



Career Resources* for OPHS Students Table of Contents

Internships and Job Shadowing.....	Page 2
Informational Discussions/Interviews.....	Pages 3 & 4
Resume Writing Tips.....	Page 5
Sample Resume.....	Page 6
Cover Letters and Sample.....	Page 7
Job Applications.....	Page 8
Steps in Career Planning.....	Page 9
Finding Your First Job.....	Page 10
Preparing for your Job Interview.....	Page 11
Social Media and Career Success.....	Page 12

*[Source: California Career Center <http://www.calcareercenter.org>]

Internships

Internships provide on-the-job training similar to apprenticeships. Some high school programs, such as California Partnership Academies, include internships as part of their required experiences, but they can also be found by an individual student.

Internships are opportunities to gain experience in a particular type of work. You can determine if you have an interest in that particular career, you can create a network of contacts, and/or gain school credit. Internships provide employers with cheap or free labor for (typically) low-level tasks. Some interns find permanent, paid employment with the companies in which they interned. Their value to the company may be increased by the fact that they need little to no training.

Internship positions can be found in most occupational areas including business, government, non-profit groups, and organizations.

Contact Mrs. Friedman, Career Advisor in the OPHS College & Career Center, at pfriedman@opusd.org to learn more about how to land an internship.

Job Shadowing

Job shadowing is another great way to learn about a job. Job shadowing involves spending time with someone who's actually doing the work and/or volunteering to help out in the workplace.

Job shadowing lets you learn about a job by walking you through the work day as a shadow to a competent worker. It is a temporary, unpaid introduction to working in an occupation you are interested in learning more about. Shadowing lets you see the work environment, employability and occupational skills used, and potential career options.

A formal job shadow program requires an employee/company to partner with the school so contact Mrs. Friedman (pfriedman@opusd.org) regarding the programs available at OPHS. You can also create job shadowing opportunities on your own by talking with family members and family friends.

Informational Interviews

Informational interviews can be a great job-hunting resource. They are like job interviews except you ask all the questions about an occupation, not a specific job opening. You have two goals during this interview. The first is to learn about the occupation to see if it might suit you. The second is to establish a connection with the person you're interviewing.

Informational interviews can lead to job search suggestions, company contacts, and even job offers!

Benefits

Informational interviews provide many benefits to help you.

- Make a contact—a connection with someone.
- Learn more about the company, industry, and job.
- Gain confidence as you practice your interviewing skills.
- Possibly learn about “hidden” (unadvertised) jobs or internships.

Who to Ask

Interviews take time, so target only individuals who have occupations you really want to pursue.

You might ask:

- Friends, family, neighbors, supervisors, coworkers, and anyone they know.
- People listed in the yellow pages or association directories.

Guidelines

Here are some general guidelines for the interview:

- Interview three people for each occupation of interest.
- When you call, say how you got that person's name.
- Explain that you're seeking information and guidance.
- Ask to meet for 20 minutes and stick to it (wear a watch).
- Bring paper and pen with you and take notes.
- Research the occupations and organization beforehand as you would for a job interview.
- Dress and act as you would at a job interview.
- DON'T ask the person for a job in any way.

Questions to Ask

Since you probably don't have much time, pick only a few important questions to ask.

Here are some ideas:

- How did you get into this type of work? This job?
- What type of preparation/education/training did you have? What is required?
- What do you enjoy the most? The least?
- What three skills do you use most often?
- Describe a typical day or week.
- What motivates you?
- Describe difficulties you regularly face on the job.
- What are the advancement opportunities and limits?
- How does a person usually progress in this field?
- What must a person know to stay competitive?
- What's the economic outlook for this career?
- How does your job affect your home life?
- What are typical entry-level job titles and duties?
- How do you suggest I learn more about this field?
- Here are my strengths. How do they fit in this field?

After the Interview

When your scheduled time is almost up, end the interview. Here are some important tips for ending your interview.

- Thank the person before you leave.
- Ask for referrals to others who might be available for an informational interview.
- Ask for the person's business card.
- Immediately send a thank you note.
- Evaluate how well you conducted the interview.
- Decide how to weigh what the interviewee said. Take what you heard with a grain of salt and trust your own judgment.
- Review the notes you took and decide on your next step.
- When you eventually do get a job, tell your interviewees about it—they'll want to know how your search ended!

