

## Career Education



# Career Education

*BETH BOGGS, MOUNTAIN EMPIRE  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE*



Career Education by Lumen Learning is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), except where otherwise noted.

# Contents

## Part I. Career Exploration

1. Fields of Interest 3

## Part II. Job Search

2. Current Job Openings 7

## Part III. References

3. References 11

## Part IV. Applications

4. Information Collection Sheet 15
5. Key Action Verbs 23

## Part V. Resume

6. What to Include in a Resume 29
7. Key Action Verbs 31

## Part VI. Cover Letter

8. Cover Letters 37

Part VII. Thank You Letter

9. <u>Thank You Letters</u>	41
-----------------------------	----

Part VIII. Interview Skills

10. <u>Interview Activity I</u>	45
11. <u>Interview Activity II</u>	48
12. <u>Interview Activity III</u>	52

PART I  
CAREER EXPLORATION





# I.

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>  
[www.vawizard.org](http://www.vawizard.org)

Students who do not know what careers they would like to pursue will be asked to review supplementary career resources such as the Occupational Handbook or the Virginia Wizard or the local employment office or any authoritative resources which could give them information about career pathways. Students will choose at least two occupations that they would be interested in pursuing. For each of the two occupations of interest, all students will review the level of education required, salary information, hiring outlook, and other information regarding the career fields and write a paper including this information comparing and contrasting the two career fields of interest.



PART II  
JOB SEARCH



## 2. Current Job Openings

Finding a position can be difficult. Students will identify resources for finding job openings in the career area they are interested in. Students will find a current job opening from a reliable source and submit the position announcement for review including a screen shot of the position with all details of the position, the website the position was found, the date the position will close, and a brief description of why the student selected this position.



PART III  
REFERENCES





# 3. References

## **Whom to use as a Reference**

Choose nonrelatives who know your work habits, accomplishments, community activities, academic abilities, or character. Solicit references from people you trust, those who will maintain confidentiality, and those who will give an honest, good reference about you. This group could include the following:

- Former supervisors
- Former work peers
- Business associates
- Former or current associates from community activities
- Former or current teachers and instructors
- Others who know your abilities

These reference types can attest to a range of areas about you including your work habits, your ability to get along with others, your academic abilities, and your personality.

Friends and family members should not be asked to be references. Employers view them as being biased, of course, so the employer may not value what they have to say about you.

## **Top Five Rules of References**

1. Ask permission from each person you want as a reference.
2. Be sure the person will give a positive reference about you.
3. Thank your references for their help and send them a thank you note after they grant you permission.
4. Keep your references informed about your job search progress.
5. Stay in touch with references during the times you are not looking for employment. If you connect with your references only when you are in a job search, this sends a negative message that you are simply using them.



PART IV  
APPLICATIONS



# 4. Information Collection Sheet

(The information provided on this worksheet should be thorough and complete. Save it as a lasting resource; update it as the years pass. Use the information as a “Menu” for which to create a unique resume for each position you seek.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date updated: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Personal Information

Address:

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Use a “professional email” a combination of your name, initials, numbers, etc.)

## 2. Education

(Education should be listed in reverse chronological order. You want the potential employer to see your most recent information first.)

College \_\_\_\_\_ attended: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Location:

-----

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree:

-----

-----

Date	obtained	(anticipated)
------	----------	---------------

-----

College \_\_\_\_\_ attended:

-----

-----

Location:

-----

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree:

-----

-----

Date	obtained	(anticipated)
------	----------	---------------

-----

Other schools attended or relevant education information:

-----

-----

-----

-----

-----

-----

-----

-----

-----

-----

### 3. Experience

(Consider all experience – paid, unpaid, volunteer, etc.)

Company/Organization

Name:

-----

Position

Title:

-----

Address:

-----

Dates employed (Months and years only) From:

To: -----

Name of Supervisor: -----

Starting Pay: -----

Duties and responsibilities (Use action verbs to describe the duties performed, be sure to give yourself credit for the responsibilities you held in a position.)

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

Company/Organization

Name:

-----

Position

Title:

-----

Address:

-----

-----  
-----  
Dates employed (Months and years only) From:  
----- To: -----

Name of Supervisor: -----  
Starting Pay: -----

Duties and responsibilities (Use action verbs to describe the duties performed, be sure to give yourself credit for the responsibilities you held at position.)  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

Company/Organization Name:

-----  
-----

Position Title:

-----  
-----

Address:  
-----  
-----

-----  
Dates employed (Months and years only) From:  
----- To: -----

Name of Supervisor: -----  
Starting Pay: -----

Duties and responsibilities (Use action verbs to describe the duties performed, be sure to give



yourself credit for the responsibilities you held at position.)

