

# Looking for a Job

## LESSON DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

Getting a job is fundamental to achieving economic success. Most people begin their work lives working for others. While obtaining a job can be a challenge, there are widely accepted practices in business and government that make the process less difficult. This lesson provides an overview of steps for finding job openings, writing a letter of application, preparing a resume, completing an application, and participating in an interview.

Lesson 4 correlates with national standards for economics and personal finance as shown in Tables 1-2 in the introductory section of the publication.

## ECONOMIC AND PERSONAL FINANCE CONCEPTS

- Job application
- Job search
- Resume

## OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Identify the key steps in the **job-application** process.
- Practice job-interview skills.
- Write a letter of application and a **resume**.

## TIME REQUIRED

One 45-minute class period

## MATERIALS

- A copy for each student of **Theme 2 Introduction** from the *Student Workbook*

- A copy for each student of **Exercise 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3** from the *Student Workbook*
- A copy for each student of **Activity 4.1**

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



To download visuals, find related lessons, correlations to state standards, interactives, and more visit <http://fffl.councilforeconed.org/9-12/lesson4>.

## PROCEDURE

1. Tell the students that they will now begin to learn more about the important role they will play as workers in the economy. In this lesson, they will examine the job search process.
2. Distribute a copy of **Theme 2 Introduction** from the *Student Workbook*. Ask the students to read the section to become acquainted with the concepts presented in this theme.
3. Tell the students that you will be providing them with an overview of the steps in the job application process and will give them some opportunities to develop and practice their job-seeking skills.
4. Give each student a copy of **Exercise 4.1** from the *Student Workbook*. Ask the students to read the exercise and answer the questions. When they have finished, discuss the answers. Sample answers include the following:
  - a. What are the six primary steps in the job application process? (**Look for job openings, write a letter of application, prepare a resume, complete the application, participate in a job interview, write a thank-you letter.**)
  - b. What are two suggestions for finding a job? (**Check the CareerOneStop [[www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org)] website offered by the U.S. Department of Labor to find state and private job banks. You may also consult Monster.com, Careerbuilder.com, and other**)

- job search websites. Consider ways to network with family, friends, and organizations like the local Chamber of Commerce. Also, check with teachers, guidance counselors, local employment agencies, newspaper classified advertisements, and businesses.)**
- c. What are two tips for writing a letter of application? **(A letter of application should be a standard business letter. A typical letter expresses your interest in a particular job; links your experience, interest, or training to the job; and explains how you can be reached for an interview.)**
  - d. What information is ordinarily included on a resume? **(Your name, telephone number, street address, e-mail address, career objective, education, work experience, abilities, and other information that might include interests, awards, offices held in organizations, extracurricular activities, and names of references.)**
  - e. There are many suggestions for how best to conduct yourself at a job interview. Which suggestions do you think are most important, and why? **(Answers may include know the company, arrive on time, go alone, dress appropriately, be poised and confident, have a firm handshake, establish eye contact, communicate clearly, be ready for some open-ended questions, emphasize your strong points, ask questions, and be positive.)**
  - f. Why is it important to send a follow-up thank-you letter? **(It is good manners to thank people for their time and any feedback they may have provided; it provides you with an opportunity to let the prospective employer know why you believe you would be a good fit for the job; and it provides another opportunity for you to remind the prospective employer of your strengths.)**
5. Give each student a copy of **Exercise 4.2** from the *Student Workbook*. Point out the detailed information that is called for on a typical job application. Ask the students to read through the application and answer the questions at the end of the exercise. Discuss the students' responses. Possible answers include the following:
- a. What information is requested on the job application? **(Personal information such as name, address, and Social Security number; availability to work; and education.)**
  - b. What are the obligations of individuals with disabilities? **(Individuals with disabilities must inform employers that they need special accommodations.)**
  - c. What sort of questions are employers not supposed to ask? **(Federal law prohibits hiring decisions being made on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, pregnancy, marital status, parenthood, age, height, weight, criminal record, or perceived disability. Interviewers and job applications are not allowed to pose personal questions that do not pertain to the requirements of the job.)**
6. Tell the students that they are going to participate in a job-interview simulation. Ask: Has anyone ever participated in a job interview? What are some characteristics you think employers look for in new employees? List the students' comments on the board. **(Likely answers: employers look for employees who are punctual, pleasant, courteous, and hard-working; and of course they look for employees who have the skills needed to do the job.)**
7. Give each student a copy of **Exercise 4.3** from the *Student Workbook*. Allow the students a few minutes to study the information. Divide the class into pairs. One member of each pair should act as the interviewer; the other should act as the interviewee. Ask one student in each pair to select a job from the Job Postings sheet for which he or she will apply. Ask the other student to use the Interviewer Evaluation Form to conduct a simulated interview and to complete the evaluator's section. Then have the students conduct their interviews. When they have completed the first interview, have the students

reverse roles so that the interviewer becomes the interviewee and the interviewee becomes the interviewer. At the end of each interview, have the interviewer give the job applicant the completed evaluation form.

