

Who Are You?

- What is your philosophy of life?
- What is your belief system?
- What are your spiritual values?
- On what level do you want to contribute to society?
- What work category fits you?
- What things in life are important to you?

What Are Your Job Values?

As you are defining your interests, look at your values; that is what is important to you in the workplace. Sometimes the two can clash but on the whole, if you know both, that narrows down your options. Ask yourself and find answers to the following questions:

- What type of environment do you want to work in?
- How many hours do you want to put in?
- What kind of benefits do you want to receive?
- What geographic location do you prefer?
- What quality of life have you set for yourself?
- What salary do you want to earn?

Skills and Strengths

After deciding on some interests and values having been introspective and honest with yourself, you might feel ready to go and find a position that fits you. One day, your mom's cousin's neighbor, a manager of a communications department hears you are looking for a position and advises you to send a resume. You are flattered as of course communications "could fit you"!!!! You get an interview and your interviewer has only one question:

Your skills can fall into THREE distinct categories:

1. "Job-Content" Skills

These are the abilities and expertise learned from majoring in a particular area as was mentioned above AND/OR additional skills gained through an internship, volunteer or part-time experience

2. Transferable Skills

These skills derive from an A&S education or A&S-based education. They include:

Communication: writing, speaking, listening and discerning

- Researching
- Analyzing
- Critiquing
- Problem solving

3. Personal Characteristics

Personal strengths are personal characteristics and attributes you have that are a part of your personality. They are traits you were either born with or abilities that you have developed over the years. Some adjectives describing your traits might be:

Reliable	Enthusiastic	Energetic	Organized
Determined	Affable	Compassionate	Persuasive
Motivated	Ambitious	Independent	Detailed

Your personal strengths can also include natural abilities like:

- A high level intelligence
- Natural interpersonal skills
- An innate math mind
- Understanding of details
- Computer savvy

Other Strengths You Have to Offer

Personality

Everyone obviously has a different type of personality. There are no right or wrong personalities, only a need for you to understand the type of person you are and how that can enhance your job. Don't be afraid to let your personality come through in an interview.

- Likeability Factor
- Sense of Humor
- Compassion
- Intelligence and...
- ATTITUDE!

It is often said that an employer would rather hire someone with a good attitude and train them, than hire someone with the expertise but a poor attitude.

Experience

The above skills and strengths can be considered the raw material you have to work with. However, you need to mold these materials, direct them, hone them into application that gives them even more strength called experience.

Employers today almost expect an applicant to have completed an internship (or two or three) or to have had a related work experience of some type.

This experience can be picked up through a variety of situations:

Internships	Part-time Work	Summer Work	Volunteer Work
Activities	Travel	Projects	Student Teaching

Let the employer know what you have done, what projects you've worked on, successes you've had, what promotions you've had and what you gained from these experiences

Marketing Yourself!

Be prepared to talk about your accomplishments and successes you had while doing an internship or other experiential learning situation.

- Prepare Job Search Documents (Resume, Cover Letter, Reference List)
 - If you have not started a resume:
 - Get samples in the Career Services Center or on the website; prepare your own resume on Word.
 - Upload your resume to MU Career Manager where your resume will be critiqued, you can see job postings and employers can peruse your resumes. You can also sign up for on-campus interviews at this site.
- Understand Behavioral Interviewing
 - Get interviewing handouts and questions
 - Make an appointment for a mock interview with a counselor in the Career Services Center.

Reliable	Enthusiastic	Energetic	Organized
Determined	Affable	Compassionate	Persuasive
Motivated	Ambitious	Independent	Detailed

TOOLS FOR FINDING A POSITION

Traditional Application Packet

- School Application
- Resume
- Cover Letter
- Credentials
- Portfolios

School Applications

Teacher candidates will be required to fill out an application for each school district that they apply to. Many school districts have their applications on-line. Educators seeking positions in the state of Wisconsin can use **WECAN** which allows a candidate to fill out one application that can be used at most of the Wisconsin-state school districts. Fill out the applications completely and truthfully.

Resumes

Even though applications are required, your first impression will probably be through your resume and cover letter. Develop a professional, reader-friendly format, be complete and truthful and **PROOF, PROOF, PROOF.**

See sample teaching resumes: www.marquette.edu/csc

Cover Letters

Cover letters should not be exceedingly long—not more than three or four paragraphs are good. In the first paragraph, state the position for which you are applying and how you learned of the opening. If a person working for the school district informed you of the opening, you can mention the person by name.

In the second paragraph, market yourself for the position and convey energy and enthusiasm. The letter should point out highlights of your resume and explain why you are a good match for that particular position and that particular school district. This includes discussing your degree and academic background, talking about your skills and accomplishments, and, very importantly, giving specific examples. The letter should also point out something about you that is not on the resume, something that would help reveal you to the reader.

