient person wants to know: How long will it take for me to find a job? Here is a very general guideline to the time it will take for your job search in Saskatchewan.

Depending on the current job market conditions and the economy in your region, you can anticipate that that it will take on average one month of job searching per \$10,000 you expect to earn. For example, if you expect to make \$40,000 per year, then you can estimate that it will take on average four (4) months to find a job. You will learn more about the average salary for occupations later in this book.

Once again, these are only very basic estimates of the average length of time that your job search may take; it could be shorter or it could be longer. Factors contributing to the length of time that a job seeker may take to gain employment include the demand for the person's occupation, the applicant's prior work experience, and the amount of time invested into the job search.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRADES AND TECHNICIANS**

### **Top tips for what employers are looking for:**

- *Current relevant work experience*
- *Current set of skills*
- *What can you do for the employer? Employers want to see that you can starting working effectively as soon as you start the job.*
- *On your resume and in the job interview explain to the employer your past five years of relevant work experience.*
- *Employers would like to know that you have a good work ethic and will get the job done effectively and safely.*
- *Employers like to see that you can be adaptable to a new job and projects.*
- *Employers would like you to be able to communicate and ask questions when you don't understand a task or situation.*
- *If your skill set is not a perfect match with the job, explain how you can use your current set of skills, education and work experience in this new position.*

### **What is TOWES?**

Throughout Canada, employers, educators, labour organizations and governments are working collectively to ensure that Canadians have the Essential Skills needed for complete involvement in home and community life.

TOWES - the Test Of Workplace Essential Skills offers applicable, reliable and effective assessments, curriculum and training support for organizations and individuals seeking to assess and upgrade their Essential Skills.

### ***For more information:***

<http://www.towes.com/en/about-towes/what-is-towes/what-is-towes>

## JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Please click on the links below for a complete description of each job.

### Employment Rankings Legend

- 1 - Workers meet or may be excess of demand
- 2 - Workers meet demand
- 3 - Workers supply limited, employers may have to compete for workers
- 4 - Workers in short supply, employers need to recruit beyond traditional sources
- 5 - Workers are not available in local markets to meet labour demands

OC	TRADE	EMPLOYMENT 2015
7372	<a href="#">Blaster/Driller</a>	4
7234	<a href="#">Boilermaker</a>	4
7281	<a href="#">Bricklayer</a>	3
7272	<a href="#">Cabinet Maker</a>	4
7271	<a href="#">Carpenter</a>	4
7282	<a href="#">Concrete Finisher</a>	3
7611	<a href="#">Construction Labourer</a>	4
7371	<a href="#">Crane Operator</a>	3
7271	<a href="#">Cribber (concrete)</a>	3
7241	<a href="#">Electrician</a>	4
7318	<a href="#">Elevator Constructor</a>	4
2234	<a href="#">Estimator</a>	4
7284	<a href="#">Exterior Finisher</a>	3
7295	<a href="#">Floor Covering</a>	3
7271	<a href="#">Framer</a>	4
7253	<a href="#">Gas Fitter</a>	4
7292	<a href="#">Glazer</a>	4
7312	<a href="#">Heavy Equip. Technician</a>	4
7521	<a href="#">Heavy Equip. Operator</a>	4
7293	<a href="#">Insulator</a>	4
7284	<a href="#">Interior Finisher</a>	3
7236	<a href="#">Iron Worker</a>	4
2225	<a href="#">Landscape</a>	3
7231	<a href="#">Machinist</a>	4

OC	TRADE	EMPLOYMENT 2015
7311	<a href="#">Millwright</a>	4
7294	<a href="#">Painter/Decorator</a>	3
7284	<a href="#">Plasters/Drywall</a>	3
7251	<a href="#">Plumber</a>	4
7244	<a href="#">Power Line Person</a>	4
7313	<a href="#">Refrigeration Mechanic</a>	4
7291	<a href="#">Roofer</a>	4
7233	<a href="#">Sheet Metal Worker</a>	4
7252	<a href="#">Sprinkler Fitter</a>	4
2154	<a href="#">Surveyor</a>	3
7283	<a href="#">Tile setter</a>	3
7237	<a href="#">Welder</a>	4

### Related Jobs

- [Buyer/Purchasing Agent](#)
- [Construction Estimators](#)
- [Construction Manager](#)
- [Safety Officer](#)
- [Site Superintendent](#)
- [Technical Instructor](#)

### Red Seal

The Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program (also known as the Red Seal Program) was launched over 50 years ago to provide greater movement throughout Canada for skilled workers. Currently, it stands for a benchmark of quality for industry. Through the Program, tradespersons are able to achieve a Red Seal endorsement on their provincial/territorial certificates by successfully completing an interprovincial Red Seal examination. The Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program recognizes their abilities and ensures recognition

of their certification throughout Canada without having to take additional examinations. There are presently 55 Red Seal designated trades.

Red Seal certification may help you to land a job but this may depend on a few different factors. The employer may or may not require that you have the Red Seal certification for the job. If the job that you are applying to is with a union, this may affect whether or not you are required to obtain the Red Seal certification. It is a good idea to ask the employer if they require the Red Seal certification before going through the process of obtaining the Red Seal for your occupation.

For more information about the Red Seal program please visit:

<http://www.red-seal.ca>

## ***APPRENTICESHIP INFORMATION***

Apprenticeship is the path to becoming a journeyman in one of the designated trades or subtrades in Saskatchewan. Apprenticeship is a system of training in which you “earn as you learn.” This type of learning has been around forever – the best way to learn is by doing. The majority of your time will be spent learning on the job from a skilled journeyman and you also spend some time each year in technical training.

When you are conducting your job search, ask potential employers if they are willing to register you as an apprentice – this is called indenturing. Typically, an employer will register you after three to six months of work. There are four trades in Saskatchewan – electrician, plumber, refrigeration mechanic, and sheet metal worker – in which you can only work six months until you must become an apprentice. These are called compulsory trades.

To indenture, you sign a contract of apprenticeship with your employer. This sets you up with the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC) as an apprentice. You and your employer begin tracking

the number of hours you work on the job. You learn from a journeyperson while earning a wage.

Once you have worked enough hours, you will be scheduled to attend technical training, usually for about eight weeks. This is where you learn theory to reinforce the knowledge and skills taught in the workplace. After you have completed the required levels of workplace and technical training you have the opportunity to write your journeyperson exam.

When you pass your journeyperson exam, you receive your Red Seal Interprovincial certification. This allows you to work in your trade anywhere across Canada, and you may be highly sought after as a skilled tradesperson. Your certification is a starting point to a career full of opportunities – from manager to instructor to entrepreneur.

Apprenticeship training is between one and four years, depending on the trade. As you are working while learning, there is little education-related debt. There are many supports in place as well, including grants and tax credits.

The other method to becoming a journeyperson is to work in the trade as a tradesperson for a required amount of years. Once you have built up enough work experience, you are eligible to write the Red Seal exam.

Learn more at [www.saskapprenticeship.ca](http://www.saskapprenticeship.ca), or call 1-877-363-0536.

## ***LICENSING AND CREDENTIALS***

One factor that could affect your chances of gaining employment is whether or not you have the required licensing for your occupation in Saskatchewan.

Without the proper credentials and/or licensing, it will be impossible to obtain employment in certain fields. Saskatchewan employers are very strict about their employees having the required training and licensing; this is because employees

having proper licensing and credentials protects the employer from potential legal action by their customers.

Across Canada, some form of self-governance, separate from the employer, regulates most professional occupations in the majority of industries. These governing bodies can be professional associations, which may require members to have specific qualifications and credentials. These professional associations, which you may not be required by law to belong to in order to practice your profession, may assess your qualifications and inform the employer that you are suitably qualified.

Professions where there is an element of risk to another person or to the company will require you to be officially certified to work in that occupation. A certification, or license, is a document that states that you are legally entitled to work in a particular profession in Canada. Licensing terms vary from province to province, from region to region, from occupation to occupation and by the standards set by a national governing body. Most licensed occupations have expiry dates every few years when you will be required to take an examination to refresh your knowledge and renew your license. Canada is a highly-regulated country in terms of licensing and the specific credentials required to work in a wide variety of specialized occupations, although some employers and jobs may never require any such documentation. You should always be aware of the industry's standards regarding professional association membership and/or licensing credentials whenever you apply for a job in Saskatchewan.

There are strict rules for licensing in some occupations because there could be liability issues if work is not completed properly or if someone is injured as a result of the work. Employers are well aware that costly lawsuits can occur if work is not completed correctly. To avoid being sued, wherever possible Saskatchewan employers regularly ensure that all of their staff members have been properly trained and/or have received proper licensing credentials to conduct their work.

The process for licensing or obtaining the proper credentials to work in an occupation can vary depending on the occupation and the risk involved with that occupation. The greater the risk, the lengthier the licensing process. One obvious example concerns medical doctors. A doctor will require years of examinations and practical experience working under supervision before being formally licensed due to the risk and responsibility involved in the profession. While some occupations will require little by way of credentials, others may require licensing or specific credentials to be renewed every few years. For example, take the local auto mechanic. A garage mechanic will have to take formal schooling in a recognized trade school and then write examinations and serve a practicum term or apprenticeship before being given a license to work in auto repair. The reason that an auto mechanic has to have a license is that if they do not fix a car correctly and a person is harmed by the driving the “repaired” car, the driver could sue the owner of the garage that repaired the car.

You will find that most occupations in Saskatchewan have some schooling requirements. Simple “street-smart” knowledge or learning from experience is seldom enough to get you the job.

A wide variety of occupations require licensing. Some licensing can be done relatively easily and quickly upon your arrival at your new job, but most often employers will not even consider interviewing you unless you have the required licensing and qualifications. In some cases, however, your intention to become licensed in the near future can be a good enough reason for you to be considered. You may be able to schedule the license examination prior to starting in the position. Another option is to work under a licensed professional and at the same time take the required courses and examinations to become licensed and thus qualified to practice in the licensed position.

To keep your licensing and educational upgrade information organized, you will find the following worksheet very helpful. In this worksheet, you can record the licensing, credentials and education requirements for your occupation and what,

if any, upgrades will be required for you to obtain the licensing, credentials and training needed to work in your chosen occupation.

## **WORKSHEET**

### **LICENSING AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

<b>LICENSING REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>UPGRADE REQUIRED</b>
<b>CREDENTIALS/EDUCATION REQUIRED</b>	<b>UPGRADE REQUIRED</b>
<b>PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>UPGRADE REQUIRED</b>

## ***INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS***

What is an **Informational Interview**? It is an opportunity for you to learn more about the attributes and qualifications employers in your profession or occupation are looking for. In an Informational Interview, *you* are the interviewer!

First, you conduct a search on the Internet to find the website of the company you would like to work for. Once on the website, you will locate the email address of the Human Resources Manager. This is generally found on a website under the title 'jobs,' 'careers,' or 'employment.' When you have the email address of the Human Resources Manager, you can send them an email message asking what education and training they require for the position that interests you.

You can also conduct an Informational Interview via telephone with the Human Resources Manager of a company that you would like to work for. Human Resources Managers won't always agree to participate in such interviews, so when you do find a willing participant, keep in mind that they are doing it partly out of generosity - but that they also may be watching out for good talent. The Informational Interview allows you to learn more about the requirements for the job and also to network with the Human Resources Manager. During the Informational Interview, you can express your interest in working for a company like theirs and explain that you would like to learn more about the requirements, credentials and working experience they look for when they are hiring new staff.

For example, you would like to work as a Plumber. First, research the Internet for the Plumbing companies in your area that appeal to your interests. On their websites, look for the direct email address for the Human Resources Manager. Again, you can probably find this email address on the company's website under "careers" or "jobs" or "contact us." This is the address to send your Informational Interview questions to. Keep your email short - plan your questions out first to get as many important questions answered from this electronic conversation as possible. The person who receives your email will be more likely to send a reply

if your email is brief, well-informed, easy to understand and to the point. When you receive a response from a Human Resources Manager, always send a reply thank you email, keeping the thank you email short as well. Do not ask for a job or if they have a job available – this is not the time.

Remember, you are trying to build a relationship and gain information. Most importantly, keep the name and contact details of the Human Resources Manager and their response in your Job Search Journal. We will discuss the Job Search Journal later in the textbook.

Once you've conducted an Informational Interview, you will know exactly how to tailor your employment approach for that company by assessing the information you have received from the Human Resources Manager.

What follows is a sample of a typical “Informational Interview” email.

**To:** humanresources@email.com  
**From:** johndoe@Canadajobnet.com  
**Subject:** Informational Interview

Hello,

I am very impressed by your company and I am wondering if you would be kind enough to answer some quick questions I have regarding the qualifications that you require for potential employees.

If a person were to apply for the position of Plumber with your company, what qualifications would you be asking for with regard to:

- Education
- Licensing/professional qualifications
- Work experience
- What other suggestions do you have for a person entering the Plumbing

industry?

I am very grateful for your valuable time and I appreciate your assistance. If you are aware of other companies that may be able to provide helpful information, I would greatly appreciate having that information as well.

Thank you again for your assistance, and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. Please feel free to contact me at my email: johndoe@canadajobnet.com or at my telephone number: 555-1234.

Best regards,

John Doe

When you receive a response from the Human Resources Manager – either by email or by telephone - always send a thank you email within 24 hours.

### ***LET'S CREATE AN EFFECTIVE CONSTRUCTION RESUME***

One of the primary barriers to employment that job-seekers face is not having an effective Construction resume.

Your Construction resume is really a win-or-lose part of your job search. You will find that there are many styles of Construction resumes to choose from, but which Construction resume is best for you? And what is the purpose of the Construction resume?

The primary purpose of the Construction resume is to impress the employer with your past successes, accomplishments, experience and education in a clear, concise, and factual manner.

If you are attending school or have recently completed your studies but do not have related work experience to list on the Construction resume, you can list other relevant work experience; your experience does not have to be paid to be

relevant. You can include as experience any time when you learned or demonstrated the skills, knowledge or abilities that are related to the type of job you are seeking.

A Construction resume should be no longer than a maximum of two pages. To begin with, employers are interested in your most recent college or university, professional, or technical schooling only. No details about your primary schooling or personal details like birth date, social status, health status, marital status and any other personal details should be included in your Construction resume.

A professional Construction resume should provide the employer with a brief description of what you have accomplished and how you can contribute to the company's success. If you do not have a long work history, you can list educational successes in place of professional successes.

If you are a student, you can list your educational experience and how your studies can be of benefit to the company. You can also use relevant experience to support your Construction resume; this can include paid or unpaid work, an internship or a substantial class project, volunteer positions, or positions held in clubs, etc. This information provides the employer with a clear picture of how your experience is related to the requirements for the job.

There is a tendency for Construction resume writers to want to be very thorough with their work history and go into great detail about the tasks they accomplished during each period of employment. There is no need for this at the Construction resume stage. In fact it may be to your detriment if you write too many details, as the reader – your potential employer - may become bored and lose interest in your Construction resume and in you. The employer does not generally have the time to read a ten-page Construction resume. Try to keep your Construction resume simple, informative and short.

The format and style you choose for your Construction resume should reflect the purpose of the occupation you are applying for. For example, your Construction

resume should be designed in a straightforward, plain font and feature information on your education, along with a short summary of the projects that you have recently worked on.

By reading your Construction resume, the employer should have a good understanding of your work experience, qualifications, skills, and aptitude for the job.

### ***USE “POWER WORDS” FREQUENTLY***

In any type of advertising, descriptive words are the key to the buyer’s heart. Just a few powerful words applied to a simple bar of soap can change the perception of that soap to one of a “luxurious premium cleanser.” With the added wording, we create the image of a prestigious soap.

The same idea applies to your Construction resume, cover letter and your face-to-face job interview. One of the best ways to impress an employer is with persuasive “power” words. Put yourself in the employer’s shoes for a moment. The employer is doubtless looking for someone who has **solid** experience, **strong** communication skills and **proven** abilities. Did you read that?

- **SOLID**
- **STRONG**
- **PROVEN**

It is critical to your job search that you market yourself to the employer in the most effective method possible. Well-chosen words are the way to do it.

Here is an example of the difference power words can make in your Construction resume. Let’s assume that the Human Resources Manager is reading the following two Construction resumes. The first Construction resume is from a person who prepared their Construction resume in a very simple style. The second person, with the same work experience, wrote their Construction resume using a few “power” words. Which of the two candidates do you think the

employer would call for an interview? Based on these examples, who looks like a better candidate for the position?

**SIMPLE CONSTRUCTION RESUME :**

*"Plumber with 6 years of experience working with residential and industrial buildings. I have experience communicating and working with clients."*

**POWER WORD CONSTRUCTION RESUME :**

*"Successful Plumber with six years of solid experience and extensive knowledge of Saskatchewan plumbing systems. Stellar track record with more than 6 years of valuable experience communicating with clients."*

**WHO WOULD YOU HIRE?**

*"I am a good plumber."*

*"I am an accomplished plumber."*

Which statement has more impact? Or how about this example:

*"I do not have any experience at the job."*

*"I am a polite and friendly person who is eager to learn on the job."*

Use Power Words to highlight your skills and talents, but be certain to use Power Words in the correct context. If you have any doubt about their meanings, check your dictionary; a thesaurus is also helpful to clarify meanings and give you

alternatives for Power Words you may have already used in your Construction resume or cover letter.

Here are some examples of *Power Words* that will give emphasis and originality to your Construction resume and cover letter:

ACCOMPLISHED	INNOVATIVE
ADAPTABLE	MOTIVATED
CREATIVE	PROBLEM-SOLVER
EXCELLENT	PROFICIENT
ESTABLISHED	WELL-ORGANIZED

## **WORKSHEET**

### **POWER WORDS**

To give your Construction resume added power and market your best self to employers, you will want to use some power words. Think about how you want to “sell” yourself to an employer with suitable “power” words.

In the worksheet below, list ten power words that you think are appropriate for your Construction resume and possibly for your cover letter.

POWER WORDS	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

***WHAT DOES AN EFFECTIVE CONSTRUCTION RESUME LOOK LIKE?***

To help you create your own personalized Saskatchewan Construction resume, we have separated our Construction resume template into 9 sections. As you will see in the sample, there is a structure that should serve you well. The structure of an effective Construction resume is very straightforward. Read along as we show you an ordinary Construction resume and then contrast it to the sample 'power' Construction resume.



### ***First Section – Identifying Yourself***

- Your Name
- Your Address
- Your Telephone Number, Email Address, Fax Number, Home Address

### ***Second Section – The Job You've Applied For***

- This is where you enter the title or description of the job you are applying for. Consider this the “title” of your Construction resume.

### ***Third Section – Your Work Background***

- This section of your Construction resume provides a brief background of your work experience. Be sure to include all of your jobs and your work-related accomplishments, and don't forget to use those “power words” that we mentioned earlier.
- Use bullet points to list your work experience and previous employers.

### ***Fourth Section – Professional Strengths***

- This is the section where you present your professional skills as they relate to your personality and talents.

### ***Fifth Section – Career Highlights***

- This section differs slightly from your “work background” section in that it highlights relevant school projects or professional accomplishments that you have achieved.

### ***Sixth Section – Career Progression***

- This section of your Construction resume should list your most recent employment and positions you've held as far back as 15-20 years ago, depending on your age and experience. Keep using your “power words” and make sure you keep each bullet point to a maximum of two lines.

### ***Seventh Section – Education***

- In this section, list only your post-secondary schooling and any special training that you have that would qualify you for the position.

### ***Eighth Section – Special Expertise***

- In section Eight list computer programs or technical expertise that you have that can benefit the potential employer.

### ***Ninth Section – Accomplishments***

- Your personal interests and personal accomplishments are featured here. In this section, you can include hobbies, extra-curricular activities, etc. This section, however, does NOT include any personal data such as your birth date, marital status, religion, or family structure. This is solely to highlight your talents and skills that are not work-related but may interest the employer. You want to show the employer that you are a well-rounded person with a variety of outside interests and activities.

