

When you're serious about pursuing a career, your attention to the little things can make a big difference in being perceived as a quality candidate. It can separate you from the crowd, elevating you from "good" to "great."

Eric Mason, Federated Insurance Company

Your Job Search Portfolio



LUCIA S. SIGMAR, PH.D.

**COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

What does your job search involve?



- Résumé (Traditional /Scannable/ Digital)
- Reference Sheet
- Cover Letter
- Interview
- Other Job Search Messages
- Other Web Resources

The Résumé





Your Résumé is a Marketing Tool.

YOU are the product.



What is your objective?

To get an interview

in ten seconds.

Selling yourself means knowing your employer.



- What are the organization's needs?
- What is the organization's mission?
- What does the organizational chart look like (divisions/employees)?
- What are the organization's publications?
- Who are the organization's customers?
- How will your qualifications will help deliver value to the organization and its customers?

Selling yourself means knowing yourself.



- What is your specific objective?
- What have you accomplished?
(education, pertinent work experience, special qualifications, certificates, awards, organizations)
- What are your capabilities and strengths?
(organizational skills, communication/teamwork skills, management skills, foreign language skills, leadership skills, computer/technology skills, accounting skills, finance skills, interpersonal skills, work and personality traits)

Top 3 Reasons Not to Hire Someone to Write Your Résumé.



- It's personal. You know yourself better than anyone else.
- A one-time résumé aimed at a single job is useless. You will need to revise your résumé many times as you seek a variety of jobs.
- If someone writes your résumé for you, then you'll end up with a generic (template) that looks like everybody else's. In today's highly competitive job market, a generic résumé will lose out to a targeted résumé nine times out of ten.

Tips on Writing Your Objective



- Be specific about the job title, area of specialization, and type of company.
- Don't limit yourself with phrases such as *entry-level* or *challenging position*
- Focus on the employer's needs.
- Be concise.

Which objective statement is better?

A challenging position in the accounting field with opportunity for growth.

An auditor position in an internal corporate accounting department where my accounting skills, computer experience, knowledge of GAAP, and attention to detail will help the company run efficiently and ensure that its records are kept accurately.

Types of Résumés



- The Traditional Print Résumé (Print-based, unique)
- The Scannable Print Résumé (Plain, emphasis on keywords)
- The Digital Résumé (such as ASCII, pdf, html)

The Reference Page

The Traditional Print Résumé



- White, 100% cotton, 20 to 28-lb paper

- Make your format attractive:

Use Times New Roman 10-12 point/14 point for headings

Use white space

Keep One-inch margins at top, left, right/1.5-inch margin at bottom



Content Suggestions



- Include all of your contact information (nothing of a personal nature)
- Include a statement of objective.
- Select the background facts.
- Organize for strength
- Arrange the facts into groups, then construct headings (6)
- Present in reverse chronological order.
- Write impersonally and consistently
- Use verb-based descriptions

Suggested Résumé Headings



- Main Heading with Contact Information
- Career Objective
- Education
- Experience
- Qualifications or Qualifications Abstract
- Awards and Honors
- Community Service or Extracurricular Activities
- References

How long should my résumé be?



A controlled study of 570 recruiters revealed that they claimed to prefer one-page résumés...

But the recruiters actually chose to interview the applicants with two-page résumés. *

* Source: Blackburn-Brockman and Belanger, "One Page or Two?: A National Study of CPA Recruiters Preferences for Résumé Length," *The Journal of Business Communication*, January 2001, 29-57.

Make your résumé as long as is needed to sell your skills to recruiters and hiring managers.



People with more experience will likely have longer résumés. Some senior-level executives with a lengthy history of accomplishments might have a résumé that is three pages or longer.*

People with less experience, those making a career change, and those who have had only one or two employers will likely have a one-page résumé.

* Source: <http://resume.monster.com/articles/length/>>

Traditional Print Résumé Example:



JOHN K. STUDENT

7431 Davenport Drive
Dallas, Texas 75226
jkstudent@yahoo.com

512.598.9693

512.598.0017

OBJECTIVE

Seeking a full-time position in finance and accounting to efficiently and effectively achieve the goals of a company.

