

Business in Action

8th edition

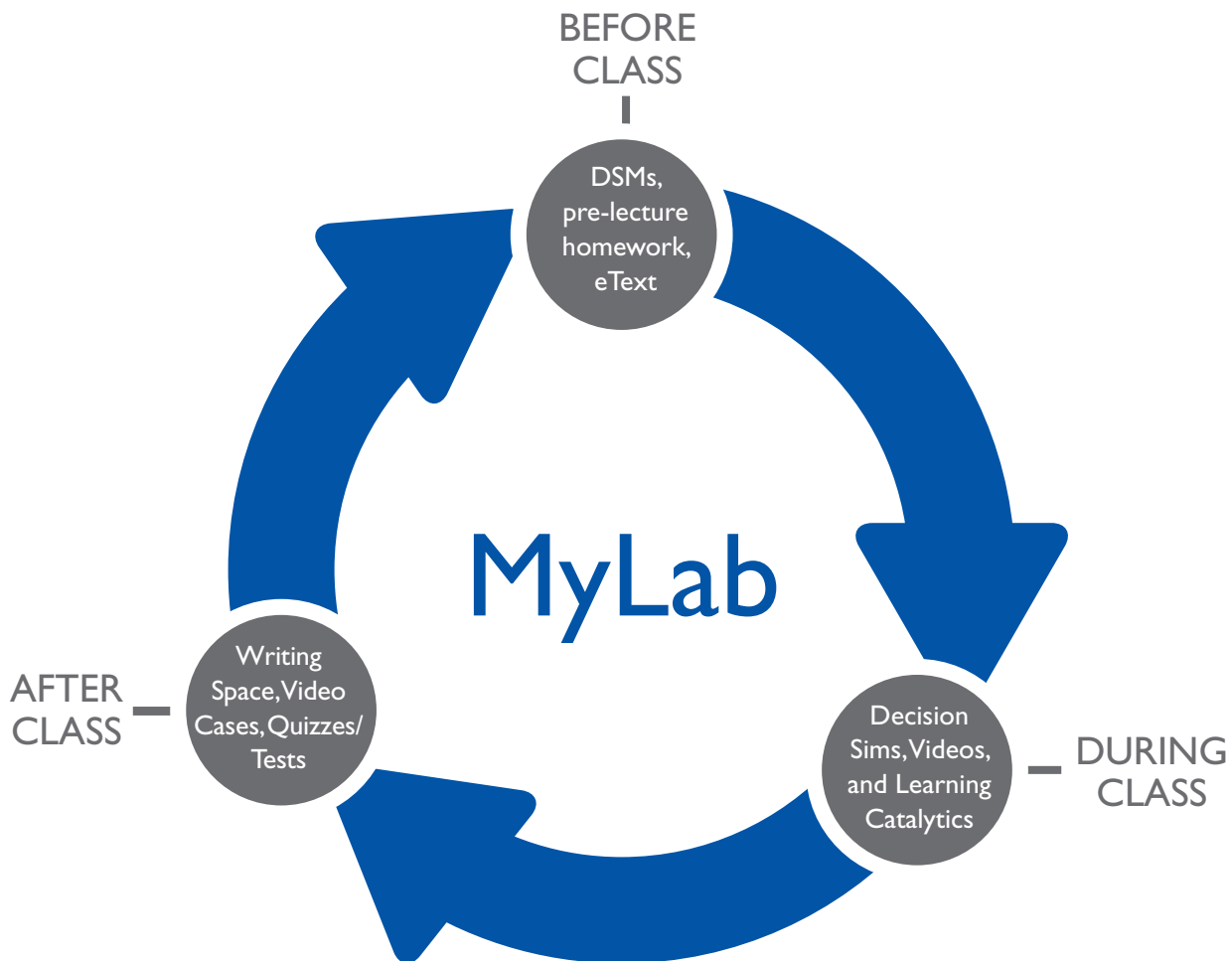


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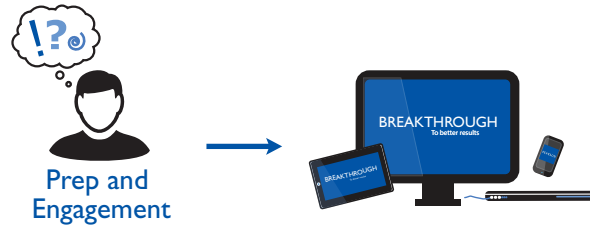
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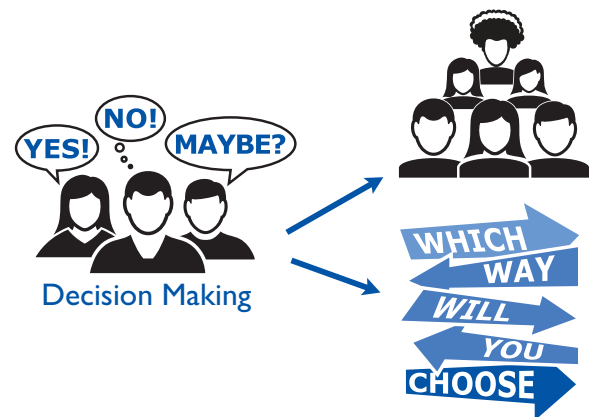
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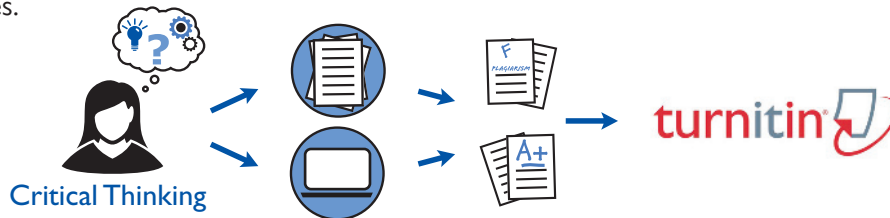


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Eighth Edition

Business **in Action**

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This book is dedicated to the many instructors and students who have used this text and its predecessors *Excellence in Business* and *Business Today*. We appreciate the opportunity to assist you in your exploration of the world of business, and we wish you great success in this course and in your careers.

Courtland L. Bovée
John V. Thill

Contents in Brief

Preface xv

Prologue: Using This Course to Help Launch Your Career xxiv

- PART 1 Setting the Stage: The Business of Business 1**
- 1 Developing a Business Mindset 2
 - 2 Understanding Basic Economics 26
 - 3 The Global Marketplace 49
 - 4 Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility 73
- PART 2 Building the Framework: Business Ownership and Entrepreneurship 97**
- 5 Forms of Ownership 98
 - 6 Entrepreneurship and Small-Business Ownership 121
- PART 3 Guiding the Enterprise: Leadership, Organization, and Operations 145**
- 7 Management Roles, Functions, and Skills 146
 - 8 Organization and Teamwork 170
 - 9 Production Systems 198
- PART 4 Supporting the Workforce: Motivation and Human Resources 223**
- 10 Employee Motivation 224
 - 11 Human Resources Management 247
 - 12 Labor Relations 273
- PART 5 Satisfying the Customer: Marketing, Sales, and Customer Support 295**
- 13 The Art and Science of Marketing 296
 - 14 Product and Pricing Strategies 321
 - 15 Distribution and Marketing Logistics 348
 - 16 Customer Communication 371
- PART 6 Managing the Money: Accounting and Financial Resources 395**
- 17 Financial Information and Accounting Concepts 396
 - 18 Financial Management 421
 - 19 Financial Markets and Investment Strategies 445
 - 20 The Money Supply and Banking Systems 469

Appendixes

APPENDIX A Business Law A-1

APPENDIX B Risk Management B-1

APPENDIX C Information Technology C-1

APPENDIX D Personal Finance: Getting Set for Life D-1

Glossary G-1

Brand, Organization, Name, and Website Index I-1

Subject Index I-3

Contents

Preface xv

Prologue: Using This Course to Help Launch Your Career xxiv

PART 1 **Setting the Stage: The Business of Business** 1

CHAPTER 1

Developing a Business Mindset 2

BEHIND THE SCENES YOLANDA DIAZ: BUILDING HER DREAM WITH HARD WORK AND STRONG BUSINESS SENSE 2

Introduction 3

Understanding What Businesses Do 3

Adding Value: The Business of Business 3
Competing to Attract and Satisfy Customers 4 • *Accepting Risks in the Pursuit of Rewards* 4

Identifying Major Types of Businesses 4

Making the Leap from Buyer to Seller 6

Seeing Business from the Inside Out 6
Appreciating the Role of Business in Society 7
Using This Course to Jump-Start Your Career 9

Recognizing the Multiple Environments of Business 10

The Social Environment 10
The Technological Environment 11
The Economic Environment 12
The Legal and Regulatory Environment 13
The Market Environment 13

Identifying the Major Functional Areas in a Business Enterprise 14

Research and Development 15
Manufacturing, Production, and Operations 15
Marketing, Sales, Distribution, and Customer Support 15
Finance and Accounting 15
Human Resources 16
Business Services 16

Exploring Careers in Business 16

Operations Manager 17
Human Resources Specialist 17
Information Technology Manager 17
Marketing Specialist 17
Sales Professional 18
Accountant 18
Financial Manager 18

Achieving Professionalism 19

Striving to Excel 19
Being Dependable and Accountable 20
Being a Team Player 20
Communicating Effectively 21
Demonstrating Etiquette 21
Making Ethical Decisions 22
Maintaining a Confident, Positive Outlook 22

BEHIND THE SCENES YOLANDA DIAZ GROWS MIRADOR ENTERPRISES INTO A MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR SUCCESS STORY 22

KEY TERMS 23

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 24

EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 24

PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 25

CHAPTER 2

Understanding Basic Economics 26

BEHIND THE SCENES COULD YOU PREDICT SALES OF APPLE'S NEXT BESTSELLER? 26

Introduction 27

What Is This Thing Called the Economy? 27

Factors of Production 27
The Economic Impact of Scarcity 28

Economic Systems 29

Free-Market Systems 29
Planned Systems 30
Nationalization and Privatization 31

The Forces of Demand and Supply 32

Understanding Demand 32
Understanding Supply 33
Understanding How Demand and Supply Interact 34

The Macro View: Understanding How an Economy Operates 35

Competition in a Free-Market System 35
Business Cycles 36
Unemployment 37
Inflation 37

Government's Role in a Free-Market System 39

Protecting Stakeholders 39
Fostering Competition 39
Antitrust Legislation 40 • *Merger and Acquisition Approvals* 41
Encouraging Innovation and Economic Development 41
Stabilizing and Stimulating the Economy 41

Economic Measures and Monitors 42

- Price Indexes 43
- National Economic Output 44

BEHIND THE SCENES RACING TO SUPPLY ONE OF THE HOTTEST PRODUCTS IN HISTORY 45

- KEY TERMS 46
- TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 46
- EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 47
- PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 47

CHAPTER 3

The Global Marketplace 49

BEHIND THE SCENES H&M: FIRST SWEDEN, THEN THE WORLD 49

Introduction 50

Fundamentals of International Trade 50

- Why Nations Trade 51
- How International Trade Is Measured 51
- Foreign Exchange Rates and Currency Valuations 53

Conflicts in International Trade 54

- Free Trade 54
- Government Intervention in International Trade 55

International Trade Organizations 56

- Organizations Facilitating International Trade 56
 - The World Trade Organization* 56 • *The International Monetary Fund* 57 • *The World Bank* 57
- Trading Blocs 57
 - North American Free Trade Agreement* 57 • *The European Union* 59 • *The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation* 59 • *The Trans-Pacific Partnership* 59

The Global Business Environment 60

- Cultural Differences in the Global Business Environment 60
- Legal Differences in the Global Business Environment 61

Forms of International Business Activity 63

- Importing and Exporting 63
- International Licensing 64
- International Franchising 64
- International Strategic Alliances and Joint Ventures 64
- Foreign Direct Investment 65

Strategic Approaches to International Markets 65

- Organizational Strategies for International Expansion 65
- Functional Strategies for International Expansion 66

BEHIND THE SCENES H&M EXPANDS ITS GLOBAL FOOTPRINT, BUT NOT WITHOUT COMPETITION AND CHALLENGES 68

- KEY TERMS 69
- TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 69
- EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 70
- PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 70

CHAPTER 4

Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility 73

BEHIND THE SCENES NIKE'S GLOBAL PRESENCE PUTS IT ON THE FRONT LINES OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY 73

Introduction 74

Ethics in Contemporary Business 74

- What Is Ethical Behavior? 75
- Factors Influencing Ethical Behavior 76
 - Cultural Differences* 76 • *Knowledge* 76 • *Organizational Behavior* 76
- Ethical Decision Making 76

Corporate Social Responsibility 79

- The Relationship Between Business and Society 79
- Philanthropy Versus Strategic CSR 79

Perspectives on Corporate Social Responsibility 80

- Minimalist CSR 80
- Defensive CSR 81
- Cynical CSR 82
- Proactive CSR 82
- Resolving the CSR Dilemma 82

CSR: The Natural Environment 83

- Efforts to Conserve Resources and Reduce Pollution 84
- The Trend Toward Sustainability 86

CSR: Consumers 87

- The Right to Buy Safe Products—And to Buy Them Safely 87
- The Right to Be Informed 88
- The Right to Choose Which Products to Buy 88
- The Right to Be Heard 88

CSR: Employees 89

- The Push for Equality in Employment 89
 - Affirmative Action* 89 • *People with Disabilities* 90
- Occupational Safety and Health 90

BEHIND THE SCENES NIKE BUILDS A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING 91

- KEY TERMS 93
- TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 93
- EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 93
- PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 94

