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ABSTRACT

This packet documents suggestions for conducting a job search, writing a resume, and interviewing. Suggestions for a job search include the following: knowing one's skills, knowing what one is looking for, and knowing where to look for jobs, including newspaper advertisements, employment centers, employment firms, networking, and blind attempts. Information on resume writing is as follows: what is a resume, what should be in a resume, building a first resume (including worksheet), and writing a cover letter to accompany a resume. The following interviewing tips are provided: preparing for interviews, making a good first impression, continuing the first impression, being positive, asking questions, doing a sales job, closing the deal, writing a thank-you note, being persistent, typical questions asked by interviewers, and questions that should not be asked. (IC)



Tips on Finding and Getting a Job...Searching for, Writing a Resume, and Interviewing ICPAC Information Series IS-9

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Tips on finding and getting a job.

searching for, writing a resume, and interviewing

Getting your first job--or any job--is not easy. In fact, the idea may be overwhelming. Eventually, however, almost everyone lands that first job, suffers adjustment jitters on the first days on the new job, and then settles down into handling it for several months or even years. Just keep in mind that "everyone does it," and you can do it, too!

How to start?

Know what you are looking for.

First of all,

employers.

you need to decide the purpose of your job search and the type of job you are looking for. Be honest with yourself--so you can be honest with possible

Are you looking for a part-time job, a temporary job, or a full-time, long-term job? The type of job are you looking for depends on your goals.

If this is to be a part-time or temporary job, you may think that you won't need to enjoy this position nor look at it for any type of meaningful experience.

Here are some things to think about before you start your actual job search.

- All jobs will give you some type of experience. The experience may be good or it may be negative. But you will learn something on the job that you can take with you to the next job. In addition, you can and should be able to use this experience on a resume to show additional skills you have learned. You also should be able to use supervisors at any jobs as references for your next job searches. And if nothing else, you may find out that you really enjoy doing that type of work or that you hate it and never want to work in that field again.
- What skills do you have that the job market might want? Take a sheet of paper and list all the experiences you have had during your lifetime. Include work, life, volunteer, military, education and training, hobbies and interests, and leisure activities. Then think about the skills you gained during these experiences. Rate them on a scale of strong to competent to acceptable. Write down as many skills ERIC you can think of; be generous with this list. You always mark out the weaker ones later. (You

can use this information when developing your resume and during the interview.) But knowing these skills will also help you

determine the type of job you can get or the training you may need to do a job well.

- Find the types of jobs for which your skills are needed. If you don't know these jobs, look at the Dictionary of Occupational Titles at your local library. It lists skills needed for all jobs.
- Look at the kinds of things you like to do. If you like to work outside, look for work that allows you that opportunity. If you are an active person, make certain that the jobs you are seeking allow for some activity and that you will not be sitting all day. If you do not enjoy working with people all the time, look for a job which allows working on your own.
- If this is to be a long-term, full-time job, do you want advancement opportunities? Will a smaller firm offer these opportunities? Or will you need to look only at larger firms for the chance to promote to higher-level jobs? Will these opportunities be available at the division you begin at or will you have to move to take an advancement?
- · Remember, to be successful in any job, you need to enjoy it. You cannot go to work on a daily basis, be miserable, and do a good or even an acceptable job. So, you need to make certain that the job fits you. Therefore, it is most important to "know yourself."

Once you have done these things, you can start looking for specific jobs--you can start picking and choosing the jobs you want to pursue. It will not be as important to have the job fit you perfectly if the job is to be only a temporary one. You can handle anything if you know it won't last forever--or even a long period of time. But if this job is to last you for six months or over, match yourself carefully to it.

Where do I look for jobs?

Ever heard the saying "It's a jungle out there?!" Many people in the working world compare it to the wildness of the jungle. The job market is often said to be tough

because it is not wellorganized. There is no one place where all jobs are listed; in fact, according to J. Michael Farr, of JIST Works, Inc.. Indianapolis, "85% of all job openings are not advertised, posted, or



otherwise made available to the general public." It should also be pointed out that most companies are not really very expert in knowing how to hire people. You may find that many employers do not know how to interview and that even after they finish interviews, they take weeks or months to decide whom to hire. And you will more than likely not ever hear from them even if you interview with them. Many never let you know if they filled the job opening.