## ***SAMPLE CONSTRUCTION RESUME***

The following page has an example Construction resume which you can use to create your own resume.

**Name**  
Address  
Email, Phone Number

**JOB OBJECTIVE:** In one line, describe the position(s) you hope to be matched up with.

**SKILLS:**

- In bullet points
- Indicate skills *relevant to your intended job* which you have developed through your experience and education
- Example: Finish carpentry, kitchen fitter, stair construction, shuttering
- Example: Project management skills (describe)
- Example: Safety training (describe)

**WORK HISTORY:** (most recent first, listing only the relevant experience):

**Abc Const, Dublin, Ireland**

**2011 / 2012**

- List and describe primary activities and your contributions to major projects
- Formwork, Pour Concrete, Framing

**John Friel Const**

**2010 / 2011**

- Stairs, Operating heavy duty tools, Cabinet Making, Cabinet Fitting

**Fergus Mc Guinness Const**

**2005 / 2010**

- Roofing, Formwork, Finish Carpentry, Shuttering
- Supervised 25 workers on 100 successful projects, at or under budget

**Bert Duncan Const**

**2000 – 2004**

- Labouring, Roofing, Finish Carpentry, Building
- Etc.

**EDUCATION / TRAINING / CREDENTIALS:**

- In bullet points, list your most recent certifications first, including approximate dates, the subject/description of the qualification, and the organization you received the certification from
- 2010 – 2011                      Stair Construction                      Bob's Carpentry School
- 2005 – 2009                      Carpentry Apprenticeship                      Jim's Carpentry School
- Leaving/High School Certificate
- Clean drivers license (indicate license class, country of issue)
- Safety certifications (site safety, First Aid, etc.)



Now that you have reviewed the sample Construction resume, you should refer back to the previous worksheet in this chapter to assist you to create your own Construction resume. Remember: Keep your Construction resume brief and to the point. Highlight your experience with tools and equipment, education and knowledge. Use power words to help you create a Construction resume that showcases your skills, education and talents and "Wows" the employer.

If you are still in high school or have recently graduated from high school your resume may be slightly different. We have provided you with a sample high school resume below and you can adapt this style to suit your experience and education.

### ***SAMPLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT RESUME***

The following page has an example of a High School Student resume which you can use to create your own resume.

**Keith Jones**

Home: 555-543-6543 Cell: 456-123-7654

Keith.Jones@gmail.com  
244 Chestnut Street, Regina, SK S4P 0B0

## Education

**Saskatchewan High School**, Regina, SK, May 2013

Overall; Honour roll - Honours: French Honours Society, National Merit Scholar, completed Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship

Clubs: Political Science, Show Choir, Theater, Yearbook Committee

Athletics: Soccer Captain, Intramural Volleyball

## Experience

*Assistant*, **Berkshire County Playhouse**, Regina, SK Summer 2013

- Coordinated rehearsal and performance schedules for the cast and crew of three one-week productions over one season
- Created and managed social media accounts for the playhouse to market each show and ongoing activities

*Cashier*, **Joe's Cafe**, Regina, SK Fall 2012 - present

- Was selected employee of the month for efficient, friendly service
- Promoted to Barista in September, 2012

*Tutor*, **Student Tutors**, Regina, SK January 2012 - present

- Helped elementary school students apply mathematic and scientific concepts to their homework assignments
- Helped coordinate a weekend trip to the Science Centre each season and designed a series of math and science questions related to the animals and exhibits children encountered there
- Became a buddy to one student throughout the three and a half years, encouraging and assisting him with studies and adjusting to different grade levels

*Volunteer* **Soup Kitchen**, Regina, SK Fall 2013 - present

- Served meals to over 100 less fortunate individuals each week
- Created a brown bag lunch program collecting donations to give bags of food for individuals to take home with them

*Volunteer*, **John Doe Political Office** Summer 2012

- Made over 1000 phone calls to local residents and businesses to inform them about Doe's positions on issues
- Helped organize and publicize a voter registration day at the local High School for the start of the school year

## Other Experience and Hobbies

- Lead role in *The Music Man*, Spring 2013
- Named MVP after leading soccer team to finals victory in 2013 fall season

## ***DO DO A DO, DON'T DO A DON'T: RESUMES***

After all of the hard work of creating your own resume (which you've saved on paper or saved in your computer), now is the time to take a second look at it. Construction resumes have a whole list of DO's and DON'T's. Keep these factors in mind as you create the perfect resume.

### **CONSTRUCTION RESUME DO'S**

- **DO make sure that the spelling and grammar are perfect!** Use a computer spell-check to check your completed resume. Make sure the spell-check is set to 'English – Canada.'
- **DO ask someone (friend, family member) to read your resume to see if your resume is clear and understandable to the general reader.** Have as many people as you can read it and give you their reactions, both positive and negative.
- **DO use positive, powerful words in the resume.** These keep the reader interested and inspire confidence in your abilities and talents.
- **DO format the resume in an easy-to-read style.** A messy or poorly laid-out resume reflects badly on the applicant.
- **DO use appropriate paper.** If you are sending your resume via mail or when you are appearing in person for an interview, use a high-quality plain paper (white or off white) for your resume. Do not use fancy colours or specialty/novelty paper.

### **RESUME DON'TS**

- **DO NOT repeat information in the resume.** If you were a plumber for two different companies try to describe each employment a little differently – even if you were doing the same job at each company. It keeps the reader interested and doesn't make your work history appear to be monotonous.

- **DO NOT list any personal details (i.e. date of birth, marital or health status, etc.).** These details are not required. In some instances, asking for these details can leave the employer open to charges of violating your personal rights by suggesting that they are making their employment decisions based on these personal details.
- **DO NOT use “I”** as in *‘I think’*, or *‘I believe’* any more than absolutely necessary.
- **DO NOT change type styles in your resume.** Choose a font that looks appropriate for body copy and can also be used in ‘bold’ for your resume's headings.
- **DO NOT ask for salary information or state past salary payments.** This is a discussion best left for a second interview. More on this later.
- **DO NOT title your resume ‘Construction resume.’** The reader will already know it is a Construction resume by the layout and content.
- **DO NOT lie on your resume (or on your cover letter or interview).** Employers use standard and sophisticated ways to confirm that what you claim is true.
- **DO NOT attach references or testimonials.** That will come later.
- **DO NOT include personality profiles that may have been conducted by former employers.** The employer will learn about your personal traits during the interview. The resume is only for your professional expertise.
- **DO NOT repeat power words.** Try to use different ones each time, making sure that they suit the context.

How does your resume appear? If you have done any “don’ts,” it is important that you go back and correct them. Be sure to keep these “don’ts” in mind as you read on to create a cover letter in the next chapter, too.

Now, on to some frequently asked questions you may have about the resume - writing process.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – RESUMES

- 1. What is the difference between a career highlight and the accomplishments that are listed at the end of the resume?**

“Career Highlights” are professional projects or accomplishments that you have achieved in the workplace. “Accomplishments” are personal accomplishments (hobbies, extracurricular activities, etc.) that will illustrate that you are accomplished in your personal life and are a motivated “team player.”

- 2. What if there is a gap of time on my resume when I wasn't working or attending school?**

If you do not have a sequential employment pattern, you should briefly explain any non-employment period on your resume. For example: “1998 - 1999 - Studied and travelled overseas in England and France.”

- 3. Should I list the cities and countries that I have worked in on my Construction resume?**

Yes, especially if you have worked in various countries around the world. This tells the employer that you have the ability to find successful employment in a work situation other than in your own country, and that you were comfortable doing so.

- 4. Should I send my resume and cover letter to an employer via email as an attachment?**

Send your documents electronically only if you have been instructed to do so by the job advertisement or the employer. If you include the resume in the body of the email, there is no risk of including a computer/email virus that may infect the employer's computer. If you send the resume in the ASCII format, the resume may be printed directly from the email and if needed the Construction resume can be sent to the employer's database for future review.

## ***YOUR TWO BEST ADVERTISEMENTS***

Equipped with an exceptional resume, what you will need now is an exceptional cover letter.

Your cover letter and resume are the advertisements for your skills and expertise. To get ahead of the competition, you have to make sure that your cover letter and resume are perfect, without any grammatical or spelling errors. Your cover letter and resume will be your most powerful sales tools to get the employer's attention. You can do this by using the 'power words.' Make sure that your cover letter and resume are easy to read and concise. Employers do not want to spend hours reading a cover letter and resume. The cover letter should spark the employer's interest to read the resume; the resume should inspire interest even more, enough to interview you. The interview is the time to go into further details about your expertise and work experience. Remember not to repeat any details on your cover letter and resume (employers do not want to read the same details twice).

Employers place a high value on personal or professional references. References are like a "seal of approval" from previous employers and people you know, and verify that your skills and personality are acceptable for employment.

In the following chapters, we will continue to discuss solutions to the common barriers to employment, the purpose of professional or personal references, and how to write an effective cover letter that will complement your resume.

## CHAPTER 3

# FIRST IMPRESSIONS FIRST: COVER LETTERS AND REFERENCES

Do you remember when you first met your very best friend? What did you originally like about him or her? What was the very first thing you remember about that meeting? Like the initial meeting of friends, first impressions count. As the cliché goes, you can only make a first impression once - and with employers it is very important that when they view your Construction resume and cover letter for the first time they have the very best impression of you.

### ***WHAT IS A COVER LETTER?***

Previously, we reviewed the effective Construction resume. Your Construction resume is the main course of the job search meal and your Cover Letter is your Construction resume's "appetizer." A cover letter's primary purpose is to act as an introduction to your Construction resume. The cover letter will be sent along with your Construction resume to the employer.

What exactly is a cover letter? Put simply, it is a brief outline of your career objectives, a summary of your previous work experience, and a list of some notable career highlights. This letter serves as your introduction to the employer, describing who you are and what you do. The introductory letter must be interesting and very well written. After reading the cover letter, the employer's interest should be piqued enough to go on to read your Construction resume. However, if your cover letter is not in a very professional format or it is mired with spelling errors or is not compelling, the employer will not be inspired to read the rest of your Construction resume. The job will always go to a person with a great cover letter and Construction resume. That's the person who made a great first impression.

In this chapter, we will provide you with many useful tips and examples to ensure that the employer reads both your cover letter and your Construction resume.

## ***COVER LETTER RULES***

The first step to employment is to have an exceptional cover letter and Construction resume. Remember: first impressions, to an employer, count the most. Having a perfect Construction resume can mean the difference between being asked for an interview or not being considered at all. Both your cover letter and Construction resume should be tailored to fit the position you are applying for. For example, if you have experience in more than one profession and would like to apply for a variety of jobs, you should have as many versions of both your cover letter and your Construction resume as you need to cover your range of experience. Both your cover letter and Construction resume should reflect this ideal. One Construction resume/cover letter does not fit all! The content in the different versions of the cover letter and Construction resume should be similar, but the difference would be the projects and achievements you would highlight and the skills you emphasize. It is good to have a variety of skills and past experience on any version of your cover letter, as more and more companies expect their employees to be responsible for a variety of duties. The more experience and the more variety, the better.

You do not want the cover letter to be lengthy or include irrelevant information, like listing your early childhood education. A cover letter should not include any personal information.

The goal is to keep the employer interested and to keep the reader reading – right through to your Construction resume. One of the trickiest technical issues in a cover letter is not repeating the information that will be read again in the Construction resume. This takes a bit of practice, but is well worth the effort. Find new ways of describing some of the details of your past experience. For example, on your Construction resume you stated that you have been employed as a plumber for eleven years, but with three different companies. On your cover

letter, you could summarize your work experience like this: “As a knowledgeable and experienced plumber, I possess over a decade’s worth of experience and knowledge to repair plumbing issues in residential and commercial buildings.”

You want to ensure that everything listed in your cover letter and Construction resume is correct and easily understood by the employer.

### ***DO DO A DO, DON'T DO A DON'T: COVER LETTER WRITING***

A cover letter should be brief but contain the highlights of your career that are likely to impress the employer and illustrate how you can contribute to the success of their company. Keep the following DO's and DON'TS in mind when crafting your cover letter.

#### **COVER LETTER DO'S:**

- **DO - keep your cover letter to one page.** Any longer, and the employer may stop reading – and even skip reading the attached Construction resume all together.
- **DO - use perfect spelling and grammar.** This is very important. Always use a dictionary and/or set your computer’s spell-check to “English – Canada.”
- **DO - include career successes.** Examples make your experience stand out.
- **DO - address the cover letter to the Human Resources Manager by name if possible.** The more the letter seems “personalized” and less like a mass mail-out, the better chance it will have of being read by the right person.
- **DO - include the company's name and address in the cover letter if possible.** If you are doing a “mass mail-out” (sending the same copy of cover letter and Construction resume to many

employers), then you can exclude the name and address of the companies being applied to. Remember, if applying for a specific job with one company, **try** to include the company name and address in the letter and **try** to include the name of the Human Resources Manager.

- **DO - try to imagine what the employer would like to hear** about how you can contribute to the company and help the company realize its goals.
- **DO - provide a sampling of your greatest workplace accomplishments.** Try to include statistics and measurable results to document your successes.
- **DO -** If you are in a technical industry, **list a few of the technical programs that you specialize in.** This helps the employer understand your strengths as a potential employee.

## COVER LETTER DON'TS

- **DO NOT state salary expectations or your previous salaries.** This delicate issue will be discussed at a job interview later on.
- **DO NOT state what you expect from the company and the position.** You want to impress the employer with your skill set and gain their interest. This area can be addressed in formed “questions” to the employer later in the job interview process.
- **DO NOT include any personal information, including your health status, your marital status, your religion or your birth date.**
- **DO NOT use exactly the same information in your cover letter as your Construction resume.** This can be a challenge. However, it is a very important point to consider. This will ensure that you

keep the reader's interest. No one wants to read the same information twice. **Try to re-phrase or sum up the work experiences you have had using your best POWER WORDS.**

- **DO NOT send a cover letter out without someone else reviewing it.**
- **DO NOT include personality profiles or overviews.** The employer will learn about your personal traits during the interview.

### ***MAKE IT CORRECT***

One of the most important details of a cover letter is that it uses correct grammar and is free of mistakes. Nothing says, “I’m not good enough for the job” like grammatical and spelling errors.

### ***IF YOU ONLY HAVE RELEVANT EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE***

Cover letters can be tricky if you are applying to a job and you have the required education but do not have the relevant work experience. This is common among new graduates and people attending school who may have the proper education but have not yet had the opportunity to gain work experience. There is a method that you can use in your cover letter that will show the employer that you have had practice in this field. Here are some samples of phrases that can help to describe your applicable experience in a Cover Letter:

*“As part of the requirements for this position, I have been involved in a multi-million dollar construction project that has given me experience overseeing large construction sites. I also have completed a course in surveying and engineering.”*

If you are a student, in the Cover Letter you can explain how your educational experience and your previous work experience can contribute to the company’s success. This experience can be paid or unpaid, such as an internship or a substantial class project, volunteer positions, or positions held in clubs, etc.

## ***THE TYPICAL COVER LETTER STRUCTURE***

Saskatchewan employers have been accustomed to receiving cover letters in a standard format for the past fifty years or more. An effective cover letter differs from an ineffective cover letter only by its content. Where your cover letter should stand out is in the wording and descriptions you use within the standard cover letter structure. To provide you with a better understanding of the basic structure of a cover letter that you can use to create your own compelling new cover letter or letters, here is a breakdown of the different structural components of a typical cover letter:

### **The first structural piece is:**

- Your address
- Telephone
- Email address

### **The second structural piece is:**

- The day's date

### **The third structural piece is:**

- Hiring/Human Resources Manager's name
- Company name
- Company address

### **The fourth structural piece is:**

- To whom the letter is addressed

### **The fifth structural piece is:**

- To let the employer know which job you are applying for. Always use the job title or the exact words the employer used to advertise the position.

**The sixth structural piece is:**

- A list of career highlights that are relevant to the job you are applying for.

**The seventh structural piece is:**

- Point form of more career highlights, with statistics if possible.

**The eighth structural piece is:**

- The closing of your cover letter. Here you can summarize how you would like to contribute to the success of the company.

**The ninth structural piece is:**

- Sign-off and signature.

## ***TWO SAMPLE COVER LETTERS***

Keep all these individual structural pieces in mind when you read the following examples. The first two are examples of a “professional” cover letter sent in response to an employment posting in a newspaper advertisement (note that the second one has a “competition” number as stated in the ad).

Here is the newspaper advertisement for our fictional Project Manager job:

**Project Manager needed**  
**Specific Job Description**

- **You will be responsible for monitoring the entire projects budget and continuously reviewing to ensure that variances are managed in an effective and profitable way.**
- **You will be responsible for processing monthly progress drawings and changing orders as they are passed up through the GC to your office area of responsibility.**
- **You will be responsible for gaining all relevant building permits**
- **Contract negotiation and administration**
- **You will be responsible for managing the full tender negotiation process with all sub trades.**
- **You will be responsible to ensure full compliance with the construction schedule.**
- **Monitor and review all scopes of work and approve any changes from the original contracts and agreements.**
- **Manage and revise all operating manuals and “as built” drawings.**

**Requirements**

**A degree in construction management, engineering or architecture**

- **Solid proficiency in Excel, Word, PowerPoint and Microsoft Project**
- **You will have a complete knowledge of construction drawings and specifications as well as commercial construction techniques and methodologies.**
- **You will have 7-10 years of commercial construction experience with values of at \$50MM+**
- **Ability to easily develop and maintain rapport with internal and external clients and consultants.**

**Please forward your Construction resume by email in attached Word format to:**

**[jobs@thegreatbigconstructioncompany.com](mailto:jobs@thegreatbigconstructioncompany.com)**

**Quoting job code: GG702**

**We thank all candidates for applying, however only qualified candidates will be contacted for an interview. All resumes not contacted will be kept on file confidentially for future positions.**

**This is a sample cover letter to reply to the job advertisement:**

**2111 Your Street,**

**Your Town, Your Province, Postal Code**

**TEL: 123-555-4567**

**Email: Johndoe@Canadajobnet.com**

**September 03, 2014**

**Personnel Manager**

**The Great Big Construction Company Inc.**

**876 Nomad Road**

**Big City, Province, Postal Code**

**Email: jobs@thegreatbigconstructioncompanylimitedinc.com**

**To Whom It May Concern:**

**I am writing to you in response to your advertisement for a Project Manager. As you can see from my enclosed Construction resume, my experience and qualifications match this position's requirements.**

**I especially would like to point out that I am a recent graduate from The College and as part of my studies have been participating in a specialized work experience which has equipped me with the practical skills required for this occupation.**

**During the four years that I studied at The College, I further deepened my knowledge of preparing monthly detailed analyses of construction projects and performing site inspections. My work experience employer also thought highly enough of my abilities to delegate senior tasks to me after my first month of employment.**

**Some of my professional accomplishments include:**

- Effectively operated the Data Warehouse and SAP computer programs.**
- A degree in construction management.**
- Solid proficiency in Excel, Word, PowerPoint and Microsoft Project**

- **Have extensive knowledge of construction drawings and specifications as well as commercial construction techniques and methodologies.**

**Please feel free to contact me by email at: [johndoe@Canadajobnet.com](mailto:johndoe@Canadajobnet.com). Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to the opportunity to discuss the position with you.**

**Sincerely,**

**John Doe**

If you are responding to an advertisement, you will want to tailor your cover letter to the advertisement's key words and job requirements. Speak directly to the employer and be specific about how your experience and qualifications match their requirements. Another tip is that you should always pay attention to the details of the ad: if the employer states that you must use (or "quote" as some ads may say) the "competition number" in the ad, be sure to do so.

## WORKSHEET

### CREATE YOUR OWN COVER LETTERS

In order for you to complete your own effective cover letter, we have provided a template where you can enter your own information. After entering your own information in the template, you can type these into your computer to create your own personalized cover letter.