PART 2 Building the Framework: Business Ownership and Entrepreneurship 97

CHAPTER 5

Forms of Ownership 98

BEHIND THE SCENES CISCO TACKLES THE CHALLENGE OF STAYING ON TOP IN A FAST-MOVING INDUSTRY 98

Introduction 99

Sole Proprietorships 99

- Advantages of Sole Proprietorships 99
- Disadvantages of Sole Proprietorships 101

Partnerships 102

- Advantages of Partnerships 102
- Disadvantages of Partnerships 103
- Keeping It Together: The Partnership Agreement 103

Corporations 104

- Advantages of Corporations 105

Disadvantages of Corporations 105

Special Types of Corporations 106

Corporate Governance 108

Shareholders 108

Board of Directors 109

Corporate Officers 110

Mergers and Acquisitions 111

Advantages of Mergers and Acquisitions 111

Disadvantages of Mergers and Acquisitions 111

Merger and Acquisition Defenses 113

Strategic Alliances and Joint Ventures 114

Strategic Alliances 114

Joint Ventures 114

BEHIND THE SCENES CISCO TURNS ONE OF THE TOUGHEST MOVES IN BUSINESS INTO A STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE 115

KEY TERMS 116

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 117

EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 117

PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 118

CHAPTER 6

Entrepreneurship and Small-Business Ownership 121

BEHIND THE SCENES BRINGING TRADITIONAL HEALING WISDOM TO MODERN CONSUMERS AT SISTER SKY 121

Introduction 122

The Big World of Small Business 122

Economic Roles of Small Businesses 122

Characteristics of Small Businesses 124

Factors Contributing to the Increase in the Number of Small Businesses 124

E-Commerce, Social Media, and Other Technologies 124 • *Growing Diversity in Entrepreneurship* 124 • *Downsizing and Outsourcing* 125

The Entrepreneurial Spirit 125

Why People Start Their Own Companies 126

Qualities of Successful Entrepreneurs 126

Innovating Without Leaving: Intrapreneurship 126

The Start-Up Phase: Planning and Launching a New Business 128

Small-Business Ownership Options 128

Blueprint for an Effective Business Plan 129

The Growth Phase: Nurturing and Sustaining a Young Business 131

The New Business Failure Rate 131

Advice and Support for Business Owners 132

Government Agencies and Not-for-Profit Organizations 132 • *Business Partners* 133 • *Mentors and Advisory Boards* 133 • *Print and Online Media* 133 • *Networks and Support Groups* 133 • *Business Incubators* 134

Financing Options for Small Businesses 135

Private Financing 135

Banks and Microlenders 135 • *Venture Capitalists* 136 • *Angel Investors* 136 • *Credit Cards and Personal Lines of Credit* 137 • *Small Business Administration Assistance* 137

Public Financing 137

Crowdfunding 137

The Franchise Alternative 138

Types of Franchises 138

Advantages of Franchising 138

Disadvantages of Franchising 139

How to Evaluate a Franchising Opportunity 139

BEHIND THE SCENES BUILDING AN AUTHENTIC AND PURPOSEFUL BUSINESS AT SISTER SKY 140

KEY TERMS 141

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 142

EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 142

PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 143

PART 3

Guiding the Enterprise: Leadership, Organization, and Operations 145

CHAPTER 7

Management Roles, Functions, and Skills 146

BEHIND THE SCENES WEGMANS SATISFIES CUSTOMERS BY PUTTING EMPLOYEES FIRST 146

Introduction 147

The Roles of Management 147

Interpersonal Roles 147

Informational Roles 148

Decisional Roles 149

The Planning Function 149

Defining the Mission, Vision, and Values 150

Assessing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats 151

Developing Forecasts 151

Analyzing the Competition 152

Establishing Goals and Objectives 153

Developing Action Plans 153

The Organizing Function 154

Top Managers 154

Middle Managers 155

First-Line Managers 155

The Leading Function 156

Developing an Effective Leadership Style 157

Coaching and Mentoring 158

Managing Change 158

Building a Positive Organizational Culture 159

The Controlling Function 160

The Control Cycle 160

Establishing Performance Standards 160 • *Measuring Performance and Responding as Needed* 161

Crisis Management: Maintaining Control in Extraordinary Circumstances 162

Essential Management Skills 163

Interpersonal Skills 163

Technical Skills 163

Conceptual Skills 164

Decision-Making Skills 164

BEHIND THE SCENES CUSTOMERS BELIEVE IN WEGMANS BECAUSE WEGMANS BELIEVES IN ITS EMPLOYEES 166

KEY TERMS 167
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 167
EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 168
PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 168

CHAPTER 8

Organization and Teamwork 170

BEHIND THE SCENES CEMEX REINVENTS A CENTURY-OLD COMPANY TO COMPETE IN A NEW BUSINESS WORLD 170

Introduction 171

Designing an Effective Organization Structure 171

- Identifying Core Competencies 171
- Identifying Job Responsibilities 172
- Defining the Chain of Command 173
 - Span of Management* 173
 - Centralization Versus Decentralization* 174

Organizing the Workforce 176

- Functional Structures 176
- Divisional Structures 176
- Matrix Structures 177
- Network Structures 178

Organizing in Teams 179

- What Is a Team? 179
- Types of Teams 179
 - Problem-Solving Teams* 179
 - Self-Managed Teams* 180
 - Functional Teams* 180
 - Cross-Functional Teams* 180
 - Virtual Teams* 180
 - Social Networks and Virtual Communities* 181

Ensuring Team Productivity 182

- Advantages and Disadvantages of Working in Teams 183
- Characteristics of Effective Teams 184

Fostering Teamwork 186

- Team Development 186
- Team Conflict 187
 - Causes of Team Conflict* 187
 - Solutions to Team Conflict* 188

Managing an Unstructured Organization 189

- Potential Benefits of Unstructured Organizations 190
- Potential Challenges of Unstructured Organizations 191

BEHIND THE SCENES AN INNOVATIVE COLLABORATION PLATFORM AT CEMEX “MAKES A BIG COMPANY LOOK LIKE A SMALL COMPANY” 193

KEY TERMS 193
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 194
EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 195
PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 195

CHAPTER 9

Production Systems 198

BEHIND THE SCENES CUSTOMIZING DREAMS AT KIESEL GUITARS 198

Introduction 199

The Systems View of Business 199

- Thinking in Systems 199
- Managing Systems for Peak Performance 200

Value Chains and Value Webs 202

- Redefining Organizations with Value Webs 202

The Offshoring Controversy 203

Supply Chain Management 206

- Supply Chains Versus Value Chains 206
- Supply Chain Systems and Techniques 207

Production and Operations Management 208

- Lean Systems 208
- Mass Production, Customized Production, and Mass Customization 210
- Facilities Location and Design 210
- Forecasting and Capacity Planning 211
- Scheduling 211

The Unique Challenges of Service Delivery 212

- Perishability 212
- Location Constraints 213
- Scalability Challenges and Opportunities 213
- Performance Variability and Perceptions of Quality 213
- Customer Involvement and Provider Interaction 213

Product and Process Quality 214

- Quality and Complexity 214
- Strategies for Ensuring Product Quality 215
 - Continuous Improvement* 215
 - Statistical Process Control* 215
 - Six Sigma* 216
 - ISO 9000* 216

BEHIND THE SCENES KIESEL’S PRODUCTION SYSTEM SATISFIES DEMANDING GUITARISTS 217

KEY TERMS 218
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 218
EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 219
PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 219

PART 4

Supporting the Workforce: Motivation and Human Resources 223

CHAPTER 10

Employee Motivation 224

BEHIND THE SCENES TAKING A SECOND LOOK AT THE CAREER LADDER 224

Introduction 225

What Motivates Employees to Peak Performance? 225

- What Is Motivation? 225
- Classical Theories of Motivation 227
 - Taylor’s Scientific Management* 227
 - The Hawthorne Studies and the “Hawthorne Effect”* 227
 - Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs* 228
 - Theory X and Theory Y* 228
 - Herzberg’s Two Factors* 229
 - McClelland’s Three Needs* 229

Explaining Employee Choices 230

- Expectancy Theory 230
- Equity Theory 231

Motivating with Challenging Goals 232

- Management by Objectives 233
- Risks and Limitations of Goal-Setting Theory 234

Redesigning Jobs to Stimulate Performance 235

- The Job Characteristics Model 235
- Approaches to Modifying Core Job Dimensions 236

Reinforcing High-Performance Behavior 237

- Types of Reinforcement 237
- Unintended Consequences of Reinforcement 238

Motivational Strategies 239

- Providing Timely and Frequent Feedback 239
- Making It Personal 239
- Gamifying for Healthy Competition 240
- Adapting to Circumstances and Special Needs 241
- Addressing Workplace Negativity 241
- Being an Inspiring Leader 241
- Motivating Yourself 241

BEHIND THE SCENES MOTIVATING INDIVIDUALS BY PERSONALIZING CAREERS AT DELOITTE 242

- KEY TERMS 243
- TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 243
- EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 244
- PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 244

CHAPTER 11**Human Resources Management 247****BEHIND THE SCENES AN UNCONVENTIONAL APPROACH TO FINDING UNCONVENTIONAL EMPLOYEES 247****Introduction 248****Keeping Pace with Today's Workforce 248**

- Contemporary Staffing Challenges 248
- Planning for a Company's Staffing Needs 249
 - Evaluating Job Requirements* 249 • *Forecasting Supply and Demand* 249
- Alternative Work Arrangements 250

Managing a Diverse Workforce 251

- Dimensions of Workforce Diversity 251
 - Age* 252 • *Gender* 252 • *Race and Ethnicity* 254 • *Religion* 254 • *Ability* 255 • *Diversity Initiatives* 255

Managing the Employment Life Cycle 256

- Hiring Employees 256
- Terminating Employees 256
- Replacing Retiring Employees 258

Developing and Evaluating Employees 259

- Appraising Employee Performance 259
- Training and Developing Employees 259
- Promoting and Reassigning Employees 261

Administering Employee Compensation 261

- Salaries and Wages 262
- Incentive Programs 262

Employee Benefits and Services 264

- Insurance 264
- Retirement Benefits 264
- Stock Options 265
- Other Employee Benefits 265

BEHIND THE SCENES FOR ZAPPOS, FINDING THE RIGHT EMPLOYEES MEANS REJECTING THE OLD WAY OF DOING BUSINESS 267

- KEY TERMS 268
- TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 268
- EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 269
- PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 269

CHAPTER 12**Labor Relations 273****BEHIND THE SCENES BOEING AND THE IAM: A HIGH-STAKES BATTLE WITH THOUSANDS OF JOBS ON THE LINE 273****Introduction 274****The Role of Labor Unions 274**

- Unionization: The Employee's Perspective 275
- Unionization: Management's Perspective 276

Unionization in Historical Perspective 277

- Power to the Unions: The Wagner Act of 1935 278
- Power to the Owners: The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 279
- Power to Union Members: The Landrum-Griffin Act of 1959 279

The Organizing Process 280

- Union Security and Right-to-Work Laws 280
- Types of Unions 280
- How Unions Are Structured 281
- Union Organizing Drives 282
- Management Efforts to Avoid Unionization 283

The Collective Bargaining Process 284

- Negotiating an Agreement 285
- Exercising Options When Negotiations Break Down 285
 - Labor's Options* 285 • *Management's Options* 286

Grievance, Discipline, and Arbitration Procedures 287

- Unfair Labor Practices 287
- Resolving Employee Grievances 288
- Disciplining Employees 288
- Arbitrating Disputes 288

The Future of Labor 289**BEHIND THE SCENES BOEING AND THE IAM: A PROJECT SAVED, BUT STRIFE REMAINS 291**

- KEY TERMS 291
- TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 292
- EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 292
- PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 293

PART 5**Satisfying the Customer: Marketing, Sales, and Customer Support 295****CHAPTER 13****The Art and Science of Marketing 296****BEHIND THE SCENES RED ANTS PANTS GIVES WORKING WOMEN A CHOICE THAT FITS 296****Introduction 297****Marketing in a Changing World 297**

- The Role of Marketing in Society 297
 - Needs and Wants* 297 • *Exchanges and Transactions* 298 • *The Four Utilities* 298
- The Marketing Concept 298

Challenges in Contemporary Marketing 300

- Involving the Customer in the Marketing Process 300
- Making Data-Driven Marketing Decisions 302
- Marketing with Greater Concern for Ethics and Etiquette 302

Understanding Today's Customers 304

The Consumer Decision Process 304
The Organizational Customer Decision Process 306
Identifying Market Opportunities 307
Examining the Current Marketing Situation 308
 Reviewing Performance 308 • *Evaluating Competition* 308 • *Examining Internal Strengths and Weaknesses* 308 • *Analyzing the External Environment* 309
Assessing Opportunities and Setting Objectives 309
Crafting a Marketing Strategy 310
Dividing Markets into Segments 310
Choosing Your Target Markets 311
Staking out a Position in Your Target Markets 312
The Marketing Mix 313
Products 314
Pricing 314
Distribution 314
Customer Communication 315

BEHIND THE SCENES AGGRAVATION LEADS TO INSPIRATION FOR SARAH CALHOUN OF RED ANTS PANTS 316

KEY TERMS 317
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 318
EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 318
PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 319

CHAPTER 14

Product and Pricing Strategies 321

BEHIND THE SCENES TRANSFORMING A WORLD-CLASS ATHLETE INTO A WORLD-CLASS BRAND 321

Introduction 322
Characteristics of Products 322
Types of Products 322
 Consumer Products 323 • *Industrial and Commercial Products* 323
The Product Life Cycle 324
 Introduction 325 • *Growth* 325 • *Maturity* 325 • *Decline* 325

The New-Product Development Process 326

Idea Generation 326
Idea Screening 326
Business Analysis 327
Prototype Development 327
Test Marketing 328
Commercialization 328

