



CISDD Job Search, Resume, Interview and Writing Guidebook

CISDD Resume, Interview and Writing Guidebook

Contents:

- I. Overview
- II. Job Search
- III. Memos (Business Writing)
- IV. Cover Letters
- V. Resumes
- VI. References
- VII. Thank-You Notes
- VIII. Interviewing

I. Overview:

CISDD's job search, resume, interview, and writing guidebook is designed to assist students in improving the skills necessary for acquiring internship and employment opportunities. The guidebook is particularly useful for students interested in [applying for CISDD's HRA, CITY and general internship programs](#).

II. Job Search:

The CUNY system offers many resources for students to facilitate a productive job search. Students should use everything available to them. The following websites are part of the CUNY internship programs and should be consulted at the start of a job or internship search:

CISDD Career Center: <http://career.cisdd.org>

CUNY Webportal Links to Campus Career Centers:

www1.cuny.edu/portal_ur/content/studentjobs/careerservices.html

Being proactive is the best way to be in charge of a career. Always keep an eye out for interesting positions on the various online job sites, such as hotjobs.com and monster.com. Also, look in the daily newspapers either online or in hardcopy. If there is a company you have an interest in working with, don't be afraid to write a letter requesting an informational interview—a chance to sit down and talk with someone already working in your desired field in order to find out more about how to get started and what opportunities may be available.



The CISDD Career Center (How do I get an internship?)

The CISDD Career Center website was created to bring students and employers together. Students post their resumes on the Career Center website and the employers we work with are given access to the website to view student's resumes and contact them for interviews. In fact, students *must* register, post their resumes on the Career Center website and come in for a pre-screening interview before they can be considered for *any* internship.

In order to post your resume on the Career Center website you must visit <http://career.cisdd.org> and follow these steps.

- 1) Register for a Career Center account and complete an online resume builder by clicking on [CUNY Students](#).
- 2) After fully completing and **submitting** your resume online **come to one of our pre-screening interview sessions** found here: <http://career.cisdd.org>

The pre-screening interviews will be 10-15 minutes long, will be formal and are required in order to have your resume uploaded and approved on our website.
Interviews are held at the CISDD office at 101 West 31st Street, 7th Floor.

- 3) Your resume will be approved and posted to the Career Center for various CUNY-sponsored internship opportunities and industry partner positions. **NOTE: We will NOT approve any resumes with spelling or grammatical errors!**

Keep in mind that CISDD internships are competitive. In order to make a good impression you must portray professionalism in your resume and during interviews. Your final interview will be with a hiring manager of a Government agency or IT company.

If you need assistance with your resume you should contact your school's career services office. You can find a link to your school's career services below. This web site also has information about other career opportunities for CUNY students:
http://www1.cuny.edu/portal_ur/content/studentjobs/careerservices.html

For more information, email interns@cisdd.org.

III. Memos (Business Writing):

A memorandum (memo) is used to make announcements, to confirm what has transpired during conversations or meetings, and to request or exchange information. It can be directed to a few specific people, but often addresses a group—an entire team or department. It is often written in the first person (*I* or *we*) and ranges from very informal to extremely formal, depending on the writer and the intended recipients. Its topic is narrow and should be apparent immediately. Since it is a business document, it is important that the writing be up-front and concise. A good memo summarizes facts, analyzes pertinent issues, makes a recommendation, and supports it. It is easy to get overly technical and use unnecessary words to describe a situation; attention to clarity eliminates any need for the writer to go into lengthy explanations. Remember too, that a memo becomes the property of its recipients and is not “private.” Don’t say anything in a memo that you wouldn’t say in person.

See the example that follows:

The logo for Emma Media Corporation, featuring the company name in white text on a black rectangular background.

