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The 4-Tions: Your Guide to Developing Successful Job Search Strategies

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THE 4-TIONS



YOUR GUIDE TO DEVELOPING
SUCCESSFUL JOB SEARCH
STRATEGIES

Emad Rahim, DM, PMP, Richard Q. Holloway, JD
and Lisa D. Summerour MSM

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First Edition

This book is dedicated to all of the individuals entering and re-entering the job search arena; and to those individuals working to help others remain relevant, confident, and marketable throughout their careers.



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I would like to thank my wife for her unconditional love, for being a great partner and mother to our children, and for your support after 15 years of married. Thanks to all my friends and family members for pushing me towards finishing this book. - Emad Rahim, DM, PMP

Thank you to Madame Clerk Doctor Holloway, the Beautiful Baby, my beloved Family and Friends, Mr. Clerk the Late Great Raymond E. Holloway, and to every manager, supervisor, co-worker and employee from whom I have learned and through whom I have grown. - Richard Q. Holloway, JD

A special thanks to the business program at Riverside High School in Milwaukee, WI for preparing me for my first job interviews nearly 30 years ago; and to Marilyn Sietz, former Director of the NY USA and NJ USA Pageants, for providing me a training ground to conduct my first interview preparation sessions. - Lisa D. Summerour, MSM

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for making the 4-Tions a part of your career resource library. My co-authors and I appreciate you making this investment in your career and we believe you will benefit from what you learn here. Be patient. Although the 4-Tions is designed for you to be able to implement much of what you learn immediately, give yourself time to get through everything and time to become comfortable with the processes.

The precursor to the 4-Tions was originally developed as part of the curriculum used in a vocational training program. I witnessed hundreds of job seekers benefit from lessons taught in the curriculum that paved the foundation for the 4-Tions. My colleagues and co-authors, Lisa Summerour and Richard Holloway, were equally familiar with and concerned about the challenges faced by individuals newly entering the workforce and by even more candidates who were not comfortable or prepared to re-enter the job search arena. Together we decided to combine more than 60 years of experience in the areas of recruiting, law, career services, vocational counseling, coaching, training, facilitating, education management and teaching to develop a guide to help you move forward into your career search feeling more empowered, prepared, and confident.

The 4-Tions represents what we consider to be the 4 most important aspects of the job search. These 4 areas are:

- * Documenta **tion** : Resume, Application Information, References
- * Prepara **tion** : Company Background, History, Questions
- * Presenta **tion** : Appearance, Clothing, Hygiene, Grooming
- * Communica **tion** : Articulation, Eye Contact, Active Listening

The 4-Tions is designed to provide you with fundamental job search strategies and practices to help you develop habits that will stay with you your entire professional life. Our intention is to create in you a desire to continue learning, adapting, and possibly even inventing new and more effective ways to present your skills to potential employers.

The 4-Tions is not an exhaustive resource. In this ever-changing world of technology there is no way we could include everything and even if that were possible, 6-months from now you might find a different more suitable way to apply what you learn here to your specific situation. Also, employers and recruiters are always working to improve their job sourcing processes. We cannot predict what that might look like but we are certain of one thing – the best candidates will learn to change with technology and industry demands so they are always presenting themselves in the best and most current manner.

We were excited and encouraged to write the 4-Tions because at one point, each one of us has been where you are – in need of assistance with our job search strategies. Be encouraged in knowing we got through the process and you will too.

Respectfully,

Dr. Emad Rahim

FOREWORD

by Arel Moodie

There is a big misconception about what it takes to succeed in today's society. Education is indeed important. It is the centerpiece to all successful individuals.

Education alone, however, won't guarantee your professional success. Learning how to properly plan for your future career is essential for getting an upper hand in this competitive job landscape.

Most young people start planning on their future careers right around graduation time. Though some planning is better than no planning, getting a jump start on your future is one of the most worthwhile steps you can take in graduating without the stress of what you will be doing next.

I've had the opportunity to meet over 150,000 young people from almost every single state in this country through my work as an entrepreneur and motivational speaker. No matter where I travel, whether it's rural, urban, or suburban America, there are certain commonalities I've noticed in young people. One of the greatest needs is for more young people to take their future planning into their own hands and do it as soon as possible.

The book you are about to read will outline some crucial steps every young person can start taking to prepare for their future career success. As you read every word in this book, you'll begin to realize that there are strategies that will help separate you from the crowd and put yourself in the best position to get that dream job you deserve.

There is a wise adage that says if you fail to prepare then you should prepare to fail. Gaining the slightest advantage through your preparation could mean the difference between getting the interview and not getting the inter-

view. The slightest advantage could mean the difference between getting a job and being unemployed. What you learn in this book will give you the advantages you need. Your career will be where you spend the majority of your life. Making sure you enjoy what you do and get the position that is best for you is something with which you should become obsessed. Making the time investment now will yield high returns in your future career and life satisfaction.

Now is your time to take action. What lies in front of you in this book will give you the competitive edge you need to get the interview and get the job. Enjoy the journey. You are part of a small elite percentage of the population who choose to invest in their future success. You will get out of this book the energy you put into it. And the energy you put in now will make your future self grateful that you did.

To Your Success -

Arel Moodie, America's Top Young Speaker

Best Selling Author of ***Your Starting Point For Student Success***

Founder of the College Success Program | www.collegesuccessprogram.com [<http://www.collegesuccessprogram.com>]

1

PREPARATION

A successful cover letter and resume will generate enough interest to encourage a prospective employer or hiring agent to initiate moving forward to the interview. This chapter is designed to help prepare you for a face-to-face interview, but a good portion of what is presented in this chapter could apply to a telephone interview as well. Your job is to be fully prepared for each phase of the process leading up to and beyond your interview.

Information Gathering

You should ask or get answers to several questions during the interview scheduling call. Do not assume anything because you do not want to miss obtaining relevant information. Here are several things to consider, write down, and take along with you to your interview.

Location. Be sure to obtain the street address of the interview location. Ask if there is anything specific you need to know about entering the building. Is there a particular entrance you should use? Will someone meet you in the lobby? Where can you park?

Interviewer. Get the name, be sure you have the correct spelling and pronunciation, and job title of the person who will be conducting the interview. Also, get the name and title of that interviewer's assistant, secretary, or

co-worker if you have been speaking with them throughout the scheduling process.

Contact Information. Have the telephone number of the person with whom you will be interviewing and the person who scheduled the interview. If you have been working through an employment agency, be sure to have that person's name and contact information with you the day of your interview.

Dress Code. This is very important information to get before the interview. You do not want to dress inappropriately for your interview. Depending on the company culture, inappropriate could mean being underdressed or overdressed for the position in question. Either way could make you stand out as someone who does not fit in with the company culture. So ask what the company dress code is and ask for examples as to what that looks like. Then take some time to figure out what you will wear and have it ready to go well in advance of your interview.

