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ADDRESSING STUDENTS' COMPETENCIES THRU  
PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Education:  
Vocational Education

---

by  
Victor Raymond Schiro

June 2001

ADDRESSING STUDENTS' COMPETENCIES THRU  
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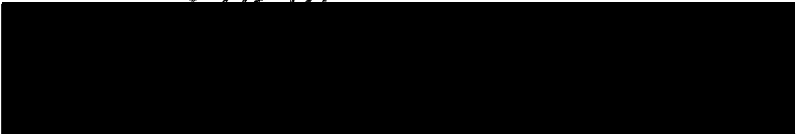
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by  
Victor Raymond Schiro  
June 2001

Approved by:

  
Joseph A. Scaricella, Ph.D., First Reader

6/16/01  
Date

  
Thom Gehring, Ph.D., Second Reader

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## ABSTRACT

This study presents a solution to industry's concerns regarding the applicants' level of preparation as they enter or seek improvement in the workforce. It addresses the need to present a realistic approach to career choices, job expectations, and skill preparation.

It offers self-direction in evaluating what the applicant brings to the job and effective communicative techniques for conveying this information to the employer. Historical perspectives of job preparation, relative to emerging workforce expectations, are also presented.

The project presents a model for the construction of a job search portfolio. A collection of documents created for this project design and assessment comprise the materials found in the appendix. Forms and templates are used to organize information. Completed examples, are presented as practical instruments for implementing expectations discussed in the literature section.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I would also like to express indebtedness to my parents, Victor and Carmella Schiro, children, Christopher and Lisa Schiro, who have sacrificed so much in support of my career, pursuits of additional teaching credentials, and advanced degrees. Most of all, I would like to convey my special appreciation to my wife and companion, Carol Schiro, for a lifetime of allowing me to set off in several directions during our time together.

I want to recognize all of my life-long acquaintances for their contribution to my persona. My greatest indebtedness is to all those I have worked with during my adult life. In particular, to those who took part in teaching me skills and life's lessons during my Railroad Machinist Apprenticeship and working career. During this time, I learned that the community educates the children

and what I was learning dated back centuries, because these people offered me information others had taught them.

I want to thank Dr. Thom Gehring for his assistance, guidance, and help in improving my writing skills. But most importantly for stating:

"We all learn from each other as we stand upon the shoulders of those who have taught us and those who taught them." These shoulders have figuratively raised me to a height capable of looking over the fence to see more clearly.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the students and advisors of California's SkillsUSA who took part in field testing, lambasting, and offering suggestions for the construction and organization of the project. Thanks to you all.

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife, father, brothers,  
children, and students.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### BACKGROUND

#### Introduction

Chapter One presents an overview of the project. The context of the problem was discussed, followed by the purpose and significance of this project. Next, the limitations, and delimitations which apply to this project were reviewed. Finally, a definition of terms was presented.

#### Context of the Problem

In the twenty-first century globalization is projected to have an effect on workforce demand, knowledge, and technology. This globalization is growing exponentially, making diversity in worker preparation imperative. As a result, some people will not be able to participate at their maximum potential in the workplace because of inadequate training or education.

Further, a gap exists between employer expectations of an applicant's preparedness, and the recognition of these expectations by both students and educators. Employers voice their serious reservations about an applicant's non-technical abilities. These non-technical abilities are employability skills, which "are the

attributes of the employees, other than their technical competence, that will make them an asset to their employer" (Buck & Barrick, 1987, p. 29). The applicants' non-technical skills remain dubious unless they can demonstrate to the employer that they have developed these skills. Portfolios may provide a resolution for this problem.

Three types of skills are described in the portfolio: technical, academic, and work readiness. Evaluating a student's employability portfolio allows employers to assess key attributes about the candidate's high school or college priorities, and their potential for the position.

#### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to develop a classroom handbook explaining the process and standards, necessary in developing an employability portfolio. The project's purpose includes aligning high school and post-secondary academia with industry expectations. The purpose of this process includes the implementation of a life-long learning skill where a person will evaluate and then present evidence of knowledge and skill acquisition.

## Significance of the Project

A portfolio for the workplace draws upon the following concept. The ability to carry out a job effectively comes from transferring and applying past learning from education and life's experiences to the task. As applicants are screened, human resource managers are replacing, *tell me what you know* with a *show me what you can do* attitude.

Successful entry-level portfolios identify the applicants' experiences and knowledge by validating their qualifications for a desired position. The portfolio substantiates students' skills beyond their education. It allows applicants to demonstrate the commitment, personality, priorities, and qualities they possess as qualifications to their new positions.

The portfolio serves to connect workplace relevance to classroom activities. Through this connection, students have a superior expectation of what they should be striving toward; "identifying gaps in their learning, determining strategies that support their learning, celebrating risk taking and inquiry, setting goals for future experiences, while seeing change and development over time" (Porter, & Cleland, 1995, p. 3).

Employers and educators must join in a partnership to establish methods for translating an applicant's academic and personal achievements into a measurement of workplace readiness, and ultimately, prosperity in their chosen career. This assessment for workplace readiness requires that the partnership determine which skills, traits, and knowledge applicants will need in order to succeed at work, and how to foster their acquisition.

The development of portfolios in the classroom represents an intersection of assessment and instruction. This connection will allow an instructor to provide students with an additional level of feedback regarding their successes. It provides instructors with information regarding their lessons' effectiveness and relevance to the workplace by identifying those skills students have mastered and where improvements must be made to reach entry-level competency.

The portfolio involves students in their own assessment process. This student-centered activity promotes management of their learning, documents progress and achievements, articulates their accomplishments and experience toward successful learning outcomes.

## Assumptions

The following assumptions were made regarding the project:

1. By informing instructors of industry's expectations for applicant's knowledge, personal and technical skills, students will have greater success in securing job interviews for entry level employment;
2. By providing students with examples and expected levels of achievement, they will have greater success in earning job interviews and opportunities for promotions;
3. The portfolio will enhance the students' personal satisfaction with their life experiences, education, and skill acquisition.

## Limitation and Delimitation

During the development of this project, a limitation and delimitation were noted. These are presented in this section.

### Limitation

The following limitation applies to this project:

The scope of this guide is limited to the use of students enrolled in classes at the Yucaipa High School Agriculture and Technology Department.

## Delimitation

The following delimitation applies to this project:

This project may be utilized by any educator or student.

## Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as they apply to this project.

- Cover Letter - Accompanying, explanatory letter: a letter sent with another document or package, providing necessary or additional information (Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary, 1993).
- Employability Portfolio - A collection of a student's work that demonstrates knowledge, skills, and achievements. Employability portfolios contain an introduction, a career development package, work samples, and a writing sample (CTAP, 1995).
- Employability Skills - Includes reading, arithmetic, problem solving, decision-making, dependability, a positive attitude, and ability to cooperate. "These skills are not job specific, but are skills that cut horizontally across all industries and vertically across all



jobs from entry levels to chief executive officer" (Sherer, & Eadie, 1987, p. 16).

- Industrial Age - The period during which mechanical devices were generally substituted for human skills and inanimate power or energy was substituted for animal power (Merriam-Webster's 's collegiate dictionary, 1993).
- Performance-Based Assessments - Alternatively identified as authentic assessment; has been used by Industry to establish one's competency in a particular knowledge or skill. An observer evaluates the students as they perform a task (NCRVE, 1997).
- Résumé - A summary of one's educational and work experience, for the information of possible future employers (Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary, 1993).
- Sample - A representative part of a single item from a larger whole or group especially when presented for inspection or shown as evidence of quality (Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary, 1993).

- Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) - This Report established the basis for the development of numerous workplace readiness programs, surveys, and curricula at the state and local level (NCRVE, 1998).
- Skills - The ability to do something well, such as an art or trade gained through experience and training (Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary, 1993).
- Technological-Information Age - The period of increased access, communication, management, and processing of information, knowledge, and products using computerization, robotization, and electronic media (Grummon, 1997).
- Traits - A particular characteristic or quality that distinguishes one's personality (Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary, 1993).

#### Organization of the Project

There are four chapters in this project. Chapter One provides an introduction to the context of the problem, purpose and significance of the project, limitations, delimitations, and the definitions of terms. Chapter Two consists of a review of the literature. Chapter Three

outlines the population to be served and the project design. Chapter Four presents the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the development and implementation of the project. The project references follow Chapter Four. Finally, the Appendix consists of documents, which support the conclusions and recommendations noted in Chapter Four.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction

Chapter Two consists of discussions presenting the relevant literature supporting employability skills and the development of a student's Employability Portfolio. Included are: a historical overview; identified skills and traits; classroom development of employability skills, and the documentation process in developing a student portfolio.

#### History of Employability Skills

During the last three thousand years, basic education, skills, and trades have been passed by word of mouth from teacher to student, father to son, and mother to daughter. As the demand for skilled labor increased beyond the capacities of this system, indentureships began. Thus allowing master craftsmen, artisans, and journeymen to pass on their basic education and skills to more than their own immediate families (Daggett, 1995).

The indenture's education consisted of technical and life skill information including: acquiring foreign language and bartering. These skills were essential in

identifying; locating; and developing sources of raw materials or finished products necessary in their trade. Technological progress was slow and the general education received by the indentures was relevant to the period in which they lived (Daggett, 1995).

This system lasted until the beginnings of the American and European Industrial Revolutions. Relative to the demands of the new age, the indenture system failed for two reasons: the process of a completed indenture was slow, and the number of emerging journeymen could not meet the demands of growing industries (Daggett, 1995).

#### Government Support for Vocational Education

An alternative to this system was the American introduction of the European style trade schools. These mechanical schools were factory or privately owned programs. This system created a cheap labor pool for their industry. Students received training and instruction in basic academic, trade, and production line skills prior to being placed in the workplace (NCEE, 1998).

By 1862, the American government recognized the need for a change from an agrarian to industrial-based economy and began to support vocational education in the college system. That year, Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Act,

which developed Land Grant colleges. For this purpose, units of 30,000 acres were deeded to individual states based on their number of Federal Representatives and population. The states, under the act, could sell the land and use the profits for:

The endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college where the leading object shall be; without excluding other scientific and classical studies and including military tactics, to teach branches of learning as are related to agriculture and mechanic arts.  
(Smith, 1979, p. 11)

The colleges met the requirements of this law as follows:

- Agriculturally,  
By disseminating information about crop rotations and greater productivity per useable acre,
- Industrially,  
By introducing, manufacturing techniques and trade skills (Smith, 1979).

In 1866, California opened the Agriculture, Mining, and Mechanical Arts College (Smith, 1979). Before the early 1900s, Federal and State public monies supported only technical and vocational courses at the college level. In 1902, California added its fourth Constitutional

Amendment, which allowed State support for public secondary and technical schools (Smith, 1979).

At the turn of the twentieth century, additional Federal funds became available to help the country enter the new world of urban industrialization and mechanization. On February 23, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson extended Federal support into public education through the Smith-Hughes Act. This act supported classes in agriculture, the trades and industries, home economics, and the preparation for vocational instructors. This legislation, while providing for Vocational Education and passed before the American involvement in World War I, did so in the interest of the national welfare. A feature of the bill was that it allowed the appropriation to become permanent. The act stood for more than fifty years (Smith, 1979).

Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal included four bills placing \$48.5 million into the development of vocational education programs. Additional federal funds were directed toward vocational programs through the Vocational Expansion Act in 1963 and the Carl Perkins Act of 1984. The 1994 School to Work Opportunities Act addressed student skill shortages through new partnerships between educators and employers (Smith, 1979).

## Changes in Academic and Vocational Education

American education has made adjustments to fit the needs of industry. Four historical eras coincide with the public's view and significant developments in technologies. These include the Industrial Revolution, World War II, the Cold War, and the New Millennium.

### Industrial Revolution

During this last century, American educators significantly adjusted their goals and priorities to accommodate new technologies and employment needs of emerging American industries. Education satisfied these needs by following industry's new organization. They standardized students' academic curriculum, vocational skills, gender-specific competencies, and introduced a class bell schedule, which acclimated the student to the regimen of the new workday (Daggett, 1995).

As the 20<sup>th</sup> century commenced, the educational mission and philosophy shifted from its rural-agrarian predominance to meeting the needs and requirements of the urban Industrial Age. Technological innovations, including electricity and steam power changed the processes of communicating, manufacturing, and transporting of finished goods. This change was "so profound that it transformed



almost every area of life in fundamental ways" (Wynn, 1998, p. 36).

### Post World War II

The second wave of reform began as parents viewed higher education as the ticket to a professional life and a better standard of living for their children. Education moved away from vocationally driven curriculum and toward a new attitude of *my child is going to college*. Pressures from American society demanded the construction of additional universities and a more stringent college preparatory curriculum in the secondary education system (Daggett, 1995).

