

JOB SEARCH OUTLINE – HOW TO MARKET YOURSELF

INTRODUCTION

As part of Becas MOB's strategic planning exercise, one important project that resulted was the design of an effective aid mechanism for current and former Brockmann Fellows. The most frequently cited problem Fellows encounter is a lack of adequate professional opportunities upon their return to Mexico (sometimes paired with reverse re-acclimation shock). While this may be true in general, we tend to believe opportunities in Mexico abound for ambitious, well-prepared, bright and resourceful people like yourselves. This guide will thus focus on what you can do to prepare yourself for finding the right job for you.

The keys are to be well prepared, disciplined, and aggressive in looking for opportunities. If you see something you want, go after it. Finding the job you want takes planned, systematic effort and preparation. Your future career depends not only on knowing your qualifications, but also on how well you market them. Plan, and start, your job search well in advance of your return to Mexico (at least 6 months before the planned starting date). Know where to look for contacts and opportunities and use them to your advantage. Ask past Brockmann Fellows for advice and mentorship. Many will gladly provide it. Resolve to survive disappointments and persist in looking. Don't be discouraged if you don't get immediate results.

This short guide is meant to help those who want to make sure they find the right job, and those willing to work for it. It should work just as well for those who have yet to return to Mexico, and those who have already been in the country for some time. While there are comprehensive books on the subject (some listed at the end), we believe herein lay the bases for sorting out one's true aspirations, identifying resources, preparing and finding opportunities for productive employment in Mexico.

The guide is organized into the following sections:

PART I

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF	Pg. 2
ABOUT YOUR OBJECTIVES	Pg. 2
ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR OBJECTIVES	Pg. 4
YOUR ACTION PLAN	Pg. 5

PART II

JOB SEARCH TIPS	Pg. 7
SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND CONTACTS	Pg. 8
NETWORKING	Pg. 9
OTHER STRATEGIES	Pg. 13
NEGOTIATING AN OFFER	Pg. 14

PART III

THE RESUME (CV)	Pg. 16
COVER LETTERS	Pg. 18
INTERVIEWING	Pg. 19
OTHER USEFUL PUBLICATIONS	Pg. 24
CLOSING WORDS	Pg. 24
APPENDIX	Pg. 25

1- BEFORE YOU START

ABOUT YOURSELF

The first step in any job search is to know where you stand and what your situation really is.

Start by documenting your personal offer, that is, what you have to offer any future employer. Make a very thorough analysis. Force yourself to be as specific and detailed as possible. For example, you might start with the following:

You are bilingual with a foreign education

You have work experience in _____ (document specific work experience)

You have had responsibility in _____ (once again, document specifics)

You developed special skills in _____ (project management, programming, communications, customer relations, accounting, financial reporting, design, drafting, etc.)

You carried out research in _____

What else do you have to offer that is of value to a future employer? (For instance, specific achievements, adaptability, an alternative career already developed, personal integrity, flexibility with respect to compensation, or past success in win/win negotiations)

Your strengths: document what they are. Be honest. (For instance, a long term vision, well-organized, systematic at problem solving, responsible, trustworthy, people skills, quick at learning, teamwork oriented, computer literate, etc.). Remember, there may be concealed advantages. If you retain sources of information, contacts and resources alive and available both in Mexico and where you studied, you can make yourself much more attractive. So as soon as you return to Mexico keep in touch with your contacts back where you studied to promote a flow of information. Your value to local companies will be partially based on your direct access to, and understanding of, important new trends in your field of interest abroad. Leverage your strengths.

You still also have to make yourself aware of your weaknesses. Otherwise they may come back to haunt you. So list them. Be honest. These are what you have to work on to improve. Take a look from certain angles or areas of expertise. Repeat this exercise to make sure you haven't missed anything.

- What have you failed to achieve in your professional life in the past? In your personal life? Why?
- Do you not have work experience in an important area?
- Do you have limited access to important contacts?
- Any personality characteristics that you need to work on?
- Any specific requirements or restrictions (like improving your English or public speaking)?
- What skills did others in your field develop that you haven't?
- What else do you have to develop to be of more value to an employer in your field of interest?

ABOUT YOUR OBJECTIVES

- The next step is to ask yourself three important questions.
- Do you really know what you want?
- Do you know what type of working environment you want?
- Do you know what types of employers interest you?

Ask yourself if you really know what you're looking for. What are your true ambitions? Start thinking in depth what success is for you. It could be making a contribution to a team-managed firm in a growth-enabling setting, work enjoyment and sharing a positive attitude towards daily work, achieving specific income levels at specific dates, leading a wholesome active life, or it could be growing your own company in a specific sector. Make an effort to understand your values, skills, interests and dreams. Also, know what failure is for you. Make it explicit; that way you'll be able to evaluate progress. A worthy life plan has both purpose and direction.

Continuing with the same line, ask yourself, what motivates you in life? It could be challenges, the chance to learn something new, merit recognition, growing your own family, etc. What motivates you at work? Perhaps it is teamwork, achievement, economic compensation, job benefits, feedback and recognition, professional development, modern facilities, independence, competition, quiet, fast-paced work style, flexible hours, travel opportunities, customer contact, responsibility, information processing, little uncertainty or creativity. Do you want to work in a large, medium or small institution? Do you prefer to work in a large city or a smaller town? Think carefully. Consider what you really want (what you're willing to work for and earn) as opposed to what you wish you had but are not willing to do all it takes to obtain (note that first you need to know the true requirements).

From these responses you can begin to consider your objectives, long-term and short-term. It generally helps to phrase them explicitly, considering the occupational area or career field, the industry, employer size, and geographic limitations.

Your long-term (5-10 year) goals are: _____ (to raise a family, to expand operations throughout Mexico, to manage successively larger projects, to live a healthy life, to grow a business, to have your own home, etc.). Note the implications. For instance, if you want to start a business or join a recent start-up, you will most likely have to sacrifice current income for a larger potential benefit in the future. In that case, make sure you are willing to bet on the future while hedging risks to the extent possible, and make sure you can handle the uncertainty involved for a few years.

With this in mind, your short-term goals are: _____ (To get a well paid job, to gain experience in a specific industry, to live in certain city, to access certain contacts, to get married, etc.). Ask yourself once again if this is true; if this is what you're really looking for (and willing to work for).

You can now begin to determine where you want to go. It might look like the following: Your field of emphasis is _____ (finance, environment, economic development, tax law, policy implementation, etc.) and you seek participation in a team of _____ (talented, educated, etc.) professionals within an entity currently active in _____ (region, location), preferably in _____ (more specifically) and doing work in _____ (industries, segments, sectors, etc.). Think of the factors involved (your travel availability, the base location, language requirements, reputation of the organization, etc.). Think of what you may be able to realistically do for the organization (specific research, general management, strategy formulation, human resources, marketing, field work, technical expertise, etc.)

Ask yourself, what increases your work enjoyment? Think of all relevant variables. (For instance, integrity of colleagues, interaction beyond workplace, work variability, traveling or being in a specific location, informality of the work environment, reputation of the employer, size of organization, flexibility, etc.) The industry and occupations you seek should be compatible with your interests and values.

Think, what don't you want in a job? (Organizational tension, personal conflicts, biased treatment, inconvenient location, bureaucracy and lobbying, etc.) The more you know about your ideal job and the more focused you are, the more likely you are to find such a position. Focus on your target: a job category in a specific industry.

Review your original goals before you studied your master's degree and evaluate how you changed.