Memo

To: John Jobs

From: Sandy Student

CC: IT Department

Date: February 25, 2005

Re: Emma Media Web Site Homepage

Emma Media Web Site Homepage

The unveiling of our new homepage for www.emmamedia.com is scheduled for July 11, 2005. The new homepage has been over-hauled to reflect the changes set forth in the Emma Media Corporation Technology Initiative. For further information on the specifics of the new homepage and our technology initiative please refer to the Emma Media Corporation Technology Initiative available on the network drive.

Please contact me with any questions or comments.

IV. Cover Letters:

A cover letter provides an opportunity to create a personal addition to your resume. Your cover letter is your first opportunity to introduce yourself, present your qualifications and show the search committee you are a potential candidate for the advertised position. Cover letters should always be tailored to the specific job you are applying for; in other words, you need to create an original letter for every job. It is very important to emphasize the skills that you have as they apply to the position they are offering.

1. Style Guide:

Cover letters should always follow a basic form: intro, strengths and relevant experience and closing. Begin with an intro paragraph stating the position and name of the company for which you are applying. Follow that with a paragraph highlighting your relevant skills for the position. Finally, close with a paragraph stating your interest in the job and company.

2. Personalize Your Letter to Each Company:

Never use a generic cover letter that's designed to be used for any job. Instead, take a few minutes to personalize your letter to show a company you are serious about working there. State the reason for your interest in the company. Show that you have done your homework by mentioning something positive about the company or its industry.

3. Identify the Position:

Always include the specific job title of the position you are applying for and whenever possible address the cover letter to a specific individual.

4. Highlight Your Strengths:

Explain two to three reasons why your experience makes a good fit and a brief outline of your career/school highlights that correspond to the job. Give a few facts, list relevant skills and state accomplishments at recent jobs that will be impressive. If you have relevant volunteer or professional experience, mention it briefly in your cover letter.

5. Take Action Steps:

Take a proactive approach in your cover letter. State the fact that you are available for a personal interview; give your home, work, email and/or cell phone numbers where you can be reached.

6. Notify Your References:

If you are including references in your cover letter make sure you first ask permission and then notify your references when you send your letter to a prospective employer. Make sure to include the phone number, address and e-mail of each reference. Supervisors and professors are considered good references. Avoid using family or friends as references.

Cover letter examples:

Traditional Cover Letter

Sandy Student
123 Pleasant Street, Apt. 1
New York, NY 10001
212-555-1212
SandyS@hotmail.com

February 25, 2005

Mr. John Jobs
Emma Media Corporation
123 Broadway, Suite 4
New York, NY 10001

Re: Technical Internship (HTML and Desktop Support)

Dear Mr. Jobs,

I am very interested in exploring the possibility of a technical internship in Desktop Support and HTML design at Emma Media Corporation. I have enclosed my resume and references for your consideration.

I am confident that the experience I've gained in school and in the private sector make me an ideal candidate for your internship position. My knowledge of HTML and desktop support are very strong. I have gained 2 years experience in desktop support while working as a Helpdesk Technician at one of the advanced computer labs at Hunter College. During my time as a Helpdesk Technician I was responsible for attending to all support related issues for over 50 computers and users. This involved servicing hardware and software issues, networking and user account issues as well as overseeing staff scheduling. In addition to my experience in desktop support I also have a year of experience developing HTML in a corporate environment. While I was a Technical Specialist at Omnicom Corporation I was responsible for updating the company website on a weekly basis. This involved designing, editing and testing advanced HTML code.

I am very excited about applying my technical skills to your HTML and Desktop Support internship position. Producing quality work is very important to me and I am confident that I will be a valuable asset to Emma Media Corporation. Please review my enclosed resume and references and contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Sandy Student

Traditional Cover Letter with Letterhead

Sandy Student

123 Pleasant Street, Apt. 4
New York, NY 10001

E-mail: SandyS@hotmail.com
Phone: 212-555-1212

February 25, 2005

Mr. John Jobs
Emma Media Corporation
123 Broadway, Suite 4
New York, NY 10001

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Dear Mr. Jobs,

I am very interested in exploring the possibility of a technical internship in Desktop Support and HTML design at Emma Media Corporation. I have enclosed my resume and references for your consideration.