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

#### 4. Certifications & Licenses

List your professional certifications/licenses that would benefit you in the position.

(i.e. applying at a restaurant include your food handlers card, applying at a hospital include your CPR Certification. Be sure to include certification/license numbers and expiration dates if applicable.)

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

#### 5. Activities

Include any memberships in professional associations, clubs or community groups, volunteer or religious organizations. Include name of association, offices held, and the dates. Add any other significant activities attributed to your leadership:

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

### 6. Employment References

References are not required as part of a resume, especially if they are included on the application. Avoid using family and friends. Professional references may include: advisor, instructor, peer, supervisor, co-worker, past supervisor, etc. You should ask permission before using anyone as reference!

Name:

-----

Phone: (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City:

----- State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Address:

-----

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ applicant:

-----

-----

Position

Held/Company:

-----  
-----

Name:

-----

Phone: (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City:

----- State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Address:

-----  
-----

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ applicant:

-----  
-----

Position

Held/Company:

-----  
-----

Name:

-----

Phone: (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City:

----- State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Address:

-----  
-----

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ applicant:

-----  
-----

Position

Held/Company:

-----  
-----

Name:

-----  
Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City:  
\_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Address:  
-----

-----  
Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ applicant:  
-----  
-----  
Position \_\_\_\_\_ Held/Company:  
-----  
-----

Name:  
-----  
Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City:  
\_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Address:  
-----  
-----  
Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ applicant:  
-----  
-----  
Position \_\_\_\_\_ Held/Company:  
-----  
-----

# 5. Key Action Verbs

---

Achieved	Acted	Activated	Adapted
Administered	Advised	Aided	Allocated
Analyzed	Applied	Appraised	Approved
Arranged	Assembled	Assessed	Assigned
Authored	Audited	Balanced	Billed
Brought	Budgeted	Calculated	Carried out
Chaired	Clarified	Classified	Coached
Collected	Communicated	Compiled	Completed
Computed	Conceived	Conceptualized	Conducted
Contracted	Consolidated	Controlled	Convinced
Corresponded	Counseled	Created	Critiqued
Dealt	Decided	Defined	Delegated
Demonstrated	Described	Designed	Determined
Diagnosed	Directed	Dispatched	Devised
Earned	Edited	Educated	Eliminated
Enabled	Encouraged	Enforced	Enhanced
Enlisted	Established	Estimated	Evaluated
Executed	Explained	Expanded	Expedited
Fabricated	Facilitated	Familiarized	Fashioned
Forecasted	Formed	Formulated	Fostered
Gathered	Generated	Guided	Handled
Identified	Illustrated	Implemented	Improved
Increased	Influenced	Informed	Initiated
Inspected	Inspired	Instructed	Interpreted
Introduced	Invented	Investigated	Launched
Led	Listed	Listened	Maintained
Marketed	Mastered	Mediated	Moderated
Monitored	Motivated	Negotiated	Observed
Organized	Outlined	Overhauled	Oversaw
Performed	Persuaded	Pioneered	Planned

Presented	Prioritized	Produced	Projected
Proposed	Processed	Programmed	Promoted
Published	Publicized	Purchased	Received
Reconciled	Recorded	Recruited	Reduced
Referred	Rehabilitated	Rejected	Renegotiated
Represented	Reorganized	Reported	Researched
Restored	Retrieved	Reunited	Reviewed
Revitalized	Scheduled	Screened	Selected
Set Goals	Set up	Sold	Solved
Specified	Spoke	Stimulated	Streamlined
Structured	Summarized	Supervised	Supported
Surveyed	Tabulated	Targeted	Taught
Tested	Trained	Tripled	Transformed
Upgraded	Updated	United	Utilized
Verified	Volunteered	Wrote	