Sound like a nightmare? It can be. But, it will be easier if you go about your job search with a plan-of-attack and stay in control. Here are some helpful hints to planning your "job attack!"

- 1. Spend as much time as you can finding a job. For people with no job, family, or educational commitments, it is advised to treat job-hunting like a full-time job. Work at it as many hours a day as you can.
- 2. Find job leads. Here are some of the possibilities: newspaper and journal classifieds, state employment centers, private employment firms, networking, and blind attempts (sending in your resume, calling on the phone, or showing up unannounced to fill out an application). Look at the yellow pages in your phone book. Talk with your local Chamber of Commerce for companies needing your skills. Read the business section for new or expanding companies. You will want to use every possibility.

Another opportunity for job listings is the internet.

Many companies are now listing their job openings on various bulletin boards on the internet. Some are listed offession while others are listed by both profession y location. You will want to explore this new

opportunity, especially if you are willing to relocate. These listings usually describe the position and then include an address for forwarding your resume or any other steps the company wants you to take.

You can also call the ICPAC Hotline for career profiles. Profiles often give names and addresses of associations for certain jobs and careers. These associations will have valuable information on businesses which employ people with your training and skills.

3. Do your homework. Some businesses have no set way of hiring people. Others do. If you have certain places where you want to work or apply, call their personnel offices and find out about their hiring process. Some will tell

you about services they use, such as the state employment centers. Others will tell you that they accept applications only on certain days. Follow up with action.

4. Use the "back door." This is where you should

learn to network--ask your friends and relatives to refer you to others who work at a specific place or in the type of job you want. Or call the personnel office and ask for an informational interview. You can request to interview with a person in the type of job that you want. This way, you will get to know someone in your

desired place of employment or who can help direct you or refer you to a similar job. This type of interview can also give you inside information about the job or business.

- 5. Look at each job ad carefully. Even if you have only some of the skills that are listed as requirements, you should apply for the job. According to Richard Boles in What Color is Your Parachute?, "Forty-two percent of all job openings remain unfilled because an employer cannot find a qualified applicant." If that employer really needs to fill the position, he or she may hire you and offer to train you on the skills that you don't have.
- 6. Always use a resume to apply for a job. Even though there may be a formal application, your resume will supply information and say something about you that the application will not. A cover letter is also very useful, especially if you are applying for a specific job with a specific company. The cover letter should be written specifically for each job. You should strongly state your main qualifications or experience that fit that particular job. Remember, you are selling yourself--and only you can do that!

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Let's look at writing a resume...

What is a resume?

A resume is a summary of your education, employment, and experience. When you fill out an application for a job, you are telling future employers what they want to know. A resume is a way for you to tell them what you want them to know.

What should be in my resume?

Your resume should include positive information about yourself. Your goal is to sell your skills and abilities to a potential employer. Often, it is your resume that earns you the chance to interview for a job. You should tailor your resume to the type of work that you want. However, avoid the temptation to exaggerate or include untrue information.

How do I build my first resume?

- 1. Fill in the Resume Worksheet on the next page. Don't skip this step! Refer to your list of skills that you put together from the first steps of this information piece. Also, list all of your achievements. That way you won't forget to include something important.
- 2. Organize your information. Use the two examples on this page and the next as a guide for organizing your resume. Include dates only if your work history is continuous.
- 3. Make it neat. If possible, use a computer. This will allow you to easily revise and customize it for individual employers. Make your resume easy to read by using a simple type face, such as Times Roman. Print it in black ink on white, off-white, light blue or gray paper.
- 4. Have it reviewed. Ask someone who knows you fairly well to review your resume. Get as much useful feedback on your resume as possible before you give it to a potential employer. A simple error could cost you a job.

Laura Anne Green 2345 North Holland Street Ellettsville, Indiana (812) 555-5555

Objective

Sales associate in a major retail store

Education

Ellettsville High School Business Practices Program

3.0 G.P.A.

Experience

Clerk, Elletts ville Emporium

Responsible for floor sales and inventory in a houseware

and linens specialty store

Chef's Assistant, Royal Catering

Ordered and prepared ingredients for use by chef

Tennis Coach, YMCA Summer camps

Introduced children ages 8 to 12 to basic tennis skills

Activities Treasurer, Future Business Leaders of America, 1992-93

Activities Coordinator for church youth group with 150 members

Co-Captain and Letter Winner, Girl's Varsity Tennis

References References furnished upon request from employers, teachers, or

pastor.