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I am very excited about applying my technical skills to your HTML and Desktop Support internship position. Producing quality work is very important to me and I am confident that I will be a valuable asset to Emma Media Corporation. Please review my enclosed resume and references and contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Sandy Student

E-mail Cover Letter

From: Sandy Student [SandyS@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 25, 2005 11:10 PM
To: Jobs, John
Subject: Technical Internship (HTML and Desktop Support)
Attachment: MyResume.doc; References.doc

Dear Mr. Jobs,

I am very interested in exploring the possibility of a technical internship in Desktop Support and HTML design at Emma Media Corporation. I have attached my resume and references for your consideration.

I am confident that the experience I've gained in school and in the private sector make me an ideal candidate for your internship position. My knowledge of HTML and desktop support are very strong. I have gained 2 years experience in desktop support while working as a Helpdesk Technician at one of the advanced computer labs at Hunter College. During my time as a Helpdesk Technician I was responsible for attending to all support related issues for over 50 computers and users. This involved servicing hardware and software issues, networking and user account issues as well as overseeing staff scheduling. In addition to my experience in desktop support I also have a year of experience developing HTML in a corporate environment. While I was a Technical Specialist at Omnicom Corporation I was responsible for updating the company website on a weekly basis. This involved designing, editing and testing advanced HTML code.

I am very excited about applying my technical skills to your HTML and Desktop Support internship position. Producing quality work is very important to me and I am confident that I will be a valuable asset to Emma Media Corporation. Please review my attached resume and references and contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Sandy Student

123 Pleasant Street, Apt.1
New York, NY 10001
212-555-1212
SandyS@hotmail.com

V. Resumes:

The most important and effective tool in applying for an internship or employment opportunity is a high quality resume. Your resume is the first, and often only, impression that you will make on the individual(s) whose job it is to contact people for interviews and make final decisions on who gets hired.

Employers are inundated with resumes and must turn away the majority of applicants. Because employers must reject so many resumes they will use any imperfection in your resume as justification for throwing it in the trash. Typo's, grammatical errors and misspellings are simply unacceptable.

We have compiled a set of rules to help you in creating a good resume. It is very important to follow through on each step.

1. **Spell Check:**

ALWAYS spell check your resume. Anytime you do any editing make sure you have used your word processor's spell check feature before you save.

2. **Proofread:**

When you feel that you have completed your resume proofread it twice and then ask someone (i.e. your professor or career services contact) to proofread it for you as well. This is especially important for people who practice English as a second language. Even if you are applying for a position that does not require good writing skills, it is important to show that you can communicate well.

3. **Never Lie:**

Never lie about your skill set and avoid exaggeration. Remember, anything on your resume is fair game at an interview. If your interviewer finds out that you have only done something once, but have it listed as a skill on your resume, it discredits everything on your resume and discredits you as an honest person.

4. **Portray Professionalism:**

Your resume should look as professional as possible. This means no unusual fonts, no colored paper, no small or extremely large margins and no extremely large, bold or tiny print. Make sure you have a professional e-mail address. Free e-mail addresses are fine but they should be some derivative of your name NOT your favorite band or movie.

See the following samples:

Someone
123 Here. There, NY 10010
Phone: (212) 222-2222
someone@somemail.com

Objective: To obtain a position in information technology.

Education:

Fall '99 - Present

City University of New York at Baruch College

Major: Computer Information Systems

Expected graduation date: June 2003

GPA - 3.3

Major GPA - 3.5

Experience:

Sept '02 - Dec '02

New York Stock Exchange

New York, NY

Corporate Network Intern

Duties included setting up base builds on PCs, cleaning older PCs being readied to be returned to the leasing company, installing software on customer's desktops as required, assisting first and second level analysts in troubleshooting customer's problems, and updating various databases used to track equipment.