### Cold War

Two significant events occurred during the beginning of this period. On October 4, 1957, the Russians launched the first artificial satellite, Sputnik 1, from their cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. Sputnik 2 launched thirty-three days later carrying a canine, named Laika into orbit. These two events occurred before America successfully launched its Vanguard rocket the following January. Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, voicing the shock of events declared, "the Russians have jumped way ahead of us in the conquest of space" (Wright, 1997, p. 2).

America entered the space race in January, 1958. In response to the flooding of technical colleges with new students to support the increasing demand for engineer recruitment in the Aerospace industries, the third wave of education reform began. Education placed greater emphasis on scientific and vocational curriculums supporting the design and use of new machinery and materials (Wright, 1997).

#### The New Millennium

The fourth, most current and substantial wave of educational reform has been the preparation of students for the global workforce and the new Information Age. "Earlier industrial technologies replaced the physical power of human labor; substituting machines for body and brawn" (Rifkin, 1996, p. 66). What differentiates the Information Age from the Industrial Age is its transition from mass labor to a conceptual workforce. This change is accompanied by "increasingly sophisticated technologies to process goods and services" (Slavin, 1996, p. 607).

American manufacturing and service sectors are undergoing a transformation as profound as the one experienced by the agricultural sector earlier in the last century (Slavin, 1996). These transformations include the increase in the rate of business development and the new

complexities they must manage as companies act beyond international boundaries. It is not a new idea that industries should seek greater profitability by moving factories to the cheapest, most productive workforce. The workforce now extends beyond national borders and has become global.

The focal point of the coming age is evidenced in the commercial and public uses of the Internet. Clients are communicating, planning, purchasing, and selling products using this new electronic medium. "The Information Age has witnessed the work of industry coming to the worker rather than the worker to the work" (Daggett, 1997, p. 54).

During the latter part of the last century, we moved away from an industrial beginning toward a technological-information-based economy. Unskilled positions have begun to disappear rapidly. This new and emerging workplace requires the application of skills, some of which did not exist less than five years ago. Success in this developing globalization will require the employee to develop efficient techniques for thinking, managing, and working.

While the required skill levels for those remaining entry-level positions has increased, the demand for entry-level skill positions available for young graduates

has decreased. Education can become more effective when educators identify the entry-level skills valued by employers (Kubissa, 1999).

#### Skills and Traits Employers Value Most

The workplace has little patience with employees who do not know how to take responsibility for their own learning and who think that the need to learn ends once they begin working.  
(Fletcher, 1997, p. 2)

In 1991, the United States Department of Labor developed a commission to identify which skills and competencies employees needed to be successful. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) met four times during that decade and produced a report each time. The Commission proposed five competencies and three basic skills.

#### SCANS Competencies

Each worker should be competent in handling:

- Resources - This included the ability to identify, organize, plan, and allocate resources. These resources include time, money, material, space, and staff;
- Interpersonal Relationships - The ability to work well with others. They should be competent in working on teams, leading and teaching

others, serving clients, negotiation, and working in socially or culturally diverse environments;

- Information - The ability to acquire and use information, including the organization and maintenance of data, interpretation and communication of the implications from this information, and the use of computers to process and present data;
- Systems - The ability to understand complex interrelationships. These include, but are not limited to social, organizational, and technologically based systems;
- Technology - The ability to work with a variety of technologies. This includes the selection of equipment and tools, and the application of technology to specific tasks (SCANS, 1991).

Underlying these competencies, the Commission identified three intellectual skills and personal qualities as their foundation. The workers should have basic skills which allows them to read, write, listen, speak, and perform mathematical operations. They must have cognitive skills which assist them in thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, visualizing, learning,

and applying new knowledge and skills. Within each, they should develop personal qualities including; responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, and honesty.

In the 1991 abstract of the SCANS Report, the Commission declared, "more than half of our young people leave school without the knowledge or foundation required to find and hold a good job" (SCANS, 1991, p. iii). Despite significant changes in the educational system, the rate of modernization outside the classroom has been four to five times faster than the rate of change within it (Daggett, 1998). This preparation lag has caused the schools and students to fall farther behind in developing skill levels industries require for entry-level positions.

The Northwest Regional Education Laboratory (NREL) (1993), supplemented the SCANS report two years later by asking regional employers, "at the entry-level, which skills are missing" (p. 6)? Their answers were broad and reflected the diversity and specificity of emerging technologies. These answers dealt with the skill readiness of the entry-level employee and centered around their use of machinery, vehicles, familiarity of materials, and specific industry applications of certain processes and techniques.

When asked, "which attributes employers expected from their new employees?" the answers focused on fewer attributes indicating their agreement on specific traits (NREL, 1993, p. 9). In 1993, K. Cotton placed these attributes in three categories: Basic Skills, Higher-Order Thinking, and Affective Skills and Traits.

- Basic Skills  
Oral communication (speaking and listening), reading, following and understanding instructions, elementary arithmetic, and writing.
- Higher-Order Thinking Skills  
Problem-solving, learning skills, strategies, creative and innovative thinking, and decision-making.
- Affective Skills and Traits  
Dependability, responsibility, enthusiasm, motivation, self-discipline and management, positive attitude toward work, honesty, integrity, conscientiousness, punctuality, efficiency, interpersonal skills, cooperation, working as a team member, self-confidence, positive self-image, ability to work without

supervision, adaptability, flexibility,  
appropriate dress and grooming.

Employers and researchers recognize the relative importance of basic skills and higher-order thinking. They more easily agree that affective skills, in particular "dependability, responsibility, and positive attitude toward work" are the most desired attributes of the new employee or continuing employee competing for promotion (NREL, 1993).

The rapidly changing worksite and increasing need for employees have caused some industries to disregard job-specific qualifications in favor of employability skills as their primary employment criteria. In 1988, the Journal of Career Development's research identified nine common employer reasons for not hiring young people in entry-level positions:

- Low grades and levels of academic accomplishment;
- Poor attitudes, lack of self-confidence;
- Lack of goals, poorly motivated;
- Lack of enthusiasm, lack of decisiveness, little evidence of leadership potential;
- Lack of preparation for interview;



- Excessive interest in security and benefits, unrealistic salary demands and expectations;
- Inadequate preparation for work, inappropriate background;
- Lack of extracurricular activities; and
- Inadequate reading, writing, and math skills (Charner, 1988).

One year later, and in a separate effort, the National Center for Education and Employment supported Charner's findings by describing the current hiring practices of employers by stating:

Employers:

- 1) Place great importance on employee's attitude;
- 2) Emphasize basic skills over job-specific skills; and
- 3) Deem it important for workers to have an understanding of the work environment. (Natriello, 1989, p. 4)

The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce (1991) stated, "The primary concern of more than eighty percent of employers was finding workers with a strong work ethic, appropriate social behavior, reliable, positive attitude, pleasant appearance, and a dynamic personality" (p. 4).

As employers consider probation periods and promotions, they look for assets the employee will bring

to the workplace. "Employers discharge, or fail to promote, most employees because of behaviors reflecting an inadequate work value or attitude rather than because of a deficiency in job skills or technical knowledge" (Gregson, & Bettis, 1991, p. 3). Additionally, "eighty-seven percent (87%) of persons losing their jobs or failing to be promoted were found to have improper work habits and attitudes rather than insufficient job skills or knowledge" (Beach, 1982, p. 71).

Employers are looking at the total package applicants bring to the job. The ability to get along with and be productive among others is a strong point. Beyond this, the employer is looking at the manner in which individuals approach their work assignments.

#### Skills in Today's Workplace

Employment and employability are different. "Being employed means having a job. Being employable means possessing qualities needed to maintain employment and progress in the workplace" (Bhaerman, & Spill, 1988, p. 43). Utilizing these employability skills can be the difference between keeping and losing a position. "Roughly one-third of all high school graduates and somewhat more

high school dropouts, fail to find stable employment by the time they are thirty" (Kazis, & Barton, 1993, p. 6).

The workplace is evolving. "The world has changed; no longer will a strong back, willingness to work, and a high school diploma insure success in today's world" (SCANS, 1991, p. 1). Instead of the monotonous, cyclical workplace with supervision and decision-making committees removed from the line of work, the new site requires employees to be solution-oriented, flexible, adaptable, and organized into teams or crews. "The global employer regards their labor pool as an investment, not a cost" (Dagget, 1997, p. 3).

"Good jobs depend on people who can put knowledge to work. New workers must be creative and responsible problem solvers and have the skills and attributes on which employers can build. Employers and employees must share the belief that all workplaces must work smarter" (SCANS, 1993, p. 24).

#### Changes in the Workforce

Today's changes and successes in the American workplace are a result of the employer's efforts to match the models and techniques found effective in competing

foreign workplaces. Packer (1992), described the global workforce as one that will:

use all of their worker's skills to relentlessly pursue excellence, product quality and customer satisfaction. They combine technology and people in new ways, moving decisions closer to the front lines and drawing more fully on the abilities of all workers. (p. 29)

Global workers will need more than their toolboxes for success in the workplace. They will need to apply their minds by solving problems, making decisions, working independently and in small or large teams. There will be a need for worker collaboration and teamwork, requiring employees to be creative, flexible, and possess good interpersonal and managerial skills.

The need for interpersonal skills is supported by the growing diversity of the American population. The global workforce is neither gender nor language specific. According to Lankard (1990), the more multicultural the workforce becomes, the greater the need will be for interpersonal skills.

Identifying the skills and traits necessary for success in the workforce is important. The next step is to learn how they are applied at the worksite. The greatest success is placement into a job-like environment where the

students can practice these competencies/skills and learn from successes and mistakes.

### Developing Employability Skills

Teaching is more than telling and learning is more than acquiring and demonstrating mastery of facts. "To ensure the transfer of basic skills into the workplace, teachers must engage students as active participants in the learning process" (Junge, Daniels, & Karmos, 1984, p. 145). By combining teaching and learning in a setting, students recognize as appropriate or relevant to the instruction, their learning and comprehension will increase. "A key feature of programs which successfully teach employability skills is that instructors hold and communicate high expectations for the learning and behavior of their students--whether or not the overall culture of the school holds high expectations for them" (Lankard, 1990, p. 3).

The instructors who hold, communicate, and reinforce high expectations generally find students to be quite responsive. In a workplace-like learning environment, instructors also communicate employer-like expectations for basic skill applications, punctuality, dependability, thoroughness, decision-making capabilities, and

cooperation. Further, in this environment, the student has the opportunity to practice and perfect employee skills and traits.

This role-playing enhances the student's employability qualities, self-confidence, and self-esteem. The classroom is the site to make mistakes and improve on lessons learned from errors. "In classes that effectively teach employability skills, instructors assume the role of facilitators and coaches rather than lecturers and order givers, requiring students to take on much of the responsibility for their own learning" (Graham, Vitale, & Schenk, 1991, p. 289).

#### The Student Portfolio

"A recognized value of the portfolio assessment is that it can accommodate diverse learning patterns of all students" (Caine, & Caine, 1990, p. 67). The employability portfolio is the students' presentation of their competencies: applied academic skills (writing), work readiness skills (work sample and communicative skills), and specific technical skills. The use of the employability portfolio allows the student, instructor, and employer to evaluate the students' knowledge, skills, and personal traits by providing a snapshot in time of the

product and process of their accumulated life's experiences (Conference Board of Canada, 1992). By documenting this information, the student identifies attributes that would otherwise have gone unrecognized during the course of an assessment or job interview.

#### Summary

The literature important to this project was presented in Chapter Two. A history of employability skills in vocational education was summarized. Changes in academic and vocational education during the last century were presented. Employer desired skills and traits were discussed. The workforce changing models are discussed.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CURRICULUM METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

Chapter Three details the steps used in developing this project. It identifies the population served, the curriculum development process including the resources used and content validation process. The chapter concludes with a summary.

#### Population Served

The project was developed for students aged 16 through adult seeking employment opportunities or participating in the California SkillsUSA competition. It was developed in accordance with the guidelines determined by the California SkillsUSA (CASUSA) VICA Board of Directors, State and Executive Directors, State and Regional Coordinators, Chapter Advisors, and their membership. Acting as Consultants were J. Waite, CASUSA Region 4 Coordinator; C. Felice, CASUSA Region 2 Coordinator; Cabinetmaking Instructor, Salinas High School; N. Renteria, CASUSA Region 4 Coordinator, Business Instructor, Mission Trails ROP; W. R. Reedy, CASUSA President and Executive Director, Colton Joint USD



Vocational and Work Experience Coordinator; D. Turner,  
CASUSA State Director, California Department of Education.

