**How to present yourself to potential employers**

Be professional. Prepare your 15-second commercial where you identify who you are, highlighting your strengths and accomplishments​. Be sure to show how you can bring added value to an organization and be concise​.

* Sample 15-second commercial:
	+ Greeting: Hello, my name is Dylan Lemay. I am an experienced ice cream maker.​
	+ Interest/Passion: I've always had a passion for creating food that makes people happy, and who doesn't love ice cream. ​
	+ Strengths: My strengths include hand-crafted ice cream, resolving customer complaints, and maintaining a clean work environment. ​
	+ Brief Example: Last summer, I worked at Coldstone Creamery where I created a popular ice cream concoction with sprinkles and fruity pebbles. I am sure I can create new fun flavors for your customers as well. ​
	+ Goal: I am looking to gain further experience in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.​

**Managing your expectations**

As a teen looking for your first job, you may still be asked to complete a resume and to apply online. Before you begin your search, be sure to set realistic goals for yourself. Think about the job you are looking for and the hours you can work.

**Resume writing tips**

* Pay careful attention to spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style
* PROOFREAD and then have someone else proofread
* Keep descriptions clear and to the point
* Be sure to highlight your qualities and good habits
* Mention your achievements
* Use Times New Roman or Arial fonts
* Reread the job description to ensure that you have tailored your resume to match

**Transportation**

If you have a valid driver’s license and access to a vehicle that is great. If you don’t, consider looking for a job close to home, one where you can walk or bike to.

**INTERVIEW TIPS**

* Research the company
* Bring copies of your resume
* Arrive early (5-10 minutes)
* Make eye contact
* Be positive and optimistic
* **Prepare for common interview questions**
* Tell me about yourself.
	+ **Response:** Keep your response 60 to 90 seconds in length. Focus on your relevant experience, skills, and why you want the position.
* What Are Your Strengths and Weaknesses?
	+ **Response:** Consider what traits you value in yourself, and what types of compliments you’ve been given in the past. For weaknesses, describe a problem— such as saying you spend too much time on the details rather than saying that you are a perfectionist.
* **Questions to ask the hiring manager**
	+ What is the work schedule for this position?
	+ What are the biggest challenges that I might face in this position?
	+ What is a typical workday like for this position?
	+ I read a sign outside that says you pay $13-15 hourly; can you please tell me how much this position pays?
* **Prepare stories to tell your hiring manager**
	+ In the interview, you may be asked to tell them about a time you:
		- Had to lead something
		- Made a mistake
		- Overcame a challenge

These prompts are meant to gauge how you react in various situations, so you will want to develop a handful of stories that highlight your leadership, teamwork, and communication skills. **Focus on strengths relevant to the job you are interviewing for.**

* Thank the interviewer for the opportunity and their time
* **Write a thank-you note**
	+ Send a thank-you note via email or mail within 24-48 hours of the interview.
	+ **Sample:** Thank you for taking the time to interview me (Insert date). I enjoyed our conversation about (recall something specific that was discussed), and it was great learning about the (insert job title) position overall. It sounds like an exciting opportunity, and I’m looking forward to hearing any updates you may have. I hope to hear from you soon.
* **SILENCE YOUR PHONE AND NOTIFICATIONS**
	+ Turn your phone on airplane mode or DO NOT DISTURB

**When to talk about pay!​**
Do your research. Find out salary ranges for your city, industry, and the job title you are applying for. Employers are looking for candidates who hold a certain level of skills, expertise, and knowledge. So, do not undervalue your past experiences. Make sure that every component of your job application, from the resume to the interview, highlights those experiences and be as specific as possible when referencing your skills and abilities. Do not make it personal, instead focus on the professional aspects that make you worth the salary. Ask for a reasonable amount.

* In the first interview, you can ask what the position pays.
* In the second interview or when you get the offer, it is more acceptable to ask about compensation. Be sure to express your interest in the job but be ready to negotiate. If you feel the compensation is too low, you need to give solid reasons as to why you should be paid more (e.g., salary research, strengths, experience, work shortage, etc.). Be ready to give an amount, but do not be first. Even in a challenging job market, negotiating in good faith is always acceptable. Ask for what you want, emphasize the value you can bring to the organization when discussing salary during an interview, and be honest about your situation.
* Get it in writing. The compensation, job title and responsibilities, and other details documented. This can be done in an email by reiterating everything you were told about the position by the hiring manager.