April '00 - Feb '02

Macy's East

New York, NY

Furniture Order Expeditor for Merchandise Information Office

Duties included updating weekly Past Due report on company software and database, communicating with vendors and merchants about order status, handling phone calls from store sale associates concerning furniture order issues, canceling orders based on customer service demands, creating purchase orders via E.D.I for stock and custom needs, and generating delay letters for customers.

May '01 - Dec '01

DraConnect PC Retailer

New York, NY

Assistant Manager of Sales and Technician

Duties included maintaining retail costs of merchandise on company website, assisted technicians on installing PC software and operating systems.

June '99 - Aug '99

New York Downtown Hospital

New York, NY

Receiving Clerk

Duties included distributing office supplies to different departments in the hospital, filing purchase orders, and general office duties such as faxing, printing, and answering phones.

Skills:

Knowledge of Windows 95 – XP, MS Word, MS Excel, MS Access, Lotus Notes, Internet Explorer, Anti-virus programs, basic C++, SQL, and HTML

Activities:

Vice President of the Chinese Student Association, Hong Kong Club.

References:

Available upon request.

Someone
123 Here. There, NY 10010
Phone: (212) 222-2222
someone@somemail.com

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position in the computer industry, preferably in the software development field.

EDUCATION

B.S., Computer Science, City College, CUNY Major GPA 3.59 February 2004

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming Languages: C/C++, Java, Perl, SQL, VHDL, Scheme
Operating Systems: Windows 95/98/ME/2000/XP/NT, DOS, UNIX, Mac OS
Software Packages: MS-Visual Studio, JDeveloper, MySQL, MatLab, Max+Plus, Dr. Scheme, DreamWeaver, Adobe GoLive, FrontPage, iMovie
Other Skills: MS-Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, CompRater, ProRater, Regular Expression, Turing Machine, Finite State Machine.

RELEVANT COURSE PROJECTS

Software Engineering: Led a team, implemented an online computer store.
Database System: Created a database system individually for insurance agencies.
Hardware Design: Served in a team, developed a multi-cycle CPU.

EXPERIENCE

Insurance Agent

Smart Way Insurance Brokerage Corp. New York, NY 01/03 – Present

- Report claims to insurance companies, and follow up for clients.
- Help customers with all forms of insurance, mainly for auto, home, commercial.
- Offer office assistance: answering phones, data entry and filing.
- Help to establish and re-organize additional office in Flushing, NY.

Computer Lab Assistant

Multimedia Center, City College New York, NY 10/02 – 12/02

- Provided technical support for all computer related needs and assisted instructors.
- Installed, configured, and maintained application programs.
- Updated websites, using DreamWeaver, Adobe GoLive and FrontPage.
- Shot and edited movies; uploaded them to the Multimedia Center website.

VI. Customer Service Representative

AsiaTone, LLC. New York, NY 03/01 – 08/03

- Answered phone calls and explained the services/products; solved complaints.
- Solved customers' issues including difficulties of making calls, requesting credits.
- Promoted new services/products to prospect customers.
- Trained new employees systematically.

LANGUAGES: Fluent in English and Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese).

CITIZENSHIP: Permanent resident of United States, citizen of China.

ACTIVATES/HONORS: Member of ACM, 2003; Dean's list, 2003.

Someone
123 Here. There, NY 10010
Phone: (212) 222-2222
someone@somemail.com

SKILLS:

- Experience in Java development in Windows environment.
- Ability to learn quickly and apply new technologies and concepts.
- Experienced team player, excellent skills in communication and collaboration.

TECHNICAL SKILLS:

Languages: Java, HTML, UNIX Shells, C++, UML, SQL, Rational Rose and MS Office 2000.

EDUCATION:

City University of New York - Queens College, Flushing, NY **Expected Graduation 2005**

- Masters Degree in Computer Science

City University of New York - Queens College, Flushing, NY **2000 - 2003**

- Bachelor of Science in Computer Science.
- 3.4 GPA
- Completing a four-year academic course load in three years.
- Recipient of Leadership and Scholastic Achievement Scholarship.