Directions. You would be amazed at how many candidates get lost and end up late for interviews. It may seem like a lot of work in some cases, but it is worth the investment of time and energy to ensure you are not merely on time, but early, for what could be a pivotal event in your career. You have the address, be sure you know where you are going by conducting a test run. Drive to the location before your interview to be sure you know exactly where it is and the best way for you to get there. Use a navigation device, search Google™, print out MapQuest™, do whatever you need to do to ensure you know where you are going. Be sure to read the chapter on Presentation before doing your test run. If you need to take public transportation to get to your interview you will require a bit more advanced preparation. Check the bus or train schedule. Be sure to arrive very early rather than scheduling yourself to arrive – just in time. Find some place to sit and prepare that is nearby or in the building where your interview is scheduled. You might find a coffee shop, a book store, or a library that you can sit in within walking distance of your interview location. The key here is to provide yourself the mental security of being comfortably early.

Scheduling

This may seem like common sense, but it would surprise you to know how many people ruin their interview opportunity because of poor sched-

uling. When scheduling your interview take into consideration your current responsibilities and circumstances. Do you have daycare needs to arrange? Are there car or home repairs on your calendar that require you to be available? Will you need to rent a vehicle, or as we previously discussed, will you need to use public transportation to get to your interview? If so, you need to factor the necessary time for your respective circumstance into your planning. The best investment you could make during your job search is to purchase and use a calendar. Having all of your activities in one accessible location will serve you well, especially if you end up with several interviews per week; or if you are already managing a very busy life.

Time Management. Many people are late and ill prepared for interviews and other appointments due to poor time management. What might this look like? It could be as simple as answering your phone. How many times have you taken a call knowing you were pressed for time? Discipline yourself not to answer the telephone within ten minutes of the time you need to leave for your interview (Newberry, 1999). The same is true for finding projects, starting an activity, or running an errand, when you should be taking that time to stay focused and calm. Your goal should be to arrive at your interview feeling prepared, not pressed for time. On the way to the interview, while waiting to meet the interviewer, and during the interview your cell phone should be off and out of view. Do not allow yourself to play games or text while you are waiting. Do not leave the phone on vibrate; turn it off. The visual of you texting as the interviewer is coming to greet you, is an image you will never erase. Likewise, a ringing, music playing, or vibrating cell phone will leave an equally unprofessional image of you in the interviewer's mind. Avoid it at all costs. Control the controllables.

Arrive More Than Early. There is a saying that goes, if you are on time, you are late. This is how you need to view your arrival to your interview. Plan to arrive early enough to visit the rest room. Yes, there is the obvious reason of going to the rest room to relieve yourself. Nobody wants to be in their interview and distracted by the fact that they really need to go to the bathroom. The other reason you want to arrive more than early is to check yourself out in the mirror. Give yourself the ole "once over" and be sure everything is in place. If you have done everything properly to prepare up until now, this one step can give you an added confidence boost.

What to Take

Today, many organizations require candidates to complete applications at the time of the interview. Before we go deeper into physical items you should bring along, let's briefly discuss being mentally prepared for what might feel like a series of tests. Be aware that you may be asked to complete additional assessments including but not limited to the following:

- * Personality Inventory
- * Aptitude Test
- * On-site Writing Sample
- * Basic Office Software Skill Assessment, i.e. Excel, Microsoft, PowerPoint

You will usually be told in advance of your appointment that you will be expected to complete these assessments. The best preparation is to stay calm, answer the questions honestly, and in a timely manner, since some of these programs are time sensitive. For the skills based assessments, you can build your confidence by keeping your skills up. Many of the office software programs offer tutorials that you can use at home. For more advanced training, you may want to consider taking a class at a local library, adult learning center, or through an online program.

For the interview, be fully prepared by taking certain documents with you. This will also allow you to be prepared if you are asked to complete an employment application during the interview or if certain things are requested for your candidate folder. What follows is a list of items you should consider having with you the day of your interview.

Identification. Take a current form of identification that includes your photograph. Your driver's license will usually suffice. Generally, if you take your driver's license you might want to take your social security card as well. If you have a passport, this will often take the place of both the driver's license and social security card. If you do not have identification, check with a state or local agency about obtaining a legal photo identification card.

Documentation. In addition to your resume, which will be addressed in more detail in another chapter, you should have high quality copies of relevant certifications, awards, degrees, and transcripts. Being prepared includes having a complete set of all documents you might want to leave with the employer, organized and in a clean folder that you are able to leave with the

person interviewing you if asked. You want to avoid leaving any original documents with the interviewer or having to ask to use a copier to duplicate items while you are there for your interview.

Thank You Cards. You will want to complete the interview process with a professional, short, handwritten thank you note. Thank you notes will be discussed in more detail later. For now, purchase an inexpensive set of plain thank you cards and a pack of stamps so you are always prepared to follow up immediately after your interviews.

Business/Networking Cards. Many people are confused by this item. The truth is, if you are looking for employment you need a business or networking card more than someone who is employed. It is imperative that you present a professional image at every opportunity. Writing your name on a napkin or the back of someone else's business card is not as professional nor does it show preparedness like handing someone a business or networking card.

In Appendix A, we have provided business card samples. Take note of the key components of the business card and note how we made adjustments to the second and third examples. Use these examples as guides to create the business card that best represents you. Notice that we removed the Organization Name, Primary Business Address, and the Logo information. If you are currently looking for work it is unlikely that you have this information to include. If you happen to have your own business and this information is relevant for you, by all means – include it. Obviously, you will want to include Your Name. Use your formal name, not a nickname. Use the name that is on your legal identification documents, i.e. your birth certificate, driver's license, or passport. If you are not working you may be thinking you have nothing to put in the Your Title area. Even though you are not working and do not have an actual job title, you do have skills or a current status that you can highlight in this section. Here are a few examples of what can be put in the Your Title area:

- * Web Designer
- * IT Professional
- * Nurse Practitioner
- * Marketing Degree Graduate
- * Student – XYZ University | Bachelor of Arts – Marketing

* Writer | Editor | Proofreader

You can include your home address, or use a post office box address as we show in one of the examples. For security purposes, using a post office box is something to consider. Another option is to omit your actual street address and only include the City, State, and Zip Code information. A third option is to only provide complete mailing address information when requested. In this case, you would write that information on the back of your business card. Include at least one telephone number and if you have a fax number, include it as well. Finally, provide your professional email address and if you have a LinkedIn account, be sure to include your LinkedIn URL on the card.

Keep the business card design simple and clean, and use a font that is easy to read. Your information is what should stand out on the card. Avoid making your card too busy, too colorful, or difficult to read by using a busy or fancy scripted font. Be sure to have someone proof read several times. See Appendix A for illustrations of example business cards.

Do Your Homework

Now it is time to prepare for the actual interview. This is your prep work. If you view the interview as a two-way conversation, it will help you prepare and feel more invested in the process. To that end, it is necessary that you have questions to ask during the interview.