EDUCATION

Bachelor 's Degree in Business Administration Anticipated May 2008
Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas

Major: Finance & Banking and Financial Institutions
GPA Overall: 3.0/4.0 GPA Finance: 3.43/4.0

Computer Skills:

Keyboarding at 90 wpm, Word, Outlook,
Excel, Oracle and Access

Relevant Coursework:

Principles of Financial Accounting	Intermediate Accounting 1 & 2
Principles of Managerial Accounting	Financial Statement Analysis

continued



EXPERIENCE

Teller/Personal Banker, First Community Bank
Huntsville, Texas

June 2005-Present

Performed basic bank operations (deposits, withdrawals, money orders); balanced cash drawer; cross-sold products to current customers; marketed and sold new accounts.

File Manager, Travis County Appraisal District and Tax Office 2002-2004
Austin, Texas

Managed and updated entire file system; assisted the office manager (pulled documents, performed clerical work, ran errands); performed data entry; greeted and assisted customers.

AWARDS

Smith-Hutson Scholarship, 2007

REFERENCES

Available on Request.

Scannable Print Résumé Tips:



- Include industry-specific keywords to max # of hits
- Choose precise nouns over action verbs/Avoid abbreviations
- Present in a scanner readable form:
 - Use 10-14 point type.
 - Avoid unusual typefaces, underlining, and italics.
 - Be sure that your name is the first line on the page.
 - List each phone number on its own line.
 - Provide white space.
 - Use smooth white paper, black ink and quality printing.
 - Avoid double columns.
 - Do not fold or staple your résumé.

Scannable Print Résumé Example:



MEGAN K. ROSENBLOOM

3145 Sleepy Hollow
New Bedford, Massachusetts 02746
954.301.4607 (home)
954.497.3987 (cell)
meganr@yahoo.com

KEYWORDS: Office Manager, Office Support, Administrative Office Assistant, Clerical Support, Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Telephone Etiquette, Voice Message Systems, PIMs, Project Management

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, May 2008
Eli Mason University, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02746
Management Major with a Minor in International Business
Major GPA: 3.3/4.0



continued



SPECIALIZED COURSES

Office Management, Business Communication, Business Law, Human Relations and Resources Management, and Organizational Behavior.

EXPERIENCE

Office Clerk, J. J. Webb, Inc. (Wholesale Grocers) 2006-Present
New Bedford, Massachusetts

Maintain inventory, supervise two clerks, report late shipments to purchasing manager