COURSEWORK:

- Advanced courses in Mathematics
- Programming with Java
- Design and Analysis of Algorithms
- Data Structures
- Discrete Structures
- Operating Systems Concepts
- Assembler and Intel based PC Architecture.
- Theory of Computation
- Database Systems
- Software Engineering
- Parallel and Distributed Systems

PROJECTS:

- Eight Queens Interactive Puzzle in Java, developed Graphical User Interface using Java/AWT and swing
- Designed, Developed and Tested Connect4 in Java, using UML and unit and integration testing.
- Written programs to solve problems in Mathematics and Physics in Java.
- Command line interactive menu using UNIX shell script

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Lab Assistant- Understanding Personal Computers Course Queens College, NY **9/2002-1/2003**
Assisted students with Unix, HTML and MS Office 2000.

United Artist Movie Theatre Bayside, NY **4/1999-11/2001**
Provided customer service, which included tendering a cash register, answering telephone inquiries and concession management. Diffused and resolved major customer service issues.

Sandy Student

123 Pleasant Street, Apt. 4
New York, NY 10001

E-mail: SandyS@hotmail.com
Phone: 212-555-1212

Objective:

To apply my computer programming skills in a full or part-time internship position with a growing firm

Education:

B.S. Computer Science, June 2002
Hunter College, New York, NY

M.S. Computer Information Systems, anticipated Spring 2005
Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY

Experience:

Technical Specialist, Omnicom Corporation, Queens, NY. July 2002 – February 2003

- ▶ Designed online application utilizing Java and MySQL to calculate company inventory
- ▶ Updated company website using HTML, ColdFusion and Java Script
- ▶ Led IT Operating System Upgrade Program for my department

Helpdesk Technician, Hunter College, New York, NY. September 1999 – December 2001

- ▶ Provided desktop support for student computer lab with 50 Windows NT systems
 - ▶ Diagnosed and repaired various computer hardware and peripherals
 - ▶ Organized monthly schedule for computer lab support staff
-

Certifications and Technical Skills:

- ▶ A+ and MSDN Certified
 - ▶ Languages: C++(advanced), JAVA (intermediate), HTML, DHTML, Scheme, Perl
 - ▶ Database: Oracle, MySQL, PostGres (beginner)
 - ▶ Systems: Windows 9x, XP, NT. Redhat Linux, Unix BSD
 - ▶ Applications: Microsoft Office, Dreamweaver, Flash MX, Photoshop
-

Additional Skills:

- ▶ Fluent in Spanish
- ▶ Excellent reading, writing and communication skills
- ▶ References available upon request

Resume Resources

Use the resources below to help craft a resume that is right for you.

Monster Resume Center – <http://resume.monster.com/> – Monster’s free resume advice is some of the best on the internet. Read the [Resume Tips for Technology Professionals](#) article for advice on shaping your IT resume.

Quintessential Careers - Action Verbs - www.quintcareers.com/action_skills.html - Using action verbs in your resume is essential. This list is broken down by skill categories so you can find the verb that best helps to describe your skills and work accomplishments.

Yahoo! HotJobs - <http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/> – Click on *Career Tools* then *Resume Writing* for samples and advice.

MSN Careers - www.careers.msn.com – Linked with Careerbuilder.com, MSN Careers is a good resource for job seekers. Click on *Articles and Advice* for the free resources.

CUNY WriteSite - <http://writesite.cuny.edu/> - The WriteSite is an Online Writing Lab, or OWL—a collection of writing resources and a way of interacting with other CUNY writers through the Internet. It complements face-to-face resources, like your campus Writing Center.

CUNY Campus Writing Centers – Get on-campus help with your resume or other writing needs.