Ask Questions. Basic questions many candidates ask during interviews include questions regarding health benefits, vacations, promotion policies or career advancement, job responsibilities, work schedules, training, expectations, company culture, company history, and next steps in the interview process. In order to ask questions that show you are interested, well informed, and inquisitive, be prepared with questions that go beyond the basics. By visiting the organization's website you can learn more about the company's history and prepare questions that relate to the company's mission and vision statement. Be sure to investigate the job you are interviewing for by thoroughly reviewing the job description so you can connect your skills to the specific requirements and preferences of the position. Finally, by visiting the company website or using professional networking websites like LinkedIn™ you may be able to learn something about the person(s) scheduled to interview you. Be sure not to invade their privacy by

asking them to connect with you on Facebook™ or LinkedIn™. This is solely to be used as a way to obtain background information on the interviewer. Here are some additional areas to become familiar with prior to your interview:

- * Key people in the company
- * Background information on the person(s) interviewing you
- * Company history, mission, and vision
- * Company strategic plan (if available)
- * Company products, services, and target market
- * Size in terms of sales, employees, and client base
- * Company locations and affiliates
- * Organizational structure
- * Company culture and workplace dynamics
- * Major competitors and their place in the market.
- * Company reputation as viewed by clients, suppliers, and competition
- * News reports, YouTube™, and other forms of information about the organizations

Be aware that much of your preparation will be for background information so you are knowledgeable and prepared should these topics arise. It may be possible that you will have opportunities to share some of what you learned, during the natural flow of the interview conversation. Be prepared to ask three to five questions, when appropriate. Do not attempt to impress the interviewer with an extensive list of questions designed to show how much you learned about the company.

Be Present. Once you enter the interview session it is important for you to pay attention and be present. Some people get so excited or nervous that they find it difficult to pay attention. This is where rehearsing for the interview will really benefit you. Being present means actively listening, paying attention to your surroundings, and taking notes.

Active Listening. You have done your homework and have questions. You know what makes you a good fit for the position and you want to share relevant information. It is still very important that you listen with the intent of understanding, not just for the purpose of waiting for your chance to speak. Active listening means being engaged in the conversation and fully

understanding what the person you are speaking with is saying so you can respond appropriately.

Pay Attention. Take your time entering the room and allow the person interviewing you to direct you to where you should sit. Look around the room. What do you see? Pictures of children, vacations, or hobbies? Does the person have a lot of books in their office? Do you see a stack of music cds? These could be important pieces of information that help you learn a bit more about the person interviewing you. Be careful not to assume anything. If you see pictures of children, you might say something like, “Cute children” instead of “Are they your children?” It is possible the person does not have children of their own but they volunteer as a big brother or big sister. If you had a big brother or big sister through an organization growing up, you may have just found a common interest. There is a fine line between being politically correct and being invasive. Having said that, most people who have pictures and things of interest on display in their offices are fairly open to having someone notice them and inquire about them. Be sure that this is only an ice-breaker or a brief conversation. It may feel great to have what feels like a general conversation about a common interest, but do not allow this to take precedent over the actual interview. Remember, the purpose of this interview is to be sure you provide evidence that you are the right candidate for the position.

Take Notes. This is important. It means you need to be prepared by having a note pad and pen with you during the interview. It is perfectly fine for you to let your interviewer know that you will be taking notes because you do not want to miss anything. Taking notes does not mean writing down everything that is said during your interview. It means capturing key bits of information, reminders of questions you might want to ask based on something you discuss, and details on what the next steps in the interview process might be. If you are asked a question and you do not know the answer, it is a good idea to write down that question. Should you have a second interview, you want to be sure you have researched the answer and are prepared to answer the question the next time around.

Rehearse. It may sound strange and it will likely be uncomfortable, but you will only get better at something if you do it well repeatedly – so practice your interviewing skills. You can role-play with a friend, go on the

Internet and look up videos on interviewing or, if you are in college or working with an employment agency, inquire as to whether they provide interview preparation training. You can have a friend video tape you while you role-play so you can watch and hear yourself to see if you have nervous habits, repeat phrases, and other things you might need to eliminate over time to improve your interviewing skills. Interviewing is a skill. Being a good talker, having the gift of gab, and being a people person – have nothing to do with being a good interviewee. Take this opportunity to practice active listening, paying attention, and taking notes. The more you practice what you learn the more comfortable and confident you will be during your interviews. In the chapter on communication we will share additional information to assist you in specific practice techniques that will help you improve your interview skills as well as your ability to communicate more effectively.

Social Media

Before we continue, this would be a great time to define the term *brand*, because you will begin seeing it in this section. Brand could be viewed as your personal or professional image. It is what you are known for and who you are known to be; you could see it as your reputation. If friends identify you as always being on time, being dependable, and being honest – these traits are part of your brand.

As previously mentioned, using the Internet and social media sites to learn about an organization or even someone with whom you will be interviewing, is expected. Very often, an interviewer will ask a candidate if he or she went to the company website, and if so, what did they learn? What you want to be aware of as a candidate is that your information may be accessed as well. Many employers purposely take the time to visit social media sites to investigate candidates prior to or after interviewing them. Be proactive. Take the time now to be sure there is nothing circulating on the Internet, i.e., Facebook™, MySpace™, LinkedIn™ etc. that would reflect negatively on you should a potential employer happen to find it. Consider the photographs, conversations, and affiliations associated with your various profiles on social networking sites. Be aware of your personal and professional brands and understand that your Internet activity is a part of your brand. It represents who you are, what you are about, and prospective employers will use that information to determine if you are a “good fit” for their company.

Once information is posted on the Internet, it is virtually impossible to remove. The reality is that today, most young people have a significant digital footprint as a result of their use of social media. That being the case, there are a few things you can do to stay in control of your brand and your Internet image.

First, take advantage of the various privacy features available to remove specific information from public access. Sites like Facebook™ have privacy settings you can adjust to control who sees your page and who can post to your page. LinkedIn™ allows individuals to choose whether or not their connections are accessible for others to view. If you are not skilled at using the privacy settings, take advantage of the help features and tutorials available on these sites so you can learn to manage your site(s) effectively. Delete less than favorable images, comments, and posts from your profile all together. But understand this, it may already be too late. It is possible that things already posted have been shared, archived, and reposted someplace else. Moving forward, do not assume anything is private if it is posted. That includes private chats, which can be copied using the print screen feature and reposted.

Finally, be consistent. At some point, you may end up managing several social media sites that house your personal and professional identities. It will be necessary to visit your social media site(s) regularly, so you can be sure the information you post is consistent, current, and projecting the image you want visible to the world. Managing your brand on social media must become part of your career plan. Start managing it correctly now, because it could benefit you immensely later.

Post Interview

You did it! You made it through the prep work and the entire interview process. If you prepared you should be feeling confident about your performance and the positive impression you left with the individual(s) with whom you met. There are three things left for you to do. First, use the contact information you obtained in the beginning of this process to send thank you notes to everyone with whom you met. Keep it short, write it by hand, and remember to refer to something specific from your conversation with that person, and include follow-up information (see Appendix B). Second, do a self-assessment. While the interview is still fresh in your mind, go over

the entire experience and determine how you feel about your presentation. Do you feel you answered the questions well? Did you feel physically comfortable? Did what you were wearing fit in with what employees you saw were wearing? Did you have questions you felt you didn't answer well? If so, what were they? Write all of this information down. Finally, make the adjustments. Take some time now to address what you feel went well and not so well, so you can make whatever adjustments you want to make before the next interview.

What About Online?