INTERESTS

Member, Professional Secretaries Association
Northside Voters League

REFERENCES

Available on Request

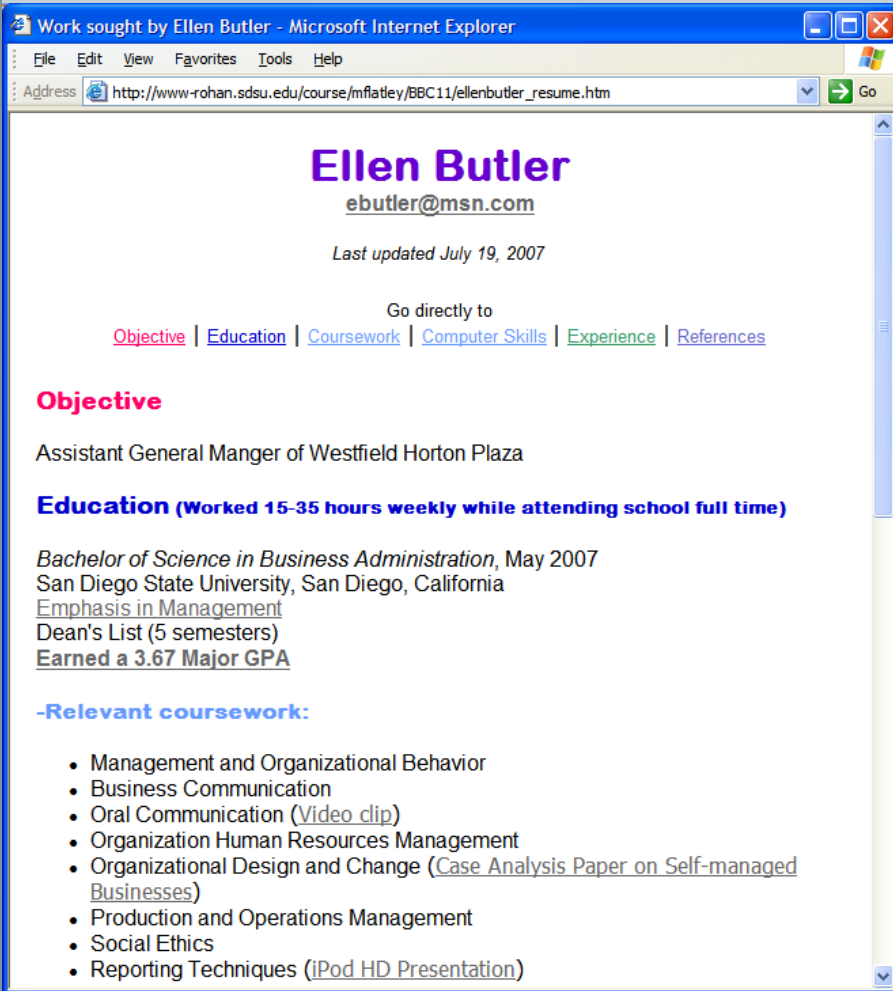
Digital Résumé File Formats



E-Portfolios are generally presented at Web sites where they are available 24/7 to employers.

- Low end – lacks formatting; used primarily with text-based systems
ASCII or text files
- Mid-level – retains most formatting; used when receiver requests and when you know receiver's systems will allow
doc, rtf, or pdf files
- High end – extends capabilities; used when receiver can handle it and when you want to showcase more material as well as include graphics, sounds, and animation (web profiles).
Html

High-End Digital Résumé Example



Work sought by Ellen Butler - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/course/mflatley/BBC11/ellenbutler_resume.htm Go

Ellen Butler

ebutler@msn.com

Last updated July 19, 2007

Go directly to

[Objective](#) | [Education](#) | [Coursework](#) | [Computer Skills](#) | [Experience](#) | [References](#)

Objective

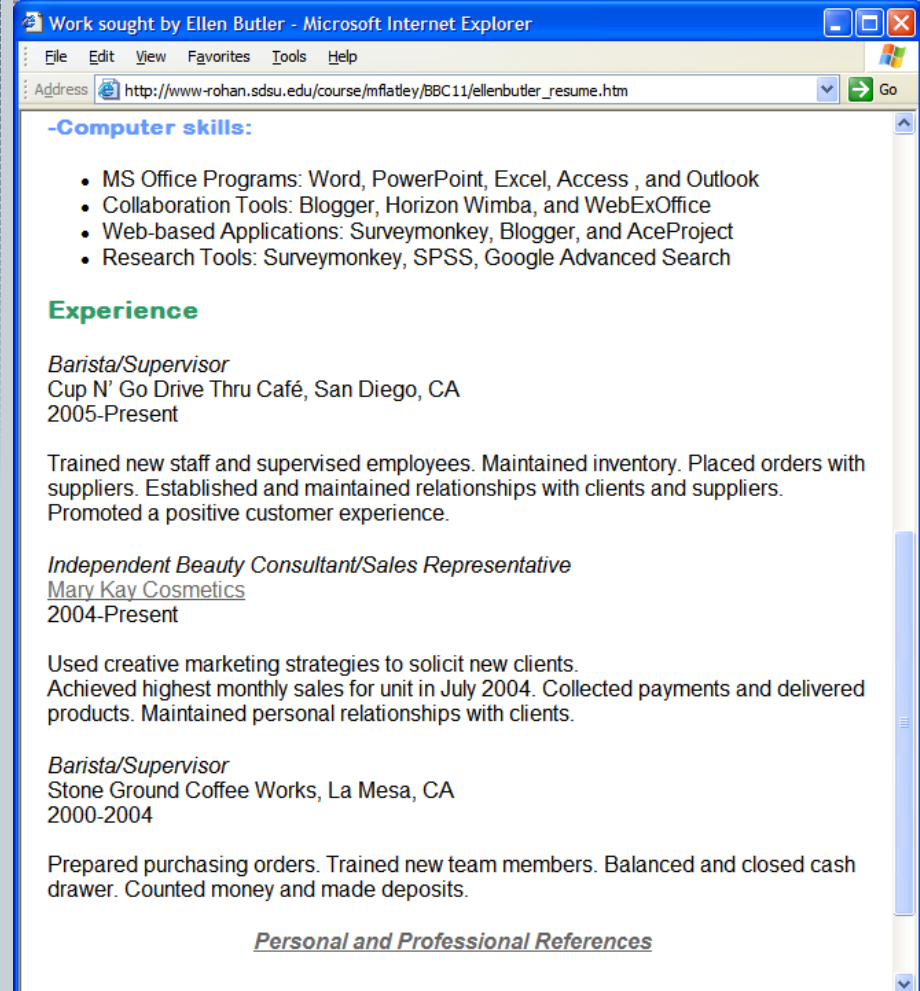
Assistant General Manger of Westfield Horton Plaza

