

# Educator's Guide and Supporting Documents



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# Educator's Guide: Introduction to the Video Series

## Description:

This introductory segment provides an overview of the DCMP, "Getting a Job! for Students Who are Blind and Visually Impaired" module.

## Questions for Students:

- Think about your experiences finding and keeping a job. What did you learn from these experiences?
- What do you think you could have done better to be successful on the job?
- What is a portfolio and how do you think a job search portfolio could be used to support your job search?
- What documents would be useful to keep in your job search portfolio?
- What is the difference between a paper and an electronic version of the portfolio and why it is good to have both types?
- Review the supporting documents page on the ["Getting a Job! for Students Who are Blind and Visually Impaired" website](#). Look at the different documents provided to support the video topics. How might you use the supporting documents in your job search and why would it be good to have them in a job search portfolio?

## Activities for Students:

- Create either a paper folder or electronic folder that will become your job search portfolio.
- Set aside and label a specific paper folder and/or create an electronic folder that will become your job search portfolio(s).
- Make a list of the types of documents that you might find in a portfolio and put the list in the portfolio that you developed above.
- Consider items to include in the digital and paper portfolio such as: resume, school transcripts, summary of skills, diplomas, certificates of recognition, reference list with letters, list of accomplishments (describe hobbies or special interests that are not directly related to the job position), examples of your work (web page, art, online blogs, photographs, speeches, etc.), etc.
- Interview a friend, parent, or siblings and ask about their best work experience and their worst work experience. Write a report on your interview and share with the class.

# Educator's Guide: Your Journey

## Description:

This video encourages students and adults to become active participants in planning their future.

## Questions for Students:

- What is your plan for the future?
- What do you think your journey will look like and what do you think you want to do with your life?
- What do you think you need to do to achieve that future?
- What dreams, ideas, desires, and passions do you have for your future? How can you turn these into a meaningful career?
- What should you always be doing to ensure the best chance that your dreams come true?
- What is happening or has happened in the past with local industries and other segments of the workforce in difficult times?
- How have people dealt with these uncertain times and how have they found work?
- What do you do if you want a different job or want to do something new?
- How do you go about learning new skills if you wish to change careers?
- How do you plan a career change? Quitting without a plan is not a good idea, so how do you plan for this sort of change?

## Activities for Students:

- Make a list of your dreams, ideas, desires, passions, and what sort of careers these might lead to.
- Write down the path you think you must follow to achieve your goals and dreams.
- In small groups, discuss your dream for the future and what you see yourself doing once you are successful and established.
- Share individual plans with each other in your small groups. Discuss what each person thinks s/he will have to do to be successful and achieve her or his dreams.

# Educator's Guide: Your Rights and Responsibilities

## Description:

This video summarizes the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) laws. The video emphasizes how an understanding of one's rights and responsibilities leads to empowerment in securing work and in creating an accessible workplace.

## Questions for Students:

- Describe the rights you have under IDEA.
- What is a public K-12 school required to provide under IDEA?
- What accommodations have you used while you were in school?
- Describe the rights you have under the ADA. How are they different from your rights under IDEA?
- How are your responsibilities different under IDEA and the ADA?
- What does "reasonable" mean? What is a "reasonable accommodation?"
- What does it mean to be a "self-advocate" and why it is so important for your future success?
- How are accommodations provided for you in high school? How might accommodations be different in college or the workplace?

## Activities for Students:

- List your rights and responsibilities under each law, IDEA & ADA.
- Make two lists: 1) What are reasonable accommodations under the ADA? 2) What are unreasonable accommodations under the ADA?
- "Reasonable or Not Reasonable" role-play: act out accommodation scenarios provided by your teacher and then vote on what is reasonable and what is not.
- Share stories and examples of self-advocacy.
- Interview teachers, parents, relatives, or mentors asking them to share examples of times they needed to act as self-advocates and how the ADA has assisted them in getting reasonable access in college or on the job.

## **Accommodation Scenarios – Reasonable or Unreasonable**

Divide the class into small groups of three to five members. Start off with each team having the scenario role-play scene provided in print, braille, and/or by email to their technology device of choice. Information will include a list of people in the scene, descriptions of their speaking roles, intentions of the scenario to convey to the audience, and props to use.

Tell the students to not share accommodation results with other groups. They are to keep their selection and opinions a secret. Explain they will work together to finish the dialogue and then act out the scene to the whole group. This will make the role-play unique to their ideas.

Students will self-select the different roles listed on the cards and act out the assigned scenario.

List of people for both scenarios: (Students determine the speaking roles being played based on the scene):

- Employee who is visually impaired
- Office assistant
- Office manager
- CEO of the company
- Office peer

Props – White cane, backpack, papers, table, IOS or Android phone or tablet, refreshable braille device, laptop, pretend guide dog leash, etc.

### **Scenario One - Reasonable Accommodation or Unreasonable Accommodation?**

**Intention of the Scene:** In this scenario, the new employee arrives for the first day of work and is greeted by office manager and CEO and introduced to colleagues in the office. The new hire has a guide dog. The employee begins the first day with company-wide training sessions with other new hires from different departments and staff. They are in the technology lab for instruction on new products and data systems being used by the company. The new hire has limited functional vision at 20/800 with decreased peripheral vision and residual vision for reading print at 36 to 42-point font or greater. The new hire reads braille, uses audio feedback, and digital talking books. The company staff trainer begins to move through the requirements of the technology system. The new hire brought his/her refreshable braille device.

