

## Career Services Office

### Job Search Resource Guide

Phone: (313)845-9618 Email: [careers@hfcc.edu](mailto:careers@hfcc.edu)

Website: <https://careers.hfcc.edu/>

## 10 Skills Job Seekers Need

When it comes to a job seeker's skills/qualities, employers are looking for team players who can solve problems, organize their work, and communicate effectively, according to employers who responded to NACE's *Job Outlook 2014* survey.

Employers who interview and hire new college graduates were asked to rank a job candidate's desired skills and qualities. Employers rated seven of 10 qualities as "very important"; three were rated "somewhat important." (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1: Employers rate the importance of candidate skills/qualities

Skill/Quality	Weighted average rating*
Ability to work in a team structure	4.55
Ability to make decisions and solve problems	4.50
Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work	4.48
Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization	4.48
Ability to obtain and process information	4.37
Ability to analyze quantitative data	4.25
Technical knowledge related to the job	4.01
Proficiency with computer software programs	3.94
Ability to create and/or edit written reports	3.62
Ability to sell or influence others	3.54

\*5-point scale, where 1=Not at all important; 2=Not very important; 3=Somewhat important; 4=Very important; and 5=Extremely important

Source: *Job Outlook 2014*, National Association of Colleges and Employers

How can you demonstrate that you have these qualities? Here are some things you can do during your college years to meet these demands: **Join extracurricular activities.** Being an active member of a club or an intramural sports team, organizing a volunteer project, or taking part in group tasks, will help you earn that top quality spot, "ability to work in a team structure." Participating in extracurricular activities while maintaining a high GPA will demonstrate that you have the "ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work."

**Keep Your GPA High.** Good grades show that you have a good knowledge base—the "technical knowledge related to the job"—and demonstrates a strong work ethic—a quality that employers value.

**Find an internship.** Another way to demonstrate your knowledge of the job is to have done an internship or two in your field. You'll have taken an opportunity to look at your future career close up while getting hands-on experience with any potential job. Your internship can put your "foot in the door" to a job opportunity with many employers and help you build a network of professionals in your field.

**Make a Date With the Career Center.** The career center staff can help you go a long way in preparation for selling yourself to future employers. In addition to helping you choose a major and career direction, a career counselor can help you find internships, perfect your cover letter and resume, and develop your interviewing skills. Good interview skills will help you show a potential employer know that you can "verbally communicate" with people inside and outside the organization.

Courtesy of the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](http://www.nacae.org/).



## **Prioritizing is Critical to Job Search Success!!**

Priorities aren't what they used to be. When people use the word these days, they often mean something like, "yet another item on a long list of things I have to do." But a priority should really be an activity that takes place instead of another activity. You prioritize to help you focus on the most important tasks, not to add to an already-existing pile of them.

On the job search, distinguishing between essential and nonessential actions is especially important, because looking for employment is taxing and time-consuming. Whether you spend one hour a day or eight looking for work, spinning your wheels on the wrong activities can leave you discouraged and exhausted. That's why your first order of business when looking for work should be to set priorities.

### **1. Turn connections into opportunities**

It may seem counterintuitive to make following up your first priority, but any connection you've already made should take precedence over attempts to gain new contacts. It's much easier to ask for help from someone who already knows you than from a stranger.

If you're just starting your job search, get in touch with people you know, and make sure they're aware of your situation and what kind of work you're looking for. Offer to buy your contacts lunch or coffee, and take an interest in their career challenges and goals.

If a contact has responded to your request for assistance, don't assume you'll stay on his mind for long. Rather than letting the email sit in your inbox or the voice mail languish for a few days, say thanks right away. Then, keep the person apprised of how his efforts have helped your job search.

### **2. Target your résumé**

Submitting a high volume of applications each day might make you feel like you're maximizing your job-search efforts, but taking aim with each résumé you send is more beneficial. Spending an extra half-hour to highlight the connection between your work history and the employer's needs can make a world of difference in the way a hiring manager sees you. It will also help you avoid the demoralizing experience of saturating the market with your résumé, only to receive little or no response.

When the option is available, use a cover letter or equivalent email to explain how you can benefit the company, using specific examples of your contributions to previous employers.

Note that this priority applies only after you've made sure that your résumé is up-to-date and error-free. If you haven't yet revised your résumé for your current search and polished it with the help of a detail-oriented friend, move everything else on your priority list down a notch until you've done so.