### Project Development

The next section provides an overview of the project's development process. Specifically, its structure and content validation process are reviewed.

### Curriculum Design

This project was developed in compliance with the outline presented by the California SkillsUSA-VICA Board of Directors. The need for an employability portfolio was stated in earlier chapters. The absence of a CASUSA-VICA adopted portfolio guideline identifies an additional application for this project.

The skills, contents, goals, and competencies expected from this project were identified by close examination of existing CASUSA portfolio guidelines. The review of existing guidelines was brought on by requests for issue clarification by the CASUSA Regional Advisory Body, and CASUSA State Board of Directors. The contents of the existing guideline included; a cover sheet, table of contents, letter of introduction, resume, work samples, letters of recommendation, and a job application.

These goals adopted by the CASUSA Board of Directors supported the inclusion and design of the history and philosophy of the portfolio, regional and state competition requirements, section exercises and examples, and student/industry assessment worksheets. Additionally, the principal characteristics of the project included, the work was to be student-driven, and locations of all field-testing was at the discretions of the CASUSA Executive Director.

In meeting the skills, contents, goals, and competencies identified by the CASUSA and the diversities of learning styles of their students, the project became a classroom text.

Following are the six major components found in the classroom text:

- Section One focuses on developing an understanding of the portfolio contents, evaluation standards, development activities, and the relevance of these lessons to each student's future.
- Section Two discusses the presentation of the portfolio, construction of the cover page, table of contents, and the letter of introduction.

- Section Three explains the career development package. it provides a career development organizer, tips and examples of the job application, résumé, and the letter of recommendation.
- Section Four describes the work sample and provides forms and examples.
- Section Five describes and develops strategies in acquiring a letter of recommendation.
- Section Six establishes the need for assessment forms, and order of portfolio documents.

#### Content Validation

This project has been validated as the standard for portfolio development at Colton High School. The classroom text and workbook were accepted by the Colton High School Vocational Department in May 2000. In January 2001, the Colton Joint Unified District Vocational Director accepted the project as a part of the District's vocational program. In March 2001, Yucaipa High School Agriculture, Auto and Wood shops accepted the project as their standards for classroom activities.

CAUSA subjected each section of the textbook to classroom field-testing. In October 1999, a draft copy of

the classroom text was distributed by the CASUSA Executive Director to several chapters for a first response testing. From these responses, the classroom text was developed and delivered for testing during January-February 2000.

The Classroom Text was used by students in preparing portfolios for the CASUSA State Competitions held in April 2000. The evaluation of their work was done by industry representatives before and during their competitions. The text book was endorsed for further field-testing and distributed in January 2001 to the entire State organization as a standard for the April 2001 State competition.

In June 2000, the national SkillsUSA-VICA Committee for the selection of Advisor of the Year, meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, reviewed a presentation of the materials. The committee recommended portfolio development should be included in the national skill competition. The project is continuing to be reviewed by competition committees in one western and southern state.

#### Summary

Chapter Three outlined the development of this handbook project. It describes the populations served. The curriculum development, and validation process.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

Chapter Four presents conclusions and recommendations found at the completion of field testing this work. The conclusions evaluate this project's research. The recommendations are derived from classroom testing of the project. The Chapter concludes with a summary.

#### Conclusions

The conclusions extracted from this project follow.

1. A review of the literature establishes entry-level job preparedness is relative to an applicant's skill level, personal traits and acquisition of basic, higher-order thinking, and affective skills.
2. The traditional worksite tasks are rapidly becoming obsolete.
3. During the last century, American education and industry have collaborated to develop, prepare, and train the American workforce.
4. Major industries and corporations are becoming involved in their employee's retraining.

## Recommendations

The recommendations resulting from this project are as follows:

1. The project must be presented in small sections allowing for an alignment of the student's work to the presented standards.
2. There must be a continuing commitment from education and industry to insure the success of both partners.
3. Emerging technologies and paperless mediums must be introduced in the educational system to ease the transition from student to employee.
4. This project must be reviewed annually to remain current to changing presentation trends.

## Summary

Chapter Four reviews the conclusions derived from this project. It presents the recommendations extracted from this project.

APPENDIX  
EMPLOYABILITY HANDBOOK

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The project was developed for students aged 16 through adult seeking employment opportunities. It was developed in accordance with the guidelines determined by the California SkillsUSA (CASUSA) VICA Board of Directors, State and Executive Directors, State and Regional Coordinators, Chapter Advisors, and their membership. Acting as Consultants were J. Waite, CASUSA Region 4 Coordinator; C. Felice, CASUSA Region 2 Coordinator; Cabinetmaking Instructor, Salinas High School; N. Renteria, CASUSA Region 4 Coordinator, Business Instructor, Mission Trails ROP; W. R. Reedy, CASUSA President and Executive Director, Colton Joint USD Vocational and Work Experience Coordinator; D. Turner, CASUSA State Director, California Department of Education.

It is with their permission and direction;

- The term California SkillsUSA-VICA and CASUSA is used,
- The CASUSA bubble logo is placed at the beginning of the handbook,
- The SkillsUSA-VICA logo is placed on examples of competition judging forms, and
- Examples and forms are presented in their current configuration.





# Project

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## Classroom Text

## INTRODUCTION

### STUDENT PORTFOLIO HANDBOOK

Employers and colleges expect high school graduates to be ready for work or advanced training, they want people with strong academic skills who can think and apply knowledge, work with others, be responsible, communicate effectively, understand their [career] field, and adapt to new technologies. (CTAP, 1995, p. 5)

Traditionally artists, designers, journalists, and models used portfolios as a medium, which displayed their achievements or skills. As we pass into the new millennium, non-traditional workplaces are requesting documentation of your employable skills. Employers are no longer asking applicants to tell them what they know; they are asking them to validate, or prove their knowledge and skills. The portfolio is an organized collection of documents which demonstrates your knowledge, experiences, and skills. The portfolio is a transcript of your life.

There are several tasks and skills which you will perform throughout your working lifetime. The portfolio is an example of one of these tasks. In California, the employability or showcase portfolio is rapidly becoming a common high school learning and self-assessment tool. At many schools, portfolios have become a part of the twelfth grade curriculum and a graduation requirement.

Why should students, entry-level applicants, and those seeking job advancement need to develop this portfolio? Since World War II, the global marketplace and industrial technologies have undergone several significant changes. These developments have caused some employees to change jobs or careers two or three, and even more often during their working lifetimes. Students may feel their career will not be affected by these changes, but take a moment to ask your parents and instructors if they or their friends have changed jobs or careers more than once since their graduation from high school. For those that did change careers, ask did they anticipate these changes when they left high school?

Today you desire to be an auto mechanic. In ten years, your education or experience may qualify you for a position which does not exist today. As you apply for this position, you will engage in an application process. The application process may require documentation of your education and experiences since high school graduation. This handbook will give you ideas on how to organize your information. The collection of documents and information is your portfolio.

The portfolio is a selling tool of your capabilities, and since you are writing it about you, it will be unique

to your life. It is telling the story of your experiences and should be so compelling that the reader will select you for an interview over all other applicants. Through this process, you will have the responsibilities of deciding which goals, information, and examples of your work will be included in this project.

The goal of the portfolio is to earn you a job interview. Your success during that interview is dependent upon the presentation of your qualifications. This handbook uses examples and explanations to build the most complete presentation possible, but it requires an effort on your part.

There is more than one way to build this document. You may decide to build your portfolio using a different method, organization, or system, but take note of the level of expectations explained in each section. There is no guarantee for success, but it begins with your best effort.

Check the examples in each section, they offer visual clues to your questions regarding page layout or paragraph placement. Progress in small steps, finish a section, then you and your advisor should evaluate it for accuracy and completeness. There is an evaluation/checklist form provided in the evaluation section of this handbook. It is



an organization form designed to help you self-evaluate the completeness of your work.

### **PORTFOLIO SECTIONS**

There are four sections in the portfolio:

#### Introduction:

Contains a cover page stating your name and personal goals; table of contents listing the order of your documents; and a letter of introduction; describing you and the position that you are seeking.

#### Career Development Package:

Includes a fill-in job application and a resume describing your qualifications for the position.

#### Work Sample:

This requires a written description, including pictures, drawings, or diagrams which verify your writing abilities, career-technical skills, and competencies by describing a sample of your work.

#### Letter of Recommendation:

You will be asking an adult, co-worker, supervisor, or instructor for a document attesting to their personal observation of you in action.

#### Preparation

Appearance, readability, and clarity are important in presenting your document your portfolio to perspective

employers. Use no less than a 12-point "Professional" font. These fonts are clear and easy to read. Examples of such fonts include **Arial, Courier, and New Times Roman**. Cluttered fonts, such as **Algerian, Old English, and Script** are examples of unacceptable styles. This document is using the 12-point Courier font.

Examples of documents in these sections are presented in a compressed and expanded form. Before each example, there is a compressed view, which offers hints and visual clues taken from the descriptions and explanations given in that section. Full sized examples are presented to give you a visual rendering of what the page should look like.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined as they apply to this handbook.

- VICA - Vocational Industrial Clubs of America
- SkillsUSA-VICA - Refers to the national level of the SkillsUSA-VICA organization.
- California SkillsUSA-VICA (CASUSA-VICA) - Refers to the state level of the SkillsUSA-VICA organization.

- Employable Skills - Skills or traits an employer considers necessary and appropriate for employment in their company.
- (Return) - Ends a sentence or paragraph, and used for spacing of text. Colloquial phrase for "Hit the Return (or Enter) Button."
- Planning Model - Planning, actual work, and any changes or modifications.
- ROP/C - Regional Occupational Program or Regional Occupational Center.

#### **COVER PAGE**

The cover page identifies you and the name of the position you desire. It contains your full name, high school or college, hometown and state, SkillsUSA-VICA chapter number, advisor's name, title of your contest, and the date of your contest.

The request for double spacing refers to line spacing or the vertical distance between sentences. Single-spacing is accomplished by pressing the "Enter" or "Return" key once. A double-space requires that you press it twice, and so on. This is the enter key not the spacebar we are speaking about here.

As you read the following information, look at the compressed example for clues. The compressed example is on the next page. On the cover page, center each entry.

1. Type in your complete name including your middle initial. Capitalize all of the letters.  
*double-space* (enter or return key twice),
2. Enter the complete name of your high school,  
*double space,*
3. Your hometown, comma, then state, comma, Zip Code, *double space,*
4. Type "SkillsUSA-VICA Chapter XXX", (Chapter number) *double space,*
5. Type in your advisor's name (including Mr., Mrs., Ms.) comma, "Advisor," *double space,*
6. Type in the title of your competition, *double space,*
7. Type in the date of your competition.

This last entry, "Date of Your Competition," should lie near the center of the page vertically. If you need more line-spaces, place them above your name and push the whole block of information down until the date rests at the vertical midpoint of the page. On the following pages you will find examples of the cover page.

COVER PAGE, Compressed, Example 1

*[Return or Enter key, as necessary]*

**Your Full Name** *(16point. font, bold)*

*[Return]*

*[Return]*

Your High School *[14pt. font]*

*[Return]*

*[Return]*

Your Hometown, California, Zip Code

*[Return]*

*[Return]*

SkillsUSA-VICA, Chapter XXXX

*[Return]*

*[Return]*

Name of Advisor, Advisor

*[Return]*

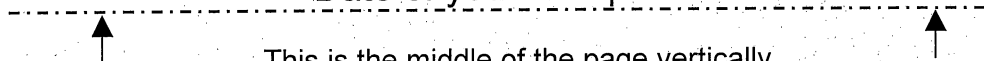
*[Return]*

Title of Your Contest

*[Return]*

*[Return]*

Date of your Competition



This is the middle of the page vertically.

Your name is in 16 point. font and bolded, while the body of this page is 14point. font. Skip two lines between each entry and make any line spacing corrections to cause the date to be just at or above the center of the page.

**NOTICE.**

Because of the renumbering of California's chapters, there is no longer a Region entry.

**MARY A. JONES**

Timbuckthree High School

Timbuckthree, California, 98765-4561

SkillsUSA-VICA, Chapter 1111

Mrs. Mary B. Jones, Advisor

Underwater Basket-weaving

February 31, 2005

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

The Table of Contents identifies the headings, which documents have been included and where these contents are located in your portfolio. There are five headings on this page: the Letter of Introduction, Job Application, Resume, Letters of Recommendation, and Work Samples.