Being prepared is even important when you are completing applications online. Some online applications can take up to two hours to complete. Many companies require that assessments and tests be completed at the time you complete their online application. Be sure to have all of your documents nearby so you are able to answer questions and complete online forms quickly. These same sites often have time limits and there is nothing more frustrating than losing your application data because you were timed-out of the company's website, while you hunted for your own information. If your data was not saved, you could end up having to start the application process over from the very beginning. Always be prepared.

Looking for employment is a full-time job. The more effort you put into the preparation process, the better you position yourself for the most desirable outcome. Speaking of effort, based on some state's requirements to collect unemployment, individuals are expected to complete five job applications per week. This is a good goal to have for yourself during your job search process. Goal yourself to finding and applying to a minimum of five jobs per weeks. Some weeks it might be more difficult than others to reach that goal. Do not be too hard on yourself if you fall short of the goal some weeks. Just be very intentional about aiming for the goal of five.

We will end this chapter by leaving you with this: You do not know who the hiring department is going to select. Your ability to influence that decision can be greatly affected by your ability to apply the preparation skills and activities laid out in this chapter. You can control your preparation process. Be realistic and understand that every completed application will not convert to an interview; and every interview will not turn into a job offer. Still, there is confidence in knowing that every step in the process does

provide you with the opportunity to get better at presenting yourself as a reliable and capable candidate.

2

PRESENTATION

There is a saying that goes, “You never get a second chance to make a first impression.” This could not be more true than in an interview situation. If it is not your nature to have a pleasant disposition, if you tend to get frustrated easily, and if you have a reputation for being on edge when under pressure – being prepared is going to help you immensely. Here is something that can benefit everyone: On the days you have an interview, imagine that each interview starts the minute you leave your home. Keep your mind, your actions, and your attitude focused on you being in interview mode. You have no idea who might be sitting next to you on the train or bus, or who could be driving in the car next to you, as you head to your interview. Do not challenge yourself with having to make the adjustment from bad mood to interview mode, as you head to your interview. Leave your home and walk into the interview prepared and presenting your best self.

First Impressions

Attire. Few things set a tone or establish a visual representation of a company's culture faster than the dress code. If you walk into a building and see everyone in dark suits, white shirts, and ties, you will immediately create an impression of the company culture. If you walk into a building, where everyone is dressed neatly but wearing jeans, polo shirts, and clean sneakers you are probably going to have a very different impression about that company's culture as compared to the first scenario. From the interviewer to the interviewee, everyone has a different perspective and unique perception regarding dress code.

Cardon and Okoro (2009) surveyed 276 students at two East Coast universities and concluded that authoritative characteristics and competency were associated with more formal attire, while a business casual dress code was associated with productivity and creativity. 199 African American students, 89 male and 110 female, and 77 European American students, 43 male and 32 female, participated in the study. All of the students in the study indicated that they preferred the business casual dress code policy to the more formal dress code.

In another study, Gifford, Ng, and Wilkinson (1985) examined the interviewer's perception of interviewees. Formality of dress was included with other non-verbal cues like the rate of gesturing and time spent talking. Formality of dress was consistently associated with interviewees having more desirable social skills. Gifford et al. agreed with previous research, which stated that the interviewee and interviewer are expected to take on certain roles and exhibit certain behaviors. It would appear that the interviewee role behavior benefits from a more formal dress code choice.

Still, use caution when opting for a more formal dress option, so you stay within the parameters defined by the company culture. An executive scheduled to interview with a prospective employer made the decision to wear a more formal traditional suit and tie. When he arrived, he noticed no one was wearing suits or ties. His discomfort increased when his contact at the company said, "I told you our dress code was casual, why did you wear a suit and tie?" The executive was following the interviewee behaviors mentioned. Like many people, he assumed a suit and tie were always a safe bet when

interviewing. What he failed to do was take into consideration the information he received regarding the specific dress code, i.e. culture, of this particular company.

It is fair to say, there is no one size fits all as it relates to the perfect thing to wear to an interview. Since research does seem to indicate that those who dress more formally than what is expected are likely to be perceived as being more skilled to some degree, consider the following: Establish what the company dress code policy is and then err on the side of being a little more formal or polished than what is expected. If the dress code is business casual, you might want to wear a shirt and tie without a jacket if you are a man. In a business casual environment, women might opt for a skirt or pants with heels and a nice blouse or sweater top. If the dress code is business formal, be sure you go the extra step to make sure you look polished; everything fits well, and depending on the environment, keep the colors mostly neutral or deeper tones with no loud or bold prints. It is a head to toe process, so do not forget to polish your shoes and be sure the heels of your shoes are in good condition. Women, do not wear heels if the taps are worn down or visibly frayed.

Get help if you need it. Many clothing stores, from Kohl's to Nordstrom, have representatives who will assist you in putting an outfit together. When in doubt, go through magazines, see what the mannequins are wearing in the store, and look on the internet by conducting a Google™ search for business casual and professional dress. Organizations like Dress for Success (www.dressforsuccess.com) and Career Gear (www.careergear.org) assist women and men respectively by providing individuals with support, coaching, and clothing for interviews and new jobs.

Clean and Orderly. As obvious as it may seem, it is still worth mentioning. Your person and your clothes should be clean and odor free. If you have pets, be sure not to have pet hair on your clothing. Polish your shoes, iron your clothing, and check for holes, busted seams, and hems that need mending.

Aroma. Sensitivity to chemicals and smells is quickly becoming a point of contention in some work environments. Studies have compared the dangers and discomfort of smelling fragrances in the workplace to inhaling secondhand smoke, before smoking was banned in the workplace. For your

interview, use as many scent free products as you can and avoid cologne and perfume no matter how much you like it. If you have pets, be sure you are free of pet hair and smells. If you smoke, it would be a good idea not to smoke before your interview. The key is to be as free of smells and allergens as possible. The interviewer might not say a word to you about it, but if it negatively affects him or her it will be difficult for them to disassociate that fact from their image of you.

Teeth/Breath. Clean teeth and fresh breath are the only way to go. It is certainly worth a trip to the dentist if you can afford it. Otherwise, brush your teeth and use a mouthwash before the interview. If you feel the need to chew gum or use a breath mint prior to going in, please be sure to discard it before meeting your interviewer.

Hands/Nails. You will more than likely be shaking hands the day of your interview. Your hands should be clean and moisturized. Your nails should be clean, manicured and cut at a professional length. Men, you can get a manicure to be sure your nails and cuticles are presentable and neat, and an unscented hand cream will do wonders for making a handshake more pleasant. Women, if you are wearing nail polish it should be neat and well applied. Chipped nail polish does not present a professional image.

Hair. Styles vary widely these days and most employers are familiar with everything from shaved heads to locks. Whatever the style, your hair should be clean and neat the day of your interview. If that means pulling it back or pinning it up, do so. Men, plan on a trip to your barber. Facial hair should be shaved and trimmed neatly. If religious practices or health issues forbid shaving, be sure your facial hair is well groomed and clean. Again, consider chemical scents when using hair sprays and other hair care products and use odorless products whenever possible.

3

DOCUMENTATION

Documentation includes all tangible evidence you might present to a potential employer that provides proof of your skills, experience, and qualifications for a particular position. This includes your cover letter, resume, certifications and licenses, portfolio, government clearances, military discharge documents, etc. For your personal storage, be sure to keep clean copies of your employment-related documents in a waterproof, fire resistant box, bin, file, drawer or cabinet.