Writing the cover letter

Always include a cover letter with your resume. It serves as your introduction to the person who might hire you. In your cover letter, you must convince the potential employer to read your resume. An employer is more likely to read your resume if you follow these guidelines in your cover letters:

- 1. Direct your letter to the person who has the job opening.
- 2. If possible, mention how you found out about the opening.
- 3. Have a strong opening statement that gives an overview of your recent achievements and experiences.
- 4. Include the key strengths that you think would make you successful at the job.
- 5. Write your signature over your typed name in the closing.

Make sure your cover letter is typed and error free. One misspelled word can cost you a job!



Resume Worksheet

Use this worksheet as a starting point for your resume. The questions below should help you think about your experiences and skills. Write down everything you can remember from jobs and activities. Later, you can remove information you don't need.

				
Job Objective. W		nre you looking		
What skills do you ha	ave? Are they strong	ng, competent or just acceptable?		
Strong		Competent	Acceptable	
				 _
What type of work en				
want?				
·		Graduation date:		
List any honors or aw	vards received.			
Work Experience. well as skills you dev	List job titles and	location of paid and volunteer work of list job accomplishments, too. Dates of employment/ volunteering:	experiences. List all of the d	uties you performed Skills:
Work Experience.	List job titles and veloped. Be sure to	list job accomplishments, too. Dates of employment/	-	• 1
Work Experience.	List job titles and veloped. Be sure to	list job accomplishments, too. Dates of employment/	-	• 1
Work Experience. well as skills you dev Job Title:	List job titles and veloped. Be sure to City:	list job accomplishments, too. Dates of employment/ volunteering:	Duties performed:	Skills:
Work Experience. well as skills you dev Job Title:	List job titles and veloped. Be sure to City:	list job accomplishments, too. Dates of employment/ volunteering:	Duties performed:	Skills: Skills:

7. References. Make a separate list of people who have agreed to be references. Include their addresses, one numbers, and job titles. You should not list people as references unless you have asked their permission first.

John Roberts

9225 Elm Avenue South Bend, Indiana (219) 555-5555

Objective

Entry level foundry technician

Education

Associate of Science: Foundry Technology Anderson Technical School, June 1993

South Bend, Indiana Top 10% of class

Diploma and Certificate of Welding Technology

South Central High School, June 1991

Mishawaka, Indiana

Experience

Jan 1993 - U.S. Steel - Advanced apprenticeship with alloy research division;

June 1993

provided smelting and casting services to a metallurgical team which

was formulating and testing new alloys

June 1992 -Aug 1993 Chicago Steel - Apprenticeship with central casting plant; gained

experience in all phases of steel smelting and casting process

June 1991 -

ALCOA-South Bend- Group leader for work team that operated can

June 1992 washing and shredding equipment at regional aluminum recycling center

Professional Affiliations International Brotherhood of Foundry Workers Local 4732

National Metallurgical Society

South Bend Treasurer

References provided upon request.

9225 Elm Avenue South Bend. Indiana 43451

June 5, 1993

Ms. Judy Conners District Supervisor Johnson Steel Company

P.O. Box 9382

Gary, Indiana 46521-9382

Dear Ms. Conners,

I recently graduated from Anderson Technical School with an associates degree in metal foundry technology. My enclosed resume covers two years experience as an apprentice with Indiana and Illinois companies.

While at Chicago Steel, my supervisor was Greg Silvers who had been a shift manager with Johnson Steel for several years. Mr. Silvers mentioned that Johnson Steel is a rapidly growing company using cutting edge technology in its production processes. Mr. Silvers feels my knowledge and skills would enable me to be an effective employee in your recently retooled Gary foundry.