There are sub-headings following the Letters of Recommendation and Work Samples. Indent each sub-heading two tabs from the left margin. Identify the author(s) of the recommendation letters including the Mr., Mrs., Ms, or Dr., before their names. Under the work sample heading, indent and list the title of each work sample included in your portfolio.

The format of this page is the same as the Cover Page. The title is 16pt. and the body is 14pt. Page numbers connect to their headings by a series of dots or dashes. Most word processing programs offer a Table of Contents (TOC) menu, wizard, or sub-routine, which will assist you in laying out this page. Take advantage of the whole page, and space your entries so they will extend from the top to the bottom of one page.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS, Compressed**

	(Return as necessary)
<b><u>TABLE OF CONTENTS</u></b> (16point font, <b>BOLD</b> , CAPS, <i>UNDERLINED</i> )	
	(Return as necessary)
Letter of Introduction (14 point font) .....	1
Job Application .....	2
Resume .....	3
Letters of Recommendation	
Mr. Mario B. Jones, Supervisor (company name).....	4
Mrs. Mary B. Jones, Principal (company name).....	5
Work Samples	
Crossover and under stitch pattern.....	6
In, out, and through stitch pattern.....	7

Take note of the information placement, font sizes, indentions, and connecting dots between text and numbers. In the Letters of Recommendation section, recognize the series of connecting dots begin at the last letters of the author's name. The title line should remain near the top of your page's margin, however you are free to place line-spacings between the remaining entries to fill the page. A full page is presented on the next page.



TABLE OF CONTENTS, Expanded

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Letter of Introduction ..... 1**

**Job Application ..... 2**

**Resume ..... 3**

**Letters of Recommendation**

Mr. Mario B. Jones, Supervisor, ..... 4  
Bubbles Saltwater Baskets

Mrs. Mary B. Jones, Principal, ..... 5  
Timbuckthree High School

**Work Samples**

Cross-over and under stitch patterns ..... 6

In, out, and through stitch patterns..... 7

## **LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

This document is the most powerful marketing tool you can use in convincing the reader that you are the only person for this position. An effective letter can get you an interview, but a poorly written one facilitates continued unemployment. The letter is your best opportunity to earn a job interview and if you are qualified, the interview will get you the job.

This is your letter; avoid clichés and colloquial phrases. Instead, strive to make it represent your individuality and capabilities. In order to be persuasive in your letter, you will have to conduct some research, planning, and effort to prepare it.

### **Research**

Investigate the company. What does the company produce or provide? What are the duties of the position you desire? Do you have all or most of the qualifications they are asking for? Do they provide on-the-job training? Find out the name and correct spelling of the person who does the hiring.

### **Planning**

What can you say that will stimulate this company's interest in you and your capabilities? Hook them! What can you say about their company that will grab the attention

of the reader? A powerful beginning paragraph informs the reader of your exciting capabilities and skills. Your message must be clear and to the point, but should not represent the same information found in your resume.

### **Format**

Place all of these great things about yourself in three strong paragraphs. Address your letter specifically to the person most responsible in getting this interview. For the purpose of this exercise, you can address your letters to the California's SkillsUSA-VICA Executive Director, or CASUSA State Director.

First paragraph: The first sentences must be attention grabbing. Explain why you are writing, which position you are applying for, and where you heard about the job. End this paragraph with a statement on why you are qualified for the position. This statement is the main idea for the next paragraph.

Second paragraph: You must support your claim of being the best for the position. This information will reiterate the positives from statements found in your resume. The more you know about the position, the easier it will be to tie your qualifications into this paragraph. You may add another paragraph, but be careful that you are not just restating the credits located elsewhere in the

portfolio. This is your area to shine, but do not burn out the reader.

You may not have work experience that actually "qualifies" you for a job. Rather, your qualifications lie in your education, skills, interests, and activities. Direct this information so the reader recognizes your capabilities. Employers will be willing to invest in on-the-job training, but they want to be sure you can read, write, and think well. Further, they want to know you communicate with others effectively, learn new things easily, show leadership, responsibility, and initiative.

Closing paragraph: Thank the their reader for time and consideration in reading your letter. Either state that you are anxiously waiting their phone call to schedule a meeting, or specify a day when you will call back to arrange for your interview. The chances for an interview increase when you call to make arrangements. Include your phone number, or a reliable means of contacting you. If you select a pager or phone messaging system, mention it to prevent any confusion.

Suggestions: Keep the margins the same on both sides of the paper and limit the letter to one page. Be enthusiastic, honest, and positive. Proofread your letter, and have others check your work. T then correct all

grammar and spelling errors. Do not leave errors or messy marks on this letter. Retype it if you do not feel it is acceptable.

You can only make a first impression once. Make your final product your best work. When it is complete, confirm it by comparing to this checklist.

<b>LETTER OF INTRODUCTION CHECKLIST</b>	
<b>Mark each box as complete once you have checked your work.</b>	
<b>Complete</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Be sure to date the letter.	<input type="checkbox"/> Single-space the body of the letter.
<input type="checkbox"/> Address the letter to a specific person.	<input type="checkbox"/> Double-space between paragraphs.
<input type="checkbox"/> After the "Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. Name" place a colon (:)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sign the letter!
<input type="checkbox"/> Have someone else read the letter to check for errors.	

**LETTER OF INTRODUCTION, Reminders.**

Take note of these reminder boxes. They are visual indicators of common errors or omissions. Format and spacing information is included in the following examples:

February 31, 2000 **DATE YOUR LETTER THE DAY YOU WROTE IT.**

Mr. Denn **ADDRESS THE LETTER TO A SPECIFIC PERSON.**  
ABC-123  
12345 North Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561

Dear Mr. Turner: **AFTER "DEAR ... NAME" : (USE A COLON).**

I am applying for the office position that was advertised in the Timbuckthree Amazonian on Monday, February 28. I am **DOUBLE-SPACE BETWEEN PARAGRAPHS.**

You will have **DOUBLE-SPACE BETWEEN PARAGRAPHS.**

acquired (or describe your specific skills here) in my classes, I feel I am qualified for this position. I held the office of vice-president of the SK **SINGLE-SPACE THE BODY OF THE LETTER.**

Please telephone **SINGLE-SPACE THE BODY OF THE LETTER.**

am not home, please leave a message on my recorder. If I do not hear from you by March 8, I will call your office to check on the status of my application.

Sincerely, (*quadruple space*)

*Mary A. Jones* **SIGN THE LETTER!**

Mary A. Jones  
1213 N. First Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION, 9<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> Example

*[Return as necessary]*

March 1, 2005 (*quadruple space*)

Mr. Dennis Turner, Director  
ABC-123 Company  
12345 North Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561 (*double space*)

Dear Mr. Turner: (*double space*)

I am applying for the office position that was advertised in the Timbuckthree Amazonian on Monday, February 28. I am confident that my skills and abilities qualify me for this position. (*double space*)

You will notice from my enclosed resume that I am attending Timbuckthree High School. With the knowledge and skills I have acquired (*or describe your specific skills here*) in my classes, I feel that I am qualified for this position. I held the office of vice-president in my high school Ski Club for two semesters. (*double space*)

Please telephone me to set up a personal interview. I can be reached at 111.111.1111 any afternoon after 3 p.m. In case I am not home, please leave a message on my recorder. If I do not hear from you by March 8, I will call your office to check on the status of my application. (*double space*)

Sincerely, (*quadruple space*)

Mary A. Jones

Mary A. Jones  
1213 N. First Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION, 11<sup>th</sup> – Post-Secondary Example

*[Return as necessary]*

March 1, 2005 (*quadruple space*)

Mr. W. "Bob" Reedy, Executive Director  
ABC-123 Company  
12345 North Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561 (*double space*)

Dear Mr. Reedy: (*double space*)

I am applying for the office position advertised in the Monday, February 28, Timbuckthree Amazonian. I am seeking employment in a company, which offers advancement possibilities, and your company allows their employees these opportunities. I am confident that my acquired abilities, education, experiences, and skills satisfy your requirements for this position. (*double space*)

You will notice from the enclosed resume that I have graduated from Timbuckthree High School and am continuing my education at Timbuckthree Community College. My educational focus is in office systems (*your focus area*). With the knowledge and skills I have acquired (*or describe your specific skills here*) in my (*occupational experiences and/or course of study*), I feel qualified for this position. I have been involved with the Salvation Army for the past two years as a committee chairperson. (*double space*)

Please telephone me to set up a personal interview. I can be reached at 111.1111 any afternoon after 3 p.m. If, I am not home, please leave a message on my recorder. Alternately you may use my email address *majones@internet.com*. If I do not hear from you by March 8, I will call your office to check on the status of my application. (*double space*)

Sincerely, (*quadruple space*)

*Mary A. Jones*

Ms. Mary A. Jones  
1213 N. First Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561



LETTER OF INTRODUCTION, 11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Grade. Example 2

*[Return as necessary]*

March 1, 2000 (*quadruple space*)

Mr. Dennis Turner, Director  
ABC-123 Company  
12345 North Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561 (*double space*)

Dear Mr. Turner: (*double space*)

I am replying to your advertisement in Sunday's Timbuckthree Panhandler for a personnel clerk. I have been doing business with the ABC-123 Company for seven years and am comfortable with the manner your company does business in this city. I feel that my experience, education, and skills qualify me for this position. (*double space*)

My summer work experiences not only introduced me to personnel work, but also have influenced my career goals and college curriculum. Being a fast learner and motivated to enter employment, I believe I would be an excellent employee and would enjoy beginning my career with the ABC 123 Company. (*double space*)

Thank you for your time and attention. I will call you next Monday in hopes of arranging an interview at your conveniences. (*double space*)

Sincerely, (*quadruple space*)

*Mary A. Jones*

Ms. Mary A. Jones  
1213 N. First Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561  
111.111.1111  
majones@internet.com

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION, Post-Secondary Example 3

*[Return as necessary]*

March 1, 2000 (*quadruple space*)

Mr. W. R. Reedy, Executive Director  
ABC-123 Company  
12345 North Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561 (*double space*)

Dear Mr. Reedy: (*double space*)

Ms. Joanne Garvey, a social worker employed in the Timbuckthree Hospital Outpatient Program, suggested I write to you about the possibility of employment in your Occupational Therapy Program. I qualify for this position because of my skills, knowledge, and abilities. (*double space*)

As my resume indicates, I am a licensed Occupational Therapist and have acquired valuable skills during my career that will benefit patients in the Timbuckthree Hospital. I would love to contribute to such a reputable program. (*double space*)

I would like very much to meet at any time convenient for you. I will phone you Monday morning to discuss the arrangement of an interview. Thank you for your time and attention. (*double space*)

Sincerely, (*quadruple space*)

*Mary A. Jones*

Ms. Mary A. Jones  
1213 N. First Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561  
111.111.1111  
majones@internet.com

## **Career Development Section**

This section contains information regarding completion of the job application, resume, and work sample. It includes explanations, organizing plans, critique lists, and samples of completed forms. You may copy and use these forms as you develop your portfolio. If there is not enough room between sections use additional paper.

## **Career Development Organizer**

The organizer allows you to centralize information about yourself and tells you where to place this information within the package. The first section, "Personal Information" is asking for information which applies to the Letter of Introduction, job application, and Resume.

Job Application: The job application is an important document in your job-hunting package. Most employers ask you to complete these forms at their site. That means, you will complete this by hand in an unfamiliar office setting, with people moving around you without the least concern about what you are doing. Even though you are writing information about yourself as you complete this form, these can be very stressful moments. Included in

this segment are specific examples and suggestions for you to do the best job possible.

Resume: This section begins with a worksheet. It gives you an opportunity to gather and place information in sections as you prepare to type your final document. Worksheets help organize and group information. We offer this one to streamline the process of developing your portfolio. The Resume Critique List offers a checklist for your final product.

Work Sample: IMPORTANT. Whenever you provide a work sample, DO NOT use your ORIGINALS! Offer them at your interview. Keep in mind the term "original" means there is only one. Photocopy it. Remember; do not include ANY originals for CASUSA-VICA competitions. The summary form provides six organizing questions to assist you in developing the explanation of your project.