- Are these still valid? Do you have new goals for the next stage of your life?
- Which changes have you undergone over the last 3 years?
- Which do you like? Which are problematic?
- Has your image of your career changed, or has it stabilized for some time?
- What knowledge and skills did you acquire recently?
- Which skills can you further develop? Is there a demand for them?
- What people in which positions are doing the things you would like to be doing in 5-10 years? Why?
- What aspects of Mexican life do you miss most while being away?
- When you envision returning to Mexico what do you imagine will be complicated and frustrating?
- How will you deal with it?
- What expectations will be placed on you for being a graduate of a foreign university?
- What time frame have you set for securing productive employment once you return?
- How much time can you give yourself to find the right job?

In the end, just as with a well-run institution, a personal mission statement should detail who you are, what you do and why you do it. A vision statement should detail where you're heading and which main obstacles you should focus on overcoming in order to advance the furthest. Identify opportunities, weaknesses and threats. Review these every 1-2 years. Success is then defined as achieving your vision.

Finish this self-assessment exercise by summarizing your objectives in one sentence each. Go back and look at these often.

ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR OBJECTIVES

Having figured out your objectives, you need to think about the consequences of these objectives. If you are to live in a different city, there are considerations, both positive and negative: You may not have friends there, your immediate family might resent it, you may need to get a home or a car, different weather, career development issues, you may have access to research centers, you may have an opening for other activities and hobbies, you may need to commute, or you may have a chance to completely change your lifestyle. Think carefully.

If you return to the same city where you lived before, there are also consequences to be considered. Perhaps you can utilize contacts and a developed reputation. Or perhaps better career opportunities might be restricted as compared to larger cities. Some family, personal and financial issues may become relevant. Don't overlook these.

Think carefully about the difficulties of returning to Mexico after life abroad. Most people you will encounter back in Mexico have little knowledge of what you have undergone, and thus will not value what you think is valuable. Plan for what you will encounter, culturally, opportunity-wise, salary-wise and in terms of re-acclimation. Women may experience more difficulty if they enjoyed relative independence overseas. Be aware that reverse culture shock does occur to everyone, to a greater or lesser degree based on expectations and the degree of cultural immersion abroad. Past Brockmann Fellows may be quite helpful in overcoming this. We strongly advise you to seek their help and counseling.

Think about the consequences of the industry, setting, entity size, structure, growth potential and reputation. There will be opportunities and risks involved.

You may also need to further clarify a few things.

- Of the things you want and don't want, which are desirable and which are required? What is the relative importance of each?
- What opportunities derived from your objectives will arise in 5, 10 and 20 years? What would you like to be doing? What will your needs be?
- Who is doing the things you would like to be doing in 5, 10 and 20 years? What positions do they have and how did they get there?
- Are your objectives realistic, time-phased and measurable? What stage do you want to reach by what time?
- Which skills that you possess are truly marketable? Which skills did you not develop that others in your field did? Can you still develop them? What are the consequences of your strengths and weaknesses?
- What personal characteristics will help you achieve success? Does your personality tie in with the objective? How?
- To what extent is compensation an issue? Is a high salary an immediate need?
- Do you have any obligations remaining that you need to honor? What are the consequences?

Finally, considering all of the foregoing, can you make a competitive personal offer for the specific position that you want? If not, rethink your position or plan on acquiring all necessary skills, contacts, resources and experiences to be able to make a competitive proposal. Simply having a high level master's degree from a top university is not enough. You also need to prepare to get a job and be productive.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

The most important part of ending up where you want to be is having a well thought plan to get there. So you will need to craft a plan of action. That is, the steps you need to follow in order to reach your goals. If you are still away from Mexico, take that into account. Try to start six months before you plan to start the job. It should include at least the following steps:

Summarize your strategy

- Define your objectives, interests and offer
- Research to verify that opportunities are available

Make a program to follow.

- Include dates. Take into account how long you are willing to spend searching.
- Start six months before your master's ends. Prepare with much anticipation.

Make a list of:

- Networks, referrals and contacts in the field/industry/sector you wish to enter
- Brockmann Fellows that may assist you (primarily in your field of interest)
- Contacts to be made at seminars, presentations or other events
- Headhunters and placement agencies that work in your field of interest
- Possible employers (with details of their desirable characteristics)
- Internet listings/sites that may be useful

Get strong recommendations**Begin a networking campaign**

- Gain information through your networks
- Join professional associations if necessary
- Attend courses and seminars if necessary

Research potential employers. Find out their size, industry position, strategy, projects, etc.

Get in touch with potential employers: send cover letters and resumes

- Set up interviews
- Follow up all contacts

Evaluate all offers (terms and flexibility, location, type of work, training, benefits, etc.)

Close a deal and start right away

2- PREPARATION

JOB SEARCH TIPS

The second part of this text relates to the two important keys to success: to be better prepared than anyone with whom you might compete, and to be aggressive in pursuing what you want (initiative is always highly rewarded). As a rule, the best jobs do not go to those with the best credentials. They go to the best prepared and most energetic.

As such keep in mind the following tips.

- Establish a schedule of job search activities (specify the time you will devote every week) and stick to it
- Keep track of your progress by noting everything from when you initiated contact with a potential employer to the outcome.
- Every once in a while review whether your plan remains realistic. Evaluate which strategies are producing the best results. Put more energy into these. If the job you want is not realistic at this time or in a particular location, go back to the first steps. Look for other locations, industries or consider starting at a lower position. If you are making steady progress, then do stick to the plan.
- Position yourself to take advantage of opportunities related to your interests.

Choose at least 30 potential employers. You will need to look at that many if you want to secure the job that's right for you. Put them into three categories: The primary targets, the secondary targets and a reserve. Keep a file on each of the entities in your primary target group. Store related articles or references in industry publications. If you find anything that makes you think you wouldn't want to work for a primary target or that its future looks risky, drop it from the primary target group. At that point move up another one from the secondary target group.

Research all primary targets very well. At the very least, carefully read each one's recruiting literature, web page and annual report. Call them up and request brochures, catalogs or other printed information they have. Do the same with their customers, suppliers and competitors.

- What they do, size, competitive position in the industry, customers, channels, products and services, sales, earnings and benefit programs
- History and reputation
- Structure, ownership, subsidiaries, parent companies and locations
- Programs and new projects
- Corporate policies and culture
- Strategy and plans for expansion
- Trends and issues in the field
- Problems in the industry and/or the institution
- Top executives
- Job openings and compensation packages
- Ask yourself: where would I fit in and why? What skills and qualities are required for the position? What is the salary for the position?

Keep written record of all contacts and progress made. All information you provide and feedback you receive should be put in writing.

- Have confidence in yourself and your abilities. Follow opportunities aggressively.
- Follow up cover letters with confirmation phone calls.
- Remember, well-prepared paperwork is an easy way to score points.
- Be honest, concise and clear.
- Market your marketable strengths.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

Remember, preparation is one key to success. In the process, you will need to research information and become well documented to achieve the best preparation. Be creative in your search. These sources may help, whether for finding a job upon returning to Mexico or for networking further ahead in your career:

Your current or past work colleagues.

Your own or your family's acquaintances, such as friends, doctors, travel agents, realtors, etc.

Your undergraduate and graduate schools.

- Career Services at your graduate school at the very least should have preparation materials. You should seek advice from Career Services staff on issues related to re-entry shock, foreign recruiting at school, interviewing workshops, resume writing, job search strategies and career planning.
- You can speak to current faculty for advice on specific subjects or specific fields, especially your academic advisor. Faculty often know about conferences and seminars in your field and may facilitate your attendance. Be alert for faculty (both from your department and others) who have connections with universities, government entities or research organizations in Mexico.
- Opportunities may arise from alumni networks. They should have a web site with the means to locate volunteering alumni. Use this resource to your advantage.
- Your school library will also have magazines, journals, directories and valuable trade information.

Becas MOB/Asociacion de Exbecarios.

