

# TRAPPER **PATH** CAREER SERVICES



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# HOW TO FIND A JOB

Job searching is time-consuming and can be overwhelming!

Sometimes it is difficult to even get started when the possibilities are so numerous.

**Be enthusiastic, self-confident, and persevering. You got it!**

1. **Break it into small, achievable goals.** Dedicate a couple of hours a week to your job search and identify your timetable. This keeps you on track and working toward your goal. Try to be realistic about the amount of time you are willing to commit to finding a job.
2. **Try narrowing down your possibilities** by answering the following questions honestly:

<b>WHO?</b>	Who do you want to work for? Who do you know? Who are the other people you need to consider in your decisions?
<b>WHAT?</b>	What size of employer appeals to you? What type of employer would you enjoy? What type of job? In what capacity do you want to work? If you don't know where to start, try beginning with who you WON'T work for.
<b>WHY?</b>	Why would you take the job – future career goals, compatible work environment, opportunity for advancement, or more responsibility?
<b>WHERE?</b>	Where do you want to live? Where do you want to start? Where do you want to go?
<b>HOW?</b>	How will you start to look for a job? How will you identify potential employers? How will you evaluate opportunities and offers?

3. **Write your resume and a sample cover letter.**
4. **Network! Network! Network!** Let everyone you can think of know that you are starting this process. Ask them to keep a lookout for potential opportunities or contacts. Circulate copies of your resume.
5. **Identify potential opportunities.** Research interesting employers. Check online resources, your local newspaper's help wanted section, and Northwest College's career Twitter page at [twitter.com/nwcadvising](https://twitter.com/nwcadvising).
6. **Start applying to targeted employers.** School breaks are excellent times to visit with potential employers.
7. **Follow up!** Keep track of your job search and keep going!  
\*\*\*Remember to send thank-you notes.\*\*\*
8. **Finally.....You are hired! Way to go!**

# ONLINE JOB SEARCH



Online job seeker/workforce services system for employment in Wyoming.

**[www.wyomingatwork.com](http://www.wyomingatwork.com)**



Non-profit jobs. Connecting people who want to do good with job opportunities for action and collaboration.

**[www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org)**



Compilation of millions of jobs from thousands of company websites, job boards, and newspapers for a one-stop search.

**[www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com)**



Resources to help the right people find the right federal employment across the United States and around the world.

**[www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)**



Find employment opportunities and apply online via company career sites to cut out the middle man.

**<https://usnlx.com>**



Country-specific career and employment information. Search for jobs in more than 30 countries and 50 USA metropolitan areas. (Access on campus computer, then create an account)

**<https://online.goinglobal.com>**



The most advanced company information database. Find out who employs your major!

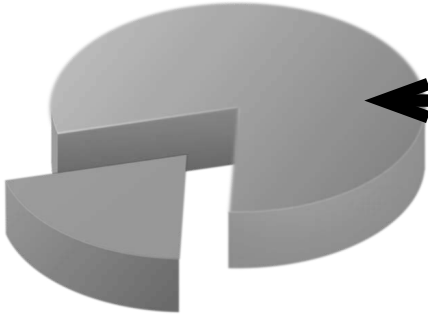
**[www.buzzfile.com](http://www.buzzfile.com)**



A networking site dedicated to professional use and a powerful resource for marketing yourself, expanding your networking, and identifying internship and job opportunities. Make your profile stand out.

**<https://www.linkedin.com>**

# NETWORKING



**70%-80% of jobs ARE NOT advertised on job boards or websites!**

## What is Networking?

Simply put, it is developing and maintaining relationships.

### You've already done it!

- Talking to your fellow classmates
- Attending a student meeting
- Asking a professional in your field for advice about how to get your foot in the door