### **3. Make new connections**

Networking can seem like an inefficient use of your time, especially after you've spent a day meeting people without identifying any definite leads. But any of those connections might lead in an unforeseeable way to your next opportunity. The key is to make the interactions as personal as possible. Whenever feasible, try to nudge email and phone-call exchanges toward face-to-face conversations.

Be wary of networking activities that make you feel as if you're accomplishing something without really improving your prospects. Attending a networking event, for example, will do you little good if you lingered by the snack table all night. Put yourself out there, and develop a quick pitch that summarizes your professional background and job-search goals in 15 to 30 seconds.

# Network For Your Job Search

***Networking could be what helps you land a job.***

If you take part in social networking sites, you probably have a pretty good idea of how networking can enhance your personal life. But, if you're like many new college graduates, you're probably not as comfortable about incorporating networking into your job search.

In spite of your discomfort, you need to incorporate networking into your job search: Especially in a competitive job market, networking could be what helps you land a job. In fact, many jobs are filled before they are even advertised—filled by people who learned about the opportunity before it was formally announced.

What is networking when it comes to the job search? It's not about using people. Just as you look to build personal relationships through social networks, you want to build relationships to foster your professional life. These relationships can help you not only in your current job search but down the road as you build your career.

Networking is not one-sided: It works both ways. You offer assistance to others just as they offer assistance to you. Perhaps the easiest way to think about networking is to see it as an extension of being friendly, outgoing, and active.

Here are some tips for building and maintaining a healthy network:

1. **Make a list of everyone you know—and people they know—and identify how they could help you gather career information or experience:** Who do you know at school? Professors, friends, and even friends' parents can all be helpful contacts. Did you hold a part-time job? Volunteer? Serve an internship? Think about the people you came into contact with there.
2. **Sign up for an alumni mentoring program:** Many colleges offer such programs, and they are a great way to build relationships in your field.
3. **Join the campus chapter of a professional society that relates to your career choice:** In many ways, a professional society is an instant network: You'll be with others who have the same general career interest. Plus, you may be able to learn more about your field from them. For example, you may be able to learn about the field and potential employers from others who share their internship experiences.
4. **Volunteer at a local museum, theater, homeless shelter—anywhere that even remotely relates to your field of study:** By volunteering, you'll not only learn about your chosen field firsthand, you'll also be able to connect with people who are in the field.
5. **Speak to company representatives at career fairs, even if you're not ready to look for a job:** Be up front that you're not currently in the job market and don't take a lot of the representative's time, but touching base with a potential employer now can help you down the road when you are ready.
6. **Attend company information sessions at your college and talk one-on-one to the recruiters who run them.**
7. **Schedule informational interviews with people who can tell you about their careers:** It's best to ask to meet in person or by phone for a short interview, and don't immediately start asking "How can you help me?" Plan your questions ahead of time, focusing on how the company works and how the person shaped his or her career path.
8. **Add your profile to LinkedIn:** It's free. And then, work your profile. Add work history (including internships!), skills, and keywords. Make connections to people you've worked with or met through networking. Ask for "recommendations" from people who have worked with you. You'll find LinkedIn is a good source of suggestions for people in your field to contact for informational interviews.
9. **Remember to be courteous and tactful in all your conversations, to send thank-you notes to people who help you, and to find ways to help others as well:** Don't drop your network once you've gotten a job. Nurture the relationships you've built and look for opportunities to build new connections throughout your career. Getting started might be uncomfortable, but with time and practice, networking will be second nature.

Courtesy of the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](#).

# Researching Employers

by Alicia Bervine, Anne Orange, and Jennifer Whetstone-Jackson

Researching employers is perhaps the single-most important activity you will undertake in your job search. The information you uncover can help you:

- Discover organizations that are a good match for you,
- Identify the organization's goals and needs,
- Tailor your resume and cover letter to highlight your skills and experiences that match the employer's needs,
- Know what questions to ask employers,
- Demonstrate your interest in and enthusiasm for the organization,
- Answer interview questions with confidence, and
- Make an informed employment decision.

Unfortunately, many students overlook the importance of research when undertaking a job search or looking for an internship. In fact, it's common for employers to complain that potential job candidates haven't "done their homework," and instead come into the interview with little or no knowledge about the organization. These candidates flounder, asking questions that could be easily answered by a cursory look at the company website or literature. Needless to say, they make a poor impression, because employers often assume lack of research means lack of interest.

