

# **Career Development**

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**careers.dom.edu**

## ***Resources for Educators***

**7900 W. Division Street, Parmer LL 010  
River Forest, Illinois 60305**

**Phone: (708) 524-6786  
careers@dom.edu**

# Job Search Checklist

Adapted from the *Job Search Handbook for Educators, 2014*

- ☐ Visit Career Development to obtain information on upcoming events, job postings, and to set up appropriate appointments.
- ☐ Register online in both College Central Network (CCN) and ISCPA (Quick Links found at: [www.careers.dom.edu](http://www.careers.dom.edu))
- ☐ Begin constructing a resume, or update one you already have. Set up an appointment to meet with a career counselor to review your resume.
- ☐ Upload your resume onto CCN and ISCPA. Make sure to publish your resume into the resume books.
- ☐ Create a Linked In account and join the Dominican University Alumni group.
- ☐ Attend any workshops or upcoming related events.
- ☐ Meet with a career counselor to start planning a job search strategy.
- ☐ Determine the types of schools and geographical area in which you will apply for teaching positions. If you are “mobile” and can relocate, your options will increase.
- ☐ Start collecting letters of reference from previous field experiences.
- ☐ Attend any job interviewing and/or job fair preparation workshops.
- ☐ Attend education job fairs in the area and any other opportunities for professional development.
- ☐ Send follow-up thank-you letters and e-mails after interviews and job fairs.
- ☐ Apply to school systems online or on paper; follow each district’s specific procedures.
- ☐ Consistent follow-up is crucial! Make sure to maintain a constant communication process with all districts with which you have applied and/or interviewed.
- ☐ Keep a log of these communications and all of your applications.
- ☐ Review the offer to best decide the fit between you and the position, as well as to obtain clarification on any points that do not make sense to you.
- ☐ If you decide to accept the offer, take time to celebrate! Also withdraw from other serious contenders. Stop looking and do not accept any more interview offers from other contenders.
- ☐ If you do not end up with a full-time contract, you may want to try looking for teaching assistant or substitute teaching positions. Stay in contact with Career Development and your preferred school districts in case any last-minute opportunities arise.

# Job Search Basics

## RESUME

Administrators are most concerned about the teaching-related content of your resume, such as student teaching and other practicum experiences. In addition, you may want to include any other experiences, such as tutoring or working as a camp counselor, that are relevant to working with your desired population in a teaching or mentor capacity. It must be easy-to-read, and error-free. Be truthful about all of the information that you provide on your resume.

## COVER LETTER

Write individual letters to each school district and personalize those letters by explaining briefly why you want to work at *that* district. Give specific examples of your accomplishments related to the position you are applying for. Keep in mind that cover letters can be seen by administrators as a sample of your writing, so make sure it flows well, makes sense, and is free of errors. This letter may set you apart from other candidates, and you want administrators to read your letter and want to read your resume.

## THANK YOU LETTER

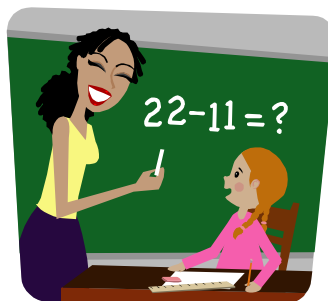
Thank you letters can be either handwritten or typed, but make the effort to write one within one to two days of an on-site interview or job fair interview. The thank you letter reconfirms your interest in the job and provides you another opportunity to briefly summarize your qualifications. It also sets you apart from those who do not take the time and effort to write one.

## INTERVIEWING

When considering what clothes are appropriate for interviewing, dress up and dress conservatively. Be prepared to discuss your accomplishments, tell a story! More information on interviewing follows in this Education Career Guide.

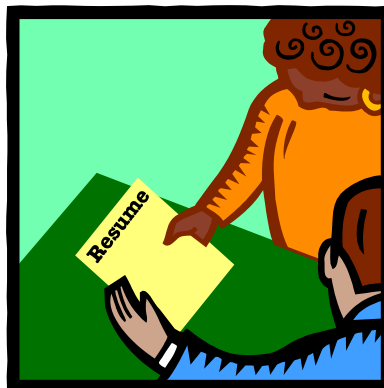
### **In general, school districts are looking for teachers who:**

- Have good interpersonal skills and enjoy working with children
- Are knowledgeable about the science of teaching
- Are knowledgeable about the content of their discipline
- Have had a variety of experiences
- Are organized
- Have good communication skills
- Will present a good model for children
- And believe that they can make a difference in a child's life through their teaching.