The very best feature of this template is that you can create a cover letter that is exclusively your own, and that you can easily adapt to suit the various positions you apply for. Simply insert your own details into the blank spaces in the template. When you have completed all of the blank spaces in a template, then you can type the completed cover letter into your computer to save as a master copy.

The template is a **Cover Letter responding to an advertisement.**

The template shows you where to fill in the information that is required.

**Example # 1 - Professional Cover Letter responding to an Advertisement**

\_\_\_\_\_(Your street address)  
\_\_\_\_\_(Your town and Province )  
\_\_\_\_\_(Postal code)  
\_\_\_\_\_(Today's date)  
\_\_\_\_\_(Human Resources Manager's Name)  
\_\_\_\_\_(Human Resources Manager job title)  
\_\_\_\_\_(Employer company name)  
\_\_\_\_\_(Employer street address)  
\_\_\_\_\_(Employer City, Province and Postal Code)  
\_\_\_\_\_(Position applied for – INCLUDE competition number if provided)  
\_\_\_\_\_: (Your greeting)

As part of my long-term goals and values, I am focusing on a career that incorporates both my education and professional experience. I am eager to learn more about the position of \_\_\_\_\_(job title) and I attach my Construction resume for your consideration.

Over the past \_\_\_\_\_(how many years), I have worked within the \_\_\_\_\_(your industry name) field as a \_\_\_\_\_(Your current job title). I gained practical experience \_\_\_\_\_(your job duty) and \_\_\_\_\_(your job duty) for \_\_\_\_\_(most recent employer). As the \_\_\_\_\_(Your current job title), my responsibilities included \_\_\_\_\_(your job duty) and \_\_\_\_\_(your job duty), \_\_\_\_\_(your job duty) and \_\_\_\_\_(your job duty).

Some of my professional accomplishments include:

Effectively conducted \_\_\_\_\_(your job duties here) duties for \_\_\_\_\_(list year here \_\_\_\_\_).

Successfully \_\_\_\_\_(list another professional accomplishment here).

Prepared \_\_\_\_\_(list another professional accomplishment here).

Conducted \_\_\_\_\_(list another professional accomplishment here).

I offered an organized approach to my position as the \_\_\_\_\_(Your current job title) for \_\_\_\_\_(most recent employer), stressing the importance of communication and teamwork.

With my skills, education, professional experience and high energy level, I am confident I can make a strong contribution to \_\_\_\_\_(Employer company name).

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to speaking with you in the near future. Please feel free to contact me at (email) \_\_\_\_\_(your Email) or (Telephone) # \_\_\_\_\_(your telephone).

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_(Your name)

A really good cover letter can be very impressive - even persuasive - to an employer.

***PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES***

One part of your job application that the employer will especially be looking for is your **professional references**. For professional references, you should collect reference letters from three of your previous employers. If you have not had previous work experience, then you may list personal references from people you

know who are established members of the community. You are assembling what is called a **reference list**.

If you are a recent graduate or are attending school, you may also use teachers as reference that is relevant to your work. **Faculty members** who know about your academic ability, productivity, and timeliness, and perhaps have observed how you work with others, could also be included on a reference list.

Most likely the employer will ask you for references after your first or second interview. At this point the employer has probably “short-listed” or made a decision as to the prime candidates for the job. This means that you have a good chance to get the job, and now they are looking for the best references from each candidate. This is another important step when you must be sure to be well-organized and prepared. This may be your final step to getting the job offer.

The purpose of a **Professional Reference** is to offer the employer a testimonial of how well you have done at previous jobs, and to be able to contact your previous employers to confirm this.

A professional reference letter from a previous employer is typed on company letterhead. The letter should state your previous work responsibilities, list any professional contributions that you have made to the company, and give assurance that you were a good worker.

The previous supervisor who writes the letter of reference should clearly state in the letter where he/she can be contacted in the event a new employer wants to discuss your qualifications and work history further. The letter should also include the supervisor's signature at the end of the letter.

If your previous work experience is outside of Canada, the reference letter should be in English and list a contact who is accessible to the Saskatchewan employer (for example, an email address).

It is understandable that if you are presently employed, you may not want to risk losing your current job by having the prospective employer contact your current employer for a reference. If this is the case, then simply explain to the employer you are applying to that you would be happy to provide them with letters from previous employers but you would prefer that they not contact your current employer as it could possibly jeopardize your present employment. Remember that the employer may still be considering other candidates at this point, so you should be careful to protect your current job in case you don't get the new job.

You should prepare your references **before** you start your job search, because then you will have the reference letters on hand should an employer request them at any time during your job search.

An example of a **Professional** Reference Letter:

**ABCD Technologies, Inc.  
354 Any Street  
Big City, Province, Postal Code  
123-555-1234 • Fax 123-555-4156**

**September 07, 2014**

**To Whom It May Concern:**

**Jane Doe worked for me at ABCD Construction for five years as a Project Manager. Jane is a meticulous, highly knowledgeable Project Manager who is capable of at least a middle-level management position. She has keen insight into the project management process and is an expert in needs analysis, proposal supervision, development, and organization.**

**Jane's in-depth technology knowledge, unique team leadership style, and excellent interpersonal skills have consistently earned her excellent reviews from senior management.**

**If you would like to speak to me about Jane's skills, talents and work habits, feel free to call me at 123-555-1234.**

**Sincerely,**

**John Doe Jr.  
Vice President  
ABCD Construction Inc.**

Personal References, on the other hand, are offered by people who you have known for a period of six months or longer and who have not employed you. These types of letters are written by people of social stature in the community - for example, the owner of a company, doctor, lawyer, community leader, etc. A personal reference would confirm that you are of good character and are honest,

friendly and an asset to your local community. If you are a student, you may also use instructors as a reference for studies that are relevant to your work. Teaching staff may know about your academic ability, productivity, and timeliness, and perhaps have observed how you work with others, so could be added to a personal reference list.

The people you ask for a personal reference from do not necessarily have to write a reference letter: you can simply list the “personal reference” by offering their name, title and direct telephone number in the event that the employer would like to have more feedback about your personal character. If you do not already have Professional References, then **try to assemble three personal references.**

### ***COMPILING A REFERENCE LIST***

Once you have received either your professional or personal letters of reference, it is time to make a formal list of them for your job search. This is called a reference list, and its purpose is to provide an employer with an easy-to-read, one-page record of references that they can contact to verify your credibility as an employee and your character as a person. Your reference list should include all of the necessary contact information, including: email address, company website, telephone, fax number, company address, name of contact person and contact person’s job title. There will be an example reference list shown later in this chapter that you can use as a model to create your own reference list.

Make sure that you **contact all your professional or personal references FIRST** to let them know that an employer may contact them for a reference by email or telephone. Be sure to do this prior to the employer’s call. You do not want the reference seeker to catch your listed references off guard, when they might not be prepared to offer the appropriate glowing responses regarding your employment or personality.

Here is an example of a **reference list** that you could give to an employer.

### **References for Jane Doe**

**123 Hunter Ridge  
Regina, SASKATCHEWAN  
Telephone: 123-555-1234  
jdoe@yahoo.com**

- **Tom Book Construction Co. – Owner - Mr. John Doe, Sr.  
Email: johndoe@Email.com / Tel: 123-555-4567  
3440 Hot Street, Regina, SASKATCHEWAN**
  
- **Have Got It Construction Shop Suppliers – Owner – Mr. John Doe, III  
Email: johndoe@Email.com / Tel: 123-555-1953  
2255 Money Street, Regina, SASKATCHEWAN**
  
- **Hammers Construction Co. – Owner – Mr. John Doe, Jr.  
Email: johndoejr@Email.com / Tel: 234-555-1234  
5560 Good Street, Regina, SASKATCHEWAN**
  
- **Lucky Construction Manufacturing – Owner – Ms. Janine Doe  
Email: janedoe@Email.com / Tel: 123-555-1321  
888 Makeup Avenue, Regina, SASKATCHEWAN**
  
- **Big Construction Company – President – Mr. John R. Doe  
Email: johnrdoe@Email.com / Tel: 123-555-8888  
1939 Happen Street, Regina, SASKATCHEWAN**

# WORKSHEET

## REFERENCES

To make sure that both your professional and personal references are in order before starting your job search, we have provided a checklist for you to complete.

### PROFESSIONAL OR PERSONAL REFERENCE LETTERS:

- Collect at least three **reference letters and/or contacts**.
- Confirm that the **contact information** for all of the references **is up to date** and correct.
- Reference letters have been scanned and are ready to email**, or letters prepared to be faxed, to the employer.
- Add all references to your one-page master **reference list**.

Remember, your professional or personal references should be in order **BEFORE** you have a job interview. The employer could ask to see your references the same day as your first job interview and if your references are not in order, you may appear to be disorganized or unprepared. It is better to have the references up to date with the most recent contact information ready to give to the employer whenever he or she requests them.

## CHAPTER 4

### **FINDING THE JOBS AND MAKING THE “WOW”**

You are now equipped with an excellent Construction resume that fully highlights your skills and talents. Plus you've got several cover letter styles ready for any possible employment position that interests you. You have got all of your Job Search tools in your toolbox. You are on the right track to finding your new job. What's the next thing to do?

Now you have to get out and “**market**” yourself – and adapt yourself to the market. You need to know where your skills are in demand in Saskatchewan and also be able to effectively impress - or “**WOW**” - the employer in order to get to the head of the job-seeker line, and to secure yourself a job.

#### ***AN OVERVIEW OF THE SASKATCHEWAN JOB MARKET***

The economy is one of the largest factors in the Saskatchewan job market. When the economy is strong, businesses will tend to expand and recruit more staff. During a time when the economy is experiencing a downturn, there is a ripple effect throughout the workforce as companies and organizations will be less willing to take the risk of hiring additional staff or expanding their business. Additionally, there may be growth in certain aspects of the economy and this may lead to an increased demand for certain occupations (and more job openings) and decreased demand in others that are experiencing a decline.

To enhance your knowledge of the Saskatchewan job market and economy, you can look at various media sources and websites.

To research current information on the Saskatchewan labour market (either for local or national job market information), visit the Canadian government website

WorkinginCanada.gc.ca and you can view Sask Jobs for Saskatchewan Job Market Information:

<http://www.workingincanada.gc.ca>

<http://www.saskjobs.ca/>

There are also a number of newspapers and media available online where you can receive the latest news and updates on the economy.

CBC - <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business>

Globe And Mail - <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/>

Saskatchewan local newspapers directory website:

<http://www.newspaperscanada.ca/database/>

Canadian local newspapers directory website:[www.ccna.ca/database/](http://www.ccna.ca/database/)

Having a strong understanding of the current economy and job market will be a great asset to you in your job search.

## ***BIG CITIES VS. SMALLER TOWNS***

To have the greatest chance of success for your job search, you may want to consider the possibility of relocation. The more flexible you are with your job search location and options, the more likely you are to be successful in your job search. The more companies and areas that you contact, the more your opportunities will increase.

There is a common belief that if you focus only on the major cities in Canada—like Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Saskatoon, etc. -- you will have a better chance of finding your dream job. You are partly right. Many big-name international companies have their head offices located in these bustling metropolises – and if you are looking to work for a big-name company in a big city, that is probably the place that you would naturally look. But while you are looking for work, remember this: there are many thousands of other job seekers

doing exactly the same thing – looking for a job in The Big City. The competition is intense for the jobs that are available. In these regions, employers have such a great number of applicants to choose from that they may not desire a newly-graduated student who has limited work experience.

The truth is this: big cities have more companies, more competition and a higher cost of living. Smaller towns – and there are lots of them throughout Saskatchewan- have fewer of the “big-name” companies, but less employment competition. You may want to keep your options open and explore the opportunities for work that are located in the more remote areas of Canada; some jobs in smaller towns can go vacant for months because the employer cannot find a candidate who is suitably trained for the job. It is important to consider the more remote regions of Canada, as that is where there are may be a greater number of employment vacancies.

You may be surprised to find that there are sometimes great opportunities for employment in the rural areas, as many small towns have few graduates to fill their employment needs. Many people leave their small towns to work in the Big Cities, leaving an employment void in their hometown. By expanding your job search to regions outside of major cities, you may improve your chances of securing a job offer.

## ***TRAVEL***

Some construction jobs may be located outside of your hometown. When you have a job interview you may want to ask the employer where your job will be located. Some construction jobs may be in remote locations across the province and could be in a camp style setting. If there is travel involved for you to get to your job and work, your employer may reimburse or pay for your travel expenses. This could include your transportation, housing and food. But it is important to speak with your employer and ask him or her, if any of the costs are covered and when you are to be paid for these expenses.

It is common to travel to a job site and work for several days and then return to your home town for your days off and continue this cycle until the construction project is completed. This cycle could be anywhere from a 4 - 10 day cycle.

### ***RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH***

Be sure to research all the regions of Saskatchewan to find out where your skills are in demand so that you will know where your target market is. Once you have identified the regions or cities where your occupation is in the greatest demand, you will know exactly where to target your job search.

Below are helpful websites that you can use to research a variety of topics for your job search:

<http://www.workingincanada.gc.ca>

[www.thinkconstructions.ca](http://www.thinkconstructions.ca)

[www.saskjobs.ca](http://www.saskjobs.ca)

[www.saskcareers.ca](http://www.saskcareers.ca)

On these very helpful and free user-friendly websites, you can find exact information about:

- **Employment prospects (where your job is in demand)**
- **Wages and salaries for different jobs**
- **Who hires (search for potential employers in local communities across Canada)**
- **Compare occupations to find out more information about the current situation in the local labour markets across Canada.**

### ***JOB SEARCH JOURNAL***

As organization is such a key element to the success of your job search, you will want to keep a **Job Search Journal**. Keeping a Job Search Journal is the best way to track the jobs you have applied for and the people you have spoken to for networking purposes. Why keep a Job Search Journal? Because the better

equipped you are and the more organized you are, the better your chances are for success.

Suppose, for example, that you send your Construction resume to a job and do not hear from the employer for four weeks, and then the employer contacts you to see if you are still interested in the position. You may not remember the employer or the position. It would not make a good first impression on the employer if you do not remember the employer or the job! Another possible situation: you have started to network with professional peers via email and the Internet. Two months later, one of the people you had chatted with writes you an email and says, "I think we may have the perfect job for you in our company." You try to remember who this person is and how you originally met. If you do not have the contact information in your Job Search Journal, then this could be another lost opportunity. There are many good reasons why you should keep a Job Search Journal. In the Job Search Journal you can keep track of the Who, What, Why, Where and How's so that you stay focused and organized. You can keep a Job Search Journal either on your computer or on paper. You can copy the sample we have provided and use that as a template.

**HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF A TYPICAL JOB SEARCH JOURNAL:**

WHO DID YOU SPEAK TO?	WHEN?	HOW?	WHERE?	WHY?	WHAT?	COMMENTS
Mr. John Smith	Oct.15, 2014	Email	www.construction.com	Possible job with his company	Carpenter job	He asked me to email him by Dec.15, 2014

# WORKSHEET

## CREATE YOUR OWN JOB SEARCH JOURNAL

This is a Job Search Journal template you can use to keep track of your own job search details. You may wish to make several copies to use on an ongoing basis.

### ***JOB SEARCH JOURNAL***

WHO DID YOU SPEAK TO?	WHEN?	HOW?	WHERE?	WHY?	WHAT?	COMMENTS

## **MARKETING YOURSELF WITH A “WOW”**

Wherever you are in Canada, you will see an endless amount of advertising and sales pitches – almost everywhere you look, will find some form of advertisement or signage trying to sell you something. These ads are a direct solicitation, an eager appeal, an overt invitation from companies to buy their products; these companies yell, coax, coerce and distract in a continual barrage of marketing tricks to grab the consumer’s attention. It is very important – in fact, vital - to these companies that their product stands out from all the other similar products. The sole purpose of marketing is to grab your attention so that you will choose one company’s product over their competitor’s.

Once you know where your job is in demand, it is important to know how to effectively impress the employer. In your job search, you will also have to use advertising skills to market or sell yourself to the employer. You are selling a product:, and **the product is you**. You must make yourself stand out from the other competitors who are vying for the employer to “buy” what they are selling. Your competitors want the employer to buy **their** skills and choose **them** over all others. Your job competitors want your job.

Marketing yourself, or what we will call the “**WOW**” **principle**, is a delicate task. When advertising companies decide to market a new product, they often spend a lot of money to research how they can effectively catch the consumer’s interest and sell their product. Furthermore, there is a lot of time involved in making sure that the marketing of the product is appealing and not offensive to the consumer. You must use this same delicate balance when you market yourself to an employer.

How can marketing be an important component of finding a job? After all, the employer only needs to know your expertise and education for the job, right? This is partly true. However, the main objective of this manual is for you to gain

employment, and the most effective way to do this is very close to selling a soft drink.

Here's an example of the 'Wow' principle: imagine that you are walking through a store and suddenly you get thirsty and decide that you would like to buy a soda. You walk down the soda aisle and see one section that just has Bland White Cola Bottles with the word "Cola" written on them. You may have never heard of this brand of cola and the bottle seems pretty unattractive. But you know two things: it is a cola, and it is the same size as the other surrounding cola brands. But somehow it doesn't have the same appeal as...the Bright Red Cola Bottles sitting next to it. You might have even heard the Bright Red Cola Bottle jingle or commercial a few times. The Bright Red Cola Bottles stand out by being more attractive, familiar and appealing to you. And even though the Red Bottle is the same size as the Bland White Cola Bottle sitting right next to it and the Bland White Cola may even cost less, you are more likely to reach for the Bright Red Cola Bottle and purchase it.

**This is the “WOW” principle.** You want to make yourself stand out from your competitors for a job and market (or sell) yourself to the employer in an effective manner, just like that Bright Red Soda Bottle.

How you will effectively market (or “WOW”) yourself to the employer is going to be very similar to the way an advertising company puts together a campaign for a product or service that a consumer will buy.

A word of caution here: while it may be tempting to contact the employer over and over again or make the biggest and flashiest Construction resume, that is not the wisest move to make. Employers can become irritated with job applicants who appear to be like a popular cliché, “too much sizzle and not enough steak.” Being **subtly persuasive** is the key to all great marketing, and your job search is no different.

Here is a good example of “too much sizzle and not enough steak”: an over-eager job applicant has had a successful job interview. The meeting with the employer went well, and the job seeker felt he was a very strong candidate for the job. He did everything right. Then he went one step too far: he contacted the employer four times in the week after the interview, calling every day to see if he had got the job yet. He didn’t allow his first impression - his qualifications, his good interview skills and his attractive cover letter and Construction resume - do the selling for him. Because he was too aggressive, he failed to get the job.

What you want to do is present your most impressive information once and let the “WOW” factor work for itself. When the employer sees a Construction resume that has power and sells itself, he/she will be much more likely to contact you for an interview.

**You are the advertising campaign for yourself.** The first thing you will do is to find out what your “consumer” - also known as The Employer - is seeking from an employee and work your “WOW” campaign toward getting yourself that important first interview.

### ***HOW TO “WOW”***

How will you find out what kind of employee the employer is looking for, so you can market yourself effectively to the employer? The easiest first step in your “WOW” campaign to learn about the employer's needs and wants is to contact the employer through an **Informational Interview email** - as we discussed in a previous chapter.

To refresh your memory, an Informational Interview provides an opportunity for you to learn more about the requirements that employers are looking for and to find out more about the job that you would like to apply for. You can conduct an Informational Interview with the company's Human Resources Manager.

Remember, these managers do not have to participate in an Informational Interview, and may not have time to talk to you or write back. But if you do get a response, an Informational Interview will give you valuable data about the requirements for a job, insight into the company's practices and culture, and possibly provide you with the opportunity to network with other potential hiring managers.

For a typical Informational Interview, please refer to the sample in Chapter 2.

