



QUESTIONNAIRES AND TIPS TO ACCOMPANY:

Fashion & Textiles: The Essential Careers Guide by Carol Brown

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO HELP EVALUATE THE TYPE OF CAREER YOU WANT:

What do I want from a career or job?

1. What type of career do I want?
2. What type of work am I interested in?
3. What choices do I have?

What are my goals?

1. What are my short-term goals?
2. What are my long-term goals?
3. How achievable and/or ambitious are my goals?

Where do I want to work?

1. Where do I want to work?
2. Do I want to work in this country or an international market?
3. What kind of company do I want to work for?
4. What size of company do I want to work for?
5. What salary would be appropriate?
6. Do I want to work for myself?

What skills do I have?

1. What do I have to offer?
2. Do I need to retrain or upgrade my skills?
3. Do I need to gain further experience?
4. Do I have strong administration skills?
5. Do I have good keyboard skills?
6. Do I have strong managerial and supervisory skills?
7. Do I have good manual dexterity?
8. Do I enjoy a challenge?
9. Am I able to cope well under pressure?
10. Do I enjoy implementing new ideas?
11. Do I have a clean driving licence?

TIPS FOR WRITING A SUCCESSFUL CV

- Always consider the type of employment you are seeking and think about the type of skills required for that position.
- Word Process your CV using a clear typeface such as Arial or Tahoma.
- Use an easy to read layout.
- Make sure your CV is one or two pages in length.
- Ensure all information on your CV is relevant to the position you are applying for, highlighting the skills that match the post you want.
- Make sure all information is accurate, truthful and correct.
- Include the following information on your CV:
 - personal details – name, address including postcode/zip code, phone/fax number, mobile, email address (make sure this projects a professional image), date of birth and nationality
 - personal profile/statement – a brief statement identifying your personal attributes
 - education history – list the schools, colleges and/or universities you have attended in chronological order with the most recent first
 - employment history – in chronological order with the most recent first; state employment experience and track record, identifying work responsibilities, summarizing specific duties and what the role entailed
 - work experience – identify previous relevant experience, briefly noting roles and responsibilities completed during the placement
 - other skills/additional information – list any further skills e.g. knowledge of software packages, presentation skills, clean driving licence
 - activities and interests – optional but provides employer with further information about the type of person you are
 - references – usual to include the details of two referees, including names and contact details (always ask your intended referee if he or she is happy to be contacted in this capacity); also acceptable to write 'References available on request'
 - Make sure you check and re-check all grammar and spelling – run a spell check but also ask someone else to read through the CV.
 - Print your CV in black ink on plain, good quality white or cream paper (or save it as a PDF file).
 - Always send a covering letter with your CV.
 - Keep your CV up-to-date by making changes when you develop new skills, attend courses, gain more experience, etc.

TIPS FOR WRITING A COVERING LETTER

- Always write a covering letter to accompany a company application form or a CV.
- Word Process your letter using a clear typeface such as Arial or Tahoma.
- Make sure your covering letter reiterates the main points in your CV.
- Target the letter at a specific person – you may need to contact the company by phone and make a few discreet enquiries to find out the name.
- Do not exceed one page in length – include two to four paragraphs that are focused and to the point.
- Put your address (including postcode/zip code) in the top right hand of the page with the date underneath.
- Put the name and position of the addressee (if known), the company's name and address (including postcode/zip code) below your address and on the left hand side.
- Where the name of the addressee is known, put 'Dear Mr (or Mrs/Ms) xxx'.
- If the name of the addressee is not known put 'Dear Sir/Madam'.

- Identify the job title and reference number in the first paragraph.
- Follow this paragraph with a brief statement identifying your background skills, why you are applying for the position and what you are able to offer the company.
- Write clearly and formally including all punctuation where required.
- For a letter where the addressee's name is known conclude your letter with 'Yours sincerely'.
- For a letter where the addressee's name is not known conclude your letter with 'Yours faithfully'.
- Print your name at the end of the letter and sign above it.
- Check and re-check your spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Print your letter in black ink on plain, good quality white or cream paper.

