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Office of the Superintendent
of Bankruptcy Canada

Bureau du surintendant
des faillites Canada

An Agency of
Industry Canada

Un organisme
d'Industrie Canada

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**WORK
IT!**

JOB SEARCH KIT



Canada



Protecting the
Integrity of the
Insolvency System

Protéger l'intégrité
du système
d'insolvabilité

This kit contains:

- Instruction booklet
- "Writing a Résumé" PowerPoint presentation
- Résumé and cover letter templates
- Sample job postings
- Sample interview questions
- "Job Interview Strategies" PowerPoint presentation



Note: In this publication, for purposes of brevity and clarity, the masculine form refers to both males and females.

Cette publication est disponible en français.

Note to teachers: You are hereby authorized to make photocopies of any part of this booklet.

If you want additional copies of this workshop, please do not hesitate to contact the OSB Corporate Secretary at the following address:

Vivian Cousineau
OSB Corporate Secretary
365 Laurier Ave West, 8th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C8

Phone: (613) 941-2694

Fax: (613) 946-9205

E-mail: cousineau.vivian@ic.gc.ca



INSTRUCTIONS

For some time now, the Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy (OSB) has been developing financial tools for young people. These days, teenagers are informed and aware when it comes to money. They readily understand that every budget revolves around income.

Most young people would really like to find part-time work or a summer job, but the first steps are often quite difficult and they don't always know what to expect. Teens are often awkward when presenting themselves in person. Furthermore, their résumés don't always showcase their abilities because young people are hesitant to include unpaid work. They think that employers are only interested in their paid experience.

Another problem is that most young applicants are nervous. Even we as adults sometimes lack self-confidence when looking for a job.

This workshop, which was developed by students participating in the OSB Student Program, is intended to help teenagers to write their résumés and cover letters, as well as to prepare themselves for their first interview. A number of 14- and 15-year-olds have already had a chance to participate in this workshop and really enjoyed the experience.

The workshop is aimed at the teachers and parents of teenagers who are preparing to enter the job market. The goal is to help young people to increase their self-confidence in anticipation of their first interview. You will find in this kit all of the necessary material for conducting a learning activity with young enthusiasts and adult assistants. Ideally, there would be two adults for each teenager, but one adult per young person will do if necessary.

You should first survey the students to determine their level of interest. You can do the same with your teenagers at home. We really believe that young people will take advantage of this opportunity to draft their résumés and learn more about interview situations. Make sure you have at least one adult to interview each young candidate. Once you know how many candidates you have, and you have found enough adults to help you, you're ready to start.





STEP 1: Presentation on how to write a résumé and cover letter. We have included the electronic version of this presentation in PowerPoint format. These are only suggestions, so don't hesitate to adapt the presentation to your group and to the situation.

If you are the one giving the presentation:

Be prepared. Go over the presentation beforehand. Incorporate your own notes. Don't hesitate to share anecdotes and stories. Teens will enjoy them and learn something at the same time.

Be careful not to speak negatively about people who have sent you their résumés, otherwise the teens will worry that they will be laughed at by employers to whom they send their résumés. Focus instead on giving advice based on your own experiences. For example, about a résumé indicating the applicant's weight, don't say, "I once received a résumé where the guy said how much he weighed." Say instead, "Don't provide personal details like your weight."

Talk to the students about funny things that happened to you. For example, you can say: "One time I did my résumé and forgot to include my telephone number. No employers could call me, and I kept wondering why I didn't manage to find a job that summer." Teens will learn more from your mistakes when they are recounted humorously.

STEP 2: Preparation of the résumé and cover letter. We have included an electronic version of a model résumé and cover letter. If you have other models to suggest to the teens, we invite you to present them. Format is a matter of personal taste; the more choice they have, the more chance there is that the teens will find a model they like and that reflects their personality.

The kit contains ads for fictitious positions. Post them on the wall of a room not occupied by the group and ask each student to select two. If you are dealing with a large group, you can give them a file containing the descriptions of all the positions and ask them to select two each.