Now, back to the "WOW." Let's look at an example of a successful schedule for a "WOW" campaign directed at getting a job at a bank. You are a Carpenter, and would like to apply to some major construction companies. Where do you start? From the previous chapter, you know that you would first search the Internet to find leading banks that interest you. **Contact the Human Resources Manager at these construction companies** and let them know that you are interested in working with them. Ask them in an **Informational Email Interview** for the key qualities they look for in an employee. Listen to (or read) their reply very carefully. You can also assume that this particular industry has a fairly conservative attitude. You should market yourself, your Construction resume and how you conduct yourself in contacts with the employer in an impressive but conservative manner.

Why are you doing this?

**You are building the cornerstones to your "WOW" campaign by tailoring your Construction resume, cover letter and your entire campaign to what the employer wants in an employee.**

Back to the Carpenter job. Because you know that these construction companies are looking for trustworthy, reliable and efficient employees, you know exactly how to design your cover letter and Construction resume to effectively sell yourself to the employer. Show the employer that you have all of the qualities

that would best suit the construction company and use specific examples to illustrate this point. Make sure that your Construction resume and cover letter clearly explain the skills and work experience that you have and the equipment that you have worked with.

**Your potential employer will be judging everything you do or say.** Your “WOW” campaign will be carefully analyzed. Keep this in mind. Remember that the employer wants to find someone who is a “perfect fit” for their organization and if they don’t see it in you, they will look for someone else who will better represent their business. **This means devising or designing your “WOW” campaign to directly appeal to each company you apply to.**

### ***MORE ABOUT “WOW” SELF-MARKETING***

Whatever kind of industry you are in, you can think of original and suitable methods to make yourself stand out from your competitors. It is always important to make your presentation **short and to the point**. Employers are usually busy and do not have time to look over a long resume or a lot of samples of work attached to your cover letter and Construction resume. However, if you do decide to attach additional information to illustrate your best work, make sure that it will not take longer than **three minutes** for the employer to look over. This kind of **self-marketing** serves your purpose to “WOW” the employer and helps you to get the job interview you desire.

You want to “WOW” self-market yourself effectively to the employer from the start of your job search right through to the very end when accepting the position. This effective marketing strategy should be used at **all stages** of the job search process, including:

- Cover letter and Construction resume.
- Communicating with the employer - always present yourself in the best possible manner.

- Portfolio of your best work.
- Job Interview(s).
- Follow-up with the employer after the interview.
- Accepting the job offer.

Every stage of your job search is a part of your advertising campaign to make a good impression on the employer. And at every point of the process, you are being judged. It is important to always be at your best and always be yourself. The employer wants to get to know the true you, as this is the person they are interested in to hire. If you try to represent yourself as someone you're not, the employer will sense it and you will not get an interview.

# WORKSHEET

## EFFECTIVELY “WOW” YOURSELF TO EMPLOYERS

Let's review the most important aspects of selling yourself to the employer. First, you identify what the employer is looking for in an ideal employee. You do this by sending potential employers a request for an Informational Interview, researching websites, and looking at job advertisements. The second step is to decide how you will convince the employer that you have the skills they are looking for. The last task is to sell yourself to the employer. The worksheet will help you keep track of your Informational Interview responses and form the action plan for your “WOW” campaign.

1. Which **employers/industries** are you seeking employment with?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you created your **Informational Interview email**?

- \_\_\_\_\_

3. After sending the potential employers an Informational Interview email and receiving their responses – **write the words that would best describe their ideal employee.** What are the qualities, skills and education/training the employer is looking for?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you included the **qualities that the employer is looking for in your cover letter and Construction resume**? Give specific examples of

a time when you used those qualities in your work. Check off what you have done, using the checklist below:

- You have included the **qualities that the employer is looking for** in your cover letter and Construction resume.
- Record in your **Job Search Journal** the names of employers who you have contacted.
- Other ideas to "WOW"** or sell yourself to the employer.

List your ideas here:

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## CHAPTER 5

### YOUR JOB SEARCH: A BIG JOB MADE EASY

The previous chapters have helped you create a perfect Construction resume, craft a great cover letter, assemble appropriate references, and devise your “WOW” self-marketing plan. You are now fully equipped with all the job search tools you need and you have budgeted for any expenses you may incur while using these job search tools. Now it is time to learn more about the exciting and powerful job search methods you can use.

#### ***KEYS TO A GREAT JOB SEARCH***

**Why is the job search so important to landing a job?** The job search is an effective way for you to broadcast your cover letter and Construction resume to employers. You will be using the Job Search methods in this chapter to effectively market yourself to employers.

The keys to a great job search are these:

- Devising a **targeted job search** - where the demand is for your skills.
- **Using as many different job search methods as possible** to respond to job ads in newspapers, recruitment firms, job websites, etc.
- **Contacting** as many employers as possible.
- **Networking** or building relationships with employers and people in your industry.
- **Keeping an open mind and being flexible** will also assist you in your success.

What types of job search methods are there? The most common job search methods are:

- **Networking**
- **Cold-Calling**
- **Recruitment/employment agencies**
- **Posting your Construction resume on the Internet**
- **Newspaper job listings**
- **Career/Job websites**

Here are some of the more popular Saskatchewan job websites:

- <http://www.saskjobs.ca/>
- <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>
- [Jobs in Saskatchewan](#)

Let's continue with more details about various job search methods.

Many job seekers want to know which is the most effective job search method to use. The answer is simply ***whichever job search method gets you the job.*** Your job search will also be dependent on being at the right place at the right time. By utilizing these job search methods and contacting as many employers on your target list as you can, it is only a matter of time before you come across an employer who will be interested in you.

### ***NETWORKING, NETWORKING, NETWORKING***

Why network? Because it is an excellent way for you to gain information about jobs that are not advertised. The majority of people in Saskatchewan who are employed, obtained their jobs by networking or learning about job opportunities from others in the same occupation - more than from Help Wanted newspaper ads or job websites.

**Networking** is probably **the most valuable job search skill to have** for finding the job you want. Networking is an accepted way of expanding your business

horizons by building relationships with peers in your profession or industry. When you have built a list of contact names of professional associates, you can network with these new associates to exchange industry information and learn of possible jobs.

It is easy to establish your own network of professional associates – and believe it or not, you have **already** established a core group of network contacts! Every person you know may have a tip to offer or some information about a potential job. If you keep talking to your contacts about what is happening in their industry and jobs that might be available and seek out and network with even more new people who may have access to industry information, you will almost certainly find a job. Keep in mind that with every person you talk to, every person you meet, every company you send your Construction resume out to, you are building a network that will help you find a job.

You can network with industry peers on the Internet, by telephone or any other industry event. Networking is often done at social events where the atmosphere is more relaxed and open. It is accepted that these gatherings are an opportunity to build business relationships.

How do you start networking? There are several ways to start. The first step is to contact a professional association for your occupation. Use an Internet search engine like **www.google.ca** to find listings of associations for your industry. You can type key words into the search engine to locate the association's website. Good keywords to do a search would be **name of your industry association + Canada**. For example, a **plumber** would do a search on the Internet using the keywords **plumber association + Canada**.

You may want to try alternate titles for your occupation while conducting a search on the internet, as this will yield broader results.

Here you can **list your own key words to do a search on the Internet**  
(try different words and terms for your search on the Internet).

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Once you have located websites for various professional associations of interest, you can ask each professional association how you can join, and if you can put be on the mailing list for their electronic industry newsletters (e-newsletter). You should be able to find an email address for general information somewhere on the association’s website.

The next step, once you receive a response or e-newsletter, is to start emailing Human Resources Managers in the industry. You can email the Human Resources Managers your Informational Interview email to find out details about their employment needs and also to develop new contacts in your industry.

You should attempt to join as many industry-specific associations and events as possible. By doing so, you will be gaining more contacts and more opportunities to further your successful job search. Another idea is to join in Internet “chat room” discussions in your profession and introduce yourself to others in the same industry. There are many such “chat rooms” for discussing a great variety of interests and professions, so there is almost certainly one that will fit your career interests too. You may also find that using Facebook and LinkedIn can be very helpful to network and find out the latest news for your job.



## ***NETWORKING ETIQUETTE***

The key to networking is to acknowledge the efforts of those you network with. If you have met or had an internet discussion with someone who has assisted you by providing helpful information and he/she is someone who you want to keep in contact with, be sure to acknowledge that person's help with a follow up **Thank You email**. In the thank you email, you may include your contact information. Thank the contact person for their time and tell them that you truly appreciate their willingness to share their valuable knowledge with you. Thank You emails will remind those you have met that you appreciate their time, and will make you that much more "memorable" in the event that they have some helpful information for your job search later on.

It is important that you remember that networking is a two-way street. Just as they provided you with information, you should also go out of your way to provide them with helpful or interesting information. You could send the new networking contact an interesting article about your mutual interests or the name of a good contact that they could use. You should not use the same contact more than once or twice for a favour - such as "have you heard of any employment openings recently?" - until you can help them in return or provide them with some information that may be of some value to them.

For networking to work efficiently for you, you should keep a record in your **Job Search Journal** of the name of each person you spoke to, what you spoke about and their contact details. It could be very helpful for you to keep in contact with these people in the future. Even after you are hired for a job, the contacts you have made by networking during your job search will be a valuable asset.

It's a good idea to communicate with your established contacts once every 8 weeks or so and keep on building your network of contacts.

# WORKSHEET

## NETWORKING

Keep track of all the professional associations and other industry organizations you find while doing your research on the Internet.

Record the **professional associations and organizations** here:

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

## COLD-CALLING

**Cold-Calling** is a term for sending your cover letter and Construction resume to companies that **do not** have a job advertised. The cold-calling method can be a

very valuable tool to find jobs that are not advertised. Jobs that are not advertised are often referred to as the **Hidden Job Market**.

The prime advantage to cold-calling is that if there is a job available that is not advertised, you will not have as much competition as you might have when the job is advertised to many potential candidates. An interesting fact about the hidden job market in Saskatchewan is that **more than 70% of jobs are not advertised**. This is because employers do not have the time or the resources to advertise the job, go through the process to find the best candidates, interview, conduct a second interview, etc. More than 70% of employers recruit for employment positions via networking.

If you contact 100 companies or organizations using the Cold-Calling method, you can expect to hear back from about 3 of the businesses. This sounds like a lot of work for very little return. However, with Cold-Calling you might have a much better response rate than if you sent your Construction resume to 100 companies for advertised jobs. Why? Because of the 100 employers you Cold-Called, probably less than 1% had their available jobs advertised. Because they had not advertised the jobs, the job applications that they would receive for any potential employment opening in their company would be very few and so your Construction resume would be looked at more carefully.

If you apply to 100 jobs that are advertised, you might expect to have as many as 100 competitors per job posting – or about 10,000 people just like you seeking those jobs. The math always works with you in Cold-Calling.

To locate potential employers for your Cold-Calling campaign, you can research the Internet using a search engine and you can also use a directory to find businesses that are related to your occupation.

Using these directories, you can find employers to tap into the hidden job market and contact employers who could be hiring but do not have a job advertised.

### Exercise

Using a directory and Internet Search Engines, **find five local businesses for your industry** that you can contact using the **Cold Calling** job search method.

Record the contact information (including telephone, website, email address and office address) for **five potential employers in your area**.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

# WORKSHEET

## CREATE YOUR OWN COLD-CALLING EMAIL

Below is an example of a Cold-Calling Email to send to a Human Resources Manager. Copy this out and fill in the blanks with your own information. If you are attending school or are a recent graduate, list relevant projects or education to illustrate your applicable work experience to the employer.

To: \_\_\_\_\_(Human resources manager)

From: \_\_\_\_\_(your Email)

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_(List the position you are applying for)

Email Body:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_, (Human Resources Manager)

Please find enclosed my cover letter and Construction resume for your review. With more than \_\_\_years of exceptional experience in \_\_\_\_\_ (your industry), I am confident that I could make a strong contribution to your company.

Thank you for your valuable time and I look forward to speaking with you in the near future. Please feel free to contact me at by telephone at: \_\_\_\_\_(Your Telephone) or via email: \_\_\_\_\_(Your Email). Thank you again for your valuable time.

Best Regards,

\_\_\_\_\_(Your Name)

## ***INTERNET JOB WEBSITES***

The World Wide Web has made the Internet a focus for all aspects of human culture. Virtually anything that you want to know or learn about is online, somewhere. In the old days – the old days being only about 15 years ago – people used to read newspapers, books and periodicals to research a particular subject matter. But now people can electronically search for anything and everything a person could possibly think of – good and bad.

With the advent of Internet websites came one of the most popular and successful electronic concepts: **the job website**. There are literally thousands of employment websites - <http://www.saskjobs.ca/> is just one of them - whose purpose is to advertise jobs for employers. Job websites usually cover a broad spectrum of professions and industries for locations all across Saskatchewan.

If you do a search on the Internet for key words ‘jobs Saskatchewan,’ ‘job websites Saskatchewan,’ ‘employment Saskatchewan,’ etc., you will come across more online job websites than you may have even imagined. You find websites similar to these:

- <http://www.saskjobs.ca/>
- <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>
- [Jobs in Saskatchewan](#)

These are some of the more popular job websites in Saskatchewan. Some online sites are high-quality; some sites are specialized to a trade or field; and some are downright awful with out-of-date information and confusing interactivity. But remember that there are literally hundreds of job websites, and when you use them selectively, they are a valuable tool to include your work search toolbox.

The main advantage to job websites is one-stop convenience. You can access jobs day or night from your own computer and there are usually lots of jobs

advertised for you to view. The websites do not cost anything to access, and that is another advantage to using them. The disadvantage of job websites is that millions of other people also have access to these job advertisements.

Job websites are usually broken down into occupations and then further classified by region. Once you have located the occupation and region you would like to work in, then you can conduct a search on the job website to find suitable jobs to review. Once you have found a job that you would like to apply for, the job advertisement will state who to send your cover letter and Construction resume to. This is the same kind of information you would find in a newspaper job advertisement.

When you have submitted your cover letter and Construction resume, then it is time to wait for a response.

**Remember to keep track of the jobs you applied for in your Job Search Journal.**

# WORKSHEET

## INTERNET JOB WEBSITES

Keep track of all the Internet Job Websites that you find. A great way to keep track of all your Internet Job Websites is to keep them bookmarked as favourites on your computer.

Create a list of **Internet Job Websites**:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
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## ***POSTING YOUR CONSTRUCTION RESUME ON THE INTERNET***

One of the Internet's most helpful features is its usefulness for people who are searching for work. With so many people using the service, many employers now rely on the Internet to advertise their employment vacancies, or at least incorporate "employment" sections into their overall online presence. Unlike using the "help wanted" advertisements in a traditional newspaper's classified section, the Internet offers "free" advertising in the form of search engines and individual websites. Already online, a company that posts the jobs it has available can control their own search process efficiently and cost-effectively, putting their requirements in front of more eyes than a simple classified ad ever could.

But it works both ways. You can post your Construction resume on the Internet and get your talents in front of potential employers.

How does posting your Construction resume on the Internet work? When you visit job websites, many will have an option for you to post your Construction resume on their site. Each job website will explain the procedures necessary to post your Construction resume online so that employers who are using the service will be able to do a search for their particular interests. This service is usually free and it is quite easy to post a Construction resume on these sites, although websites may process your Construction resume in different ways. Many will simply ask you to cut-and-paste your electronic Construction resume, while others may ask that you fill out their "standard" Construction resume with your employment and educational details. If you decide to put your Construction resume on a job website, the Construction resume may be put in a simple text that will not recognize any formatting you have done in a software program such as Word. The plain text will change the way your original Construction resume looked in a formatted program (such as Word). It is a good idea to review the Construction resume once you have posted it on the job website. Within minutes, your Construction resume could be read and evaluated by the many employers who use the service.

You should be aware that there are some security issues to be considered when posting your Construction resume on the Internet. Any time you post personal information on the Internet, there is the possibility that your personal details may be used or viewed by unscrupulous people. Before posting your Construction resume on a job website you may want to review the website's **privacy policy** to ensure that your information is kept confidential. Most major employment sites are trustworthy and secure, but this is really a personal decision and only you can decide if you feel comfortable displaying your home address, email address, work experience and other personal information to the public.

**Remember to note in your Job Search Journal the job websites where you posted your Construction resume.**

### ***NEWSPAPER JOB LISTINGS***

Despite the popularity of the Internet, the place most people look for work in is still in the **Classified Section of the newspaper**. There, you will find job advertisements for all kinds of professions categorized by industry. Newspapers in both large cities and small towns will have jobs advertised in the Classified section of their newspaper – this is often the biggest section in the paper.

The majority of jobs that are in the newspaper will be updated either on a daily or weekly basis. Most employers will post the job until they receive a sufficient number of Construction resumes to review to select a suitable candidate for the job.

An added convenience of the newspaper job advertisement is that the majority of newspapers - both large city newspapers and small town newspapers - are now available on the Internet. The newspapers will have their job advertisements listed on the Internet, so you can view the jobs from your computer.

For an extensive database directory of newspapers in Saskatchewan, refer to the website:

- <http://www.swna.com>
- Canadian local newspapers directory website: [www.ccna.ca/database/](http://www.ccna.ca/database/)

Jobs listed in the newspaper can be advertised for one day, a few days, or for as long as it takes to fill the job. Sometimes a job will be posted for weeks at a time.

As with other job websites, keep in mind that many other applicants will be able to view the job ads and so there will be a lot of competition for those jobs. However, **do use this method** - the employer has to find a suitable person for the job, so why shouldn't that person be you?

The ad in the newspaper usually only gives some of the information about the hiring company and the job. If the company has listed their website address in their job ad, then be sure to have a look at the website to find out more about the company. The company may also have jobs listed on their own website that are not listed in the newspaper. It is always advantageous to research the employer's website so you can tailor your cover letter and Construction resume to the needs of the company.

In the newspaper ad, the employer will also explain how to submit your cover letter and Construction resume. You can send your cover letter and Construction resume via email, fax or mail. The ad may also indicate who you should send the cover letter and Construction resume to.

Remember to enter the information about any jobs you apply for in your **Job Search Journal**. It may take as long as eight weeks for an employer to respond to your Construction resume. Many employers do not respond to every Construction resume they receive. It is not unusual in a tight job market for one available job to receive 100 or more responses. Employers may not even

acknowledge a Construction resume until they select those that have been short-listed for the interview process. They may say, “only qualified applicants will be contacted” in their advertisement. This means that you will not receive a call or letter thanking you for your Construction resume submission unless they decide to invite you for an interview.

## **CAREER AND JOB FAIRS**

Career and Job Fairs are a new hiring trend. They are usually held in a conference hall, at a university campus, or in a large meeting room and are designed solely to attract potential job applicants for companies that are hiring at the present time or in the near future.

Who attends a career or job fair? There is a variety of employers from all kinds of professions and industries who participate in Career/Job Fairs. Companies and organizations that are seeking to recruit staff quickly in “bulk” will be there. The hiring employers will have a table, booth or kiosk at the fair where they can meet with potential employees and provide information about their company and the positions they are recruiting for.

Career and Job Fairs are held all over Saskatchewan on a regular basis and are generally advertised in newspapers, industry websites and on the Internet. Next time you are on the Internet, try doing a search like “**Regina + Job Fair**”, or “**Saskatchewan + Career Fair**”, or “**Plumber + Career Fair + Saskatchewan**”. For more information on career fairs in your region and for those specializing in your occupation, do a search on the Internet using these keywords:

- (city to be searched)\_\_\_\_\_ **job fair**
- (city to be searched) \_\_\_\_\_ **career fair**

Researching the Career Fairs may take some time, but it will be worth it. You will be able to quickly identify the companies that are hiring and need qualified staff just like you.

