

# A Time When I Was Nervous About Getting a Job

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A Thematic Unit about Resume Writing  
And Job Preparation

☞ For intermediate and advanced level students



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# **A Time When I Was Nervous About Getting a Job**

By Irma Oke

Being financially independent is my dream. To achieve that goal I must find a job, which currently is hard to find. There are many factors that make me worried about finding a job in the field that I want. One of them is the economic situation with a low employment rate. The second factor is that I have not finished my degree yet. I really want to work in a decent job as an accountant, but I have to wait until I finish my degree. I am not currently happy to be out of a job but I would rather wait so that when I get the job, I will have a good schedule and good pay.



Irma is an ESL student at The Learning Center in Williamsport, PA. She is originally from Benin, West Africa. She has lived in the United States for 12 years. She lives here with her husband, daughter and son.

**A. First Impressions – Write and Discuss**



1. How do you feel about the story?

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2. If you could have any job, what would it be? Why?

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3. Would you like to have a better job in the future?

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4. Have you ever worried about getting a job?

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5. Has someone you know ever been in a difficult situation financially? What happened?

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## B. Playing With Language

Put the sentences from the story in the correct order by number.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I really want to work in a decent job as an accountant, but I have to wait until I finish my degree.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Being financially independent is my dream.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The second factor is that I have not finished my degree yet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ To achieve that goal I must find a job, which currently is hard to find.
- \_\_\_\_\_ One of them is the economic situation with a low employment rate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ There are many factors that make me worried about finding a job in the field that I want.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am not currently happy to be out of a job but I would rather wait so that when I get the job, I will have a good schedule and good pay.

## C. More Playing With Language

Choose whether the statements from the story are True (T) or False (F).

- \_\_\_\_\_ Irma desires to be financially dependent on her husband.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Irma has finished her degree.
- \_\_\_\_\_ There are many factors that make her worried about finding a job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Irma is happy that she doesn't have a job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It is currently difficult for Irma to find a job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Irma would like to be an accountant.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The economic situation makes it easier for Irma to find a job.