At lunch, the new hire is ready to find the guide dog relief area. The employee quickly finds there is no grass area near the office building or outdoor trash cans close to the office. The first grass area is across the freeway.

**Request:** Before the end of the day, the new staff member who is visually impaired asks to meet with the office manager. He/she explains the accommodation request is for individualized instruction with specific keyboard commands for the assistive technology he/she will use. In addition, he/she also requests guide dog relief area near the building. He/she explains what is needed for his/her guide dog to be healthy and for he/she to be safe in the work environment. The new employee explains what is typically used in airports for a safe service dog relief area and asks for this option to be near the office. The new employee gives the office manager resource links of several companies that make these resources.

Are the requests in Scenario One reasonable?

Answer: Yes, both are reasonable accommodations

### **Explanations of Answers:**

**Modified training** - When the workplace is rolling out a new system or upgrading its computer programs, an all-staff training session may not cover keyboard commands or other details specific to assistive technology users. As an employee who is blind or visually impaired, you should be able to request individualized instruction to allow you to learn these systems properly.

**Guide Dogs Relief Area** - A guide dog relief area is a reasonable accommodation where commercial products are on the market and are compact for small spaces.

## Scenario Two - Reasonable Accommodation or Unreasonable Accommodation?

### Intention of the Scene:

An employee with low vision has taken a new job. The employee with low vision drives with prism magnification in special low vision glasses. He/she has a driver's license and lives in a state that allows for low vision drivers. The new employee benefits from handheld and portable magnification devices for work. His/her vision is 20/250. He/she prefers to read print at 24 to 40-point font depending on the light in the room and/or uses electronic magnification devices to read. The employee with low vision is given a new laptop computer for the office along with his/her peers. What is not included is additional zoom magnification software designed for people with visual impairments. The built-in screen computer magnification options in computer settings is not enough to offer workable solutions to enlarged text. Specially designed zoom software provides magnification and a dictation reading program for low-vision users.

**Request:** The employee with a visual impairment asks the office manager for screen magnification and reader software for the blind or visually impaired to accommodate the work he/she is doing on the laptop. For this employee and his/her visual impairment, larger screen magnification is better. The employee explains the benefit to him/her of using a larger 24-inch screen connected to the laptop through an adaptor and HDMI cord for more accurate and faster access to visual information.

Are the requests in Scenario Two reasonable?

Answer: Yes, both are reasonable accommodations

### Explanations of Answer:

**Assistive technology** - Assistive technology is an important accommodation for employees who are blind or visually impaired, allowing them to access computers and other systems in the workplace alongside their sighted peers. Typical examples of assistive technology include scanners, magnifiers, digital recorders, screen reading software, refreshable braille displays, and braille embossers.

Although the larger screen, adaptor and cord are not assistive technology per say, these are reasonable and low cost options. This request does not show undue hardship to the company.



## Scenario Three - Reasonable Accommodation or Unreasonable Accommodation?

**Intention of the Scene:** An employee who is blind uses a variety of assistive technology along with refreshable braille and screen reader technology. The company has made available Optical Character Recognition (OCR) assistive technology devices that scan and read printed materials. What the employee feels is needed to save him/her time during the day and especially at meetings is to have a fellow employee sit next to him/her and read all the notes and visual information for each meeting instead of using assistive technology.

**Request:** The employee who is blind requests that colleagues stop what they are doing and read notes, minutes of meetings, and memos to him/her. The employee with a visual impairment officially asked the boss for a designated person to read printed notes and memorandums that are sent by email.

Are the requests in Scenario Three reasonable?

Answer: No, it is not a reasonable accommodation

### **Explanations of Answer:**

The employee has an email system on the laptop with screen reader technology. The employee prefers to ask colleagues to stop their work and read various notes to him/her. The request is not reasonable.

However, an option from the company could be to offer more support with training on screen reader software and offer new apps and training with reading text aloud and identifying objects through photos to the employee. This would help the employee with a visual impairment work more efficiently and eliminate negative office dynamics.

## **Debrief:**

### **What is a reasonable accommodation?**

There are many Internet sites that share ideas about the rubric to determine reasonable accommodations or not. Researching ADA can be another task the students consider for additional study time. A reasonable accommodation is any change to the application or hiring process, to the job, to the way the job is done, or to the work environment that allows a person with a disability who is qualified for the job to perform the essential functions of that job and enjoy equal employment opportunities. In all work environments, an accommodation is considered anything that allows someone to do the essential functions of their job. An accommodation could be equipment, coaching, scheduling, task rotation or job rotation; any change that allows someone to do the essential function of their job.

Accommodations are considered “reasonable” if they do not create an undue hardship or a direct threat. In order to determine what is reasonable, an employer must look at the request made by the applicant or employee with a disability. Whether or not an accommodation is reasonable will vary according to the position the employee holds, the way their disability affects their ability to do their job, and the environment that they work in.

### **What is an unreasonable accommodation?**

When determining if an accommodation is reasonable or unreasonable, there are three criteria that must be considered.

1. Undue hardship to the company
2. Removing essential job functions from the position
3. Displacing a fellow employee

# Educator's Guide: Introduction to Vocational Rehabilitation

## Description:

This video introduces Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and discusses where to find local offices.

## Questions for Students:

- What do you know about Vocational Rehabilitation and the services they offer?
- What does it mean to be eligible for VR services and how do you apply for services in your state?
- What does entitlement mean? Consider why VR services are not an entitlement and what this means for those who apply for services.
- What is order of selection and what does it mean to someone applying for services?