Impose a deadline. For example, you could indicate that they have 90 minutes to apply and that their candidacy must be submitted before a specific time.

Next, pair each young person with an adult who will spend the next 60 to 90 minutes helping him to prepare a résumé.

Don't forget to suggest that they take the electronic copy with them at the end of the workshop.

Guidelines for adults:

Avoid falling into the trap of doing the work yourself. Instead, encourage the teens to think about their skills and abilities. Ask questions that will help them identify their qualifications for themselves. Show them how to figure out from the job posting what the employer is looking for and how to respond to that in the cover letter.

Make sure that the teens include their volunteer activities as well as other work they have performed (mowing lawns, babysitting, etc). You should also get them to correct their texts themselves (check grammar and punctuation).

Finally, make sure that the job applications are submitted on time.

STEP 3: The interview. You will find in this kit a list of questions to ask during the interview, as well as indications of what you should expect as a response. These are only suggestions. If you come up with questions you think would be better, don't hesitate to ask them.

Pair each teen with at least one adult for the interview portion. If possible, make sure that the person who conducts the interview is not the person who helped draft the résumé and cover letter for that teen.





Guidelines for adults:

Use the questionnaire in this kit or other questions you have prepared. Be careful to read the questionnaire and really immerse yourself in it. Be conscientious in your preparations and professional in your approach. The young people won't benefit from this exercise if the adults aren't serious about it.

When the interview is over, have the applicant leave the room so you can reread your notes and prepare yourself for the feedback exercise.

STEP 4: The feedback process.

When you're ready, sit down with the applicant for the feedback exercise. Always try to find something positive to say and be sure to give constructive criticism.

You can proceed as follows:

1. How did the candidate present himself? Did he introduce himself? Did he appear enthusiastic or embarrassed? Did he take the time to shake your hand?
2. Go over the questions one by one. What did you get from the responses (refer to your notes)?
3. How did the interview end? Did the candidate ask any questions?
4. How did the candidate leave the interview? Did he thank you for your time? Did he repeat your name? It's surprising to see how many young people forget the name of the person interviewing them. Make up a name for yourself at the beginning of the interview. Say that you are conducting the interview on behalf of the person whose name was on the advertisement. Note at the end of the interview whether he says, "Thank you, *Fictitious name*". Did he shake your hand before leaving?

Other things to note (see the feedback list in the kit):

- Did the candidate use appropriate language?
- Was his posture correct?
- Was he distracted?
- Did he talk too much, or not enough?
- Anything else that impressed or annoyed you.

Of course, it's important to provide constructive criticism, but at the same time, you shouldn't hide anything from the teens in your assessment of their responses. If you noticed something unacceptable, you should let the teen know. Otherwise, he will repeat the same mistakes in a real interview when there is an actual job at stake. If you notice that the young person is uncomfortable with this, explain that the criticism is necessary, even if it is unpleasant to hear, because it's better to be aware of weaknesses than to ignore them and not get a sought-after job.

Try to always end on a positive note.

Once this exercise has been completed, you should move on to the next step.

STEP 5: The presentation on how to do a good interview. We have included the electronic version of this presentation in PowerPoint. These are only suggestions, so go ahead and adapt them to the needs of your group and to the circumstances. We have found it useful to do the presentation AFTER they have completed their first interview simulation because they will recognize their own mistakes as you are doing the presentation and will learn more that way. They'll remember this for a long time!

If you are the person giving the presentation:

Be prepared. Review the presentation beforehand. Add your own notes and share any anecdotes or stories you might have. The teens will enjoy this and will learn something from it.

Never speak negatively about someone you've interviewed because the teens will worry that they will be made fun of by people who interview them. You can provide them with guidance drawn from your own experiences. For example, if you once interviewed someone who kept calling you by your first name, don't say, "I interviewed someone once who called me by my first name." Say instead, "When addressing the interviewer, use Mr. or Ms. followed by the family name, rather than his first name."