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZER**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Personal Information** (Use for Letter of Introduction, Job Application and Resume)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Job or Career Plans** (Include on Resume)

*Examples: Become an electrician, machinist, carpenter, computer programmer, nurse, auto mechanic, self-employed.*

a. Short-range plans, (1-5 years):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Long-range plans, (more than 5 years):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Specific descriptions of career plans:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZER (Cont)**

**3. Education (List on Job Application and Resume)**

**a. Schools Attended.** *List all schools, starting with the most recent and ending with junior high or intermediate schools.*

**b. Course of Study.** *Program of study in high school or ROP/C. (Examples: Career-technical program in health careers, business major, home economics.)*

School Name \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Attended \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ Course of Study \_\_\_\_\_

Certificates, Degrees and Diplomas received (include dates): \_\_\_\_\_

School Name \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Attended \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ Course of Study \_\_\_\_\_

Certificates, Degrees and Diplomas received (include dates): \_\_\_\_\_

School Name \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Attended \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ Course of Study \_\_\_\_\_

Certificates, Degrees and Diplomas received (include dates): \_\_\_\_\_

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZER (Cont)**

**4. Special Interests, Activities, and Achievements:**

(Use on Application, Resume and in requesting Letter of Recommendation)

**a. Career-related Activities:**

*Examples: Clubs, teams, student government, SkillsUSA-VICA, scholarships.*

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**b. Achievements:**

*Examples: Special Awards, Certificates, and Honors*

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**5. Skills, Strengths, and Abilities:** (use on Application, Resume and in requesting Letter of Recommendation)

**a. Skills:**

*Examples: Oral communication, farm management, record keeping, carpentry, mechanical skills, basic office skills, electronic skills.*

---

---

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**b. Strengths:**

*Examples: Leadership, punctuality, reliability.*

---

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZER (Cont.)

**5. (Cont.) Skills, Strengths, and Abilities:** (use on Application, Resume and in requesting Letter of Recommendation)

**c. Abilities:**

*Examples: Artistic ability, writing ability, ability to speak more than one language.*

---

---

---

**6. Paid Work Experience** (Use for Job Application and Resume)

*List three most recent positions held.*

**a. Position/Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of employment (choose one): Full-time \_\_\_ Part-time \_\_\_ Summer \_\_\_

Employment period: From (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_ until (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_

Employer/Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Skills and knowledge gained through this job: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**b. Position/Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of employment (choose one): Full-time \_\_\_ Part-time \_\_\_ Summer \_\_\_

Employment period: From (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_ until (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_

Employer/Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Skills and knowledge gained through this job: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---



CAREER DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZER (Cont.)

**6. (Cont.) Paid Work Experience** (Use for Job Application and Resume)

*List three most recent positions held.*

**c. Position/Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of employment (choose one): Full-time \_\_\_ Part-time \_\_\_ Summer \_\_\_

Employment period: From (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_ until (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_

Employer/Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Skills and knowledge gained through this job: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**d. Position/Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of employment (choose one): Full-time \_\_\_ Part-time \_\_\_ Summer \_\_\_

Employment period: From (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_ until (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_

Employer/Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Skills and knowledge gained through this job: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**e. Position/Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of employment (choose one): Full-time \_\_\_ Part-time \_\_\_ Summer \_\_\_

Employment period: From (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_ until (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_

Employer/Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Skills and knowledge gained through this job: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZER (Cont.)**

**7. Unpaid Work Experience:** (included on both Job Application and Resume) Include any volunteer or community service work you have done. Examples include work with hospitals, recreational programs, museums, children's groups, charity groups, and scouts. Family responsibilities such as childcare, home or auto repairs, shopping, yard work and work in family business can be included.

**a. Name of activity or task** \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Duties or responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Skills and knowledge gained \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**b. Name of activity or task** \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Duties or responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Skills and knowledge gained \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**c. Name of activity or task** \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Duties or responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Skills and knowledge gained \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**d. Name of activity or task** \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Duties or responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Skills and knowledge gained \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **JOB APPLICATION**

For every college, job, or training program to which you apply, an application will be required. The ability to complete an application is a skill you will use throughout your life. You must understand the questions, know all the required information, and fit your answers into limited spaces.

Job applications are not included in the portfolio. They are one part in the process of becoming employed. This application provides the employer an example of your handwriting abilities. In other words, this document is a check on your neatness, ability to organize, and communicate information on a form.

Obtain a job application from a potential employer. If you are unable to get one, they are also available from your Career Development Center/Department or Work Experience counselor. A sample Job Application is available on the SkillsUSA-VICA web site at [www.casusa.org](http://www.casusa.org) for use in its competitions.

**TIPS FOR COMPLETING YOUR JOB APPLICATION:**

- **For purposes of the SkillsUSA-VICA Portfolio, use “000-00-0000” as your Social Security Number.**
- Always photocopy the application and use its copy for a rough draft or practice sheet.
- Review the complete form before entering any data.
- Be careful to follow instructions.
- Do not leave any item blank. If the question does not apply to you write “not applicable” or “N/A.”
- Complete one copy of the form in pencil; this becomes your “rough-draft” file copy.
- Complete the second copy of the form using an extra fine point black pen. This will represent your very best image on paper, and it will demonstrate the quality of your work. Try an erasable ink pen.
- Do not use whiteout or write-overs (single strokes with the pen). Do not try to make an “L” into a “1” or an “M” into “something else.”
- Avoid leaving blanks on the application form. Enter N/A in the center of the line if the questions do not apply to you.
- Example: from the California SkillsUSA form

Full-time Yes Part-time N/A Specify hours M-F 8:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Full-time N/A Part-time Yes Specify hours M-F 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

- Check your grammar and spelling.
- State the specific job title when asked; “Which Position.” Never respond “anything” or “any openings.” Be professional, have an answer.
- Double-check the form for accuracy and quality.

Your application must be neat, easy to read, completely filled in with no blank spaces, and free of any mistakes.

### JOB APPLICATION - EXPLANATIONS

The following examples are given using sections from the CASUSA-VICA form.

### PERSONAL SECTION

Position applied for: \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal**  
(please print clearly)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security No \_\_\_\_\_  
LAST FIRST MI.

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Are you legally employable in the USA? \_\_\_\_\_

What method of transportation will you use to get to work? \_\_\_\_\_

Were you previously employed by us? Y/N If yes, from \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_

When will you be available for work? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you work Full-Time \_\_\_\_\_ or Part-Time \_\_\_\_\_? Days and hours desired \_\_\_\_\_

Below, list any experiences, skills, or qualifications, which relate to this position. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The first portion of any Job Application is an important evaluation tool for the employer. In a few lines, the application tells them who you are and what you want to do for their company. It is this impression which determines whether your application will be selected for further review.

In this section we will complete this document, step-by-step. Do not leave any boxes unmarked or blank lines in this form. Write "N/A," "N. A." or "Not Applicable" in spaces you feel the question does not apply to you.

As you begin working with this form please note that the underlined statements at the beginning of each paragraph correspond to a question from the CA SkillsUSA-VICA Job Application form.

POSITION (S) APPLIED FOR:

"Anything open, (blank), whatever, and doesn't matter" are examples of inappropriate responses to this question. If the job has a flyer or was advertised in the newspaper, then copy down its' advertised title. If you were in their office, ask the person who handed you the application for the job title.

DATE:

Use the current date. Write in a format which is easy to read. Spell out the name of the month. When the space is small or tight use a slashed format; MM/DD/YYYY, 03/03/2005, or Mar 3, 2005.

NAME:

The order of your names can be different on each form you fill out. Check around, above, and below the line that asks your name for hints about which order they expect. There may be an order stated for you to follow. In this case, it is Last, First then Middle. There should be a comma between your last and first names. Most forms ask only for your Middle Initial, this one did. Do not forget the period after your middle initial.

SOCIAL SECURITY No.:

These words are commonly abbreviated "SSN." It is important that you know, or have these numbers available to answer this question. You may be hesitant to give out this precious identification number. If so, consider writing a short note stating that the number will be provided by you at the time of hiring. FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE CALIFORNIA SkillsUSA-VICA STATE COMPETITION, PLEASE ENTER "000.00.0000." Use these numbers to protect your privacy.

ADDRESS:

You may have a short or long entry for this line. Do your best to fit it all in the space provided including the abbreviation for: Street - St., Lane - Ln., Avenue - Ave., Way - Wy., Circle - Cir., or Boulevard - Blvd. If your address is short and will fit neatly with space to spare, considered writing out the abbreviations.

CITY:

The name of your city may be long or short. Do your best not to abbreviate your city's name. Write it neatly.

STATE:

Several years ago, the United States Postal Service (USPS) adopted two-letter identifiers for all of the states. Space for this answer varies. There is always space for the USPS CAPITALIZED identifiers. California's identifier is "CA."

ZIP:

The ZIP Code is a standard five-digit identification of your home's location. Recently, the USPS added a hyphen and four additional digits. This extension can be found on your electric, phone, or city bill. In this space write in your five-digit Zip Code, a hyphen, then your four digit extension.

TELEPHONE:

This entry includes your area code, prefix, and phone number. When you write the phone number place a period, not a hyphen between each set of numbers. 111.111.1111. Computerized data readers identify hyphens (-) as a minus or negative value.

ARE YOU LEGALLY EMPLOYABLE IN THE USA?

This answer should be either Yes or No.

WHAT METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION WILL YOU USE TO GET TO WORK?:

A one-word answer is not going to be sufficient here. Be specific enough to show that you know this answer. "My parent's car," "my automobile", "public bus transportation," "BART/Metro-Link," "my bicycle," or "I will walk to work" are examples of expected responses.

WERE YOU PREVIOUSLY EMPLOYED BY US?:

The answer should be either yes or no. If yes, from...until? Answer as completely as possible. Examples include "January 3, 1999 until March 30, 1999," "June 20, 2000 until August 29, 2000", "August 29, 2000 until the present." If the space is severely limited, consider using the formats found in the DATE section above.

WHEN WILL YOU BE AVAILABLE FOR WORK?:

"Thursday" does not answer this question. State a date or a day and date not just a day of the week. Examples include: "Thursday, October 5, 2005, or Oct. 05, 2005." If you are ready to go to work that day then this answer should match the date of the application. Neither should this date be earlier than the date of the application.



WOULD YOU WORK:

Full-Time, do not use a "✓" or an "x," use the answers "YES" or "NO."

Part-time, the rules from above apply to this answer also.

Specify days and hours if part-time: The answer space is limited so abbreviate the answer to this question. However, do not forget the a.m.(s) and p.m.(s) when you list your hours. "Sat. 11a.m. - 5p.m.," "M-F 4p.m. - 8p.m." are examples of a complete answer. Eliminate the periods between a. m.(am) when you need the space. Your response must make sense. An incorrect answer may put you at work when you are supposed to be in class. "7 - 10p.m. means either three or fifteen hours.

BELOW, LIST ALL EXPERIENCES, SKILLS, OR QUALIFICATIONS, WHICH RELATE TO THIS POSITION:

First, answer this question by identifying experiences, skills, and qualifications which fit the job the best. Then add more attributes you feel will be used in this job. Last, place additional qualities you will bring to the position.

Address the job first. Why are you the best person for this position? What have you done in class, at school, at work, at home, or in your lifetime that will demonstrate the fact that you are the best one for this position. This may seem like a difficult question. Generally, if you can think of one answer then closely related experiences would start coming to mind. Remember, for an entry-level person the answer to some questions may be "N/A."

Then concentrate on which experiences, skills, or qualifications you will bring to the job that are not listed in the job title or explanation of duties. During your research of the position and company, you should listen for specific "job or employee-trait descriptors." This information can help draw attention to how you fit the qualities the company is searching for. These additional traits may be the key to your successful interview.

When asked for specific skills and experiences, the reader is looking for short, specific responses. They must provide more information than actual words. General and specific skill descriptions appear on the next page.

## Specific Skill Descriptions

Here are examples of general and specific answers.

GENERAL ANSWER	SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION
Use a Computer.	Computer literate in Office 3025.
Drew buildings using a computer.	Computer literate in AutoCAD, R-30.
Completed an Accounting Class.	Designed an Excel/Lotus Profit/Loss spreadsheet.
Built a wooden box.	Designed, laid-out, and fabricated a wooden container.
Used the phone.	Customer Service, acted as a Receptionist, made office appointments, Accepted phone orders.
Used a copier, sent a fax.	Competent in the use of office equipment.
Roofed a house.	Measured a roof deck and prepared a list of materials.
Created artwork.	Graphic communications, designed web pages, invitations, letterheads.
Changed engine oil and filter.	Performed preventive automotive engine maintenance.
Dee-jayed music at a dance.	Set-up and used electric sound equipment, made recordings, entertained at social gatherings.
Cooked a dinner.	Prepared meals, estimated costs, presented main course and dessert entries.
Dirt bike mechanic.	General maintenance of air-cooled two- , four-stroke cycled engines, and transmissions.
Made school movies.	Set-up, produced and directed video projects reporting school activities.

**RECORD OF EDUCATION SECTION**

The Record of Education details your scholastic accomplishments. It requests information which deals only with completed work. If there is nothing to place in a box, mark it "N/A," "N. A." or if you have room spell out "Not Applicable." A blank space leaves a doubt in the reader's mind whether or not you missed the question. There should be no blank areas in this form.