## Activities for Students:

- Go online and locate the state and local VR offices that serve your area.
- Make a list of the services offered at your local VR office.
- Invite a representative from the local VR office, your O&M instructor, and teacher of students with visual impairments to discuss the services offered by VR and how an individual applies for these services.
- Visit the local VR office for a tour and talk with VR counselors.
- Make a list of the eligibility requirements for VR services.
- Consider issues like services offered, eligibility, and accommodations and why you would choose one over the other.

# Educator's Guide: Introduction to Workforce Development Centers

## Description:

This video introduces Workforce Development Centers and discusses where to find local offices.

## Questions for Students:

- What do you know about Workforce Development Centers and the services they offer?
- Locate your local Workforce Development Center and explore what services they offer.
- What accommodations might you need when visiting a Workforce Development Center and how do you request them?
- What is the role of a case manager at a Workforce Development Center and why it is good to get to know your case manager early?
- How do Workforce Development Centers and VR work collaboratively to support the employment goals of people with disabilities?

## Activities for Students:

- Go online and locate the local Workforce Development Center that serves your area and make a list of the services they offer.
- Invite a representative from your local Workforce Development Center to visit your school to discuss the services offered and how you apply for services.
- Visit the local Workforce Development Center for a tour and to talk with case managers and career counselors.
- List the similarities and differences between Workforce Development Centers and Vocational Rehabilitation. Consider issues like services offered, eligibility, and accommodations and consider why you would choose one over the other.
- Develop a plan for how you can utilize Workforce Development Center services. Develop a list of workshops you would like to attend, when they are offered and what you do to request accommodations.

## **Sample Email to Workforce Development Center to Request Accommodations**

Hello Workforce Development Center Staff:

My name is Ella Smith.

I am working with my transition counselor to build a better understanding of what resources are available to me as I look at my career goals. I would like to make an appointment with a counselor at the Workforce Development Center. I am a person with low vision. With printed materials you plan to share with me, I need paper copies of materials in 24-point font. Or you may email me the documents you plan to share in Word format. I will either print them out ahead of time or bring my laptop to read them during the meeting. My email is ella.smith@gmail.com.

I look forward to scheduling a meeting with the Workforce Development Center counselor. I am available Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Sincerely,

Ella Smith

# Educator's Guide: Overview — Social Security Benefits and Work

## Description:

This video focuses on the benefits of working and introduces the Social Security Administration programs that can help you find a job.

## Questions for Students:

- Why do people collect Social Security benefits?
- Why are people concerned about losing Social Security benefits if they go to work?
- Do Social Security benefits help or hinder people in the achievement of their dreams?
- What are the benefits of working?
- How can making more money help you achieve your goals?
- What is personal independence and how can a job help you achieve this?
- What skills and knowledge can you learn from working and how will these help you get ahead?
- How can meeting new people and taking part in a school-to-work mentor program help you achieve your goals?
- What is personal satisfaction and how can working help you feel this?

## Activities for Students:

- List reasons people collect Social Security benefits and why people are afraid of losing them if they get a job.
- In small groups, list two or three benefits of working and then share your list with the class.
- Rank the benefits of working listed above from most important to least important.
- Talk with relatives about their experiences working and find out what they found most rewarding and most challenging.

# Educator's Guide: Supplemental Security Income Program (SSI)

## Description:

This video offers a brief introduction to the Social Security Administration's Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program.

## Questions for Students:

- What is Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and why do people receive these payments?
- Why are people concerned about working while collecting SSI?
- How can you, as a student, improve your job opportunities while collecting SSI?
- What happens with your SSI benefits if you are laid off or your hours are reduced where you work?
- What is a Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) and how can it benefit you?
- Who do you contact to discuss SSI benefits and working if you have questions?

## Activities for Students:

- Go online and locate the local Social Security office that serves your area and identify who to contact with questions.
- Invite a representative from your local Social Security office to visit your school, in person or via video conferencing, to discuss Social Security benefits and how people apply for these services. As a group, prepare a list of questions to ask.
- Visit the local Social Security office for a tour and to talk with staff who can answer questions and offer assistance to beneficiaries.
- Interview someone from your network of mentors, who is collecting or has collected SSI and is benefiting from work support.

# **Educator’s Guide: Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)**

## **Description:**

This video offers a brief introduction to the Social Security Administration’s Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program.

## **Questions for Discussion:**

- What does the “D” stand for in SSDI?
- What is SSDI and who is eligible to receive it?
- Where does the money come from to pay for SSDI?

## **Activities for Students:**

- Look at a pay stub and find the FICA tax that pays for SSDI.
- Go online and locate the local Social Security office that serves your area and identify who to contact with questions.
- Invite a representative from your local Social Security office to visit your school, in person or via video conferencing, to discuss Social Security benefits and how people apply for these services. As a group, prepare a list of questions to ask.
- Visit the local Social Security office for a tour and to talk with staff who can answer questions and offer assistance to beneficiaries.
- Interview someone who is collecting or has collected SSDI.



# Educator's Guide: Your Ticket to Work

## Description:

This video provides an introduction to the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Program.

## Questions for Students:

- What is an employment support program?
- What is a ticket to work and what does this ticket get for you?
- What is MAXIMUS and what do they do for ticket holders?
- What is an Employment Network (EN) and what role do they play in the Ticket to Work Program?
- What can you do if an EN is not providing you with the services you need?