I would like to schedule an appointment with you to learn more about Johnson Steel and its employment opportunities. I will call your office in a few days to see if there is a convenient time for us to meet.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ohn Roberts



- 60% of all jobs are found by talking with others.
- Only 25% of job openings ever make it to the want ads.
- To heighten your chances of getting a job, visit the place of work in person. Whether blindly applying for a job there or answering an ad, your chances will be greatly improved if you give them your resume in person. They will be impressed by the fact that you made the effort to come in and introduce yourself. Two-thirds of all jobs seekers use this approach; 50% of these are successful!
- It takes an average of 5 years to change a person's first impression of someone! In a job interview, therefore, you have only one impression to make--the right one!
- 87% of all applications received by employers are not filled out correctly; and they are general filed in a wastebasket.
- In the first 4-7 minutes of an interview, the employer has already made a hiring decision.
- The average employer will spend 7-10 seconds reading your resume.

Get ready to interview



The most important thing to remember is that interviewing is a SALES JOB! You are the salesperson; the person interviewing you is your client. You will be SELLING YOURSELF.

How do you go about

this? Let's look at some steps which

will be very helpful.

1. Prepare for-rehearse for-interviews. Anticipate various questions that you think might be asked in an interview. (We have included some general ones on the next page.) Then, formulate answers to them. Use correct grammar and answer questions thoroughly. Organize your answer to questions so that you don't forget anything. Practice your answers so that you don't leave out things you want them to know about you. Practice in front of a mirror or with a friend.

If you are asked about salary requirements, you need to be prepared for this question. You should have an idea of the minimum you can live on. You might want to give a range of what you are expecting. Or you could set a lower beginning wage with a suggestion that once you are performing the job at full-range, you would hope for a raise. If you can leave room for negotiation, that might be helpful.

- 2. Make a good first impression. Many employers do "judge a book by its cover." This means that your appearance is very important. Follow these guidelines:
- Dress conservatively but one step above what is normally worn on the job you are interviewing for.
- Use cologne and jewelry sparingly.
- Since tight-fitting clothes, short skirts, and revealing shirts are never acceptable in the workplace, don't wear them to an interview.
- Be well-groomed. Nice clothes won't cover up poor hygiene. Make sure your hair is clean and combed.
 - Make sure your shoes are clean and polished.
 - Clothes should be wrinkle-free.
 - · Do not smoke.

Be on time--or even early--for your interview. Arriving in time to give yourself some extra time will allow you to relax and

review what you want to say during the interview. It also give you an opportunity to chat with others at ERIClace of work--a good networking opportunity.

Be prepared to shake the hand of an interviewer. But also extend your hand to anyone else who is introduced to you. Make certain you give everyone a good, FIRM handshake; a limp one implies that you are a person with little self-confidence.

3. Continue your first impression. Be confident but not boastful. Keep good eye contact. Speak clearly and in a moderate tone so that you are not being asked to speak up or repeat yourself. Try to relax, but don't be too casual. After all, you must display the right amount of interest and energy.

Also, try to be your natural self. You must show your interviewers the "real you;" you want to fit, and they need to know you to judge your fit.

- 4. BE positive! No matter how you feel about a former job or boss, don't discuss your negative feelings about these topics or any other ones for that matter. Companies are looking for people who are POSITIVE-who will be a positive influence on other employees. Negative ones only lower morale in the workplace which leads to many problems.
- 5. Ask questions. Asking questions demonstrates to interviewers that you have thought about work, jobs, and even the company you are interviewing with. Some questions you can ask include the following:
- Which job qualification do you feel is most important?
- How long has the predecessor held this position? Why is he or she leaving the position?
- Will the person filling this job be receiving any training?
- Could you describe the typical workday of this position?

Although some authorities advise not to ask about salary or benefits during the first interview, others advise that it is okay to ask about health insurance and about retirement plans. These two issues demonstrate your interest in your future. Asking about vacation plans, however, is not a good idea!

If you have physical limitations, make certain that the jobs you look for meet those restrictions or that there will be resources to help you overcome the limitations. If you have solutions to your limitations, you can suggest these at this time.

6. Be sure you have done your sales job! Sometimes, it may be necessary to turn a chit-chatty interview into a productive interview. Unfortunately, there are unprepared interviewers who chat about the weather, the latest outcome of a ballgame, or a common place that you both have been. During this "talk," you won't have a direct opportunity to discuss your skills and assets.

This is where the real SALES JOB comes in. You must be prepared to turn the chitchat around and bring up topics about your experience, education, skills and assets that will make you the **best person for the job**. If you don't do this, your interviewer will never find out about the real you. He or she will make judgements based on how well you can make small talk. Small talk may not be the most important part of doing a job well.