TIPS FOR WRITING A PERSONAL STATEMENT

- Remember it is important to gear your personal statement to the job you are applying for, stating what attracted you to the position, exactly what you are capable of doing and, most importantly, offering evidence of your suitability.
- Your personal statement should consist of three sections – introduction, main section and summary.
- In the introduction include a brief statement identifying the position you are applying for, where and when you saw the position advertised and why you want to apply for the position.
- In the main body outline your past experiences and the knowledge and skills you can bring to the job and the company, identifying the roles and responsibilities that the employment position entails.
- In the summary reiterate your reason for applying for the position of employment and state your interest in applying for the job.
- Always check through your work carefully and get someone to proof read the statement and check that it meets the criteria of the job specification.

TIPS FOR PLANNING THE CONTENTS OF YOUR PORTFOLIO

- Use an A3 or A4 portfolio depending on the type of work being presented.
- Use both sides of the plastic wallets to display your work.
- Ensure all pieces are secured, using glue or spray mount that doesn't distort the work.
- Include 20 to 25 pages of work depending on the position you are applying for.
- The content of your portfolio could include:
 - storyboards/mood boards
 - design developments
 - examples of range-building with supporting fabric ranges
 - schematics
 - cost sheets
 - lay plans
 - fashion illustrations
 - photographs of your work
 - examples of CAD work
 - fashion editorials
- Always put your best work into the portfolio – never include substandard work to fill it up.
- Carefully plan the sequence of projects, editing the contents and removing any dated pieces of work.
- Make sure there is sufficient information supporting each project and explaining the background to the project: What was the brief? Who was the client?
- Try to keep all your work flowing in the same direction, either landscape or portrait.
- Make sure you include a range of work that represents your full skills.
- Tailor your portfolio to each position you apply for, adding extra work that relates directly to the company.
- Remember it is important to include a copyright notice for each piece (including the word 'copyright' or the copyright symbol ©). This provides you with protection against your work being used without your permission.
- Be prepared to talk through your portfolio at an interview.
- Make sure your portfolio is kept up to date by regularly reviewing it and adding new projects.
- Always label your portfolio clearly with your name and address.
- Use the chart below as a checklist for planning your portfolio.

[illegible]

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING

- Always contact the company and confirm that you will be able to attend on the date and at the time requested.
- Before the interview, do the following preparation:
 - research the company using the internet, trade journals, company newsletters
 - find out as much information as you can about the type of business, organizational structure, history of the company, its products and services.
 - look at the sample questions on pages 175-179 of *Fashion and Textiles* and practise giving a full response
- Think about what you will wear for your interview and consider the following:
 - research into the company to give you an insight into the dress code for the position
 - dress appropriately for the company and be smart and comfortable
 - wear a black or navy suit for any corporate position
 - avoid wearing shoes that you are unable to walk in and make sure shoes are clean and well heeled
 - avoid heavy perfume or aftershave, heavy make-up and revealing heavy piercing and tattoos
- On the day of your interview make sure you arrive in good time.
- If you are late then ring the company and explain the situation.
- Take extra copies of your CV to hand out in the interview if necessary.
- Never discuss salary at an initial interview – this can be done at a second interview.
- Try to stay calm and combat your nerves by considering the following:
 - smile and look people in the eye when they are talking to you
 - moderate your voice
 - practise your handshake – a firm handshake gives an impression of confidence
 - avoid fidgeting, playing with your hair or gesticulating too much while speaking
 - sit forward during the interview
 - engage with the interviewer/interview panel
 - be polite and friendly and try to create a rapport.
- Never do the following in an interview:
 - lie or exaggerate your qualifications, knowledge or experience
 - talk negatively about your previous employer
 - chew gum
 - leave your mobile phone switched on
 - drink alcohol before an interview or if you are invited out to lunch as part of the interview process
 - After the interview make notes. Record the questions you were asked and your responses, names of people met and notes on the structure of the company.

