

# Tools For Success

## Step 1: Resume

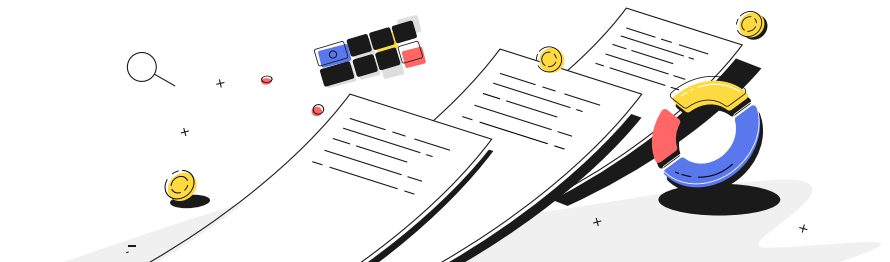
### Refresh Your Resume

Even though resumes are usually one or two pages, the smallest details can make a big impression. We suggest reviewing your resume for typos and inaccuracies before submitting it. It's also a great idea to have a friend or mentor look over your resume to make sure it looks and sounds professional. If you have a cover letter, address it to the interviewer or hiring manager. Make sure to match the font of your cover letter and resume to make it neater and look more professional. These details show hiring managers or recruiters how organized you are! Additionally, your resume shouldn't have distracting features like headshots or colorful fonts. Unusual fonts can make it hard for interviewers to read and upload your resume to their ATS system.

Use a simple email address that focuses on your name to make communication straightforward and professional. Email names such as AnnaBanana@gmail.com or MusicIsMyLife@yahoo.com might seem fun, but they can give the impression that you're not serious about your job search. Creating a new email address on Gmail or Yahoo is free and takes less than five minutes.

Turning that traditional "Objective" statement into a quick summary is another great update for your resume. The summary should be a brief description of your talents and goals. Think of it as your elevator pitch on paper. Say what you are looking for and how you can help your potential employer.

It's your resume, so know it inside and out! Your interviewer will expect you to know your professional history off the top of your head, so be prepared to answer all their questions. Be ready to answer questions about gaps in your work history, reasons for leaving jobs, special projects you completed, or anything that might stand out.



# Get References

Have at least two (but preferably three!) professional references willing to sing your praises. Reach out to them ahead of time to ask if they're willing to be your reference and give them a heads-up when you're on the job hunt.

Even if you're not looking for work, maintaining relationships with your references is important. Reach out to them once or twice a year to stay on their radar. The last thing you want is for them to forget who you are when an interviewer calls them.

Speaking of remembering, keep your references as fresh and recent as possible. Make new connections with coworkers and supervisors so that you have plenty of professional support in your contacts list. If the only references you have are from jobs you held several years ago, your interviewer might be hesitant in hiring you. Lastly, make sure all your references' contact information is updated (job title, phone number, etc.).

## Step 2: Social Media Review



### **Update your work history and refresh your summary on LinkedIn:**

A great LinkedIn profile showcases your current job position, skills, and any recent projects you have worked on. The most important part of your LinkedIn profile is the summary section.

Consistently refresh your summary as this is the most viewed part of a LinkedIn profile. A good summary states your talents, passions, and career goals (think "elevator pitch," like your resume summary). Talk about what problems you solve, but be brief.

## **Upload a new LinkedIn photo:**

Choosing a professional-looking, high-resolution photo makes a great impression on anyone who comes across your profile. Selfies are unprofessional and may seem too casual to some hiring managers.

Remember: many supervisors aren't millennials and don't understand the selfie phenomenon. Have a coworker snap a few crisp shots of you at your next work event, or even take a photo of yourself at a pretty area in your office the next time you come in wearing your favorite outfit.

## **Stay engaged:**

Many employers reach out to new hires through LinkedIn, so check your messages often. It is good practice to check in with your contacts now and then, congratulate them on promotions, and endorse them for their skills.

Remember: LinkedIn is the social network of the professional world. The more you communicate with your contacts, the more they will help boost your profile.