## Where should you begin?

Start by developing a list of organizations in which you might be interested—companies that have the types of jobs or do the type of work that interests you. These could be organizations that visit your campus for career fairs, information sessions, and interviews, or they might be companies you have identified on your own as potential employers. An added bonus: You may discover lesser-known organizations that might be a match for your skills and interests. (Having a problem with this step? Talk with a career counselor in your campus career center for direction.)

Research companies to obtain information in each of the following categories:

- Organizational overview: age, size, financial outlook, growth, and structure
- Trends/issues in the industry
- Mission, philosophy, objectives
- Public or private or foreign-owned
- Location of plants, offices, stores, subsidiaries
- Products and/or services
- Names of key executives
- Competitors
- Sales, assets, earnings
- Growth history and current growth activity
- Current challenges
- Major achievements and activity, issues, news
- Career paths, training, benefits
- Company culture

## **For specific industries or sectors, see:**

- ThomasNet.com, for brief information about manufacturers in 67,000 categories in the United States and Canada.
- GuideStar.org, for brief information on more than 1.8 million U.S. nonprofit organizations.
- Idealist.org, for information on 71,000+ nonprofit organizations worldwide.
- USA.gov, for a list of federal agencies (click on “Find Government Agencies” on the home page).
- USChamber.com, for a list of employer members (click on Chambers and then “Chamber Directory”).

Don't forget the resources available in your campus career center: Check your career center for information about employers that recruit at your school. Finally, this list of resources is a *starting* point; never underestimate the power of a search engine. Simply “Google” the name of the organization you are interested in and see what information and news is returned!

## **Other Research Resources**

### **Start with the organization's website.**

Well-constructed and comprehensive sites will have abundant information, and for the sites that are not as comprehensive, it is still important to learn what is there. This is what the organization deems most important for you to know.

### **Look at university libraries' research databases.**

These will have information not available elsewhere for free, including financials, industries, market news, trade data, and more. Choose the business databases for information for the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Some of the most relevant databases are Hoovers.com, Dun & Bradstreet Million Dollar Directory, Thomson One, Business Source Premier, IBISWorld, Mergent Online, Glassdoor, and Buzzfile.com.

### **Check your public library.**

Public libraries have online research tools available free with a library card. In the business category, you may find ReferenceUSA, with information for more than 20 million U.S. companies, including nonprofit organizations. Speak to a reference librarian for additional options to research organizations.

### **Look at social networking sites, including LinkedIn.**

LinkedIn has become a leading source of inside information about organizations.

- On LinkedIn, find companies of interest and once found, click on the “Follow” tab to receive updates posted by the company.
- Join groups related to any career interest appealing to you.
- Contribute to discussions and connect with other members.
- Use the advanced search to find alumni working in companies in which you are interested.

### **Try the Employer Locator on Careeronestop.**

Go to [www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org); in the site search window, search for “Employer Locator.” This is a U.S. government database of nearly 12 million U.S. employers with brief information about each. It's a good resource for finding employers in a specific industry in a particular geographical location.

### **Look for small, independent companies in the local newspaper.**

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## The Best Ways to Use Social Media in Your Job Search

1. **Plan a social media strategy that is right for your career goals.** Think about the types of organizations you want to work at and research what networks the company and the people that work there are utilizing to make sure you are on those networks too.
2. **Build an on-line professional profile.** Almost all employers will do a Google or LinkedIn search on potential candidates. Make sure that when employers find you they are seeing information about your professional accomplishments and background that's up to date. If there are too many videos, photos, and other references and links to your personal life, you should utilize privacy settings and consider disabling or removing some of these other links.
3. **Create a robust LinkedIn profile.** You should tweak your Facebook profile to be more professional, and make sure that your privacy settings are secure.
4. **Use platforms like Twitter to expand your network.** Build relationships with organizations and individuals of interest to you and don't be afraid to reach out through several social media platforms. Many industry-related Twitter chats exist that can help you communicate your knowledge of different industries to the right people. There continue to be many success stories of individuals getting jobs or internships by actively participating in these chats and impressing hiring managers.
5. **Stay active on Foursquare, YouTube, and Pinterest.** Using these platforms will help you build your on-line presence, share your interests, and demonstrate your creativity, but it also makes it even more critical that you control your content.
6. **Join LinkedIn Groups (industry-related, or your college/university-related).** Actively participate in discussions and identify individuals whom you can converse with online who may also be able to help you build a robust network and eventually lead you to getting the job you want.
7. **Consider starting a blog related to the many career interests you are passionate about.** In addition to your own posts you can comment on other material that is on topic. This will give you an opportunity to communicate with others who share similar interests as yourself and connect with them. Some of your readers may be in a position to hire and be impressed with your initiative and ingenuity.
8. **Pay It Forward.** Communicate and share information. Re-tweeting, forwarding links, articles, and other relevant social media will not only raise your on-line profile, but will encourage others to also do the same for you.
9. **Use social media platforms to research organizations and people.** You may discover information that will be important to your interview preparations and help you stand out to your interviewers.