Education (Worked 15-35 hours weekly while attending school full time)

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, May 2007
San Diego State University, San Diego, California
[Emphasis in Management](#)
Dean's List (5 semesters)
[Earned a 3.67 Major GPA](#)

-Relevant coursework:

- Management and Organizational Behavior
- Business Communication
- Oral Communication ([Video clip](#))
- Organization Human Resources Management
- Organizational Design and Change ([Case Analysis Paper on Self-managed Businesses](#))
- Production and Operations Management
- Social Ethics
- Reporting Techniques ([iPod HD Presentation](#))



Work sought by Ellen Butler - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/course/mflatley/BBC11/ellenbutler_resume.htm Go

-Computer skills:

- MS Office Programs: Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access, and Outlook
- Collaboration Tools: Blogger, Horizon Wimba, and WebExOffice
- Web-based Applications: SurveyMonkey, Blogger, and AceProject
- Research Tools: SurveyMonkey, SPSS, Google Advanced Search

Experience

Barista/Supervisor
Cup N' Go Drive Thru Café, San Diego, CA
2005-Present

Trained new staff and supervised employees. Maintained inventory. Placed orders with suppliers. Established and maintained relationships with clients and suppliers. Promoted a positive customer experience.

Independent Beauty Consultant/Sales Representative
[Mary Kay Cosmetics](#)
2004-Present

Used creative marketing strategies to solicit new clients. Achieved highest monthly sales for unit in July 2004. Collected payments and delivered products. Maintained personal relationships with clients.

Barista/Supervisor
Stone Ground Coffee Works, La Mesa, CA
2000-2004

Prepared purchasing orders. Trained new team members. Balanced and closed cash drawer. Counted money and made deposits.

Personal and Professional References

The Reference Sheet





One recent study by the Society for Human Resource Management of 2,500 human resource professionals said 96 percent of their companies always check references.

Source: Soltis, *The Wall Street Journal*, 21, March 2006: B7.

The Reference Sheet



- Check with references before listing them. Use 3-5 instructors, current or previous employers, and professional contacts (No friends, family, or relatives).
Get permission as well as complete contact information.
- Plan the arrangement and ordering.
**Use an organizational plan for arranging your list.
Order references in a way that favors you.**
- Present it in good form.

Reference Sheet Example:



John K. Student

7165 Hermes Lane
New Berlin, Illinois 62670-3748

Voice/Message: 217.787.0445

Cell/Message: 217.456.2411

Fax: 954.301.4607

Email: johnkstudent@hotmail.com

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Professor Michael Smith (Major Professor)
University of Illinois at Springfield
Accounting Department
5250 Shepherd Road
Springfield, IL 62794-9256
Email: Michael.Smith@uis.edu
Phone: 217.786.2259

Kathy M. Jones, Director (Internship Supervisor)
Terry Toggle Enterprises, Inc.
360 West Reynolds
Springfield, IL, 62702
Email: kmjones@tte.org
Phone: 217.841.2848, ext. 620

The Cover Letter



What is the purpose of the cover letter?



- To introduce the résumé
- To highlight your strengths as they benefit the company
- To gain an interview

Cover Letter Strategy



- Gain attention in the opening.
- Select content. Present qualifications to fit the job.
- Present your major selling points. You are building a case for yourself as THE ONE for the job.
- Drive for action in the close. What do you want?

Cover Letter Tips



- Avoid “I” as much as possible.

For example:

I took classes in business communication and computer applications.

(Instead, put it this way...)

Classes in business communication and computer applications prepared me to ...

Cover Letter Tips



- Use traditional letter style (Modified Block)
- Print your cover letter on the same quality paper as your résumé.
- Consider using the same heading for your letterhead.
- Address it to the appropriate individual (by name).
- Don't rely on spell check to find the errors for you.
Proofread carefully or have someone else proof it for you.
- Make it flawless.