Record of Education					
Level of Education	Site Name and Address (include City, State, Zip)	Course of Study (Major Emphasis)	Circle Education Completed	Have you Graduate (circle one)	List Diplomas, Certificates, or Degrees
High School (Secondary)			Grade 9 10 11 12	Yes / No	
College			Semester 1 2 3 4	Yes / No	
Other Rop/ROCs, Trade School			Semester 1 2 3 4	Yes / No	

NAME AND ADDRESS OF SCHOOL:

In the high school section, list the school that you are currently attending. You will need the complete name and address of the school, including the zip code. If you have graduated, passed the G.E.D., or received a certificate from a high school, then list that school.

In the "College" section, list the name and address, including the zip code, of where you are currently attending, or have completed some courses. The last section, "Other," applies to JTPA, Trade Schools, and ROP/Cs. You may be a high school student, and have enrolled or completed these types

of classes. List them here including complete names and addresses.

COURSE of STUDY (Major Emphasis):

High school students are traditionally enrolled in "General Education" courses. Some schools offer academy programs, or cluster emphasis; these answers are also appropriate for this space. If you feel your course of study is different than that please list it here.

College students may not have decided on a major yet, but have taken some coursework. Your answer will also be General Education. You might not have declared a major but have focused in an area of your competition, list its' name.

ROP/C students should list the course name of the programs which they are enrolled or completed. For programs that involve clusters and academy programs, list the name of the program. Cosmetology is a better program description than hair coloring and fingernail capping.

CIRCLE EDUCATION COMPLETED:

It is important to understand what this statement means. It says to circle the highest grade completed. This is often the grade level you completed last June.

College and ROP/C students, the question asks to circle the last semester completed. Semesters often end in winter and spring. Determine the sum of semesters you have attended this college or program and circle it.

HAVE YOU GRADUATED?: (Circle One)

Circle the appropriate answer. High School students will find it hard to circle this, if they are still enrolled in classes. ROP/C students who have received their certificate(s) of completion should circle the yes answer.

LIST DIPLOMAS, CERTIFICATES, or DEGREES:

If you have graduated from a high or trade school, you have received a diploma or certificates. When you

graduate from college, you will receive a certificate or a diploma, sometimes both. List them here.

NO BLANK SQUARES OR BOXES! Use "N/A," "N. A." or "Not Applicable" in space where the question or statement does not apply to you. If you are a high school student who has not attended or completed any ROP/C or college classes will have a "N/A" in the Site, Course of Study and List Diplomas boxes.

**PAST EMPLOYMENT SECTION**

The past employment section details and validates the experiences that you claimed in the previous sections. On the CAUSA-VICA form there are two examples. The one closest to the top of the page should be your most recent position.

If you have worked, or are still working your first job mark the second box (Job 2) either: "NA," "N. A.," or "Not Applicable." If you have no work experience write the "NA" in both Job boxes and move on to the Personal Reference section.

Job 3		May we contact this employer as a reference?(circle one) Yes or No		
Company Name Address	From	Describe your Job Responsibilities	Starting Wages	Ending Wages
	(Month/Year)			
	Until			
	(Month/Year)			
Phone Number		Reason for Leaving	Supervisor's Name	
Type of Business				

JOB 1:

If you have a current job or have had only one job enter the information in these boxes.

May we contact this employer as a reference? Yes/No:

The answer requires a circle around the YES or NO. If you feel you could use your last job supervisor as a reference who would support your claims of skills and experiences then circle Yes. If not circle No.

COMPANY NAME, ADDRESS:

Use complete business name and address. This would include City, State, and Zip Code.

PHONE NUMBER:

All American phone numbers have three parts. The first three are the area code. Second is the prefix, and third is the actual phone number. Enter all three parts of the phone number here separating the three sections by "dots." If there is an extension, enter it also with the word or abbreviation of extension. Example one: 000.000.0000, Example two: 000.000.0000 extension (ext.) 2701.

TYPE OF BUSINESS:

What did they do where you worked? Examples include Food Service, Construction, Auto Parts, Insurance Company, Pre-school, Dentist's Office, or Delivery.

FROM - UNTIL:

What are the dates of your employment? When did you start and when did you leave? Space is tight so you may consider a slashed format: mm/dd/yyyy (11/11/2005).

DESCRIBE YOUR JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

What did you do on your last job? Did you push a broom, cook, type, file records, help patients, use a cash register, or computer? Did you have a position of leadership where you were responsible for decisions regarding what you or others would do each day? Did you order stock or put inventory away? Have you driven a company vehicle or a forklift?

REASON FOR LEAVING:

Why did you leave? Was it because it was a short-term job, for the summer or after school until the holidays? The work and school load was too great a load and you decided to give up the job?

WEEKLY STARTING AND ENDING SALARY:

How much were you paid for the work you were doing? Did it change while you were there? Enter the starting wage and ending wage in different boxes. Do not forget the dollar sign (\$) and decimal.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Give your supervisor's full name. Joe, George, or Wanda is not specific enough. A supervisor can be a lead-person, crew chief, co-ordinator, or the owner of the company. Include the Mr., Ms, Mrs., or Dr. You may want to keep the friendship between you and your employer for a period of time.

**PERSONAL REFERENCES SECTION**

The Personal References section identifies people who know about you and the way you conduct yourself in a work or social situation. If contacted, these people might be asked about your personality, leadership qualities, and whether you have the perseverance the employer may feel is necessary to perform the job. Notice the exclusion of

Personal References (not former employers or relatives)		
Name and Occupation	Address	Phone Number



"Former Employers and Relatives." If you know of someone who will describe your best qualities to this employer, this is the person to list. It helps if the person you are thinking about happens to be in the field you are hoping to enter.

NAME AND OCCUPATION:

Use their complete name and job title or description in these spaces. Place their name on the top line and occupation below it. Examples include John A. Shasta - Chef, Mary M. Someday - Medical Transcriber, William (Toots) T. Bell - Locomotive Engineer, and Veronica Doolittle - Animal Training Assistant.

ADDRESS:

Enter their complete address including City, State, and Zip Code.

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

Enter the phone number here separating the three sections by "dots." If there is an extension, enter it also with the word or abbreviation of extension. Example one: 000.000.0000, Example two: 000.000.0000 extension (ext.) 2701.

## SIGNATURE LINE SECTION

Signature _____	Date _____
-----------------	------------

Your formal signature includes your first, middle initial (with a period), and last name. The date will also appear more formal and clear when you spell out the month.

Examples of names include:

Date formats include:

William T. Williams,

Carol M. Smothers,

Robert C. Swanson, and

Myra M. Morales.

January 24, 3003,

March 05, 2005, and

25 May 2005.

Date formats are not standard. There are European, Military and Government formats. Using only numbers may be confusing to the reader. Given the name of the month, the day and year can be determined. Be clear. Abbreviate, or spell out the name of the month. The increasing use of dots/periods (.) as a replacement for the traditional slash does not create the same problem as the format of the date. An example includes:

11.10.2005 can be confused with 11.10.2005. The first is Day. Month. Year while the latter is Month. Day. Year.

# JOB APPLICATION, 9<sup>TH</sup>-10<sup>TH</sup> Grade Example

## California Association of SkillsUSA-VICA APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

To Applicant: We deeply appreciate your interest in our organization and assure you that we are sincerely interested in your qualifications. A clear understanding of your background and work history will aid us in placing you in the position which best meets your qualifications and may assist us in your future upgrading.

Position applied for: Front Office Assistant

### Personal (please print clearly)

Date March 3, 2005

Name Jones Mary A. Social Security No. 000-00-0000  
LAST FIRST M.I.

Address 1213 North First Street

City Timbuckthree State CA ZIP 98765-5675

Telephone 123.321.12 Are you legally employable in the USA? Yes

What method of transportation will you use to get to work? My personal car

Were you previously employed by us? (Y/N) Yes If yes, (from-until) June - September 1999

When will you be available for work? March 6, 2005

Would you work Full-Time No or Part-Time Yes? Days and hours desired Mon-Fri, 12pm-7pm

Below, list any experiences, skills, or qualifications, which relate to this position. I have a broad knowledge of personal computers and software. I have excellent customer relations and telephone skills. I have filing experience and can maintain records. I am cordial when welcoming new clients, and I am a hard working efficient person.

### Record of Education

Level of Education	Site Name and Address (include City, State, Zip)	Course of Study (Major Emphasis)	Circle Education Completed	Have you Graduate Yes / No	List Diplomas, Certificates, or Degrees
High School (Secondary)	Timbuckthree High School 4683 Main Street Timbuckthree, CA 98765	General	Grade ⑨ 10 11 12	YES	H. S. Diploma 1999
	Timbuckthree Com. College 171 Joshua Avenue Timbuckthree, CA 98765		Semester 1 2 3 4	No	
College	Timbuckthree Com. College 171 Joshua Avenue Timbuckthree, CA 98765	General Education	Semester 1 2 3 4	No	
Other Rop/ROCs, Trade School	Timbuckthree R.O.P. 4791 Main Street Timbuckthree, CA 98765	Office Careers	Semester ① 2 3 4	Yes	Certificate of Completion

**JOB APPLICATION, 9<sup>TH</sup>-10<sup>TH</sup> Grade Example, Page Two.**

**Employment History**

List all past employment below, beginning with the most recent.

Job 1 May we contact this employer as a reference?(circle one) Yes  or No

Company Name Address	From (Month/Year)	Describe your Job Responsibilities	Starting Wages	Ending Wages
Bill N. Lotts 3 North Talltree La Timbukthree, CA 98765	Dec. 1999 Until (Month/Year)	Resolved property questions with clients and Title Companies Accepted payments, wrote receipts and managed payment records.	\$8.00	\$8.00
Phone Number	Present	Reason for Leaving	Supervisor's Name	
123.987.6543			Bill Lotts	
Type of Business		N/A		
Real Estate and Property Management				

Job 2 May we contact this employer as a reference?(circle one) Yes  or No

Company Name Address	From (Month/Year)	Describe your Job Responsibilities	Starting Wages	Ending Wages
Dr. Peter Peterson 5874 West Cedar Avenue Timbukthree, CA 98765	June 1999 Until (Month/Year)	Answered the phones, made appointments, filled-in chart used computers, and greeted patients.	\$5.75	\$6.25
Phone Number	November 1999	Reason for Leaving	Supervisor's Name	
123.321.4632		A new position became available.	Jane Peterson	
Type of Business				
Dental Office				

**Personal References (not former employers or relatives)**

Name and Occupation	Address	Phone Number
Jane Washington Accountant	461 North Hamilton Avenue Timbukthree, CA 98765	123 778 4695
Ralph Peters Self-employed	222 Starburst Way Timbukthree, CA 98765	123 467 9167
Alice Sanders Shop Owner	7163 Northwest "N" Street Timbukthree, CA 98765	123 998 6542

Signature Mary A. Jones Date March 3, 2005

**JOB APPLICATION, 11<sup>TH</sup> Grade - Post-Secondary Example**

**California Association of SkillsUSA-VICA  
APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT**

To Applicant: We deeply appreciate your interest in our organization and assure you that we are sincerely interested in your qualifications. A clear understanding of your background and work history will aid us in placing you in the position which best meets your qualifications and may assist us in your future upgrading.

Position applied for: Front Office Assistant

**Personal**

(please print clearly)

Date March 3, 2005

Name Jones Mary A. Social Security No. 000-00-000  
LAST FIRST M.I.

Address 1213 North First Street

City Timbuckthree State CA ZIP 98765-567

Telephone 123.321.123 Are you legally employable in the USA? Yes

What method of transportation will you use to get to work? My personal car

Were you previously employed by us?(Y/N) Yes If yes, (from-until) June - September 1999

When will you be available for work? March 6, 2005

Would you work Full-Time No or Part-Time Yes? Days and hours desired Mon-Fri, 12pm-7pm

Below, list any experiences, skills, or qualifications, which relate to this position. I have a broad knowledge of personal computers and software. I have excellent customer relations and telephone skills. I have filing experience and can maintain records. I am cordial when welcoming new clients, and I am a hard working efficient person.

**Record of Education**

Level of Education	Site Name and Address (include City, State, Zip)	Course of Study (Major Emphasis)	Circle Education Completed	Have you Graduate Yes / No	List Diplomas, Certificates, or Degrees
High School (Secondary)	Timbuckthree High School 4683 Main Street	General	Grade 9 10 11 <u>12</u>	YES	H. S. Diploma 1999
	Timbuckthree, CA 98765				
College	Timbuckthree Com. College 171 Joshua Avenue	General Education	Semester <u>1</u> 2 3 4	No	
	Timbuckthree, CA 98765				
Other Rop/ROCs,	Timbuckthree R.O.P. 4791 Main Street	Office career	Semester 1 2 3 <u>4</u>	Yes	Certificate of
	Timbuckthree, CA 98765				

**JOB APPLICATION, 11<sup>TH</sup> Grade - Post-Secondary Example, Page Two.**

List all past employment below, beginning with the most recent.