With hundreds and possibly thousands of resumes being received for dozens of positions, employers are challenged with canvassing a sea of documents to find the candidate who best fits the position. It is your responsibility to ensure that your resume is both esthetically appealing and informatively sound. Depending upon your skill set and depth of experience, you may be required to have more than one resume.

Resume Screening

In today's high-tech world, fewer and fewer hiring professionals screen resumes manually. Automated resume screening processes are becoming the norm. Automated software programs prescreen resumes by identifying key words and phrases in the resume that are specific to the job listing. This means, your resume may be eliminated from the process before a person

actually sees it. According to the blog Resume-Help.org “Your online resume must be tailored to the job you want.” Tailoring your resume to the specific requirements of the position to which you are applying and providing unequivocal evidence of your qualifications, are keys to increasing the chances your resume will make it through the screening process.

Key Words. Key words are relevant words used in the job description posted by the company or the words candidates might use to search for particular jobs on a job board. In this case, we are referring to the words an applicant should include on their resume to be sure it aligns with the job description of the position for which they are applying. Key words can be relevant to certain industries, careers, positions, and even requirements. Hiring managers looking for applicants to interview for a marketing position may be looking for key words like competitive marketing and product positioning. Hiring agents looking for a candidate who has earned a specific degree, required for a particular position, will search resumes and focus on those resumes that include the desired degree. The best way to edit your resume to include the most desirable key words is to review the job description and be sure you use some of the key words you find in the description. Career Builder editor Kate Lorenz suggests that applicants present their resume as if the reader is comparing the words from your resume to the list of desired qualifications for the position. Note: Be sure your experience, education, and skill set can fully support any information you include on your resume. In other words, be honest.

Length

The length of your resume depends on your experience, your position, and your skill set. According to Monster.com resume writing expert Kim Isaac, your resume should be, “Long enough to entice hiring managers to call you for job interviews.” More specifically, Ms. Isaac says the length of your resume should depend on factors like the industry you work in, your years and scope of experience, the number of employers, education, accomplishments, training, and career objectives.

To give you an idea, an entry-level applicant with three to five years of experience and a recent degree will probably be able to present their credentials on one page. On the other hand, someone with 15 years of experience, multiple degrees and several certifications who is currently working in exec-

utive leadership may require three pages to highlight their expertise. If you are thinking the more you put on the resume the more interesting it will appear or the more experienced you will appear, think again. The goal is to provide relevant, factual, timely information so a hiring agent is interested enough to want to move you to the next step in the process.

Sections

A resume is generally comprised of five or six sections covering personal or contact information, objective, career summary, employment history, education, and skills. The order this information is listed on your resume may vary, and even the descriptions of each heading might differ, but the general idea of what you want to share with a prospective employer is consistent. Below is a breakdown to assist you with each section.

Heading – Personal information. The heading and personal information is typically located at the top of your resume. It could be centered or placed on the left or right margins, but almost always at the top of the page. Include your contact information with your address spelled out completely. Do not abbreviate the street, lane, avenue, or whatever it is you live on. Include your telephone number and a professionally appropriate email address. Using email addresses with questionable language, nicknames, or other personalized tags is not recommended. Here are two examples of email address, which do you think is most professional?

Example 1: jackolanternlover@example.com

Example 2: j.perry.609@example.com

Hopefully, you selected Example #2 as being the most appropriate option. If it is necessary that you create a new email address for your job search and other professional correspondence, then do so. Make it something simple, like your name and the first few numbers of your zip code or your area code. If you include numbers, be sure they are not associated with your social security number or your birthdate.

Objective. There has been much debate over whether or not objectives on resumes are becoming obsolete. Today a professional profile or career summary might replace the objective. The professional profile and career summary are more appropriate for someone with a professional history that

can be condensed and featured at the top of the resume. Everyone else should consider using an objective. The challenge with writing an objective is to be sure it is specific to the position to which you are applying. Many objectives render themselves meaningless because they are so generic. Here are two examples:

Objective 1: Interested in securing a challenging position with a forward thinking organization where my skills can be utilized.

Objective 2: College graduate with bachelor degree in security and three years of IT experience interested in a challenging entry-level position in the IT security department of a technology focused corporate environment.

It is clear that the second objective example is far more specific than the first. The first objective could be placed on top of almost any resume. Secondly, it says nothing about the applicant's skills, education, or interests. Take the time to write an appropriate objective for the position with which you are applying and be aware of the fact that the objective needs to be tailored to the specifics of that position.

Education. There is a lot of room for error in this section. Although we will have provided you with pages of information to help you create what might amount to a one page resume, the writers still feel compelled to say, less is more. When it comes to the education section of your resume only include schools where you have earned or are in the process of earning a degree. You might be tempted to make an exception if you attended a school where you earned a considerable amount of credits toward your degree. Just be aware that you might have to explain to an interviewer why you started working towards your degree and stopped. Finally, according to work-life balance professional Rebecca Adams, your high school should not be included on your resume. Unless you are currently in high school, or a recent high school graduate applying for a summer job, do not include your highschool information on your resume.

Qualifications. Your qualifications or skills should be specific to the position for which you are applying. This might include languages in which you are fluent, software knowledge, and computer skills. Be sure the infor-

mation you include is current. There is no reason to include Windows 95 as a skill on your resume.

Experience. Employment history or work experience can include jobs you were paid to perform and volunteer positions as long as the experience you gained is relevant to the job in which you are interested. Under each job title, you will want to include a description highlighting your duties, tasks, or specific impact you had on the organization. Entry-level employees can simply list the duties and tasks from past employment. This would include your job functions or responsibilities. Very often, you can find this information listed in the job description for your position. However, upper-level employees should document the impact they had in previous positions by providing examples of leadership, teamwork, collaboration, problems solved, increased sales, cost-savings, projects completed on time and on budget, personnel hired and supervised, etc. Whenever possible, use specific percentages to show increases you were responsible for; use specific dollar amounts to indicate the amount your project came in under budget; and the actual weeks or months ahead of schedule your project was completed.

Interests and Activities. In the past, this area included hobbies and activities an applicant was interested in and memberships or affiliations with organizations. Today's resume writing professionals recommend omitting this section from your resume all together and the authors of this manual agree. The exception to this rule includes any affiliations with professional organizations that are specifically relevant to your career or position of interest. They can be included and listed under a heading entitled Professional Affiliations. As far as activities, interests, and hobbies be prepared to share this information during your face-to-face interview if the interviewer ask you, "So, what do you do in your spare time?"

Structure or Formatting. The formatting of your resume is almost as important as the content. If your resume does not look professional, there is a good chance it will never be read. Take the time to use resume writing templates that can be found in most computer word processing software programs. You can also conduct a Google™ search to find free resume writing templates. If you use a professional resume writing service, they will select a format for you.

References. A reference is a person who can vouch for you. Your references should be a representation of various individuals in your life who can share positive insights into your traits and qualities such as, your work ethic, character, personality, skill, productivity, volunteerism, and educational achievements. References can include: former supervisors, instructors, coaches, ministers, co-workers, long-time friends, mentors, networking associates, clients, vendors, protégés, and in some cases a family member. Always ask potential references if they are interested in providing a recommendation or being a reference, in advance of submitting their contact information to a prospective employer.