Print Cover Message Example (1 of 5)



Opening

[Sender's Address]

[Date]

[Receiver's Address]

Dear Mr. Guthrie:

Because of my specialized training in accounting at Sam Houston State University and my practical experience in petroleum accounting, I believe I have the qualifications you described in today's issue of the *Houston Chronicle*.

Print Cover Message Example (2 of 5)

Body

With a background of three years as a part-time employee of the State Comptroller of Public Accounting and the State Auditor's office, and with four years' specialized training in the College of Business Administration at SHSU, I am the person who meets your requirements. As an auditor in both the state departments mentioned above, I participated in audits of the books of several oil firms and gained some familiarity with petroleum accounting procedures which should increase my usefulness in future work of this type.

Print Cover Message Example (3 of 5)

Body continued

In my intensive coursework at the University, I studied several phases of accounting (including petroleum, fiduciary, cost, and systems as well as theory and auditing) with the intention of obtaining a comprehensive and well-integrated background for competent work in the petroleum field. Please look at the attached résumé to note the additional courses with which I rounded out my training. The sincerity of my study efforts is evidenced by the B.B.A. degree with honors I was awarded this June.

Print Cover Message Example (4 of 5)

Body continued

With a view to the value of human relations in business, I actively participated in organizations such as Sigma Nu (social fraternity), intramural volleyball, Men's Chorus, and Alpha Kappa Psi (professional fraternity). Through these associations I learned a great deal about people and how to work with them. I am confident that I could work effectively with your accounting department staff.

Print Cover Message Example (5 of 5)

Closing

As my interests lie in useful and satisfying work in the field of petroleum accounting, may I meet you personally and talk with you about working for Atlas? Please contact me at your convenience at 713-399-3589 or e-mail me at jkstudent@earthlink.com.

Sincerely,

[Your typed name]

enclosure

The Interview



Handling the Interview

- Investigate the company.
- Make a good appearance.
- Make eye contact.
- Have a firm handshake.
- Anticipate questions and prepare answers.
- Put yourself at ease.
- Help control the dialogue.



Preparing your answers helps you choose a strategy.