Product Identities 329

Brand Name Selection 329
Brand Ownership 330
Packaging 330
Labeling 331

Product-Line and Product-Mix Strategies 332

Product Lines 332
Product Mix 332
Product Expansion Strategies 334

Product Strategies for International Markets 335

Pricing Strategies 335

Strategic Considerations in Pricing 336
Cost Structure and Break-Even Analysis 336

Pricing Methods 338

Cost-Based Pricing 339
Value-Based Pricing 339
Optimal Pricing 339
Skim Pricing 339
Penetration Pricing 340
Loss-Leader Pricing 340
Auction Pricing 340
Participative Pricing 341
Free and Freemium Pricing 341
Price Adjustment Tactics 341

BEHIND THE SCENES BUILDING THE ANNIKA BRAND 343

KEY TERMS 344
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 344
EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 345
PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 345

CHAPTER 15

Distribution and Marketing Logistics 348

BEHIND THE SCENES COSTCO KEEPS CUSTOMERS COMING BACK FOR MORE 348

Introduction 349
The Role of Marketing Intermediaries 349
Wholesaling Versus Retailing 349
Contributions of Marketing Intermediaries 349
Wholesaling and Industrial Distribution 352
Major Types of Wholesalers 352
The Outlook for Wholesaling 352

Retailing 353
Retailing Formats 354
The Outlook for Retailing 355
Distribution Strategies 357
Customer Needs and Expectations 358
Product Support Requirements 358
Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning 358
Competitors' Distribution Channels 358
Established Industry Patterns and Requirements 359

Considerations in Channel Design and Management 359
Channel Length 359
Market Coverage 361
Distribution Costs 361
Channel Conflict 361
Channel Organization and Control 361

Physical Distribution and Logistics 363
Forecasting 364
Order Processing 364
Inventory Control 364
Warehousing 365
Transportation 365

BEHIND THE SCENES COSTCO PUSHES ITS SUPPLY CHAIN TO SATISFY CUSTOMERS 366

KEY TERMS 367
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 368
EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 368
PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 369

CHAPTER 16**Customer Communication 371****BEHIND THE SCENES HOW THE QUEST FOR A BETTER CAMERA STRAP TRIGGERED THE GROWTH OF ONE OF TODAY'S HOTTEST COMPANIES 371**

Introduction 372

Customer Communication: Challenges, Strategies, and Issues 372

Establishing Communication Goals 372

Defining Customer Messages 373

Assembling the Communication Mix 374

Communication Laws and Ethics 375

Advertising 376

Types of Advertising 377

Advertising Appeals 377

Advertising Media 379

Direct Marketing 381

Direct Marketing Techniques 381

Direct Marketing Media 381

Personal Selling 382

Contemporary Personal Selling 383

The Personal-Selling Process 383

Sales Promotion 385

Consumer Promotions 385

Trade Promotions 386

Social Media and Public Relations 387

Social Media in the Marketing Process 387

Communication Strategies for Social Media 388 • *Brand Communities* 389

Public Relations 390

BEHIND THE SCENES FANATICAL CUSTOMERS HELP PUSH GOPRO INTO BILLION-DOLLAR TERRITORY 391

KEY TERMS 392

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 392

EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 393

PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 393

PART 6**Managing the Money: Accounting and Financial Resources 395****CHAPTER 17****Financial Information and Accounting Concepts 396****BEHIND THE SCENES REALITY COMES KNOCKING AT THE GOOGLEPLEX 396**

Introduction 397

Understanding Accounting 397

What Accountants Do 397

Private Accountants 398

Public Accountants 398

Major Accounting Rules 399

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) 400

Non-GAAP Metrics 400 • *Global Reporting Standards* 401

Sarbanes-Oxley 401

Fundamental Accounting Concepts 402

The Accounting Equation 402

Double-Entry Bookkeeping and the Matching Principle 403

Using Financial Statements: The Balance Sheet 404

Understanding Financial Statements 404

Balance Sheet 404

Assets 407 • *Liabilities* 407 • *Owners' Equity* 407

Using Financial Statements: Income and Cash Flow Statements 408

Income Statement 408

Statement of Cash Flows 410

Analyzing Financial Statements 411

Trend Analysis 411

Ratio Analysis 412

Types of Financial Ratios 412

Profitability Ratios 412 • *Liquidity Ratios* 412 • *Activity Ratios* 412 • *Leverage, or Debt, Ratios* 414**BEHIND THE SCENES GOOGLE THIS: "COST CONTROL" 415**

KEY TERMS 416

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 417

EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 417

PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 418

CHAPTER 18**Financial Management 421****BEHIND THE SCENES CHARGING AHEAD: VISA SEARCHES FOR FUNDS 421**

Introduction 422

The Role of Financial Management 422

Developing a Financial Plan 423

Monitoring Cash Flow 423

Managing Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable 424 • *Managing Inventory* 424

Managing Cash Reserves 425

The Budgeting Process 426

Budgeting Challenges 426

Types of Budgets 427

Financing Alternatives: Factors to Consider 429

Debt Financing Versus Equity Financing 429

Length of Term 430

Cost of Capital 430

Risk 430 • *Interest Rates* 430 • *Opportunity Cost* 431

Financing Alternatives: Short-Term Debt 432

Credit Cards 432

Trade Credit 432

Secured Loans 433

Unsecured Loans 433

Commercial Paper 434

Factoring and Receivables Auctions 434

Financing Alternatives: Long-Term Debt 435

Long-Term Loans 435

Leases 436

Corporate Bonds 436

Financing Alternatives: Equity 437

Venture Capital and Other Private Equity 438

Public Stock Offerings 438

BEHIND THE SCENES VISA FUNDS ITS FUTURE WITH RECORD-SETTING IPO 440

- KEY TERMS 441
- TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 442
- EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 443
- PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 443

CHAPTER 19

Financial Markets and Investment Strategies 445

BEHIND THE SCENES CHESAPEAKE ENERGY SEARCHES FOR STABILITY IN A VOLATILE WORLD 445

- Introduction 446
- Stocks 446
 - Types of Stock 446
 - Stock Valuation 447
- Bonds 449
 - Advantages and Disadvantages of Bonds 450
 - Bond Issuers 451
- Mutual Funds 452
 - Advantages and Disadvantages of Mutual Funds 453
 - Choosing Mutual Funds 453
- Derivatives 456
 - Options and Financial Futures 457
 - Commodities Futures 458
 - Currency Futures 458
 - Credit Derivatives 458
- Financial Markets 459
 - The Stock Market 459
 - The Bond Market 459
 - The Money Market 460
 - The Derivatives Market 460
- Investment Strategies and Techniques 460
 - Establishing Investment Objectives 461
 - Learning to Analyze Financial News 462
 - Creating an Investment Portfolio 462
 - Buying and Selling Securities 463

BEHIND THE SCENES CHESAPEAKE ENERGY HEDGES, THEN DOESN'T, THEN DOES 464

- KEY TERMS 466
- TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 466
- EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 467
- PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 467

CHAPTER 20

The Money Supply and Banking Systems 469

BEHIND THE SCENES CAN A NOT-FOR-PROFIT CREDIT UNION COMPETE IN A PROFIT-DRIVEN WORLD? 469

- Introduction 470

- The Money Supply 470
 - The Meaning of Money 470
 - Monitoring and Managing the Money Supply 470
- The Federal Reserve and Other Federal Financial Institutions 472
 - The Fed's Major Responsibilities 472
 - The Fed's Tools for Implementing Monetary Policy 473
 - The Federal Funds Rate* 473 • *The Discount Rate* 474
 - Other Government Banking Agencies and Institutions 474

- Investment Banking 475
 - Services Offered by Investment Banks 475
 - Types of Investment Banks 476
- Commercial Banking and Other Financial Services 477
 - Commercial Banking Services 477
 - Other Financial Services 478

- Banking's Role in the Great Recession 478
 - Building the Perfect Bubble 479
 - Recovering from the Dot-Com Bubble* 479 • *Creating a New Bubble in Housing* 479 • *Securitizing Debt* 481
 - The Bubble Bursts: The Meltdown of 2008 482
 - The Great Recession 483

- Efforts to Regulate and Reform the Banking Industry 484
 - Lessons to Be Learned 484
 - Efforts to Prevent Another Banking Crisis 485

BEHIND THE SCENES ALLIANT CREDIT UNION: A MEMBER-DRIVEN APPROACH TO MEETING CUSTOMER NEEDS 487

- KEY TERMS 488
- TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE 489
- EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE 489
- PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS 489

Appendixes

APPENDIX A
Business Law A-1

APPENDIX B
Risk Management B-1

APPENDIX C
Information Technology C-1

APPENDIX D
Personal Finance: Getting Set for Life D-1

Glossary G-1

Brand, Organization, Name, and Website Index I-1

Subject Index I-3

Preface

Major Changes and Improvements in This Edition

Here are the major changes in the Eighth Edition of *Business in Action*:

- Five new chapter-opening vignettes with chapter-ending case studies:
 - Chapter 2*: The forecasting challenges faced by Apple when the company was planning the launch of its iPhone 6 models
 - Chapter 3*: Cisco's successful merger-and-acquisition process, defying the odds when it comes to buying other companies
 - Chapter 8*: The Mexican building-materials giant Cemex's innovative use of custom collaboration platform to help its global workforce solve pressing business challenges
 - Chapter 11*: Zappos' unconventional strategies for finding and attracting unconventional employees
 - Chapter 16*: GoPro's smart use of social media to build awareness of and demand for its rugged action cameras
- More than three dozen new review, analysis, and application questions and student projects
- Fourteen all-new exhibits and 45 updated or redesigned exhibits, further expanding *Business in Action's* unmatched selection of value-added instructional visuals
- Coverage of the revolution in mobile connectivity and the many ways mobile is reshaping business
- New or substantially revised sections include
 - The Technological Environment** (Chapter 1), highlighting the disruptive effects of mobile communication and connectivity
 - The Trans-Pacific Partnership (PTT)** (Chapter 2), highlighting the controversy surrounding this major new trade agreement
 - Legal Differences in the Global Business Environment** (Chapter 2), updating the European taxation controversy that has forced Google, Amazon, Starbucks, and other U.S. companies to change their business practices
 - Blueprint for an Effective Business Plan** (Chapter 6), adding a discussion of the contrary view about the value of conventional business plans and the use of *canvases* instead
 - Social Networks and Virtual Communities** (Chapter 8), adding an overview of Zappos's reliance on social networking to keep its growing workforce connected
 - Gamifying for Healthy Competition** (Chapter 10), describing how companies are using game principles to motivate employees
 - Gender (Chapter 11, in Dimensions of Workforce Diversity)**, updating the discussion of gender pay imbalance and uncovering the major issues behind the often-quoted statistics about women earning only 70 percent of what men earn
 - Test Marketing** (Chapter 14), expanding the coverage with the new phenomenon of crowdsourced test marketing and crowdfunding as a way to identify potential hit products

Packaging (Chapter 14), broadening the discussion of how packaging decisions are often a tug-of-war between competing economic and environmental concerns

The Outlook for Wholesaling (Chapter 15), adding discussion of how e-commerce technologies let companies such as Amazon jump into traditional wholesaling and distribution channels because some incumbent players were too slow to adapt

The Outlook for Retailing (Chapter 15), expanding the discussion points of overcapacity, the emergence of mobile commerce, the growth of multichannel retailing, and data security and privacy concerns stemming from personalized marketing efforts

Physical Distribution and Logistics (Chapter 15), using Amazon's new same-day delivery service and experimentation with delivery drones to highlight the importance of competitive physical distribution in the marketing mix.

Public Relations (Chapter 16), explaining how social media have upended the traditional practice of public relations

Business in Action: An Ideal Text for Your Introduction to Business Course

Business in Action is the ideal text for courses that aim to cover the full spectrum of contemporary business topics in the most efficient and successful manner possible.

HIGH-EFFICIENCY LEARNING WITHOUT COMPROMISES

Business in Action offers instructors and students a much-needed alternative to texts that are either overstuffed and overwhelming or so skimpy that they compromise essential coverage. With a full 20 chapters, including chapters dedicated to employee motivation, customer communication, financial markets, and banking, it has the same scope as other comprehensive texts while being up to 20 percent shorter. There is no filler and no fluff, and the examples were chosen carefully to illustrate important points, without overloading the text. We invite you to do side-by-side comparisons with any other business text to see which one will make the best use of students' limited time and energy for studying.

VIGNETTES AND CASE STUDIES THAT BRING BUSINESS CONCEPTS TO LIFE

Every chapter is bookended with a vignette/case study pair that help students grasp the principles covered in the chapter. The chapter-opening vignette introduces a company faced with a major strategic challenge and encourages students to imagine how they would address that challenge. The chapter-closing case study describes the strategic choices the company's leaders made, including how they applied the concepts students just learned in the chapter. Three critical thinking questions require students to apply the concepts covered in the text. Plus, students can find out more about the company featured in the case by completing the "Learn More Online" exercise. In this edition, six of the vignette/case studies are all new, and the rest have been updated to reflect the most recent decisions faced by each featured company.

OBJECTIVE-DRIVEN DESIGN WITH INFORMATION CHUNKING AND INTERIM CHECKPOINTS

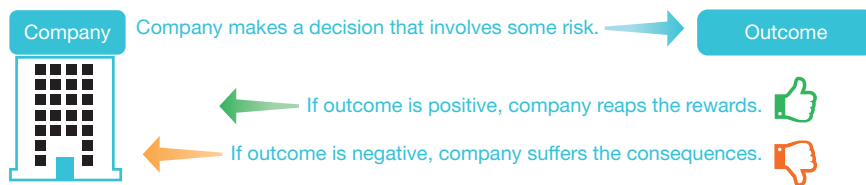
Every chapter is divided into six concise segments, each focused on its own learning objective and offering a comprehensive checkpoint to help students review and reinforce what they've learned. With this approach, each learning objective segment is treated almost as a mini-chapter within the chapter, letting students pace their intake and memorization, rather than having to review an entire chapter at once. The consistent six-part structure

also simplifies course planning and class time allocation for instructors, and it helps students organize their reading, review, and test preparation.