## D. Experience Chart



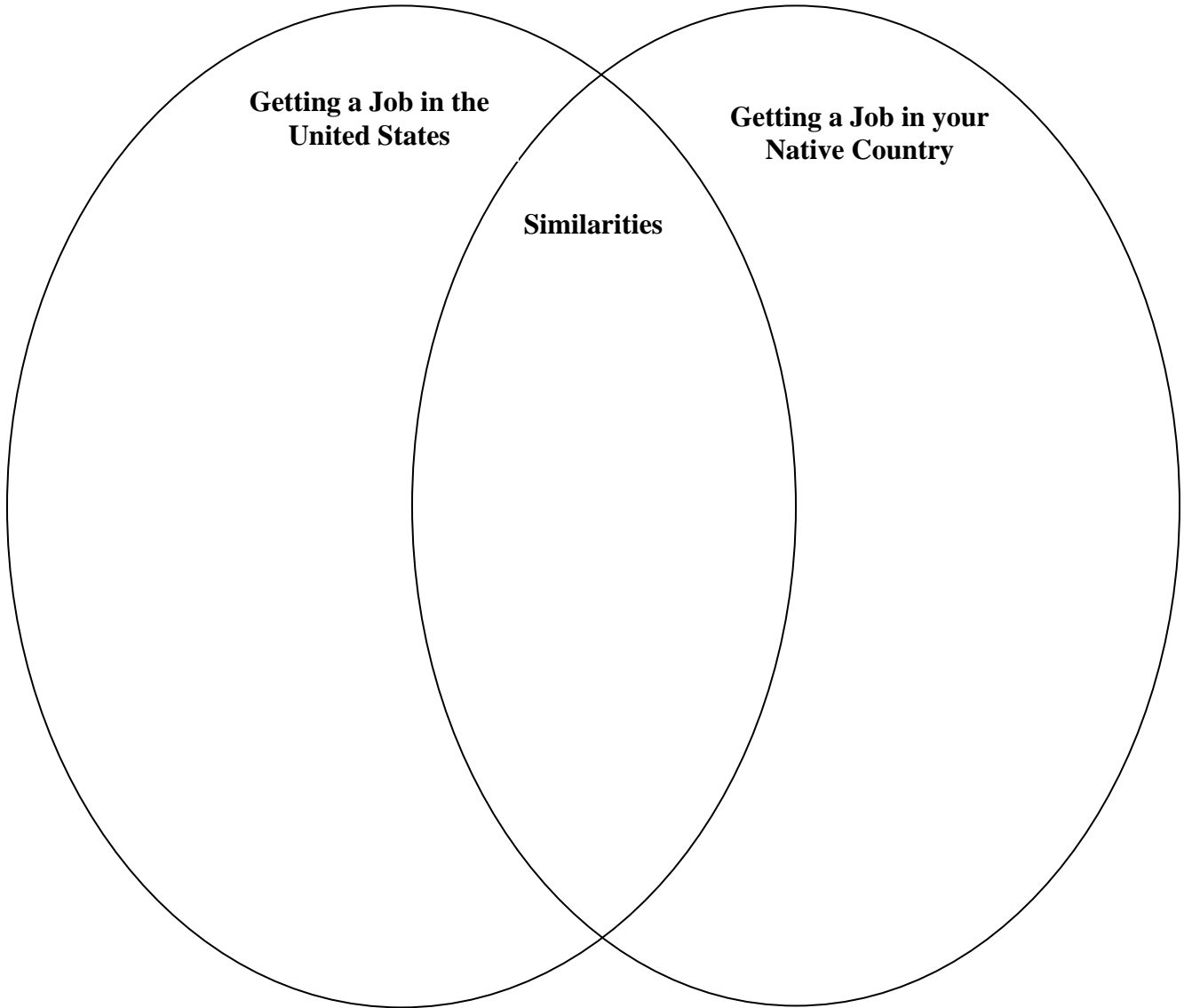
Write both positive and negative experiences you have had with looking for a job in the past. Interview one other student and write their experiences. We will fill in the rest of the blanks as a class.

Positive Experiences	Negative Experiences
<i>Example: I got the job.</i>	<i>Example: I got lost Looking for the interview.</i>

## E. Getting To Know Each Other



Write the similarities and differences of getting a job in the United States compared to getting a job in your native country.



↪ What does it mean to live the “American Dream?”



**F. Vocabulary** – We will review vocabulary that is on a resume as a class. Circle any words you do not understand.

Resume	Personal Information	Summary	Qualifications
Objective	Experience	Education	References



### Generic Resume Template

**Name** (largest font on page)

**Address**

**E-mail** (make sure it is appropriate)

#### Qualifications or Summary

- List strengths or special skills that make you qualified for the job
- List skills you could use at any job
- Example: foreign languages, computer skills

#### Experience

- List most recent jobs first
- Include: Job Title, Start and End Dates, Employer, Location, *Relevant* Responsibilities, Skills, Training

Example:

**ESL Instructor      08/08-Present      The Learning Center, Williamsport, PA**

\*Administered Intakes and Assessments

\*Provided relevant instruction for ESL students

\*Developed appropriate curriculum

\*Maintained accurate records

#### Education

- List most recent education first.
- List all college, university and professional degrees. Do not list high school unless it is the only education you have.

Example:

**Bachelor of Arts, Journalism 1997 Lock Haven University, Lock Haven, PA**

**References** available upon request.

## G. Resume Vocabulary Continued



1. Write your name, address and email address.

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2. List some of your special skills or strengths.

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3. List any jobs you have had in the past (try to include the name of your employer, your job title and when you worked there).

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4. Write down any places you have gone to school.

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5. List three people you could use as a reference.