- 1 Elevator Speech.** Prepare a few sentences to pitch yourself to people you meet.
- 2 Be Nice.** Get involved in interesting activities, form lasting and mutual relationships, and offer assistance and support to others.
- 3 Be Enthusiastic and Positive in Communications.** Take the initiative; you never know where the person working with you on your class project will be working two years from now.
- 4 Tell EVERYONE You are Looking for a Job.** Start with people you know – family, friends, doctors, hairstylists, professors, alumni, anyone you come in contact with – and tell them what you want to do and why (your elevator speech).
- 5 Informational Interviewing.** Ask for advice and insight from a professional. Explain you are a student, and they were recommended as someone who has a lot of experience and expertise about the field. People are very open when they are treated like an expert. Don't call and ask "Do you have any jobs?"
- 6 Talk with Teachers & Professors.** They have interacted with thousands of students who are now out there working for companies. What are their careers?
- 7 Join LinkedIn.** Start making connections.
- 8 Follow up.** You've made a contact; be sure to maintain it. Get their business card. Before you leave the meeting, ask if they mind staying in touch with you. Smart job seekers know to maintain contacts with people in their field at all times, not just when they are looking for a letter of recommendation, internship, or job.
- 9 Say Thank You!** Don't take people for granted. Let them know you appreciate their time, help, and expertise. ALWAYS send thank-you notes or emails.

# RESUME COMPONENTS

## First Name Last Name

Address • City, State, ZIP Code • Phone • Personal email (not school email) • LinkedIn URL

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### **OBJECTIVE OR SUMMARY** (Optional and almost never used)

Only add if resume is not accompanied with cover letter, like at a job fair.

**Example:** Seeking a Marketing Analyst position starting Summer 2023

### **EDUCATION** (Required)

**Example:** Big Horn Basin High School, anticipated graduation date 2025, GPA 3.5 CPR certified, Safe Sitter certified, etc.

### **SKILLS** (Optional)

Present only skills, abilities, or accomplishments that are relevant to your reader.

**Example:** Communication, Leadership, Teamwork

### **EXPERIENCE** (Required)

Reflect skills, strengths, accomplishments, or achievements. Back up with evidence. Present most relevant information first. Experience can include volunteer and co-curricular activities as well as paid jobs. Quantify details to add magnitude: "Which resulted in an increase of 30 new members," or "Planned training program for 35 participants."

**Example:** Salesperson/Management Intern  
Company, Powell, WY | Summers years

- Earned 2022 top sales associate award for customer service
- Researched market trends and presented findings to top management

### **HONORS & AWARDS** (Optional)

List scholarships, Dean's & President's list, honors, and awards.

**Example:** Dean's list | dates

### **ACTIVITIES or VOLUNTEER SERVICE or INTERESTS** (Optional)

List professional groups & organizations, club memberships, interests, volunteer work, hobbies (if relevant), etc., to show diversity or another skill area related to your career goal. Include any positions held, special projects, or leadership posts held while a member. This area may also include travel experience. Try to avoid controversial topics.

# Trapper Jim

(307) 555-5555 | TrapperJ@nwc.edu/TrapperJ@gmail.com

School Address:

231 W 6th St  
Powell, WY 82435

Home Address:

100 Osage Drive  
Pinedale, WY 82601

## OBJECTIVE

Summer employment or internship, utilizing communication and graphic arts background to develop multimedia presentations. Willing to relocate for the summer.

## EDUCATION

**A.A. in Communication, Graphic Arts**

**Graduation May 2022**

Northwest College (NWC), Powell, WY

Coursework includes: Advertising, Graphic Design, Public Speaking

## SKILLS

- Adobe Illustrator, MS Publisher, InDesign, Photoshop
- Access, Word, Excel, PowerPoint
- English, Conversational Spanish

## WORK EXPERIENCE

**Sales:** FedEx, Cody, WY

Summer 2020 - Present

- Worked front counter and production printing two and four-color overlays.
- 16-20 hours per week while being a full-time college student.

**Trailblazer:** NWC Admissions, Powell, WY

Summer 2020

- Work with parents of incoming NWC students.
- Used verbal communication skills and training to lead tours and present information on College departments and programs.

**Graphic Designer:** WOW Inc., Burbank, CA

Summer 2019

**Internship:** Designed work including multimedia, production, four-color printing.

## HONORS AND ACTIVITIES

- Student Senator, Northwest College, 2020-2021
- Student Activities Chair, 2020-2021
- Dean's List

## PORTFOLIO

- [www.JTrapperPortfolio.com](http://www.JTrapperPortfolio.com) and available upon request

# RESUME CHECKLIST

Resumes are focused professional and academic life summaries. Resumes are subjective, there is no perfect format and different styles appeal to different types of employers.