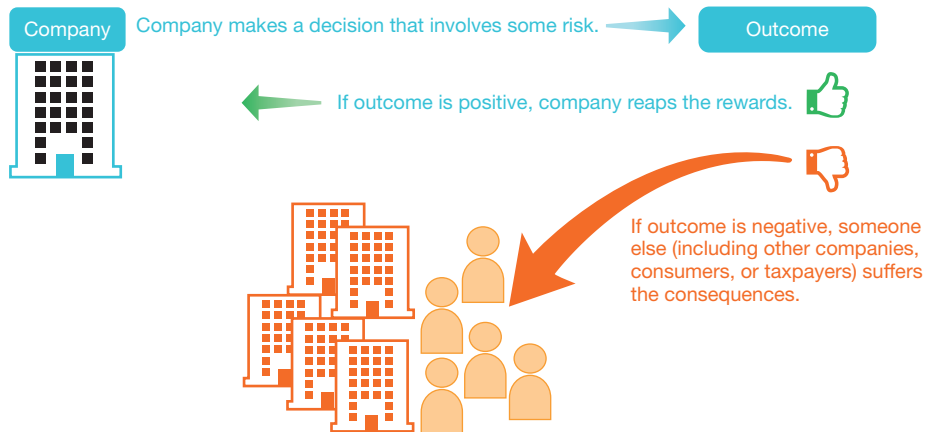
VISUAL LEARNING FOR A NEW GENERATION OF STUDENTS

Business in Action takes efficiency and student-friendly design to an entirely new level, with more than 150 *Exhibits That Teach*. These unique diagrams, infographics, and other exhibits address the challenge of getting students to read long passages of text by presenting vital concepts visually. The emphasis throughout is on productive learning—on helping students minimize the time they spend reading while maximizing their learning outcome. This value-added approach to visuals is in sharp contrast to books that try to entertain with decorative photos, cartoons, or fractured page designs that disrupt the flow of reading and thereby force students to spend even *more* time reading.

Healthy connection between risk and reward



Moral hazard: Link between risk and reward is broken



Extending the Value of Your Textbook with Free Multimedia Content

Business in Action's unique Real-Time Updates system automatically provides weekly content updates, including interactive websites, podcasts, PowerPoint presentations, online videos, PDFs, and articles. You can subscribe to updates chapter by chapter, so you get only the material that applies to your current chapter. Visit <http://real-timeupdates.com/bia8> to register.

The screenshot shows the 'Real-Time Updates' website for 'Business in Action, 8th Ed.' The interface includes a navigation menu with categories like News, Articles, Podcasts, Videos, PowerPoint, PDFs, and more. A main content area displays a news article with a 'Read More' link. A sidebar on the left lists various media items. At the bottom, there are sections for 'CHAPTERS', 'SEARCH', 'FAQ/INDEX', 'STUDENTS', and 'TOP BUSINESS STORIES FROM TIME'.

- 1 See breaking news on hot business topics.
- 2 Read messages from the authors, access special instructor-only media files, and join online communities for instructors.
- 3 Click on any chapter to see the updates and media items for that chapter.
- 4 Scan headlines and click on any item of interest to read the article or download the media item.
- 5 Subscribe via RSS to individual chapters to get updates automatically for the chapter you're currently teaching.

Building Skills, Awareness, and Insight

Each chapter contains a rich set of questions and projects to help students verify their learning, expand their knowledge, and practice important skills:

- **Test Your Knowledge.** Fourteen carefully selected questions help you review information, analyze implications, and apply concepts. Highlighted questions involve ethical considerations and concept integration from other chapters.
- **Expand Your Knowledge.** *Discovering Career Opportunities* tasks give students a chance to explore career resources on campus, observe professionals at their jobs, interview businesspeople, and perform self-evaluations to assess their own career skills and interests. *Improving Your Tech Insights* tasks students to research and summarize an important technical development and explain its business implications; this feature introduces them to such revolutionary developments as nanotechnology, location and tracking technologies, and assistive technologies for people with disabilities.
- **Practice Your Skills.** *Sharpening Your Communication Skills* addresses one of the key skill concerns among today's hiring managers; this exercise lets students practice listening, writing, and speaking in a variety of real-life scenarios. *Building Your Team Skills* teaches important team skills, such as brainstorming, collaborative decision making, developing a consensus, debating, role playing, and resolving conflict. *Developing Your Research Skills* familiarizes students with a wide variety of business reference materials and offers practice in developing research skills.

Full Support for AACSB Learning Standards

The American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) is a not-for-profit corporation of educational institutions, corporations, and other organizations devoted to the promotion and improvement of higher education in business administration and accounting. A collegiate institution offering degrees in business administration or accounting may volunteer for AACSB accreditation review. The AACSB makes initial accreditation decisions and conducts periodic reviews to promote continuous quality improvement in management education. Pearson Education is a proud member of the AACSB and is pleased to provide advice to help you apply AACSB Learning Standards.

Curriculum quality is one of the most important criteria for AACSB accreditation. Although no specific courses are required, the AACSB expects a curriculum to include learning experiences in the following areas:

- Written and oral communication
- Ethical understanding and reasoning
- Analytical thinking
- Information technology
- Interpersonal relations and teamwork
- Diverse and multicultural work environments
- Reflective thinking
- Application of knowledge

Throughout *Business in Action*, you'll find student exercises and activities that support the achievement of these important goals, and the questions in the accompanying test bank are tagged with the appropriate AACSB category.

Course Planning Guide

The structure of *Business in Action* makes it easy to adapt to courses of any length and with any specific instructional goals. The following table suggests one possible sequence and schedule for covering the chapters in the textbook, with time allocations based on the total number of class hours available.

Chapter	Hours Devoted to Each Chapter		
	30-Hour Course	45-Hour Course	60-Hour Course
Chapter 1: Developing a Business Mindset	1	2	3
Chapter 2: Understanding Basic Economics	2	2	3
Chapter 3: The Global Marketplace	1	2	3
Chapter 4: Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility	2	3	3
Chapter 5: Forms of Ownership	1	2	3
Chapter 6: Entrepreneurship and Small-Business Ownership	1	2	3
Chapter 7: Management Roles, Functions, and Skills	2	3	3
Chapter 8: Organization and Teamwork	1	2	3
Chapter 9: Production Systems	1	2	3
Chapter 10: Employee Motivation	1	2	3
Chapter 11: Human Resources Management	1	2	3
Chapter 12: Labor Relations	1	2	3
Chapter 13: The Art and Science of Marketing	2	2	2
Chapter 14: Product and Pricing Strategies	2	2	2
Chapter 15: Distribution and Marketing Logistics	1	1	2
Chapter 16: Customer Communication	1	2	2

Continued on next page

Chapter	Hours Devoted to Each Chapter		
	30-Hour Course	45-Hour Course	60-Hour Course
Chapter 17: Financial Information and Accounting Concepts	2	3	3
Chapter 18: Financial Management	2	2	3
Chapter 19: Financial Markets and Investment Strategies	1	2	3
Chapter 20: The Money Supply and Banking Systems	2	2	3
Appendix A: Business Law	-	1	1
Appendix B: Risk Management	1	1	1
Appendix C: Information Technology	-	-	1
Appendix D: Personal Finance: Getting Set for Life	1	1	1

Resources for Instructors and Students

Instructor's Resource Center

At the Instructor Resource Center, www.pearsonhighered.com/irc, instructors can easily register to gain access to a variety of instructor resources available with this text in downloadable format. If assistance is needed, our dedicated technical support team is ready to help with the media supplements that accompany this text. Visit <http://247pearsoned.custhelp.com/> for answers to frequently asked questions and toll-free user-support phone numbers.

The following supplements are available with this text

- **PowerPoints.** A full set of PowerPoint slides is provided. The slides are divided by chapter and are suitable for leading class lectures and discussion. The slides contain the relevant material from each chapter along with reproductions of key tables and figures.
- **Instructor's Resource Manual.** The *Instructor's Resource Manual* makes it easy to plan lectures and incorporate all resources offered with *Business in Action*. Each chapter contains a chapter outline, classroom activities, and answers to all end-of-chapter material.
- **Test Bank.** The test bank contains approximately 100 questions per chapter, including multiple-choice, true/false, and essay questions.
- **TestGen® Computerized Test Bank (and various conversions).** TestGen is a test-generating software program that allows instructors to add, edit, or delete questions from the test bank; analyze test results; and organize a database of exams and student results.

CourseSmart eTextbook

CourseSmart eTextbooks were developed for students looking to save on required or recommended textbooks. Students simply select their eText by title or author and purchase immediate access to the content for the duration of the course using any major credit card. With a CourseSmart eText, students can search for specific keywords or page numbers, take notes online, print out reading assignments that incorporate lecture notes, and bookmark important passages for later review. For more information or to purchase a CourseSmart eTextbook, visit www.coursesmart.com.

Customer Service

If you have questions related to this product, please contact our customer service department online at <http://247pearsoned.custhelp.com/>.

About the Authors

Courtland L. Bovée and John V. Thill have been leading textbook authors for more than two decades, introducing millions of students to the fields of business and business communication. Their award-winning texts are distinguished by proven pedagogical features, extensive selections of contemporary case studies, hundreds of real-life examples, engaging writing, thorough research, and the unique integration of print and electronic resources. Each new edition reflects the authors' commitment to continuous refinement and improvement, particularly in terms of modeling the latest practices in business and the use of technology.

Professor Bovée has 22 years of teaching experience at Grossmont College in San Diego, where he has received teaching honors and was accorded that institution's C. Allen Paul Distinguished Chair. Mr. Thill is a prominent business consultant who has worked with organizations ranging from Fortune 500 multinationals to entrepreneurial start-ups. He formerly held positions with Pacific Bell and Texaco.



Courtland L. Bovée

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John V. Thill

Courtland L. Bovée

John V. Thill

Real-Time Updates—Learn More

Real-Time Updates—Learn More is a unique feature you will see strategically located throughout the text, connecting students with dozens of carefully screened online media. These elements—categorized by the icons shown below representing interactive websites, podcasts, PDFs, articles, videos, and PowerPoints—complement the text’s coverage by providing contemporary examples and valuable insights from successful professionals.



REAL-TIME UPDATES

Learn More by Reading This Article

Ready to start a business? Get this insider advice	4
Managing your career in today’s workplace: One expert’s view	9
Is a higher minimum wage really the job killer some claim it to be?	30
Why aren’t wages rising faster?	36
Which companies do U.S. consumers like and loathe the most?	74
Starting and growing a successful partnership	103
The innovation advantage of intrapreneurs	126
Learn from the failure of other entrepreneurs	131
Looking for an angel?	137
What makes the digital enterprise effective?	153
A company needs bosses, right?	155
Management is not leadership	156
The benefits of mobile collaboration	183
Three factors that distinguish smart teams	185
Givers, takers, and matchers: How giving can be a source of motivation	225
Eight mistakes that demotivate employees	241
An in-depth tutorial on labor unions	280
How established companies are trying to compete against “digital disrupters”	312
Marketing a museum in the social media age	312
The fundamental steps to building your brand	331
Ten successful brand extensions	334
Social media etiquette guide for businesses	388
How social media changed public relations	390
Introduction to the accounting equation	403
Get a grip on balance sheets	407
Build a better budget	426
Free tutorials to help you get started in investing	462
Did we learn anything from the banking crisis?	485
Smart tips for buying life insurance	B-5
Simple steps to protect your privacy	C-4



REAL-TIME UPDATES

Learn More by Listening to This Podcast

A closer look at the equilibrium point	34
Transforming M&A into a strategic advantage	112
Bold vision: Dream big and don’t back down	151
Taking teams to the top	183
Keep small tiffs from escalating into major battles	188
Hear from experts on business law	A-4



REAL-TIME UPDATES

Learn More by Watching This Video

The mobile business advantage	11
Are corporations putting too much emphasis on shareholder value?	81
Hear what 1,000 global CEOs think about sustainability	86
Young entrepreneurs changing the world	125
How managers tackle today’s leadership challenges	158
Building trust in virtual teams	182
Watch robots build a Tesla electric car	215
See what Google employees have to say about diversity	255
Dr. Philip Kotler on the importance of brand equity	329
Yield management in the hotel industry	339
Watch Walmart’s march across America	350
The future of retail: some possible innovations	355
Essential points on the income statement	410
Can this company pay its bills?	414
The basics of exchange traded funds	453
Free personal investing videos	D-6



REAL-TIME UPDATES

Learn More by Reading This PDF

Want to pitch to investors? Learn from the pros first	130
Don’t sign that franchise agreement before you read this	139
A closer look at union versus nonunion pay	275
Can you pass the seven-point test?	438
Free consumer advice from the Federal Reserve	473

**REAL-TIME UPDATES**

Learn More by Watching This Presentation

Satisfying the four fundamental drives of employee behavior	226
Five tips for reading a balance sheet	406