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6. What is your dream job? What objective would you have to get this job?

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## H. More Vocabulary – Training Levels

Match the word with the correct meaning.



On-the-job training	Bachelor's Degree	
Vocational training	Master's Degree	Associate Degree
Vocation or trade	Doctoral, Professional Degree	

1. \_\_\_\_\_ A degree that is finished after 4 years of full time schooling after high school.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ A degree that is finished after 2 years of full time schooling after high school.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Skills and responsibilities that are learned at a job.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Training for a specific vocation or trade like cosmetology, massage therapy, automotive, culinary arts or nursing.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ A career or profession.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ The degree you receive AFTER a Bachelor's degree.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ The highest degree a person can receive.



## I. Grammar – Adjective or Adverb?

Read the opening story again. Decide if the underlined words are adjectives or adverbs. Write “adjective” or “adverb” on the line after each word below.

Being financially independent is my dream. To achieve that goal I must find a job, which currently is hard to find. There are many factors that make me worried about finding a job in the field that I want. One of them is the economic situation with a low employment rate. The second factor is that I have not finished my degree yet. I really want to work in a decent job as an accountant, but I have to wait until I finish my degree. I am not currently happy to be out of a job but I would rather wait so that when I get the job, I will have a good schedule and good pay.

1. financially adjective
2. currently adverb
3. hard adverb
4. many \_\_\_\_\_
5. one \_\_\_\_\_
6. economic \_\_\_\_\_
7. low \_\_\_\_\_
8. employment \_\_\_\_\_
9. really \_\_\_\_\_
10. decent \_\_\_\_\_
11. currently \_\_\_\_\_
12. rather \_\_\_\_\_
13. good \_\_\_\_\_
14. good \_\_\_\_\_



**Resume Tip!!!** It is a good idea to use adjectives in your resume that describe you or your responsibilities. Using a Thesaurus can help you so you don't use the same words over and over.

## J. Using a Thesaurus

In the chart below there are several verbs that would be good to use on a resume. The definition is also provided. The verb is written in the present tense. However, on a resume verbs are used in the past tense. Fill in the chart by changing the verb to the past tense. Use a thesaurus to write a synonym for each verb.



<b>Verb</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Past Tense</b>	<b>Synonym</b>
Achieve	to gain something by hard work		
Build	to make something by putting materials together		
Organize	to put things in order		
Manage	to direct business		
Perform	to do something a certain way		
Repair	to fix or bring something to its original state		
Improve	to make something better		

**Tip!!!** Synonyms are words that mean the same!

## **K. Other Stories**

### **Getting a Job in the United States by Maria Reyes, from the Dominican Republic**



Last week I went to a job interview. I read first all the rules. They were very long. For example, no shorts and no short blouses. There was another about the time, don't come more than 15 minutes early. In this interview I was nervous because when I opened the door I hoped for only one interviewer. When in the office, there were more than 6 people, every one with different questions about the job. I was nervous in all parts of my body and my heart was at 1,500 beats per minute. The next time I have to be prepared to know how many people will be in the interview room, not to be under attack again.

### **Getting a Job in the United States by Kifle Solomon, from Ethiopia**



I came to the USA in December of 2009. I had only one plan to get work, that was work in the church. Unfortunately, I didn't succeed in my plan, working in the social ministry of the church, because my Visa didn't permit me to work. I know that when I applied for a social security card I was rejected. Anyway, I tried to get a job through friends. I met employers but I was rejected when I didn't have a social security card. It is so sad when you really want to do any job but there is no way to get a job.

## **L. Teacher Story**

### **A Time When I Was Nervous About Getting a Job by Stacey Noltee**

I was nervous when I went back to the work full time after being a stay-at-home mom. Although being at home with my children was wonderful, it was also difficult.