The letter should be impeccable in its grammar, usage, mechanics and format. No typos. Have several people critique it. **PROOF, PROOF, PROOF!**

Send the cover letter to a specific person (not “to whom it may concern”). If applying to an elementary position, send the resume to the principal. If sending an application to a high school, address it to the HR Administrator or directly to a department chairperson (after you ascertain their names, spelled correctly!)

Ten Rules of Cover Letter Writing (from the Job Search Handbook for Educators by the American Association for Employment in Education)

1. Don't draft generic letters; make each letter unique to a specific school district.
2. Address your letter to a specific person at the school district with the correct spelling of that person's name/title.
3. Communicate something unique to that person.
4. Show how you can meet the needs of the school, rather than what you hope they will do for you.
5. Use the body of the letter to highlight your education and experiences that are relevant to the job.
6. Qualify and quantify your experiences and achievements using examples.
7. Ask for a meeting to discuss your qualifications in more details.
8. Keep to a minimum sentences that begin with “I.”
9. Write a one-page letter; spell check, proofread, and laser print it so you don't produce a “sloppy copy.”
10. Sign the letter (make a copy for your files) and paperclip it on top of your resume.

The Job Search

Finding teaching positions that are opened in your field is the next goal after your paperwork has been completed. There are two ways to approach a job search: by being reactive or proactive.

Reactive Approach – applying for positions found through the following:

- **Online lists** from your college career office, State listings, newspapers, educational journals or professional organizations—or just site you find by googling.
- **Teacher job fairs**
- **School district sites** (Most schools districts of any size have their job listings on their web page. However, they don't necessarily list everything, like elementary positions, as there would be so many applications.
- **Word of mouth** from friends, family and acquaintances
- **On-line vacancy lists** (following is a partial list of educational job sites.)
 - Wisconsin - www.wisconsin.gov/state/home
 - Project Connect - <http://careers.education.wisc.edu/projectconnect/teacher/>
 - Illinois Job Bank – www.illinoiseducationjobbank.org
 - Cook County (IL) Suburban Regional Office of Education - www.cook.k12.il.us
 - Illinois Association of School Administrators - www.iasaedu.org
 - Education Week on the Web - www.edweek.org
 - Illinois High School Association - www.ihsa.org
 - Jobs. Com - www.jobs.com - Lists many job websites.
 - Minnesota Educational Vacancies - www.mnasa.org
 - Inner City Teaching Corps - www.ictc-chicago.org/
 - The Edison Project - <http://www.edisonlearning.com/>
 - The Education America Network - <http://educationamerica.net/>
 - Teaching and Projects Abroad - www.shrivercenter.org/
 - Teachers-Teachers.com - www.teachers-teachers.com/
 - Urban Catholic Teaching Corps – <http://www.bc.edu/schools/lsoe/cce/prek-12/uctc/about.html>

Proactive Approach – Researching and applying directly to schools districts, not knowing if there are openings

Determine your top school districts that you would like to work for. Research these schools districts, try to talk to someone who works there, and try to meet a principal or department chair, all of which can be done whether there is an opening at the moment or not. Many elementary school districts do not even publish elementary vacancies as they do not wish to be bombarded with resumes. Many school districts will accept resumes even if they don't have an opening in that field at the moment.

Interviewing

- Prepare, Prepare, Prepare
- Research district you will interview with
 - Try to find articles in the local newspapers about them during the past year
- Find people to talk with people who teach in that district or who know people who teach in the district that they can introduce you to
- Prepare questions and answers that you might be asked (see below); do a mock interview with a friend
- Arrive 10-15 minutes early, confident, but not cocky

- Have questions ready to ask during or at the end of the interview. Questions can make you appear intelligent, curious, astute and “with it”
- Interviewers want to learn about the “real” you. Practice smiling and looking comfortable. They want to interview a real, live person, not someone putting on an act
- You can ask who will be on your interview team
- Be ready for “scenario questions”:
 - What would you do IF.....
- Be ready for some indirect questions like:
 - If you could read only one book, what would it be
 - What person would you most like to be like
- Do you come across as bettering yourself: good attitude, positive, collaborative, life-long learner, comfortable with who you are, a good match
- After the interview if you really want the position, write a thank you note. You can handwrite it to one person on the committee or to all the members
- Some schools will call you one way or the other as to whether you did or did not get the job. If you ask why you were not offered the position, most will not say much because of legal ramifications. However, you could ask if they can give you any hints as to how you can improve your interviewing.
 - How to ask Questions:
 - Not: Am I going to have low level classes?
 - But: What will my schedule look like?