Before you go into an interview, make a list of things you want the employer to know about you that will make you the person he or she wants to hire! Write them down. Then, make sure you can briefly show how or where you got these skills. Mention some projects you worked on or other jobs you've held which used these skills. Remember, if you don't show your real strengths now, you will not have a second chance to do so.

7. "Close the deal." In any sales job, a salesperson's last task is to finish the details of the agreement. Before you leave the interview, find out the next steps in their process. What is their next step in the hiring process? When will they make their decision about the next step? Will there be another interview? Will they notify you of their final decision, even if it's negative? These questions show your interest in the position as well as a need for organization in your life. This is especially true if you are presently employed and will need to give your present employer notice of intent to quit.

Note: Both the interviewing company and a present employer will expect you to give at least a two-week notice. This is standard. Unless there are unusual circumstances, never give less than this amount of notice.

After the Interview

8. Remember your manners. Within a day or two after the interview, send a thankyou letter to the all people with whom you interviewed. Besides thanking them for taking the time to talk with you, restate the reasons you think you would be good for

the job. Mention one or two of your strongest skills that are most notable for the job and their company. Also, mention one or two positive things you liked about their company or the place of work. Last, state that you are looking forward to hearing

from them again.

If you don't hear from them within the time-frame that they talked about in the interview, you may call to find out the status of their hiring process. This will

to ease your nerves and remind them that you ERICill very interested in their firm and job. However,

one call should be the maximum unless they tell you to feel free to call again later. Being a pest won't give them a positive impression.

9. **Keep trying.** Even though you have interviewed, you should pursue all other job opportunities that you find while waiting on the outcome of the interview. There are many reasons for this, even though you think the pending job is the perfect one. Never put all your eggs — or hopes — in a single basket. You may be passing up a much better opportunity!

And if you don't get the pending job, you might call the interviewer and ask him or her to keep you in mind for other openings in the company. This is a very positive sign to that person that you hold no grudges and are a winner!

Some typical questions asked by interviewers

- Tell me a little about yourself.
- Describe your personality...your workstyle.
- What type of person do you find it hard to work with?
- What are your most valuable skills or assets; how do they fit with this job?
- · What is your most serious fault or weakness?
- Why should I hire you?
- Why are you interested in this job and our organization?
- What do you think you would like about this job?
- Tell me briefly about your past jobs?
- Why did you leave your past job?
- Why do you want to leave your present job?
- Have you ever had a problem on a job and how did you handle it?
- What do you hope to be doing in five years...10 years?
- Beyond work experience, what should I know about you?

Questions you should not be asked—

It is illegal to ask questions in the following areas about prospective employees:

- sex, race, religion, ethnic background, military background, marital status;
- age, unless there are legal restrictions about age related to the specific job;
- marital status, children, or other family members;
- non-work related disability;
- · an arrest record; and
- details of a military discharge.

However, the last two items may be on an official job application. If there are questions pertaining to these areas on the application, you should answer them honestly. If you do not, the employer can rightfully fire you in the future for falsifying anything on a job application. Therefore, it is wise to be truthful.

If you feel you have been denied employment based on issues unrelated to your ability to do the job, contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in your state.

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Some popular career profiles available from ICPAC

Longshore Worker/Stevedore

please order no more than two at one time

Accountant & Auditor Actor/Actress, Director, Producer Actuary Advertising Agent Aerospace Engineer Agricultural Engineer Agricultural Scientist Air-traffic Controller Aircraft Mechanic Airplane Pilot Ambulance Attendant/Driver Architect Archivist & Curator Auto Body Repairer/Auto Mechanic Automobile Salesperson Bank Teller Barber **Biological Scientist** Biomedical Engineer Biomedical Equipment Technician Blacksmith Boilermaker Brickmason/Stonemason Broadcast Technician **Bulldozer Operator Bus Driver** Carpenter Carpet Installer Ceramic Engineer Chemical Engineer Chemist Child Care Worker Chiropractor City Manager Civil Engineer Clergy Clinical Laboratory Technologist College Faculty Member Commercial Artist Computer Programmer Computer Service Technician Computer Systems Analyst Construction & Building Inspector Construction Worker Cook/Chef Correction Officer Cosmetologist