# Organizations Offer Information on Jobs With the State or Federal Government

[National Conference of State Legislatures](#) This is a nonpartisan, noncommercial website designed to educate college students, recent graduates, and anyone looking to change careers about the diverse professional opportunities available within state legislatures. The “Career Paths” section features testimonials from statehouse staff from Florida to Hawaii, Texas to Wisconsin sharing their job experiences and motivations for choosing a career in public service.

[The Partnership for Public Service](#) The Partnership for Public Service is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that works to revitalize the federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and by transforming the way government works.

[Idealist.org](#) Idealist connects people, organizations, and resources to find practical solutions to social and environmental problems. It works independently of any government, political ideology, or religious creed.

[GovLoop.com](#) Join more than 300,000 of your federal, state and local government peers in innovating and problem-solving with free resources and trainings. It works independently of any government, political ideology, or religious creed.

[National Contract Management Association](#) The National Contract Management Association is the professional group for professionals along the buying and selling chain. This includes jobs within the federal government.

Courtesy of the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](#).



## Job Search Sites

### General Sites:

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All Star Jobs	<a href="http://www.allstarjobs.com">www.allstarjobs.com</a>
Black World Careers	<a href="http://www.blackworld.com">www.blackworld.com</a>
Career Exposure	<a href="http://www.careerexposure.com">www.careerexposure.com</a>
Career.com	<a href="http://www.career.com">www.career.com</a>
Career Age	<a href="http://www.careerage.com">www.careerage.com</a>
CareerBuilder	<a href="http://www.careerbuilder.com">www.careerbuilder.com</a>
Career One Stop	<a href="http://www.careeronestop.org">www.careeronestop.org</a>
CareerSite.com	<a href="http://www.careersite.com">www.careersite.com</a>
Contract Job Hunter	<a href="http://www.cjhunter.com">www.cjhunter.com</a>
The Career Key	<a href="http://www.careerkey.org">www.careerkey.org</a>

### Health Care/Medical Sites:

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Health E Careers	<a href="http://www.healthcareers.com">www.healthcareers.com</a>
Medzilla	<a href="http://www.medzilla.com">www.medzilla.com</a>
Physemp.com	<a href="http://www.physemp.com">www.physemp.com</a>

### Human Resources Sites:

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HR Connections	<a href="http://www.hrconnections.com">www.hrconnections.com</a>
HR Hub	<a href="http://www.hrhub.com">www.hrhub.com</a>



## International Sites:

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EscapeArtist.com	<a href="http://www.escapeartist.com">www.escapeartist.com</a>
Youmu	<a href="http://www.youmutravel.com">www.youmutravel.com</a>
LatPro (Spanish)	<a href="http://www.latpro.com">www.latpro.com</a>
OverseasJob.com	<a href="http://www.overseasjobs.com">www.overseasjobs.com</a>

## Legal Sites:

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FindLaw	<a href="http://www.findlaw.com">www.findlaw.com</a>
LAWJOBS.com	<a href="http://www.lawjobs.com">www.lawjobs.com</a>
Association Career Network	<a href="http://www.legalstaff.com">www.legalstaff.com</a>