## Activities for Students:

- Go online to the MAXIMUS website and make a list of the services they provide to ticket holders.
- Go online to the MAXIMUS website and make a list of the Employment Networks (EN) that service your area and provide employment supports for individuals who are blind or have low vision.
- Write four questions to ask an EN to make sure they are a good fit for you.
- Invite a representative from your local Social Security office to visit your school, in person or via video conferencing, to discuss the Ticket to Work Program and how people apply for these services. As a group, prepare a list of questions to ask.
- Role-play what you would do if you are unhappy with your EN provider.
- Visit the local Social Security office for a tour and to talk with staff that can answer questions and offer assistance to beneficiaries.
- Interview someone who has utilized the Ticket to Work Program in finding a job.

# Questions to Ask When Choosing an Employment Network (EN)

## What is an Employment Network (EN)?

ENs provides employment services and other supports that help you find and keep a job.

## Here are questions you should ask any EN you are considering:

1. Does your agency have any experience supporting people with visual impairments?
2. What services do you offer for a client who is blind or has low vision?
3. How do you recommend we stay in contact and communicate?
4. Do you have videoconferencing capability? Do you have tutorials about your system?
5. What is required of me as a client of your organization?

## If you receive SSI or SSDI services:

- You may be eligible for a Ticket to Work from Maximus, the company that coordinates the Ticket to Work Program.
- If you would like to participate in Ticket to Work, contact Maximus.
- Once you receive your Ticket to Work, you will need to choose an Employment Network (EN) that will provide employment services that help you to find and keep a job.
- Maximus can provide a list of ENs in your area.
- It is important to choose an EN carefully to be sure the EN can provide services that meet your needs.

Take some time to think of other questions you want answered.

If an EN you choose does not work out, Maximus can help you find another EN that might be a better fit for you.

# Educator's Guide: Introduction to Job Search

## Description:

This video introduces the concept of a job search and some of the activities and tools that are useful in initiating an organized and focused search for employment.

## Questions for Students:

- Why is it important to have career goals?
- What is the purpose of a career assessment?
- Where are job openings posted and where is the best place to look for a job?
- What is networking and why do so many people find jobs through networking?
- What is a job search portfolio and how is it to be used to support your job search?
- What documents would be useful to keep in your job search portfolio?
- What is the difference between a paper and an electronic version of the portfolio and why it is good to have both types?
- How do you plan a job search?
- Consider new skills you need to learn and resources you need to explore to stay current with workplace trends, such as assistive technology, apps for cell phones and tablets, etc.
- What role do goals and a schedule play in developing a successful search for employment?

## Activities for Students:

- Draft personal and career goals.
- Take a sample career assessment.
- Share examples of job postings from different sources.
- Identify your skills and challenges and develop an ongoing skills sheet to describe yourself.
- Start networking with family, friends, and mentors.
- Set up a mentorship directory of people with visual impairments who could act as role models to you and fellow students.
- Develop individual job search portfolios.
- Review the Supporting Documents page on the [Getting a Job! for Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired website](#). Look at the different documents provided to support the video topics. How might you use the Supporting Documents in your job search and why would it be good to have them in your job search portfolio?

- Develop a job search plan including goals and a job search schedule of activities.
- Create a list of the types of documents that you might find in a portfolio.

# Educator's Guide: Job Applications

## Description:

This video focuses on job applications and looks at how they are used by employers and why it is important for the job seeker to be thorough, neat, and accurate when filling them out.

## Questions for Students:

- What is the purpose of a job application?
- What information might you expect to be asked for on a job application?
- Besides information, what is the employer looking to learn about you from the application?
- What should you do to ensure your application makes the employer want to more about you?

## Activities for Students:

- Examine different job applications, both paper and online, comparing what information they ask you to provide.
- Fill out sample job applications and have others review your work.
- Develop a Job Application Worksheet (see the ["Getting a Job! for Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired" website](#) for an example of a job application). This document contains all the usual information you would need to fill out most applications.
- Create both paper and electronic versions of your job application information so you are ready to use them in your job search.

# Application for Employment

This sample application is a reference. Students should be given the [accessible, fillable document](#).

XYZ company is an Equal Opportunity Institution and EEO/Affirmative Action Employer committed to excellence through diversity. Employment offers are made on the basis of qualification, and without regard to race, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin, disability, age, veteran status, or sexual orientation. Complete the entire application. You may attach a resume, but you must still complete all questions, or your application will be deemed incomplete and may not be considered. Please fill out each box (don't just indicate "See Resume.") Application with missing or invalid job numbers will not be considered for any position.

Position Applying for:

JOB #:

Name (Last, First, Middle):

Other names under which you have attended school or been employed:

Street Address:

City, State, & Zip:

Social Security Number:

Home Phone:

Work Phone:

Other Phone:

Are you Eligible to work in the Unites States? Yes/No

Are you 18 years of age or older? Yes/No

If NO, what is your current age?

Are you currently employed at XYZ company? Yes/No

If YES, what is your current job title & department?

Have you ever been employed by XYZ company? Yes/No

If YES, dates of employment & reason for leaving.

Are you related to any current XYZ company employees? Yes/No

If YES, their names & their relationship to you?