---





PART V  
RESUME



# 6. What to Include in a Resume

- Contact Information
  - If using your cell phone number as the primary way to contact you, be sure you have a voicemail set up and you will not change your number prior to the call for an interview.
  - Use a “professional email.” A form of your name or initials and numbers.
- Objective
  - If you wish to include an objective on your resume, be specific. The objective should clearly note the position you are applying for with the company.
- Education
  - Be sure to list the institution you have received your education from as well as the dates of attendance. Your degree or certificate should be accurately and completely noted. (Associate of Arts & Sciences Degree in General Studies; Associate of Applied Sciences Degree in Paralegal Studies; Certificate in Medical Office Coding and Procedures; Career Studies Certificate in Phlebotomy)
- Experience
  - Include the company, your title and dates of employment. Use action verbs to describe the duties you completed.
- Additional Sections May Include
  - Professional Certifications/Licenses
  - Skills or Abilities
  - Volunteer Experience or Community Service
  - References

## Proofreading Your Resume

- Your resume should be one page. If you extend to a second page it should include your name and a page number.
- Check for consistency.
  - Headings should be the same size, color and format.
  - Institutions and Employers should appear consistently within the headings.
  - Depending upon your resume layout, you may need to ensure justification of text or dates for consistency.
- Spell check.
- Double check to ensure phone numbers are correct.
- Remove repetitive statements.
- Ensure complete sentences.

## 7. Key Action Verbs

---

Achieved	Acted	Activated	Adapted
Administered	Advised	Aided	Allocated
Analyzed	Applied	Appraised	Approved
Arranged	Assembled	Assessed	Assigned
Authored	Audited	Balanced	Billed
Brought	Budgeted	Calculated	Carried out
Chaired	Clarified	Classified	Coached
Collected	Communicated	Compiled	Completed
Computed	Conceived	Conceptualized	Conducted
Contracted	Consolidated	Controlled	Convinced
Corresponded	Counseled	Created	Critiqued
Dealt	Decided	Defined	Delegated
Demonstrated	Described	Designed	Determined
Diagnosed	Directed	Dispatched	Devised
Earned	Edited	Educated	Eliminated
Enabled	Encouraged	Enforced	Enhanced
Enlisted	Established	Estimated	Evaluated
Executed	Explained	Expanded	Expedited
Fabricated	Facilitated	Familiarized	Fashioned
Forecasted	Formed	Formulated	Fostered
Gathered	Generated	Guided	Handled
Identified	Illustrated	Implemented	Improved
Increased	Influenced	Informed	Initiated
Inspected	Inspired	Instructed	Interpreted
Introduced	Invented	Investigated	Launched
Led	Listed	Listened	Maintained
Marketed	Mastered	Mediated	Moderated
Monitored	Motivated	Negotiated	Observed
Organized	Outlined	Overhauled	Oversaw
Performed	Persuaded	Pioneered	Planned

Presented	Prioritized	Produced	Projected
Proposed	Processed	Programmed	Promoted
Published	Publicized	Purchased	Received
Reconciled	Recorded	Recruited	Reduced
Referred	Rehabilitated	Rejected	Renegotiated
Represented	Reorganized	Reported	Researched
Restored	Retrieved	Reunited	Reviewed
Revitalized	Scheduled	Screened	Selected
Set Goals	Set up	Sold	Solved
Specified	Spoke	Stimulated	Streamlined
Structured	Summarized	Supervised	Supported
Surveyed	Tabulated	Targeted	Taught
Tested	Trained	Tripled	Transformed
Upgraded	Updated	United	Utilized
Verified	Volunteered	Wrote	

---





PART VI  
COVER LETTER



# 8. Cover Letters

Cover letters should be formatted like a formal letter and include a return address, date, and a greeting. Be sure to end the letter with a salutation. Remember that employers are using the cover letter to evaluate your written communication skills.

## Opening Paragraph

- State why you are writing, how you learned about the position, and basic information about you.

## Second Paragraph

- Explain WHY you are interested in the position and the type of work the employer does.
- Demonstrate that you know enough about the employer or position to relate your background to them.
- Use this paragraph to explain important information from your resume in greater detail

## Third Paragraph

- Thank the employer for their consideration & indicate you would welcome the opportunity for an interview.



PART VII  
THANK YOU LETTER



## 9. Thank You Letters

- Always send a Thank You letter to the employer following an interview.
- This is an opportunity to formally thank the interviewer and committee for their time.
- This could make you stand out above other applicants.

Thank You letters should follow up on information from the interview. If you feel you need to further discuss or clarify a topic this is an opportunity to do so. You may also reiterate your interest in working for the company/business.

Thank You Letters can be send via email mail. They may be typed or handwritten. Be sure to take note of the interviewer's names so that you properly address the Thank You Letter to the correct individuals.