On the websites, there will be more information on how you can register to attend Career/Job Fairs. Career/Job Fairs are usually held with no cost to attend; they may, however, ask that you pre-register for the event. It is best to check the website for more information on how to obtain tickets and also the times that the Career/Job Fair will be open.

Remember to make as many copies of your Construction resume as there will be employers at the Career Job Fair. When you attend the fair, have your Construction resumes stored neatly in a folder. You should wear neat clothes to the event and be very presentable - just as you would dress for an interview.

When you arrive to the Career/Job Fair, take the time to introduce yourself to each of the employers who interest you. When you are speaking with the employer, ask some general questions about their business and show an interest in what their response. Offer them a copy of your Construction resume.

In return, the employer will provide you with their business card - or you can politely ask for their business card if they don't give you one. You will want to keep all of the business cards you collect at the job fair for future networking purposes.

You may not be able to attend the career or job fair in person. The career or job fair's website will list the names of the companies that will be attending the career fair and are recruiting employees. **This is a great way for you to discover companies that are hiring today.**

**DO NOT** send your Construction resume to the contact person at the Career Fair. You want to use the Career Fair website to look for **the employers who**

**will be in attendance** at the Fair. Contact those employers directly by mail if an address is listed. Better yet is to send the employer your Construction resume by email, if the company's web address contact is listed.

This is one of the best ways to find companies that are hiring. Once you have located them, go to the company's website and find the name of the Human Resources Manager and submit your cover letter and Construction resume in the same way as you would for a cold-calling job search.

Whether you are able to attend the Job Fair or not, you should be in the habit of making notes in your Job Search Journal of all of the contact information you have collected, and note when you email the Human Resources Manager. In the email to the HR Manager, you should also insert a copy of your cover letter and electronically attach a copy of your Construction resume.

Here is an example of an email that you could send to a Human Resources Manager after the Career/Job Fair to show your interest in the company:

To: hire@thegreatbigconstructioncompany.com

From: janedoe@yahoo.com

Subject: Regina Career/Job Fair

Dear Ms. Smith,

It was a pleasure to meet you at the Regina Career Fair. I now have a much better understanding of your company and your organization's objectives. Moreover, I am confident that with my extensive experience as a Plumber I could make a substantial contribution to your company.

Should you have any questions regarding my Construction resume, please feel free to contact me at Tel: 125-555-4778 or via email: janedoe@yahoo.com. Thank you again for your valuable time.

Best Regards,

Ms. Jane Doe

Once you have sent the email to the employer, then **wait two weeks before you follow up with the employer (either by telephone or email)**. Don't be discouraged if you do not receive an immediate response acknowledging receipt of your email.

# WORKSHEET

## CAREER/JOB FAIRS

Career/Job Fairs are a great place to find employers who are hiring. To do the best job search possible, it is important to keep track of the Career/Job Fairs that you find. Here are some spaces where you can keep a record of all the Career/Job fairs that interest you:

Career/Job Fairs	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

**Remember to make a record in your Job Search Journal of the names of all of the Human Resources Managers you spoke to and the companies that you sent your Construction resume to.**

# WORKSHEET

## JOB SEARCH METHODS CHECKLIST

As you proceed with your job search, use the following checklist for every job you apply for. Check off the different job search methods that you have used for each job search you conduct. Every component of your job search is equally important. Remember, the more job search methods you use, the better your chances of success.

- Cold-calling**
- Newspaper advertisements**
- Internet Job Websites**
- Recruitment/Employment agencies**
- Informational Interviews**
- Career/Job Fairs**

## CHAPTER 6

### **EMPLOYERS WHO ARE HIRING FOR YOUR OCCUPATION**

One of the most important keys to employment success is making direct contact with the employer. In the previous chapter we discussed the various methods that a jobseeker can use to make contact with an employer. Using a variety of these job search methods will provide the job seeker with the best opportunity for employment.

In this chapter, you will learn how to use the different job search methods to create your own personalized list of employers who are hiring for your occupation. You can use this list as a starting point for your job search and you can add to the list as you progress with your job search. When you've completed your employer list, you should have as many as 50 employers to contact for job opportunities. The list of employers that you create will contain the contacts that you have researched using the following methods:

- Cold-calling
- Newspaper advertisements
- Internet Job Websites
- Recruitment/Employment agencies
- Informational Interviews
- Career/Job Fairs

# WORKSHEET

## EMPLOYERS WHO ARE HIRING

In this exercise, you will research and compile a list of 50 employers to use for your job search. Refer to the previous chapter for an explanation of how to conduct the research for each of the Job Search methods. As part of the exercise, you will write the name of the employer, their contact details (including telephone, email and website address) and job posting information. After completing your cover letter and Construction resume, you can contact these employers as part of your job search.

1. Prepare a **list of 15 employers** using the **Cold Calling method**.
2. Create a **list of 15 employers** using a **Job Website**. Use at least **3 different Job Websites** to research the employers.
3. Develop a **list of 15 employers** using **Newspaper advertisements** from a minimum of **3 different newspapers**.
4. Conduct **3 Informational Interviews** with potential employers.
5. Review a **Recruitment Firm** to find **2 suitable job postings** for your occupation.

## CHAPTER 7

# YOUR JOB SEARCH ACTION PLAN

You are almost halfway through learning all of the important steps to getting a job. While you are in the process of conducting your job search, you may find that your best efforts are not paying off or that the process of finding a job is exhausting and you don't know if you are accomplishing very much.

### ***YOUR BLUEPRINT: THE ACTION PLAN***

Think of your job search this way: you wouldn't drive to a new town without a road map, so why would you conduct a job search without a map showing how to get the job offer? To be able to successfully proceed with the job search, you should consider making a **Job Search Action Plan** to accompany your **Job Search Journal**.

The Job Search Action Plan is an employment blueprint – a series of achievable steps you need to take to obtain a job. **There is a difference between the Job Search Journal and the Job Search Action Plan.** The Job Search Journal is a daily record of all of the actions you have taken as part of your job search and the new contact information that you have gathered from employers and networking contacts. A Job Search Action Plan, however, is a **list of things that you need to do for your job search.**

It is really important to be flexible when you create your Job Search Action Plan. Remember that the goal of an Action Plan is to create a blueprint of **how** you are going to find a job, so it is important that you make the plan progressive and your targets achievable.

There are no hard rules in creating a Job Search Action Plan other than the straight-line structure that ultimately finds you successfully employed. You may find that you need to add or remove components as part of your personalized Plan, and that is fine. What you are trying to do is logically organize your thoughts and objectives into little tasks or goals that are interconnected, and ultimately result in your employment.

Your Job Search Action Plan can also act as a great motivator as well. You can refer to it often to see how far you have progressed with your job search, or check to see where your process needs improvement.

In this chapter, you will find an example with building-block components for a template to make your own Job Search Action Plan. You may choose to incorporate some of the Job Search Action tasks that are listed and you may also add some of your own unique tasks. Use the Job Search tasks that work best for you. Design your Job Search Action Plan so it provides a clear map of what you need to do to get the job.

# WORKSHEET

## JOB SEARCH ACTION PLAN

Here is an outline of a Job Search Action Plan that you can use for your own Job Search. The tasks are listed in the order that they should be completed.

Next to each task is a checkbox. Check the checkbox once the task has been completed.

There will also be a space where you can write your own comments. You can make note of the specifics of each task that need to be done or enter other remarks.

### Job Search Action Plan

**TOOLS FOR JOB SEARCH**

---

**RESEARCH LICENSING / CREDENTIAL REQUIREMENTS**

---

**WRITE AN EFFECTIVE COVER LETTER AND CONSTRUCTION RESUME**

---

## Job Search Action Plan

- PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL REFERENCE LIST**

---

- RESEARCH WHERE YOUR SKILLS ARE IN DEMAND**

---

- CREATE A JOB SEARCH JOURNAL**

---

- “WOW” THE EMPLOYER (MARKET YOURSELF TO THE EMPLOYER)**

---

- ALL JOB SEARCH METHODS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED**

---

- RESEARCH A LIST OF 50 EMPLOYERS**

---

## Job Search Action Plan

- LIST YOUR BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT AND SOLUTIONS

---

- RESEARCH YOUR SALARY OR WAGE FOR YOUR OCCUPATION

---

- PREPARE FOR THE JOB INTERVIEW

---

- AFTER THE JOB INTERVIEW

---

- FOLLOW-UP WITH EMPLOYERS

---

- REASSESS YOUR JOB SEARCH

---

## Job Search Action Plan

**ACCEPT THE JOB OFFER**

---

**DECLINE THE JOB OFFER**

---

**GET THE JOB PROMOTION**

---

**OTHER TASKS THAT YOU NEED TO COMPLETE AS PART OF YOUR JOB  
SEARCH**

---

Changes, exclusions and additions to a personalized Job Search Action Plan are inevitable. Some of the elements listed above may not be as important to your search as they may be to another job seeker. As stated previously, your plan will not only contain the general building blocks, but will also be specific to you to help you keep your job search on track.

Once you have a Job Search Action Plan, you will have a clear understanding of the steps you need to take to facilitate your job search.

## CHAPTER 8

# BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS TO EMPLOYMENT

Organization is the key to a successful job search. In the preceding chapters, you learned how to assemble your references and organize many other items that you need for your job search.

In this chapter, we will reveal many hidden secrets that will help you to overcome the barriers to employment - barriers that may not yet be apparent to you, and barriers you may have already encountered when you applied for work.

By knowing how to overcome these barriers, you will have a competitive edge over other job applicants who face the same problems but do not know how to resolve them. Or, worse yet, they may not even be aware that these barriers to employment exist.

The solutions we offer may not be the perfect fit for everyone, so we encourage you to be creative in developing your own responses. Below, you will find a list of potential barriers to employment, and after each barrier you will find a suggested solution.

### ***BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT:***

***Your Job Search Skills. You have tried applying for jobs in the newspaper or on job websites and you haven't had a response from employers. What can you do?***

### ***SOLUTION:***

When you've read the information and learned the job search techniques presented in this textbook, you will be equipped to conduct an effective job search. Try a variety of job search methods and prepare a Job Search Action Plan to provide yourself with clear direction on the steps that you need to take to obtain employment. In a later part of this textbook, we will explore how you can re-examine your job search and make improvements if you need to. The most common barriers to employment are: being poorly informed about the job market, not having adequate job search skills, and not knowing how to make the contacts that are helpful for getting a job. When you've completed this manual and the exercises provided, you will be equipped with the knowledge to overcome these potential barriers.

Let's continue with some common barriers to employment that many job-seekers have to overcome:

### ***BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT:***

***Your conversational English is not adequate for a job interview.***

### ***SOLUTION:***

One solution to a lack of English language skills is to do volunteer work with an English-speaking community organization. This will provide an opportunity for you to be around those who speak English fluently, and give you the chance to improve your English by listening and conversing. The benefits are twofold: you will be practicing your English skills and you will be gaining volunteer experience for your Construction resume. You can do research on the Internet to find volunteer organizations in your community. This website: <http://volunteer.ca/> has an excellent directory of non-profit organizations across Canada.

## ***BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT:***

*You lack confidence when approaching employers.*

### ***SOLUTION:***

Many job seekers find it daunting to approach an employer for either an Informational Interview or for a job interview; you are not alone! You already know that one of the key traits an employer is seeking in a potential employee is confidence. Your self-confidence tells an employer that you are a person who trusts their own abilities and, in turn, the employer can trust the employee's skills to contribute to their company.

The best confidence-builder is preparation. Prepare to your best ability for any contact that you may have with the employer. Your preparation could include researching the employer's website and company background, practicing your job interview questions, and rehearsing for telephone conversations.

## ***BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT:***

*You lack a professional image.*

### ***SOLUTION:***

Professional image is a very important aspect to any person's job search, regardless of occupation. The professional image starts with a job seeker's cover letter, Construction resume, communications with employers, and personal appearance at the job interview. Throughout the job search, a job seeker should always present and prepare themselves in the best possible manner to increase employment prospects.

## ***BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT:***

***You do not have relevant work experience.***

## ***SOLUTION:***

There are two methods for gaining employment in the trades sector. The first is direct entry employment. Seek out a company in your trade of choice and begin work as an unskilled labourer with the intention of becoming apprenticed. The second is pre-trades training. Pending skill and confidence as well as the interest/needs of the prospective employer, you may need to seek trade specific training prior to applying for positions. For information on all pre-trades training programs and institutions in Saskatchewan specific to each construction trade, go to [www.thinkconstructions.ca](http://www.thinkconstructions.ca) and link to the trade of your choice under the "Trades" tab.

An important potential barrier to finding a job is not having relevant work experience. Why does the employer want you to have relevant work experience? Because the employer wants to ensure that you can adapt quickly to their work environment. Without relevant work experience, the employer believes that it could take a long time before you become a productive member of their organization. For this reason, employers may be hesitant to hire a person without relevant work experience.

To overcome this potential barrier to employment, you can utilize a variety of techniques to gain relevant work experience or to illustrate to employers the relevant skills that you already have for the job. A Practicum or work placement is non-paid employment that can provide you with practical work experience and can help make the transition into your new occupation much easier. Many schools and colleges are willing to arrange for a practicum or work placement as part of educational studies. Another viable option is to volunteer with an

organization that is relevant to the job seeker's education; this can provide a job applicant with work experience that can be listed on a Construction resume. Recent graduates may also highlight relevant school projects or studies that demonstrate to the employer the relevant skills that have been gained as part of their studies.

## ***BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT***

***You do not have any Saskatchewan work experience.***

### ***SOLUTION:***

As we mentioned in the previous solution, a viable option is to volunteer with an organization whose function is related to the job seeker's education or previous work experience; this can provide the job applicant with work experience that can be listed on a Saskatchewan Construction resume. Another option is to research the areas of Saskatchewan where your skills and expertise are in demand. Work experience requirements can vary with labour market conditions at different points in time and in various regions. For example, in areas with a low labour supply and jobs that are in high demand, employers tend to lower their requirements for entry to those occupations. The key is to find where your job has the greatest demand or to train for a new occupation that is in great demand and where Saskatchewan employers will be more flexible about hiring applicants with limited experience.

## ***BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT***

***You have unrealistic expectations about job title and salary.***

***SOLUTION:***

Researching salary information can provide job seekers with a realistic understanding of the average pay for their occupation in the region where they reside. Having an understanding of the appropriate salary level for your profession is important for both the job interview and for relating it to the cost of living in the city or town where the job is.

When viewing job advertisements, it is important that you consider the experience that the employer requires for the position and whether the salary offered is suitable for the experience required.

# WORKSHEET

## OVERCOMING EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS

In this exercise, you will be required to identify five potential barriers that you could face in your job search. When you have listed five potential barriers that could prevent you from obtaining employment, then you will provide five solutions that you can use to overcome these potential challenges. You can refer to the previous examples in this chapter, but you are also encouraged to list barriers and solutions that are unique to your own job search.

### **For example:**

1. A barrier that could prevent me from getting a job is that I do not have a license to work as an Engineer. My solution will be to contact the local Engineers' Association to find out more information about how I can obtain my license.

You can use this exercise to help you overcome your personal barriers to employment. Make a record in your Job Search Action Plan of the actions you need to take to overcome the barriers you identify for your own job search.

### **Exercise:**

1. List five barriers and five solutions for your job search.

## CHAPTER 9

# WITH A POSITIVE ATTITUDE, YOU CAN LAND THE JOB!

### *WHAT IS A POSITIVE ATTITUDE?*

It is waking up in the morning and knowing that it is only a question of **when** you will get the job, not **if** you will get the job!

Studies have proven time and time again that people with a positive attitude lead happier and more productive lives. Furthermore, positive people are more successful in achieving their goals than those who perceive life as a negative experience, and their goals as impossible dreams.

Immediate success may not come your way with every step you take on your job search journey. Success is often the result of good luck and hard work. However, keeping positively focused on the end result - that you will obtain a job - can help to make it happen.

You have a goal in mind for the job you want and the salary that you want to earn. Now it is time to focus and to make these dreams a reality.

An integral part of making these ideas a reality is to clearly define, in writing, your employment aspirations and objectives. If you do not have a particular career goal in mind, here is an opportunity for you to explore the different directions that you could take. There are no right or wrong answers for this exercise. While it is important to know what you want and how to get it, it is also wise to be willing to consider other opportunities that may occur unexpectedly on your road to success.

### **Exercise:**

**Write down** your aspirations for the future, where you would like to work, the position you want to work in and the salary that you expect to be earning. Complete this exercise for your vision of the future for:

- 1. Six Months**
- 2. Two Years**
- 3. Five Years**

When you have listed your goals for six months, two years and five years, refer to these important benchmarks frequently. Even better, keep them posted somewhere in your house where you can see them and they can act as daily reminders of why you are making the effort and taking the time to conduct a job search.

## Chapter 10

# **SALARY REPORT AND JOB INTERVIEW**

In this chapter, we will explore the typical and not-so-typical job interview. Before we get to interview tips and techniques, we'll focus on one important element of the pre-job interview: understanding how much money you can earn.

Not only is salary an attractive motivator throughout your job search, but it should also be something that you have researched thoroughly **before** you attend your job interview.

### ***WHAT IS THE AVERAGE SALARY?***

How much is the average income is for your profession? This is critical to know when the employer asks you what salary you expect to earn. To prepare you for your job interview and also so you have an idea of how much money you can expect to earn, it is a good idea to do some research on an average salary range for your position.

Salaries are specified as either a monthly or annual amount for most positions, although some salaries will be quoted at an hourly rate. Generally, salaries are quoted as a whole, before deductions for taxes. At most jobs, you will be paid every two weeks or twice a month - on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month and the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month, or every second Friday. You will get paid either by cheque or your employer may automatically deposit your pay directly and electronically into your bank account.

Some employers will provide medical insurance, which covers a portion of your healthcare costs, as what is called a “benefit” to their employees. These benefits

are paid by employers to attract quality staff, to foster a sense of loyalty, and to encourage their employees not to look elsewhere for jobs.

The amount of salary paid for the same position can range greatly from one region to another and also from employer to employer. Larger companies will generally provide some types of medical insurance benefits while smaller companies may provide options other than medical insurance, such as more room for growth for your career. When researching your salary, consider the location of the job, the size of the company you are applying to, and your experience and education. As an apprentice, your wage is typically based on what a journeyperson makes. Upon successful completion of each year of apprenticeship, your wage increases accordingly until you become a journeyperson. Of course, during your interview with the employer you may wish to state that your salary range is flexible - this will be addressed further in the Job Interview chapter.

Finally, when considering your salary range, you should take into account the cost of living in the area where you will be working. The cost of living can range greatly from large cities where rent for a house and amenities are priced higher, to smaller, more rural towns where costs are lower.

Excellent websites to research the expected salary for your position are these websites:

- <http://www.saskjobs.ca/>
- <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>
- [Jobs in Saskatchewan](#)

## **JOB INTERVIEWS**

Job interviews are nerve-wracking for everyone. The stress is understandable: a job interview provides your best chance to make a good impression on the employer. The mental stress of a job interview can wear on even the best, most qualified candidates. However, try to think of a job interview from this perspective: employers want you to do well and are hopeful that they've found the just the right candidate for the job. The faster they find a qualified applicant for the job, the better it is for them. They want to see you succeed in the job interview. Remember too, the employer has already read your Construction resume and cover letter, and because you were called for an interview, they know you fit the profile for the employee they want to hire. Therefore, the interview is your perfect opportunity to WOW the employer with your talents and skills.

The purpose of the interview is for the employer to find out more information about your previous work experience, what your previous work environments have been like, to gauge if you would function well in a “team” environment, assess your confidence and commitment to the company and its goals, and evaluate your general suitability for the job.

There will most likely be more than one interview.

### **BEFORE THE INTERVIEW CHECKLIST**

It is first impressions that count at your interview. You have one chance, so make sure that the following information is correct.

