

## Landing that First Job.

*Guest Author: Jay Pipes, The GrooveJob.com Team. GrooveJob.com is a leading site for part-time, hourly and seasonal job opportunities serving students around the country.*

As a teenager, looking for your first part time job can seem like a daunting task. Let's face it, finding a job is hard to begin with. But when you haven't had any experience in a workplace, have never been through an interview, and don't know where to start in writing a resume, the task can seem impossible. Of course, your parents are probably no help; "it's simple", they say, "Just go ask Joe at the corner market for a job; he'll give you one!" So, how do you go about getting your first job?

### **Preparing for the Job Hunt**

The most important steps in going to get your first job take place before you even head out the front door. You need to prepare for what you're about to do.

### **Put together a simple resume**

Many first time or part time job seekers don't believe they need a resume, or think that "well, I don't really have anything to put on a resume, so why bother?" Two reasons. First, having a resume to give to the prospective employer shows you've put some effort into finding a job (read: you will put some effort into the job you do for them...). Secondly, it allows you to showcase those things about you that you want the employer to remember.

Having a printed resume sets you apart from the crowd. Even if you have no work experience, you can still give the employer an idea of who you are, and what your strengths are. If all you've done is baby-sit your kid brother, put it down in writing. Emphasize the skills you learned while baby-sitting, the challenges you overcame, and so on.

### **Appearance matters**

Make sure when you head out the door, that you are well groomed and well dressed. You don't need to be in a suit, just make sure you look presentable. Make sure "your Grandma would approve..."

### **Get a list of places to apply**

Of course, you can use sites that focus on part time jobs for teens like [GrooveJob.com](http://GrooveJob.com) to find part time jobs in your area, but there are many other ways to find employers. You can get a list of places looking for people from a variety of sources. You can pick up a local newspaper, go to the library to look at help wanted listings, or walk through town looking for Help Wanted signs. But remember, not every business looking for an employee will have a Help Wanted sign in the front window. Put on your list of places anywhere that you think would be fun to work, and go get that job. Walking in and asking for a job isn't illegal, and it shows the manager that you are interested and ambitious if you ask for a job even when one isn't advertised.

### **Prepare for "No"**

Before you go apply anywhere, you need to prepare yourself for rejection. That's right. Nobody, and I mean, nobody, gets accepted every single place they apply for a job. As a first time job seeker, you need to mentally prepare for someone to say, "No". There's nothing wrong with a store owner saying to you, "I'm sorry, we don't need anyone right now." However, there is a right and a wrong way to respond to a business owner or manager who says they have no need for you. If you get a "No, I'm sorry" (and everyone will!), respond by saying, "Well, if you do need someone in the future, please give me a call. I'll leave you a copy of my resume. Thanks for your time."

This shows the manager that you are serious about getting a job, and you have demonstrated the ability to follow up. Simply walking away from the store shows the manager that you weren't serious about the job to begin with. Stand up for yourself and demonstrate maturity. It goes a long way in presenting yourself.

### **Stand up straight and be mature**

Not to sound like your parents, or anything, but...

Go to each of the employers on your list, walk in the door, and ask for that job. Keep your head up, maintain eye contact, have a firm handshake, and be confident. Employers look for certain qualities when a jobseeker walks in the door. Foremost of those qualities is the candidate's ability to communicate. If you are meek, shy, and unable to show the employer that you are serious about getting a job, you probably won't get one. When communicating to a manager, demonstrate that you are eager to get the job.

### **Follow Up**

This is probably the most important part of getting a job. Employers look for candidates who have the ability to follow up with customers, because it shows a willingness to get involved and be responsible. Always make a follow up call or get in touch with the potential employer. Usually, it's best to wait about a week to make a call, and when you do, make sure to get on the phone with the person who will be hiring. Don't rely on someone else to leave the right message for you.

## SKILLS EMPLOYERS WANT

In a poll taken by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, the top skills most wanted by employers in their new workers included:

1. Communication skills
  - Be able to ask questions; listen well; express yourself clearly and intelligently.
2. Honesty/Integrity
  - Respect the rights and property of others; be fair in your dealings with coworkers and customers; recognize that company time and property is not your personal time and property.
3. Interpersonal skills
  - Respect diversity and be able to handle conflict; be friendly, cooperative and tactful.
4. Motivation / initiative
  - Give your best effort; be creative and innovative; be willing to perform extra work.
5. Strong work ethic
  - Be punctual, show up on time or early and have a good attendance; exhibit loyalty to the company; work well without constant supervision.
6. Teamwork skills
  - Carry your share of the workload or more; recognize your personal style and its impact on others; remain open to other team members' comments, suggestions and constructive criticism.
7. Flexibility
  - Adapt to change; be creative and innovative; be willing to "think outside of the box".
8. Computer skills
  - Know how to do web-based research and verification; be familiar with word processing, spreadsheets and databases; integrate the computer into your daily activities.
9. The following all tied for 9<sup>th</sup> place:
  - Detail oriented
  - Leadership skills
  - Organizational skills
  - Self-confidence

## Resource Guide for Teen Jobs

### Jobs For Younger Teens

- Baby sitting
- Pet sitting/dog walking
- Lawn and yard work
- Shoveling driveways
- Household chores/cleaning
- Errands
- Homework help/tutoring

### Typical Teen Jobs

- Camp counselor
- Cashier
- Child care assistant
- Fast food or restaurant
- Hospitality - hotels, resorts
- Lawn/yard maintenance
- Lifeguard
- Retail
- Resort jobs - ski resorts, vacation resorts, amusement parks
- Office Assistant

### Where to Find Teen Jobs

- Check with your high school guidance office for job postings.
- Check the newspaper help wanted ads.
- Walk around town or the mall and look for help wanted signs in store windows.
- Search Facebook groups for "summer jobs"
- Park City Customer Service desk (in the center court) and ask for the employment binder – lists current, known openings in the mall

### Lancaster companies that typically hire those 16 and under:

- Weis Market
- Giant Food Stores
- Lancaster Barnstormers
- Dutch Wonderland
- Hershey Park
- Food Service Venders – dishwashers
- Golf courses
- Vet clinics
- Movie theaters

### For more information:

Log into Career Connect at [www.lancasterchambercareerconnect.com](http://www.lancasterchambercareerconnect.com) for internship and job shadowing opportunities and other career resources.

For Local Summer Jobs here in Lancaster, PA go to <http://www.dol.gov/summerjobs/>

[http://jobsearch.about.com/od/teenstudentgrad/a/teenjobsearch\\_2.htm](http://jobsearch.about.com/od/teenstudentgrad/a/teenjobsearch_2.htm)

Check out [www.groovejob.com](http://www.groovejob.com) Summer, Teen, Part Time Jobs in Lancaster, PA

Register on Job Gateway at [www.jobgateway.pa.gov](http://www.jobgateway.pa.gov)