## Company Information Sites:

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555-1212.com	<a href="http://www.555-1212.com">www.555-1212.com</a>
EDGAR Online	<a href="http://www.edgar-online.com">www.edgar-online.com</a>
Fortune	<a href="http://www.fortune.com">www.fortune.com</a>
D&B Hoovers	<a href="http://www.hoovers.com">www.hoovers.com</a>
InfoUSA (small business info)	<a href="http://www.infousa.com">www.infousa.com</a>
SuperPages.com	<a href="http://www.bigbook.com">www.bigbook.com</a>
US Chamber of Commerce	<a href="http://www.uschamber.com">www.uschamber.com</a>

## Interviewing Information Sites:

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The Balance Careers	<a href="http://www.jobsearch.about.com">www.jobsearch.about.com</a>
Dress for Success	<a href="http://www.dressforsuccess.org">www.dressforsuccess.org</a>
Job.Interview.net	<a href="http://www.job-interview.net">www.job-interview.net</a>
Interview Gold	<a href="http://www.interviewgold.com">www.interviewgold.com</a>
Skillful	<a href="http://www.skillfullydone.com">www.skillfullydone.com</a>

## Salary and Compensation Sites:

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Bureau of Labor Statistics	<a href="http://www.bls.gov">www.bls.gov</a>
ICT/Clayton Wallis	<a href="http://www.ictcw.com">www.ictcw.com</a>
Economic Research Institute	<a href="http://www.erieri.com">www.erieri.com</a>
Homefair (Relocation Assistance)	<a href="http://www.homefair.com">www.homefair.com</a>
Janco Associates, INC.	<a href="http://www.e-janco.com/Salary.htm">www.e-janco.com/Salary.htm</a>
JobStar Central	<a href="http://www.jobstar.org/tools/salary/index.htm">www.jobstar.org/tools/salary/index.htm</a>
Salary Expert	<a href="http://www.salaryexpert.com">www.salaryexpert.com</a>

## Terminology Sites:

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Refdesk.com	<a href="http://www.refdesk.com">www.refdesk.com</a>
Computeruser	<a href="http://www.computeruser.com">www.computeruser.com</a>
Webopedia (Online Dictionary)	<a href="http://www.webopedia.com">www.webopedia.com</a>
Whatis.com	<a href="http://www.whatis.techtarget.com">www.whatis.techtarget.com</a>
Wordsmyth	<a href="http://www.wordsmyth.net">www.wordsmyth.net</a>



## HFC Career Service Office Helping Ex-Felons Achieve Employment

*This handout is also found on our website [careers.hfcc.edu](http://careers.hfcc.edu) under Career Tools.*

*Since several websites are listed, you may want to pull this handout up online so you can link directly to these sites.*

### Job Hunting Tips

Don't assume employers won't want to hire you. Usually everyone faces some type of obstacle, but employers are usually more concerned about finding the right fit. Don't limit yourself to employers who hire ex-felons, even though that is a good starting point, look at all employers. The exception is working with "vulnerable populations". This is explained below.

### Employment Protections

There are a number of laws that govern the employment of people with criminal records. Some of these laws protect ex-offenders from discrimination based on their conviction records and others restrict employers from hiring people with certain types of convictions. While employers are generally not allowed to have blanket bars against hiring people with criminal records, they are permitted to consider the relationship between the conviction record and the job sought. The types of jobs with legal prohibitions against ex-offenders tend to be in the fields of childcare, education, security, nursing and home healthcare, where "vulnerable" populations are involved. Michigan law provides limited coverage to people with criminal records. The Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act prohibits employers from asking about or maintaining records concerning any misdemeanor arrests that did not result in conviction. For further questions, see link below to Michigan Employer Guide flyer.

[www.michigan.gov/documents/mdcr/HiringPeoplewithCriminalRecords2010brochure\\_333180\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdcr/HiringPeoplewithCriminalRecords2010brochure_333180_7.pdf)

### Federal programs to help Ex-Offenders

Federal programs are generally designed to help people who need a job, housing, public assistance, and other services. Each program has different standards for participation with low income being the most common requirement. **There are no federal programs exclusively for ex-offenders.** Most assistance programs are administered locally by community agencies. One of the first stops you should make is to the One-Stop Career Center to help you with job leads. The Dearborn location is listed below, or search for another location at [www.servicelocator.org](http://www.servicelocator.org) or call the toll-free hotline: 1-877-US2-JOBS. Ask about job search assistance, federal bonding, employer tax incentives, job training, and Workforce Investment Act - sponsored training. The One-Stop Center will probably know about community assistance programs for ex-offenders. *One Stop Career Center, Michigan Works Office-* phone: 313-945-8159

6451 Schaefer Road  
Dearborn, MI 48126

### Veterans

Ex-offenders who are veterans should contact their local office of Veterans Affairs for assistance. They have a wide range of programs that can be helpful including rehabilitation services. The website for the VA is: <http://www.va.gov> or you can contact their national toll free number at 1-800-827-1000.