Tell them stories about things that happened to you. For example, you might say: "I went to an interview one time with two different socks, and I spent the whole time trying to hide them!" If they see you laughing at yourself a little, they'll appreciate your candour. They'll remember this later, especially if they have interviews that don't go well. Ask the other adults present to share anecdotes about mistakes they made during interviews.

You may now decide to repeat the simulation. Time permitting, do Step 3 a second time using the second position chosen.

End of the activity: Make sure you give the young people the electronic copies of their résumés and cover letters so they can work on them more at home.

Feedback list

| Element | Good* | Needs work* | Comments** |
|--|-------|-------------|------------|
| Presentation | | | |
| Did he introduce himself? | | | |
| Did he shake your hand? | | | |
| How did he address you? Mr., Ms. | | | |
| During the interview | | | |
| Appropriate language? | | | |
| Too chatty? | | | |
| Appropriate tone? Too loud, not loud enough. | | | |
| Delivery? Spoke too quickly or too slowly. | | | |
| Intimidated? Relaxed? | | | |
| Appeared interested? | | | |
| Appropriate posture? | | | |
| Did he ask good questions? | | | |
| After the interview | | | |
| Did he thank you? Did he remember your name? (Thank you Mr. XXX, Ms. ZZZ). | | | |
| Did he shake your hand? | | | |

General impression

* You can check the appropriate column or indicate a mark between 1 and 10.

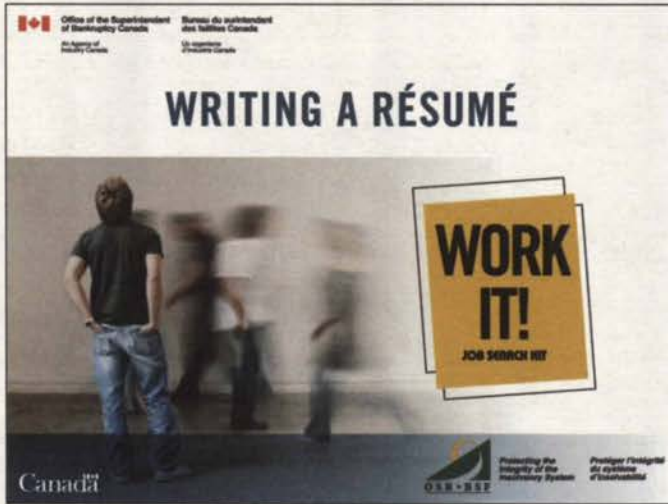
** Don't be stingy with your comments. They will be very useful to the teens, who will receive them and remember them.

We hope this activity was a success and that the kit was useful.

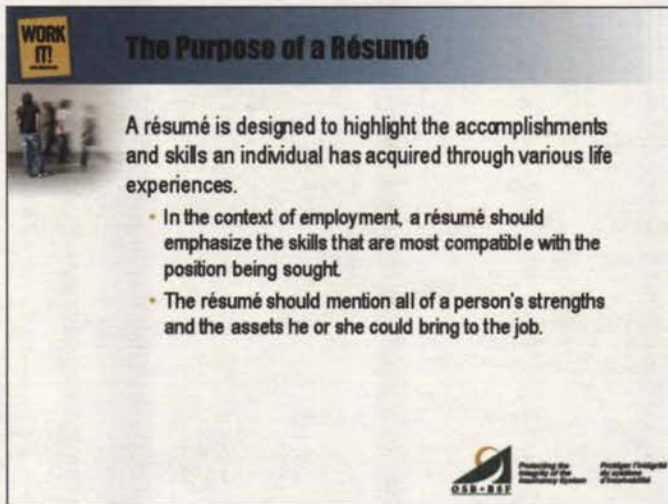




Notes



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Notes

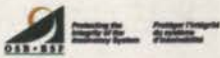
WORK IT! What to include in a Résumé



The following are essential components of a strong résumé:


- Personal Data
- Education
- Awards, Achievements
- Work Experience
- Community Involvement and Personal Interests

And should be accompanied by a well written cover letter.