 - Not: Do I have to teach _____?
 - But: Would art be included in my schedule?

 - Not: Do parents support the school?
 - But: How do you involve parents?
- At the end of the interview, is there anything that you’d like to tell them that they didn’t ask
- It’s okay to think about an answer before replying if you haven’t thought about it or prepared a response in that area
 - Ex: What are misconceptions people have about you
- If asked to give a weakness, don’t give the worst case scenario:
 - “Oh, man, I really screwed up this particular discipline situation”
But
 - “I experienced a tough situation.....this is the way I handled it....I learned through this situation that this is the way I’d do it next time. It was a real learning experience.
- When you leave the interview, smile, shake hands, don’t be discouraged! Recruiters are looking for confidence

Just because you are not hired at one school does not mean that you will not be a good “match” for another. Maybe you like more freedom with the curriculum and some schools will allow that whereby others won’t etc. It is important that you find the atmosphere and culture that fits your style

Questions and answers span eight major interviewing categories

(See Employment Strategies for Prospective Teachers: A Guide in your packet which contains the following questions and explains how to answer these questions.)

1. General Character Assessment
2. Academic and Co-curricular Background
3. Teaching Ability and Educational Philosophy
4. Learning Styles and Student Achievement
5. Planning and Organization
6. Student and Parent Rapport
7. Student Management
8. Classroom Environment
 - What influenced you the most to become a teacher
 - Provide a brief biographical sketch of yourself. Start with high school
 - Pick our your favorite teacher (high school or college) and describe what impressed you the most about this person
 - What do you perceive as the three most important strengths you possess as a teacher.
 - Name one or two areas that you discovered, while student teaching, that you would like to improve
 - Why do you think you will make a good teacher at this school
 - How are you able to show both an interest in and an enthusiasm for teaching
 - Describe how you might dress for the first day of school
 - What class or classes did you take in college that prepared you the most for a teaching career
 - Explain why you feel you are ready to be a teacher
 - Describe your student teaching assignment. How would you rate your general performance? What went especially well for you while student teaching
 - What student activities, if any, were you involved in during high school and/or college? How might your involvement have helped you to be a better teacher
 - What sports or student activities do you feel qualified to coach or direct? Why
 - Name two or three teaching skills essential in helping students learn
 - Talk about your ability to introduce or begin a lesson
 - What have you found to be a good way to motivate students toward active participation in the learning process
 - How do you reinforce major concepts or ideas that you want students to learn
 - Students need teacher feedback regarding their efforts. Name several ways that you provide students with such validation
 - In what ways are you able to change your teaching methods to meet the wide range of academic needs that will be present in your classroom
 - Describe one or two good questioning techniques that you use with students
 - How can a teacher get students actively engaged in a classroom discussion
 - What influenced you the most to become a teacher
 - Provide a brief biographical sketch of yourself. Start with high school
 - Pick our your favorite teacher (high school or college) and describe what impressed you the most about this person
 - What do you perceive as the three most important strengths you possess as a teacher.
 - Name one or two areas that you discovered, while student teaching, that you would like to improve
 - Why do you think you will make a good teacher at this school
 - How are you able to show both an interest in and an enthusiasm for teaching
 - Describe how you might dress for the first day of school
 - What class or classes did you take in college that prepared you the most for a teaching career

- Explain why you feel you are ready to be a teacher
- Describe your student teaching assignment. How would you rate your general performance? What went especially well for you while student teaching
- What student activities, if any, were you involved in during high school and/or college? How might your involvement have helped you to be a better teacher
- What sports or student activities do you feel qualified to coach or direct? Why
- Name two or three teaching skills essential in helping students learn
- Talk about your ability to introduce or begin a lesson
- What have you found to be a good way to motivate students toward active participation in the learning process
- How do you reinforce major concepts or ideas that you want students to learn
- Students need teacher feedback regarding their efforts. Name several ways that you provide students with such validation
- In what ways are you able to change your teaching methods to meet the wide range of academic needs that will be present in your classroom
- Describe one or two good questioning techniques that you use with students
- How can a teacher get students actively engaged in a classroom discussion
- How do you draw a lesson to a conclusion
- In your opinion, what abilities are common to good teaching
- How would you go about deciding what teaching materials to use in one of your classes
- Describe your ability to listen and be responsive
- Not all students learn best in the same way. For instance, some may need more visual cues than auditory ones. How might you accommodate some different learning styles in your class
- What are some ways that teachers can be helpful to the slow learner
- How are you able to stimulate creative expression by your students
- What type of testing information might be helpful in assessing a student's ability
- If most of the students in your class were achieving below average at the end of a grading period, what might you think? What would you do
- What would you do if you were to receive a new student in your class who had a learning disability
- What makes up a good lesson plan for you
- How might a teacher's goals or objectives affect learner outcomes
- Almost every school has a prescribed curriculum for each grade level or subject area. How would you use this information in planning your own classroom curriculum
- Most lesson planning results in the modification of ideas and approaches. When you student taught, how and when did you deviate from your lesson plans
- Describe how you determine academic needs and then decide upon the proper learning materials
- How do you help to ensure student time on task
- How do you organize students for effective instruction
- What techniques do you use to display an interest in your students
- Would students view you as a reasonable person to know and a fair person with whom they can work. Why
- How are you able to make students feel at ease around you, while still respecting you
- Why might students view you as fair and impartial
- In what ways do teachers need to show a willingness to help students who have difficulties
- How would you handle a parent-teacher conference where the parents blamed you for his or her son's lack of progress
- In what ways can you have a positive impact on the parents' view of you as a teacher
- Good teaching can usually prevent discipline problems. Explain what this means
- Why is good classroom control a prerequisite to teaching and learning
- How would you handle a student who refuses to work in your class
- In what type of situation would you turn to the principal or dean of students for assistance

