

Getting Hired: Making the Most of your Résumé and Interview

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Applying for Employment

The application

1. Most school districts have online employment applications you must fill out before your file can go forward toward an interview.
2. Most applications online are “click and submit” but a very few may need to be printed and mailed in.

Recommendations

1. Virtually all districts ask for recommendations.
2. Most email your recommenders to submit references. If the district uses a form that must be filled out and mailed in, you supply each reference with an addressed envelope when you give him/her the form.
(Very rare in recent years.)
3. If a district asks you to have references write letters, supply each reference with an addressed/stamped envelope so they have the formal name, title and business address for their letter.

Waivers

1. Recommendation forms usually have a place to indicate whether you waive your right to see that form. Though you have a legal right to see your recommendations, but know that some of your referees will be reluctant to give as detailed evaluation of you without the waiver.
2. Look at the forms you are asked to complete. The form may ask you to fill out your name and personal contact information before you give it to the referee.

Using common sense

1. Your referees want you to get a job. However, you should ask for their recommendations in a businesslike manner before listing their names.
2. Avoid giving a referee a form, telling him/her you “have to have it right now.”
3. It is permissible, after a week has passed to send a short email to a referee to ask if he/she has had a chance to fill out that recommendation.

The Interview

Before the Interview

1. Plan to dress professionally.
2. Find out what you can about the job before you go.
3. Be sure you have resume, transcripts, etc. up to date.
4. Monitor your online presence—do you appear professional there?

At the Interview

1. How many students are in the program?
2. How many music classes do I teach? (How is schedule set up?)
3. How many days each week do classes meet?
4. May I have extra rehearsals? May I have summer rehearsals?
5. Is there a booster organization? Who are sponsors for our trips?
6. What events are typical for the band each year? (concerts, parades, graduation, competitions, trips, pep rallies, etc.)
7. How is transportation handled for the band (financially and logistically)?
8. What is the condition of the uniforms and when may we buy new ones?
9. How is the budget set up, and how is the paper work handled for purchases? How are repairs handled?
10. May I go to my professional conference, and is there a stipend for this?
11. May I drop pupils from my classes? Can students quit when they want (or without a conference)?
12. Is the marching band permitted to rehearse on the football field? Where does the band normally rehearse (if not on the football field)?
13. Are drum majors/ officers/guard already chosen?
14. Has there been any conflict between athletics and band? (choir, theatre)
15. How is the current inventory?
16. I would strongly recommend that you wait till the end of the interview to ask about salary. If the subject has not arisen toward the end of the interview, a good way to open the topic is to ask if the salary is figured on a nine-month contract or longer.

After the Interview

1. Is this a town I could live in for a couple of years?
2. Is there any sign of support from the community toward the school and/or band?
3. Can I learn and grow as a teacher/musician/person here?
4. Remember that you are interviewing them too, in a way. You may need a job, but only you can evaluate the whole situation to decide if it is a place you can work.

Curriculum Vitae vs. Résumé?

The primary differences between these are length, what is included and for what each is used. A résumé is a one or two page summary of skills, experience and education. While a résumé is brief and concise, no more than a page or two, a curriculum vitae is a longer (at least two page) and is more detailed.

A more subtle but equally important distinction is that whereas the goal of a résumé is to construct a professional identity, the goal of a CV is to construct a scholarly identity.

A curriculum vitae includes a summary of your educational and academic backgrounds as well as teaching and research experience, publications, presentations, awards, honors, affiliations and other details. In Europe, the Middle East, Africa, or Asia, employers may expect to receive a curriculum vitae. In the United States, a curriculum vitae is used primarily when applying for academic, education, scientific or research positions. It is also applicable when applying for fellowships or grants.

Curriculum vitae=[the] course of [my] life. (Latin)

A quick search of the web will yield multiple sites with templates and examples, as well as sources for writing a cover letters or a CV.

A few extra hints to help you out in writing a résumé

Use proper designation for your degree name when including it in writing, such as on your résumé.

Line up your indentations. Use the tab key to get the front of each indented section lined up well.

Avoid abbreviating anything not known to the education world at large. Do not abbreviate “department” or “technician.” Someone in Human Resources might not know what a “marching tech” is. The same goes for nicknames for your college marching band or acronyms for student music organizations.

If you are smart enough to make the Dean’s List or the President’s List, please be sure you use the possessive apostrophe! (It is the list that belongs to the Dean.)

Principal and principle. Learn the difference.

There-their-they’re. Learn the difference.

Always have someone else read your résumé. You will be surprised what a proofreader will see that you did not notice!