Resume Writing Tips

Looking for a job means you must have a personal resume. A resume is a one-page summary of your skills, accomplishments, experiences, and education, and is designed to grab an employer's interest and get you an interview. It is your personal poster or web page telling about yourself and why you are qualified for the job.

Here are some resume-writing tips:

- Show your best attributes and skills so the employer will want to meet you.
- Describe your skills and abilities as they relate to the job duties.
- Focus on your experience and education that's appropriate for the job you are seeking.
- Be honest about what you list.
- Ask someone like a school counselor, career center technician, or teacher to read your draft and give you suggestions.
- Always prepare a well-organized, easy-to-read printed resume (hand-written resumes are not acceptable).
- Make sure your resume is error free: check for correct spelling and grammar. Have someone else proofread it.
- Allow plenty of time to develop your resume.
- Ask your teacher, school counselor, club advisor, or coach to be a reference.
- Start your resume with the job objective at the beginning.

There are many resources for resume writing, both in books and on the Internet. Many companies use only electronic resumes which may have different guidelines.

Sample Resume

Below is a sample resume for you to use to get you started.

Lisa Ortiz
142 South Main Street
El Monte, CA 91735
(626) 555-1212
Lisa's_email@address

OBJECTIVE: Retail Sales Clerk

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- General retail merchandising skills
- Bilingual—Spanish
- Sales experience
- Merchandise stocking
- Display work
- Use of computerized cash register
- Technological literacy—Word processing, database management, and Internet

EXPERIENCE

Cashier at Target	Summer 2019
Volunteer Work at L.A. County Fair	Spring 2019
McDonald's Restaurant	September 2018 to May 2019
Night Drive Up Window Service	

EDUCATION

Excellence High School	Graduate June 2021
Career Technical Education-Retail Merchandising Classes	Junior and Senior Years
Work Experience Education Class	

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND AWARDS

Junior Scholastic Scholarship Federation
Bank of America Award in Retail Merchandising
Community Service Award for Volunteer Work
Certificate in Computer Studies
OSHA Safety Certificate

INTERESTS/HOBBIES

Softball
Hiking and Backpacking

REFERENCES Available upon request. (Type your references on a separate page.)

Cover Letters

Cover letters should always be included with any resume you submit. Your cover letter may be as important as your resume. Cover letters are customized to fit the job sought.

An excellent cover letter:

- Is addressed to a specific person.
- Identifies the job you are applying for and how you found out about it.
- Briefly summarizes your skills in relationship to the job you are applying for.
- Tells the employer when you are available for an interview and when you can start work.
- Provides information on how to contact you.

JobStar Central  has a lot of great information to help you develop your cover letters.

The following cover letter is a sample of what you might use to get a part-time job.

Sample Cover Letter

September 1, 2018

Mrs. Linda Chang, Personnel Manager
Image Unlimited
5683 Business Center
Industrial City, California 91820

Dear Mrs. Chang:

In the August 20 issue of Career Magazine, you advertised for a retail sales trainee. Please consider me as an applicant. I graduated from Excellence High School in June. My high school program included two years as a retail merchandising student. This program helped me develop skills in sales, inventory, merchandise stocking, display work, and the use of computerized cash registers.

My resume is enclosed. I am available immediately for part-time or full-time employment. It would be possible for me to report for a personal interview any day at your convenience. I appreciate your consideration. You may reach me at (626) 555-1212 or by e-mail at lortiz@employee.net.

Sincerely,

Lisa Ortiz (Your Signature)

Lisa Ortiz
142 South Street
El Monte, CA 91735


Enclosure: Resume

Job Applications

In addition to the resume and cover letter, your job application is one of the first impressions your potential employer will have of you.

Make it a good one by following these tips:


- Develop a “Master Application” so you are ready to fill in any application at a moment’s notice.
- Read the entire application before filling in any sections.
- Use information from your resume to complete the application.
- For difficult questions, use a separate piece of paper to practice writing answers.
- Most applications can be completed online, for a hard copy application use a pen with dark ink (preferably black) and print clearly.
- Completely answer ALL questions. If questions do not apply, write N/A (not applicable) or draw a line in that space.
- After you’re done, proofread the application, correcting spelling and grammar errors.