## Helpful Hints For Resumes

- **First Impressions:** Your resume is the first piece of work that a potential employer will see. Be sure to double check spelling and grammar. Have a friend proofread your final product. Typos and other small errors make a big difference!
- **Font:** Use only one font consistently throughout your resume. Arial and Times New Roman are very standard fonts. Also, bolding, *italicizing* and underlining within the same font can improve the readability and appearance of your resume (if these graphics are not overused). An 11 or 12 point font is suggested; use a professional-looking font.
- **Contact Information:** (Name, Address, Phone Number and E-mail address)  
Include a professional-looking e-mail address as a form of contact, double check your e-mail address to ensure it looks professional. Include a home or cell phone number and avoid listing a work number whenever possible. Most employers are comfortable leaving messages on answering machines (make sure to check your outgoing message on your voice mail!)
- **GPA:** List GPAs of 3.0 or higher on your resume. Include your major GPA if that is significantly higher than your cumulative GPA.
- **Length:** College students and recent graduates should maintain a one-page resume until they have completed an internship or full-time professional experience. If you have an extensive work history, or in a graduate degree program that relates to your professional field, then a two-page resume is acceptable.
- **Final Comments:**
  - Have your resume printed on plain, white paper, resume paper is fine, but not required.
  - Avoid fancy borders and graphics.
  - Since your resume is a work-in-progress, prepare only a few copies. Your address and phone number may change or you may take on a new position.
  - Use effective and concise language and word choices.



**Add action to your resume by utilizing this list of verbs to describe your**

## Involvement at work and other activities....

Accelerated	Critiqued	Integrated	Referred
Accomplished	Decided	Interpreted	Rehabilitated
Achieved	Delegated	Interviewed	Reinforced
Adapted	Delivered	Introduced	Repaired
Addressed	Demonstrated	Investigated	Represented
Adjusted	Designed	Involved	Researched
Administered	Detailed	Launched	Resolved
Advanced	Developed	Learned	Restored
Advised	Devised	Lectured	Restructured
Analyzed	Diagnosed	Led	Reviewed
Applied	Directed	Maintained	Revised
Appraise	Discovered	Managed	Revitalized
Approved	Distinguished	Marketed	Scheduled
Arbitrated	Distributed	Mediated	Screened
Arranged	Diversified	Mentored	Selected
Articulated	Dramatized	Met	Served
Ascertained	Edited	Moderated	Shaped
Assembled	Educated	Modified	Showed
Assessed	Eliminated	Monitored	Simplified
Assisted	Enabled	Motivated	Solved
Attained	Encouraged	Negotiated	Sponsored
Balanced	Enlarged	Networked	Staffed
Budgeted	Enlisted	Nominated	Stimulated
Built	Established	Observed	Streamlined
Calculated	Estimated	Obtained	Strengthened
Captivated	Evaluated	Operated	Studied
Catalogued	Examined	Organized	Submitted
Clarified	Executed	Originated	Summarized
Coached	Exhibited	Oversaw	Supervised
Collaborated	Expanded	Participated	Supported
Collected	Explained	Performed	Surveyed
Commended	Facilitated	Persuaded	Systematized
Competed	Familiarized	Planned	Taught
Communicated	Finalized	Prepared	Tested
Compiled	Focused	Presented	Trained
Completed	Found	Presided	Transformed
Computed	Generated	Processed	Translated
Conceptualized	Grouped	Produced	Traveled
Condensed	Guided	Projected	Unified
Conducted	Handled	Promoted	Updated
Conserved	Hired	Proposed	Upgraded
Consolidated	Identified	Provided	Utilized
Contributed	Illustrated	Purchased	Validated
Controlled	Implemented	Qualified	Verified
Converted	Improved	Quantified	Widened
Cooperated	Incorporated	Realized	Worked
Coordinated	Increased	Received	Wrote
Corrected	Influenced	Recommended	
Corresponded	Informed	Recruited	
Counseled	Initiated	Rectified	
Created	Instructed	Reduced	