- Past Fellows are an excellent source of leads into almost any career. The Asociacion de Exbecarios' database will be the main instrument to locate them (for the time being, contact them through www.becasmob.org.mx). You can seek placement opportunities from Brockmann Fellows in your field. Some may provide a mentorship if approached properly. Others will provide valuable advice on everything from re-adjusting to Mexico to job searching tips for specific locations. Many went through the very same situation you are encountering or will shortly encounter, so are quite knowledgeable.
- You can also seek advice from Becas MOB's Board members, who constitute a group of willing unpaid advisors in various fields.

The internet.

- Almost all companies, nonprofit organizations and institutions active in the world today have a web page with important information. You can find them through a search engine such as google (www.google.com) using the right keywords.
- Most professional associations or societies also have a web page. You can purchase directories, industry trade magazines and other sources from their web pages.
- You can buy books and directories on any conceivable subject, industry, category, field or budget directly from sources such as Amazon (www.amazon.com). They mail to Mexico.
- American Chamber (Amcham) has a job directory in which you may list yourself (www.amcham.com.mx).
- CONACYT also has a hiring directory online (www.conacyt.mx).
- There are other international and Mexican jobs bulletins throughout, as well as international employment hotlines. Use a search engine to locate them using those or similar keywords.

Industry directories can be a valuable source of information.

- Professional and industry directories.
- Directories of chambers of commerce.

- Government listings and directories (such as Bancomext's listing of exporters)
- Amcham has several company directories of members, as well as non-members and other industry directories. Many affiliates are foreign companies operating in Mexico or Mexican firms operating abroad, which are the sorts of institutions that will need foreign trained employees. Becas MOB has access to all these resources if anyone is interested.

Trade publications generally offer leads into conventions (for information gathering) and job opportunities in specific fields. Specific sections of newspapers do as well.

You can inquire directly with specific target companies and organizations.

Headhunters and recruitment/employment agencies.

- Guillermo Cepeda of Horton International (www.horton-mexico.com) has offered to include CVs of Brockmann Fellows in their database for mid and high level positions
- Korn/Ferry International, John Smith and others are listed in the Amcham directories (available at the Becas MOB's office).

NETWORKING

Everyone has heard the phrase "It's not what you know, but who you know". A good contact can get your resume read by people who count, arrange for you to meet key executives, set up interviews, and say just the right things about you to the right people. These are people who can give you needed information, connect you with someone with the information you seek or connect you with someone who can provide a job. This is something you may have to do to look for a job or to look for other professional opportunities later on in your career. The more effort you put into networking, the more successful you are likely to be. To give yourself a greater probability of success, start this phase long before you return to Mexico. Stay abreast of current trends and developments in Mexico. Maintain communication with individuals in your professional field at home. Take advantage of trips you make to Mexico before you finish school, to visit professional organizations and potential employers. Initiate mutually beneficial relationships.

You now have a wonderful opportunity to reestablish contact with the people you know and to meet many interesting new people. The professional alliances you build now and continue to nurture will provide you a base of professional colleagues with whom you can dialogue. The better supported you are by personal contacts and information sources, the better you can perform in today's fast-paced environment. You may feel uncomfortable asking for help; remember, though, that most people are sincerely glad to be of assistance, if you approach them in a considerate manner. Some get an ego boost from being the "expert". Others identify with your situation. Besides, if you are well informed about the sector, they may learn from your ideas.

There are at least three types:

- Current contacts
- Resources for target companies
- Industry information experts

Now, where do you find those contacts? Start with the obvious: people you know. Each is a potential source of contacts to your career area of interest or to your target organizations. Consider friends, relatives, your current and former professors, other students and professional acquaintances (your previous boss, doctor, accountant, lawyer, realtor, stock broker, tax specialist, past customers or competitors, etc.). Let everyone know about your job search long before you need to have a job. Friends find their friends jobs. So do relatives. If you know anyone who works in a target organization, contact him/her. Arrange for an informational interview.

There are other sources of contacts that can help you in your plan. Ask them for the names of people who might provide you with additional insight into your chosen career area or the names of those to whom you might send your resume. Get permission to use the names of references, and do make use of them. Develop contacts with influential individuals in your field back in Mexico. Many organizations only hire from within or through personal connections. Consider the following leads:

- School Career Services and its Alumni network. Don't overlook this important resource. Depending on which school you attended, there are Alumni willing to help you out. They can provide a wealth of information about careers and some great referrals. Foreign student advisors can provide you access to other Mexican students or alumni in Mexico. Your academic advisor should also be of help if you put in the effort.

- The same is true of other Brockmann Fellows and Board members of the Foundation. Collaborate with Fellows who recently returned from abroad and who are also looking for work. Jobseekers working in teams turn up much more useful information than a single person acting alone. There is a network of Brockmann Fellows already in Mexico that will willingly assist you with advice. Use it. The mutual support a group provides is very important in what otherwise can be a lonely struggle.
- Locate other Mexicans who have foreign degrees. People who share common experiences are more likely to want to help one another.
- People in Mexico who have achieved in the field you seek. These people you may find in the chamber of commerce directories or in newspaper articles. You may contact them even if only by phone.
- Members of organizations to which you belong or would belong once you get the right job. You may also contact them.
- Clients/suppliers/collaborators of your target institutions. You may also contact them.
- Community groups of business leaders.
- Professional associations are comprised of people with mutual interests in a given career area. Virtually all careers have their own associations and you can find them usually listed in the internet or in directories of professional associations. Most meet monthly or quarterly. Many have international divisions and international membership. Often, non-member can attend a meeting or two before joining. These meetings provide great opportunities to make contact with people who are in a position to be of fairly direct help. They may also yield newsletters with important information. So, find the one that suits you, join and get involved. Volunteer for committee work if possible. Subscribe to their newsletters and journals.

Remember, the intent behind networking is to educate yourself about the needs and opportunities in your field of interest in Mexico, and to make yourself known to influential individuals who have the power to hire you. Prepare a script for networking (and some conversation openings) that is natural to you. This will provide guideposts throughout your conversation. Make sure it encourages interactive discussion. Put yourself in the listener's context. Your objectives must be clear. Write a cover letter to know what to say (you may even send it beforehand to explain things). If you are contacting a referral, do mention your reference to start the conversation. If you have no reference or other contact, focus on sharing ideas so that the person can learn something as well.

- Choose a pattern of questions to be answered to "yes" (establish a "yes" pattern). You may start with relatively trivial concerns that will assure a "yes" response.
- Know what you're talking about. Do your research.
- Know who you're calling (your audience) and why.
- Know your objective.
- Balance the conversation by asking questions.
- Know how to introduce yourself to those who don't know you.
- Explain why you are getting in touch.
- Explain your current situation and your future objectives.
- Even if calling by phone, dress well. Be confident and professional.
- Ask for advice. Be open to suggestions outside your plan.

To get to an interview, you will first have to call. To get through you may need to get past the screener (a secretary or personal assistant). Be kind to the screener. Make him/her feel like he/she knows more about the organization than anyone else but the boss. Be polite but aggressive. Plan requests that can be answered positively. If you can't get through, write a note and then call early or late when your target is answering own phone calls. If you know the person, call at home if easier.

Now you are ready to get in touch with your contacts. Begin with a phone call. Quickly introduce yourself, your purpose in calling ("I'm interested in learning more about _____") and get an appointment to talk about what the person does and the field in general (an informational interview). Introduce what you want and what help he/she can provide in 20 seconds or less. Treat him/her like an expert. You seek information and ideas on an institution and/or industry in order to get a job and start a career in that specific field. Make it clear you are not seeking a job offer from him/her. Remember, at this point you're researching available options. Write simple notes on what you want to say in a note card.