Dancer/Choreographer Dental Assistant/Dental Hygienist Dental Laboratory Technician **Dentist** Diesel Mechanic Dietitian & Nutritionist Drafter Drywall Installer & Lather **Economist Educational Administrator** Electrical & Electronics Engineer Electrician Electronic Equipment Repairer **Emergency Medical Technician** Farm Equipment Mechanic Farmer/Farm Manager Financial Manager Firefighter Fish & Game Warden Flight Attendant **Florist** Food Service Manager Forester & Conservation Scientist Funeral Director Gardener & Groundskeeper General Maintenance Mechanic General Manager & Top Executive Geographer Geologist & Geophysicist Health Administrator Heating & Cooling Mechanic Highway Maintenance Worker Home Health Aide Hotel/Motel Manager & Assistant Industrial Engineer Industrial Hygienist Insurance Agent Interpreter & Translator Jeweler & Watch Repairer Judge Kdg. & Elementary School Teacher Landscape Architect Laser Technician Laundry & Dry Cleaning Machinist Lawver Legal Assistant Librarian

Licensed Practical Nurse

Locomotive Engineer

Locksmith

Machinist Management Analyst & Consultant Manufacturer's Representative Marine Engineer & Architect Marriage Counselor Material Moving Equipment Operator Mathematician Meat Cutter Mechanical Engineer Medical Assistant Medical Record Technician Metallurgical & Materials Engineer Meteorologist Mining Engineer Model Musical Instrument Repairer Musician & Composer Nuclear Engineer Nuclear Medicine Technologist **Nuclear Quality Control Inspector** Numerical Control Machine-tooler **Nursery Worker Nursing Aide** Occupational Therapist Office Machine Repairer Oil & Gas Drilling Production Ophthalmic Lab Technician Optician Optometrist Orthotist & Prosthetist Painters & Paperhangers Payroll Clerk Personnel, Training/Labor Relations Specialist Petroleum Engineer **Pharmacist** Photographer & Camera Operator Physical Therapist Physician Physician's Assistant Physicist & Astronomer Plumber & Pipe Fitter **Podiatrist** Police Officer, Detective, Special Agent Postal Clerk & Mail Carrier Postmaster & Mail Superintendent Power Plant Operator Printing Press Operator **Production Coordinator** Property & Real Estate Manager **Psychologist** Public Administrator Public Relations Specialist

Purchasing Agent Radio, TV Announcer/Newscaster Radiologic Technologist Railroad Brake, Signal & Switcher Railroad Conductor & Yardmaster Real Estate Appraiser/Sales Agent Receptionist & Information Clerk Recreational Therapist Registered Nurse Reporter & Correspondent Respiratory Therapist Retail Sales Manager Road Construction Mach. Operator Robotics Technician Sailor & Deckhand Secondary School Teacher Secretary Security Guard Sheet Metal Worker Shoemaker & Repairer Sign Painter & Letterer Small Engine Mechanic Social Scientist Social Worker Special Education Teacher Speech Pathologist & Audiologist Sports Professional Statistician Stockbroker Structural Metal Worker Substance Abuse Counselor Surgical Technologist Surveyor Taxi Driver & Chauffeur Teacher Aide Technical Writer Telephone Installer & Repairer Tool-and-die Maker Travel Agent Truck Driver TV & Radio Repairer Underwriter Upholsterer Urban & Regional Planner Veterinarian Veterinarian Lab Technician Visual Arts (Fine & Graphic Artist) Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Water Treatment Plant Operator Welder Wholesale & Retail Buyer Woodworker

Sources:

Court Clerk/Court Reporter

Counselor

Custodian

"Getting a job without experience," Marvin Walberg, Scripps Howard Newservice, The Herald Times, July 20, 1994.

The art and science of finding a job, Indiana Workforce Development.

"35 of the best job search tips you'll find anywhere," Indiana Workforce Development.

"Outrageous facts! 18 things you should know o' out the job market and finding your next FRIC," Indiana Workforce Development.

Other ICPAC resources:

The Future, Education, and the Job Outlook	IS-46 IS-49
Discovering careers that fit you	
Essential Skills of the Future Workforce	
Maximizing Employability — Enhance your Skills	

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(others available--call our Hotline)

Call the ICPAC Hotline to order any of the above information pieces and career profiles. Toll-free number: 1-800-992-2076



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