- 1. Where and when is the interview to be held?**

2. **What is the method of the interview (telephone, in person, web cast, Skype, Google, etc.)?**
3. **Are there any materials that you are required to bring to the interview? For example, should you bring additional copies of your Construction resume to the interview?**
4. **If it is a telephone or web cast interview, make sure that you know who is calling whom. Do not assume that the employer will call you. The employer may expect you to call them. If you have not heard from the employer ten minutes after the time that has been set, call them. If it is by Skype, make sure you are connected to the employer on Skype before the meeting.**

## ***THE DIFFERENT INTERVIEWS***

What kind of job interviews would expect to experience? Here are some types of interviews that you may encounter:

1. **In-Person Interview.** This interview would take place somewhere at the company's site, possibly in the Human Resources office.
2. **Telephone Interview.** This is the most common type of interview for applicants who are applying for positions outside of their own towns.
3. **Webcast, Skype or Video-Conference Interview.** This type of interview is becoming more common for long-distance interviews.

Each of the different interview methods will basically be composed of similar questions and content, even though the settings are different.

### ***PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW***

**Do your homework. Research, research, research** the company and all that the company has accomplished over the past 2 years or longer. You want to be as prepared as possible for the interview. The employer will want to know that you are familiar with their industry.

During your interview, you should make frequent eye contact with the interviewer, be interested in their questions and responses, smile often, and speak directly to the employer/interviewer. Even if you are on the telephone, people can sense if you are smiling - so make sure you smile during a telephone interview. Confidence is one of the major attributes employers are looking for – so sound and look confident!

### ***BEHAVIOURAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS***

In the interview, the employer may ask you about specific examples of occasions when you have successfully implemented tasks. These types of interview questions are becoming more popular with employers. Employers use these “what-did-you-do?” lines of questioning to allow them to predict future performance based on past performance. These are called **Behavioural Interview Questions**.

The Behavioural Interview Questions are an excellent way for the employer to learn more about your work habits. Answer those interview questions with a positive response. Never make negative statements about yourself or your previous employers or co-workers, as this will reflect badly on you. Try to find a positive answer to any question.

Your answers should always be prepared ahead of time. Be ready to provide an example of each of the following:

- **A problem at your previous job.** Think about a work-related issue that posed a challenge for you to solve.
- **The action you took to resolve that problem.** Detail how you met the challenge head-on.
- **The successful result of the action that you took to resolve the problem.** Give an example of a work-related problem or experience that was resolved successfully as a result of your actions. Employers love to hear about past successes because those success stories demonstrate the ability to understand where improvements can be made and how to implement those improvements.

The employer will evaluate how you answer these and other questions to determine how well you work with other colleagues (this is commonly referred to as being a “team player”), how well you solve problems on your own (as an “independent worker”) and how well you work under supervision.

***For example, if the employer asks you “What is your greatest weakness?”***

***You want to answer in the manner of this example:***

***“In the past I found it a challenge to work with the Miter saw. To master this challenge, I took it upon myself to enrol in a class which would teach me how to use a Miter saw, I took this class on my own time. After taking the class, I was much better at using the Miter saw and was able to use the saw more efficiently at work.”***

Look at that again: in this answer, you **identified a problem** (lack of miter saw skills), **you took action** to solve the problem (you took a class to learn how to use the miter saw), and finally you **received a satisfactory result** as a consequence of your actions (you were able to use the miter saw more efficiently). You took a potentially negative question and turned it into a positive answer that shows the employer that you are proactive and do not give into or hide from your weaknesses.

What follows in this chapter are some other questions that the employer may ask you. It is a good idea to prepare some responses to reflect the experiences that you have had. You should also be aware that these are only sample interview questions, and employers may ask a variety of other questions. However, after working through this exercise, you will be able to understand the **problem/action/result** process of any behavioural question.

## **PRACTICE INTERVIEW: SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

Here are some typical interview questions that an employer may ask. We have also included some examples of appropriate answers to these interview questions. You can write your answers in the space provided below, or you can write your own answers on a separate sheet of paper to use as practice for your upcoming job interview.

### **QUESTION #1: "TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF."**

This is a question interviewers usually ask to start the flow of conversation. The key to a successful interview is to keep your responses to three key points and keep each answer to no longer than three minutes at most. You do not want to bore the interviewer or provide information that is not relevant to the position. Also, remember: **do not start your response with any personal information.** This is an interview about a job, it is not a personality profile. You want to talk about your **professional** skills, your education, past work experience and the personal traits you have that assist you to be a dedicated worker, and how those traits will help you to contribute to the success of the company.

### **ANSWER #1:**

You should be comfortable discussing all aspects of your professional life. To help you prepare, make a list of your

**Equipment Skills:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Education:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Past Work Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Traits:** \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION #2: "WHY SHOULD WE HIRE YOU?"**

This is a very straightforward question designed to hear how you can "sell" yourself to an interested employer. Take some time right now to think about how you will phrase your answer. In your response, mention personal traits - such as your patience and willingness to work hard - and emphasize your professional strengths and applicable experience for the job. The interview answers must always come reflect on what you can contribute to the company. Give specific examples of past projects you were involved in and how that experience can contribute to the position and the company. Remember: be persuasive! Your Construction resume was your foot in the door, but your answer to this question is how you'll be remembered. Grab the interviewer's attention with a compelling reason why they should hire you, or you risk losing the interviewer's interest.

**ANSWER #2:**

**Personal Traits:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Professional Strengths:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Give an Example of a Successful Past Project You Personally Worked on:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION #3: “What are your greatest strengths?”**

You will want to mention one or two strengths that are work-related, and explain about a past successful work experience when you used those strengths.

**ANSWER #3:**

**List One or Two Professional Strengths:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **and** \_\_\_\_\_

**Detail a past Success Story when you had a problem at work and found a solution to the problem using those strengths:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION #4: “What is your greatest weakness?”**

Turn the negative into a positive. Everyone has weaknesses. By identifying the challenge (avoid the word ‘problem’ as it sounds very negative), how you overcame that challenge, and how you are now a better worker for it, you will give the employer a good reason to hire you. What the employer is really looking for with this question is not your lack of ability, but how you handle challenges and resolve them. Think of the worker who improved their computer skills in the example above as an example of a strong, positive response to this question.

**ANSWER #4:**

**Describe a challenge you have had professionally**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Provide a positive account of how you resolved that challenge**

\_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION #5: "Why do you want to leave your present employer?"**

Give a positive answer – you do not want to mention past problems with your boss or co-workers. The best answer you can give is that you are seeking greater challenges and that you have given as much as you can at your current position. Stating that you need further challenges shows that you have drive and determination.

**ANSWER #5:**

*I am seeking more challenges because:*

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*Give an example of a specific challenge that you would like to tackle.*

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**QUESTION #6: "Why do you want to work for this company?"**

Don't answer this question with, "Because I saw your ad in the newspaper." You should state what you find the most interesting about the company and the industry in general. Then sum up with a quick comment about how eager you are to contribute to the company's success. Mention how you would like to work for an established company such as theirs – and give the reasons why.

**ANSWER #6:**

*Most desirable feature about the company is:*

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*Most interesting feature about the industry is:*

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*Flatter the company (compliment them about what a great company it is):*

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**QUESTION #7: “What do you know about our company?”**

You want to talk about the company and this is when your research will be useful. You should also have some knowledge about the industry in general.

**ANSWER #7:**

**Key points about the general industry:**

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**Key points about the employer, their products and company outlook:**

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**QUESTION #8: “Why do you want this position?”**

When you applied for this job, you probably had a very good idea of why the job appealed to you. The motivating factor may in fact be the higher wages, but that’s not what employers want to hear. They want to know how you can contribute to their success. Think of all the challenges that this job offers you. What are they? Visualize the opportunities that you will have to help build the company’s fortunes. How will you do that? You should answer this question with a response that will let your positive attributes shine through. For example “I am really interested in this position because it offers a very interesting set of challenges and there is the room for greater opportunities,” then go on to list a few examples and your thoughts on the position.

**ANSWER #8:**

**List an interesting set of challenges for this job:** \_\_\_\_\_

**List some of the greater opportunities the job will afford you:**

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**QUESTION #9: “Do you work better alone or as part of a team?”**

If your job consists of you working by yourself, alone for long periods of time, then you will want to highlight how much you enjoy working independently. But if you will be working on team projects, you should state how well you work as part of a team and how you enjoy the time spent with colleagues. In all

circumstances, however, - even if you are going to be the only one on the job for days at time or if the job calls for you to work with 50 people at once all of the time - you should always state that you enjoy working as part of the team and can work independently. It is a trick question. Any kind of job will at some point require you to work on your own and most jobs will require you to work with colleagues or a boss, so the employer will want to know that you can work well with others and can work well independently as well.

**ANSWER #9:**

***If the job requires you to work alone, give an example of how you are independent worker:***

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***If the job requires lots of teamwork, explain how you successfully worked as part of a team:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Be sure that you summarize by saying that you can work well both as an independent worker and as part of a team:*** \_\_\_\_\_

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**QUESTION #10: “What did your last supervisor criticize most about your performance?”**

In answer to this question, you will want to give a reply that doesn't relate to the responsibilities of the current position. For example, if you are applying for a Carpenter position, you will not give an answer about your carpenter work, but instead is about something that is not relevant to the position. Perhaps, “My previous supervisor requested that I sharpen my web design skills so that I could help out with the maintenance of the company's website, and I took it upon

myself to take a website design course. Later in the year, my supervisor commented that I had improved my website design skills greatly and was able to contribute to the company very well.” What you are trying to do is side-step a negative question about your lack of your skills with a positive, proactive answer that shows how you dealt with a criticism and improved yourself and your performance to the benefit of the company.

**ANSWER #10:**

***Self-criticism: Think about a time when you lacked skills to do a job. This should not be something directly related the position you are applying for, but a former job. What was it?***

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***Explain how you overcame the criticism and improved your performance:***\_\_\_\_\_

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**QUESTION #11: “Where do you see yourself in five years?”**

This is a question that is asked to determine the extent of your personal ambition. What your response really tells the employer is what to expect from you in terms of your vision of the job, your employment movement expectations within the company, and even how long that you’ll stay before you get bored and move on! Make the assumption that you will be working for the company and that you have moved up one or two positions and that you may have done some professional development as well. Be modest, but also show that you are motivated with your answer.

Most of all, think like an employer. What would you like to hear from a loyal employee? You may be thinking “I would probably stay here at this company as long as I find the job interesting – or until I find a better job,” but the employer would rather hear “From what I have learned by doing research on your company and in our meeting today, I strongly believe this company would offer me exciting challenges and plenty of the opportunities that I seek in (name your employment field and details).” You may also want think about how you can improve yourself on the job with additional education and supplement your skills and benefit the company. This also shows that you are loyal and willing to improve yourself to improve the company’s fortunes.

**ANSWER #11:**

***You should state you would like to be working with their company and that you look forward to contributing to the company over the next few years.***

***How?:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***You can also mention that you would like to enrol in some professional development courses to expand your solid knowledge of this profession.***

***Which ones?*** \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION #12: “Why have you changed jobs so frequently?”**

If your Construction resume lists many jobs you've had in the last 5 to 10 years, you may have to explain your transient job history. Was it because of contract work? Piecework? Personal challenges? Again, you should give only positive answers. If you left your last few jobs because your boss was overbearing or treated you unfairly, this is not what you tell the interviewer. Instead, you should highlight the opportunities you had to learn different aspects of the jobs and confirm that you are now looking for an opportunity to contribute on a long-term basis to a company. Then give some specific examples of your long-term goals and mention a personal goal or achievement, such as that you have just bought a house in the area and are interested in settling in one place, or that you are keen to have your family settle down in the area.

**ANSWER #12:**

***Briefly outline the opportunities you have had to learn different aspects of responsibility in your various positions.***

---

***You are now looking for an opportunity to contribute on a long-term basis to a company. Give specific examples to back you up: that you would like to settle in this area as you just bought a new house, or that you are interested in staying in the area for a particular reason.***

**QUESTION #13: "Are you willing to relocate?"**

You may start work in the city where you are being interviewed, but big construction companies sometimes move employees around for different projects. When a company does this, they will usually pay the cost of your relocation.

Remember, relocating to another jobsite might never happen. This question is sometimes asked just to see how flexible you are to the idea – and your openness to sudden changes in the course of business. However, if you aren't willing to relocate for the company, then clearly say so.

**ANSWER #13:**

***You will answer that you are willing to relocate if required to do so, unless you are certain that relocation is not practical for you.***

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**QUESTION #14: "Are you willing to travel?"**

The interviewer will ask this question if travelling is part of the job. If you have travelled for your job in the past, then give specific examples of successful business trips.

**ANSWER #14:**

***If you agree to travel for the company, then answer yes.***

***If you do not want to travel, then you should state this in the interview.***

**QUESTION #15: “Are you willing to work overtime?”**

The interviewer may be asking this question because overtime will be part of the job. Consider carefully before answering this question. Overtime is a reality for many jobs – though it usually does come with extra pay. For time worked over and above a “normal” full-time workday of 7.5 to 8 hours, there is usually overtime pay or time-off-in-lieu depending on your employment contract. Be sure to check out the employment legislation in your province.

**ANSWER #15:**

***If you are willing to work some overtime hours, answer yes. If you have worked overtime in the past, then give one or two specific examples.***

---

**QUESTION #16: “Have you ever been fired or asked to resign?”**

Many people leave positions either on their own accord or because the employer asked them to leave. If you have been fired in the past, tell the interviewer that you have been able to learn something new from this experience and this knowledge has helped you grow as an employee. In doing a background check of your employment history and salary, your former employer may or may not give a reason why you are no longer in their employ. If you phrase your answer in a manner that does not alarm your new employer, there may not be any reason to ask former bosses about any possible dismissals.

**ANSWER #16:**

***What positives can you state about each position that you have left? What new experiences or lessons did you learn?***

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**QUESTION 17: “How long have you been searching for a job? Why haven't you received a job offer? Why have you been unemployed for so long?”**

This may seem like very impersonal questioning, but it really done to gauge your personal goals and eagerness to find work. It is important to stay positive, and not to be negative about yourself or the other jobs you have interviewed for but didn't get. You might want to say that you are “very selective” with your employment positions and are looking for “the right fit” and you “feel that this position would be a very good fit for my credentials and expertise.” This type of comment subtly suggests that potential employers are knocking on your door asking you to work for them, but you enjoy the luxury of choosing the one that's right for you. Finally, and most importantly, state that this company “really interests you” and that you would welcome the opportunity to work with them.

**ANSWER #17:**

***Why haven't you already got a job? You can say that you are very selective with your employment to find just the right fit for your talents. Can you think of any other positive “reasons”?***

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**QUESTION #18: “What previously-held job is your favourite, and why?”**

Think of all the good jobs you’ve had. Try to find similar tasks in a previous position that you expect to find in this position. For example, if you will be counting inventory in this new job, then in your answer state that you really enjoyed in your previous job sorting inventory (or the closest task to this new position). Understand the skills required for this position and tailor your answer accordingly. Finally, summarize any answer to a question by stating that you also really enjoy learning new things. This again confirms that you like to learn on the job and want to better yourself for the company’s benefit.

**ANSWER #18:**

**List similar tasks in a previous position that will be beneficial to this position.** \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION #19: “Do you consider yourself to be organized? Do you manage your time well?”**

The person asking these questions is trying to see if you have good “time management” skills and are able to prioritize construction projects well. Being able to do all the work you’re given properly and in an efficient manner is important to an employer and is key to getting a job. You should be able to give some specific examples of how you manage your time effectively on a day-to-day basis and provide an example of a project you worked on where you used your time management skills effectively.

**ANSWER #19:**

***Think of some typical workplace examples of how you manage your time effectively on a day-to-day basis and list them here:***

***Give one example of a project you worked on where you used your time management skills effectively.*** \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTION #20: “Would you choose the same career if you started again?”**

If you are in the same field that you started in and the new job is in that field, then you can state that you like this industry and you like the work that you have been doing. Employers appreciate employee enthusiasm for their business. However, if this job is a departure from your original career, then you can give some reasons why you are entering this new career. You need to convince the employer that this was a well-thought-out career decision. You may want to talk enthusiastically about your interest in this new-to-you industry, and how you welcome the challenge and opportunity to grow and learn in this environment. It can also be helpful to find some creative parallel qualities between your old job(s) and this one to put the employer's mind at ease.

**ANSWER #20:**

***If you are in the same field that you started in and the job is in that field, then you want to answer how much you enjoy working in this industry.***

***What are some things that you really like about this work?***

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***If this is a completely different industry, give some examples of how you can grow and learn in this new industry.***

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***What are some similarities between your old job(s) and this one?***

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**QUESTION #21: “Why have you stayed with the same employer for so long?”**

If you have held a job with your previous employer for many years, that says something about you. It says that you are loyal to your former (or current) employer, and also says that you were a good employee and they wanted to keep you. However, this questioning is also intended to determine if you are simply a creature of habit who didn't want to change jobs or take career risks. In your answer, state that you enjoyed the many challenges of this position and that you were able to work effectively with people both inside the company and within the industry. Give some examples of how you learned and grew over the years and how you evolved professionally throughout your time in that job.

**ANSWER #21:**

***Give some examples of how you learned and grew over the years on the job and how you evolved professionally.***

---

**QUESTION #22: “Do you consider yourself to be a risk-taker?”**

What is risk? It's not the danger that you may put yourself in by walking in moving traffic or jumping out of an airplane without a parachute – but it's close. Risk, in business, means the calculated chances you take to successfully advance the company's interests.

By posing this question, the interviewer wants to determine how much adversity you are willing to face and how much risk you are willing to take for the company. You should carefully consider the company you are applying to before answering this question. Is this company or industry the type that is prone to making aggressive decisions and taking big chances? Is the company on the leading edge in the industry? Or is this an old, well-established construction company that likes to produce the same quality of projects over and over, year after year? You want to stay in line with the company's values but also show that when the time is right, you are willing to take a calculated risk for the opportunity to help the company. Be sure you've done your research so that you can interpret the company the right way.

**ANSWER #22:**

***You want to stay in line with the construction company's values but also show that when the time is right, you are willing to accept a calculated risk for the company's benefit and for your professional growth.***

***Give an example of a risk that you took on behalf of your former employer that helped the company as a whole:***

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**QUESTION #23: “Would your present employer be surprised to know you're job-hunting?”**

Unless you are currently unemployed, you are probably conducting this job search while still working for your present employer. This is very common. Respond with a positive answer again: let the interviewer know that you are happy with your current job, but you are seeking more challenges and growth opportunities. Being able to explain what is attractive about this “new” job will be very flattering to an employer.

**ANSWER #23:**

***Let the interviewer know that you are happy with your current job but are seeking more challenges and opportunities. What are they?***

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**QUESTION #24: “How well do you handle change?”**

As you are reading this book, you are ready for and comfortable with change. You must always answer that you handle change well, that change represents growth, and that you realize that the company at some point may ask you to do a task that is outside of your job description. This shows that you are flexible, and employers favour flexible employees. Provide an example of a time in the past when you were called on to be flexible and how you were successful at adapting.

**ANSWER #24:**

***Provide an example of a time in the past at your job that you were called on to be flexible and how you were successful at adapting:***

---

**QUESTION #25: “What would be your ideal job? Who would be your ideal boss?”**

This is another “what-if” question that appears to have no wrong answer, but it may, if you're not careful. The way you answer either of these questions tells a lot about your ideals and the comfort level you seek. Right now, allow yourself to think about a dream job. Now, strip away the dream job’s title and think about the details that make it a dream job. This is how you would answer a question on an ideal job. It’s not about what it is, but rather what the job offers that makes it so great that you would enjoy getting up every morning to do it.

Is it that this dream job gives you the ability to make decisions freely, and act on them? That it allows you to create? What would it be?

This line of thinking can also be applied to thoughts about a dream employer. Do you want someone who respects your opinion? Allows you to make decisions? What else?