Dearborn Veterans Center – Phone: 313-277-1428  
2881 Monroe Street Suite 100  
Dearborn, MI 48124

## Getting an Adult Criminal Conviction Set Aside

Setting aside a conviction removes an adult Michigan criminal conviction from the public record of the Michigan State Police and the court, and is sometimes referred to as an expungement. The law that allows a person to apply to have one conviction set aside provides that the record be made nonpublic so that any criminal record check, made by someone other than the agencies specified in the law, will reveal no conviction.

## Getting a Juvenile Criminal Conviction Set Aside

Setting aside a conviction removes an adult Michigan criminal conviction from the public record of the Michigan State Police and the court, and is sometimes referred to as an expungement. Individuals are eligible to ask the court to set aside up to three juvenile offenses each year. The case must be closed for at least one year and only one of the convictions can be a felony as an adult. An individual may file an application if they are 18 years of age or older and one year has passed from the date of adjudication, or after one year following the date of completion of any term of detention.

## Explaining your background to employers

Often ex-felons are unsure how to explain their incarceration to an employer. Use these 4 steps:

1. Own it. If you have multiple crimes of the same nature then just summarize.
2. Express remorse
3. Say what you learned from the experience and what you accomplished during your incarceration
4. Close out with your goals now and for the future

## How does this look in a resume?

Remember that the purpose of your resume is to get a job interview; it is not the place to accentuate your weaknesses or lie about yourself. Instead communicate to employers what you can do for them. Issues about your criminal record are best left for an interview. In your resume you may want to avoid a chronological format with its list of employers by date. Instead you may want a functional resume which emphasizes qualifications of the job you seek (such as skills, competencies or personal qualities). Present your prison time in non-prison terms if possible. Instead of saying you worked for "Wisconsin State Prison" word it as "State of Wisconsin". Both statements are true, but the first raises more red flags that can prevent you from getting an interview.

## What does this look like in a typical conversation?

*In 1996, I was convicted of sale of a controlled substance. I was sentenced to five years but got out in three on good behavior. I realized I had made some bad decisions so I took advantage of whatever opportunity I could to get my life back on track. I participated in substance abuse treatment and earned my GED. I'm a more mature person now because of what I've been through and am continuing with programs to help myself now that I'm out. I know I have to prove myself so I'm going to try hard to be one of your best employees.*

## What does this look like in letter of explanation to an employer?

*Dear Employer,*

*Please accept this letter of explanation regarding my offense background. I was convicted on a first offense of distribution of a controlled dangerous substance. In January 2008, I was sentenced to 90 days at \_\_ Correctional Facility, but got out in 72 days because of good behavior and working in the jail.*

*My experience has helped me realize that I was on the wrong path, which was not the way I wanted to live. I have used my time constructively while being incarcerated to help myself make the best of the situation. I learned valuable new skills and how to undertake an effective job search and become a top performing employee.*

*Please note that an employer who hires me is eligible for up to a \$2400 tax credit and I can be bonded for up to \$5,000 at no charge to you for a period of six months with no cost to you. My main goal now is to make an honest living and to build upon the satisfaction of personal achievement I have discovered through incarceration. I will make every effort to be among your best employees if you give me a chance to work for you.*

*Sincerely,*

**Looking for more help?**

Check out this helpful blog where you can dialogue with others that have similar concerns.

<http://howfelonscangetjobs.blogspot.com/>

There is a wealth of DETROIT AREA resources found at Julies List from free removal of gang tattoos, support and mentoring groups, medical and psychiatric care and therapy, to job training programs.

<http://julieslist.homestead.com/ParoleePrograms.html>

Career Services Office  
Henry Ford College  
5101 Evergreen Road  
Dearborn, MI 48101  
Phone 313-845-9618  
careers.hfcc.edu

## What to Do If You Don't Have a Job at Graduation

**Keep going!** Be persistent in your job search. Get up every day as if you're going to work, and spend time identifying and researching employers. Contact employers and schedule appointments. Make your job search your job!