Other documents

Several other documents were mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. We will not go into detail regarding each specific document. There are a few key points for you to remember pertaining to other documentation:

- * Make high quality copies to have available.
- * Do not present them unless requested – dumping a cadre of documents onto a hiring agent’s desk may seem like a good idea – trust us, it is not. If the documents are required, you will be notified as to when and to whom you should present them.
- * If it is a portfolio, be sure the presentation, i.e. carrying case, is professional and the contents are representative of your best work. Quality over quantity is vital.
- * Only present documents specific to the position for which you are applying.

Professional Resume Writing Services

If it is within your budget, consider hiring a professional resume writing service to create your resume.

- * **Career service center.** If you are currently enrolled at a university or college, investigate to find out whether or not you have a career services department. They will often have representatives or software available to students to assist in designing and creating resumes.
- * **Independent professionals.** This could be a professional resume writer or someone from a career center who writes resumes as a side job. If you

are in school, you might even find another college student who has developed enough skills and has a strong enough writing background to help you create an effective resume.

✱ **Employment agencies.** Most agencies do not want to send resumes to potential employers that are not a good representation of the applicant. If you are using employment agencies during your job search, ask your agency representative if they provide a resume writing service or someone who can critique your resume.

Online Services

Collectively, the authors have likely interviewed and/or reviewed resumes belonging to thousands of candidates. Remember, your one chance to make a good first impression applies to your resume presentation as well. Be aware that if your resume does not get past the screening process, whether screening occurs manually or via an automated system, you will not likely make it through the door as a candidate.

4

COMMUNICATION

You may be familiar with the phrase, “communication is key.” Effective communication skills can be a huge confidence boost. Ineffective communication skills can prove detrimental to an interview. According to Barbara Brown (2011) the process of communication involves sharing thoughts and feelings through speaking, writing, and body language. Brown views the goal of communication as creating a common perception, changing behaviors, and obtaining information. In your interview you may be involved in seeing all three of those goals come into play. The two means of communications generally recognized are verbal and nonverbal or body language. When you are communicating effectively, your verbal communication and your body language are sending the same message.

During your interview, you may find that you are involved in working towards all three of Brown’s (2011) goals mentioned previously. You will want to *create a common positive perception* about who you are and how you are a good fit for the position. You may want to demonstrate your ability to *change behaviors* or adapt to a new position or new work environment. Finally, you will definitely want to *exchange information* as you share rele-

vant information about yourself, while obtaining information about the organization.

If you think about it, when considering the interview process, your communication begins when you enter the building. What are you communicating to everyone who sees you when you walk through the door? Are you dressed appropriately? How is your posture? Are you smiling at people as you approach them? Is your behavior that of a professional? This is the beginning of your ability to communicate whether or not you are a potential candidate for the position.

Once in the actual interview many find this process daunting and unnerving. It does not have to be. The great thing about an interview is it is merely a conversation about your experiences and interests, and how they relate to the job in question. If you do your homework outlined in earlier chapters of this book, you will feel prepared and comfortable about the opportunity to find out if you are a good potential candidate for a position.

Practice for Improvement

Record Yourself. Becoming an effective communicator and interviewee takes practice. It is a good idea for you to set aside time to practice interviewing. You can have a friend or mentor ask you questions so you can practice answering questions pertaining to your job history, education, career goals, and other interview relevant information. If it is possible, record yourself practicing. This will allow you an opportunity to hear yourself. You can listen for repetitive usage of words or fillers people often say without realizing it. Examples include words like, definitely, uhm, yea, and ok. If you slow down and think about what you want to say before you speak, you can often catch yourself before these words come out of your mouth. It is also a good idea to get comfortable with short periods of silence. It is alright if you take a moment to consider an answer before you start talking. It is also permissible that you allow the person interviewing a moment to think or respond. Since many people are uncomfortable with silence, there is a tendency to want to fill that space with meaningless phrases or useless chatter. Avoid doing either.

Dress Rehearsal. If you video tape your practice sessions you will also be able to analyze your body language. Conduct a dress rehearsal by wearing the clothes you intend to wear to the interview. This way you can

see what the outfit will look like to the interviewer. You can tell if you need to unbutton your jacket when you sit. For women considering wearing a skirt or a dress, seeing the video will help you determine how to sit. If your skirt is too short, blouse is cut too low or you are wearing too much make-up, you will see it in the video.

Continuing Education

Continue working on your vocabulary, diction, and pronunciation. Effective communication means getting your message across clearly and concisely. You want to be comfortable communicating and with practice and growth you will be.

Communication Tips

Here are a few communication tips that will help you be more effective during interviews and in all other communication opportunities:

- * Make comfortable and consistent eye contact.
- * Speak clearly and at a steady speed using your diaphragm to support your breathing. Take a deep breath in and you should see your stomach area move, not just your shoulders. You want deep, smooth breaths not short shallow breaths that raise your pulse and come across as nervousness.
- * Think about what you are going to say before speaking. It is okay to have a few seconds of silence during the conversation.
- * Be familiar with words and phrases specific to the industry. You want to sound knowledgeable and current.
- * Speak professionally. Profanity, slang, and inappropriate comments should never be a part of an interview.
- * Listen carefully. Allow the speaker to complete his or her thoughts before you comment.
- * Take notes. Never go to an interview without a notepad and pen.
- * Have questions prepared. The best interviews feel like conversations between two inquisitive individuals. Do your part by having relevant questions prepared about the position and the organization.

Professional Networking

The term *networking* has been used several times in our text. It is a phrase you will hear often throughout your professional career and we thought it was important to end 4-Tions with some basic information about networking. You will have many opportunities to participate in networking events. You will hear people talk about networking and you might even come to believe you understand what networking is. Before we provide a definition, let's look at a few things that we do not believe constitute networking.

First, an event, even if it is billed as a networking event, should not be considered networking simply because people are gathered, socializing, and exchanging business cards. Effective networking may or may not be happening at such an event. Secondly, networking is not something you do when you need help. In other words, when you are looking for a job is not the time you should decide to begin networking by reaching out to everyone you know and a few folks you do not know, asking if they can help you find a job. Third, networking is not about how many people you know. So, if you have 1,000 friends on Facebook™ that does not mean you are a great networker.

What is networking and why is it important? *Networking* is the process of building and maintaining solid professional relationships for the purpose of acquiring social capital. *Social capital* is the accumulation of resources established through purposeful personal and professional interactions. Resources include ideas, knowledge, information, opportunities, contacts, and referrals. Characteristics of developing social capital include trust, confidence, friendship, good deeds, and goodwill (Misner, Alexander, & Hilliard, 2009). In short, networking is about meeting people, and developing and maintaining relationships with them where you are able to share and exchange resources. Networking is important because it allows you to development relationships that are mutually beneficial, can help you grow, and provide you opportunities to add value to others; and networking can create a community of support that enhances everyone's ability to be successful.

