**Writing the Story of You**

Writing or updating your résumé is a great opportunity to step back and think about where you’ve been and where you’d like to go. Do you like the path you’re on, or is it time for a change? Are you focused on a particular field, or do you need some time to explore?

What’s your story? Thinking about where you’ve been and where you want to go will help focus your job search.

You might find it helpful to think about the “story of you”—the things you are passionate about, your skills, your ability to help an organization reach its goals, the path you’ve been on so far, and the path you want to follow in the future (see [**Figure** 18.1](https://etext-ise.pearson.com/eps/pearson-reader/api/item/4b0db6ed-b4aa-48cd-b7b8-79b0f191d942/1/file/bovee-bct-14e_eText_v3/OPS/xhtml/ch18_pg0002.xhtml#P700101245100000000000000000643B)). Think in terms of an image or a theme you’d like to project. Are you academically gifted? An effective leader? A well-rounded professional with wide-ranging talents? A creative problem solver? A technical wizard? Writing your story is a valuable planning exercise that helps you think about where you want to go and how to present yourself to target employers.

**Figure 18.1**

Writing the Story of You

Writing the “story of you” is a helpful way to think through where you’ve been in your life and career so far, where you are now, and where you would like to go from here. Remember that this is a private document designed to help you clarify your thoughts and plans, although you probably will find ways to adapt some of what you’ve written to various job-search documents, including your résumé.

# Learning to Think Like an Employer

When you know your side of the hiring equation a little better, switch sides and look at it from an employer’s perspective. Recognize that companies take risks with every hiring decision—the risk that the person hired won’t meet expectations and the risk that a better candidate has slipped through their fingers. Many companies judge the success of their recruiting efforts by *quality of hire*, a measure of how closely new employees meet the company’s needs.[2](https://etext-ise.pearson.com/eps/pearson-reader/api/item/4b0db6ed-b4aa-48cd-b7b8-79b0f191d942/1/file/bovee-bct-14e_eText_v3/OPS/xhtml/ch18_pg0027.xhtml#P70010124510000000000000000069C3) Given this perspective, what steps can you take to present yourself as the low-risk, high-reward choice?

Employers judge their recruiting success by *quality of hire*, and you can take steps to be—and look like—a high-quality hire.

Follow the online conversations of professional recruiters to learn what their hot-button issues are.

Of course, your perceived ability to perform the job is an essential part of your potential quality as a new hire. However, hiring managers consider more than just your ability to handle the job. They want to know if you’ll be reliable and motivated—if you’re somebody who “gets it” when it comes to being a professional in today’s workplace. A great way to get inside the heads of corporate recruiters is to “listen in” on their professional conversations by reading periodicals such as *Workforce Management* and blogs such as Fistful of Talent and The HR Capitalist.

**Researching Industries and Companies of Interest**

Learning more about professions, industries, and individual companies is a vital step in your job search. It also impresses employers, particularly when you go beyond the easily available sources such as a company’s own website. “Detailed research, including talking to our customers, is so rare it will almost guarantee you get hired,” explains the recruiting manager at Alcon Laboratories.[3](https://etext-ise.pearson.com/eps/pearson-reader/api/item/4b0db6ed-b4aa-48cd-b7b8-79b0f191d942/1/file/bovee-bct-14e_eText_v3/OPS/xhtml/ch18_pg0027.xhtml#P70010124510000000000000000069C5)

[**Table** 18.1](https://etext-ise.pearson.com/eps/pearson-reader/api/item/4b0db6ed-b4aa-48cd-b7b8-79b0f191d942/1/file/bovee-bct-14e_eText_v3/OPS/xhtml/ch18_pg0004.xhtml#P700101245100000000000000000647B) lists some of the many websites where you can learn more about companies and find job openings. Start with The Riley Guide, which offers advice for online job searches as well as links to hundreds of specialized websites that post openings in specific industries and professions. Your college’s career center placement office probably maintains an up-to-date list as well.

**Table 18.1**

Selected Job-Search Websites

| **Website**[**\***](https://etext-ise.pearson.com/eps/pearson-reader/api/item/4b0db6ed-b4aa-48cd-b7b8-79b0f191d942/1/file/bovee-bct-14e_eText_v3/OPS/xhtml/ch18_pg0004.xhtml#P70010124510000000000000000064D0) | **URL** | **Highlights** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Riley Guide | [www.rileyguide.com](http://www.rileyguide.com/) | Vast collection of links to both general and specialized job sites for every career imaginable; don’t miss this one—it could save you hours of searching |
| [CollegeRecruiter.com](http://collegerecruiter.com/) | [www.collegerecruiter.com](http://www.collegerecruiter.com/) | Focused on opportunities for graduates with fewer than three years of work experience |
| Monster | [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com/) | One of the most popular job sites, with hundreds of thousands of openings, many from hard-to-find small companies; extensive collection of advice on the job-search process |
| MonsterCollege | [college.monster.com](http://college.monster.com/) | Focused on job searches for new college grads; your school’s career center site probably links here |
| CareerBuilder | [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com/) | One of the largest job boards; affiliated with more than 150 newspapers around the country |
| Jobster | [www.jobster.com](http://www.jobster.com/) | Uses social networking to link employers with job seekers |
| USAJOBS | [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov/) | Official job-search site for the U.S. government, featuring everything from jobs for economists to astronauts to border patrol agents |
| IMDiversity | [imdiversity.com](http://imdiversity.com/) | Good resource on diversity in the workplace, with job postings from companies that have made a special commitment to promoting diversity in their workforces |
| [Dice.com](http://dice.com/) | [www.dice.com](http://www.dice.com/) | One of the best sites for high-technology jobs |
| TopTechJobs | [toptechjobs.com](http://toptechjobs.com/) | Concentrates on jobs for IT specialists and engineers; also incorporates [NetTemps.com](http://nettemps.com/) for contractors and freelancers looking for short-term assignments |
| Internship Programs | internshipprograms.com | Posts listings from companies looking for interns in a wide variety of professions |
| SimplyHiredIndeed | [www.simplyhired.com](http://www.simplyhired.com/)[www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com/) | Two specialized search engines that look for job postings on hundreds of websites worldwide; they find many postings that aren’t listed on job board sites such as Monster |

\*Note: This list represents only a small fraction of the hundreds of job-posting sites and other resources available online; be sure to check with your college’s career center for the latest information.