**REAL-TIME UPDATES**

Learn More by Visiting This Website

Working to Eradicate Corruption Around the World	62
Ready to take a business international?	64
Want to make an impact with your entrepreneurial efforts?	82
Know your rights as a consumer	88
Get help from a Small Business Development Center	100
Benefit corporations and B Corp certification	106
Interested in shareholder activism?	109
Find an incubator to nurture your new venture	134
Management tools and trends	162
The effort to bring manufacturing activities back to the United States	204
Sustainability at Walmart	206
Interested in a career in supply chain management?	207
Which companies rank highly in quality of work life?	248
Looking for jobs at diversity-minded companies?	252
Get the facts on gender gaps in corporation leadership	253
See how the NLRB investigates charges and oversees elections	283
Learn more about careers in marketing	298
Insights for marketing—and career building	302
Marketing to the mobile buyer	300
New research into consumer-generated content marketing	301
What's Hot in Global Consumer Markets?	305
Love the retail experience?	354
See the hottest new concepts in retailing	356
See how big Amazon's distribution operations look from the inside	365
See the latest ads from all around the world	380
Issues in database marketing	381
See what one of the leading voices in contemporary business has on his mind	388
Content marketing and blogging tips	388
Considering a career in accounting?	399
The latest coverage of crowdfunding	430
Getting your credit report is essential—and free	430
Debt financing programs at the Small Business Administration	432
Get the inside scoop on IPO activity	440
Learn the basics of successful bond investing	451
Free money advice from Mint.com	477
Legal advice for small businesses	A-2
The Electronic Frontier Foundation's position on the DCMA	A-5
Money Management Strategies to Get Your Finances Under Control	D-1

**REAL-TIME UPDATES**

Learn More by Exploring This Interactive Website

Use this powerful search tool for easier online searches	7
Explore the wide range of career possibilities	17
Do a Deep Dive into Balance of Trade Data	51
Get an interactive look at global economic data	57
Explore NAFTA trading flows, city by city	57
Explore the Latest Data on Europe's Financial Health	59
See how one of the world's biggest energy consumers is reducing, reusing, and recycling	82
Create a more sustainable product with Nike's interactive tool	84
Watch lean manufacturing in action	208
Plot your career path	233
Quick summaries of key motivational concepts	239
Take a closer look at how the United States is changing	254
Explore the salary potential for virtually any business career	262
See the strategies behind the world's strongest brands	331
How much does that fund really cost?	454
Find the funds that are right for you	454
Practice your investment skills	459
Interested in working for an investment bank?	476
Use these free online financial calculators	D-5

**REAL-TIME UPDATES**

Learn More by Reading This Infographic

Can you run an entire company from a smartphone?	11
The Staggering Scale of International Tax Havens	62
Mutual funds: The fundamental concepts	453
Mutual funds: The fundamental concepts	225
Outlining a risk management strategy	B-2
Mint.com's Life After Graduation roadmap	D-8

Prologue

Using This Course to Help Launch Your Career

You might not be thinking about your long-term career path as you dive into this business course, but this is actually the perfect time to start planning and preparing. Even though you may not have decided which area of business interests you the most, it's never too early to start accumulating the skills, experiences, and insights that will give you a competitive advantage when it's time to enter (or reenter) the business job market. By thinking ahead about the qualifications you'd like to have on your résumé when you graduate, you can select courses, seek out part-time employment and internship opportunities, and pursue extracurricular activities that will give you the professional profile that top employers look for.

This prologue sets the stage by helping you understand today's dynamic workplace, the steps you can take to adapt to the job market, and the importance of creating an employment portfolio and building your personal brand.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHANGING WORLD OF WORK

Even as the U.S. economy recovers from the Great Recession and employment levels improve, you're likely to encounter some challenges as you start or continue on with your business career. As companies around the world try to gain competitive advantages and cost efficiencies, employment patterns will vary from industry to industry and region to region.

The ups and downs of the economic cycle are not the only dynamic elements that will affect your career, however. The nature of employment itself is changing, with a growing number of independent workers and loosely structured *virtual organizations* that engage these workers for individual projects or short-term contracts, rather than hiring employees. In fact, one recent study predicted that independent workers will outnumber conventional employees in the United States by 2020.¹

This new model of work offers some compelling advantages for workers and companies alike. Companies can lower their fixed costs, adapt more easily to economic fluctuations and competitive moves, and get access to specialized talent for specific project needs.² Workers can benefit from the freedom to choose the clients and projects that interest them the most, the flexibility to work as much or as little as they want, and (thanks to advances in communication technology) access to compelling work even if they live far from major employment centers such as New York City or California's Silicon Valley.³

On the other hand, this new approach also presents some significant challenges for all parties. These flexibilities and freedoms can create more complexity for workers and managers, diminished loyalties on both sides, uncertainty about the future, issues with skill development and training, and problems with accountability and liability.⁴ Many of these challenges involve communication, making solid communication skills more important than ever.

These changes could affect you even if you pursue traditional employment throughout your career. Within organizations, you're likely to work with a combination of "inside"



Peter Bernik/Shutterstock

Are you comfortable working on your own? Independent workers have become an important part of the global workforce.

employees and “outside” contractors, which can affect the dynamics of the workplace. And the availability of more independent workers in the talent marketplace gives employers more options and more leverage, so full-time employees may find themselves competing against freelancers, at least indirectly.

As you navigate this uncertain future, keep two vital points in mind. First, don’t wait for your career to just happen: Take charge of your career and stay in charge of it. Explore all your options and have a plan—but be prepared to change course as opportunities and threats appear on the horizon. Second, don’t count on employers to take care of you. The era of lifetime employment, in which an employee committed to one company for life with the understanding it would return the loyalty, is long gone. From finding opportunities to developing the skills you need to succeed, it’s up to you to manage your career and look out for your own best interests.

HOW EMPLOYERS VIEW TODAY’S JOB MARKET

From an employer’s perspective, the employment process is always a question of balance. Maintaining a stable workforce can improve practically every aspect of business performance, yet many employers want the flexibility to shrink and expand payrolls as business conditions change. Employers obviously want to attract the best talent, but the best talent is more expensive and more vulnerable to offers from competitors, so there are always financial trade-offs to consider.

Employers also struggle with the ups and downs of the economy. When unemployment is low, the balance of power shifts to employees, and employers have to compete in order to attract and keep top talent. When unemployment is high, the power shifts back to employers, who can afford to be more selective and less accommodating. In other words, pay attention to the economy; at times you can be more aggressive in your demands, but at other times you need to be more accommodating.

Companies view employment as a complex business decision with lots of variables to consider. To make the most of your potential, regardless of the career path you pursue, you need to view employment in the same way.

WHAT EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN JOB APPLICANTS

Given the complex forces in the contemporary workplace and the unrelenting pressure of global competition, what are employers looking for in the candidates they hire? The short answer: a lot. Like all “buyers,” companies want to get as much as they can for the money they spend. The closer you can present yourself as the ideal candidate, the better your chances of getting a crack at the most exciting opportunities.

Specific expectations vary by profession and position, of course, but virtually all employers look for the following general skills and attributes:⁵

- **Communication skills.** Communication is far and away the most commonly mentioned skill set when employers are asked about what they look for in employees. Improving your communication skills will help in every aspect of your professional life.
- **Interpersonal and team skills.** You will have many individual responsibilities on the job, but chances are you won’t work alone often. Learn to work with others—and help them succeed as you succeed.
- **Intercultural and international awareness and sensitivity.** Successful employers tend to be responsive to diverse workforces, markets, and communities, and they look for employees with the same outlook.



Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock

Communication skills will benefit your career, no matter what path or profession you pursue.

- **Data collection, analysis, and decision-making skills.** Employers want people who know how to identify information needs, find the necessary data, convert the data into useful knowledge, and make sound decisions.
- **Digital, social, and mobile media skills.** Today's workers need to know how to use common office software and to communicate using a wide range of digital media and systems.
- **Time and resource management.** If you've had to juggle multiple priorities during college, consider that great training for the business world. Your ability to plan projects and manage the time and resources available to you will make a big difference on the job.
- **Flexibility and adaptability.** Stuff happens, as they say. Employees who can roll with the punches and adapt to changing business priorities and circumstances will go further (and be happier) than employees who resist change.
- **Professionalism.** Professionalism is the quality of performing at the highest possible level and conducting oneself with confidence, purpose, and pride. True professionals strive to excel, continue to hone their skills and build their knowledge, are dependable and accountable, demonstrate a sense of business etiquette, make ethical decisions, show loyalty and commitment, don't give up when things get tough, and maintain a positive outlook.

Adapting to Today's Job Market

Adapting to the workplace is a lifelong process of seeking the best fit between what you want to do and what employers (or clients, if you work independently) are willing to pay you to do. It's important to think about what you want to do during the many thousands of hours you will spend working, what you have to offer, and how to make yourself more attractive to employers.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

Economic necessities and the vagaries of the marketplace will influence much of what happens in your career, of course, and you may not always have the opportunity to do the kind of work you would really like to do. Even if you can't get the job you want right now, though, start your job search by examining your values and interests. Doing so will give you a better idea of where you want to be eventually, and you can use those insights to learn and grow your way toward that ideal situation. Consider these questions:

- **What would you like to do every day?** Research occupations that interest you. Find out what people really do every day. Ask friends, relatives, alumni from your school, and contacts in your social networks. Read interviews with people in various professions to get a sense of what their careers are like.
- **How would you like to work?** Consider how much independence you want on the job, how much variety you like, and whether you prefer to work with products, machines, people, ideas, figures, or some combination thereof.
- **How do your financial goals fit with your other priorities?** For instance, many high-paying jobs involve a lot of stress, sacrifices of time with family and friends, and frequent travel or relocation. If location, lifestyle, intriguing work, or other factors are more important to you, you may well have to sacrifice some level of pay to achieve them.
- **Have you established some general career goals?** For example, do you want to pursue a career specialty such as finance or manufacturing, or do you want to gain experience in multiple areas with an eye toward upper management?
- **What sort of corporate culture are you most comfortable with?** Would you be happy in a formal hierarchy with clear reporting relationships? Or do you prefer less structure? Teamwork or individualism? Do you like a competitive environment?

You might need some time in the workforce to figure out what you really want to do or to work your way into the job you really want, but it's never too early to start thinking about where you want to be. Filling out the assessment in Exhibit 1 might help you get a clearer picture of the nature of work you would like to pursue in your career.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO OFFER?

Knowing what you want to do is one thing. Knowing what a company is willing to pay you to do is another thing entirely. You may already have a good idea of what you can offer employers. If not, some brainstorming can help you identify your skills, interests, and characteristics. Start by jotting down achievements you're proud of and experiences that were satisfying, and think carefully about what specific skills these achievements demanded of you. For example, leadership skills, speaking ability, and artistic talent may have helped you coordinate a successful class project. As you analyze your achievements, you may well begin to recognize a pattern of skills. Which of them might be valuable to potential employers?

Next, look at your educational preparation, work experience, and extracurricular activities. What do your knowledge and experience qualify you to do? What have you learned from volunteer work or class projects that could benefit you on the job? Have you held any offices, won any awards or scholarships, mastered a second language? What skills have you developed in nonbusiness situations that could transfer to a business position?

Take stock of your personal characteristics. Are you aggressive, a born leader? Or would you rather follow? Are you outgoing, articulate, great with people? Or do you prefer working alone? Make a list of what you believe are your four or five most important qualities. Ask a relative or friend to rate your traits as well.

If you're having difficulty figuring out your interests, characteristics, or capabilities, consult your college career center. Many campuses administer a variety of tests

EXHIBIT 1

Career Self-Assessment

Consider these 20 questions to help define the sort of career path you would like to pursue.

Activity or Situation	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	No Preference
1. I want to work independently.				
2. I want variety in my work.				
3. I want to work with people.				
4. I want to work with technology.				
5. I want physical work.				
6. I want mental work.				
7. I want to work for a large organization.				
8. I want to work for a nonprofit organization.				
9. I want to work for a small business.				
10. I want to work for a service business.				
11. I want to start or buy a business someday.				
12. I want regular, predictable work hours.				
13. I want to work in a city location.				
14. I want to work in a small town or suburb.				
15. I want to work in another country.				
16. I want to work outdoors.				
17. I want to work in a structured environment.				
18. I want to avoid risk as much as possible.				
19. I want to enjoy my work, even if that means making less money.				
20. I want to become a high-level corporate manager.				

that can help you identify interests, aptitudes, and personality traits. These tests won't reveal your "perfect" job, but they'll help you focus on the types of work best suited to your personality.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE YOURSELF MORE VALUABLE?

While you're figuring out what you want from a job and what you can offer an employer, you can take positive steps toward building your career. First, look for volunteer projects, temporary jobs, freelance work, or internships that will help expand your experience base and skill set.⁶ You can look for freelance projects on Craigslist and numerous other websites; some of these jobs have only nominal pay, but they do provide an opportunity for you to display your skills. Also consider applying your talents to *crowdsourcing* projects, in which companies and nonprofit organizations invite the public to contribute solutions to various challenges.

These opportunities help you gain valuable experience and relevant contacts, provide you with important references and work samples for your *employment portfolio*, and help you establish your *personal brand* (see the following sections).

Second, learn more about the industry or industries in which you want to work and stay on top of new developments. Join networks of professional colleagues and friends who can help you keep up with trends and events. Many professional societies have student chapters or offer students discounted memberships. Take courses and pursue other educational or life experiences that would be difficult while working full time.

BUILDING AN EMPLOYMENT PORTFOLIO

Employers want proof that you have the skills to succeed on the job, but even if you don't have much relevant work experience, you can use your college classes to assemble that proof. Simply create and maintain an *employment portfolio*, which is a collection of projects that demonstrate your skills and knowledge. You can create a *print portfolio* and an *e-portfolio*; both can help with your career effort. A print portfolio gives you something tangible to bring to interviews, and it lets you collect project results that might not be easy to show online, such as a handsomely bound report. An e-portfolio is a multimedia presentation of your skills and experiences.⁷ Think of it as a website that contains your résumé, work samples, letters of recommendation, relevant videos or podcasts you have recorded, any blog posts or articles you have written, and other information about you and your skills. The portfolio can be burned on a CD or DVD for physical distribution or, more commonly, it can be posted online—whether it's a personal website, your college's site (if student pages are available), a specialized portfolio hosting site such as Behance. To see a selection of student e-portfolios from colleges around the United States, go to <http://real-timeupdates.com/bia8>, click on Student Assignments and locate the link to student e-portfolios.