**Register.** Sign up on job-search engines. Stay current and active on business networks like LinkedIn or social media sites like Facebook where you can find company profiles.

**Work your network.** Contact alumni in your field. Remind your contacts that you're still looking for a job. Make new contacts by joining professional groups in your area.

**Call on the career center.** Even though you've graduated, your college's career center is ready to help. Use all the online resources the career center offers.

**Take a temp job.** Temporary work will give you a way to pay your bills, and will help build the skills and experience that employers want. Plus, temp work will give you more contacts for your network, and may lead to a full-time job. Some organizations use temp positions as a stepping stone into full-time employment.

**Get your foot in the door.** Some employers offer internships to recent graduates. You may find part-time positions at a company for which you want to work. This could be effective, especially in an organization that hires from within. If you do a great job, you become an excellent candidate for a full-time position.

**Look for ways to build new skills.** Volunteer opportunities, like temp work, will open your network to new people and new opportunities. It can also help you develop new skills that will make you a more appealing job candidate.

# Choosing Among Job Offers

First, make sure you know enough about the organization, the job, and the details of each offer to weigh one offer against another. If you lack information, seek it out by asking the employer, researching the organization, and talking to others who work at or are familiar with the organization or job. Ask your career services staff if they have had feedback from past students who have taken jobs with the organizations you are considering, and check to see if your career office has an alumni adviser to help you make contact with alumni working for these organizations.

There is no perfect formula for making your decision, but one of the best ways to begin is by making a list of all of the features that are important to you in your first job. These may include such items as the type of work you'll be doing, the organization's reputation/prestige, training program, salary, specific benefits, location of job, opportunity for advancement, work environment, opportunity for free time (evenings and weekends), opportunity for travel, colleagues with whom you'll be working, and so forth. Add every possible item you can think of to your list.

## What matters most?

After you have all the features on your list, rank them in order of their priority to you. For example, type of work may be most important to you, followed by salary, and then specific benefits.

Next, look at each job offer you are considering, and rate the features of each using a scale of one to five (with five being excellent and one being poor). For example, if ABC Company's offer provides a great starting salary, you'll most likely give that feature a "5" under ABC. If XYZ Company's offer provides a lesser starting salary, XYZ might earn a "3" rating for salary. (See the sample below.)

After you have finished rating all the features for all your offers, add up the scores for each offer. Although this is an inexact science, it is a way to demonstrate which offer provides you with the most of whatever features are important to you.

## Weigh your options carefully

In the final analysis, remember to weigh carefully what is most important to you. Don't be unduly swayed by the job title or the prestige of the organization and how it will impress your relatives. While it is helpful to get advice from family and friends, you are the one who will be going to work every day. You need to be sure that your job will be a good experience for you and will allow you to achieve your initial goals. Remember, though, that no job is perfect or able to meet all your needs. Consider the factors that you are willing to compromise on or have met in other ways. For example, if you enjoy travel and your job provides little opportunity for it, you can use long weekends and vacations for this interest.

## Nothing is forever

Keep in mind that while you want to make the best possible decision at this moment in time, your decision is not irrevocable. The odds are great that you will not remain with your first employer for your entire career. As you progress in your career, you will continue to learn which features are of highest priority for you (your priorities will also probably change with time) and how to find the best opportunity to have these priorities met. Good luck!

**Sample Rating Sheet for Multiple Job Offers**

<b>Feature (in order of importance)</b>	<b>ABC Company</b>	<b>MNO Company</b>	<b>XYZ Company</b>
Challenging work	4	5	4
Advancement opportunities	3	4	2
Medical benefits	5	5	5
Salary	5	3	5
401(k) retirement plan	4	4	3
Dental benefits	4	4	4
Training program	3	4	4
Life insurance	4	4	3
Job location	5	4	4
Workplace environment	4	3	4
Opportunity to travel	4	2	2
Tuition reimbursement for grad school	5	4	1
<b>Total Rating:</b>	50	46	41

Create your own list of features that matter to you and list them in order of importance, with the most important feature appearing at the top of your list. Then, rate the features of each company's offer on a scale of one to five (five=excellent; 1=poor). In the sample to the left, the offer from ABC Company has the highest rating, indicating that ABC's offer provides more of the features that matter to the sample job seeker. This is one way to compare job offers.