- Baruch College - <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/writingcenter/>
- Borough of Manhattan Community College - <http://socrates.bmcc.cuny.edu/wac/center.html>
- Brooklyn College - <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/mkframe/mkframe.htm?frontURL=http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/info/acad.htm>
- City College - <http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/ctl/handbook/writcenter.html>
- College of Staten Island - <http://www.csi.cuny.edu/catalog/undergraduate/academicservices.html> (scroll towards the bottom of the page)
- Hunter College - <http://admissions.hunter.cuny.edu/~graduate/studenterv/4.html>
- John Jay College - <http://web.jjay.cuny.edu/~writing/homepage.htm>
- Kingsborough Community College - <http://www.kbcc.cuny.edu/wac/links.htm>
- LaGuardia Community College - <http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/english/writingcenter/>
- Lehman - <http://www.lehman.edu/provost/enrollmentgmt/issp/>
- New York City Tech - <http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/students/learningcenter/services.shtml>
- Queens College - <http://qcpages.qc.edu/qcswsw/>
- Queensborough Community College - <http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/ISS/Default.htm>
- York College - <http://www.york.cuny.edu/~writcent/>

VI. References

References can be almost anyone you know but you should avoid using family or friends. The best references are past employers or professors. Traditionally you only need to provide 3 references. You must ask the person you list as a reference before you use their name.

See the references example that follows:

Sandy Student

123 Pleasant Street, Apt. 4
New York, NY 10001

E-mail: SandyS@hotmail.com
Phone: 212-555-1212

References:

Debbie Johnson
Omnicom Corporation
432 Griffin Blvd.
Queens, NY 10001
718-555-1212
d.johnson@omnicom.com

Professor Richard Kurth
Brooklyn College
20 Lester Hall
2900 Bedford Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11210
718-555-1212
kurth@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Donald Regent
Regent Law Firm
456 5th Avenue, Floor 15
New York, NY 10001
212-555-1212
DR@regent.net

VII. Thank You Note:

It is customary to send your interviewer a thank you note or email the day after the interview. A thank you note is an important courtesy that is often overlooked. Thank you notes are also a good opportunity to restate your qualifications for the job and to include any information that you may have failed to mention during the interview.

See the thank-you note examples that follow.

Traditional Thank-You Note

123 Pleasant Street, Apt.1
New York, NY 10001
212-555-1212
SandyS@hotmail.com

February 25, 2005

Mr. John Jobs
Emma Media Corporation
123 Broadway, Suite 4
New York, NY 10001

Dear Mr. Jobs,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me and discuss the technical internship position at Emma Media Corporation. It was a great pleasure meeting with you and your staff.

Our meeting has further convinced me that I would be an ideal candidate for your internship position. I know that I can be a valuable asset to your company in the position that we discussed.

Please contact me if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Sandy Student

Traditional Thank-You Note with Letterhead

Sandy Student

123 Pleasant Street, Apt. 4
New York, NY 10001

E-mail: SandyS@hotmail.com
Phone: 212-555-1212

February 25, 2005

Mr. John Jobs
Emma Media Corporation
123 Broadway, Suite 4
New York, NY 10001

Dear Mr. Jobs,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me and discuss the technical internship position at Emma Media Corporation. It was a great pleasure meeting with you and your staff.

Our meeting has further convinced me that I would be an ideal candidate for your internship position. I know that I can be a valuable asset to your company in the position that we discussed.

Please contact me if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Sandy Student

E-mail Thank-You Note

From: Sandy Student [SandyS@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 25, 2005 11:10 PM
To: Jobs, John
Subject: Thank You

Dear Mr. Jobs,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me and discuss the technical internship position at Emma Media Corporation. It was a great pleasure meeting with you and your staff.

Our meeting has further convinced me that I would be an ideal candidate for your internship position. I know that I can be a valuable asset to your company in the position that we discussed.

Please contact me if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Sandy Student

123 Pleasant Street, Apt.1
New York, NY 10001
212-555-1212
SandyS@hotmail.com

VIII. Interviewing:

All the work you have done so far, your resume and cover letter, is intended to get you to the most important part of the job application process, the interview. Interviews are often the make or break event in applying for a job. A good interview can lead to a job for a less qualified applicant just as a bad interview can lead to a qualified applicant not getting the job. Follow these tips to help you in your interview process.