**Error Free** (no inconsistencies, spelling, or grammar mistakes; all could instantly disqualify you)

**One Page** (unless you have extensive relevant experience)

**Easy to Read** (with clear font choices)

**Prominent Name & Contact Info** (up-to-date and easy to find)

**Clear & Organized Content** (order each section and list content from most to least relevant)

**Reverse Chronological Order** (most recent first)

**Consistent Tenses** (present tense for current position and past tense for older positions)

**Use Bullet Points** (highlight skills, abilities, competencies, and relevant duties)

**Consistent Margins** (can be adjusted to save space, but keep even)

Many employers spend  
**10 seconds**  
reviewing your resume. Make  
your best qualities easy to find.

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## EMPLOYER PET PEEVES:

- **No Personal Information.** Don't include photos, marital status, age, weight, religion, etc., to avoid potential discrimination issues.
- **No Templates.** A unique resume will set you apart from the competition.
- **No Jargon, Acronyms, or Abbreviations.** The person reviewing may be unfamiliar with some terms.
- **No "References available upon request."** Have a separate page of references.

**Your resume is an advertisement.  
Employers are the target and you are the product.  
Have your resume reviewed!**



# TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Transferable skills are abilities, attributes, and personal qualities obtained during your studies and experiences that you can use across industry lines. The following are examples of transferable skills.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS**

Identifying resources, delegating tasks, and initiating new ideas

## **ANALYTICAL SKILLS**

Compiling, sorting, and analyzing data

**CREATIVE SKILLS** Creating and designing new concepts or methods, or adding to existing ones

## **CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS**

Making reasonable judgments that are well thought out after analyzing and evaluating a situation, event, or experience

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS**

Working with the public and interacting with customers with professionalism and efficiency

## **INTERPERSONAL SKILLS**

Interacting effectively with others

## **LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

Motivating and leading a group toward a common goal

## **MULTITASKING SKILLS**

Successfully completing multiple tasks at one time

## **ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS**

Using time, energy, and resources in an effective way in order to accomplish tasks and achieve goals

## **PERSUASION SKILLS**

Changing a person's attitude or behavior toward a project, idea, object, or other person(s)

## **PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS**

Recognizing an issue and identifying ways to solve the problem

## **QUANTITATIVE SKILLS**

Sorting, analyzing, and applying mathematics to data

## **TEACHING SKILLS**

Transferring knowledge and skills to others

## **TEAMWORK SKILLS**

Collaborating with others in order to accomplish a goal or task

## **TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS**

Using appropriate technology to accomplish a task

## **TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS**

Using one's time effectively or productively

## **VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Listening and expressing one's self with words

## **WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Communicating ideas and concepts in writing

## The attributes employers seek on a candidate's resume

- Communication skills (written & verbal)
- Leadership
- Analytical/quantitative skills
- Strong work ethic
- Ability to work in a team
- Problem-solving skills
- Initiative
- Attention to detail
- Computer skills
- Organized

## Words that Describe your Personal Traits

active	determined	fair	methodical	reliable
adaptable	diplomatic	forceful	objective	resourceful
adept	disciplined	honest	outgoing	self-reliant
broad-minded	discreet	innovative	participate	sensitive
competent	efficient	instrumental	personable	sincere
conscientious	energetic	logical	pleasant	successful
creative	enterprising	loyal	positive	tactful
dependable	experienced	mature	productive	versatile

## APPLICATIONS BY EMAIL

- Always include a brief note in the body of the email stating what you're applying for, what materials you have attached, and how to contact you.
- An email can also be a good opportunity to reiterate your excitement for the position.

## APPLICATION FILE NAMES & SAVING DOCUMENTS

- Employers receive dozens of cover letters and resumes a day. Saving your documents with clear and appropriate file names will ensure your materials don't get lost. Example: **TrapperJoe.Resume** or **TrapperJoe.Coverletter**
- Saving as a PDF prevents your formatting from getting jumbled.
- Some online application systems cannot process PDFs, so always follow specific system instructions.

# REFERENCES

- Employers generally ask for three to four professional references.
- Ask each contact if they will serve as a **strong** positive reference for you.
- Have a reference page that is separate from your resume.
- Choose past/current supervisors (internship, summer job, or volunteer experience), professors, and colleagues.
- List your references in order of relevance and priority.
- Let references know you are job searching and that they may be contacted; provide them with your resume and a job description.

**Joe Trapper**  
231 W 6th St, Powell, WY 82435  
(307) 555-5555 / JTrapper@gmail.com

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## REFERENCES

Top Reference Name  
Reference's Job Title  
Employer  
Reference's Employers Mailing Address  
City, State ZIP Code  
Phone Number  
Email Address  
Relationship: (If necessary)

**Send references,  
a copy of your  
resumé, job  
description, and  
cover letter**

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- Request one month in advance of the due date.
- Follow references guidelines.