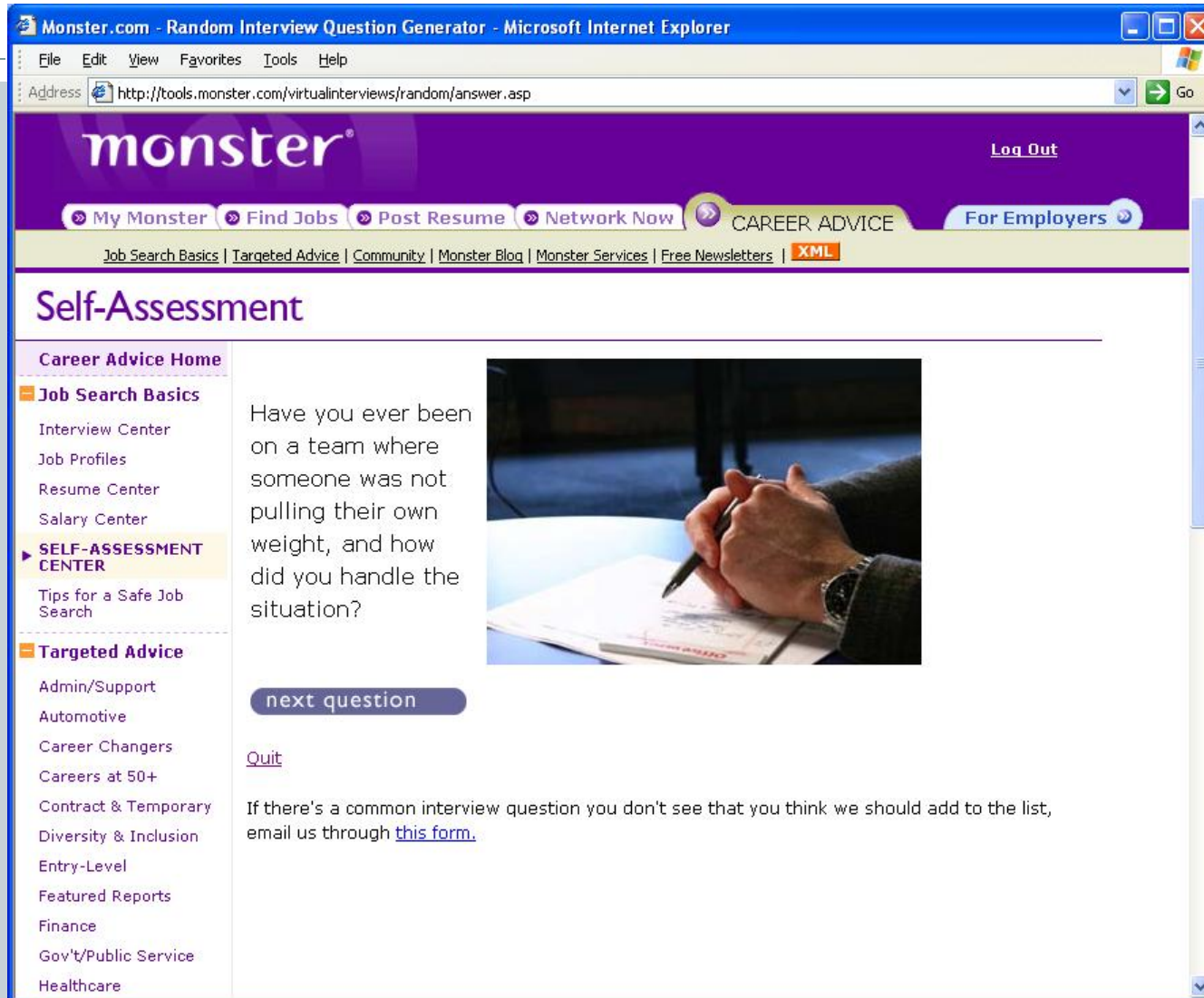


Question: What are your weaknesses?

Possible Strategies:

- Present a weakness that's really a hidden strength.
- Cite a corrected weakness.
- Recall a lesson learned.
- Reveal a lapsed skill.
- Use an unrelated skill.
- Cite an objective.
- Try humor.
- Repeat your qualifications.

Practice with Interactive Tools



The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Monster.com - Random Interview Question Generator - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar displays "http://tools.monster.com/virtualinterviews/random/answer.asp". The page features the Monster logo and navigation links such as "My Monster", "Find Jobs", "Post Resume", "Network Now", "CAREER ADVICE", and "For Employers". A "Log Out" link is also visible. The main content area is titled "Self-Assessment" and includes a sidebar with categories like "Job Search Basics", "SELF-ASSESSMENT CENTER", and "Targeted Advice". The main text asks, "Have you ever been on a team where someone was not pulling their own weight, and how did you handle the situation?" and includes a "next question" button and a "Quit" link. A photograph of hands writing in a notebook is also present.

Monster.com - Random Interview Question Generator - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://tools.monster.com/virtualinterviews/random/answer.asp Go

monster Log Out

My Monster Find Jobs Post Resume Network Now CAREER ADVICE For Employers

Job Search Basics Targeted Advice Community Monster Blog Monster Services Free Newsletters XML

Self-Assessment

Career Advice Home

Job Search Basics

- Interview Center
- Job Profiles
- Resume Center
- Salary Center


SELF-ASSESSMENT CENTER

- Tips for a Safe Job Search

Targeted Advice

- Admin/Support
- Automotive
- Career Changers
- Careers at 50+
- Contract & Temporary
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Entry-Level
- Featured Reports
- Finance
- Gov't/Public Service
- Healthcare

Have you ever been on a team where someone was not pulling their own weight, and how did you handle the situation?



next question

[Quit](#)

If there's a common interview question you don't see that you think we should add to the list, email us through [this form](#).

Practice with Interactive Tools

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Monster.com website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: http://tools.monster.com/quizport/default.asp?quest=2&oldquest=1&file=campus_virtual_interview&ans=2&quest=1&oldquest=1&file=campus_virtual_inte...

The website's navigation menu includes: **My Monster**, **Find Jobs**, **Post Resume**, **Marketplace**, **Education**, **Career Advice**, and **For Employers**. Below this, there are links for **Job Search Basics**, **Targeted Advice**, **Community**, **Monster Blog**, and **Monster Services**.

The main content area is titled **Self-Assessment**. It features a sidebar on the left with a list of categories: **Career Advice Home**, **Job Search Basics**, **Education**, **Special Features**, and **Targeted Advice**. The **SELF-ASSESSMENT CENTER** is highlighted in the sidebar.