1. Mark Your Calendar:

Mark the date, time and location of your interview in your date book. It's appropriate to confirm your interview appointment 1 or 2 days in advance. If you have to reschedule your appointment, do so at least 2 days in advance and if you have an emergency the day of your interview, call your interviewer and politely explain the situation.

2. Preparation (the day before):

It's important to be prepared when the day of your interview arrives. You should complete the following tasks at least 1 day in advance.

- Make copies of your resume
- Get/print directions to the interview (www.mapquest.com)
- Make copies of your cover letter
- Make copies of your references
- Prepare interview questions
- Review your resume

3. Preparation (the day of):

- Hygiene (shower, shave, grooming)
- Dress appropriately (suits, ties, business attire – look professional)
- Bring directions, resumes, cover letters, interview questions
- Arrive 15 minutes early
- Turn off your cell phone

4. During the Interview:

- Introduce yourself with your full name
- Shake hands
- Sit up straight - be attentive - look people in the eye - smile
- Answer questions directly. If you are confused by a question it is ok to ask them to repeat it or explain it in greater detail.
- Again, don't lie and avoid exaggerating
- Be prepared to ask questions of your interviewers and/or the company

5. Typical Interview Questions to Practice:

1. Tell me about your previous job.
2. Tell me how your schooling has prepared you for work.
3. What type of position are you seeking?
4. Why should I hire you for my job?
5. What is your best quality?
6. How would you rate your knowledge of (blank)?
7. What can we expect from you if you are hired?
8. What are your long-range employment goals?
9. Do you have any questions for me? (yes, YOU DO!)
Always prepare questions for your interview.

Skills and Questions for Interviews

1. Open Ended Questions

The 30 second commercial about yourself:

Response to the question: So tell me about yourself?

My name is _____
I am a _____ (with a degree in _____ from _____)
Most recently with _____
Major responsibilities including _____
Accomplishment I'm proud of _____
Three things I bring to the table are _____
Reason for leaving _____
Future plans include _____
Be specific: Name companies, industries, jobs

Example:

My name is Yokaira Peralta and I currently majoring in Computer Information Systems at Lehman College and I also have been taking numerous math and statistics classes. I also tutor for the SEEK program helping students prepare for math and English exams. I am now looking for an internship with a company where I can apply my database, computer, and statistical skills that I developed in school.

SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Below is a list of soft skills that employers are looking for. They will ask you questions that to see if you posses these abilities. To prepare for these questions, write down a time you demonstrated these skills. You can use this list to respond to almost any question an employer may give you.

Skill to function effectively as part of a team.

Give an example of working in a team such as a group project.

Accomplishment example:

All the tutors in the SEEK tutoring program would get together and meet. We would share what techniques where most effective with our students. We then developed a list of those techniques. We also devised ways to improve the program by...

Ability to work independently and come up with innovative solutions.

Accomplishment example:

When I was working as a receptionist, I had worked the front desk alone. I had to answer peoples questions and direct them to the correct contact.

Good interpersonal, oral and written communication skills

Ability to effectively communicate technical information

Accomplishment example:

As I tutor I not only had to be good at explaining concepts but I also had to be a good listener. I often had to deal with frustrated students and students who had a hard time expressing their needs. As a tutor I was also required to write up reports on students progress.

Ability to complete multiple tasks

Accomplishment example:

As a receptionist I had to answer calls, people coming into the office, and multiple other projects all at the same time. I had to prioritize my tasks by...

Attention to detail

Accomplishment example:

In order to create web pages by hand with out an editor you have to pay a lot of attention to detail or your web page will not turn out correctly. This is especially true of JavaScript...