# COVER LETTER BASICS

**A cover letter introduces the resume and is your chance to pitch yourself. It proves that you can do the job and shows enthusiasm for the organization. Cover letters are sometimes more important than resumes.**

**The easiest way to approach your letter is to think of yourself responding to two common interview questions:**

## **1. Why do you want to work here?**

Research the company, show them that you are interested in what they do and explain why you decided to apply for the job.

## **2. Why should we hire you?**

Keep it brief and explain the reasons why you are qualified for the position. Look at the job description and show that you have the qualifications they are asking for in an employee. Make the connections for the reader!

### **Cover Letter Pet Peeves:**

- **Resume Duplication.** The employer already has your resume. There is no need to write out all your qualifications again.
- **Reading a Novel.** Long blocks of text with irrelevant information will certainly be skipped over.
- **Generic Letters.** Research the position and the company, then tailor your cover letter to the job announcement. The lack of specific references to the job and company will indicate to the employer that you were too lazy or uninterested to perform basic research on the company. Reference specific items from the job description. Many job seekers will not spend the time to develop a complete cover letter for each job, or even worse, they will neglect to include one.
- **Unnecessary Sentences.** Get to the point while remembering that employers read dozens of cover letters per position.

### **Online applicant tracking systems are used by many employers.**

Use plain text with no images. Keywords are critical to getting your resume to a person. Use the job requirements for deciding what words are important.

- Example: "Excel" not "Microsoft Office Suite"

**Most entry-level applicants have similar qualifications.  
The cover letter is your chance to stand out from the crowd.**

# COVER LETTER COMPONENTS

Joe Trapper  
231 W 6TH ST, Powell, WY 82435  
(307) 555-5555  
JTrapper@gmail.com

Date (Month Day, Year)

Name of Employer Contact (or HR Director)  
Job Title  
Organization  
Street Address  
City, State ZIP

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. \_\_\_\_\_: (use last name)

## INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH:

- **Why are you writing?** Specifically mention the position and company you are applying to.
- Make a connection with the reader by mentioning a common professional acquaintance or by expressing your interest in the organization.
- Conclude the paragraph with a statement similar to a thesis statement, indicating the skills you are going to address in the next two paragraphs.

## BODY PARAGRAPHS:

- **Show that you can do the job** by providing specific examples of work, internship, volunteer, leadership, or class experiences to illustrate you have the same or similar skills from the description.
- Explain why **you are a PERFECT FIT for this position** and this organization.
- Explain how you can add value to the company and **why you want to work there specifically**.

## CLOSING PARAGRAPH:

- Thank the employer for looking over your application materials, and reiterate your interest in the position and/or organization.
- Express your willingness to follow up with more information if needed and provide your phone number and email address for contact.

"Sincerely" or "Respectfully,"

*Signature*

Your Name (Typed)

### **Don't write:**

#### **"To Whom It May Concern"**

*When possible, direct your cover letter to a specific person. If you can't find a contact name, use "Dear Hiring Manager" or "Dear Search Committee."*

# SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

**Position: Junior Copywriter**  
**Company: Design My Home Inc.**  
**Location: Denver, CO, US**  
**Area of Interest: Creative Services**  
**Position Type: Full Time**

## JOB DESCRIPTION

Responsible for product copy for the “Design My Home” brand. We are seeking creative individuals with **\*strong writing and editing skills.\*** Ability to work as a **member of a team** is a must!

The Junior Copywriter will play a vital role in **\*writing product and website copy\*** that aligns with the company brand. The successful applicant will work closely with our in-house Project Management, Catalog Content, and Website Creative teams, and lead meetings with designers to develop an understanding of new products. He/she will partner closely with our in-house Web Development team to ensure accuracy of information and consistency of style in website product descriptions. **•Manage•** copy requests, **\*proofread and edit\*** incoming copy, and make changes as needed. **°Research and conceptualize°** new campaign ideas. **•Prioritize deadlines•** and manage multiple projects and assignments.

## DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience with project management
- Experience with in-house advertising
- Familiarity with **+Adobe Photoshop+,** InDesign, and Java
- Personal passion for interior design

**Note items in bold and Match Symbols (\* • • ° +~)**  
These are points of significance on the job description that have been included in the cover letter as an example.

## REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Four-year bachelor’s degree or equivalent experience
- One to three years of copywriting or editing experience
- Positive and flexible attitude, with the ability to roll with any situation
- Superior **\*editing, writing, proofreading\***, and **~communication skills~**
- Very strong ability to prioritize and work efficiently
- Strong competency as a **team player** as well as flexibility to work individually
- Strong sense of accountability, especially regarding deadlines, and follow-through on commitments

## TO APPLY:

Submit cover letter and resume to John Smith, Human Resources Manager, at [j.smith@designmh.com](mailto:j.smith@designmh.com).

# SAMPLE COVER LETTER

**Joe Trapper**

231 W 6th Street, Powell, WY 82435  
(307) 555-5555 / JTrapper@gmail.com

**March 1, 2023**

Mr. John Smith  
Human Resources Manager  
Design My Home  
1 Beacon Street  
Denver, CO 02116

**Note items in bold and Match Symbols (\* • ◻ ° + ~)**

These are points of significance on the job description that have been included in the cover letter as an example.

Dear Mr. Smith:

Having experience as a copywriting intern and enthusiasm for interior design, I am excited to apply for the Junior Copywriter position with Design My Home. After speaking with Sarah Brown at the University of Wyoming information session about copywriting opportunities in your Boston office, I knew Design My Home would be the perfect company for me. Design My Home's creative approach to promoting contemporary décor connects with my personal passion for interior design. My interest in home design in addition to my **\*creative writing, editing\*** and **~communication skills~** make me a strong candidate for this position.

As a copywriting intern I gained direct experience **\*writing, proofreading, and editing copy.\*** One of my largest projects at Publishers Clearing House was to **~communicate~** with my fellow interns to **°research and construct°** a potential marketing proposal. Our **◻team worked together◻** to design innovative online marketing materials using **+Adobe Photoshop+** for our new e-reader product to be implemented through our social media sites. I created copy content to complement the design work of my fellow interns. After proposing our ideas to the senior copywriters and marketing managers, our design was selected to be incorporated into the new social media campaign. I look forward to applying my **~communication~** and **◻teamwork skills◻** to the Junior Copywriter position at Design My Home.

While working for UW's campus newspaper, I was promoted from Staff Writer to Assistant Editor. As Assistant Editor it was vital I **•managed production deadlines•** to ensure our paper was published on time and without errors. Working for an independent, student-run paper increases my appreciation for Design My Home's history as a startup company.

I look forward to discussing how I could apply my skills and experience to the Junior Copywriter position. Please contact me with any questions at 307-555-5555 or JTrapper@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Joe Trapper

If the employer does not require a cover letter, but you apply through email, treat your email as your cover letter.

# SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

You know yourself better than anyone else. Think about which things might affect you when you get into the workforce. We have suggestions for a few circumstance, but you may need extra help before you graduate and find a job. Keep in mind that companies are required to abide by Equal Opportunity Guidelines (EOG).

## **Disabilities**

It is a personal decision to disclose information about your disability to an employer. It can explain to your employer about gaps in your background, but can create fear about prejudice. Remember you have legal protections through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

- Protects you from discrimination.
- Requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to perform positions essential job functions.
- Protection from retaliation and confidentiality.

## **Veterans**

Employers appreciate that veterans are hard workers and dependable employees. Transitioning from the military to civilian life and explaining your skills developed during your service can be difficult.

- Highlight your skills: patience, perseverance, teamwork.
- Many employers provide veterans' preference status (including USAJOBS.gov).

Utilize NWC services before you graduate!



# CAREER EVENT CHECKLIST

Preparation for career events is critical. Take advantage by attending as many relevant events as possible.



**Attend career fairs in the Big Horn Basin area.**



**Add reminders to you calendar so you don't forget.**



**Ask for time off so that you can attend the entire event.**



**Prepare your resume.** Get it reviewed by Career Services staff.



**Print multiple copies of your resume.**



**Develop specific questions for each company to show you have an interest in them and have taken time to research their company.**



**Plan your professional attire.** Clothes are clean, well fitting, and wrinkle-free; shoes shined, jewelry and fragrances are kept to a minimum, hair/nails/facial hair trimmed and professional, freshen breath, use deodorant.



**Consider using a professional portfolio or folder to hold your resume.** Include a pen and some paper for notes.



**Collect employers' business cards for communicating afterwards.**

While the experience may seem overwhelming, remember company representatives are there to specifically lean about you.