If required for position, do you have a valid driver's license? Yes/No

If YES, state of issuance, license #, and expiration date:

How did you learn about this employment opportunity? Check all that apply:

- Job Bulletin Posting
- Website
- Referral by employee
- Department of Labor
- Online Ad
- Social Media
- Other

**Education:**

**High School**

Name of School

City/State

Did you graduate? Yes/No

If no, # of years left to graduate

If yes, date of graduation

Degree received

**GED**

Name of School/Intuition

City/State

Date received

**Other School**

Name of School

City/State

Did you graduate? Yes/No

If no, # of years left to graduate

If yes, date of graduation

Degree received

Degree received

Major

**College**

Name of School

City/State

Did you graduate? Yes/No  
If no, # of years left to graduate  
If yes, date of graduation  
Degree received  
Major

### College

Name of School  
City/State  
Did you graduate? Yes/No  
If no, # of years left to graduate  
If yes, date of graduation  
Degree received  
Major

Other credentials/ licenses/ professional affiliations, etc. which are relevant to the job(s) for which you are applying.

### **Skills:**

Please list technical skills, clerical skills, trade skills, etc., relevant to this position. Include relevant computer system and software packages of which you have a working knowledge, and note your level of proficiency (basic, intermediate, expert)

### **Work Experience:**

Please detail your entire work history. Begin with your current or most recent employer. If you held multiple positions with the same organization, detail each position separately. Attach additional sheets if necessary. Omission of prior employment may be considered falsification of information. Please explain any gaps in employment. Include full-time military or volunteer commitments.

**PLEASE DO NOT** complete this information with the notation "See Resume."

**PLEASE NOTE:** XYZ Company reserves the right to contact all current and former employers for reference information.

Dates Employed (most recent position) From/To

Full time / Part-time

If part-time, # hrs/wk:

Title



Starting Salary

Final Salary

Organization Name and Address:

Supervisor's Name, Title, and Phone #

Other Reference Name, Title, and Phone #

Contact my current references: At any time/Only if I am a finalist candidate

Primary duties:

Reason for leaving:

Dates Employed (previous employment) From/To

Full time / Part-time

If part-time, # hrs/wk:

Title

Starting Salary

Final Salary

Organization Name and Address:

Supervisor's Name, Title, and Phone #

Other Reference Name, Title, and Phone #

Contact my current references: At any time/Only if I am a finalist candidate

Primary duties:

Reason for leaving:

Dates Employed (previous employment) From/To

Full time / Part-time

If part-time, # hrs/wk:

Title

Starting Salary

Final Salary

Organization Name and Address:

Supervisor's Name, Title, and Phone #

Other Reference Name, Title, and Phone #

Contact my current references: At any time/Only if I am a finalist candidate

Primary duties:

Reason for leaving:

# Educator's Guide: Resumes

## Description:

This video focuses on resumes and their purpose and format.

## Questions for Students:

- What is the purpose of the resume?
- How is a resume like an advertisement or a sales brochure about you?
- How do you tailor your resume to the position you are applying for?
- What on your resume will show an employer that you are qualified for the job?
- What on a resume will get you disqualified?
- What could you include that will offer more details to reinforce your skills?
- What belongs on a resume and what does not belong?

## Activities for Students:

- As a group, create a list of the dos and don'ts of resumes. What belongs on a resume and what does not?
- As a group discuss strategies of what to include. Hiring managers look for a wide range of skills and attributes. Employers want a full picture of you, so highlight internships, volunteer activities, and employment during high school and college either paid or unpaid. For each role, frame your responsibilities and accomplishments to show relevance to the hiring managers you're targeting.
- Examine sample resumes looking for things you could include on your resume and for things that do not belong or can get you disqualified.
- Review job duties held in summer or during school and turn the list into accomplishments that describe how well you did it. Compile a list of all the things that set you apart with each job.
- Create a resume and share it with friends, family members, teachers/transition counselor, and/or your mentor/role model for feedback.
- Find a job posting for a job you would like to apply for and tailor your resume to fit that position. Share this with others for feedback.
- As a group, expand the view in the resume job section from duties to accomplishments and explore what the benefits of the job accomplishments were to your boss or the company. This will help clarify the advantages the employer will receive by hiring you.
- Create both paper and electronic versions of your resume so you are ready to provide it in whatever format an employer prefers when applying for a job.

# Sample Student Resume

## Ivette Allen

7129 Round Rock Lane, Bedford, New Hampshire 03110

Cell Phone: 603-714-3592      Email: ivette.allen@gmail.com

**OBJECTIVE:** Program management for youth-focused music education programs

### EDUCATION:

Bedford West STEM Academy – Diploma, 2019 (3.2 GPA)

University of New Hampshire (Music Education) Manchester, NH (2019 – Present)

### WORK EXPERIENCE:

#### Music Education and Tutoring (2017 – Present)

- Hume Music Company, Bedford, NH – Private flute lessons to children (2018 – Present)
- Manchester Community Choir, Manchester, NH – Seasonal music presentations (2017 – Present)

#### Public Library, Beltline Branch, Bedford, NH (May-August 2018-Present):

- Maintained library database on checked-out materials
- Coordinated summer camp program: Accessible Apps and Youth Writing Skills
- Organized online catalog to incorporate new materials

### ACTIVITIES and INTERESTS:

- Building a house for Habitat for Humanity (25 hours) (2019)
- Collecting food for the Family Place (40 hours) (2017)
- Computer distribution with Computers for the Blind (35 hours) (2019)
- Organizing the choir annual award ceremony (2018 – 2019)
- American Council of the Blind Student Program (2018 – Present)
- Big Brothers Big Sisters volunteer (2019 – Present)
- High school band member playing flute, (2017 – 2019)
- High school choir member (2016 – 2019)
- High school French club (2017 – 2019)

### AWARDS:

- Citywide Choir Best Vocal Competition (2018 – 2019)
- Honor Roll (four semesters in high school – 2018 – 2019)
- Dean's List (one semester – 2020)
- American Council of the Blind College Scholarship for Music Education (2020)
- Bedford West STEM Academy School Spirit Squad Leadership Award (2019)

References Available Upon Request

# Sample Student Resume

Marcus Barton

3012 Oakley, Chicago, Illinois 60607

Phone: 312-272-1021      email: [mdbarton@gmail.com](mailto:mdbarton@gmail.com)

## SKILLS:

### Business Leadership

- Reviewed multiple bids for office services and technology a month, collecting and analyzing information and distributing it to leadership in a timely manner.
- Assisted in the research, negotiation, and setup of a new Goalball club, building website and marketing efforts and increasing fan attendance 20%.
- Integrated new assistive technology teaching systems and assisted in hiring instructors to support people who are blind or visually impaired.