As you assemble your portfolio, collect anything that shows your ability to perform, whether it's in school, on the job, or in other venues. However, you *must* check with employers before including any items that you created while you were an employee and check with clients before including any *work products* (anything you wrote, designed, programmed, and so on) they purchased from you. Many business documents contain confidential information that companies don't want distributed to outside audiences.

For each item you add to your portfolio, write a brief description that helps other people understand the meaning and significance of the project. Include such items as these:

- **Background.** Why did you undertake this project? Was it a school project, a work assignment, or something you did on your own initiative?
- **Project objectives.** Explain the project's goals, if relevant.
- **Collaborators.** If you worked with others, be sure to mention that and discuss team dynamics if appropriate. For instance, if you led the team or worked with others long distance as a virtual team, point that out.

- **Constraints.** Sometimes the most impressive thing about a project is the time or budget constraints under which it was created. If such constraints apply to a project, consider mentioning them in a way that doesn't sound like an excuse for poor quality. If you had only one week to create a website, for example, you might say that "One of the intriguing challenges of this project was the deadline; I had only one week to design, compose, test, and publish this material."
- **Outcomes.** If the project's goals were measurable, what was the result? For example, if you wrote a letter soliciting donations for a charitable cause, how much money did you raise?
- **Learning experience.** If appropriate, describe what you learned during the course of the project.

Keep in mind that the portfolio itself is a communication project, so be sure to apply everything you'll learn in this course about effective communication and good design. Assume that potential employers will find your e-portfolio site (even if you don't tell them about it), so don't include anything that could come back to haunt you. Also, if you have anything embarrassing on Facebook, Twitter, or any other social networking site, remove it immediately.

To get started, first check with the career center at your college; many schools offer e-portfolio systems for their students. (Some schools now require e-portfolios, so you may already be building one.) You can also find plenty of advice online; search for "e-portfolio," "student portfolio," or "professional portfolio."

BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

Products and companies have brands that represent collections of certain attributes, such as the safety emphasis of Volvo cars, the performance emphasis of BMW, or the luxury emphasis of Cadillac. Similarly, when people who know you think about you, they have a particular set of qualities in mind based on your professionalism, your priorities, and the various skills and attributes you have developed over the years. Perhaps without even being conscious of it, you have created a *personal brand* for yourself.

As you plan the next stage of your career, start managing your personal brand deliberately, rather than just letting it happen. Here are the basics of a successful personal branding strategy:⁸

- **Figure out the "story of you."** Simply put, where have you been in life, and where are you going? Every good story has dramatic tension that pulls readers in and makes them wonder what will happen next. Where is your story going next? You might even want to write a brief summary of your story to help clarify your thoughts.
- **Clarify your professional theme.** Volvos, BMWs, and Cadillacs can all get you from Point A to Point B in safety, comfort, and style—but each brand emphasizes some attributes more than others to create a specific image in the minds of potential buyers. Similarly, you want to be seen as something more than just an accountant, a supervisor, a salesperson. What will your theme be? Brilliant strategist? Hard-nosed, get-it-done tactician? Technical guru? Problem solver? Creative genius? Inspirational leader?
- **Reach out and connect.** Major corporations spread the word about their brands with multimillion-dollar advertising campaigns. You can promote your brand for free or close to it. The secret is networking, which you'll learn more about in the next section. You build your brand by connecting with like-minded people, sharing information, demonstrating skills and knowledge, and helping others succeed.
- **Deliver on your brand's promise—every time, all the time.** When you promote a brand, you make a promise—a promise that whoever buys that brand will get the benefits you are promoting. All of this planning and communication is of no value if you fail to deliver on the promises your branding efforts make. Conversely, when you deliver quality results time after time, your talents and professionalism will speak for you.

BUILDING YOUR NETWORK

Networking is the process of making informal connections with mutually beneficial business contacts. Networking takes place wherever and whenever people communicate: at industry functions, at social gatherings, at alumni reunions—and all over the Internet, from LinkedIn to Facebook to Twitter. In addition to making connections through social media tools, you can get yourself noticed by company recruiters.

Networking is more essential than ever because the vast majority of job openings are never advertised to the general public. To avoid the time and expense of sifting through thousands of applications and the risk of hiring complete strangers, most companies prefer to ask their employees for recommendations first.⁹ The more people who know you, the better your chance of being recommended for one of these hidden job openings.

Start building your network now, before you need it. Your classmates could end up being some of your most valuable contacts—if not right away then possibly later in your career. Then branch out by identifying people with similar interests in your target professions, industries, and companies. Read news sites, blogs, and other online sources. Follow industry leaders on Twitter. You can also follow individual executives at your target companies to learn about their interests and concerns.¹⁰ Be on the lookout for career-oriented *Tweetups*, in which people who've connected on Twitter get together for in-person networking events. Connect with people on LinkedIn and Facebook, particularly in groups dedicated to particular career interests. Depending on the system and the settings on individual users' accounts, you may be able to introduce yourself via private messages. Just make sure you are respectful of people and don't take up much of their time.¹¹

Participate in student business organizations, especially those with ties to professional organizations. Visit *trade shows* to learn about various industries and rub shoulders with people who work in those industries.¹² Don't overlook volunteering, which enables you to meet people, demonstrate your ability to solve problems, manage projects, and lead others. You can do some good while creating a network for yourself.

Remember that networking is about people helping each other, not just about other people helping you. Pay close attention to networking etiquette: Try to learn something about the people you want to connect with, don't overwhelm others with too many messages or requests, be succinct in all your communication efforts, don't give out other people's names and contact information without their permission to do so, never email your résumé to complete strangers, don't assume that you can send your résumé to everyone you meet, and remember to say thank you every time someone helps you.¹³

To become a valued network member, you need to be able to help others in some way. You may not have any influential contacts yet, but because you're actively researching a number of industries and trends in your own job search, you probably have valuable information you can share via your social networks, blog, or Twitter account. Or you might simply be able to connect one person with another who can help. The more you network, the more valuable you become in your network—and the more valuable your network becomes to you.

Finally, be aware that your online network reflects on who you are in the eyes of potential employers, so exercise some judgment in making connections. Also, many employers now contact people in a candidate's public network for background information, even if the candidate doesn't list those people as references.¹⁴

REAL-TIME UPDATES

Learn More by Visiting This Website



Follow these people to a new career

Alison Doyle maintains a great list of career experts to follow on Twitter. Go to <http://real-timeupdates.com/bia8> and click on Learn More in the Students section.

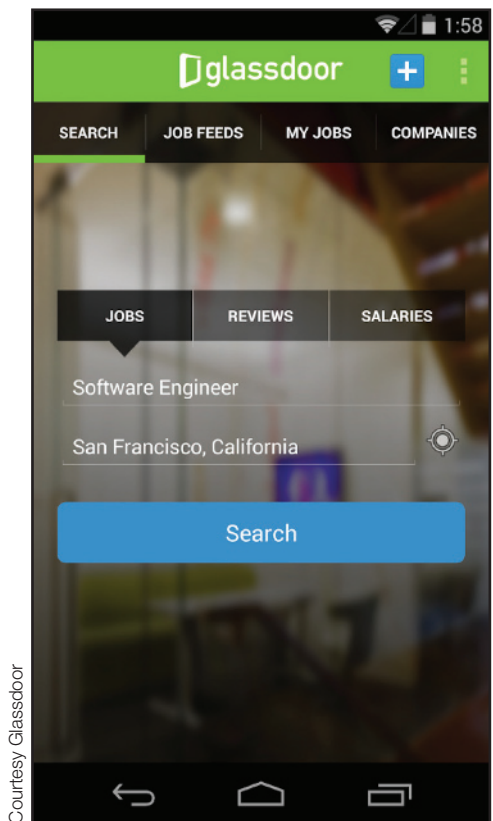
USING ALL THE JOB-SEARCH TOOLS AT YOUR DISPOSAL

As a final note, be sure to use all the job search tools and resources available to you. For example, many companies now offer mobile apps that give you a feel for what it's like to work there and let you search for job openings. A variety of apps and websites can help you find jobs, practice interviewing, and build your professional network (see Exhibit 2).

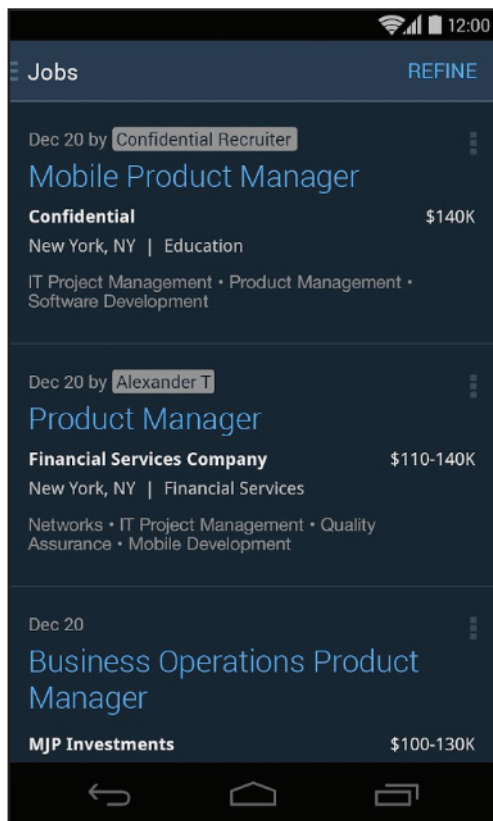
EXHIBIT 2

Mobile Job-Search Tools

A wide variety of mobile apps, such as these from Glassdoor and TheLadders, are available to help you find the ideal job and manage your career path.



(a)



(b)

Preparing Your Résumé

Although you will create many messages during your career search, your résumé will be the most important document in this process. You will be able to use it directly in many instances, adapt it to a variety of uses such as an e-portfolio or a social media résumé, and reuse pieces of it in social networking profiles and online application forms. Even if you apply to a company that doesn't want to see your résumé, the process of creating it will prepare you for interviewing and preemployment testing.

Before you begin writing a résumé, make sure you understand its true function—as a brief, persuasive business message intended to stimulate an employer's interest in meeting you and learning more about you. In other words, the purpose of a résumé is not to get you a job but rather to get you an interview.¹⁵

Your résumé is one of the most important documents you'll ever write. You can help ensure success by remembering four things: First, treat your résumé with the respect it deserves. A single mistake or oversight can cost you interview opportunities. Second, give yourself plenty of time. Don't put off preparing your résumé until the last second and then try to write it in one sitting. Experiment with different ideas and phrases until you hit on the right combination. Also, give yourself plenty of time to proofread the résumé when you're finished—and ask several other people to proofread it as well. Third, learn from good models. You can find thousands of sample résumés online at college websites and job sites such as Monster.com. Fourth, don't get frustrated by the conflicting advice you'll read about résumés; they are more art than science. Consider the alternatives and choose the approach that makes the most sense in your specific situation.

Be aware that you will find a wide range of opinions about résumés, regarding everything from appropriate length, content, design, distribution methods, and acceptable degrees of creativity to whether it even makes sense to write a traditional résumé in this age of social media and online applications. For example, you may encounter a prospective employer that wants you to tweet your résumé or submit all the links that make up your online presence, rather than submitting a conventional résumé.¹⁶ You may run across examples of effective résumés that were produced as infographics, interactive videos, simulated search engine results, puzzles, games, graphic novels—you name it, somebody has probably tried it.

By the way, if anyone asks to see your “CV,” they’re referring to your *curriculum vitae*, the term used instead of *résumé* in some professions and in many countries outside the United States. Résumés and CVs are essentially the same, although CVs can be more detailed. If you need to adapt a U.S.-style résumé to CV format, or vice versa, career expert Alison Doyle offers advice on her website, www.alisondoyle.com.

KEEPING YOUR RÉSUMÉ HONEST

Estimates vary, but one comprehensive study uncovered lies about work history in more than 40 percent of the résumés tested.¹⁷ And dishonest applicants are getting bolder all the time—going so far as to buy fake diplomas online, pay computer hackers to insert their names into prestigious universities’ graduation records, and sign up for services that offer phony employment verification.¹⁸ “It’s becoming common to cheat,” observes Professor George Gollin of the University of Illinois, Urbana, mentioning the 200,000 fake college degrees sold every year as one example.¹⁹

Applicants with integrity know they don’t need to stoop to lying. If you are tempted to stretch the truth, bear in mind that professional recruiters have seen every trick in the book, and frustrated employers are working aggressively to uncover the truth. Nearly all employers do some form of background checking, from contacting references and verifying employment to checking criminal records and sending résumés through verification services.²⁰ Employers are also beginning to craft certain interview questions specifically to uncover dishonest résumé entries.²¹

More than 90 percent of companies that find lies on résumés refuse to hire the offending applicants, even if that means withdrawing formal job offers.²² And if you do sneak past these filters and get hired, you’ll probably be exposed on the job when you can’t live up to your own résumé. Given the networked nature of today’s job market, lying on a résumé could haunt you for years and could force you to keep lying throughout your career to hide the original misrepresentations on your résumé.²³

ADDRESSING AREAS OF CONCERN

Many people have gaps in their careers or other issues that could be of concern to employers. Here are some common issues and suggestions for handling them in a résumé:²⁴

- **Frequent job changes.** If you’ve had a number of short-term jobs of a similar type, such as independent contracting and temporary assignments, try to group them under a single heading. Also, if past job positions were eliminated as a result of layoffs or mergers, find a subtle way to convey that information (if not in your résumé then in your cover letter). Reasonable employers understand that many professionals have been forced to job hop by circumstances beyond their control.
- **Gaps in work history.** Mention relevant experience and education you gained during employment gaps, such as volunteer or community work.
- **Inexperience.** Mention related volunteer work and membership in professional groups. List relevant course work and internships.
- **Overqualification.** Tone down your résumé by focusing exclusively on the experience and skills that relate to the position.