**Sources:** Individual websites, all accessed 10 May 2016.

Employers expect you to be familiar with important developments in their industries, so stay on top of business news.

To learn more about contemporary business topics, peruse leading business periodicals and newspapers with significant business sections (in some cases you may need to go through your library’s online databases to access back issues).

Thousands of bloggers, microbloggers, and podcasters offer news and commentary on the business world. AllTop is another good resource for finding people who write about topics that interest you. In addition to learning more about professions and opportunities, this research will help you get comfortable with the jargon and buzzwords currently in use in a particular field, including essential keywords to use in your résumé.

# BILE APP

**The**[**Indeed.com**](http://indeed.com/)**mobile app lets you search for jobs and apply for them from your phone.**

**Take advantage of job-search apps as well, including those offered by job-posting websites and major employers. You can use them to learn more about the company as well as specific jobs. See**[**“Job-Search Strategies: Maximize Your Mobile”**](https://etext-ise.pearson.com/eps/pearson-reader/api/item/4b0db6ed-b4aa-48cd-b7b8-79b0f191d942/1/file/bovee-bct-14e_eText_v3/OPS/xhtml/ch18_pg0004.xhtml#P70010124510000000000000000064DD)**for more tips on using a smartphone in your job search.**

# Job-Search Strategies: Maximize Your Mobile

The mobile business communication revolution is changing the way employers recruit new talent and the way job candidates look for opportunities. Many companies have optimized their careers websites for mobile access, and some have even developed mobile apps that offer everything from background information on what it’s like to work there to application forms that you can fill out right on your phone.

However, don’t be too quick to abandon a job application or an investigation into an employer just because the firm doesn’t have a careers app or a mobile-friendly job site. Creating apps and mobile-friendly websites takes time and money, and many employers are still in the process of optimizing their online career materials for mobile devices. In a recent survey, 40 percent of mobile users said they would abandon a nonmobile job application—a distressingly high number in a slow job market. Don’t miss a great opportunity just because an employer hasn’t caught up to your mobile habits.

In addition to researching companies and applying for openings, integrating a mobile device into your job-search strategy can help with networking and staying on top of your active job applications. For instance, some companies don’t wait long after extending an offer; if they don’t hear from the top candidate in a short amount of time, they’ll move on their next choice. By staying plugged in via your mobile device, you won’t let any opportunities pass you by.

Think of ways to use your mobile device to enhance your personal brand and your online portfolio. If you want to work in retail, for example, you could take photos of particularly good or particularly bad merchandizing displays and post them with commentary on your social media accounts. Employers doing background research on you on will see these posts and recognize you as a candidate who is invested in his or her career and the industry as a whole. Many of the tools you can use to build your personal brand are available as mobile apps, including blogging platforms, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

Dozens of apps are available to help with various aspects of your job search. Résumé creation apps let you quickly modify your résumé if you come across a good opportunity. Business card scanning apps make it easy to keep digital copies of business cards, so you’ll never lose important contact information. Note-taking apps are a great way to plan for interviews and record your postinterview notes. Use your phone’s scheduling capability to make sure you never miss an interviewing or a filing deadline. Polish your interviewing skills with your phone’s audio- and video-recording features or a practice-interview app. If an employer wants to interview you via Cisco WebEx or another online meeting system, those apps are available for your phone or tablet as well.

You’ve been paying a lot for your mobile service—now make that mobile work for you by helping you land a great job.

# CAREER APPLICATIONS

1. Would it be a good idea to present your online portfolio on your smartphone during a job interview? Why or why not?
2. Is it wise for applicants to shun a company that doesn’t have a mobile-friendly careers website or a career app? Why or why not?

# Translating Your General Potential into a Specific Solution For Each Employer

An important aspect of the employer’s quality-of-hire challenge is trying to determine how well a candidate’s attributes and experience will translate into the demands of a specific position. Customizing your résumé to each job opening is an important step in showing employers that you will be a good fit. As you can see from the sample résumés in [**Figures** 18.4](https://etext-ise.pearson.com/eps/pearson-reader/api/item/4b0db6ed-b4aa-48cd-b7b8-79b0f191d942/1/file/bovee-bct-14e_eText_v3/OPS/xhtml/ch18_pg0013.xhtml#P70010124510000000000000000066CC) through [18.6](https://etext-ise.pearson.com/eps/pearson-reader/api/item/4b0db6ed-b4aa-48cd-b7b8-79b0f191d942/1/file/bovee-bct-14e_eText_v3/OPS/xhtml/ch18_pg0013.xhtml#P70010124510000000000000000067AB), customizing your résumé is not difficult if you have done your research. In fact, from your initial contact all the way through the interviewing process you will have opportunities to impress recruiters by explaining how your general potential translates to the specific needs of the position.

An essential task in your job search is presenting your skills and accomplishments in a way that is relevant to the employer’s business challenges.