When I was home, as each year passed, I started to question many things. I wondered if I would ever be able to have “adult” conversations again without using words like “potty” or “poopy” or “mommy.” I also wondered if I would ever feel intelligent again at all. Honestly, I also worried that it might be difficult to trade in my comfortable sweat pants and sneakers (mom uniform) for dress clothes and heels. In all seriousness though, the most difficult thing I was facing was the sadness that I was experiencing over letting go and trusting my children into someone else’s care. That was a huge change in my life.

Now that I’m on the other side, I can say that going back to work was one of the best decision I have ever made! I love my job and my kids are doing well at school. The process was definitely worth it. The next time I am nervous about getting a job, I will remember this experience.

## M. Project – Create a Resume

Using your answers from page 8, create your own resume. You can also use the “Generic Resume Template” on page 7.

Note: Other templates will be provided on pages 15 and 16.

### **Tips for effective resume writing:**

- ➔ Use a computer to prepare your resume. Programs exist that make it easy to produce a professional looking resume.
- ➔ Do not include irrelevant personal information (age, weight, height, marital status, religion).
- ➔ Do not include salary or wages.
- ➔ Center all headings, and do not use abbreviations.
- ➔ Be specific, use concise sentences, and try to keep resume to one page if possible.
- ➔ Proofread resume every time one is printed, and have someone else proofread it if possible.

#### Use past tense active verbs such as:

Achieved	Adapted	Advised	Assisted	Built	Completed
Controlled	Convinced	Coordinated	Created	Decided	Delivered
Designed	Developed	Directed	Established	Evaluated	Generated
Guided	Improved	Implemented	Initiated	Learned	Led
Maintained	Managed	Operated	Organized	Performed	Persuaded
Planned	Produced	Reduced	Repaired	Researched	Supervised
Trained					

#### Useful Websites:

<http://wsd.dli.mt.gov/local/helena/resumelinks.asp>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/ResumeW/>

\*\*These tips were adapted from the Helena Job Service Workforce Center.

# Name

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Your Address  
Your Address  
Your Address

Phone: 555-555-5555  
Email: xyz@microsoft.com

## **Objective**

Place your text here.

## **Qualifications**

Place your text here.

## **Work History**

0000 to 0000, Title, Company  
Job Responsibilities

0000 to 0000, Title, Company  
Job Responsibilities

0000 to 0000, Title, Company  
Job Responsibilities

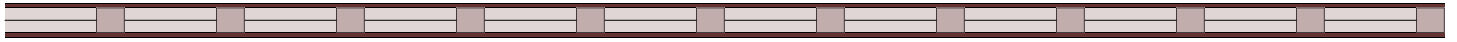
0000 to 0000, Title, Company  
Job Responsibilities

## **Education**

0000 to 0000, Degree, School  
0000 to 0000, Degree, School

## **References**

Name, Position. Company, Phone  
Name, Position. Company, Phone



NAME

Your Address ■ Your Phone ■ Your email

## **Objective**

Place your text here.

## **Education**

Dates, Degree, School

Dates, Degree, School

## **Work Experience**

Dates, Job Title

Company or Organization

Description of job responsibilities

Dates, Job Title

Company or Organization

Description of job responsibilities

Dates, Job Title

Company or Organization

Description of job responsibilities

## **Volunteer Work**

Place your text here.

## **References**

Name, Position. Company, Phone

Name, Position. Company, Phone



# ☞ Checklist for Learning

**I. Vocabulary:** Check  the words you want to remember. Add your own words. For extra practice, write sentences using each of the words. Pick one word and use it three times today.

## Resume Verbs

- achieved
- improved
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Resume Words

- objective
- references
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Training Levels

- on-the-job training
- vocational training
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Language:** Check  what you can do in English. Add more items if you would like.

## I can...

- discuss a reading passage.
- list my skills and strengths.
- understand training levels needed for a job.
- write about previous jobs.
- identify an adverb or adjective.
- create a resume.
- use a Thesaurus.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_