- In what ways would you be able to convey to the students that you are in charge of the class
- How would you go about making your room attractive and inviting to the learner
- Describe a student seating arrangement that would be in concert with our teaching style
- What is the teacher's responsibility for maintaining a clean and functional room

If you are asked to take the *Teacher Perceiver* or *Teacher Insight Assessment* at any school district, be prepared for a loose format where there are no right answers.

- The questions enable you to talk about yourself and your beliefs
- There are questions to determine compatibility with the teaching environment
- The perceiver has proven to be effective; candidates often don't like this form of an interview where there are "no right answers."
- The perceiver looks for 12 qualities and in the city, a 13th, diversity.
- The open-ended questions may ask about mission, creativity, what you believe about children, why you want to be a teacher, what does it take to be a good teacher etc.

First Year Teaching Tips

- Growth and Development
 - When interviewing, always ask what support you, as a new teacher, will be getting from that school district
- In Wisconsin, under the new state certification plan, **(PI 34)** all new teachers will be assigned a mentor. Mentoring programs provide great support from veteran teachers.

New teachers will have five years to complete outcomes that they choose for themselves, and then will be evaluated as to whether they fulfilled the outcomes (not graded on them). Outcomes can be fulfilled by activities, workshops, university courses, travel, special projects, etc.

Accountability

- An appraisal is growth oriented with a plan for improvement
- An evaluation makes a judgment as to how good a teacher you are (every state has its own method of evaluation)
- An evaluation is:
 - For the purpose of improving instruction
 - Is a condition of your employment
 - May be bargained for through an association
 - Should be taken seriously
- If the worst case scenario occurs and you are not asked back to your position, learn to market your skills and leave the school with a letter of reference
- Reasons you may not be rehired:
 - Position no longer there
 - Budget constraints
 - Program changes (elem. school no longer has a music program)
 - Performance issues: These can be overcome. You just need to work on developing in these areas.
 - Classroom management
 - Not good at working in a team

Mentoring Program

Purpose

- Acclimate new teachers to a particular school setting and culture
- Provide support to new teachers
- May provide workshops

Goals

- Facilitate personal and professional growth
- Foster a sense of readiness
- Provide opportunity for effective teaching practices and experience
- Accurate information about school
- Proved forum for discussion

Sample mentoring Timeline and Topics

- **First year teacher**
 - Begin a week before school starts
 - Hold quarterly meetings
 - Checklist with mentor

• **Two-four year teacher**

Discuss professional plans	Classroom management
Workshops, observation, peer coaching	School rules
Mentoring Topics	Parent communication
Student Discipline	Positive aspects of the teacher

Teachers' Contracts

Salary schedule	Maternity
Tuition, reimbursement	Bus duty
Child care	School Advancements
Stipend positions (coaching or clubs)	Expectations of new teachers for growth
Sick Days	Technology expectations
Personal days	

Use internet social networks to make connections with people:

We're tweeting! 

- Follow the Career Services Center on **Twitter** (twitter.com/MU_CSC) to stay up to date on the latest job search articles, highlights and Career Services Center happenings.

We're blogging! 

- Be sure to visit the Career Services Center's new blog, **Career Chatter** (marquettecsc.blogspot.com), regularly to get all the latest information and advice from our office. It's the Career Services Center... UNPLUGGED

We're on Facebook! 

- Become a fan of the MU Career Services Center on **Facebook** (www.facebook.com/mucsc). It can't hurt...right?

We're LinkedIn! 

- Network with professionals in our MUCSC Group on **LinkedIn**. If you don't already have an account - here is one good excuse to get one! To find us just search in groups for MUCSC and join.