# ACE AN INTERVIEW

**Good News!** If you've been asked to interview, your resume and cover letter worked, and more importantly, **the employer thinks you are qualified**. Now, confidently impress them with these tips:

- **Know the Employer.** Show how much you want the job by looking over their website, looking at news about them, or interviewing someone who already works there. Be sure to review their mission and values statements.
- **Know the Job.** Read the description and highlight your skills and how they qualify you for the position.
- **Practice!** Even going over sample questions can make the difference.
- **Be on Time.** But, not too early.
- **Turn Off Your Cell Phone.** Not to vibrate.
- **Look Sharp.** This will make you feel more confident and professional.
- **Enthusiasm and Confidence.** If you are not excited and sure you can do the job, why would the employer hire you?
- **Know Your "Pitch."** You are the salesman and the product in an interview. Be clear and specific about what you can offer them. Use examples to highlight your qualifications.
- **Be Positive.** Make sure you highlight each answer, even ones about past failures, with how you made a positive impact or, at least, what you learned from your mistake.
- **Don't Lie!** Even a little embellishment could come back to hurt you in the future.
- **Bring Your Own Questions.** Show that you are thoroughly interested in learning more about the organization.
- **Conclusion.** End on a good note. Thank them for their time and reiterate again that you are very interested in the position. Know what the next steps are for the hiring process.
- **Follow Up.** Make sure that you have the correct information for everyone that interviewed you. Send them a thank-you note so they can see your interest.



**Your interview is an opportunity to determine if there is a fit between your skills and the position the company is seeking to fill. If your answers aren't what the interviewer is looking for, this position may not be the job for you anyway.**

# BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWS

Instead of asking how you **would** behave, they will ask how you **did** behave. The interviewer will want to know how you handled a situation as a predictor of what you might do in the future.

In a traditional interview you are asked questions such as “What are your strengths and weaknesses?” or “Why should I hire you?” Answers to these questions typically are more straight-forward and general, rather than based upon your specific actions.

**Be ready to describe the situation, your tasks in it, your action, and the result or outcome by remembering the acronym STAR:**

## **Situation★Task★Action★Result**

**Ways to prepare for a behavioral based interview:**

- **Tell a Story.** Recall recent situations that reflect favorable behaviors or actions, especially involving course work, work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning, and customer service.
- **Paint a Complete Picture.** Be sure each story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Be sure the result or outcome reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable).
- **Be Honest.** Don't embellish or omit any part of the story.
- **Be Specific.** Don't generalize about several events; give a detailed account and discuss your specific role within one event.
- **Prepare.** Write your stories down so you remember the details you want to highlight.

**Examples of behavioral based questions include:**

- Give an example of an occasion when you used logic to solve a problem.
- Tell me about a course, work experience, or extracurricular activity where you had to work closely with others. How did it go? How did you overcome any differences?
- Tell me about a time when your supervisor criticized your work. How did you respond?

**Keep in mind there aren't right or wrong answers.**

# ANSWER COMMON TOUGH QUESTIONS

- 1. Tell me about yourself.** It is okay to provide a little background on your life but they don't need a complete biography. Try to focus your answer and end with what drew you to the company and position.
- 2. What are your strengths/weaknesses?** STRENGTH — Focus on strengths that you have objectively demonstrated in previous experiences. WEAKNESS — When talking about weaknesses, employers hate cliché answers like, "I just care too much," or "I work too hard." You are not expected to reveal your deepest secret! Instead, talk about a real weakness that you have taken concrete steps to work on such as, "I struggled with organization so I have a planner, and I have seen positive improvement as I work on this weakness."
- 3. Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?** The employer is trying to determine if you are someone who could stay with the organization. Be honest, but try to avoid talking about how you want to move in six months, plans to run away to the circus, or thoughts about graduate school. Talk about what you like about the future career path or how the company mission and values are a good match for you. At the very least, talk about the type of work environment you'd like to work in or your leadership aspirations.
- 4. Why did you leave your last position?** Remember your mom's rule: "If you don't have anything nice to say...." Bad mouthing a former boss or company will not endear you to the interviewer. If you cannot think of a good reason, simply say that you are looking for a new challenge or opportunity.
- 5. What color/animal/superhero would you be and why?** Strange questions like these may pop up in an interview and throw you off. Remember that there is no wrong answer in this situation. The employer wants to see how you think under pressure and how creative you are. Take a deep breath and feel free to be imaginative and funny if appropriate.
- 6. Why should we hire you?** This is your chance to make your final pitch. Limit your answer to your top reasons. Number them if you have a tendency to ramble: "The three main reasons you should hire me are...." Typical reasons for entry level jobs are that you have the education, experience, and passion to fit in well in the work environment.