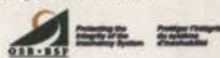
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WORK IT! Personal Data



It is essential that you provide your potential employer with all of your contact information. This section is usually found at the top of the résumé and includes the following elements:

- **Name:** First and last (middle name is optional).
- **Address:** number, street (apt. if applicable), city, province and postal code. (If you have more than one address, it may be useful to list all of them).
- **Telephone number:** Include all possible numbers, such as home phone, cell, and fax.
- **E-mail address:** Make sure your e-mail address doesn't include inappropriate humour (e.g., Partygirl@mail.com).
- **Languages:** List the languages in which you can function.



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Notes



Awards and Achievements

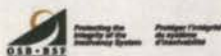


This section provides an opportunity to inform the potential employer of any recognition you have received for your activities.

You should include the following:

- Academic Achievements
 - Scholarships, bursaries, class distinctions, contests (e.g. public speaking or essay writing).
- Community Awards
 - Awards for community involvement

Athletic awards can be included here, but it may be more appropriate to include them in the "Personal Interests" section.





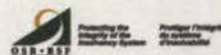
Work Experience



In this section, you should list all of your work experience, with a brief description of your tasks and the skills you developed through these jobs.

If you have little or no work experience, you can use this section to mention volunteer experience.

- Volunteering is a great way to develop experience, and most employers look favourably on people who volunteer their time. In addition, volunteering can help young people develop practical skills for the work environment, which will help them to find jobs later on.





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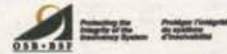
WORK IT!

Work Experience (cont'd)

Your work experience should be listed in reverse chronological order (beginning with the most recent and working back).

When describing the work done, be sure to begin your sentences with **action verbs**. The descriptions should be very brief.

- E.g.: Instead of writing: "I read to elderly people after school and helped prepare their meals", write:
 - Read to the elderly
 - Helped with meal preparations



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Work Experience (cont'd)

Always include the name of the employer or organization:

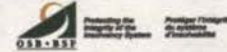
- McDonald's, The Salvation Army, City of Ottawa, etc.

Include the title of the position you held:

- Assistant Manager, Cashier, Salesperson, etc.

Indicate when you held the position.

See the following slides for examples.



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Notes

Series of horizontal lines for taking notes.

WORK IT! **Work Experience (cont'd)**



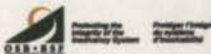
Example #1

- Happy Fun Time Day Camp:** Counsellor (Summer 1999)
 - Responsible for young children ages 4 and 5
 - Organized a variety of activities

Example #2


- McDonald's:** Cashier/Assistant Manager (Apr. 1999–Aug. 2001)
 - Responsible for ordering supplies and merchandise
 - Balanced and closed cash registers

Note: It's a good idea to place the employer's name on the left in bold type because this highlights the most important information for potential employers, which is where you worked as opposed to when you worked there.



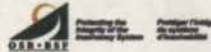
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WORK IT! **Community Involvement and Personal Interests**



This section reveals a lot about your personality and should include all activities in which you have participated.

- Sporting Activities:**
 - Include the sports you play, coach, or teach, as well as any awards you have received.
- Academic Activities:**
 - Debate team, essay writing contestant, etc.
- Clubs:**
 - School newspaper, Chess Club, etc.




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Notes

WORK IT!

Community Involvement and Personal Interests (cont'd)

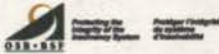


This section allows you to highlight certain skills and personality traits such as:

Team work (e.g. by playing team sports, or participating in group activities)

- Leadership skills (e.g. coaching, instructing, teaching)
- Social Awareness (e.g. volunteer work or community involvement)


Note: if volunteer activities have been listed under work experience, there is no need to repeat them here.

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WORK IT!