**SALLY STAR**  
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<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	Teaching position in Early Elementary Education (K-3)	
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>Dominican University</b> , River Forest, Illinois Master of Arts in Teaching Expected May 2016 GPA: 3.7/4.0 Licensure: Type 03 <b>Loyola University</b> , Chicago, Illinois Bachelor of Arts May 2014 Major: English GPA: 3.6/4.0 Dean's Scholarship 2010-2014	
<b>FIELD EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>Hatch Elementary School</b> , Oak Park, Illinois Student Teacher, Second Grade	Spring 2015
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developed, planned and organized lesson plans for morning and afternoon classrooms with 20 students per session.</li><li>• Effectively utilized lesson plan format to emphasize long and short-term goals and assessment.</li><li>• Used formal and informal assessments to improve instruction and increase learning.</li><li>• Worked effectively with a diverse student population.</li><li>• Assisted with parent-teacher conferences and open houses and translated for Spanish speaking parents.</li></ul>	
<b>EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE</b>	St. Edmund Elementary School, Oak Park, IL St. Miguel Elementary School, Chicago, IL Hephzibah Reading Academy, Oak Park, IL	October 2012 September 2012 July 2013
<b>RELATED EMPLOYMENT</b>	<b>Dominican University</b> , River Forest, Illinois Student Tutor, Learning Resources	2013-present
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support and tutor students with writing, reading and critical thinking across all disciplines</li><li>• Aid college level students in the brainstorming, drafting and editing processes</li></ul>	
<b>LANGUAGE SKILLS</b>	Fluent in reading, writing and speaking Spanish	
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Kappa Delta Pi, Education Honor Society</b> , Member 2014-present <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Obtained membership based on strong academic achievements.</li><li>• Participated in service program tutoring to community schools.</li></ul>	
<b>ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT</b>	Law Office of Peter Latz, Oak Park, IL 2012-2014 Office Manager/Legal Secretary <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compiled documents for legal filings and organized all case files.</li><li>• Communicated with clients and court liaisons and confirmed all court hearings.</li></ul>	
<b>COMPUTER SKILLS</b>	Smart Board, Kurzweil Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook, Publisher	

# What NOT To Do in a Resume

Addison “Addy” Montgomery

100 Main St.

River Forest, IL 60305

Cell: (630) 555-5555

sexychica@yahoo.com

Don't include nicknames

Use a professional email address

**Objective:** To obtain a teaching position in an elementary school, making the world a better place, one child at a time.

Don't include fluff. Have a specific objective

**Education:** Dominican University

B.A. Major in History Certification: Type 03

GPA: 2.9/4.0

I will be getting my certification soon!

Include city & state

2009-2013

Only include GPA over 3.0

Only need year you graduate

Avoid “I” statements. Give specific certification information

**Teaching Experience:**

King Elementary School, Chicago, IL

*Student Teacher, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade*

Fall 2012

Don't repeat action verbs

- Worked with students on various lessons
- Attend parent-teacher conferences
- Worked with cooperating teacher on lesson plans
- Used classroom management techniques
- Worked one-on-one with students completing homework assignments
- Assigned homework assignments and classroom projects

Whole section needs to be more specific. List accomplishments that set you apart from other

**Practicum Experience:**

Don't leave out any part of the name

Wright School, Chicago, IL

*Practicum for Social Studies, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade*

Spring 2011

Don't repeat what you said in other bullet points

- Observed lessons
- Developed own lesson plans for class
- Worked one-on-one with students completing homework assignments

Be more specific!

Edison Elementary School, Stickney, IL

*Practicum for Language Arts, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade*

Winter 2010

- Helped students with homework and class assignments
- Taught own lesson to class

Need to be more specific!

**Other Experience:**

Nanny for the Smith family

2009-Present

Try to include experiences with children other than babysitting or nannying.

- Play with the kids while parents are at work
- Feed them, bathe them, help them with their homework
- Drive them to and from school, extracurriculars, etc.
- Get them ready for school each day

Watch for typos!

**REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST!**

Don't need this

## Creating a Winning Cover Letter

Keep in mind the basics about cover letters:

- **Keep it short.** The ideal cover letter is 3-4 paragraphs and never exceeds one page.
- **First Paragraph --** Answer three questions: Who are you, what do you want and how did you find out about it? (this does **not** mean, start the paragraph by saying, "My name is ...") Provide information showing your specific interest in the company. Also indicate how you became aware of the opening (newspaper, website, etc.) and the specific job title if you have it.
- **Second Paragraph --** Sell yourself! Highlight one or two qualifications you feel would be of greatest interest to the employer. Be specific!! Don't just say "I'm organized" say "I have demonstrated strong organizational skills in preparing lesson plans and assignments for a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class with 26 students." If you have had related experience or specialized training, point it out as well.
- **Third Paragraph --** Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration. Indicate that your resume is enclosed, and credential file is available. Invite the reader to schedule an interview at his/her convenience.
- **Explain why you want the job.** Keep the focus on the school and what you can offer them, not what YOU wish to obtain in the position. Genuine enthusiasm will set you apart from those sending generic form letters.
- **Keep the tone and content professional.** If you are sending via email, do not use the casual tone associated with emails and text messages. Keep it formal.
- **Address a specific person.** This could be an administrator or principal, but could be HR personnel. Make sure to spell his/her name correctly and use proper salutation (ex. Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms., etc.) Make a phone call if you're not sure who to address it to.
- **Remember --** This is a sample of your writing style. Proofread. Again. Spell check will not catch everything. Even if your letter is free of typos, poor grammar also makes a bad impression.





# Sample Cover Letter

**SALLY STAR**

7900 W. Division Street ▪ River Forest, Illinois 60305  
(708) 524-6786 ▪ [ssar@dom.edu](mailto:ssar@dom.edu)

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October 18, 2015

Dr. Joseph Smith  
Principal  
Hatch Elementary School  
1000 N. Ridgeland Ave.  
Oak Park, Illinois 60302

Dear Mr. Smith:

I was very excited to see your listing for a third grade teacher in the College Central Network job listings on the Dominican University website. I will be graduating with a Master of Arts in Teaching from Dominican University in May with type 03 licensure, and I am eager to apply my various experiences working with children.

The enclosed resume details the specifics of my student teaching and extracurricular experiences. As you can see, I have focused on opportunities that involved working with first through third graders. This age group seems to draw out my most creative instincts. I am also attracted to the progressive mission of District 97. I visited the District website and noticed that District 97 is initiating a program to heighten the use of technology in the classroom. This is a special interest area for me. I have taken technology coursework and attended several workshops on using technology in the classroom.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this position and my qualifications with you. I would also be happy to provide you with my credentials. Please feel free to contact me at [ssar@dom.edu](mailto:ssar@dom.edu) or 708-524-6786. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Sally Star

Enclosure

# Behavioral Interviewing

Behavioral Interviewing is a new style of interviewing that more and more organizations are using in their hiring process. The basic premise behind behavioral interviewing is this: the most accurate predictor of future performance is past performance in a similar situation.

During a behavioral interview, always listen carefully to the question, ask for clarification if necessary, and make sure you answer the question completely. Your interview preparation should include identifying examples of situations from your experiences on your resume where you have demonstrated the behaviors a given company seeks. During the interview, your responses need to be specific and detailed. Tell them about a particular situation that relates to the question, not a general one. Briefly tell them about the situation, what you did specifically, and the positive result or outcome. Your answer should contain these four steps (Situation, Task, Action, Result or "STAR") for optimum success.

## STAR Method

**Situation:** give an example of a situation you were involved in that resulted in a positive outcome

**Task:** describe the tasks involved in that situation

**Action:** talk about the various actions involved in the situation's task

**Results:** what results directly followed because of your actions

Before the interview process, identify two or three of your top selling points and determine how you will convey these points (with demonstrated STAR stories) during the interview.

Whenever you can, quantify your results. Numbers illustrate your level of authority and responsibility. For example: "I was a shift supervisor." could be "As Shift Supervisor, I trained and evaluated 4 employees."

## Example of a STAR Answer

**Situation:** During my student teaching last spring, I managed a classroom of 5th grade students.

**Task:** I noticed that whenever we studied our science lessons, many of the students became disengaged and disinterested which caused disruptions in the class.

**Action:** I revised the lesson plan and had teams of student's research and create displays showing the differences in cell structure of both plants and animals. The students then presented their findings to the class.

**Result:** As a result, whenever we have science lessons, students are more focused and engaged, and I have integrated more "hands on" learning into my lesson plans.