## Interview Tip:

Think before you answer! It is perfectly fine to take a deep breath and collect your thoughts so that you have a clear and concise answer.

# SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- Tell me a little about yourself./How would you describe yourself?
- Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?/What led you to choose your major field of study? Your minor?
- Why are you seeking a position with our company?
- What do you know about our company?
- What is your perception of a typical workday/work-week in this position?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in a company like ours?
- In what ways do you think you could make a positive contribution to our company?
- Why should I hire you?
- What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work?
- If you were hiring a graduate for this position, what qualities would impress you?
- What do you see yourself doing 5-10 years from now?
- What are your long-range and short-range career goals and objectives? How do you plan to achieve these goals? When and why did you establish these goals?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- Describe a situation in which you were successful.
- Which experience has prepared you most for this position?
- Which job have you liked best/least and why?
- What was the most difficult challenge you have had to handle in a job and what did you do?
- What have you learned from your mistakes?
- Describe an experience in which you worked as a part of a team.
- What two or three accomplishments/achievements are you most proud of and why?
- Give me an example of a time when you have had to work under tremendous pressure. What was the outcome?
- What changes would you make in your last place of employment/college experience and why?
- How do you think your previous supervisors/professors would describe you?
- What kind of supervisor do you enjoy working for?/What qualities would a successful manager possess? What is your idea of an ideal supervisor/supervisee relationship?
- Describe your most rewarding college experience.
- What college subjects do you like best/least and why?
- What have you learned from participation in extracurricular/community activities?
- How has your college experience prepared you for the career you are seeking?
- Are your grades an indication of your future performance? Why/Why not?
- Do you have plans for continued study for an advanced degree?
- Do you have a geographical preference and why? Are you willing to relocate?
- Are you willing to travel?

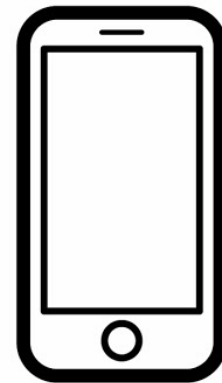
## **Questions you can ask the interviewer**

- How would you describe a typical day on the job/the nature of the position?
- What type of training can I expect in the first three months?
- What is your vision for this position? For the company?
- What are some of the difficulties facing your company now?
- What have been some of the best results produced by your people?
- What characteristics in applicants most impress you and your company?
- Is there anything else I can tell you about my qualifications?

# PHONE & ONLINE INTERVIEWING TIPS

Phone or online (usually Skype or Zoom) interviews are very common and are used primarily as the method of choice for the initial interview, primarily if you are in a different location. They can be difficult because you will have less, or no, nonverbal feedback.

- **Check (and double check) your equipment.** You do not want to lose the job because of technical difficulties or reception problems.
- **Your environment is key.** Make sure there are no distractions around you and that you are comfortable. Check what is on the wall behind you or any space visible in your camera.
- **Have job-related materials in front of you.** Resume, cover letter, job description, company info, etc. You can bring a “cheat sheet” if necessary, containing anything that could help prompt you on relevant interview questions.
- **Take notes.** Write down relevant information or potential questions for the employer. Also, make sure you get the names of everyone who interviews you for follow up and thank-you notes.
- **Match the interviewer’s speaking rate and pitch.** Remember to stay within your personality range, but venture toward that portion of your range which most closely matches that of your interviewer. This is an excellent way to establish rapport quickly over distance.
- **Don’t be thrown off by long pauses or silence after you answer a question.** The interviewers are probably just writing down your answer.



# AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Usually it is a good idea to follow up after an interview if you are sincerely interested and believe the interviewer showed interest in you.