Final Notes about your Résumé



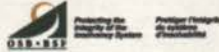
Your résumé should be no longer than two pages. Potential employers want to learn about you quickly without having to read long essays.

Refrain from using coloured or scented paper in an attempt to stand out: this looks unprofessional.

Make sure there are no spelling mistakes.

Avoid using slang (i.e., use appropriate language).

Be concise.

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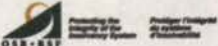
Notes

WORK IT!

The Cover Letter

The cover letter is a brief letter that accompanies your résumé. It should include the following:

- **Introduction**
 - State the position you are applying for and how you heard about the opening.
- **Second paragraph:**
 - Indicate why you want to work at this establishment and why you think you would fit in.
- **Third paragraph:**
 - Elaborate on some of the skills you have acquired and how they will be applicable to this job.



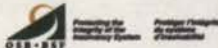
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WORK IT!

The Cover Letter (cont'd)

- **Last paragraph:**
 - Thank the reader for taking the time to read your résumé and indicate when you are available to be contacted and how.
- **Complimentary close:**
 - The following are acceptable:
 - Sincerely,
 - Sincerely yours,
 - Yours truly,
 - Very truly yours,

Don't forget to sign your letter.
Your résumé should respect standard business letter format, an example of which will be provided by your teacher.



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Ottawa, June 30, 2006

Mrs. Lucie Lalonde
Human Resources Manager
INA Supermarket Inc.
44 Greber Blvd.
Orleans, Ontario
K7F 6Y8

Dear Mrs. Lalonde:

With reference to your advertisement posted in the *Local Post*, I wish to apply for the position of salesperson in your store. I am currently a high school student and am seeking part-time work.

I hope to offer effective service to your company. With my volunteer work and the experience that I have acquired through various extracurricular activities, I believe that I can make a positive contribution to your company.

I thank you for your attention, and assure you that this position is of great interest to me. I would be pleased to meet with you at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Jean-Marc Laval
789 St-Laurent Blvd.
Pointe-Claire, Quebec
H6T 6H8
(613) 697-0365 / (613) 564-8987
Jeanmarc@email.com

Encl.: Résumé

Jean-Marc Laval

789 St-Laurent Blvd.
Pointe-Claire, Quebec H6T 6H8

Telephone: 697-0365, Cellular: 564-8987
Jeanmarc@email.com

Languages spoken and written: French/English

Education:

Kindsay Place High School: High School Diploma June 2004 (expected)

Awards and Distinctions:

Herling Miller Math Award: 1998
(awarded to top math student in Secondary II)

Inter-regional Debate Championship: 1997

Work Experience:

St-Boniface Seniors' Home: Volunteer 1998 to Present
- Prepare meals for the elderly
- Read to the elderly

Pointe-Claire Community Centre: Volunteer 1997 to 1998
- Helped kids after school with their math homework
- Organized weekend activities for kids

Personal Interests:

Debating: Member of the school debate team 1998 to 1999
- Won various awards in inter-regional competitions

Journalism: Kindsay Place School Paper 1996 to 1997
- Wrote articles for the school newspaper

Hockey: Pointe-Claire Royals 1992 to present
- Player for the Pointe-Claire Royals (Team Captain in 1994)



QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

You will find below some questions to ask of students during mock interviews. Each question is followed by suggested responses as well as recommendations to be made to the students.

We suggest that feedback be given only after the entire interview is completed so as not to affect the flow of the interview. Remember that the objective is to simulate an interview in order to expose the students to the kind of situations they might actually face. The simulation should begin the moment the student enters the room and continue until he exits at the end of the interview. The interviewer should jot down each student's answers and make recommendations once the interview is completed.

1) Why did you apply for a position in this establishment?

Students should never talk solely about money or respond that they applied only because the job was available. They should explain that they are interested in the kind of work the establishment does, and that they believe they would enjoy working there. They can add that the objective is to set money aside for studies etc., but should not overemphasize the monetary aspect.