PART VIII  
INTERVIEW SKILLS



# 10. Interview Activity I

1. Tell me about yourself.

This is your opportunity to discuss who you are as a professional. Be sure to mention your education, experience, skills, possibly even why you chose this career path. Keep your response focused on who you are as a professional.

For example:

I am expecting to receive my Associate of Applied Science Degree in \_\_\_\_\_ from Mountain Empire Community College in May of this year. Through my studies I have found I really enjoy \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ about this career field. I am a driven person and want to continually learn and grow in the field. I am not one to become stressed easily, however, when I do find myself in a stressful situation, I am able to manage my stress level by \_\_\_\_\_.

2. What are three of your greatest strengths?

Be thoughtful and honest in your response. Describe the skills you have that are most relevant to the position. Be prepared to back up your response with an example. You can provide examples of how your strengths have worked for you in the past and discuss the ways the skills could benefit you in the position you are interviewing for.

3. What are three of your weaknesses?

Be honest, but be cautious of stating that your weakness is what they are looking for an employee... Think about the job duties described in the job postings and try not to point out weaknesses

that would be a major obstacle should you be hired. It is also wise to discuss how you are working on the weakness.

Do not respond with “I can’t really think of anything”.

#### 4. Why should we hire you?

Be sure to point out qualities/skills/attributes that you possess that may set you apart from other candidates. Do you have certifications that others may not? Demonstrate confidence without sounding conceited. Illustrate your worth as an employee by talking about what past and present supervisors would say about you. Make sure you highlight your uniqueness to show you would be the best candidate for the position.

#### 5. Describe a leader you admire.

You do not have to know the person in order imitate their leadership, but it may be more

realistic if you do. Be sure you list someone that you believe has effective leadership and know why you feel they are successful in leading. Refrain from choosing a controversial leader. Discuss why you admire this person, what is it about their leadership that made you choose them. What are some of the lessons you learned from this person and how could you incorporate that into your life.

#### 6. Tell me about a time when you had to extend a deadline.

You do not want to give a negative view of your accountability. Your answer should not indicate that you have poor time management skills or poor work ethic. Discuss your willingness to adjust a deadline if you think it will add to the overall quality of the project.

What could happen if you had not adjusted the deadline. What steps did you take to extend the deadline?

7. Where do you see yourself in five years?

This is one question you would not answer specifically. If you would like to see yourself in management, it is fine to say so, but you may not want to list a specific title you would like to hold. Be realistic. Consider the company you are interviewing with, their opportunities for advancement and how that will fit into your five year plan.

8. Why are you leaving your current job?

Give two or three reasons why you are looking for a new position. Regardless of your feelings towards your supervisor and co-workers, refrain from talking negatively about them. This is a good opportunity to discuss the fact that you will be obtaining (recently obtained) a degree and you are looking for an opportunity to use the knowledge you gained through your education.

9. Why do you feel you would be a good fit for this position?

Consider the skills and characteristics that you possess that could help you succeed in the position you are interviewing for. Think about the kind of person that would be perfectly compatible with the job duties. Discuss how you stay current in the field.

10. Do you have any questions for me?

## II. Interview Activity II

Description: This activity is combined of question that are commonly asked in an interview settings. You will receive feedback on your responses in order to strengthen your interviewing skills.

Instructions: Please answer the questions as you would if you were in a face-to-face interview. Be sure to answer the complete question.

1. What do you look for in a good supervisor?

Be sure to discuss the qualities, traits, characteristics that you look for in a supervisor. Discuss the characteristics, do not just list them.

2. If you were hired how could your supervisor help you do the best on the job?

Discuss what you would want to see from your supervisor in the first weeks of your new position... Training, what type of supervision would you expect as you begin, things they could do assist you in getting acclimated to the position, etc.

3. Tell me about your relationship with your current and past supervisors

This question will give the interviewer a sense of your personality and how it relates to the prospective supervisor. How you discuss your past supervisors will give insight to the way you work and any potential problems that may arise. AVOID being negative! Be honest,

but try to put a positive spin on it. If you didn't get along well discuss what you learned about yourself, etc.

4. Talk about a work environment that you think would be ineffective for you.

What do you need to have a positive work environment, or things that could have been better at a previous environment? Discuss how it would be ineffective without those things. You could consider the importance of: communication, feedback, ability to infuse a personal touch on projects, etc. Would having these items make the work place more or less effective?

5. How would your co-workers describe your working style?

Speak specifically to the working relationships with your co-workers. You want to give the impression that you easily get along with different types of people, but do not make it sound as though you chat with your co-workers more than work.