Now you must directly tie these “dream” descriptions into your appreciation for the job you are applying for. Try to explain how your search for these ideals directly attracted you to this job.

**ANSWER #25:**

***What are some attributes of your “dream job?”***

***What are some attributes of your ideal employer?***

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**QUESTION #26: “What salary are you expecting?”**

This is another tricky question. You do not want to price yourself out of the job, nor do you want to price yourself too low. Remember to research your salary as covered in earlier in this chapter.

You should be aware of the fair market value for the services of someone with your education and experience. However, try to turn the question on the interviewer and ask what the employer feels is the appropriate salary range, considering your previous work experience and the position they are offering. Usually, they will provide you with a salary range and explain the benefits their company offers to their employees. Be prepared, however, just in case: some employers will once again turn the question back on you and say “What do you feel is an appropriate salary?” With your research, you can easily quote the “industry average” and hope that will satisfy their question. If the industry average is a sufficient amount, be prepared to state a salary range that you personally believe is appropriate for the position and which you would be satisfied to earn.

You really want to work for a company that respects its employees by paying them a reasonable wage.

**ANSWER #26:**

***Answer a question with another question – ask what they think is an appropriate salary for this position and your previous work experience.***

---

***They may reply with another question back to you; then you must state the range that you feel is appropriate for the position.***

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**QUESTION #27: “How do you resolve disputes with co-workers? How do you handle conflicts in the workplace?”**

Being able to manage the stress of workplace conflicts and disputes is a valuable skill. When disagreements break out, the time wasted in arguing costs the company money and time. Employers are seeking staff members who can quickly and effectively settle any workplace conflict. How did you manage disputes in your former job? You might explain that you work proactively and invite feedback from fellow co-workers. Think of an example of a time when you and a co-worker had a disagreement and explain how you and the co-worker were able to resolve the situation. The interviewer wants to know that you can work with others without involving the boss and taking up management's valuable time.

**ANSWER #27:**

***Provide an example of a time when you and a co-worker had a difference of opinion and how you and the co-worker were able to come to a successful resolution: \_\_\_\_\_***

**QUESTION #28: “Are you considering offers from other employers?”**

You do not want to state outright that you are considering other offers, as this may jeopardize your chances of obtaining a job offer with this company. However, you can say that you have your Construction resume out to other employers as well. This is fair and to be expected – you are, after all, in search of a job.

**ANSWER #28:**

***No. No other job offers at the moment.***

**QUESTION #29: “When can you start?”**

If have a job, you will want to provide notice to your current employer as soon as possible once you are offered the job. If you are presently in a junior position, two weeks' written notice is generally adequate; if you are in a senior management position, one month's notice of resignation is usually required.

**ANSWER #29:**

***Depends on the notice required by your current employer:***

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**QUESTION #30: “Have you ever fired anyone?”**

If you have ever been a supervisor of other employees, you may have been in the situation where firing another employee for insubordination or poor work was part of your job. How did you resolve this issue? Let the interviewer know how you worked with the employee to review their shortcomings but as a last resort had to excuse the employee from the position.

**ANSWER #30:**

***What was your approach to dismissing an employee? You should describe how you made every attempt to improve the situation for the employee but finally had no choice but to dismiss the employee:***

**QUESTION #31: How do you motivate employees?**

Employee motivation and “team building” go hand-in-hand in a successful workplace. If you’ve had success in making the workplace more harmonious and productive, this is when you can tell your story. If you managed a department, you can explain how you motivated the team with frequent team meetings and incentives. Or perhaps you took the time to recognize each employee's unique strengths and motivate the employees individually. Be prepared to give examples of how you successfully motivated the staff as a group and as individual staff members. There is no simple way to motivate all people because of the vast variety of personality types and situations in different work places.

**ANSWER #31:**

***What examples can you provide of how you successfully motivated staff as a group and as individual staff members? \_\_\_\_\_***

**QUESTION #32: “What is your commitment to this job?”**

Let them know that you will make a solid commitment to this position for as long as you are able to grow and contribute to the company. Tell them how you’ll do it – plans you've already considered are often an even bigger show of commitment.

**ANSWER #32:**

***Evaluate your potential commitment to this job. You may want to suggest that you will be ready to serve the company as long as you are able to grow and contribute. How else can you display your commitment? What kind of ideas do you have?***

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**QUESTION #33: “Are you opposed to doing a lot of routine work?”**

Sometimes the jobs you apply for may require long days of completing repetitive tasks. Does this bother you? Your answer could be: "I understand that many of the tasks involved may be repetitive with this position, but I enjoy these tasks. I also understand that in the future there may be a wider variety of tasks involved." Try to be positive and encouraging about tasks that have to be done every day.

**ANSWER #33:**

**Try to be positive and encouraging about repetitive tasks. How would you phrase your answer? \_\_\_\_\_**

**QUESTION #34: “Do you have any questions?”**

During an interview, the employer will ask you a series of interview questions and then at the end of these interview questions the employer will ask you if you have any questions. Always accept this opportunity. You do not ask questions that are self-motivated – for example, “Will I get benefits?” “Will you pay for my education?” These questions will be addressed in later interviews. The questions you ask at the end of the first interview are to show your interest in their business.

Have at least ten questions prepared for the interviewer, based on the research you conducted prior to the interview. Although you may have ten questions prepared, ask only three of those questions. You do not want to waste the employer's precious business time, and some of the questions you have prepared may have already been answered during the interview. Try to pose intelligent, probing questions, questions that you have not already discussed with the potential employer. One inside trick that you may want to try in your interview is to pose one or two questions that you may already know the answers to from your research. By asking questions you already know the answer to, you can “lead” the questioning, know how the employer will answer, and follow up with a

further “probing” question that will impress them with your understanding of their business; this approach allows you to appear to be in tune with the goals and attitudes of the company. This is your time to show them how interested you are. Here are some good examples of basic questions you can ask the interviewer:

**What is the philosophy of the company?**

\_\_\_\_\_.

**What are the company's long and short-term goals?**

\_\_\_\_\_.

**What obstacles does the organization anticipate in meeting its goals?**\_\_\_\_\_.

**What are the goals of this position?**

\_\_\_\_\_.

**Would you please describe a typical week in this position?**

\_\_\_\_\_.

**Would you be willing to indenture me as an apprentice?**

\_\_\_\_\_.

**How does the company currently fit within the industry?**

\_\_\_\_\_.

Don't forget to do your research on the company in order to prepare good questions. It helps to research topics you are genuinely interested in learning about.

## ***AFTER THE INTERVIEW***

After the interview has been completed, you should write down some notes on the information you discussed in the interview. You will need this information for the Thank You Letter that you will send after the interview, and for your own reference.

Finish the interview by asking the employer:

- When can you expect to hear from them again?
- Always smile and thank them for their valuable time!
- Last thing – shake their hand with a firm handshake (if you are in person) and (for all types of interviews) tell them “I am very interested in this position and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.” Then smile again.

Now that you have an understanding of the flow of questions the employer may ask you, you should practice your interview questions and answers before the interview. You want to be well-prepared and ready to give the employer informative answers.

There are many different types of interview questions. You may want to review some of these other types of interview questions to fully prepare for the job interview. However, do not become overwhelmed by the number of possible interview questions. Once you have mastered the most common interview questions, you will be able to adapt your answers to fit most questions, and you will go to your interview confident and well-prepared.

***Here are some additional questions you may be asked:***

- ***Describe a situation in which you were effective in achieving a particular goal.***
- ***Describe a time when you had great difficulty communicating your thoughts clearly to another person or group.***
- ***Describe your most disappointing work experience.***
- ***Tell me about a time you were effective in putting your technical expertise to use to solve a problem.***

## **WORKSHEET**

## JOB INTERVIEW

The interview is your opportunity to sell yourself to the employer. How successful you are in the interview will greatly influence your chances of obtaining the job. Everything for the interview should be organized ahead of time, and nothing left to chance.

**Here is a checklist that you can complete BEFORE the interview:**

- Where is the interview? Do you know to get to the job interview by car or transit? \_\_\_\_\_.
- What is the exact time and date of the interview? \_\_\_\_\_.
- What is the method of the interview? \_\_\_\_\_.
- What, if any, materials are you required to bring to the interview?  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- Do you have your suit or dress pressed and cleaned for the interview?  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- Have you researched the company you are applying to?
- Have you researched the current trends for this industry?
- Have you researched the salary range you would expect to receive?
- Have you read the newspapers to keep current with the latest news on the Saskatchewan economy and news?
- Have you prepared your interview questions and answers?
- Have you practiced all of your interview questions?
- Have you prepared at least seven questions to ask the interviewer?
- After the interview, have you sent your Thank You Letter to the employer?
- Other notes or comments about the interview:  
\_\_\_\_\_.

After you have completed the interview, list two things that you could do better at your next interview:

1. \_\_\_\_\_.

2. \_\_\_\_\_.

## ***THANK YOU LETTER***

Unless the employer asks you to contact them, the only contact you should make to the employer after the interview is to send a **Thank You Letter**.

Quite often a Thank You Letter can make the difference between being asked for a second interview or not. Sent within 24 hours after the interview, a Thank You Letter states that you are interested in the position and that you appreciate the employer's valuable time. It also allows you one more occasion to present your talents to the employer and reiterate how they relate to the job you are applying for. You can send your Thank You Letter via email or as a formal letter via fax. Do not send a Thank you greeting card to the employer, as this is inappropriate.

If you refer to the Thank You Letter example below, you will notice that the first sentences of the letter thank the interviewer for their time and state that you now have a better understanding of the position. The latter part of the letter is where you briefly can “sell” your experience as it relates to the position you applied for. Another note here: do not make the letter long. Employers are busy and will not have the time to read over a three-page Thank You Letter. Keep it short.

## ***SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER***

7 Long Street  
Big City, Province, Postal Code  
Telephone: 123-555-1234

April 12, 2014

Mr. John Doe, Jr.  
The Big Construction Company, Inc.  
28 Counting Street  
City, Province, Postal Code

Dear Mr. Doe, Jr.,

Thank you for taking the time to discuss the Carpenter position at The Big Construction Company, Inc., with me. After speaking with you and learning more about the company's operations, I am convinced that my background and skills coincide well with your requirements.

In addition to my qualifications and experience, I would bring an excellent work ethic and good judgment to this position. With the countless demands on your time, I am sure that you require people who can be trusted to carry out their responsibilities with minimal supervision. Moreover, I am confident that I could make a solid contribution to Big Construction Company.

I look forward to hearing from you concerning your hiring decision. Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

# WORKSHEET

## CREATE YOUR OWN THANK YOU LETTER

Here is an example of a Thank You Letter that you can use to create your own letter.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Your street address)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Your town, province)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Postal code)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Today's date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Human resources Manager's/INTERVIEWER'S Name)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Human resources Manager/INTERVIEWER'S JOB title)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Employer company name)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Employer street address)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Employer City, province and Postal Code)

\_\_\_\_\_ : (Your greeting)

Thank you for taking the time to discuss the \_\_\_\_\_(job title) position at \_\_\_\_\_(Name of company/organization), with me. After speaking with you and learning more about the company's operations, I am convinced that my background and skills coincide well with your requirements.

In addition to my qualifications and experience, I will bring an excellent work ethic and good judgment to this position. With the countless demands on your time, I am sure that you require people who can be trusted to carry out their responsibilities with minimal supervision. Moreover, I am confident that I could make a solid contribution to \_\_\_\_\_(Name of company/organization).

I look forward to hearing from you concerning your hiring decision. Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Your name)

## ***MORE ON THE THANK YOU LETTERS AND INTERVIEWS***

After you have sent the Thank You Letter, record of the details of the interview and that you sent a Thank You Letter in your Job Search Journal. After this, you must wait for the employer to contact you. It may take as long as 4 to 6 weeks for the employer to contact you again. In the meantime, continue to send out your cover letter and Construction resume to other employers in case this interview does not result in a job.

If you have more than one interview with the employer, you can send a Thank You Letter after each interview. However, you should modify the wording of the Thank You Letter each time so that the letter does not appear to be a “form letter.”

With each interview, you should make notes immediately after, noting points of the interview that you could improve upon, questions that you did not have answers for, etc. Chances are you will have more than one interview and you can look at each interview as an opportunity to learn something that can be useful for you at your next interview. A successful job interview is like any skill - it can be perfected with practice, either on your own or in an active interview. After the interview, it is important to leave a good impression with the employer by sending a Thank You Letter.

Remember, you will learn something from every interview you attend. In the following pages, you can look forward to information on preparation for your new job, making realistic evaluations of your job interviews, and how we can get you aimed in the right direction with your whole job search.

## CHAPTER 11

### JOB INTERVIEW: THE SEQUEL(S)

**AFTER** the interview, you sent a Thank You Letter to the employer. What comes next? Are there more interviews?

#### ***YES, THERE ARE MORE INTERVIEWS***

If the employer is interested in you, you will most likely be asked for a second interview. Employers may conduct as many as four interviews before they make a hiring decision. Each company's procedure varies. Generally, the hiring process is as follows:

1. **THE FIRST INTERVIEW:** you will meet with the Human Resources Manager. The Human Resources Manager will evaluate you to see if you have the required qualifications and are a good fit for their business.
2. **THE SECOND INTERVIEW:** you will probably meet with the Human Resources Manager and the Department Manager or Supervisor. The Department Manager/Supervisor wants to evaluate you to determine if you would be a suitable person to work in their department.
3. **THE THIRD INTERVIEW:** you will meet with the Department Manager and *their* supervisor. This meeting's purpose is to assess your suitability within the department and within the company. At this time, you may expect to discuss your salary expectations, although this topic could be talked about at any stage of the interviews. They also want to ensure that you are seriously interested in the position and keen to contribute to the success of the company.

During the **first interview** process, the Human Resources Manager will probably interview a large number of candidates, based upon an initial read-through of the

applicants' Construction resumes. In the **second round of interviews**, the Human Resources Manager will have eliminated candidates who are not suitable for the position or whose personality or skills were not what the company was looking for. By the **third set of interviews**, they will have eliminated even more people, selecting only the best of the group to proceed. This small selection of people – those who are judged the best from the initial interview process – will lead the employer to the **fourth round of interviews**. The handful of prospective candidates who have made it through this process are notified - and this is called being “**short listed**” – which starts the process almost anew, as candidates will be competing against as many as five other people for the same job.

During any of the stages in your interview process, you may be interviewed by a panel, or group of people. If you are interviewed by a group of people, it is a good idea to send a thank you letter to **each** of the individuals who interviewed you.

After each interview you must wait until you are contacted for another interview. In the meantime, continue with your job search to keep your options open.

# WORKSHEET

## AFTER THE FIRST INTERVIEW

You've completed your first interview with the employer. There may be more than one interview with the employer, so make sure you have filled out the following checklist so that you are fully prepared for the next series of interviews:

1. Identify two things that you could improve upon for your next interview.  
1) \_\_\_\_\_.  
2) \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Are your reference letters in order and contact information on the reference letters up to date? YES  NO
3. What is the date and time for the second interview? \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Have you practiced your interview questions again? YES  NO
5. Who will be interviewing you for the second interview? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## ***PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING***

Sometimes before an employer hires you, you will be asked to undergo some type of **pre-employment screening**. The purpose of the pre-employment screening is to ensure that you will be capable of performing your job and that you have a reliable and stable personality and employment history. The pre-employment screening is most common with positions where you may be responsible for confidential materials, large sums of money, the welfare and care for other people, or security issues. Similar to a reference check, the employer wants to be convinced that the lifestyle you lead is appropriate for the type of work that you will be involved in.

Some common examples of pre-employment screening are: a criminal record check, drug test, credit check, personal background check, education verification and even a driver's license check. The employer will pay for and conduct all of the pre-employment tests or they may have another company conduct the tests on their behalf. You should **never** be charged for these tests. It is the **employer's** responsibility and cost.

By law, companies are required to inform you that they are conducting the screening. You may be told in the interview that they will be doing this, or you will be asked to sign an agreement, or may have agreed to background checks as part of your initial application. You should know that if you feel uncomfortable about the extent of the employer's pre-screening, you always have the right to refuse any or all investigations into your personal background. However, a refusal to provide information may put your application at risk of being rejected. In Saskatchewan at this time when privacy is a very important issue, who views your personal information should be of some concern to you. If you do agree to have the pre-employment testing done, the employer may let you know the results of the testing and what the next step in the hiring process is. The employer is, by law, required to keep these test results confidential between you and the company.

# WORKSHEET

## PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING

As we mentioned, the employer may require some form of pre-employment screening before providing you with a job offer. Keep your pre-employment testing tasks organized with this worksheet. Remember to write the details of your pre-employment screening in your Job Search Journal. You should note in your journal if you passed or failed the test(s) and if there will be any additional pre-employment screening required.

1. Job applied for \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Company name \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Contact person at the company \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Type of pre-employment screening required \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Documents required for pre-employment screening \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The date of the pre-employment screening \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Result of the pre-employment test \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Passed or failed the pre-employment screening test \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Next step after the pre-employment screening \_\_\_\_\_.
10. \_\_\_\_\_.
11. What could I do better for the next pre-employment screening test? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## ***REASSESSMENT TIME - YOU DID NOT GET THE JOB OFFER***

You have gone through all of the steps in your job search process - even through to the pre-employment screening. The employer tested you and you passed but in spite of that, you did not get the job.

Why not?

This is a good opportunity for you to learn how you can improve your job search and interview skills for the next employer. **Don't be surprised if it takes several job interviews before you land a job.**

Review each step of your job search to find which aspects of the job search you can improve upon. Here are the steps that you should review:

- Cover letter – is it clear, concise, and compelling?
- Construction resume – is it easy to read and factual?
- Do you have the required licensing or certifications for your occupation?
- Research the region where your skills are in demand – is it a 'hot' job market or is it a competitive job market?
- Network with employers and others in your industry – keep looking, keep networking.
- Your Job Search Action Plan – are there any gaps?
- Keeping records in the Job Search Journal – did you follow through?
- Job Search Methods – do you need to review these?
- The Job Interview – could you have been more prepared?
- References – are they saying what you need them to say?
- Pre-Screening employment tests – what did they say about you?

If you cannot find areas in these tasks that could be improved upon, ask another person to review each step of your job search to help you see if there is anything

that needs improvement. Now ask yourself what you could do to improve this area of your job search. For example, if the portion of your job search that needs improvement is that you were not getting any job interviews after sending out many cover letters and Construction resumes, review your cover letter and Construction resume to make sure that they are perfect. The second step in your evaluation is to answer these questions:

- **Which methods you are using for the job search?**
- **Are you using as many different methods for the job search as possible?**
- **Have you spoken to others in your field (networking)?**
- **Have you completed all of the worksheets in each of the chapters?**

These are only some examples of the areas that you could review to improve your job search.

The best resource to improve your job search is to ask employers who received your cover letter and Construction resume to tell you why you didn't get an interview. If you had an interview but didn't get the job, then you can ask the employer why you didn't get the job. Employers can be an excellent source of information about what you need to do to get the job. After you have spoken with the employer, then you can change what you need to so that the next time you apply for a job, you will be equipped with even better job search skills - and get better results.

# WORKSHEET

## INTERVIEW IMPROVEMENT FEEDBACK

Here is an example of an email you could send an employer who interviewed you but did not give you the job. You can use this email to find out how you can improve your job search. You can re-type this with your own information included:

To: \_\_\_\_\_ ( Human resources manager)

From: \_\_\_\_\_ (your Email)

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_ (List the position you are applying for)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_, (Human Resources Manager)

Thank you again for meeting with me on \_\_\_\_\_ (insert the day's date). I enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about your company. As part of my interview process, I invite you to provide me with feedback on the factors involved with the hiring process.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could provide me with some information on the qualifications and/or other credentials that I did not have that your company was seeking for the position of \_\_\_\_\_ (Job applied for). With this information, I will know where to improve my qualifications and credentials for my future job search.