You may be asked whom you are representing. You reply, yourself. When asked to state your business, do so clearly. You want information of whatever is of interest to you. Although a face-to-face interview is ideal, it may be unrealistic. If so, ask for a phone interview at a specific time. When evaluating calls, check if you:

- Got the screener's name
- Expressed clear objectives for the call
- Got to the point promptly and stated the reason for the call

- Stated you are not looking for a job directly from him/her
- Avoided being interviewed over the phone
- Suggested times for an appointment
- Got an appointment or reference name to call
- Offered a phone number in case there is a change
- Completed the call quickly
- Recorded the date, time, person, company and phone number

- **Your agenda for the meeting may include the following items. Set a time limit that you are asking for. You should be prepared to get everything done in that time. It should be short.**
- **Your introduction (who you are, education, current situation, objective and goals, why you are worth a couple of minutes).**
- **The advice and counsel you seek.**
 - Information you seek on specific entities or an industry/sector.
 - Problems the sector/industry/specific area faces.
 - Important trends.
 - Referrals (decision makers for your target job type) and how to best reach them. Who else might provide additional insight?
 - Feedback on your strategy and job leads (do take notes).
 - Review your target employment list. Ask for advice on successful ones.

- Volunteer important developments in the field with which you may be familiar (from your research or study overseas) that he/she may not know. This will make it more interesting for him/her.
- Confirm follow up issues and ask permission to use his/her name with referrals.
- Offer to keep him/her informed of your progress. (Other things may come up in the future if you made a favorable impression and this is a means to get them through to you. Everyone likes to contribute to someone's success).
- For the meeting:
 - Be confident and upbeat.
 - Establish objectives. Bring a list of questions that is well thought out and makes good use of the limited time you will have with this person (such as finding out what life is really like in that field, what the recurring problems are, how he/she got to where he/she did, etc.).
 - Exchange information. Ask for advice in entering the field, about the company, the position, other sources of information, job openings, how to best prepare for future employment in the field, etc.
 - If he/she is busy, be concise and plan for another meeting.
 - If he/she has no suggestions or needs to think about it, plan for another visit.
 - If you schedule another meeting, suggest topics and promise to call. Confirm it.
 - Resist gracefully to counter-productive actions like being asked for 10 resumes. Offer to send them yourself.
 - The key to the whole process is your desire and enthusiasm. If you are really interested, it will show. The person will then respond positively.

Objections are a sign the person is listening. It is an invitation to clarify. Don't interrupt him/her. Be patient and listen carefully. Counter objections with something constructive. When faced with objections:

- Probe to identify his/her needs. Do not respond with anything about you. Keep the emphasis on what is important him/her (to the listener).
- If he/she has no time available, propose to talk later (at a definite and predetermined time) and take no more than 15 minutes.
- If you are just asked for a resume, state that it doesn't convey your whole picture. Besides your objective is to exchange information.
- Document all objections.

Follow up all meetings with a thank you note in 24 hours maximum (with a copy of your resume). It should be informal and hand written on personal stationery if possible. If you offered to send along anything else, be sure to do it. Record in your notes what the contact could lead to and evaluate if further follow up is useful. When evaluating interviews, check if you:

- Expressed clear objectives for the interview and followed the agenda
- Established a “yes” pattern of answers
- Avoided being interviewed over the phone
- Got a reference name to call
- Completed the meeting on time

Note:

- Remember, marketing is a numbers game. It may take 15 calls to get one appointment. Be persistent and don't give up after one try. Don't take it personal when 14 calls don't yield an appointment. You're getting normal results. Practice is especially useful if you have to make many “cold calls” (to people you don't know and to whom you have no connection).
- Public figures and other over-networked individuals may resist. With them, make it clear you are well organized and prepared, have a specific agenda and need no more than 15 minutes.
- Be open to talk to any new referrals. Try to meet them in person. A talk over the phone lessens your chances to make a good impression.
- Ask permission to use referees' names with referrals.
- Keep records of all meetings, letters, contacts and promises.

OTHER STRATEGIES

Of the different strategies you can use, not all will produce the best results for you. For that reason you will need to evaluate them and put more energy into one or two. You may even have to choose a completely different alternative. These four may help in that respect if you are already in Mexico.

Job openings – You want to focus on the jobs that are open. If you have a friend in an organization you're interested in, have him/her relay you the internal job openings. You may decide to visit the personnel offices of target institutions to inquire about open positions. Wait to see a recruiter if possible. Some larger organizations have specific days for drop-ins at the personnel office. If they do, drop by frequently. When you find an appropriate job notice, pick up an application (or have one sent to you) and prepare it carefully, neatly and convincingly. Submit a resume tailored for that particular position with a well-written cover letter (too many applicants are screened out due to sloppy paperwork). Follow up the application with a polite phone call inquiring about the status of your application. Offer to submit anything else that is required and ask if you may come in and talk to someone about the position. It doesn't hurt to ask.

The internal approach – If you really want to join a specific organization, you may start from below. This strategy requires you take a volunteer position, internship, cooperative education placement or a lower level position in the organization. You use the position to establish personal contacts with as many people as possible and to gain valuable experience. This strategy may require some sacrifice but it is sure to work if joining that specific organization is what you really want.

Employment agencies – Private employment agencies and executive recruiters may be used if you have extensive work experience or experience in a specialized area (such as auditing, editing, engineering, etc.) Check any contracts for fee agreements and payment schedules. The employer normally pays any fees. Keep away from agencies that would put you in a position for which you are overqualified. Employment agencies are frequently used for state and federal government positions and may provide leads on opportunities. Before you fill out standard forms, consult the instruction workbooks if available. These forms are scored and there are simple short cuts to earning points.

The create-your-own-job approach – Many naive job seekers assume they must only look for job openings that have already been created. This is not necessarily so, especially in smaller Mexican institutions. A manager may have the need for certain skills even though a position hasn't been created yet. In certain situations, a job will be created because the right person with the right skills and profile was looking for work at the right time. If you do your homework, you could be that person.

NEGOTIATING AN OFFER

Most recent graduates with little work experience feel uncomfortable negotiating salary and benefit packages and feel ill-prepared to answer questions about a salary offer. Yet negotiating salary is a normal and reasonable part of accepting any job offer. Most job offer packages are negotiable, even for entry-level positions. As part of your job search and preparation, you should research what the job is worth.

- Consult salary surveys (AmCham and Coparmex publish them in Mexico)
- Ask people who are working in the field
- Review job postings and want ads for salary ranges
- Identify comparable positions in government or other institutions that are readily available
- Contact related professional associations
- Take into account local conditions that affect salaries and the cost of living

On the other hand, foreign trained individuals mistakenly assume that their graduate education will immediately translate into a high salary in Mexico. In most cases, you will first need to prove you are worth it. Avoid being overly ambitious in your entry salary request. Be alert for those opportunities with a high degree of upward mobility in responsibilities as well as salary. Remember that a high initial salary is not necessarily indicative of a valuable job opportunity and vice-versa. Your overseas training may qualify you for benefits somewhat better than strictly local Mexican terms. However, in other cases you may have to start low and work your way up. It depends on the organization. Be patient, put in the effort and be ready to earn what you think you're worth by providing commensurate results! Otherwise high unrealistic expectations may yield a sense of apparent irrelevance of your foreign academic study to the local work culture, with ensuing disappointment. Try to match your expectations to reality as best as possible. Prepare for it and plan for advancement in the long run.

The most appropriate time to discuss salary is when you've been extended an offer. At that point the employer is more open to your salary concerns. And even then, it is preferable to let the employer bring up the subject first. If you are asked about salary before an offer is made, consider the following:

- Emphasize your match with the organization's needs and your expectation that the salary will be competitive. Try postponing discussion of any salary until the employer is prepared to make you an offer.
- If you must give a figure, give a range that you are comfortable with based on your research.
- Try to get the employer to mention a salary figure first by turning the question back to him/her. Ask what he/she had in mind in terms of salary.
- If the salary is too low, respond with a long and thoughtful silence. Silence will usually result in the employer suggesting a higher figure in better than 40% of the cases. Express your enthusiasm for the position but indicate the salary is low. A lower salary may be offset by a benefits package and other factors associated with the job.