### Customer Service

- Acted as liaison between senior leaders at The Chicago Lighthouse, responding to technology support requests via email and setting up meetings.
- Interacted with summer campers and instructors for citywide student technology camps for children with visual impairments, answering questions, connecting them with the proper resources, and overall ensuring they had the best possible experience.

## WORK EXPERIENCE:

- **The Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind Technology Department** (January 2020 – Present)
- **Jimmy's Health Club - Lifeguard** (May, 2019 – August, 2019)
- **Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind – Military Certificates – Factory** (June 2018 – August 2018)
- **Dog Walker** (August 2017 – July 2018)

## EDUCATION:

University of Illinois at Chicago, Applied Health Sciences College (September, 2018 to Present)

East Aurora High School – Aurora, IL – Graduated May, 2018 (GPA 3.0)

## TECHNICAL SKILLS AND CERTIFICATIONS:

Microsoft Office (Mac/PC); IPAD Voice Over; CPR

## VOLUNTEERING AND EXTRACURRICULARS:

- Technology Camp Instructor (July 2018 and July 2019)
- Beep Baseball Road Runner Team (April 2019 – Present)
- Trinity River Mission (Student Technology/Math Tutor) (March 2018 – April 2019)
- Goalball (2017 – Present) and Goalball Captain (2019 – Present)

References Available Upon Request

# Educator's Guide: Cover Letters

## Description:

This video focuses on cover letters, their purpose, and their format.

## Questions for Students:

- What are the goals of a cover letter?
- Do employers read cover letters?
- What does a cover letter help an employer to decide?
- What should a good cover letter contain?

## Activities for Students:

- As a group, talk about the purposes of a cover letter and what it should tell employers.
- Examine sample cover letters to get ideas for your own cover letter.
- Work in a group to outline the key areas of a cover letter. Include a brief overview of your background as is relevant to the position. Focus on one or two experiences and provide details about your success including measurable impacts you made. Pay attention to keywords listed in the job description and include those that you identify with. At the end add a skill or achievement from work or volunteer activities that are relevant to the position. Do not repeat details from your resume.
- Create a cover letter and share it with friends, family members, teachers, and mentors for feedback.
- Find a job posting for a job that appeals to you. Write a cover letter to accompany your resume and application for that job. Share what you have written with others for feedback.
- Create both paper and electronic versions of your cover letter so you are ready to use it as a template when applying for a job.

## Sample Cover Letter

7129 Round Rock Lane  
Bedford, New Hampshire 03110

January 15, 2020

Ms. Cheryl Thomas, Director  
Manchester Parks and Recreation  
1245 Main Street  
Manchester, New Hampshire 03101

Dear Ms. Cheryl Thomas:

I am writing to express my interest in the part-time music education coordinator position with the Manchester Parks and Recreation Cultural Arts Department.

I am drawn to this opportunity for several reasons. First, I have enjoyed success in leading groups of people, most recently as a music coach for children learning the flute. A highlight from my experiences was when I proactively stepped in to coordinate a summer camp for children and their families last year. I arranged lessons and video samples to help the children practice at home. The week camp was in partnership with the Wind Symphony. Due to the positive feedback I received afterward, I have been given the responsibility of writing inquiry letters to local organizations for funding support for next year's camp. To date, I have raised \$2,000.

In addition, I served as the online greeter for services and in data support with the public library during summer breaks. I scheduled content release and helped with posting. Therefore, I utilized computer and organizational skills to publish shareable content similar to what is needed with the music education coordinator position. Through my efforts, I kept library members in touch with resources and attracted new visitors.

I am also attracted to this role because of the growth opportunities that the city department provides and the part-time schedule. This will allow me to easily continue my college studies and support my community. The research of the Parks and Recreation Department that I've done has shown me that there are opportunities for self-motivated individuals like me with the city Parks and Recreation. I am eager to

apply these skills in new and important community recreational environments.

I look forward to sharing more details of my experiences, current university studies, and motivations with you. Please feel free to contact me by phone at: 603-714-3592 or via email at [ivette.allen@gmail.com](mailto:ivette.allen@gmail.com). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ivette Allen  
Enclosure



# Educator's Guide: How to Prepare for the Interview

## Description:

This video describes the preparation a job seeker should do before an interview including thinking about what the employer is looking for, dressing for success, and answering practice interview questions.

## Questions for Students:

- What are the goals of an interview for the employer?
- What are the goals of an interview for the job seeker?
- What do employers hope to learn about you through the interview?
- What do you need to do and think about before the interview?
- What is appropriate and inappropriate dress for an interview? How do you decide what is right for the job for which you are interviewing?
- What kinds of questions are often asked in an interview?