Job 1 May we contact this employer as a reference?(circle one) Yes or No

Company Name Address	From (Month/Year)	Describe your Job Responsibilities	Starting Wages	Ending Wages
Bill N. Lotts 573 North Talltree Lane Timbukthree, CA 98765	Dec. 1999 Until (Month/Year)	Resolved property questions with clients and Title Companies. Accepted payments, wrote receipts, and managed payment records.	\$8.00	\$8.00
Phone Number	Present	Reason for Leaving	Supervisor's	
123.987.6543			Name	
Type of Business	N/A			
Real Estate and Property Management				Bill Lotts

Job 2 May we contact this employer as a reference?(circle one) Yes or No

Company Name Address	From (Month/Year)	Describe your Job Responsibilities	Starting Wages	Ending Wages
Dr. Peter Peterson 5874 West Cedar Avenue Timbukthree, CA 98765	June 1999 Until (Month/Year)	Answered the phones, made appointments, filled-in charts, used computers, and greeted patients.	\$5.75	\$6.25
Phone Number	November 1999	Reason for Leaving	Supervisor's	
123.321.4632		A new position became available.	Name	
Type of Business	Dental Office			Jane Peterson

**Personal References (not former employers or relatives)**

Name and Occupation	Address	Phone Number
James Washington Accountant	461 North Hamilton Avenue Timbukthree, CA 98765	123 . 778 . 469
Ralph Peters Self-employed	222 Starburst Way Timbukthree, CA 98765	123 . 467 . 9167
Alice Sanders Shop Owner	7163 Northwest "N" Street Timbukthree, CA 98765	123 . 998 . 6542

Signature Mary A. Jones Date March 3, 2005

## **RESUME**

A resume is an important advertising tool and summary of "you." It is an organized document which makes it easy for the reader to see your education, experience, and job objective. Employers expect all job applicant's to have resumes. From the employers' perspective, the resume is a screening device. They may look at it quickly for keywords, so it must be effective to get the results you want.

Make your first impressions count. It will decide whether you move on to the next stage of the employment process. While the well-written, organized resume may open the door to a job interview your personal contact with the employer determines whether you will be hired.

### **The following elements must be included:**

1. Heading: Name, address, phone/ machine/ message/ pager, e-mail.
2. Objective: Make your objective specific enough to tell the employer what kind of job you are seeking, but general enough to cover a range of possible positions within the company.
3. Skills: List your work-related skills; these may include those you learned from occupational experiences and settings. List computers and software you have used. Mention personal skills. Demonstrate your qualities by providing strong examples.
4. Education: Reverse chronological order. Current school first. List the name of each school, city,

state, dates attended, certificates, diplomas, degrees obtained, honors earned and the year they were received.

5. Experience: Include paid and unpaid experience. Begin with your most recent and list these experiences in reverse chronological order. Include job title, name of company, city, state, telephone number, two or three major responsibilities and dates of employment.
6. Provide examples of at least two of the following: Achievements or Awards, Activities, Strengths or Abilities, Qualification Highlights, and. SPECIAL INTERESTS.

### **Formatting Your Resume**

Omit personal information (e.g. health conditions, religious affiliations or hobbies which are not job-related).

- Avoid long paragraphs.
- The resume should be one page long.
- Do not list references on resume.

### Worksheet:

On the next three pages is a resume worksheet. It will help you focus and organize information for your final document. As you begin the process of documenting accomplishments in your life, other talents may come to mind which will fit into your resume. Following the worksheets are resume examples and a critique list.



**RESUME WORKSHEET**

**RESUME WORKSHEET**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Address	
Street:	_____
City:	_____
State:	_____
Zip:	_____
Telephone Number:	(     ) _____
E-mail Address:	_____

Career Objective

Education			
College	Attending Years	Major	Degree
High School			

Related Skills	
List computer skills, certifications, keyboarding (wpm),	
1	
2	
3	
4	

Honors/Activities/Offices Held/Awards
SkillsUSA-VICA,

WORK EXPERIENCE
Position (most recent)
Employer: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State/Zip: _____
Dates of Employment: From: _____ Until: _____
Duties and Responsibilities

Position (next most recent)
Employer: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State/Zip: _____
Dates of Employment: From: _____ Until: _____
Duties and Responsibilities

REFERENCES

Job Title	_____
Name:	_____
Address:	_____
City:	_____
State/Zip:	_____
Telephone Number:	_____ . _____ . _____
E-mail Address:	_____

REFERENCES

Job Title	_____
Name:	_____
Address:	_____
City:	_____
State/Zip:	_____
Telephone Number:	_____ . _____ . _____
E-mail Address:	_____

REFERENCES

Job Title	_____
Name:	_____
Address:	_____
City:	_____
State/Zip:	_____
Telephone Number:	_____ . _____ . _____
E-mail Address:	_____

List anything else which you feel should be included in your Resume

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

RESUME, 9<sup>TH</sup> - 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE RESUME EXAMPLE

Mary Jones  
1213 N. First Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561  
123.753.1234

**OBJECTIVE:** A challenging position as an administrative assistant in an office where I may apply my recently acquired computer skills.

**EXPERIENCE:**

Dr. Peter Peterson  
5874 Cedar Ave.  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561  
June 1999 - September 1999

**SKILLS:**

- Record orders for merchandise or services.
- Give information to and interview customers, claimants, employees, and sales personnel.
- Prepare stock inventory and purchase, organize, and store supplies.
- Operate office machines, such as computer, typewriter, adding, calculating, and duplicating machines.
- Open and route incoming mail, answer correspondence and prepare outgoing mail.
- Greet and assist visitors.

**EDUCATION:**

Timbuckthree High School 4683 Main Street Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561 September 1998-Present.	Timbuckthree R.O.C. 4791 Main Street Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561 January 1999-Present.
--	---

**SPECIAL ACTIVITIES:**

- SkillsUSA-VICA Chapter President
- Salvation Army Soup Kitchen server

**RESUME, 11<sup>TH</sup> - POST-SECONDARY EXAMPLE**

Mary Jones  
1213 N. First Street  
Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561  
123.753.1234

**OBJECTIVE:** To obtain a position as secretary or receptionist.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Dependable and hard working.
- Ability to understand and carry out instructions.
- Knowledge of formats for letters, reports, and other documents.
- Knowledge of spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

**SKILLS:**

Typing	70 wpm
Shorthand	90 wpm
Ten-key	270 nspm
IBM Personal Computer	WordPerfect, Lotus 123, dBase

**EDUCATION:**

Timbuckthree High School 4683 Main Street Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561 September '95 - June '99 Diploma: General Education	Timbuckthree R. O. C. 4791 Main Street Timbuckthree, CA 98765-4561 September '98 - June '99 Certificate of Completion: Office Career
---	---

**EXPERIENCE:**

1997 to Present    **CIGNA**, Timbuckthree, CA  
*Data Entry Operator*  
Typed various reports and memos, including indemnity documents. Typed and updated files.

1996 to 1997    **FARMERS INSURANCE**, Timbuckthree, CA  
*File Clerk*  
Sorted and distributed incoming mail, received and routed calls on multi-line phones. Labeled and filed color strip files.

**SPECIAL ACTIVITIES:**

- SkillsUSA-VICA Chapter President
- Salvation Army Soup Kitchen server

## RESUME, CRITIQUE LIST

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- Does the overall appearance of the resume make an employer want to read it?
- Is the layout professional?
- Is the information organized so that it is easy to read? (Would key points be picked up during a quick screening?)
- Is it well typed? (Do not mix styles. Titles should be underlined.)
- Is it printed on good quality paper?
- Are all the words spelled correctly?
- Is the writing clear (No colloquial or street jargon)?
- Do statements begin with action verbs?
- Are verb tenses consistent?
- Is the job objective well written and clear?
- Are employment experiences listed in reverse order?
- Do your personal strengths stand out?

Are you Stressing your

- Accomplishments?
- Problem-solving skills?
- Volunteer work?
- Does your work experience account for all periods of your employment?
- Has all irrelevant information been eliminated?
- Can the same information be limited to one page?

## **WORK SAMPLES**

The most important reason for developing a portfolio is to establish which techniques and skills you have acquired. In addition to resumes and applications, employers and colleges are requiring evidence of your skills and abilities. Your portfolio must include two work samples. By default, one of these is the portfolio itself. It documents your ability to follow directions, organize information, communicate, and write coherently.

The sample can be something you produced, or evidence about a project you completed. Your sample will include photographs, with captions, and a summary describing how and what you have completed. This summary describes the project from its inception to completion, which skills and techniques you employed, and what you learned by completing this project.

Your sample should include the use of technology in addition to higher-order thinking skills. This higher-order thinking requirement is the process you will use to explain your work. Your discussion should include your planning, actual work, any changes or modifications to your work, and what you learned from the project, or would do differently the next time.

Typically, work samples relate to your competition. They do not need to be limited; you can select anything you have completed using the planning model. Key elements include planning, actual work, and any changes or modifications. It can be something similar, but not limited to one of the following:

- A project completed using a desktop publishing program.
- An artistic project using any material.
- Results of a lab experiment.
- Computer aided drafting project.
- Medical or Ordering forms with the correct data and codes.
- Description of your volunteer project.
- Photographs of a project in different stages of assembly.
- Working drawings, bill of materials, or a project.

Select the work sample which demonstrates the skills you are trying to "sell" in your portfolio. Then decide how you can best prove your competency in this area.



## **WORK SAMPLE SUMMARY FORM**

The Summary Form will assist you in organizing your thoughts as you describe your work sample.

### **WORK SAMPLE SUMMARY FORM**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Project:** \_\_\_\_\_

What is your work sample?

How did you plan to complete it?

How did you complete it? (What steps were involved?)

Which specific skills and techniques did you use as you planned and completed your project?

How would you evaluate your work?

What changes would you make to any stage of your project's completion?

**WORK SAMPLE SUMMARY FORM, EXAMPLE**

**WORK SAMPLE SUMMARY FORM**

Student's Name: Mary A. Smith

Project: Three color flyer

What is your work sample?

My work sample is a three-color flyer that I designed using PageMaker 6.5. The flyer describes the members and history of our high school girls' basketball team.

How did you plan to complete it?

I spoke with the girl's coach about what he wanted the flyer to look like and my graphic communications instructor about which equipment I would be able to use or was best suited for the project. I put all of my artwork and text data blocks together and decided where each would fit on the flyer. When the artwork is complete, I will show it to the coach and get his approval before we start printing.

How did you complete it? (What steps were involved?)

I used a Canon Color Scanner, a PC computer, and PageMaker 6.5 to input and organize the information about the team. The PM 6.5 program stripped the colors and an HP DeskJet created the camera-ready copies for the plates. Using the AGFA 1000 Image Center I burned three printing plates. I used the ABDICK 960 press to produce the flyers. I ran the flyers through the printer three times. Finally, I stacked and shrink-wrapped the flyers for the coach.

Which specific skills and techniques did you use as you planned and completed your project?

I used computer programming, communication, interpersonal and interviewing skills, printing layout, color management, plate-making skills, and pressmanship.

How would you evaluate your work?

The work turned out satisfactory. We are using it around our school and the district. I like the way the project came out, I learned more about the PageMaker program and how to use the space of the flyer effectively.

What changes would you make to any stage of your project's completion?

The next flyer will be a three-page brochure and I want to improve my use of colors.

WORK SAMPLE, 9<sup>TH</sup> - 10<sup>TH</sup> Grade Example

Mary A. Jones, Work Sample  
A Girl's Basketball Three-color Flyer

My project is a three-color flyer about our high school's girl's basketball team. It includes pictures of the members and some history about the program. The girl's coach gave me the team pictures and the history he wanted placed in the flyer.

I matched what the coach wanted and the capacity of the print shop to decide on what the flyer would look like. I started by using a PC computer, color scanner, and the PageMaker software program to develop a paste-up for the coach's approval. Next, we made printing plates and made the flyer using the school's printing press.

I completed the paste-up by using a PC computer, the PageMaker program, a color scanner, and a DeskJet printer. I used the AGFA 1000 Image Center to make the plates and the ABDICK 960 printing press to make the flyer. When the work was completed, I packaged the flyers in shrink-wrap and delivered them to the Girl's coach.