Before accepting or declining a job offer, evaluate all factors associated with the position and the organization. Ask about benefits (flexible work hours, in-house training opportunities, education benefits, support to attend conferences, health and dental plans, vacations, etc.). Consider bonus structure, promotion opportunities, professional challenge, frequency of performance reviews and salary increases, personalities of supervisors and co-workers, management style and corporate culture. These may become important factors in later rewards and satisfaction. Are the goals established for the position realistic and attainable? Evaluate all offers and choose the right one. Review once again:

- The position and its flexibility
- Job responsibilities
- Career opportunities and related future potential
- The organization's culture, lifestyle requirements and work environment
- Location and travel requirements
- Future projects

The first offer may not be the position or employer you most desire, especially if you just started looking. Express interest and ask for sufficient time to consider the offer ("to digest all the details"). Follow up on other prospective employers and inform them that you already have an offer, but since you are still considering them (position and organization) you are following up to see their interest. If you have prepared well don't assume nothing better will come along. If the employer you seek makes an offer that is too low, ask if there is room for a higher salary, for a change in job title or to have responsibilities expanded (a good justification for a higher salary).

Don't take the first offer for convenience, because a friend works there or because your friends think it sounds great. Choose a job because that is what you want. If the job is not right for you, you may be better off declining it. Consider taking a part-time job in the meantime that allows you to keep job searching. It's easy to give control of your job search to employers. They will tell you what jobs are available and may try to put you in a job they have had a hard time filling, possibly the job no one else wants.

When accepting an offer, confirm your acceptance in writing, restating the terms of the agreement. Ask the employer for a letter as well. Remember to contact all other employers to withdraw your application. Stop interviewing for any further positions.

3- RESUME, COVER LETTERS AND INTERVIEWING

THE RESUME (CURRICULUM VITAE)

In many cases, the resume and cover letter are the only means by which an employer may determine who will be invited for an interview. They should therefore be carefully prepared and contain enough pertinent information for that decision to be made. You should put forth much thought and effort to make a positive initial impression.

The resume is a short, concise outline of your employment objective, education, work experience, special qualifications and background. In short, it is an advertisement of what you have to offer an employer. You will need to highlight your accomplishments and reveal those factors that make you unique and desirable for a potential employer. It should convey concisely and strikingly the personal qualities that qualify you for a specific job. It should also contain factual and true information. Be positive in selling yourself but don't exaggerate to the point of misrepresentation. Leave the reader wanting to know more.

There is no ideal format, though most are written in a reverse chronological style which lists past employment in order by dates, with the most recent experience listed first. This is the most widely accepted format. Other formats that are not easy to evaluate or follow in time are not widely popular.

The resume should be neat and contain absolutely no typographical errors or misspelled words. Use phrases instead of full sentences to keep it concise and direct. Start sentences with action verbs but don't try to cover up inexperience with impressive-sounding terms for everything you've ever done. Don't use paragraphs longer than 8 lines. Have it proofread at least once, preferably twice by a second person.

Your resume should be laid out in an easily readable fashion. The format should be such that paragraphs, indentations, bullets, spacing and fonts do not contain inconsistencies or sloppiness. Letter sized paper of high quality white or off-white bond is the usual medium. Type your resume on a computer and use a laser printer. Unless you are an accomplished graphic artist we suggest you don't use adventurous layouts. The preferred length is one page with all information orderly condensed to appear presentable. Be brief, the shorter it is the more carefully it will be examined. However, there are always exceptions, particularly when applying for a specific job where more detailed information is required, or if you have extensive work experience and an extensive history of outstanding achievements.

It is suggested that you follow these categories:

- Identification – Your name, address, phone number, fax and e-mail are placed at the top of the resume. This information may be centered at the top of the page, blocked in the upper left hand corner or designed as letterhead on stationery. You may add your birth date or citizenship if it is important or provides you with any advantage.
- Objective (optional) – This is a clear and concise statement of your immediate employment objective. It should specify the type of position and the field of work in which you are interested, stressing what you may offer an employer instead of what you seek from it. If it is omitted, your objective should be explained in your cover letter.
- Work Experience – Begin with your most recent experience and include the job title, the employer, dates of employment, city where the job was held and a description of your job duties. Briefly include internships and volunteer work that directly relate to your career objective. Use action verbs to describe what you did (those that imply an action you performed, such as completed, managed, audited, obtained, wrote, etc.). Be very concise. Use specific buzzwords that are known in the industry but avoid the use of acronyms. Emphasize those duties and skills that relate or are transferable to the type of work you are seeking. Mention any achievements and promotions obtained. Use figures to stress results (money you saved a company, number of employees you managed, sales increases, etc.). If the experience is not related to your objective, use brief statements to describe the job functions you performed.
- Education – The most advanced degree you are completing or have completed should be listed first. Include the area of study, the school and the date acquired or projected. Previous university level degrees should be listed in reverse chronological order. Mention your grades or thesis title if exemplary. If you have little relevant work experience, list this section before Work Experience.

- Relevant Course Work (optional) – This category is hardly necessary and may only be used to list six to eight courses that clearly demonstrate a particular field of expertise, as related to your employment objectives. If you have finished school more than 2 years ago, omit this section.
- Specialized Skills – Include items that would apply to your career field, such as: proficiency in the use of particular software, fluency in foreign languages, presentation skills, public speaking, etc.
- Professional Affiliations, Honors and Awards – List the names of professional or academic organizations to which you belong. Include any offices or leadership positions you have held. List any scholarships, honors or awards you have received.
- Interests and Extracurricular Activities – You may want to include athletic, cultural or social interests, especially if they directly or indirectly relate to the position or industry.

Do not list references on the resume. Write REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST at the bottom. Type a list of your references on a separate sheet with the same heading used on your resume. Present your reference list only when the employer requests it. Always ask permission before using anyone as a reference. While references outside of Mexico will seldom if ever be consulted, the name of a well-known figure in Mexico (if one is willing to be your reference) will add considerable weight to the strength of your resume.

In conclusion, to write a resume take into account your relevant work experience, publications, education and any relevant awards, activities or skills that may be of interest to anyone evaluating candidates for the position which you seek. You have to leverage your strengths. You may find further information on how to write a resume that works for your specific needs by consulting publications that specialize on the subject. For a specific guide to making the best CV, refer to the publications listed at the end of this chapter.

COVER LETTERS

The cover letter (or letter of application) is a personal statement of interest in a particular position or company. A resume that is submitted by mail should always be accompanied by such a cover letter. It should be typed in the same quality paper as the resume. It should be addressed to a specific person (with a specific position) and be limited to one page. It is your job to find out who will be evaluating you for a job. If the organization has less than 50 people, address it to the president. Send it to him/her (make sure you know the correct spelling). Otherwise send it to a department head. If you don't know, call the company. Each letter must be individually tailored for the particular job or institution to which you are applying. Make it personal. If you are serious about finding suitable employment, it's absolutely necessary to develop a strong, convincing letter.

In preparing your letters, pay careful attention to the organization of ideas, grammar and spelling. Edit it ruthlessly, polish it and have a trusted editor give you a second opinion. It should be flawless in format and content, and should convey your information effectively and convincingly. Always use a standard business-letter format and maintain a formal tone, even if you are well acquainted within the organization. In most cases it is your presentation and what the employer will use to make a first impression. Use it to your advantage considering the position you seek.

The cover letter serves three basic purposes and is divided into sections accordingly:

Statement of Purpose – Begin with a statement of purpose (your interest in the position). Name the position to which you are applying and state how and where you learned of the position. Capture the reader's attention and interest with a hard-hitting and action-oriented first sentence (related to your past achievements) that will make the reader want to read more ("After being awarded _____ the logical step is...").