6. How do you usually go about solving a problem?

Consider the steps you normally take when solving a problem. The key is to display your initiative and ability to logical decisions. What do you base your decisions on? If you can give a specific example of a time when you used your problem solving steps that relates to the position you are applying for, feel free to do so.

7. If you had to describe yourself in three words, what would those three words be?

Be sure to choose strong words to describe yourself. Consider the job posting: Consider the company's mission statement: Consider the company's published values... what is this company looking for that happens to be one of your strengths?

8. If you were hiring someone, what would be the three most important qualities that you would look for in a candidate?

Consider what you believe is important in being an employee. Provide three qualities that you would want in a co-worker, supervisor, or expect from yourself. You can give an example of why those would be important if you would like.

9. What personal skill or work habit have you struggled to improve?

Consider your work habits and something that you have to be conscious of. Maybe an inability to say No, even when your plate is full, maybe it is delegating authority (if that is in your position). Discuss whatever the habit or skill is that you struggle to improve, and follow up with what you are doing to improve that, or the progress that you have made towards improving. Be sure to let the interviewer know that it will not leave a negative impact on you as an employee.

10. What comes to mind when you consider what you disliked about your last job?

Be careful when discussing past employers, you do not want to give specific information, rather speak globally. Remember, the interviewer is considering you for a position and wants to see how you will respond about a past employer... be sure to discuss things



that will not make it look as though you will talk negatively about their company should you leave a position with them later on.

## 12. Interview Activity III

Description: This activity is combined of question that are commonly asked in an interview settings. You will receive feedback on your responses in order to strengthen your interviewing skills.

Instructions: Please answer the questions as you would if you were in a face-to-face interview. Be sure to answer the complete question.

1. In your previous experience, would you say you were known for taking the initiative? If so,

provide an example.

If you are known for taking the initiative be sure to provide a good example of what you did and why it was taking initiative. If you have not been known to take initiative in the workplace, provide an example of why.

2. Do you prefer a stable day-to-day routine or a dynamic constantly changing environment?

Be sure to consider the position you are interviewing for. If you prefer consistency, will this job provide that? If you prefer dynamic constantly changing, will this position provide that?

3. How well do you handle criticism?

You may consider responding that constructive criticism allows you to grow as a professional.

4. Tell me something about yourself that I will not find in your resume.

This is your opportunity to discuss experiences that you may have omitted from your resume to keep it at one page. Be sure the information you provide is relevant and not found in your resume. You want to give them something new. If you have won awards that weren't noted, if you are currently working on a certificate, but didn't include it on the resume because it is not finished... now is the time to bring those things up.

5. Tell me about a time when you showed real determination.

Talk about a time when you persevered to accomplish a goal. Choose something that that will reflect an interest in developing new skills, demonstrates your ability to gather resources and manage stressful situations. Discuss the results you obtained.

6. How do you manage stress in your daily work?

The interviewer is attempting to gain information to see if you have a tendency to crack under pressure. Be sure you show that you can manage high-pressure situations. Think of ways you manage your stress throughout the day. Stay professional, and be sure not to give an example of something that would display you are unproductive during work hours because of stress.

7. What do you bring to this job that is unique and would make us want to hire you?

Your answer should demonstrate confidence in your abilities without sounding conceited. Consider what past and present supervisors or co-workers would say about you. What specific skills

do you have that relate to this job? What specific tasks do your current co-workers/supervisors come to you to complete and why? Be sure to answer the question, do not just list the same skills that are displayed on your resume.

8. What would your ideal job be like?

Your answer should demonstrate confidence in your abilities without sounding conceited. Consider what past and present supervisors or co-workers would say about you. What specific skills do you have that relate to this job? What specific tasks do your current co-workers/supervisors come to you to complete and why? Be sure to answer the question, do not just list the same skills that are displayed on your resume.

9. Do you prefer working alone or in a group?

Be honest, but also appear flexible. Consider the values and mission of the company... is teamwork something they strive for? If you are best at completing tasks alone, you can honestly say that, but also state that you can work in a group setting, and if you are better working in a group, that is okay, but be sure to mention you can also complete tasks individually. Be sure that you consider the typical work day in this position and if you would normally be working alone or in a group...

10. Why do you want to work here?

Be sure to consider what you know about this company, their mission, values, reputation, etc. (be aware of these, but do not recite them in the interview.) Discuss the reasons why a position in this company is appealing to you. Be sure to be insightful.