The project turned out acceptable. I would like to do another one. In completing this project, I used some of the newest graphic communication technologies and machinery. Also, I used communicative and customer service skills in deciding what the coach wanted and what I could produce in the print shop.

Next time, I would like to make a similar project, but with more pages so I can learn more about the bindery process for securing the pages together. Also, I would like to use the big press to learn about color management and indexing adjustments.

**WORK SAMPLE, 11<sup>TH</sup> - Post-Secondary Example**

Mary A. Jones, Work Sample

A Girl's Basketball three-color flyer

My work sample is a three-color flyer, which I designed using PageMaker 6.5, and printed using an ABDICK 960 press. This flyer introduces our high school's girls' basketball members and details the success of their program. This project demonstrates my ability and skill to accept an assignment and follow it to its completion.

This project required communication skill in aligning the expectations of the girl's coach and the capacity of our high school print shop. Also, research skills in tracking down how long the program has been in existence and how successful they have been during this time. Given the final project approval by the coach and my Instructor, I completed this project in twelve person-hours by utilizing current technologies and industry-standard machinery. They included a PC computer, graphics software, a color scanner, DeskJet printers, a plate-maker, printing press, and packaging machines.

This work turned out very well, considering my two years of high school graphics communication experience. During the layout process, I was amazed at the capacity and flexibility of the PageMaker program. I learned more about finishing a project by taking it from an idea to the final product. The printing press demonstrated the requirement for a high work ethic, specifically when aligning index marks for the color match-up. My next project will be a three-page booklet, so I can learn bindery skills.

## **LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

When seeking a job or admission to a college, you may be asked to give references or letters of recommendation. These letters strengthen your resume and application because others are verifying what you have done. Selection of references and authors for the letters may be difficult.

Who should you ask to write this letter? Consider someone you have provided a service or have worked for recently. Specifically, someone who has observed your abilities and skills should be the author of your letter of recommendation. A relative or Chapter Advisor would not be appropriate because their opinion of you is considered biased.

For the most part this portion of your portfolio is almost completely out of your control. Typically, when you ask someone to write a letter for you they may ask: "What would you like me to say?" Anybody can say anything, so direct them in such a way they will write a recommendation that best fits your needs.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

The recommendation letter should be one page, contain three-four paragraphs, and a header or trailer telling how

they can be contacted for further questions. Following are content suggestions for the letter.

First paragraph: Describes how long they have known you, in what capacity or relationship, and your activities or responsibilities.

Second paragraph: Details! This can be more than one paragraph and contain information about your accomplishments and individual strengths. Example: "How well you communicate your ideas?"

Third paragraph: Summation, broad and general statements about you.

Following is a plan for getting the letter of recommendation written. This form will give the author information you provided about yourself. As you fill in the spaces consider what you would like said in their letter. Be honest in your form entries and realistic in your expectations of this letter.

#### **PLAN FOR THE LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

1. Make a list of all of the adults who know you and about your personal achievements. They might include community and religious leaders, employers or supervisors, your parents' friends, and teachers or professors.
2. List their name, telephone number, address, and the number of years they have known you.
3. From this list, select the few which you feel will write you a letter that will meet the needs of your application.
4. Make a checklist of the information that you will need included in this letter. In particular, list:

- a) the correct spelling of your complete name including the middle initial,
- b) the date you will need to submit their letter,
- c) a verbal picture of you:
  - i. which personality trait, characteristic, and achievements would you like them to address in their letter.
  - ii. your college and career goals.
  - iii. describe your awards, honors, community, and academic activities.
5. Thank each of the writers for their assistance and support, as you receive their letters.
6. Read each letter and select one which discusses the attributes you feel are important for this position. Include this letter in your portfolio.

**REQUEST FOR LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FORM**

Date:	Date needed by:
-------	-----------------

Student's name:	_____
Address:	_____
Phone number	_____

Purpose of the recommendation:	_____
	_____
	_____

Please address this letter to:
Name: _____
Company: _____
Title: _____

List your extra-curricular activities Including offices held: _____
_____

List all of your community activities, Awards and honors received: _____
_____
_____



**REQUEST FOR LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FORM (Cont)**

List your future educational and career Goals: \_\_\_\_\_

List your employment history

EMPLOYER:	POSITION:	DATES:
-----------	-----------	--------

--	--	--

--	--	--

--	--	--

List the names of colleges/trade schools Which you plan to attend: \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a verbal picture about yourself, What are your positive characteristics That make you unique: \_\_\_\_\_

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION, Example 1: Teacher

*TIMBUCKTHREE HIGH SCHOOL*

March 1, 2005

To whom it may concern:

It is with a great deal of enthusiasm that I present Mary A. Jones for your consideration as an employment. Mary is one of my most competent business students. I recommend her highly.

Mary will be completing the Computer Science and Information Systems Career Path when she graduates from Timbuckthree High in June. Her program has included keyboarding skills, word processing experience, database formulation, spreadsheet computation, and desktop publishing applications. Mary enjoys her business courses and plans to major in business in college. In addition, Mary has been in the leadership and skill organization SkillsUSA-VICA where she is currently serving as Secretary of the Timbuckthree chapter.

I am confident that Mary's positive attitude, hard work, and perseverance will pay off in any job or educational opportunity she wishes to pursue. She will be a valuable employee because she gets along well with her peers, and is a team player. Any team will be more successful because of Mary's contributions.

If you have any questions or need additional information about Mary A. Jones's qualifications for the position of word processor, please contact me at 111.111.1111.

Sincerely,

*Luciano Tatutti*

Luciano Tatutti  
Business Department Chair

**LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION, Example 2: Friend**

March 1, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

Mary A. Jones has been an invaluable member of the Timbuckthree high School SkillsUSA-VICA for the last three years. In the years that I have known her, she has developed an impressive leadership ability and skill in working with others. Given her leadership skills, keen sense of responsibility, and love of nature, I was pleased to learn of her intent to pursue a career in Forestation conservation.

Mary is a self-directed, confident, and conscientious young woman. She is quite good at identifying a need or problem, finding a way to solve it and following a plan through to its conclusion.

I feel that Mary has the skills and dedication it takes to be successful in this field. I strongly recommend Mary for admission to college as well as any entry-level position she may apply for in the field of forest conservation.

Sincerely,

*Luciano Tatutti*

Luciano Tatutti  
Timbuckthree, CA

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION, Example 3: Employer

March 1, 2005

To whom it may concern:

I take great pleasure in presenting Mary A. Jones to you. Mary has worked part-time with our company as a bookkeeper. Currently, she is working three hours after school on Mondays and Wednesdays. Mary has been with us for the last twenty-three months. She works well with others, is a self-starter, and Mary is willing to take on any challenges within the bookkeeping field.

Mary is computer literate and is proficient in the use of several computer-based accounting programs. Mary has written program applet that we use to keep track of deliveries and shipments of our products.

Mary would certainly be an asset to any office-based business and I have no reservations when I say that she is intelligent and quick thinking in a business sense. Feel free to contact me if you have any further questions concerning Mary Jones.

Sincerely,

*Luciano Tatutti*

Luciano Tatutti  
VP of Human Resources  
Our Company  
111.111.1111

## PORTFOLIO ASSEMBLY

The portfolio is assembled in the following order:

1. Cover Page,
2. Table of Contents,
3. Letter of Introduction,
4. Job Application,
5. Resume,
6. Work Sample,
7. Letter of Recommendation, and
8. Industry evaluation sheet of your portfolio.

For the purposes of SkillsUSA competitions, once your portfolio is assembled in the order described above;

- Place a blank page behind the Letter of Recommendation and
- Place a staple vertically, in the upper left-hand corner of your cover page.
- Do not place your work into any type of plastic cover or notebook.

## **EVALUATION**

The evaluation of the portfolio first includes a check for its compliance. Are all of the entries completed? Have all of the sections been included in the portfolio? How does the overall portfolio look? Is everything signed, that should be signed?

More specifically, CASUSA-VICA requires that you present your portfolio to a professional person with a checklist to determine whether you have met the following criteria:

### **COVER PAGE**

Contains student's name, date, advisor's and chapter's name and number, contest name, and is the first page of the portfolio?

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Contains a title, is in outline form, accurate and neat, complete with correct spelling.

### **LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

Includes career preparation skills, career goals, correct spelling, and grammar.

### **RESUME**

Contains contact information: name, address, and phone number. It is neatly typed or word processed. Headings include career and education plans, education history, work experience, and one

describing either special interests, activities, achievements, skills, strengths, or abilities.

#### WORK SAMPLE

A description of the sample, steps taken to complete the work, minimum two skills standards learned by completing this project, typed neatly and easy to read. Contains photos, sketches, or diagrams describing the project.

#### LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Is the letter present and not written or signed by a CA SkillsUSA-VICA instructor or advisor?

When your portfolio is complete, an employer in your area must evaluate it. Preferably, you will select someone in the field of your skill competition.

#### Evaluation Matrix

Following is a student evaluation worksheet. In this final review, there are three checks. There are performed by the student, advisor, and industry representative. This document, signed by the industry person is required in all CASUSA-VICA competitions. Each critical component of the portfolio is placed in this worksheet.

Compare each of your completed sections to the expectations these sheets require. When your section has met the criteria, mark it off as being in compliance. When everything is marked off as complete, submit it to your

chapter advisor for their review. Finally, submit your portfolio and the worksheet to an industry representative. Ask this person for a review of your work and to compare it to his/her concept of industry standards.



## STUDENT PORTFOLIO EVALUATION WORKSHEET

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

As you complete each task, mark the student's side of the box. When you have completed all entries except for the Industry Review, present this document and your portfolio to your SkillsUSA-VICA Advisor for their evaluation.

### TITLE SHEET (Front Cover Sheet)

ADVISOR	STUDENT
---------	---------


Student's Name  
 Date of Competition  
 Advisor's Name  
 Chapter Name and Number  
 Region Identification  
 Contest Name  
 Appearance

### TABLE of CONTENTS


Title  
 Accurate  
 Neat  
 Complete  
 Correct Spelling  
 Appearance

**JOB APPLICATION**

ADVISOR	STUDENT
---------	---------


- Clean Looking
- No Write-overs
- Complete
- Accurate
- NO Blanks
- Correct Spelling
- Dates/Information Consistent

**LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

--	--

Present

**COVER LETTER**


- Career Preparation Skills
- Career Goals
- Correct Spelling
- Correct Grammar
- Describe Your Work Sample
- Describe What the Portfolio Means to You
- Signature



**Portfolio Judging Sheet**

When your portfolio is complete, an employer in your area must review it. Preferably, this person works in the field which interests you. This document is mandatory for all California state competitions.

California Association of SkillsUSA-VICA, INC.



**CALIFORNIA**

**SkillsUSA-VICA**

**PORTFOLIO JUDGING SHEET**

State Region \_\_\_\_\_ Student's School \_\_\_\_\_  
 Member Name \_\_\_\_\_ Advisor's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contest Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company Name \_\_\_\_\_ Division \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Rating (see Rubric):

	Complied	Comments
Cover Sheet	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Table of Contents	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Letter of Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Job Application	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Resume	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Work Sample	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Letter of Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

I certify this information is correct and according to the CAUSA Portfolio Evaluation Regulations.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

All areas in ***Italic*** are to be filled out by the contestant. All other areas are to be filled out by the industry representative.

## PORTFOLIO JUDGING SHEET RATING INSTRUCTIONS AND RUBIC

The following information is intended to assist Portfolio Interviewers to determine whether an item is considered enough to be checked off on the rating sheet. The following descriptors represent the minimum elements or quality that should be present in each item.

### Title Sheet (front cover sheet)

- Contains student name, date, advisor's name, chapter's name and number, and contest name,
- Located on cover; the first page of portfolio.

### Table of Contents

- Contains title,
- Outline format,
- Accurate, neat, and complete,
- Correct spelling,
- Does not need to be paginated.

### Letter of Introduction

- Position applying to,
- Name and Career Goals,
- "Thank you" statement; for the reader,
- How to get old of the applicant,
- Correct spelling and grammar,
- Describe best work samples.

### Job Application

- Neat overall appearance,
- Written in ink,
- Complete, accurate, and no blank spaces,
- Correct spelling.

### Resume

- Neatly typed,
- Contains career and education plans,
- Education history,
- Paid/unpaid work experience,
- At least one of the following; special interest, activities, achievements, skills, strengths, or abilities,
- Contact information; name, address, and phone.

### Work Sample

- A description of the work sample,
- Steps taken to complete the work sample,
- Two or more skills or standards learned by completing this work sample,
- Typed, neat, and easy to read,

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