## Activities for Students:

- In a small group, make a list of the types of things employers are looking for when they conduct interviews.
- Come up with a list of the things a person should do before the interview and a timeline for doing them.
- In a small group, identify and document what students' accomplished in jobs they held; what they did well; and things learned and skills developed or used.
- Stage a fashion show where students wear examples of appropriate and inappropriate interview attire.
- Create a list of common questions asked in an interview.
- Invite local business people, HR professionals, and others who interview potential employees to share their interview tips and suggestions.
- Create transportation scenarios with students to increase awareness of how to problem solve with various forms of transportation.
- Hold mock interviews with classmates or invite community members to come in and the students.
- What accommodations are needed to perform certain job tasks?
- What are your work traits? What would make you a good employee?

## **Practice Interview Questions**

### **General Interview Questions:**

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want to work here?
3. What qualifications do you have that relate to this position?
4. What are your strengths?
5. What is your greatest weakness?
6. What are some things you find difficult to do? Why?
7. How does your previous experience relate to the jobs we have here?
8. Have you ever been fired? Why?
9. What do you know about this company? This industry?
10. What are the most important things for you in any job/company?
11. Why should we hire you?

### **Questions that focus on your soft skills:**

1. Tell me about a time when you had to handle a stressful situation.
2. Tell me about a time when you had to overcome difficulties or problems to get your job done.
3. What was the most difficult problem you've handled? How did you deal with it?
4. Tell me about a time when you had to adapt quickly to a change.
5. We were looking for someone with more experience in this field. Why should we consider you?
6. Give me an example of a time when you did more than the job required.

## Interview Checklist

### Before the Interview:

- Decide what accommodations you will need for the interview.
- If you are working with VR, talk with your counselor about the accommodation(s) you need.
- If you are not working with VR, you must ask the employer to provide accommodations when they contact you to set up the interview.
- Learn as much as you can about the company and the job you are applying for before the interview.
- Practice interview questions with appropriate body language and strategies to look at the interviewer while he or she is speaking.
- Choose the clothes you'll wear for the interview ahead of time. Make sure they are appropriate, clean, and ready for your interview.
- Plan for your transportation to the interview and allow *PLENTY* of time. Arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled interview time.
- Have your cover letter printed and ready to give to the employer.
- Have two copies of your resume printed and ready for the employer.
- Have your reference list printed for the employer in case it is requested.

### During the Interview:

- At the end of the interview, ask the employer about the next steps, and how you can follow up.
- Do they prefer an email or a call?
- Thank the person for the interview.

### After the Interview:

- Send a note thanking the employer for the interview.
- If you do not hear from the employer a few days after the interview, you can contact them one time to ask if they have made a decision.

# Educator's Guide: Accommodations During the Interview

## Description:

This video focuses on how to pre-arrange accommodations for an interview and what to expect when you are actually being interviewed.

## Questions for Students:

- From all the accommodation options available, and considering your specific visual impairment, which option(s) is the best for you?
- How do you make accommodation requests if you are working with VR, a Workforce Development Center, or another agency?
- How do you make accommodation requests of the employer if you are not working with a vocational rehabilitation agency?
- How can body language and your actions during the interview make the difference between a successful interview and a disastrous one?
- What can you do during the interview to give the employer a good impression?

## Activities for Students:

- Write a script for how you will ask for accommodations and what you will say if the person says "no," "we can't afford that option," or some other statement that they are unable to provide what you are asking for.
- Watch video examples of interviews and look for body language. Discuss how an employer will read the interviewee's actions.
- Invite people from different professions who conduct interviews, to visit with students about the interviewing process addressing body language and people's actions during interviews.
- Hold mock interviews with classmates, teachers, and/or role models. Record the interviews and critique them for body language and other behaviors during the interview.

# Educator's Guide: After the Interview

## Description:

This video focuses on what you should do after an interview. The discussion includes sending thank you notes and thank you emails, contacting employers, and after interview dos and don'ts.

## Questions for Students:

- What is the purpose and structure of a thank you note?
- Should you mail or email the note to the employer?
- What is an acceptable way to contact the employer, what is appropriate to ask, and when is it time to move on to looking for another job?
- What are the dos and don'ts after an interview?
- What are some rejection and coping strategies that you could use if you do not get the job?

## Activities for Students:

- Draft thank you notes both for mailing and emailing. Work in small groups to proofread the note for spelling and grammar.
- Role-play contacting an employer to ask about their decision and what to do and say in different scenarios.
- In small groups, come up with a list of the dos and don'ts for after an interview.

## Sample Thank You Email Message

To: Ms. Thomas at cheryl.thomas62@yahoo.com

Subject: Thank you for the Time to Discuss the Position: Manchester Parks and Recreation Cultural Arts Department

Date: February 14, 2020

Hello Ms. Thomas:

I want to thank you for inviting me to your office today. It was great to hear about the goals of the Manchester Parks and Recreation Cultural Arts Department. I was impressed by the focus of the music education coordinator position to serve a wider group of community families with music education both online and in-person. The organization seems like a wonderful place to work and not just because you mentioned some great staff summer events. I really admire what I heard about the organizational mission driving community services, and I look forward to the opportunity to work with your team to implement some of the ideas I mentioned around teaching music to all children in our community.

Please let me know if there's anything else you need from me to move the process forward.

Have a great rest of your week.