- **Long-term employment with one company.** Itemize each position held at the firm to show both professional growth and career growth within the organization and increasing responsibilities along the way.
- **Job termination for cause.** Be honest with interviewers and address their concerns with proof, such as recommendations and examples of completed projects.
- **Criminal record.** You don't necessarily need to disclose a criminal record or time spent incarcerated on your résumé, but you may be asked about it on job application forms. Laws regarding what employers may ask (and whether they can conduct a criminal background check) vary by state and profession, but if you are asked and the question applies to you, you are legally bound to answer truthfully. Use the interview process to explain any mitigating circumstances and to emphasize your rehabilitation and commitment to being a law-abiding, trustworthy employee.²⁵

CHOOSING AN INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Of all the parts of a résumé, the brief introductory statement that follows your name and contact information probably generates the most disagreement. You can put one of three things here:²⁶

- **Career objective.** A career objective identifies either a specific job you want to land or a general career track you would like to pursue. Some experts advise against including a career objective because it can categorize you so narrowly that you miss out on interesting opportunities, and it is essentially about fulfilling your desires, not about meeting the employer's needs. In the past, most résumés included a career objective, but in recent years more job seekers are using a qualifications summary or a career summary. However, if you have little or no work experience in your target profession, a career objective might be your best option. If you do opt for an objective, word it in a way that relates your qualifications to employer needs. Avoid such self-absorbed statements as “A fulfilling position that provides ample opportunity for career growth and personal satisfaction.”
- **Qualifications summary.** A qualifications summary offers a brief view of your key qualifications. The goal is to let a reader know within a few seconds what you can deliver. You can title this section generically as “Qualifications Summary” or “Summary of Qualifications,” or if you have one dominant qualification, you can use that as the title (see Exhibit 5 on page xxxvii for an example). Consider using a qualifications summary if you have one or more important qualifications but don't yet have a long career history. Also, if you haven't been working long but your college education has given you a dominant professional “theme,” such as multimedia design or statistical analysis, you can craft a qualifications summary that highlights your educational preparedness.
- **Career summary.** A career summary offers a brief recap of your career, with the goal of presenting increasing levels of responsibility and performance. A career summary can be particularly useful for executives who have demonstrated the ability to manage increasingly larger and more complicated business operations—a key consideration when companies look to hire upper-level managers.

ORGANIZING YOUR RÉSUMÉ AROUND YOUR STRENGTHS

Although there are a number of ways to organize a résumé, most are some variation of chronological, functional, or a combination of the two. The right choice depends on your background and your goals, as the following sections explain.

The Chronological Résumé

In a *chronological résumé*, the work experience section dominates and is placed immediately after your contact information and introductory statement. Develop your work experience

section by listing your jobs in reverse chronological order, beginning with the most recent one and giving more space to the most recent positions. For each job, start by listing the employer's name and location, your official job title, and the dates you held the position (or "to present" if you are still in your most recent job). Next, in a short block of text, highlight your accomplishments in a way that is relevant to your readers. Doing so may require "translating" the terminology used in a particular industry or profession into terms that are more meaningful to your target readers. If the general responsibilities of the position are not obvious from the job title, provide a little background to help readers understand what you did.

The Functional Résumé

A *functional résumé*, sometimes called a *skills résumé*, emphasizes your skills and capabilities, identifying employers and academic experience in subordinate sections. This arrangement stresses individual areas of competence rather than job history. The functional approach has three advantages: (1) Without having to read through job descriptions, employers can see what you can do for them, (2) you can emphasize previous job experience, and (3) you can deemphasize any lengthy unemployment or lack of career progress. However, you should be aware that because a functional résumé can obscure your work history, many employment professionals are suspicious of it.²⁷ If you don't believe the chronological format will work for you, consider the combination résumé instead.

The Combination Résumé

A *combination résumé* meshes the skills focus of the functional format with the job history focus of the chronological format. The chief advantage of this format is that it lets you highlight particular areas of strength without raising concerns that you might be hiding something about your work history. Using a summary of qualifications or a career summary as your introductory statement is a great way to highlight your ability to contribute to a potential employer.

Exhibits 3 through 5 on the following pages show how a job applicant adapted the combination format to work in three job-search scenarios, each of which you might face in your career as well:

- **Scenario 1: positioning yourself for an ideal opportunity** (when you've found a job opening that aligns closely with your career goals and your academic and professional credentials)
- **Scenario 2: positioning yourself for an available opportunity** (when you can't find a job in your chosen field and need to adapt to whatever opportunities are available)
- **Scenario 3: positioning yourself for more responsibility** (after you have some experience in your field and want to apply for positions of greater responsibility)

PRODUCING YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Producing your résumé is not a simple matter, because you might need to create several formats to satisfy the requirements of various employers. Also, your résumé will be read by a human being in some cases but analyzed by computer-based applicant tracking systems in others. Unfortunately, there is no single format or medium that works for all the situations you will encounter, and employer expectations continue to change as technology evolves. Find out what each employer or job posting website expects and provide your résumé in that specific format; many employers will toss your résumé or application if you don't follow their instructions.

No matter how many media and formats you eventually choose for producing your résumé, a clean, professional-looking design is a must. Unless you have some experience in graphic design and you're applying in a field such as advertising or retail merchandising, where visual creativity is viewed as an asset, resist the urge to "get creative" with your

EXHIBIT 3 **Crafting Your Résumé, Scenario 1: Positioning Yourself for an Ideal Opportunity**

Even for an ideal job-search scenario, where your academic and professional experiences and interests closely match the parameters of the job opening, you still need to adapt your résumé content carefully to “echo” the specific language of the job description.⁴⁵

The Scenario
 You are about to graduate and have found a job opening that is in your chosen field. You don't have any experience in this field, but the courses you've taken in pursuit of your degree have given you a solid academic foundation for this position.

The Opportunity
 The job opening is for an associate market analyst with Living Social, the rapidly growing advertising and social commerce service that describes itself as “the online source for discovering valuable local experiences.” (A market analyst researches markets to find potentially profitable business opportunities.)

The Communication Challenge
 You don't have directly relevant experience as a market analyst, and you might be competing against people who do. Your education is your strongest selling point, so you need to show how your course work relates to the position.

Don't let your lack of experience hold you back; the job posting makes it clear that this is an entry-level position. For example, the first bullet point in the job description says “Become an expert in market data . . .,” and the required skills and experience section says that “Up to 2 years of experience with similar research and analysis is preferred.” The important clues here are *become* (the company doesn't expect you to be an expert already) and *preferred* (experience would be great if you have it, but it's not required).

Keywords and Key Phrases
 You study the job posting and highlight the following elements:

1. Working in a team environment
2. Research, including identifying trendy new businesses
3. Analyzing data using Microsoft Excel
4. Managing projects
5. Collaborating with technical experts and sales staff
6. Creating new tools to help maximize revenue and minimize risks
7. Bachelor's degree is required
8. Natural curiosity and desire to learn
9. Detail oriented
10. Hands-on experience with social media

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 (847) 555-2153
 emma.gomes@mailsystem.net
 emmawrites.blogspot.com

Address: 860 North 8th Street, Terre Haute, IN 47809 **Permanent Address:** 993 Church Street, Barrington, IL 60010

Summary of Qualifications

- 2 • In-depth academic preparation in marketing analysis techniques
- 3 • Intermediate skills with a variety of analytical tools, including Microsoft Excel and Google Analytics
- Front-line experience with consumers and business owners
- 2 10 • Multiple research and communication projects involving the business applications of social media

Education

7 B.S. in Marketing (Marketing Management Track), Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN, anticipated graduation: May 2014

Program coursework

- 6 • 45 credits of core business courses, including Business Information Tools, Business Statistics, Principles of Accounting, and Business Finance
- 2 • 27 credits of marketing and marketing management courses, including Buyer Behavior, Marketing Research, Product and Pricing Strategy, and seminars in e-commerce and social media

Special projects

- 2 • “Handcrafting a Global Marketplace: The Etsy Phenomenon,” in-depth analysis of how Etsy transformed the market for handmade craft items by bringing e-commerce capabilities to individual craftspeople
- 2 2 • “Hybrid Communication Platforms for Small Businesses,” team service project for five small businesses in Terre Haute, recommending best practices for combining traditional and social-media methods of customer engagement and providing a customized measurement spreadsheet for each company

Work and Volunteer Experience

Independent math tutor, 2009-present. Assist students with a variety of math courses at the elementary, junior high, and high school level; all clients have achieved combined test and homework score improvements of at least one full letter grade, with an average improvement of 38 percent

Volunteer, LeafSpring Food Bank, Terre Haute, IN (weekends during college terms, 2012–present). Stock food and supply pantries; prepare emergency baskets for new clients; assist director with public relations activities, including website updates and social media news releases.

5 **Customer care agent, Owings Ford, Barrington, IL (summers, 2011–2013).** Assisted the service and sales managers of this locally owned car dealership with a variety of customer-service tasks; scheduled service appointments; designed and implemented improvements to service-center waiting room to increase guest comfort; convinced dealership owners to begin using Twitter and Facebook to interact with current and potential customers.

Professional Engagement

- 8 • Collegiate member, American Marketing Association; helped establish the AMA Collegiate Chapter at Indiana State
- Participated in AMA International Collegiate Case Competition, 2011-2012

Awards

- 8 • Dean's List: 2012, 2013
- Forward Youth award, Barrington Chamber of Commerce, 2010

Gomes includes phone and email contacts, along with a blog that features academic-oriented writing.

Using a *summary of qualifications* for her opening statement lets her target the résumé and highlight her most compelling attributes.

Her education is a much stronger selling point than her work experience, so she goes into some detail—carefully selecting course names and project descriptions to echo the language of the job description.

She adjusts the descriptions and accomplishments of each role to highlight the aspects of her work and volunteer experience that are relevant to the position.

The final sections highlight activities and awards that reflect her interest in marketing and her desire to improve her skills.

Notice how Gomes adapts her résumé to “mirror” the keywords and phrases from the job posting:

- 1 Offers concrete evidence of teamwork (rather than just calling herself a “team player,” for example)
- 2 Emphasizes research skills and experience in multiple instances
- 3 Calls out Microsoft Excel, as well as Google Analytics, a key online tool for measuring activity on websites
- 4 Indicates the ability to plan and carry out projects, even if she doesn't have formal project management experience
- 5 Indicates some experience working in a supportive or collaborative role with technical experts and sales specialists (the content of the work doesn't translate to the new job, but the concept does)
- 6 Suggests the ability to work with new analytical tools
- 7 Displays her B.S. degree prominently
- 8 Demonstrates a desire to learn and to expand her skills
- 9 Tracking the progress of her tutoring clients is strong evidence of a detail-oriented worker—not to mention someone who cares about results and the quality of her work
- 10 Lists business-oriented experience with Facebook, Twitter, and other social media

EXHIBIT 4 **Crafting Your Résumé, Scenario 2: Positioning Yourself for Available Opportunities**

If you can't find an ideal job opening, you'll need to adjust your plans and adapt your résumé to the openings that are available. Look for opportunities that meet your near-term financial needs while giving you the chance to expand your skill set so that you'll be even more prepared when an ideal opportunity does come along.⁴⁶

The Scenario

You are about to graduate but can't find job openings in the field you'd like to enter. However, you have found an opening that is in a related field, and it would give you the chance to get some valuable work experience.

The Opportunity

The job opening is for a seller support associate with Amazon, the online retail giant. Employees in this position work with merchants that sell products through the Amazon e-commerce system to make sure merchants are successful. In essence, it is a customer service job, but directed at these merchants, not the consumers who buy on Amazon.

The Communication Challenge

This isn't the job you ultimately want, but it is a great opportunity with a well-known company.

You note that the position does not require a college degree, so in that sense you might be a bit over-qualified. However, you also see a strong overlap between your education and the responsibilities and required skills of the job, so be sure to highlight those.

Keywords and Key Phrases

You study the job posting and highlight the following elements:

1. Be able to predict and respond to merchant needs; good business sense with the ability to appreciate the needs of a wide variety of companies
2. Strong written and oral communication skills
3. High degree of professionalism
4. Self-starter with good time management skills
5. Logically analyze problems and devise solutions
6. Comfortable with computer-based tools, including Microsoft Excel
7. Desire to expand business and technical skills
8. Customer service experience
9. Collaborate with fellow team members to resolve difficult situations
10. Record of high performance regarding quality of work and personal productivity

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Summary of Qualifications

- 8 • Front-line customer service experience with consumers and business owners
- 6 • Strong business sense based on work experience and academic preparation
- 6 • Intermediate skills with a variety of software tools, including Microsoft Excel and Google Analytics
- 10 • Record of quality work in both business and academic settings

Education

B.S. in Marketing (Marketing Management Track), Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN, expected graduation May 2014

Program coursework

- 6 • 45 credits of core business courses, including Business Information Tools, Business Statistics, Principles of Accounting, and Business Finance
- 1 • 27 credits of marketing and marketing management courses, including Marketing Fundamentals, Buyer Behavior, Marketing Research, Retail Strategies and seminars in e-commerce and social media

Special projects

- 1 2 • "Handcrafting a Global Marketplace: The Etsy Phenomenon," in-depth analysis of how the Etsy e-commerce platform helps craftspeople and artisans become more successful merchants
- 1 2 9 • "Hybrid Communication Platforms for Small Businesses," team service project for five small businesses in Terre Haute, recommending best practices for combining traditional and social-media methods of customer engagement and providing a customized measurement spreadsheet for each company

Work and Volunteer Experience

- 3 4 10 • **Independent math tutor, 2009-present.** Assist students with a variety of math courses at the elementary, junior high, and high school level; all clients have achieved combined test and homework score improvements of at least one full letter grade, with an average improvement of 38 percent
- 2 • **Volunteer, LeafSpring Food Bank, Terre Haute, IN (weekends during college terms, 2012-present).** Stock food and supply pantries; prepare emergency baskets for new clients; assist director with public relations activities, including website updates and social media news releases.
- 8 • **Customer care agent, Owings Ford, Barrington, IL (summers, 2011-2013).** Assisted the service and sales managers of this locally owned car dealership with a variety of customer-service tasks; scheduled service appointments; designed and implemented improvements to service-center waiting room to increase guest comfort; convinced dealership owners to begin using Twitter and Facebook to interact with current and potential customers.