## Sample Interview Questions

- Tell us about yourself and why you are interested in this school district and/or position.
- What are your career goals short term and long term?
- What do you consider to be your major strength you bring to the classroom?
- What do you enjoy most about teaching?
- What is your most successful accomplishment?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Discuss your student teaching experience. What did you like/dislike? What changes would you have made?
- Review your teaching experiences, such as levels/subjects taught, years, location, etc.
- Tell me about your most challenging experience while working with children or in the classroom.
- Tell us about your other school-related experiences, such as extra-curricular activities, committees, curriculum development, etc.
- What opportunities have you had to bring multicultural education into your classroom?
- What experience have you had with students from culturally diverse backgrounds?
- Describe the best lesson you have delivered. Why was it successful?
- Describe the teaching techniques or strategies that are most effective for you.
- Describe your typical lesson. What does it include and who participates – how do they participate?
- How would you include cooperative learning in class teaching?
- How important is success in learning? How do you help pupils experience success?
- How will you instruct/challenge students with varying abilities?
- If pupils were having difficulty learning a skill or concept, what would you do?
- Tell me about some specific motivational strategies you use to get students excited about learning.
- Describe different student learning styles of students and how you adjust lessons to benefit those differing styles.
- Explain your skills using a computer – address classroom management, instructional, other. Are you comfortable with the use of technology in the classroom?
- What is your philosophy regarding discipline?
- What was the most challenging discipline problem that you encountered and how did you handle it?
- What techniques would you use to handle discipline problems that may arise in your classroom?
- What is your classroom management plan/style? What are your goals?
- How would you describe your learning environment?
- What role does classroom management play in the education process?
- Describe a situation when you felt pressure. How did you handle it?
- Describe your educational background and teaching experience related to your subject area.
- How do you stay current in your field?
- Are you willing to sponsor any extra-curricular activities?
- What are some methods of communicating student progress to parents other than report cards?
- How can you get students to be excited about learning?
- Do you have a specific grade level/age that you prefer to teach? Why?
- Why have you selected teaching as a profession?

## Sample Thank You Note

This should be sent no later than 24 hours after an interview

**SALLY STAR**

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(708) 524-6786 ▪ sstar@dom.edu

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February 4, 2016

Dr. Joseph Smith  
Principal  
Hatch Elementary School  
1000 N. Ridgeland Ave.  
Oak Park, Illinois 60302

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for the interview on February 3, 2016. I appreciated learning about Hatch Elementary School and District #97. I am very interested in the second grade teaching position we discussed.

During the interview, I told you about my background and student teaching experience at Longfellow Elementary School, in which I utilized various methods of teaching, including the use of computer technology. This technology allowed for hands-on activities to get the students motivated and involved. This rewarding experience compliments my coursework and provides a well-rounded background, which will enable me to successfully contribute to the Hatch Elementary School team.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (708) 524-6786. Thank you again for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you again soon.

Sincerely,

(Sign your name here)

Sally Star

# Websites for Educators

## Elementary – Secondary Information & Jobs

Certification Requirements for all 50 states	<a href="http://www.uky.edu/Education/TEP/usacert.html">www.uky.edu/Education/TEP/usacert.html</a>
Illinois State board of Ed	<a href="http://www.isbe.state.il.us">www.isbe.state.il.us</a>
Illinois Regional Offices of Education	<a href="http://www.isbe.state.il.us/regionaloffices">www.isbe.state.il.us/regionaloffices</a>
DuPage County (same for other counties)	<a href="http://www.dupage.k12.il.us">www.dupage.k12.il.us</a>
Rockford Regional Office of ED	<a href="http://www.wincoil.us/departments/regional-office-of-education">www.wincoil.us/departments/regional-office-of-education</a>
Archdiocese of Chicago	<a href="http://schools.archdiocese-chgo.org">http://schools.archdiocese-chgo.org</a>
American Assoc. of School Personnel Administrators	<a href="http://www.aaspa.org">www.aaspa.org</a>
American Association for Employment In Education	<a href="http://www.aaee.org">www.aaee.org</a>
Illinois Assoc. of School Administrators	<a href="http://www.iasaedu.org/">http://www.iasaedu.org/</a>
Chicago Metro Early Childhood On-Line Job Board	<a href="http://www.chicagometroaeyc.org/">http://www.chicagometroaeyc.org/</a>
K-12 Jobs.com	<a href="http://k12jobs.com/">http://k12jobs.com/</a>
Teachersatwork.com	<a href="http://www.teachersatwork.com/">http://www.teachersatwork.com/</a>

## Private Schools/Non-Traditional Routes to Teaching

Teach for America	<a href="http://www.teachforamerica.org">www.teachforamerica.org</a>
Boarding Schools Online (Private Schools)	<a href="http://www.schools.com">www.schools.com</a>
Peterson's Private School Directory	<a href="http://www.petersons.com">www.petersons.com</a>