Thank you for your valuable time, and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. Please feel free to contact me at Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ (Your Telephone) or via email: \_\_\_\_\_ (Your Email).

Best Regards,  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Your Name)

Sometimes the Human Resources Manager will reply with some helpful feedback and suggestions you can use to improve your job search. Send your request only once to the Human Resources Manager. Remember, Human Resources Managers are very busy, and you may not always receive a reply.

### ***TRY AND TRY AGAIN***

Above all, remember that it will probably take several interviews before you land the job. Very often it is a simply matter of being the right person in the right place at the right time. Do not take a negative response personally. Finding the employer who is the right fit for your credentials and work experience isn't always an easy task, but it will happen.

## CHAPTER 12

# YOU GOT THE JOB!

### ***AN OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT***

After the employer has reviewed your cover letter and Construction resume, interviewed you probably more than once, reviewed your personal and professional references and possibly conducted some pre-employment screening, the employer has decided that you are the best candidate for the position and has offered you the job. The employer may have contacted you by telephone or emailed you or may have sent you a formal job offer by mail.

The employer likes you and your talents – you’re the one they want for the job. Now it is time for you to consider if this is truly the company you would like to work for, in a location where you would like to work, and for the salary that you think is suitable for the position and your set of skills.

At the time you are offered the job, you can let the employer know that you are interested in the job and need a day or two to review the job offer. This is your right. You will most likely want to evaluate the job offer and perhaps ask your family for their opinion or simply think about the job offer for a day or two. When reviewing the job offer, you will want to consider:

1. Is the salary appropriate for you?
2. Is the location of the company a good location for you?
3. Does the job require a lot of long hours?

If the job offer is suitable for you, then you may decide to send a letter accepting the job offer right away. Otherwise, it’s preferable to await the employer’s formal

**Job Offer Letter.** Most job offer letters are quite straightforward and should outline what the duties of the job are, when the job starts and what the salary and benefits are. More recent additions to the standard job offer letter may also include such clauses such as a **non-competition agreement** which will require that you agree not to work for the employer's competitors within a certain time frame, or a **confidentiality agreement** where you will be asked to not disclose to anyone the company's private matters or trade secrets. There could be other agreements or contracts that the employer requests you to sign. These agreements are always crafted to benefit the **company's** interests, so be sure you read and understand any contract you sign. Always request a mutually signed copy for your own personal files.

# WORKSHEET

## JOB OFFER CONSIDERATION

There is a lot to take into consideration before accepting a job offer:

1. Is the job a job that you would find rewarding and you could excel at?  
**YES  NO  - If NOT – reconsider your acceptance**
  
2. Is the job location one that is suitable for you?  
**YES  NO  - If NOT – reconsider your acceptance**
  
3. Is the salary that is offered appropriate for your work experience, skills and education?  
**YES  NO  - If NOT – reconsider your acceptance**
  
4. What are the additional benefits the company would provide (for example, would they give you a moving allowance, would there be any medical benefits)?

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## ***I'LL TAKE IT: A TYPICAL JOB ACCEPTANCE LETTER***

Here is an example of a letter written to accept an offer of employment:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Your street address)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Your town, province)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (postal code)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Today's date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Human Resources Manager's Name)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Human Resources Manager job title)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Employer company name)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Employer street address)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Employer City, province and Postal Code)

\_\_\_\_\_: (Your greeting)

I am pleased to accept the position of \_\_\_\_\_(Job Title) working with \_\_\_\_\_(Name of supervisor) in \_\_\_\_\_(Name of company/organization). I am also pleased with the conditions of employment including the yearly salary of \$\_\_\_\_\_(salary you will be paid) as outlined in your letter dated \_\_\_\_\_.

I will report to work at \_\_\_\_\_(Time of day you start work) on \_\_\_\_\_(date you start work) at your office and will bring the required documents. I look forward to joining \_\_\_\_\_(Name of company/organization).

Again, thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to bringing my skills and talents to \_\_\_\_\_ (name of company).

Sincerely,  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Your name)

## ***DECLINING THE OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT***

Yes, sometimes it happens. After all the interviews and a solid job offer, you may decide that the job is just not right for you. If this happens, let the employer know as soon as you have made the decision. Here is a sample of a letter written to decline the job offer. Always highlight something positive while declining the offer of employment. It is important for your career to leave a professional and positive impression on people in your industry at all times. Here's an example of what you can say:

_____	(Your street address)
_____	(Your town, province)
_____	(postal code)
_____	(Today's date)
_____	(Human Resources Manager's Name)
_____	(Human Resources Manager job title)
_____	(Employer company name)
_____	(Employer street address)
_____	(Employer City, province and Postal Code)
_____:	(Your greeting)
Thank you for the job offer of _____(Job Title) with _____(Name of company/organization). Unfortunately, I must decline your generous offer.	
I had not anticipated that the employment decision would be so difficult. As I indicated during our last conversation, I had several positions under consideration. After much deliberation, I have decided to accept another position.	
I wish you and _____(Name of company/organization) much success and I hope we have the chance to meet again. Thank you for your valuable time and for your consideration.	
Sincerely,	
_____	(your name)

# WORKSHEET

## DECLINING THE OFFER

If you decide to decline the job offer, remember to:

1. Write the company a polite letter explaining that you have decided to decline the job offer.
2. Make a list of the reasons why you chose to decline the job offer. You will know for next time what you are looking for in a job offer and re-focus your job search.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. \_\_\_\_\_.
- d. \_\_\_\_\_.
- e. \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Make record in your job search journal that you declined the job offer.

4. How will you continue with your job search?

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If you decide to decline the job offer, then be confident that you have made the best decision. Continue with your job search until you find a job that is perfect for

you. It is obvious that you have skills that **are** marketable and that employers **want**.

## ***GETTING A SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER***

A Social Insurance Number is a series of 9 numbers that the Saskatchewan government assigns to every person who is working in Canada. They use this number, rather than your name, to keep track of the time you are working and that you are paying sufficient taxes. You should guard this number as you would any other valuable piece of identification and be cautious when giving the number to anyone – this is primarily how the government identifies you, and you do not want someone else using your identity. You must be legally eligible to work in Saskatchewan to apply for a Social Insurance Number.

For more information on how to apply for your Social Insurance Number, visit the Service Canada Website:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/ei/ei-list/ei-employers-sin.html>

## CHAPTER 13

### **MOVING TOWARD THAT BIG PROMOTION**

Somewhere between six months to a year after starting your job, you may begin to think about exploring other jobs within the company. You may want to get ahead by considering a job promotion and a higher salary.

Take the time to assess the current state of your company and the industry at large. Is the company expanding and looking to grow, or is the company starting to reduce the size of its workforce? The first step in seeking a job promotion is to carefully analyze the current circumstances of the company.

Here are some tips so your boss will notice you for your good work:

- Arrive at work at least five minutes early and leave ten minutes late. This shows your dedication to the job.
- Volunteer for an extra project. Every construction company loves a hard worker.
- Become involved with social activities at work. Any company loves a team player.
- Research industry newspaper articles for trends that are affecting your industry and leave an article for your boss with a note that says, “I thought that you might find this interesting.” This will show your interest in the company’s progress.
- If you have a suggestion for a way to improve your work or the company, let your boss know your suggestion and add that you hope that he/she will find it helpful.

The first thing you will need to do is to find out what this promotion requires technically. Do you have the schooling and/or training for this type of position? If

not, is it possible to obtain this training on your own time? Are you willing to risk losing your present position?

The second item is to speak with your supervisor about your ambitions. Supervisors and companies generally like ambitious, motivated staff. Bring a list of questions about the goals and responsibilities of the position and ask what kind of training would be required for the position. You can then win on two accounts: you will have shown your supervisors that you are keen to advance yourself, and also you will now have a blueprint to make a plan of action for your promotion. It is important to know *when* to have this discussion about your ambitions as much as *why* you are having the discussion. If you have only been in the position a short time, your anxiousness to find another job may prompt the employer to think that you do not like the job you are in, or that you are thinking of quitting. The employer might “read between the lines” of your request, so be cautious and think carefully before you apply for a promotion. Timing and tact are everything.

If you are not already an apprentice, discuss becoming an apprentice with your employer. If you are currently working as a registered apprentice, be sure to attend technical training when you are scheduled and work hard to complete each level successfully.

The third item is internal networking. You want to be considered a likeable person with all levels of employees. Quite often supervisors will ask employees what they think of an employee before recommending a promotion for them. Try to participate in activities like company barbeques or other events. Do socialize only with supervisors. You should socialize with all of the staff and be relaxed and friendly.

The fourth item is that you want to have a solid history with the company as a proven performer and team player. This will definitely be something that the

employer considers. A history of past success usually means future success as well.

## WORKSHEET

### HOW TO LAND A PROMOTION

To help you meet your goal of a promotion within your company, here is a worksheet to help you keep track of your progress.

- Arrive a little early for work and leave a little late each day.
- Volunteer for an extra project.
- Attend social activities at work (parties, lunches, etc.)
- Leave industry-related articles for your boss to read.
- Let your boss know that you are interested in growth within the company.
- Come to work each day with a smile on your face.
- Know the employment trends of your company.
- Understand your skill set – both the strengths and weaknesses you have.
- Identify the direction of your employment ambitions within the company.
- Research to find out if there are any professional development courses you need to take outside of work to enhance your career path.
- Attend apprenticeship technical training when scheduled, and work hard to complete each level successfully.

## CHAPTER 14

# SASKATCHEWAN JOB DIRECTORY

To provide you with an even greater advantage with your job search, we have compiled a directory of helpful websites.

### ***JOB WEBSITES***

Job Websites can be helpful to find additional information about job opportunities. These are only some of the major job websites in Saskatchewan:

- <http://www.saskjobs.ca/>
- <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>
- [Jobs in Saskatchewan](#)

## CHAPTER 15

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Accomplishments** - these are a person's personal and professional achievements as listed on a Construction resume .

**Apprentice** – An individual who is working in a designated trade, has signed a contract of apprenticeship with his or her employer, and is registered with the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission.

**Construction Resume** - a short statement of one's career and qualifications prepared by an applicant for an employment position.

**Annual Income** - the amount of financial gain received as a direct result of a job as paid over one year.

**Applicant** - a person who makes a formal request for employment.

**Association Newsletter** - a periodical or news sheet produced by a society or group that socializes and exchanges information related to their profession.

**Barrier** - something that slows the progress or achievement of a task.

**Behavioural Interview Questions** - job interview questions meant to elicit detailed responses that the employer can use to determine if the candidate possesses the desired characteristics.

**Benefit(s)** - services provided to employees under an annuity, pension plan, or insurance policy.

**Career Highlights** - are specific previous employment projects or accomplishments that can be listed in a person's Construction resume.

**Career or Job Fair** - an event that is a gathering of companies and organizations that are seeking to recruit new employees. Job applicants can attend a Career or Job fair and meet with employers.

**Career Progression** - a list of a person's work experience listed from the most recent to the least recent.

**Cold-Call** - when a person contacts an employer who **does not** have a job advertised.

**Commitment** - the trait of sincere and steadfast purpose.

**Company Letterhead** - a company's official stationery with a heading at the top that contains of company's name and address.

**Competition Number** - is a number and series of letters assigned to a job opening.

**Confidentiality Agreement** - an agreement between two parties to maintain confidential information received from the other party.

**Contact Information** - particulars on how to directly communicate with a person, organization or company. For example, address, telephone number, email address, facsimile number and/or website address.

**Cover Letter** - a letter that acts as an introduction to an applicant's Construction resume .

**Credentials** - official, recognized documentation; evidence showing that a person has educational qualifications or has a right to exercise a professional skill or trade.

**Criminal Record Check** - an inspection to ascertain if an applicant has a history of criminal activity.

**Electronic Construction resume** - a complete Construction resume in an electronic digital file.

**Email** - a system for sending and receiving messages electronically over a computer network, as between personal computers; a message or messages sent or received by such a system.

**Employment Barrier** - deficiencies that obstruct or impede progress in finding employment.

**Fax Machine** - A device that sends and receives printed pages or images over telephone lines by converting them to and from electronic signals.

**First Impression** - an initial consideration or judgment; a sometimes-irreversible character decision made within moments of meeting a person.

**Follow-Up Email** - an electronic message sent to an employer after sending a Construction resume or after a job interview.

**Font** - a print set of type of one size and face

**Format** - the organization and layout of words in a document.

**Gap (Gap of Time)** - an interruption of continuity; particularly in a person's employment history.

**Geographic Region** - a specific area of the country.

**Help Wanted** - term or advertisement used to solicit employment in a specific classified section of a newspaper that lists jobs that are available.

**Hidden Job Market** - is the job market that is comprised of jobs that are not advertised publicly.

**Hiring Trends** - the movement of particular employment variables or demand in employment sectors through a period of time.

**Human Resources Manager** - a company executive overseeing the hiring of staff and administration of employment contracts and benefits.

**Industry Newsletter** - a published or emailed periodical detailing the particular trends and topics of interest to a specific industry.

**Industry Organization** - a coalition of companies or industries organized for a particular purpose and to represent its particular interests.

**Industry Trade Show** - An event at which goods and services in a specific industry are exhibited and demonstrated.

**Informational Interview Email** - an informal interview that is conducted electronically via email. This interview session is used to gather useful information for a job search. See also Informational Interview.

**Informational Interview** - an informal interview that can be emailed, written, telephoned or communicated in person. This interview session can be used to gather useful information for a job search. See also Informational Interview Email.

**In-Person Interview** - a formal meeting in person, especially one arranged for the assessment of the qualifications of an applicant.

**Internet Access** - the ability to use the Internet to view job opportunities, as well as sending and receiving documents, such as a Construction resume.

**Internet Café** - a restaurant that provides the use the proprietor's computers to access the Internet, usually for a fee.

**Internet Job Website** - an online website that features employment listings of available jobs in the city, province and country.

**Job Duty** - the specific responsibilities for an occupation.

**Job Fair** - a limited-time trade show featuring a collection of employers who are seeking to hire new employees.

**Job Offer** - a formal statement offering a successful employment applicant a job; see also Job Offer Letter, Offer of Employment

**Job Offer Letter** - a formal, official documented offering the successful employment applicant a job; see also Job Offer, Offer of Employment

**Job Requirements** - the duties, tasks or responsibilities in a particular employment situation.

**Job Search** - a thorough search undertaken by an applicant for employment that suits their education, training and interests.

**Job Search Action Plan** - an organized plan of a person's job search. A list of tasks that need to be done as part of a person's job search.

**Job Search Journal** - a recorded document detailing the people and companies an applicant has networked with, talked to, sent Construction resumes to and had job interviews with.

**Job Search Methods** - the various tools and systems a job seeker uses to find employment, such as networking, cold-calling, Internet searches, help wanted advertisements, etc.

**Job Search Toolbox** - all of the devices used as job search equipment.

**Job Seeker** - a potential employee looking for gainful employment.

**Job Title** - the formal name for an employee's official work responsibilities for a company.

**Job Vacancy** - an employment position that has yet to be filled by a qualified applicant.

**Job Website** - an Internet website whose sole purpose is to advertise employment available, searchable by occupation and location.

**Journey person** – An individual who has worked in the trade, passed all examinations, and has been issued a Journey person Certificate of Qualification from the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission or another Canadian apprenticeship authority.

**License** - permission granted by an authority to work in a business or occupation.

**Market Yourself** - a term that means to aggressively promote a skill set to stand out from other job seekers seeking similar employment.

Microsoft Word - a popular word processing program for creating Construction resumes, cover letters and reports, etc.

**Monthly Income** - The amount of money or its equivalent received during a calendar month received in exchange for labor or services, from the sale of goods or property, or as profit from financial investments.

**Networking** - the exchange of information or services among individuals with a common interest.

**Newspaper Job Listings** - the “help wanted” section of a published newspaper that lists jobs that are available, usually found in the Classified section of the newspaper.

**Non-Competition Agreement** - a condition of an employment contract that states that for a specific time period the employee cannot compete with the employer if the employee is terminated.

**Offer Of Employment** - a formal, signed statement offering a successful employment applicant a job; see also Job Offer, Job Offer Letter.

**Online** - Connected to a computer or computer network or accessible via a computer or computer network.

**Personal Background Check** - an evaluation of references by a second or third party.

**Personal Reference** - a validation of your character and work ethic written by friends or community leaders.

**Personal Strengths** - the skills and aptitudes that you excel at.

**Personal Traits** - distinguishing characteristics and attitudes.

**Personality Profile** - a brief description of the character traits of an individual.

**Placement Company** - a business that finds suitable accommodation or employment for applicants. See also Staffing Firms, Personnel Agency, Recruitment Firm or Employment Agency.

**Portfolio** – a collection of materials, especially those that are representative of a person's work.

**Posting A Construction resume** - placing a Construction resume on the Internet for employers to view.

**Post-Secondary** - university, college or technical school.

**Power Words** - descriptive words that provide an employer with an impressive view of a person's professional skills and credentials.

**Practicum** - a school or college course, especially one in a specialized field of study, which is designed to give the student supervised practical application of previously-studied theory.

**Pre-Employment Screening/Testing** - a technical evaluation of appropriateness for an employment position, weighing education, skills and conceptual understanding.

**Professional Association** - an organization of persons having common professional interests.

**Professional Network** - a group of colleagues who associate with each other to exchange information.

**Professional Reference** - letter(s) of recommendation from former employers attesting to an applicant's strong work ethic and aptitude.

**Promotion** – an advancement within a company, usually with an increase in salary.

**Reference** - is a document or verbal statement attesting to a person's good work history or good character.

**Reference List** - a document that lists a person's personal and professional references and their contact information.

**Construction Resume** - a short statement of one's career experience and qualifications prepared by an applicant for a construction employment position.

**Rural Area** - an area outside of densely-populated cities and towns.

**Salary/Salaries** - fixed compensation for services, paid to an employee on a regular basis.

**Scan/Scanned** - To move an electronic computer scanner's finely focused beam of light or electrons in a systematic pattern over a paper document in order to faithfully reproduce the document and subsequently transmit the image electronically.

**Search Engine/Internet Search Engine** - a website whose primary function is to provide a place for seeking, gathering and reporting information available on the Internet or a portion of the Internet.

**Senior Management** - the upper management level that oversees various divisions or managers of a business or company.

**Short-Listed** - a list of preferred candidates who have been selected for final consideration for filling an employment position.

**Signoff** - the act of announcing the end of a document, as a letter using a farewell message such as Best Regards, Yours Truly, or Sincerely; also written sign-off; usually followed by a signature.

**Skills/Skill Set** - a collection of proficiencies or skills that are acquired or developed through training or experience.

**Special Expertise** - a person's exceptional skills as listed on a Construction resume.

**Specialized Field** - concentration in a particular activity in a specific trade or industry.

**Stepping Stone** - a term regarding the incremental course of advancement taken to build a career.

**Target Market** - addressing the specific needs and preferences of a group.

**Targeted Job Search** - conducting a job search in a location where a person's professional skills are in demand.

**Team Building** - helping workers to function effectively together to achieve common goals.

**Team Player** – an employee who interacts well with co-workers for the benefit of the company or business.

**Technical Skills** - the understanding of, and proficiency in the performance of, specific tasks.

**Telephone Interview** - a meeting conducted on the telephone, especially arranged for the assessment of the qualifications of a job applicant.

**Thank You Letter** - a card or letter that expresses a person's gratitude.

**Tight Job Market** - a job market that does not have many employment opportunities.

**Time Management** - managing your time effectively in order to meet a deadline.

**Unadvertised Jobs** - jobs that are available but are not advertised in any form of media or publication.

**Underqualified** - not adequately competent through education or employment experience to conduct a task.

**Web cast Interview** - a meeting conducted on the Internet, especially arranged for the assessment of the qualifications of a job applicant.

**WOW Principle** - marketing or selling professional skills to an employer in an impressive manner.