- 1. Thank-you letter.** Send immediately after the interview.
  - Thank you notes can be hand-written or emailed.
  - It is okay to send a thank you by email, particularly if that is how you have previously communicated with the interviewer.
  - Include your thanks for the interview, reiterate your interest in the job, enthusiasm for the company, qualifications and skills, and a final thank you.
- 2. Follow-up.** If you have not heard back from the employer in their proposed time frame, wait a few weeks then write a brief letter reminding the interviewer of your meeting, express your appreciation for it, and tell him/her again of your interest. In some cases, it may be wise to write a second letter or email about a month later if you do not receive a response to your first letter. **Persist.**
- 3. Follow-up again.** If the interviewer tells you to take a specific action at a later date (i.e., submit an application), telephone or write only after you have done those things.
- 4. A Job offer!** Notify that employer of your decision as soon as possible.
  - Ask for an extension if they want a decision by a certain date and you need more time to visit other organizations before deciding.

## Job Acceptance Ethics

When an offer is accepted, you should have every intention of honoring that commitment. Accepting an offer only as a precautionary measure is misleading to the employer. Students should recognize that the acceptance of a job offer may be a legally binding contract and that the employer may have the option to take legal action against the person who accepts more than one offer.

# THANK-YOU LETTERS

Thank-you letters help you stay on the employer's mind, reiterate your interest, strengths, and introduce additional relevant information.

- Email within 24 hours.
- Mail a letter or card in addition to email (optional, but encouraged).
- Send individual notes to each person you interact with (if possible).
- Send a message of some sort after any significant interaction with an employer (career fair, employer panel, networking event, interview).

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**Joe Trapper**

231 W. 6th Street | Powell, WY 82345  
(307) 555-5555 / JTrapper@gmail.com

March 1, 2023

Dear Mr. Doe:

It was a pleasure to meet you this morning. Thank you for your willingness to interview me for the Communications Associate job at Aspen Laboratories. Your team really seems to enjoy working there, and I'd be fortunate to count myself among them.

I was particularly interested in the upcoming projects you mentioned this afternoon and believe my experience in my high school's yearbook class – especially with social media – provided me with a solid foundation to help spread the word about the good work going on at Aspen Laboratories.

Please let me know if you require any additional information. I hope to hear back from you soon about the next steps.

Respectfully,



Joe Trapper





### **Foundation & Alumni • [nwcollegefoundation.org](http://nwcollegefoundation.org)**

The Northwest College Foundation & Alumni Office secures and manages private gifts for NWC, supporting student opportunity and enhancing the College's educational offerings. It's also home to the NWC Alumni Association, which provides meaningful experiences to students and alumni through programming, communication, and celebration to cultivate a shared commitment to NWC. The office facilitates connections with NWC's 24,000+ alumni around the world.

### **Enrollment Services • [nwc.edu/admissions](http://nwc.edu/admissions) • TEXT (307) 271-8314 • CALL (307) 754-6015**

The Enrollment Services office will assist any incoming student from the initial campus tour all the way to graduation. If you have any questions about Northwest College or how to get started the eager staff are here to assist.

### **Academic Programs • [nwc.edu/academics](http://nwc.edu/academics) | Center for Training and Development • [nwc.edu/ctd](http://nwc.edu/ctd)**

During the career and college decision process, one of the biggest questions students are faced with is what to study. NWC offers 45 transfer degrees, 19 technical degrees, and 22 certificates. Our Center for Training and Development provides superior quality training programs through simulators, apprenticeships, customized training, and more. Discover our many transfer and workforce-ready options, and begin building a solid foundation that will allow you to launch your career in a field best suited for your passions.

### **Advising • [nwc.edu/advising](http://nwc.edu/advising)**

Get one-on-one help with academic advising, transferring to another college, setting up an internship, and finding a job or career.

### **TRIO • [nwc.edu/trio](http://nwc.edu/trio)**

TRIO Support Services is a program funded by the Department of Education to provide eligible students with extra help. TRIO staff members and peer mentors are committed to helping you navigate and succeed in college.

### **Library • [nwc.edu/library](http://nwc.edu/library)**

The Hinkley Library staff develops, organizes, maintains, and provides access to materials which support students and other library users in their pursuit of educational and lifelong learning goals.

### **Tutoring • [nwc.edu/tutoring](http://nwc.edu/tutoring)**

Peer Tutoring Services offers free drop-in tutoring for math and science courses and writing for an written assignment in any course. Northwest College's Peer Tutors are recommended by the academic departments for which their tutor.

### **Student Success Center • [nwc.edu/success](http://nwc.edu/success)**

The Student Success Center offers students with free counseling services from licensed professional counselors; accessibility support services to help students succeed in their work; and crisis intervention when an emergency arises.