2) What skills do you have that you think would be useful in this kind of organization?

Students should highlight their skills and link them to the tasks they will be required to perform.

Example (1): I play a lot of team sports, so I know I can work on a team and I understand the importance of good team communication.

Example (2): As editor of the school newspaper, I needed to be very organized, which I believe will come in handy in this job.





3) Why do you think you would be an asset to our team?

This is another opportunity for students to emphasize their skills. They should do so by providing concrete examples.

Example: At the student council meetings I attend there are many different opinions, and I think it's important to listen to everybody's point of view and try to find a middle ground. I believe this experience has enabled me to develop skills in conflict resolution, which can help in my work environment.

4) How would you deal with a customer who is not satisfied with either the product or the service received?

This question will reflect students' maturity and ability to handle confrontation. They should indicate that they would remain calm and polite in dealing with the customer. They should also mention that they would ask about the company's policy for handling such situations before beginning work.

5) How would you deal with a fellow employee who is not performing adequately on the job?

Students should give examples of situations in which they have dealt with similar issues (group projects at school, teammates, etc.). Employers will often look for staff who attempt to deal with minor problems on their own (i.e., they wouldn't run to management with every little issue), who are good communicators (i.e., they would speak directly to the co-worker) and who are not quick to judge (i.e., they would find out if there was a problem and not just presume that the cause was laziness).

6) Can you give an example of where you solved a problem or resolved a situation, and explain how you did so?

This is another great opportunity for students to demonstrate their creativity and maturity through concrete examples. Employers often like to hear about steps that were taken to resolve problems and the initiative demonstrated by candidates in other situations. An example that involves solving a minor problem by taking it to someone else, like a teacher, does not demonstrate initiative.

7) What do you think is your biggest weakness? And how would you go about addressing it?

This is a difficult question. Students may not want to say anything that could hinder their chances of getting the job. Some people suggest being honest, but not too much so. Others suggest trying to turn weaknesses into strengths. For example, a tendency for forgetfulness may have been resolved through developing a system for organizing homework assignments.

8) If you felt that a store policy was ineffective, would you approach your manager about it?

Students should not be too aggressive in their answers by suggesting, for example, that they intend to protest every policy with which they disagree, nor should they indicate that they will never object to any situation. They should anticipate a diplomatic approach in which they discuss concerns with their superior.

Example: the student might approach the manager and offer a concrete example of how a policy negatively affected a customer, or explain why a policy should be changed and suggest a way of correcting it so that everyone is happy.

9) If a customer asked you a question to which you did not know the answer, how would you respond?

Students should never say that they would lie. They should always suggest an approach in which the requested information is conveyed to the customer.

Example: The student could indicate to the customer that he is unable to provide such information at present, but would be happy to take the customer's name and number and have someone call back with the answer.

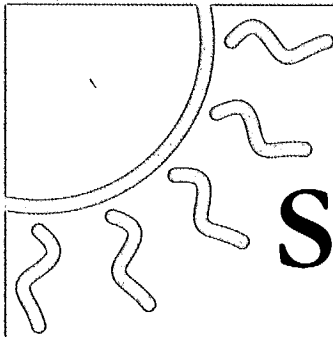
10) Do you have any questions?

Students should always have a couple of questions to ask the employer as this demonstrates a real interest in the organization.





PICK-A-JOB



Suntime Day Camp

Are you looking for a summer job?

The Suntime Day Camp is looking for an arts and crafts specialist. The successful candidate will be creative and enthusiastic and enjoy art.

Duties:

- Create arts and crafts projects for kids aged 4 to 13
- Help the children with their projects
- Maintain the arts and crafts room

If you're interested in this job, please call or submit your résumé to Joy Weatherspoon, Activities Director, Suntime Day Camp, 456 Wellington Street, Dorion, Ontario, K4D 8Y9



PICK-A-JOB

Do You Like Sports?

If the answer is "Yes", then come join our team.