Explanation of Qualifications – Explain why you are interested in working for the institution and specify your reasons for desiring this type of work (including the area/sector/industry). Emphasize any qualifications you want the employer to notice and refer him/her to the enclosed resume. Be aggressive on why you are the right one for the position (uniquely).

Request for Response - Request an appointment for an interview in a firm and positive manner implying you expect an affirmative and immediate response. Or, better yet, give a time when you will contact the institution to further discuss employment opportunities. Offer to provide further information if necessary.

Emphasize or mention why you can contribute to and fit in the organization. Be honest about why you seek to work there. Provide references if appropriate and use any connections (same hometown, same school, etc.) you may have to the person. Use them to your advantage. Note your strengths and any restrictions that may be relevant. State why it is clear that a person with your qualifications (experience, contacts, motivation, bicultural...) is an asset to the organization. Express it creatively! Get right to the point. If you have strong letters of recommendation from past employers or well-known faculty with whom you did research, attach a copy.

In sending letters, establish a schedule. Keep accurate and well-organized records. Plan to follow up the letters you send with a phone call. Inquire if your letter arrived and about the status of your application.

Once again, you may find further information on how to write a cover letter that works for your specific needs by consulting those publications that specialize on the subject, some of which are listed at the end of this chapter.

INTERVIEWING

After one week of having received your mailings you need to call your contact. Just as for informational interviews and networking, often times you will need to call an employer to seek an interview. Once again, develop a short script you can deliver in 20 seconds or less that expresses why you're calling, why you are a strong candidate for hiring and what position you are interested in. Call very early or after work hours when he/she will be personally answering calls. Get through to the contact in your letter. Speak with confidence (do not demand a job, ask for the opportunity to discuss one). Show persistence and maturity. Find a pattern of questions for "yes" answers. Do not ask if there are job openings available. Once the conversation gets going secure an interview, whether informational or with the personnel department head, independently of whether there are job openings or not. In general follow the advice mentioned in the Networking section.

A job interview is both a subjective and factual communication experience in which the compatibility of the applicant's interest and qualifications are being measured and matched against the job requirements and the interviewer's personality. The applicant must be able to identify his/her qualifications and be able to convey them effectively to the interviewer in a positive manner. It is also your chance to evaluate whether the institution will give you the job you seek.

So prepare very well; preparation is one key to success. The information determines the strategy to follow. Well-qualified and intelligent applicants often miss good jobs due to a lack of interview preparation and practice. Preparation includes a thorough self-evaluation as described in chapter 1, and the awareness of how tough it can be to answer tough questions in a pressure situation. Practice is needed so as to have the facts at the tip of your tongue about your background, education, work experience, your plans, aspirations and goals, especially your accomplishments and information about the institution. Given personality preferences, it is helpful to review and evaluate your "image" prior to interviewing. Preparation also includes thorough knowledge of the institution and its industry. It is a good idea to schedule interviews so that the last interviews are the employers you care most about (you will get better at interviewing the more interviews you undertake).

The interview is the principal technique in landing a job. During the 60 minutes or so an interview is likely to take, you must present yourself and your skills better than anyone else or you won't be hired.

- **Know yourself, your materials, what you offer, and what you want and don't want, very well. That way you won't be stressed out and give a less-than-excellent impression. Be ready to end any meeting at any moment and walk out.**
 - Know how you will develop over time and how you will improve on your shortcomings.
 - Convey what you offer and your compatibility with the job. Know how your foreign education gives you a specific and realistic advantage. Some local employers don't know very much about foreign education or how it prepares students to better develop skills and knowledge that are beneficial to the specific employer. It is your task to make it known.
 - Reassess your own strengths and weaknesses and know how you will present them in each interview.

- **Know the employer well. Research the institution/company, call them up, visit them and find out information through the internet and other data bases. Talk to employees there. Find out as much as you can about it. Review it before any interview.**
 - Know why you are being interviewed and what specifically makes you a good candidate. Know what the job you seek requires.
 - Know how you can contribute to their goals, where you fit in and why. Know specifically why they should hire you and why you will be successful in the institution. Interviewers want to know specifically why you are interested in their organization.
 - Expect to be asked what you can add to the institution as an employee, both short term and long term.
 - Expect to be asked tough questions about your shortcomings. Be prepared to answer them.
 - Know why you are compatible with the organization. Is it team oriented? As work issues become increasingly complicated, collective knowledge and teamwork are often required to conceive the best solutions.
 - Talk to someone of relevance in the institution. Find out about the work atmosphere.

- **Know the interview procedure well. If you don't know what to expect you won't be relaxed and natural. Practice interviews with the procedure to be used if necessary. There are various types of interviews:**
 - A structured, impersonal interview, where a candidate's verbal responses to standardized questions are recorded, is only used for screening. Enthusiasm and a positive attitude will often offset a lack of work experience.
 - A stress interview is designed to make the interviewee uncomfortable and bring out insecurities. A single interviewer or a board may carry it out.

- Most selection interviews are a combination of unstructured discussion and stress interview.
 - Screening interviewers are looking for facts and a reason to reject you. The purpose of the screening interview is to weed out unacceptable candidates. Avoid controversy. Don't bring up questions regarding salary or benefits. A screening interviewer is trained in interviewing; a selection interviewer isn't.
 - The person able to hire you usually carries out a completely unstructured discussion.
 - A leaderless group discussion among several candidates, with one or more interviewers, is also possible.
- Know what they should see in you. Know who you will be seeing and why.
 - Make sure the interviewer knows about you. Fill out any necessary personal information forms completely, neatly and promptly. It may be the basis for a productive interview.

Before you go into any interview, note what employers look for:

- A lot of facts in a short time - The interviewer needs enough information to make a decision to hire you, turn you down or continue evaluating.
- Your personality and personal qualities - First impressions are important. They tell a lot about your poise, confidence, ability to communicate and general social skills. Important characteristics include:
 - Your leadership qualities (as evidenced by achievement) and your ability to work as part of a team
 - Your ability to take responsibility
 - Your maturity, drive and self-control
 - Your analytical and decision-making abilities
 - Your assertiveness and self-respect
 - Your need to achieve and flexibility
 - Your enthusiastic interest in the job, future in the institution and positive attitude towards the job
 - Your ability to respond well to inquiries.
 - Your interests - What you want to do and why you want to do it. Your career goals and geographic preferences (as discussed in chapter 1).
- Your qualifications - Grades, university, work experience and extracurricular activities may be important, but most important of all is how all these things relate to your long-range objectives, your potential for growth and the contribution you will make to the institution's goals.

Appearance: first impressions are very important. Your personal appearance is seen as the outward expression of your inner state of mind. Poor personal appearance is the primary reason why interviewees are rejected. Be on time. Dress appropriately for the position you are seeking; wear clothes that are clean and neat. For most jobs you will be better off dressing conservatively and formal. Dress to your advantage (to give an image of success and confidence).

The interview begins when the interviewer greets you. First impressions are important and often lasting. Stand, smile, look the person in the eye and shake hands firmly. Be receptive to the interviewer's style. Share responsibility for creating a comfortable atmosphere, with courtesy, enthusiasm, confidence and openness. Relax and speak clearly. Control any nervous habits such as tapping your foot or using informal speech patterns. Answers to questions must be your own based on who you are. As the interview closes, express interest in the position and briefly summarize why you are the right candidate. Then ask what the next step is or when you can expect to hear from the interviewer.

During the interview, there are a few "do's" and "don'ts".