Analytical skills

Accomplishment example:

For my statistics class we had to analyze data regarding education, income, gender, and race. We had performed statistical analysis to see how those pieces of data were related. I used regressions to , graphs to show....., and mean, median, and mode to show.....

Research skills

Accomplishment example:

For a project for my management class we had to research the marketing of We used the web to find....., the library to look up....

Other Skills

- Proven skill to solve problems of varying size and complexity
- Strong organizational skills
- Demonstrated ability to set timetables to meet deadlines, goals and objectives
- Ability to learn new technologies

2. Computer Skills

Databases:

SQL

Database design

Software: MS Access, SQL Server 2000, Oracle, MySql....

ADO.NET, JDBC, ODBC, COM

Programming languages

Java, Visual Basic, C#, C++.....

Web

HTML, JavaScript, and DHTML...

JPS, PHP, ASP, ASP.NET...

XML, XSL, XSD, XPath...

DreamWeaver, PhotoShop, Flash...

Server such as IIS, Apache...

Server

Windows 2000, 2003...

Apple

Linux

Other

MS Excel, Power Point...

SPSS, SAS...

Quark...

For all the skills that you have, list times where you used the technology.

Accomplishment example:

Database design and SQL – took database class and for our final project we had to normalize data in excel, import it into MS Access and design the Forms to input data. I used Macros and SQL queries to do this. I also designed reports.

HTML – we designed a personal website in class. Coded HTML and JavaScript by hand. You can see my page at www.geocities....

Data analysis – I have taken Statistics classes. We used SPSS to analyze how gender and income affected ones education level. We did....

MS Windows – I am experience with MS XP and 2000. I can install programs and remove programs, manage....

3. Questions

Now that you have a list of your skills with an accomplishment example, you can answer just about any question an interviewer throws your way.

What are your strengths?

Talk about three of four key strengths with examples that are relevant to the positions needs. Revert to you list.

Example:

I think the reason I was successful as a tutor was that I am good at communicating with people from different backgrounds. I think that I have an ability to cater my style to the individual that I am working with. *(You now just showed how you are good communicator and how you can work with a wide variety of people without being prompted by the interviewer).*

I choose to take math and statistics classes even though they were not required by my major. It has given me the ability to effectively analyze data and to use software programs such as MS Access and SPSS.

(you showed you analytical ability and some software that the employer is looking for. This will direct them to ask more questions about MS Access and SPSS)

What can you offer us (that another candidate cannot)?

Talk about some of the skills that other candidates might not have that are important to the job. Use your soft skills list. For example talk about how you are a good team player, how you can develop innovative solutions and give an example of each.

Example:

I think I work really well in a team environment. In my management class we had a group project in which we had to develop a marketing plan that.... I helped structure the project by implementing a list of tasks and due dates. We then agreed how to assign the tasks. We then reviewed each others work and provided suggestions for improvement....

(you just showed how you are a team player which the employer was looking for. Again, you were not prompted specifically about working as a team, but you showed the employer you have that skill. They will be impressed).

How did you do in school?

Talk about your best and favorite subjects. Use your above list to talk about leadership activities, working to finance your schooling, etc.

I really enjoyed taking math classes and statistics. I really did well in statistics and I enjoyed this project which we did.....

(use this to your advantage. Talk about a project you did in school you are proud of and one that relates to the job).

Technical Questions

Be sure you know your subject matter well. If you list a skill such as XML, make sure you have a good overall understanding of the subject matter. An interviewer may ask you questions such as:

Database

What is a Relational Database Management System?

What is a primary key?

What is a normalized data?

XML

What is XML?

When would you want to use it?

What is a namespace? Why would you want to use one?

What is a schema? Why would you want to use one?

What is XSLT? How is it like and unlike SQL?

ASP.NET

What is ASP.NET? How does it employ the .NET framework?

What happens when an HTTP request for an ASP.NET page hits IIS. Please describe in as much detail as possible.

What is a user control. When would you use one?

What is a server control. When would you use one?

What does the RenderChildren method do?