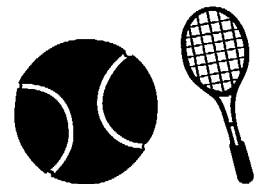
The Community Sports Centre

is looking for enthusiastic young people to organize sports activities for kids aged 6 to 10 on weekends and after school (4:00 to 6:00).

The salary is \$8.00/hour

If this sounds like the job for you,
Please bring your résumé to:

Joe Smith
Sports Director
City Community Sports Centre
4013 Main Street
Bellville, Quebec
H2Z 6T7





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PICK-A-JOB

Attention!!!!!! Attention!!!!!!

Do you enjoy movies and computer games?

Zaza Movies + Games

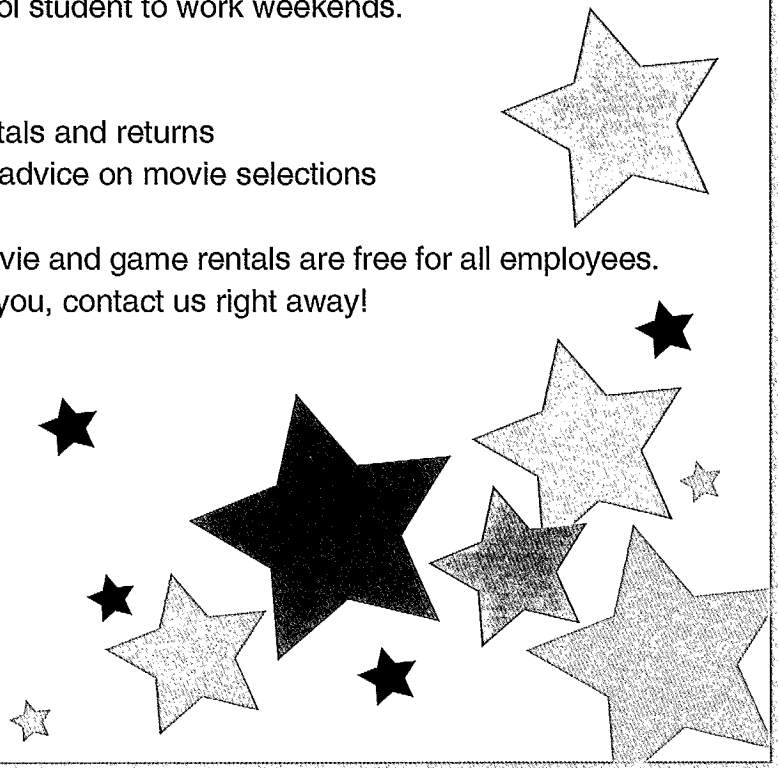
is looking for a high-school student to work weekends.

Your duties will include:

- taking care of rentals and returns
- giving customers advice on movie selections

The hourly rate is \$9. Movie and game rentals are free for all employees.
If you think this job is for you, contact us right away!

Mrs. Julie Tremblay
 Manager
 Zaza Movies + Games
 44 Coin Boulevard
 Camelot, Alberta
 K1Z 2H7





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JOB SEARCH KIT

PICK-A-JOB

Job Opportunities Joey's Clothing Store



Joey's is currently hiring for the **Christmas Rush**, so if you're looking to make some cash this holiday season and want to be part of a great team, we want to hear from you.

We are currently staffing the following positions:

- Salespersons in various departments
- Stockroom personnel
- Cashiers

We pay \$8.00 an hour plus **bonuses** for sales performance. You will also be eligible for store **discounts**.

If interested, please forward your résumé to:

Mark Windel
Human Resources
Joey's Clothing Store
547 Main Boulevard
Mapletown, Ontario K8T 9Y7



PICK-A-JOB

Fun Job at the Party Zone

**We are looking for party monitors to entertain kids
at birthday parties in our facilities.**

- Activities include batting cages, go-karts, mini-putt, basketball, floor hockey and an arcade.
- We are looking for dynamic, enthusiastic and responsible students who enjoy working with kids.
- Applicants must be able to work on weekends and occasionally on weeknights.