TIPS FOR GIVING CREATIVE PRESENTATIONS IN INTERVIEWS

- Read the interview notes carefully as they will explain what is expected of you.
- Always check beforehand what equipment will be available to use during your presentation
- Plan your presentation carefully and make sure you answer the question fully.
- Start with a brief introduction, follow with the main body and then a conclusion.
- In the introduction clearly identify what the presentation is about, outlining the main content.
- Practise giving your presentation beforehand, memorizing as much as possible and making sure it flows.
- Make sure you keep to the allocated time otherwise you may be stopped midway through your presentation.
- If using PowerPoint for presentation consider the following:
 - keep the design simple and don't overload it with transitional effects
 - use the screen as a tool to get the main points across
 - use a standard style of font such as Arial or Tahoma

- use a minimum of 20-point font size, and larger for main headings
- always check grammar and spelling
- use around six to twelve slides for a ten-minute presentation
- make sure the slides flow from one to another
- the introductory slide should give the title of the presentation and your name
- the last slide should summarize the presentation
- visual imagery must be clear and of good quality
- use bullet points
- don't overload slides with information – include a maximum of four bullet points per slide
- introduce one point at a time and allow your audience time to read each slide
- practise giving your presentation, memorizing as much as possible and making sure it flows
- provide the interview panel with a printed copy of your PowerPoint presentation
- at the end of your presentation allow time for questions and keep your answers short and to the point.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN WRITING A BUSINESS PLAN

- Make sure you identify on the plan your personal details (name, address, contact information) as well as the title of your business, aims and objectives of the business and type of business i.e. sole trader, partnership, limited company.
- Consider the following questions in your plan:
 - How much money do you require to make your business work? Consider start up costs, daily, weekly and monthly budgets.
 - Where are you going to work from? What costs are involved? Consider rent/mortgage, annual costs, rates, buildings insurance, cost of any alterations.
 - What equipment do you need to set up and run your business smoothly? When do you need this equipment? Consider whether you will buy new or second-hand, or lease.
 - What stock and consumables do you require to start up your business? Consider that items such as photocopier paper, pens, pencils, notepads, envelopes and ink cartridges will need to be replaced on a regular basis.
 - What stationery and printing do you require? Consider the type of promotional material required such as business cards, brochures, catalogues, flyers, etc. and quantities needed.
 - Will you need a vehicle for business? Consider what size this needs to be, whether it will be purchased or rented, tax, insurance and fuel costs.
 - Do you require more training to successfully set up and run your business? Consider training costs and the benefits full time or part time training would bring to your business.
 - Do you need to employ an accountant? Consider that your accounts must be kept up-to-date and that it is useful to employ an accountant to prepare your annual accounts and advise on financial matters relating to your business.
 - Do you need to source finance from a bank or building society? You will need to be prepared to talk through your ideas and your business plan.
 - How will you handle your cash flow? Consider that you will need to be prepared for unforeseen costs and to pay for materials and services.
 - Could you get funding through a government or regional enterprise scheme?
 - Do you need to take out insurance to cover your various business risks? Consider the importance of taking out insurance to cover risks such as loss of stock through fire and theft, health insurance to cover any ill health and loss of earnings, and shop, office and property insurance to cover other contingencies.
 - How aware are you of legal issues pertaining to your business? Consider issues such as copyright, employment laws, import and export regulations, labelling regulations, safety legislation, insurance cover and intellectual property rights.
 - Would it be useful to be a member of a specialist business association?
 - How will you promote your business? Consider the different ways of marketing and promotion such as advertising, editorials, the internet, trade fairs and exhibitions, flyers, press releases, mail-shots, bill boards, etc.

- Use the start-up costs checklist below to help you consider the costs and feasibility of your business.

START UP COSTS	YES	NO	SUMMARY OF COSTS
PREMISES			
DESIGN EQUIPMENT			
OFFICE EQUIPMENT			
STOCK			
CONSUMABLES			
STATIONERY AND PRINTING			
TRANSPORT			
ADDITIONAL TRAINING			

Start-up costs checklist continued:

START UP COSTS	YES	NO	SUMMARY OF COSTS
ACCOUNTS AND BANKING			
INCOME PROTECTION AND LIABILITIES			
BUSINESS SUPPORT			
PROMOTION OF BUSINESS			
MEMBERSHIPS			