- Don't act. Be honest. Be yourself, relax, speak freely. Interact with the interviewer. Know your information but don't memorize answers to standard questions. You will appear stiff.
- Speak sincerely. The only employer you will be happy working for is the one that likes the real you. Exaggerations or outright lies are usually attempts to hide some problem. An undiscovered lie will haunt you. A discovered lie can destroy your credibility. An employer doesn't want someone working for him or her that can't be trusted. Failure to tell the truth reveals a character trait that can't be remedied.
- Don't be too casual. Remember you are interviewing for a professional position.

- Don't ramble- get to the point. Be positive. Have your thoughts and questions well organized. Volunteer any important information if it is being overlooked. Be specific and give examples (examples are what give your statements credibility).
- Do talk about yourself. That's what the interview is for. When asked a question don't just answer yes or no. Elaborate on your thoughts and what is really being sought. If the question is ambiguous ask for clarification. You will be expected to contribute to the interview. Remember, every question or argument brought up is meant to evaluate why he/she should hire you, so highlight your strengths.
- Be a good listener but also ask questions that are important or help determine whether you fit in the organization. Think of questions that demonstrate what you already know, how interested you are in finding out more (that isn't mentioned in the company's literature), and your interest in the job. Also think of questions that will help you evaluate if the position fits your interests and values. You may ask:
 - What specifically you would do, your first assignment, and with whom you would work.
 - How many managers have graduate degrees in your area.
 - What your work plan would be for the next 6 months or 1-2 years.
 - What training you will need.
 - What the career path for anyone in the position is.
 - Anything you need to know about the institution that you couldn't find researching.
 - What the next step in the selection process is.
- Be a good listener but also ask questions that are important or help determine whether you fit in the organization. Think of questions that demonstrate what you already know, how interested you are in finding out more (that isn't mentioned in the company's literature), and your interest in the job. Also think of questions that will help you evaluate if the position fits your interests and values. You may ask:
- Do show commitment. Some employers spend large amounts in training new employees. If you leave early the entity will lose its investment. Be ready to prove you won't just move on. Demonstrate that you understand the pluses and minuses of the position you seek.
- Don't ask about salary or fringe benefits unless the interviewer has expressed interest in seeing you again. The interviewer won't want to discuss a salary until he/she has made an initial determination of interest in you. You may try asking what the position usually pays.
 - Know how much you should be paid and why. Know what the job really implies and find out a realistic salary for the position through other research beforehand.
- Offer to follow up with any further information to support arguments you made. Offer to give background information and further references if necessary.

Follow up all interviews with a thank you note and a call. Get feedback. Express your appreciation for the employer's time and consideration. Point to the positive conclusions of the interview, confirm your interest in the position (name it explicitly) and organization, and reiterate your strongest qualifications for the position. If additional information was requested, send it promptly. Add any new information that may be relevant which you failed to give before, and express your willingness to provide additional information if necessary. Mention anything you have done since the interview that demonstrates your interest in the job. Close with a suggestion for further action. If you are not contacted within the specific time, call to restate your interest and inquire about the status of their hiring process. If you see something you want, go after it.

Still, don't expect instant action. More interviews may be necessary to get hired. If you don't connect on the first try, don't give up. Keep trying. Interviewing is a skill that can be acquired. You will learn a great deal from each interview to improve your results in the future.

Helpful hints

- Call ahead to get a job description.
- Confirm the appointment and all necessary arrangements ahead of time. Know whom to contact in case of unavoidable changes or an emergency.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes early and go alone. Do not be late for any reason. Be well rested. Expect more than one interview by more than one person in any visit to the organization. In that case expect to repeat the same information many times.

- Bring a pen and notebook. Write a synopsis of the interview immediately afterward. Write down the time and place of the interview and the name of the interviewer (and anyone else you met). Write down important notes to help you decide in the future if you do receive an offer (what you liked and disliked). Make a note about any questions you answered poorly.
- Sit upright, smile and maintain good eye contact. Relax. Be confident. Remember a few complicated situations you faced in previous work that were resolved. Bring them up. Make sure they're factual.
- Present yourself as an honest person; don't try to hide anything.
- Combat the interviewer's boredom. Vary the tempo of your speech and tone of your voice. Point to the positive, such as the institution's leadership positions in the sector or industry.
- Be outwardly oriented. Don't think about yourself so much.
- Get the interviewer to talk about him/herself early.
- Get the interviewer to give you a job specification early in the interview and talk about the institution.
- Recognize the insecurities of the interviewer.
- Control the content of the interview. The interviewer may control the flow.
- Don't go into the interview thinking that the interviewer knows exactly what he/she wants out of the interview and will ask the appropriate questions.
- Bring a list of thoughtful questions you wish to ask the interviewer, along with a copy of your resume and list of references.
- Expect to meet a knowledgeable and well-researched person.
- Show you are interested. Be interested in the interview as an event in itself.
- The four keys to selling yourself are: enthusiasm (with a positive attitude), sincerity, tact and courtesy. Remind yourself that you are a person with skills and knowledge to offer. You've done your research and you are ready!
- Be willing to risk gambles on what appears to be a certain failure. Look at the downside, before the interview you had no offer. Afterwards the worst that can happen is that you still have no offer.
- When asking for clarification you acquire extra time to think. Don't worry about taking a few seconds to think before answering a question.
- Tactfully decline to answer questions about your private life.
- Prepare good answers to questions that probe for skeletons in your closet.
- Find out how references will respond to a check, especially anything that would disqualify you for the job you are seeking.
- Accept responsibility for personal conflicts.
- Avoid talking against a former employer. If you have to, do it dispassionately. Condemning others is condemning yourself. Be ready to answer positively about having been fired before.
- If you make a bad impression early you will have a hard time reversing it.
- Inconsistency can lead to the impression that you lack honesty.
- If you've done your homework, you will know much more about the organization than the interviewer will know about you.
- Be aware of stress. Silence by the interviewer is generally an imposition of stress. Wait through silence by counting the seconds it lasts. Only break silence with a question. Silence by the interviewee is a manifestation of confidence.

OTHER USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

The information provided in this short guide has been summarized from personal notes, the IIE's 1994 advice on Returning to Mexico and short guides by Career Services of The University of California at Riverside. As there are numerous publications on the subject of writing resumes, cover letters and job-hunting, I chose to focus more on establishing goals and a proper mind frame before job hunting. For further information on specific issues regarding job searching, please refer to the following information.

There are some publications that are sure to be of help in your preparation. A simple one to use is called JOB NOTES, part of the PRINCETON REVIEW JOB NOTES, by L. Michelle Tullier, PhD, Princeton Review Publishing, LLC, published in the US by Random House, Inc. New York 1997. They have JOB NOTES guides on Resume-writing, Networking, Interviewing and Writing cover letters. The Princeton Review also published a book on the entire process called JOB SMART by Michelle Tullier, Marci Taub, Tim Haft and Meg Heenehan. THE PRINCETON REVIEW (www.princetonreview.com) has offices in Mexico, D.F. (Guanajuato No. 228 Col. Roma, 06700 Mexico, D.F., tel. 5564-9468/4766, fax 5564-3278), Monterrey (Rio Guadalquivir No. 242 Oeste, Col. del Valle 66200 Garza García, Nuevo León, tel. 8356-6212, fax 8356-9518) and Guadalajara (Justo Sierra 1746 Col. Ladrón de Guevara, Guadalajara, Jalisco, tel. 3825-0978).

You may also consult THE JOB HUNTER'S CHECKLIST, by the editors of the Bob Adams organization, Bob Adams, Inc., 260 Center Street, Holbrook, MA 02343, 1994, or GETTING HIRED IN ANY JOB MARKET, by Frances Schmidt, iUniverse.com, Inc., 5220 S 16th, Ste. 200, Lincoln, NE 68512, 2001. A copy of both is kept at Becas MOB's office for reference. Other useful information is also kept and should be consulted if possible.