# Instagram & facebook

Take a few minutes to review your Facebook profile for anything that might be a red flag for hiring managers. Most interviewers scope out potential hires on social media to get a glimpse of your lifestyle and personality. No one wants to water down their profile, but creating a positive impression while showing your fun side is possible. If you're in doubt about any content you've posted, remove it or consider making your social media account private.



# Step 3: Get Ready For Your Interview

## Do Your Research

Research the company you are interviewing with by checking out the company's website, blog, and social media feeds. These sources are the perfect place to get a feel for the firm's culture and environment. Learning about the company ahead of time will also help you feel more confident!

## Prepare For Questions

Be ready to answer any questions the interviewer may ask you. Common interview questions include:

*Tell me about yourself.*

*Why do you want to leave your current job?*

*What makes you want to work here?*

Have some anecdotes ready for the open-ended, behavior-related questions. Be prepared to answer questions like:

*What's the hardest thing you've ever worked on?*

*What projects did you like working on the most?*

*What have you learned so far on your career path?*

An interview isn't just for the company to learn more about you but also for you to learn more about the company. Come ready with some questions to ask the interviewer. You don't want to come up blank when the interviewer asks you if you have any questions for them! This would make you seem unprepared--or worse: disinterested. Some great questions to ask are:

*What are the expectations for someone in this job role?*

*What is the culture like at this company?*

*What are the day-to-day job responsibilities?*

# What To Do The Day Before

The night before your interview, print out extra copies of your resume and references. Pick out your interview outfit and make sure it's clean and wrinkle-free. There's no worse feeling than thinking your go-to blouse is ready for your big day, only to find a stain on the sleeve!

You might also want to bring a pen, business cards, a notepad, breath mints, a Tide To-Go pen, cash (in case you need to pay for parking), and samples of your work (if relevant).

Finally, smile! Put your best foot forward and present a cheerful, polite attitude to everyone you meet. Showing respect to all staff (not just your interviewer) is a sign of integrity and shows the team that you'll be pleasant to work with. Take a deep breath, stand tall, and get ready to wow the interviewer!

## Do a Dry Run to the Interview Location

If you're not familiar with the interview location, you may want to visit it ahead of time to get the lay of the land. Look up the directions well before your interview time to account for traffic delays or time spent looking for parking. Do whatever it takes to avoid being late!



# Step 4: The Interview

## The In-Person Interview

The job market is highly competitive, so making a good impression during an in-person interview is essential. Here are a few tips to help you stand out from the crowd.

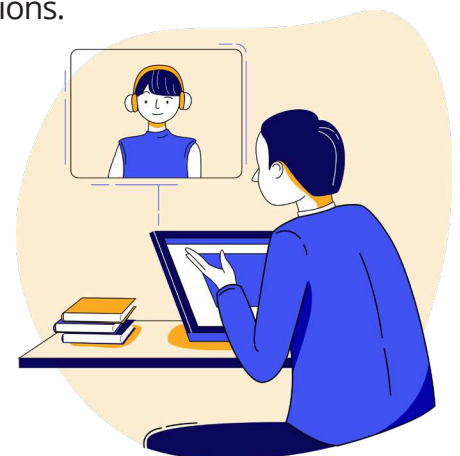
First, be sure to dress professionally and arrive early. This will show that you're interested in the job opening. Second, be prepared to answer questions about your skills and experience. This is your chance to sell yourself, so make sure you have some good examples ready. Third, be sure not to fidget or appear nervous. This can make you appear unpolished and unprofessional. Finally, be sure to follow up with a thank-you note after the interview. This shows that you're grateful for the opportunity and reinforces your interest in the position.

## The Virtual Interview

Video job interviews have become an increasingly common part of the hiring process. As a job seeker, you have the same goal in a video interview and an in-person interview: to show that you're the right person for the job. While your goals are the same as in a traditional in-person interview, there are a few differences in how you achieve them.