Sincerely,

Ivette Allen  
Ivette.allen@yahoo.com  
603-714-3592

## Sample Thank You Letter

7129 Round Rock Lane  
Bedford, New Hampshire 03110

February 14, 2020

Ms. Cheryl Thomas, Director  
Manchester Parks and Recreation  
1245 Main Street  
Manchester, New Hampshire 03101

Dear Ms. Thomas:

I want to thank you for inviting me to your office today. It was great to hear about the goals of the Manchester Parks and Recreation Cultural Arts Department. I was impressed that the focus of the position as Music Education Coordinator is to serve a wider group of community families with music education both online and in-person.

The Parks and Recreation Cultural Arts Department seems like a wonderful place to work. I really admire the mission of the agency that drives community services to everyone. I look forward to the opportunity to work with your team to implement some of the ideas I mentioned around teaching music to all children in our community.

Please let me know if there's anything else you need from me to move the process forward. Feel free to contact me by phone at: 603-714-3592 or via email at [ivette.allen@gmail.com](mailto:ivette.allen@gmail.com).

Have a great rest of your week.

Sincerely,

Ivette Allen

# Educator's Guide: References

## Description:

This video looks at employment references including who to include on a reference list, the purpose of references, whether employers even contact references, and what the employer hopes to learn from talking with them.

## Questions for Students:

- What is the purpose of references?
- Why do employers contact references and what they are looking to learn from talking with them?
- Who should you ask to be a reference and how do you ask their permission?
- What is the difference between personal and professional references?
- How do you create and format a reference list?
- When do you present an interviewer with your reference list?

## Activities for Students:

- Create a list of people who could be potential references. Consider direct supervisors from jobs or internships; people who know your volunteer activities; your vision-field team, such as teachers, transition counselors, O&M specialists; professors; and coworkers who understood the value of your accomplishments.
- Begin with a longer list of people, then narrow it down based on your priorities, the nature of the relationship, and the position you are applying for.
- Write a script for how you will ask people to be one of your references.
- Create a role-play with another student asking them if they would be a personal or professional reference.
- Create a reference list and share it with friends, family members, teachers, and mentors for feedback.



## Sample Student References

Ivette Allen  
7129 Round Rock Lane  
Bedford, New Hampshire 03110  
603-714-3592  
ivette.allen@gmail.com

### References:

American Council of the Blind  
Ted Harper  
2222 Preston Road  
Manchester, New Hampshire 03111  
[ted.harper@gmail.com](mailto:ted.harper@gmail.com) 603-275-7898  
President of the state ACB Chapter

Hume Music Group  
Rita Smith  
5301 Tennington Place  
Bedford, New Hampshire 03110  
[rsmith66@yahoo.com](mailto:rsmith66@yahoo.com) 603-275-4456  
Manager of Music Store

Manchester Community Choir  
Brad Lee  
2260 Marsh Lane  
Manchester, New Hampshire 03109  
[brad.lee@yahoo.com](mailto:brad.lee@yahoo.com) 603-679-2241  
Director of Community Choir

Joyce Power  
2478 Hope Street  
Bedford, New Hampshire 03110  
[jpower54@yahoo.com](mailto:jpower54@yahoo.com) 603-275-8920  
Orientation and Mobility Instructor (COMS)

Dr. Marynell Bailey  
4569 Merriam Park Drive  
Manchester, New Hampshire 03111  
[marynell.bailey62@yahoo.com](mailto:marynell.bailey62@yahoo.com) 603-345-5456  
Professor of English, University of New Hampshire

# Educator's Guide: Attitude – The Right Frame of Mind

## Description:

This video discusses how a positive attitude with a commitment of time and focus on goals plays a critical part in achieving personal goals and dreams.

## Questions for Students:

- What role does attitude play in your daily life?
- What attitudes do you see in yourself and others? Which of these attitudes are helpful in getting and keeping a job and which are not helpful?
- How can you overcome the negative attitudes that might hold you back?
- Describe how a person might demonstrate the following attitudes: passive, take charge, team player, committed, and seeing the big picture.
- How can you use these attitudes to guide what you do so you have a better chance of your dreams coming true?

## Activities for Students:

- Create a list of attitudes you see in yourself and others.
- Organize the attitudes listed in the previous question into two columns: label column one: "Attitudes that Can Help in my Job Search." Label column two: "Attitudes that are not Helpful in my Job Search."
- Make a list of the following attitudes: passive, taking charge, being a team player, being committed, and seeing the big picture. Next to each attitude, write the name of one or more people (friends, family members, or characters from TV programs) you have observed demonstrating that attitude.

# Educator's Guide: Hard and Soft Job Skills

## Description:

This video looks at how success at any job requires more than just hard skills, such as your knowledge, skills, and ability to do the required work. Soft skills, such as getting along with people, and knowing how to interact appropriately are vital to your ongoing work success as well.

## Questions for Students:

- What are hard and soft skills and can you give examples of each?
- Which skills are easier to identify on a resume?
- How might an employer assess a job candidate's soft skills?
- Why are soft skills harder to teach and learn than hard skills?
- How can you increase the chances that an employer notices your soft skills in an interview?

## Activities for Students:

- Create a list of soft skills you see in yourself and others.
- As a group, describe how a person who exhibits different soft skills such as cooperation, flexibility, courtesy, dependability, personal appearance, and positive attitude might act in the workplace.
- Look at sample resumes and identify the person's hard skills.
- Watch a recorded interview and see if you can pick out the soft skills the person possesses and ones they lack.
- As a group, model positive ways to express yourself in a business conversation. Practice voice tone and voice volume of expression in speaking to co-workers or in an interview.
- Talk to friends and family about soft skills that they see in you.
- Make a plan for demonstrating your soft skills in an interview and then practice interviewing with friends or family.