CLOSING WORDS

As with any job or project, or getting into a top university with a scholarship, it is to your advantage to be the best prepared of all candidates, which usually means having the most competitive offer. For that very reason, make sure you have a sound plan of action based on sound research, and make sure you devote the effort it takes to be the best prepared. Not everyone is born with the same abilities or talents. That is out of your control. However, anyone can choose to put in all the effort it takes and work through setbacks without stopping. This is the part within your control. It is all you need to be the best at what you want to do. So it is up to you to do it. You decide.

Guadalajara, Jal.

March 2005

APPENDIX: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW TO BE CONFIDENT ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR ABILITIES

THE FUNDAMENTALS

- The opposite of bravery is not cowardice; it is conformity. You have the right to be different. To think that another individual or group in any way controls your life, automatically enslaves you by your own decree. You have attracted everything that has come into your life. Do not concentrate on your limitations and failures; think of what you can be.
- Satisfy your own needs first. It is not your job to please others first. Only when we have done the best of ourselves can we be of greatest service to others.
- You are a person with skills and knowledge to offer. You know what you want and you are ready.
- Have an open mind to others' ideas. Understand them without necessarily having to believe them.
- Always prove to your own satisfaction that what is presented to you as the truth, is indeed the truth. This is a foundation on which to build a healthy life.
- It's tough to change:
 - Because it's easier to give logical reasons (excuses) why change is not necessary.
 - By holding on to mistaken certainties we resist reality. Nevertheless, we can change!
- Find out what your real needs and motivations are. Learn to trust your intuition. Observe your mistakes and try to correct them. Get the total picture of yourself, as the world sees you, not as you think or wish it did.

LIBERTY

- Self-reliance that you build for yourself is the key to self-confidence.
 - You were born with the innate ability to resolve every difficulty you will face.
 - You are allowed to make mistakes. Learn from them.
 - No one should do anything for you that you can do for yourself.
 - You must trust your instincts and not look to something external for answers.
 - You will feel no need to manipulate others when you're able to stand on your own two feet and get what you want.
 - Others are not better, or smarter, or worse than you.
 - You have no need to conform, depend or compare yourself with anyone, just to be.
 - We are ourselves and we are strong.
 - No one can ever let you down if you are not leaning on him/her.
- Strive for excellence, not to be better than the next guy.
- Recognition is not praise. Praise will eventually control you if you set yourself up to need it.
- If you can't break away from a situation, the problem is yours. You can do it anytime you want if you really want to.

SELF-ACCEPTANCE

- Recognize your own true worth as a person. You are unique and you need to impress no one.
- You will always do what you would rather do than not. This generates your motivation. If you want to have a more positive life experience, you must be CONVINCED that any change you make will bring you the satisfaction of a need or desire. Ask yourself, what are the potential benefits of any action? Are you willing to pay ALL the price? Then you can decide.
- You can choose anything you want. You have been given free will. You may make unwise decisions but you must give yourself the right to learn from your mistakes.
- Accept responsibility for your personal conflicts in full!
- A mistake is to be treated like a speck in the eye as soon as identified. Don't condemn yourself, just fix it and get rid of it. You are not your actions. Your actions are means to fulfill your needs.

YOUR MIND IS YOUR OWN BUSINESS

- Giving help is a little known secret of success. You can get things done by helping others get things done. Potential is unlimited beyond individual limitations.
- The power that created you did not put you here so that you would have to take a course or wait for a breakthrough to experience life to the fullest. Don't expect someone or god to do for you what you should be doing for yourself.
- You will attract what you most think about. So, straighten out your thoughts and purpose. Make sure it is what you want (i.e. what you're willing to pay the price for). To wish is not to want.

IMAGINATION

- Like all visionaries, those who dared to conceive had to break through the limited thinking of those who declared their ideas impossible. All problems are really opportunities in disguise.
- There are three ways to use your subconscious:
 - Verbalize: The way you talk to yourself has a profound effect upon your feelings and accomplishments. The effect works with positive and negative phrases.
 - Feeling and emotions: Aid your verbalization with positive emotional reinforces (like music)
 - Visualization: Whatever you consistently visualize you can have. Visualize having achieved it. See the details of having achieved it. You will then be able to do it.

CHOOSE YOUR DESTINATION

- You have a place where you and you alone fit. Are you in the right place? Are there things you should be doing which you are not?
- A worthy life plan for a successful life has both purpose and direction.
 - How far do you want to go?
 - Where do you want to go?
 - Is your plan in life set?
 - Can you assess progress?
 - Do you have a goal coherent with your talents?
- Break large goals into small short-term ones. The satisfaction of achieving one will take you to the next. Ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things by following a well-crafted plan step by step. Goals, whether realized or not, constructively change people's lives directing mental energies.
- Is the goal measurable, time phased and realistic? Is it defined to the details?
- Not to decide is also to decide. Not to choose success is to choose failure. Indecision creates frustration. Choose a worthy goal and make a plan for your life. Ask:
 - Do I really want this? Why?
 - Is it realistic?
 - Is it coherent with my values?
 - Can I visualize it in all respects?
 - Do I have complete faith in it?
- Successful people work with, not against, trying to beat the success system.
- Make a plan:
 - Have a clear statement of goal. Be definite.
 - Have an exact time and date to begin. It should be now!
 - Have a written plan of action.
 - Have a schedule to periodically review plans for changes and updates.
 - Carry a statement of the goal on you and look at it daily.
 - Concentrate on one specific challenge at a time.

- Make a positive statement about your goal.
- Go to sleep picturing it.
- Ask:
 - How will I benefit? What are its advantages?
 - How can I reach my goal?
 - Where can I get competent information and guidance?
 - What is the date of intended completion?
 - What are the dates of review and update?
- Make goals and plans for each area:
 - Career
 - Financial
 - Physical
 - Mental (What to study/learn. What knowledge to gain)
 - Family
 - Spiritually
 - Break each into long term and short term goals. The short-term goals you should act on right now!
- Your blueprint of destiny: Write a 5-year plan for growth. Include new viewpoints, new environments, new friends and a new standard of living. Check the plan frequently and check your surroundings for opportunities. Do the things for today, today.
- You will not be given greater opportunities in life until you have proven that you are more capable than your present work demands. Your present task is the most important thing you have to do.
- Your goals should give your life purpose and direction, so don't lock yourself in the future and keep from living in the now.
- Trust your intuition. Don't look for things, look for wisdom necessary to get the things.
- Be willing to pay the price for what you want, and get into action! Remember, you are right now exactly where you want to be (though perhaps not where you wish to be).
- Fortune favors the bold.
- Learn to accept failure. Give up the need for approval. Persistence often takes the place of intelligence and knowledge, even experience.
- Expect to succeed, like you expect not to grow old. You have the power within you to overcome any obstacle in your way.
- Do not reveal your plans, seeking approval. By doing so you set up opposition from those who unconsciously wish to control aspects of your life.

THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE

- You always have time for things important enough to give them the time. Admit it. If you "don't have time" you really don't care. If you really want to get something done you'll find the time.
- Make time for the important things in life.
- The key is in wanting not wishing.
 - The secret of winning is beginning. Start now!
 - If you want more time get up earlier.
 - You will never have more time than you have right now.
- Don't save time and waste your life. Life is to act.
- The key to using time effectively lies in setting priorities.

OVERCOMING FEAR AND WORRY

- Be willing to face failure. Ask: “what is the worst thing that could happen?” If you are mentally prepared for the worst you will be able to handle it. Conquer fears; it builds muscle.
- If you are living in the present it is impossible to worry. Live a moment at a time.
- Fear comes from using the mind more than the body. If you are active you have no time to worry.
- Change, it is inevitable. Look forward to it. Be willing to give up things the way they are and accept the way they need to be.
- If you don't like something in your life, change it.