Effective networking takes time and requires effort. Here are a few things you can learn to do to begin developing effective networking skills. First, remember that this process is not about you. Be a giver by considering how

you can provide value to the relationship. Learn what the other person is looking for. What do they need help with? Who do they need to meet? Here are a few points you can practice:

- * When you take a business card ask or let the person know that you are going to take notes on it so you can remember certain information about them. They will appreciate you for taking the time to do so.
- * When you are at an event, spend more time speaking with fewer people so you can have more meaningful connections instead of meeting dozens of people, collecting and handing out dozens of business cards, but not making any real connections.
- * Even though you want to put your focus on gathering information and determining how you can help others, it is vital that you are able to answer this question: Who are you and what do you do? Be able to share what you do and what you are looking for, concisely. Some people call it an elevator speech, some call it your 60-second commercial. It simply means you should be able to tell someone who you are, what you do, and even what you need – in 60-seconds or less. Here's an example: *My name is Olivia. I'm a college student at XYZ University and I'm earning a degree in marketing. I am looking for an internship opportunity or an entry level position at a marketing company or in the marketing department of an organization.* The more specific you can be the better. If you know the name of the company you want to work at, say it. It will be much easier for someone to help you if you are able to say exactly what you are looking for.

Just remember, networking is not all about you. So do not monopolize the conversation with what you want, and what you are trying to accomplish. A good exercise is to see how much information you can learn about the person you are speaking with before you begin offering your information. However, when asked you want to be prepared with a short, concise, and informative response.

An important component of networking is maintaining the relationships you establish. One way you can do that is to use LinkedIn™ to stay connected with professionals you meet. LinkedIn™ will allow you to stay aware

of what they are involved in and it provides you a way of posting your own career updates and activities. Remember to keep your communications on LinkedIn™ focused on professional conversations. One other way of maintaining contact is to learn about the other person's interests. An example would be meeting someone who shares your interest in hot air balloons. Maybe you learn of a hot air balloon event happening in their area or you see something amazing in a travel magazine about hot air balloons. This is great information to share with them in a short email. It lets them know you were paying attention and is a way to maintain contact. Finally, if you meet someone and make a commitment to connect with them, refer someone to them, or schedule a meeting with them – do so. Your word is your bond and you want to be sure you honor whatever commitment you made. If something comes up that interrupts the schedule or prevents you from being able to follow through – notify them immediately with a call, an apology, and a new plan.

Networking is a skill. You can start with these basics and build upon them as you get more comfortable navigating in professional circles. You can look online and check your area for local professional networking organizations. Many of them will allow you to visit as a guest at no charge. This is a great opportunity to learn what each group does, who their members are and how the group supports the members. For now, we hope we have planted a seed that reminds you, networking is about being an active participant in the process of adding value to the relationships you develop. Happy networking!

CONCLUSION

As you can see, a lot of planning and preparation goes into searching for employment. The more seriously and professionally you take the planning, the better prepared you will be for the process.

The suggestions we offer in this book are offered as tools to help you improve your opportunity to be considered as a candidate for a position. There are never guarantees and your ability to secure employment will be a combination of your qualifications, education, skills, and often times your ability to network with professionals in your industry.

Organizations spend thousands of dollars training newly hired employees to prepare them to take over their responsibilities. You owe it to yourself to invest ample time in being prepared and showing them that their training dollars will be put to good use on you.

After you are hired this process continues. As soon as you are hired you should have your resume updated to include your new position. Many people are uncomfortable because they are concerned about how it will look if they are seen updating their resume soon after being hired. This is the absolute best time to do so. You will appear organized and systematic. As a newly hired employee you have the job description, everyone is excited to have you on board, and it will merely appear you are being proactive. So, update your resume and continue to update it as your job responsibilities change.

Your personal and professional growth are areas you are responsible for as well. As you learn about your new responsibilities in your position, continue to learn about the company and the industry you work in. Take

advantage of company training opportunities and organization sponsored continued education. If your employer offers tuition reimbursement, this may be the perfect time to consider returning to school for your first or subsequent degree. Embrace the concept of being a life-long learner. It is one way to help you increase your ability to take advantage of opportunities when they are presented. It will also help position you as someone knowledgeable enough to help others. When you are able to start sharing what you have learned with others, you become a resource and an instrumental part in helping others on their journey to success.

APPENDIX

Appendix A - Business Card Examples

Following is the Soft Blue Design business card sample from Microsoft. You will find this sample and dozens of other free sample business card designs in Microsoft Publisher if you have the software on your computer. You can search online for business card templates or use online companies like gotprint.com and vistaprint.com for inexpensive options to create your own business cards.

Reminder: Keep the business card design simple and clean, and use a font that is easy to read. Your information is what should stand out on the card. Avoid making your card too busy, too colorful, or difficult to read by using a busy or fancy scripted font. Be sure to have someone proof read several times.

<p>Your Name <i>Your Title</i></p>	<p>Organization Name Primary Business Address Your Address Line 2 Your Address Line 3 Your Address Line 4 Phone: 555-555-5555 Fax: 555-555-5555 E-mail: someone@example.com</p>
<p>YOUR LOGO HERE</p>	

<p>Jacqueline Perry <i>IT Professional</i></p>	<p>1234 S. Orleans Avenue Pleasantville, NJ 08232 Phone: 555-555-5555 Fax: 555-555-5555 E-mail: j.perry.1234@example.com LinkedIn/in/j.perry123</p>
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<p>April Casey <i>Student at YXW University Bachelor of Arts - Sociology</i></p>	<p>Philadelphia, PA 19102 Phone: 555-555-5555 Fax: 555-555-5555 E-mail: a.casey@example.com LinkedIn/a.casey</p>
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Soft Blue Design business card sample by Microsoft Corporation

APPENDIX

Appendix B - Thank You Note Examples

Example #1:

Dear Mr. Magruder

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you today to discuss the management trainee position. I am excited about the possibility of working at ABX Company and I look forward to the next steps in the interview process.

*Respectfully,
April Casey*

Example #2:

Dear Ms. Morales,

It was a pleasure meeting with you this afternoon. The more I learn about the management trainee position and the culture at ABX Company, the more excited I am about the prospect of becoming part of the organization. I look forward to hearing from you regarding next steps in the interview process.

*Respectfully,
Jacqueline Perry*

Example #3:

Dear Ms. Boyd,

Thank you for meeting with me yesterday to discuss the management trainee position. What a surprise to learn that we are both avid skiers. I thought you

would be interested in an article I read about a new ski resort opening in Colorado this year. You can read the article at (website address here).

Per your instruction, I contacted Ms. Williamson in human resources and scheduled my candidate assessment for Monday, (date/time). Thank you again for your assistance.

Enjoy the rest of your week and I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Respectfully,

Shateera Israel

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Dr. Emad Rahim

Dr. Rahim entered this country as a Cambodian refugee and grew-up in the rough streets of Brooklyn, New York. Raised by a single parent, he struggled with a learning disability and the embarrassment of being ridiculed and criticized for not being properly prepared for his own interviews, he has a personal understanding of the trials and errors experienced by many of whom for which this book was written.