8. When the simulated interviews have concluded, ask the students:
  - a. What questions seem the most difficult for the interviewees to answer? **(The open-ended questions were probably the most difficult for the interviewees to answer.)**
  - b. Which characteristics of the respondent's answers did the interviewers tend to favor? **(Answers will vary. Each student will probably have a different comfort zone for different types of questions.)**
  - c. What are some important questions for the interviewee to ask of the interviewer? **(Responses will vary. Many of the most important questions that should be asked are specific to the type of job opening.)**

### CLOSURE

1. Review key points of this lesson by asking the students to identify the six steps in the job-seeking process. **(Finding job openings, writing a letter of application, preparing a resume, completing an application, participating in an interview, and writing a thank-you letter.)**
2. Ask the students to visit the Occupational Outlook Handbook at [www.bls.gov/OCO/](http://www.bls.gov/OCO/) and use it to research three jobs of interest to them. They should prepare a report that identifies the occupations they have selected and explain the nature of the work, working conditions, employment opportunities, training, and other qualifications, plus opportunities for advancement, job outlook, earnings, and related occupations.

### ASSESSMENT

Ask the students to find a job they are interested in, using the classified ads of the local newspaper or using the website CareerOneStop

at [www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org). Note: since most of the jobs listed on the Internet are full-time, the local newspaper might be a better source if you want students to consider applying for part-time or summer jobs. Distribute a copy of **Activity 4.1** to each student. Ask the students to prepare a letter of application and a resume for the job they have selected from the newspaper or website, using these samples as models.

Ask the students to prepare a sample thank-you letter that they would send to an interviewer at the conclusion of an interview.

### EXTENSION

- Have the students examine the job outlook for the county they plan to work in, using information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov) or other state or local websites.
- Invite a workforce-center official to visit the class and show the students how to register for local, state, and federal job banks. He or she might also discuss the process of applying for state and federal jobs.
- Invite a human resources manager from a local company to speak in class about what employers are looking for in a worker and how to prepare for an interview.

# Sample Letter of Application

June 15, 2011

Ms. R.B. Posnanski, Manager  
Wildlife Unlimited  
2400 Hartford Avenue  
Berlin, WI 54232

Dear Ms. Posnanski:

Please consider me an applicant for the clerical assistant position advertised in last Sunday's *Journal Sentinel*.

My high school coursework in business, which included word processing, accounting, and computer studies, has prepared me for an entry-level position. Enclosed is my resume that lists my education, experience, and skills.

My long-range goal is to work in an office where I can accept increasing responsibilities and advance toward a position as an administrative assistant. I gained valuable knowledge and experience in my high school classes and while working at Walmart in Berlin, Wisconsin.

Please call me to set up a time for an interview. I can be reached at (920) 123-4444.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Kelly A. Thomas*

Kelly A. Thomas

Enclosure: resume

# Sample Resume

**KELLY A. THOMAS**

234 Elm Tree Road

Berlin, WI 54232-4232

(920) 123-4444

## CAREER OBJECTIVE

Office or accounting clerk position with the opportunity for advancement to administrative assistant.

## EDUCATION

2006-2010 Berlin High School, Berlin, Wisconsin (GPA 3.33)

Major Course of Study: Business and Accounting

## Relevant Coursework

Word Processing, Database Applications, Business Law, Accounting I and II, Communications, Personal Finance

## Relevant Skills

Typing (70 wpm), Word Processing, and Spreadsheet Applications

## Extracurricular Activities

Member: Future Business Leaders of America, 2009

Competitor at regional skills event in accounting

French Club

## Recognition

Received highest attendance award in high school (missed 1.5 days out of 4 years).

## WORK HISTORY

*Cashier*, Walmart, Berlin, Wisconsin (six months, part time)

Greet customers, operate cash register, and balance cash register.

*Material Handler*, Jesse Jackets, Oshkosh, Wisconsin (summer help)

Check garments for mistakes or flaws and fix them, take garments to appropriate departments.

*Office Assistant*, Berlin High School, Berlin, Wisconsin (one year, part time)

Work in the front office included helping new students get to classes, answering the telephone, running errands, typing forms, and calling parents.

## REFERENCES

Provided on request