



# Presenting Your Best Self to Employers

Your resume and your job interview are an employer's first impression of you as a candidate for a position. So, it's your job to make sure it's a good one. We have some tips that you can use to strengthen your chances of landing an interview or job offer.

## Resumes

Your resume is an overview of your experience, education, and qualifications that an employer uses to evaluate your suitability for a particular job. When writing and editing your resume, [consider these tips](#):

- **Highlight** your contact information. Use a large, clear font so an employer can easily contact you.
- **Show** accomplishments. In addition to listing the positions you have held and your responsibilities, include examples of what you have achieved.
- **Include** relevant volunteer work. Paid work experience isn't the only way to gain skills. If you've been a volunteer or unpaid intern, you may have acquired skills or knowledge that will transfer to the workplace.
- **Proofread** your resume. Check for errors, including spelling, formatting, or typos. Ask someone else to proofread it, too. A second set of eyes may be able to identify mistakes or skills and experience that you didn't include.
- **Tailor** your resume for specific jobs. Compare your resume to the responsibilities and qualifications for specific job listings. Note keywords in the job posting and use those words in your resume if you have those skills and experience.
- **Refresh** your resume. Add new experiences or skills or just review it to be certain it still presents a true picture of your abilities.

## Interviews

In an interview you need to translate the experience on your resume into a conversation. [Here are some tips to help you make a strong impression](#):

- **Research the employer.** Before your interview, learn about the organization's mission, values, and work. Think about why you want to work there and be ready to explain what your strengths and experience would add to their organization.
- **Arrive early.** Decide how you're going to get to the interview location ahead of time. Plan to arrive 10 minutes early. Allow extra time for possible delays to make sure you arrive on time and feel calm.
- **Dress appropriately.** While business suits and professional dresses are appropriate for office jobs, how you dress should fit the work environment. If you're interviewing for a more casual workplace, you can check the organization for photos to see how employees dress. If in doubt, err on the side of professional attire. No matter what type of job you're interviewing for, make sure your clothes are clean and wrinkle-free.



- **Practice answering questions.** Look on the internet for sample interview questions and try answering them from your perspective. In this way, you can think ahead of time about how to talk about your experience and skills. Practicing and polishing your answers will help you feel more confident during the actual interview.
- **Prepare questions to ask.** Interviews are your opportunity to get to know the employer. Asking questions shows that you are serious about the position. For example,
  - What is a typical day or week like for someone in this position?
  - What's the most important thing someone would need to accomplish in the first 3 – 6 months in this position?
  - What's your favorite part of working for this business?
  - What are the next steps in the hiring process?

Be respectful. Be on time. Turn off your phone and give the interviewer your full attention. When the interview is over, thank the interviewer for their time and restate your interest in the position.

## Disability and Your Job Search

It is your choice whether to disclose your disability to an employer. However, you will need to disclose if you need to request an accommodation, whether it's for the job application and interview process, or for the workplace.

When disclosing a disability, it is important to provide information about the nature of your disability and how the disability affects (or would affect) your ability to perform the job successfully. Although there is no specific time frame to request an accommodation, you should do so before you have difficulties on the job, or before they become too serious.

If you're working with a Ticket to Work service provider, they may help you think about the decision to disclose. If you need an accommodation for the interview or on the job, they can also help guide you through the process of making the request.

## Ticket to Work and Your Job Search

**Social Security's Ticket to Work (Ticket) Program** supports career development for people ages 18 through 64 who receive Social Security disability benefits and want to work. The Ticket Program is free and voluntary.

Through the Ticket Program, you can work with a service provider, like an Employment Network (EN) or your State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency, to receive free supports and services that can help you on your path to financial independence through work.

EN services include career planning, job placement assistance, and ongoing employment support. Some ENs may also provide Work Incentives/benefits counseling, resume assistance, interview preparation, and assistance with requesting accommodations. State VR agencies provide the same core services to Ticketholders and additional services like training programs, rehabilitation services, special programs for veterans and youth in transition, and tuition support for college coursework.

**Find a Ticket Program service provider using the Find Help tool at [choosework.ssa.gov/findhelp](https://choosework.ssa.gov/findhelp).**

## ► LEARN MORE

For more information about the Ticket Program, call the Ticket to Work Help Line at **1-866-968-7842** or **1-866-833-2967 (TTY)**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. ET.

To view this content online and access the resources linked in the fact sheet, please visit <https://choosework.ssa.gov/library/fact-sheets>.



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