## Video Interview Tips

- Find a quiet, private, well-lit place, free from possible interruptions.
- Ensure your internet connection is stable.
- Check that your computer's audio is working.
- Test your computer's webcam.
- Close any unnecessary web browser tabs and applications.
- Dress professionally and avoid bright colors.
- Have a pen, notepad, and copy of your resume on your desk.
- When listening, nod and smile to show you are engaged.
- Use hand gestures when appropriate.
- Place your phone on silent mode.



# Professional Presentation

It's time to look your best, even when doing a virtual interview! You don't necessarily need a suit, but you should be dressed somewhat more formally than the rest of the staff. If you're not sure, err on the side of being dressier rather than casual. Do some online research to find out what the office culture is like and what the team usually wears to work. Sporting a fresh haircut and clean, trimmed fingernails are also helpful to show that you take the opportunity seriously. Makeup should be understated and professional. Dramatic features like false eyelashes can look gaudy and should be saved for after-work cocktail nights with your future coworkers.

Fresh breath and a clean smell are important too! That said, avoid wearing too much fragrance. It can overwhelm the interviewer, especially in small interview rooms and office spaces. If you're a smoker, don't smoke before your interview. Bringing drinks or food into your interview is also unprofessional.

If you chugged your coffee on your ride in, pop a breath mint so you'll have sweetsmelling breath. Mints are preferable to gum since gum-chewing can get in the way of answering questions.

Practice good posture. Standing and sitting up straight will make you more alert and show that you're attentive and interested. Don't underestimate the power of body language! Research shows that job candidates with straight postures were more likely to be hired than their slouching counterparts.

Some job seekers might feel it's unfair to be judged on their appearance. Still, the truth is that your effort in looking your best tells your interviewer that you're a qualified candidate who's enthusiastic about the job opportunity. Besides, being dressed to impress will give you a boost of confidence!

## Be Ready to Talk Salary

Don't be the first to bring up salary. However, be ready to talk about your expectations so that the interviewer can get a realistic idea of what you're looking for. Honesty is the best policy: be truthful when answering the employer's questions so they know what job openings best match you.

# Step 5: Tips For Success

## First Day of Your New Job

- **Do the small things well.** For example, arrive at work on time. Or even better, be early every day. (Remember, if you're on time, you're late!) Get prepped for the day early. If you're in a remote position, never let a Zoom meeting wait for you. Wear the appropriate clothes for the environment you are joining. Return messages quickly. Never allow yourself to be 'chased' for a task you committed to.
- **Take notes.** You cannot be expected to remember it all. In training, use a notebook to write it all down. Review later, and implement.
- **Be a willing learner.** 'Coachability' is key. Poor listeners, know-it-alls, and those who just can't focus on learning different ways in their new environment are likely to fail long-term. Your goal is to take small steps towards incremental improvement every week. You will feel the exhilaration of getting better and you can be sure that your employer will notice.
- **Ask.** Listen, learn, and try new things. But don't suffer in silence. If you don't understand, ask. Be polite; make sure the person you are asking is not in the middle of a critical situation. Ask if they have time. But ask your question.
- **Look for mentors.** Your company will have some great leaders, hopefully. Some will be more helpful than others. But all will enjoy an ego stroke when you ask, "Can I learn from you, please?"
- **Keep your head down.** I don't mean to be a shrinking violet. But don't be too forward too early. Resist the temptation, on day two, to tell a really funny story about your holiday and how drunk you all got. Listen far more than you talk. Of course, engage and be responsive.
- **Don't join a tribe.** Every office has them. Alliances, cliques, and factions. It's tempting to 'join' one, as when you are new, you feel alone. But don't. Treat everyone with respect and be open to help and guidance from everywhere.
- **Compete with yourself.** Don't get caught up in office ego fights. Your biggest competition is not your 'competitor', technology, the person sitting next to you, or anything else. Your competition is you. You have to be better than you were yesterday.
- **Never stop learning.** Read articles and blogs to improve yourself. Learn from others. Add new skills always.