Please forward your résumé to Beatrice Krane at
781 Maple Road, Capeside, New Brunswick, J8Y 6H7





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PICK-A-JOB



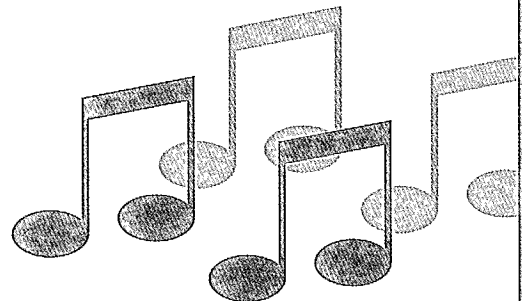
AAA Music Store

is looking for people like you

- Flexible Hours
- Great Discounts
- Fun Working Environment
- \$8.00/hour
- All the music you want

You could be part of the AAA team. If interested, please submit your résumé to the address below.

Zack Drummerland
654 Mann Street
Noteville, British Columbia
T6E 6Y7





PICK-A-JOB



Students Wanted

We're looking for Students in Grades 10, 11 and 12
to **tutor Math, Science, English and History**

- The job requires you to spend 6 hours a week (after school or on weekends) to help tutor students in Grades 7 and 8.
- The hourly rate is \$7

Interested students should contact the Community Resource Centre (Youth Department) or send their c.v. to:

Vince Dipietro
Director of Youth Activities
Community Resource Centre
333 Stewart Street
Yorkville, Ontario K1V 6H7



PICK-A-JOB

Help Wanted Winfield Grocery Stores

Winfield Grocery Stores are looking for part-time employees to fill the following positions:

- Stock room personnel
- Baggers
- Cashiers

We are looking for dedicated young people who want to be part of a team.

If you're interested in joining our dynamic team, please send a copy of your résumé to the address below.

Guss Winfield
Human Resources Director
Winfeild Grocery Inc.
589 Circle Street
Oakville, Manitoba
T6Y U9L



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**WORK
IT!**

JOB SEARCH KIT

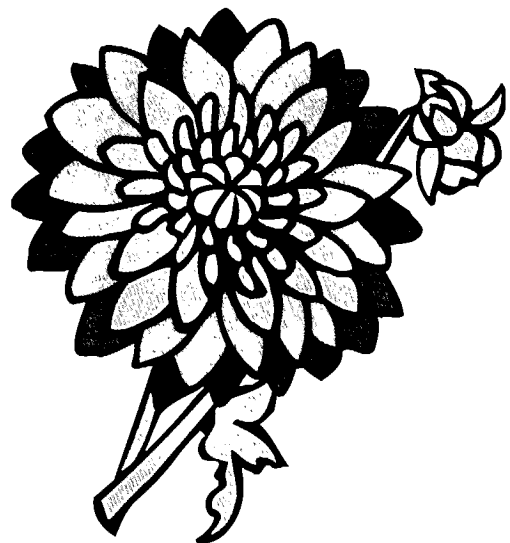
PICK-A-JOB

Help Wanted

To work in a retail greenhouse.

Assist clients with their purchases, water plants, etc.
July and August. \$8 an hour.

Please send your resume to
Jeremy Lavallée, Director,
The Lavallée Greenhouse,
56 Donaldson Road,
Guardian Angel, Ontario
K1Z 2H7





Notes

WORK IT!

What to Avoid During the Interview

The following is a list of things you **should not** do during an interview:

- Make large hand movements, fidget, play with your hair or make any other gestures that may be distracting.
- Wear a lot of jewellery or perfume.
- Arrive late.
- Address or look at only one interviewer if there is more than one.
- Ask about salary, unless the interviewer brings it up.
- Criticize a former boss, or a friend or teacher.





www.OSB-BSF.ic.gc.ca