Having a Master Application with your personal, education, skills, and work experience information already filled in makes applying for jobs so much easier and faster. Check out this typical [Job Application](#) (PDF) to see what employers usually ask for.

Steps in Career Planning

Like any project, you'll need to take certain steps to start your plan. Here are a few to consider:

- **Talk** with your school counselor, teachers, family members, and other role models about careers in which you are interested.
- **Reach out to** your school's career advisor Mrs. Friedman and ask for assistance in using career resources.





Complete an interest inventory, skill assessment, and/or personality inventory at your school's career center or at home. A great place to begin is with the [California CareerZone](#). This information will guide you to careers that may fit you well. Once your assessments are done, seek out career center personnel or your counselor to help you interpret them.

- **Match** your personal interests, skills, and personality traits with possible career choices.
- **Consider** the lifestyle you'd like to live. Will your budget, educational goals, and career options work together to support the lifestyle you want? Go to [Make Money Choices](#) and find out!
- **Investigate** different careers using career center materials and other Internet resources, like the [California CareerZone](#), or [Roadtrip Nation](#).
- **Take** high school classes leading to your desired [career pathway](#).
- **Plan** for postsecondary [education/training](#) to reach your career goal.
- **Add** "real-world" skills through participation in school clubs and organizations, student body activities, sports, and local community organizations.
- **Start** a part-time or summer job to develop employment skills.
- **Dream**, be bold, your life will be what you make it so don't hesitate to use all the information you gather to help you identify and pursue a life that matters.

Finding Your First Job

You may want to get a job, but you aren't sure where and how to begin. You can build your skills through your class work, participate in school and community activities, volunteer service, and part-time employment. If you get your first job in your chosen career area, it will help you discover whether or not that is the field for you.


There are many resources to assist you in looking for and keeping part-time or full-time jobs. You'll get better results if you widen your search by pursuing a variety of approaches, including:

- Networking with friends, relatives, neighbors, teachers, employers, clergy
- School Work Experience Office
- School Career Center
- Knocking on employers' doors (for example, at malls or supermarkets)
- Call potential employers
 - Get phone numbers from company websites and/or [professional associations](#)
- Employment Openings posted in some public libraries
- Internet job posting sites such as [indeed](#) and [ZipRecruiter](#)
- Temporary Employment Agencies
- [America's Job Centers of California](#)
- Help Wanted Classified Ads
- Volunteer Work

Preparing for Your Job Interview

It is critical to be prepared when you are called to go on an interview. Check off these items as you prepare for your interview:

1. Know your employer—learn about the organization in general and specific office if possible.
2. Be prepared to emphasize your strengths and how they fit the job.
3. Arrive early and call if you are delayed or need to reschedule.
4. References—bring a list of three references; do not use family members.
5. Portfolios—prepare a sample of documents, projects, and pictures representing your skills and achievements in a notebook or portfolio binder.
6. Dress up—first impressions are lasting.
7. Prepare a list of questions to ask the interviewer.
8. Bring several copies of your resume, a pad of paper and pen to make notes.
9. Have a positive attitude and a friendly smile.
10. Practice interviewing with a friend or family member until the process seems natural.

Check out this list of [common interview questions](#)  from the U.S. Department of Labor CareerOneStop.

Social Media and Career Success

Social media is increasingly becoming a way that job seekers can look for work and employers can evaluate perspective employees.

Think about Managing Your Online Reputation from a career perspective using these tips from Princeton University Career Services:

1. Remember, what you post online becomes public information. It is no longer under your control.
2. Be strategic about what you share with the world. Consider the long term.
3. Think before you post: Today's rant, practical joke, or flame may come back to haunt you.
4. Think before you post: Your private video, photo, or Snapchat may go public.
5. Regularly review your contacts, circles, friends and followers. They may not be your BFFs.
6. Understand your privacy settings and terms of service. Service providers often change terms.
7. Monitor your name online. Google yourself and set alerts to avoid surprises.
8. Protect your online reputation and create your personal brand. Your future will thank you.

Check out these how-to ideas:

[Using Social Media in Your Job Search](#) 

The San Jose State University School of Library and Information Science

[How To Effectively Use Social Media in Your Job Search](#) 

The University of Buffalo School of Management