Dr. Rahim is now an award winning author, educator, entrepreneur and community leader. He currently serves as an Endowed Entrepreneur-in-Residence at Oklahoma State University and a Visiting Scholar at Rutgers University. Dr. Rahim previously served as University Dean of Business at College Technical University. He held faculty appointments at several institutions including, SUNY Morrisville State College, Syracuse University, SUNY Empire State College, University of Scranton and University of Maryland UC. He has been invited to lecture at Cornell University, Northwestern University, Colgate University, Cazenovia College and Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

In 2012 Dr. Rahim participated in the Empact Summit and was recognized for his entrepreneurial work with a visit to the White House and the United States Chamber of Commerce. He was honored again in 2013 by the United Nations, as an Empact 100 Honoree. He received a congressional award for community leadership and was named as a 40 Under Forty Business Leader by Whiten School of Business.

In 2011 Dr. Rahim earned a Post-Doctoral diploma in an AACSB endorsed Bridge to Business Program at Tulane University. He earned a Doctorate in Management; a Master's degree in project management and business management from Colorado Technical University; and completed his undergraduate education at SUNY Empire State College. Dr. Rahim is currently scheduled to attend a post-doctoral fellowship at Harvard University this summer.

Dr. Rahim is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP™), Certified Manager (CM™), Certified Associate Business Manager (CABM™) and Certified FastTrac™ Facilitator (Entrepreneurship Education).

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Richard Q. Holloway, JD

Richard is a student centered educator with over 10 years of experience in the classroom and as a post-secondary education administrator. Richard also actively practiced law for over a decade in the Chicago, Cook County area. Richard's practice included criminal defense and civil litigation (both trial and appellate), real estate transactions, corporate practice and entertainment work. Richard's criminal law experience includes state and federal, as well as juvenile (delinquency as well as abuse and neglect). Richard is an entrepreneur who has owned and managed both service businesses and retail businesses. In his various professional capacities, Richard has hired and managed hundreds of professionals.

Richard's educational experience includes being a Lead faculty member, Program Director of multiple programs (Criminal Justice, Paralegal Studies, Marketing, Construction Management, and Healthcare Management), as well as being an Assistant Director of Education. He has taught in traditional classrooms as well as online, and he has revised courses, developed new courses and launched new programs. His focuses as a teacher are on student learning, and on helping students develop career-management skills.

Richard earned a Juris Doctorate (J.D.) degree from the University of Illinois College of Law, and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In his private time, Richard

enjoys spending time with his wife Regina, reading, listening to music, watching professional football and basketball, and playing basketball.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Lisa D. Summerour, MSM

Ms. Summerour has more than 30 years' experience in sales, training, and motivational speaking. She is the President and CEO of Summerour & Associates, Ltd., a firm that provides personal and professional development consulting, and course design for trainings and workshops. She is also the Vice President of Consulting Services at The Learner's Group, a consulting firm specializing in diversity, inclusion, and human equity assessment; and helping organizations improve productivity through increased employee engagement. Her area of expertise includes mentoring, change management, leadership training, and career development. She is a professionally trained coach and a certified WholeBrain Practitioner.

As a former executive recruiter, Ms. Summerour is skilled at coaching individuals through the job search process consulting with them in a variety of areas including interview techniques, question preparation, resume review, and wardrobe selection. Her extensive training as a professional actor and years of public speaking have helped her develop a presentation style that has been touted as engaging and action focused. She has an uncanny ability to interject humor and personal anecdotes making her a relatable and sought after facilitator and speaker.

Lisa earned a bachelor's degree in Sociology from Trenton State College and a Master's degree in Management from Indiana Wesleyan University. She is scheduled to receive her doctorate degree in Ethical Leadership at Olivet Nazarene University in May 2015. Her dissertation focuses on a

comparative study examining the perceptions of African American and Caucasian women and their experiences as proteges. Ms. Summerour has worked as an adjunct professor teaching online courses in career development and exploration, and business ethics and sustainability.

Ms. Summerour is enjoying a full and adventurous life. She was the first African-American to be crowned Miss New Jersey USA. For more than 10 years she worked as a professional actor appearing in roles that included playing opposite Denzel Washington in the Academy Award winning film “Philadelphia,” Forrest Whittaker in HBO’s “The Enemy Within” and Bruce Willis in “The Sixth Sense.” She is proud to have done missionary work in Rwanda and to have been present for the birth of one of her nieces. Her proudest accomplishment was receiving the Arthur F. Foreman Memorial Award in fourth grade at South Main Street Elementary School, Pleasantville, NJ. It reads: “Consideration – Effort – Sportsmanship.” *Living up to the words on that plaque still means a lot to me.*”

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QUOTATIONS

"This book should be required reading in middle schools already."
Elfie Schneider, Parent and Office Administrator for ReEmploy

"4-Tions is a perfect guide on preparing for employment, admission to schools and any situation that involves making an impression on somebody. I would recommend this publication for young people as well as seasoned veterans to prepare for interviews. This guide not only gives the reader a well laid out plan, but more importantly, will give the reader the confidence needed to succeed. Very easy to read and full of important tips."

Morris Jenkins, JD, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Health and Human Services
Southeast Missouri State University

"During my 28 years with the Federal government I have conducted countless interviews. I have interviewed students looking for internships and entry level legal and non-legal positions, secretaries, office clerks and administrators, and senior managers responsible for million and billion dollar budgets. At every level, the interview fundamentals remain the same. The successful candidate must prepare, present, communicate, and have flawless documentation. There's plenty of competition in the job search arena and if you are not ready for the interview or

job search process you will not get the job. And at every level, I have seen people fail because they were not ready and had not prepared. 4-Tions has captured and presented the key elements of a successful job search and interview preparation process. 4-Tions is concise, comprehensive, and a must read for anyone seeking a new position. The information contained in this book offers candidates the keys to success. Read it if you want to be successful or don't read it and miss out on a successful career."

David S. Cade, JD

Shareholder, Polsinelli, PC, Washington, DC

Former Deputy General Counsel & Acting General Counsel

US Department of Health & Human Services

(back cover)

"Not since the depths of the Great Depression have job seekers faced a more challenging and competitive employment environment. Who will survive and even thrive under economic conditions reminiscent of our country's darkest economic era? Fortunately, authors Rahim, Holloway, and Summerour have condensed what it takes to identify and secure meaningful employment in today's grueling job market into four time tested, research proven and fundamental concepts ... the 4-Tions: Documentation, Preparation, Presentation and Communication. As a job creator and serial, social entrepreneur it has been my greatest responsibility to hire and supervise the talent of entry-level through professional employees to perform critical services in high-risk, high-needs environments for over 20 years. My strategic advantage within my marketplace is found within my employees. Accordingly, in every hiring decision, the 4-Tions have been indispensable to and decisive in my strategic employment process. I require that my prospective employees document impeccable credentials, indicate significant prior knowledge about my companies, exhibit excellent communication skills, and demonstrate a superior level of professionalism appropriate to their tasks. In addition, I require that my employees display the ability to leave a lasting positive impression on my clients and customers by being the most knowledgeable people in the room in their area of expertise at all times. In fact, the 4-Tions is more than a practical, user-friendly guide to successfully gaining employment in

a highly competitive environment. It also encourages life-long learning and facilitates networking through effective and efficient use of social media and other technology.”

Michael Cade, Founder and CEO

Smart Giving® LLC

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