The main content area displays the **Campus Virtual Interview** section. It shows the question number: **1 of 31**. The question is: **Question:** Tell me about yourself. Below the question is a text input field for the answer. The **Your Answer:** section shows a radio button and the text: **Is there any particular information you'd like me to discuss?**

The **Monster's Feedback:** section provides feedback on the answer: **This is the best answer. This is a good way to focus the conversation, if you don't know what the interviewer is looking for. It's a good idea, however, to go into an interview with at least several themes about yourself selected and well-documented (such as "I've always been good at getting things done, even when I was...") and then have lots of examples ready. Choose themes that illustrate what you learned about the organization and its culture, as well as the demands of the job, from your extensive research.**

At the bottom of the feedback section, there are two buttons: **<< Back** and **Next >>**.

Other Messages



Other Job Search Messages



- Thank-You Message
- Follow-Up Message
- Job Acceptance Message
- Job Refusal Message
- Job Resignation Message

Thank You Message Strategy



- Expression of gratefulness
- Appropriate comments fitting the situation
- Any additional information needed
- A goodwill close

Thank You Message Example:



Your bank and the job opportunities we discussed recently continue to interest me, especially the Financial Analyst position.

I believe that my finance major, internship, and my immersion semester in Brazil highly qualify me for the position. These qualifications have given me the computer skills, hands-on experience, and interpersonal skills useful in your domestic operations. My extensive travel and cultural knowledge of South America will be valuable in your planned expansion there.

As you requested, I have enclosed samples of the financial analysis I developed as a business school project. If you need anything more, please let me know.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you soon. If you have any other questions, please contact me at zekesmith@hotmail.com.

Follow-Up Message Strategy



(Use Routine Inquiry Strategy)

- Begin directly with the objective.
- Include necessary explanation—wherever it fits.
- If a number of questions are involved, ask them.
Make them stand out with bullets or paragraphing.
- End with goodwill words adapted to the individual case.

Follow-Up Message Example:



Because the time is approaching when I must make a job decision, will you please tell me the status of my application with you?

You may recall that you interviewed me in your office on November 7. You wrote me November 12 indicating that I was among those you had selected for further consideration.

SAIC remains one of the organizations I would like to consider in making my career decision. I will very much appreciate hearing from you by December 3.

Job Acceptance Letter Strategy



- Begin directly with an affirmative answer.
- Confirm the details of employment:
 - Starting date and place
 - Comments about the work, the company, the interview(whatever you might say face-to-face)
- Goodwill Ending

Job Acceptance Message Example:



I accept your offer of employment with pleasure. After my first interview with you, I was convinced that Allison-Caldwell was the organization for me. I am looking forward to working with you and the rest of the staff.

I will be in your Toronto headquarters on May 28 at 8:30 a.m.

Job Refusal Message Strategy:



Use Indirect Approach

- Begin with words that set up the explanation
- Then present your explanation
 - The refusal should flow logically from the reasoning.
 - Do not emphasize it.
 - State the refusal quickly and clearly and positively.
 - Use compromise if practical (The best I can do is...)
- End with pleasant off-subject comment (avoid ending with old, negative, apologies)

Job Refusal Message Example:



Meeting you and the others at Northern was a genuine pleasure. All that I saw and heard impressed me most favorably. I was especially honored to receive the generous job offer that followed.

In considering the offer, I naturally gave some weight to these favorable impressions. Even though I have accepted a job with another firm, those impressions remain strong in my mind.

Thank you for your time and for making me feel so welcome.

Job Resignation Strategy



Use Indirect Approach

Make the letter as positive as circumstances permit.

- Begin with words that set up the explanation
- Then present your explanation
 - The refusal should flow logically from the reasoning.
 - Do not emphasize it.
 - State the refusal quickly and clearly and positively.
 - Use compromise if practical (The best I can do is...)
- End with pleasant off-subject comment (avoid ending with old, negative, apologies)

Job Resignation Example:



Working as your assistant for the past five years has been a genuinely rewarding experience. Under your direction, I have grown as an administrator. And I know you have given me a practical and invaluable education in retailing.

As you may recall from our past discussions, I have been pursuing the same career goal that you held early in your career. So you will understand why I am resigning to accept a store management position with Lawson's in Belle River. I would like my employment to end on the 31st, but I could stay a week or two longer if needed to help train my replacement.

I leave with only good memories of you and the other people with whom I've worked at Samuel & Co.. Thanks to all of you for your support and friendship.