Professional Engagement

- 7 • Collegiate member, American Marketing Association; helped establish the AMA Collegiate Chapter at Indiana State
- Participated in AMA International Collegiate Case Competition, 2011-2012

Awards

- 3 4 10 • Dean's List: 2012, 2013
- 1 • Forward Youth award, Barrington Chamber of Commerce, 2010

Gomes modified her summary of qualifications to increase emphasis on customer service.

She adjusts the selection of highlighted courses to reflect the retail and e-commerce aspects of this particular job opening.

She adjusts the wording of this Etsy project description to closely mirror what Amazon is—an e-commerce platform serving a multitude of independent merchants.

She provides more detail regarding her customer support experience.

The final sections are still relevant to this job opening, so she leaves them unchanged.

Notice how Gomes adapts her résumé to "mirror" the keywords and phrases from the job posting:

- 1 Suggests strong awareness of the needs of various businesses
- 2 Examples of experience with written business communication; she can demonstrate oral communication skills during phone, video, or in-person interviews
- 3 Results-oriented approach to tutoring business suggests high degree of professionalism, as do the two awards
- 4 The ability to work successfully as an independent tutor while attending high school and college is strong evidence of self-motivation and good time management
- 5 Indicates ability to understand problems and design solutions
- 6 Suggests the ability to work with a variety of software tools
- 7 Demonstrates a desire to learn and to expand her skills
- 8 Highlights customer service experience
- 9 Offers concrete evidence of teamwork (rather than just calling herself a "team player," for example)
- 10 Tracking the progress of her tutoring clients is strong evidence of someone who cares about results and the quality of her work; Dean's List awards also suggest quality of work; record of working while attending high school and college suggests strong productivity

EXHIBIT 5

Crafting Your Résumé, Scenario 3: Positioning Yourself for More Responsibility

When you have a few years of experience under your belt, your résumé strategy should shift to emphasize work history and accomplishments. Here is how Emma Gomes might reshape her résumé if she had held the two jobs described in Exhibits 3 and 4 and is now ready for a bigger challenge.⁴⁷

The Scenario

Moving forward from Exhibits 3 and 4, let's assume you have worked in both those positions, first for two years as a seller support associate at Amazon and then for almost three years as an associate market analyst at LivingSocial. You believe you are now ready for a bigger challenge, and the question is how to adapt your résumé for a higher-level position now that you have some experience in your chosen field. (Some of the details from the earlier résumés have been modified to accommodate this example.)

The Opportunity

The job opening is for a senior strategy analyst for Nordstrom. The position is similar in concept to the position at Living Social, but at a higher level and with more responsibility.

The Communication Challenge

This job is an important step up; a senior strategy analyst is expected to conduct in-depth financial analysis of business opportunities and make recommendations regarding strategy changes, merchandising partnerships with other companies, and important decisions.

You worked with a wide variety of retailers in your Amazon and Living Social jobs, including a number of fashion retailers, but you haven't worked directly in fashion retailing yourself.

Bottom line: You can bring a good set of skills to this position, but your financial analysis skills and retailing insights might not be readily apparent, so you'll need to play those up.

Keywords and Key Phrases

You study the job posting and highlight the following elements:

1. Provide research and analysis to guide major business strategy decisions
2. Communicate across business units and departments within Nordstrom
3. Familiar with retail analytics
4. Knowledge of fashion retailing
5. Qualitative and quantitative analysis
6. Project management
7. Strong communication skills
8. Bachelor's required; MBA preferred
9. Advanced skills in financial and statistical modeling
10. Proficient in PowerPoint and Excel

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1605 Queen Anne Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98109

Market and Strategy Analyst

- 1 6 • Five years of experience in local and online retailing, with three years of focus on market opportunity analysis
- 4 • Strong business sense developed through more than 60 marketing programs across a range of retail sectors, including hospitality, entertainment, and fashion
- 1 6 • Recognized by senior management for ability to make sound judgment calls in situations with incomplete or conflicting data
- 2 6 • Adept at coordinating research projects and marketing initiatives across organizational boundaries and balancing the interests of multiple stakeholders
- 9 10 • Advanced skills with leading analysis and communication tools, including Excel, PowerPoint, and Google Analytics

Professional Experience

Associate Market Analyst, LivingSocial, Seattle, WA (July 2011-present). Analyzed assigned markets for such factors as consumer demand, merchandising opportunities, and seller performance; designed, launched, and managed marketing initiatives in 27 retailing categories, including fashions and accessories; met or exceeded profit targets on 90 percent of all marketing initiatives; appointed team lead/trainer in recognition of strong quantitative and qualitative analysis skills; utilized both established and emerging social media tools and helped business partners use these communication platforms to increase consumer engagement in local markets.

- 4 • **Seller support associate, Amazon, Seattle, WA (July 2009–June 2011).** Worked with more than 300 product vendors, including many in the fashion and accessories sectors, to assure profitable retailing activities on the Amazon e-commerce platform; resolved vendor issues related to e-commerce operations, pricing, and consumer communication; anticipated potential vendor challenges and assisted in the development of more than a dozen new selling tools that improved vendor profitability while reducing Amazon's vendor support costs by nearly 15 percent.

Education

- 8 • **Evening MBA program, University of Washington, Seattle, WA; anticipated graduation: May 2015.** Broad-based program combining financial reporting, marketing strategy, competitive strategy, and supply chain management with individual emphasis on quantitative methods, financial analysis, and marketing decision models.
- 1 • **B.S. in Marketing (Marketing Management Track), Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN, May 2009.** Comprehensive coursework in business fundamentals, accounting and finance, marketing fundamentals, retailing, and consumer communications.

Professional Engagement

- Member, American Marketing Association
- 4 • Member, International Social Media Association
- Active in National Retail Federation and Retail Advertising & Marketing Association

Awards

- Living Social Top Ten Deals (monthly employee achievement award for designing the most profitable couponing deals); awarded seven times, 2011–2013
- Social Commerce Network's Social Commerce Innovators: 30 Under 30; 2012

Gomes stays with a summary of qualifications as her opening statement but gives it a new title to reflect her experience and to focus on her career path as a market analyst.

Work experience is now her key selling point, so she shifts to a conventional chronological résumé that puts employment ahead of education. She also removes the part-time jobs she had during high school and college.

She updates the Education section with a listing for the MBA program she has started (selecting points of emphasis relevant to the job opening) and reduces the amount of detail about her undergraduate degree.

She updates the Professional Engagement and Awards section with timely and relevant information.

Notice how Gomes adapts her résumé to “mirror” the keywords and phrases from the job posting:

- 1 Highlights her experience in market and business analysis and her continuing education in this area
 - 2 Mentions skill at coordinating cross-functional projects
 - 3 Lists experiences that relate to the collection and analysis of retail data
 - 4 Emphasizes the work she has done with fashion-related retailing and retailing in general
 - 5 Identifies experience and education that relates to quantitative and qualitative analysis (this point overlaps #1 and #3 to a degree)
 - 6 degree)
 - 7 Mentions project management experience
 - 8 Lists areas that suggest effective communication skills
 - 9 Lists education, with emphasis on coursework that relates most directly to the job posting
 - 10 Mentions work experience and educational background related to these topics
- Includes these programs in the list of software tools she uses

résumé layout.²⁸ Recruiters and hiring managers want to skim your essential information in a matter of seconds, and anything that distracts or delays them will work against you. Moreover, complex layouts can confuse an applicant tracking system, which can result in your information getting garbled.

Fortunately, good résumé design is not difficult to achieve. As you can see in Exhibits 3 through 5, good designs feature simplicity, order, effective use of white space, and clear typefaces. Make subheadings easy to find and easy to read, placing them either above each section or in the left margin. Use lists to itemize your most important qualifications. Color is not necessary by any means, but if you add color, make it subtle and sophisticated, such as a thin horizontal line under your name and address. The most common way to get into trouble with résumé design is going overboard.

Depending on the companies you apply to, you might want to produce your résumé in as many as six formats:

- **Printed traditional résumé.** The traditional paper résumé still has a place in this world of electronic job searches, if only to have a few copies ready whenever one of your networking contacts asks for one. Be sure to use quality paper (white or slightly off-white; avoid gimmicky designs and borders) and a quality printer.
- **Printed scannable résumé.** You might encounter a company that still prefers scannable résumés, a type of printed résumé that is specially formatted to be compatible with optical scanning systems that convert printed documents to electronic text. These systems were quite common just a few years ago, but their use appears to be declining rapidly as more employers prefer email delivery or website application forms.²⁹ A scannable résumé differs from the traditional format in two major ways: It should always include a keyword summary, and it should be formatted in a simpler fashion that avoids underlining, special characters, and other elements that can confuse the scanning system. If you need to produce a scannable résumé, search online for “formatting a scannable résumé” to get detailed instructions.
- **Digital plain-text file.** A *plain-text file* (sometimes known as an ASCII text file) is a digital version of your résumé that has no font formatting, no bullet symbols, no colors, no lines or boxes, and no other special formatting. The plain-text version can be used in two ways. First, you can include it in the body of an email message, for employers who want email delivery but don’t want file attachments. Second, you can copy and paste the sections into the application forms on an employer’s website.
- **Microsoft Word file.** In some cases, an employer or job-posting website will want you to upload a Microsoft Word file or attach it to an email message. (Although there are certainly other word processing programs on the market, Microsoft Word is the de facto standard in business these days.)
- **PDF file.** Creating a PDF file is a simple procedure, but you need the right software. Adobe Acrobat (not the free Adobe Reader) is the best-known program, but many others are available, including some free versions and online services.
- **Online résumé.** An online résumé, sometimes known as a social media résumé or multimedia résumé, gives you an opportunity to expand on the information contained in your basic résumé with links to projects, publications, screencasts, online videos, course lists, social networking profiles, and other elements that give employers a more complete picture of who you are and what you can offer.

CONSIDERING PHOTOS, VIDEOS, PRESENTATIONS, AND INFOGRAPHICS

As you produce your résumé in various formats, you will encounter the question of whether to include a photograph of yourself on or with your résumé. For print or electronic documents you will be submitting to employers or job websites, the safest advice is to avoid photos. The reason is that seeing visual cues of the age, ethnicity, and gender of candidates early in the selection process exposes employers to complaints of discriminatory hiring practices. In fact, some employers won’t even look at résumés that include photos, and some applicant tracking systems automatically discard résumés with any kind of

extra files.³⁰ However, photographs are acceptable and expected for social media résumés and other online formats where you are not actively submitting a résumé to an employer.

In addition to the six main formats, some applicants create presentations, videos, or infographics to supplement a conventional résumé. Two key advantages of a Prezi or PowerPoint supplement are flexibility and multimedia capabilities. For instance, you can present a menu of choices on the opening screen and allow viewers to click through to sections of interest. (Note that most of the things you can accomplish with presentation software can be done with an online résumé, which is probably more convenient for most readers.)

A video résumé can be a compelling supplement as well, but be aware that some employment law experts advise employers not to view videos, at least not until after candidates have been evaluated solely on their credentials. The reason for this caution is the same as with photographs. In addition, videos are more cumbersome to evaluate than paper or electronic résumés, and some recruiters refuse to watch them.³¹ However, not all companies share this concern over videos, so you'll have to research their individual preferences. For example, the online retailer Zappos encourages applicant videos and provides a way to upload videos on its job application webpage.³²

An infographic résumé attempts to convey a person's career development and skill set graphically through a visual metaphor such as a timeline or subway map or as a poster with an array of individual elements. A well-designed infographic could be an intriguing element of the job-search package for candidates in certain situations and professions because it can definitely stand out from traditional résumés and can show a high level of skill in visual communication. However, infographics are likely to be incompatible with most applicant tracking systems and with the screening habits of many recruiters, so while you might stand out with an infographic, you might also get tossed out if you try to use an infographic in place of a conventional résumé. In virtually every situation, an infographic should complement a conventional résumé, not replace it. In addition, successful infographics require skills in graphic design; otherwise you'll end up with a confusing mess that no recruiter will take time to figure out (you can see many examples of this online). If you lack those skills, you'll need to hire a designer.

PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION LETTER

Whenever you submit a résumé, accompany it with an application letter to let readers know what you're sending, why you're sending it, and how they can benefit from reading it. (Application letters are sometimes called cover letters, and they can be either printed or emailed.) Start by researching the organization and then focus on your audience so that you can show that you've done your homework.

If the name of an individual manager is at all findable, address your letter to that person, rather than something generic such as "Dear Hiring Manager." Search LinkedIn, the company's website, industry directories, Twitter, and anything else you can think of to locate an appropriate name. Ask the people in your network if they know a name. If another applicant finds a name and you don't, you're at a disadvantage.

Remember that your reader's in-box is probably overflowing with résumés and application letters, and respect his or her time. Avoid gimmicks, and don't repeat information that already appears in your résumé. Keep your letter straightforward, fact based, short, upbeat, and professional (see Exhibit 6 on the following page).

FOLLOWING UP AFTER SUBMITTING A RÉSUMÉ

Deciding if, when, and how to follow up after submitting your résumé and application letter is one of the trickiest parts of a job search. First and foremost, keep in mind that employers continue to evaluate your communication skills and professionalism during this phase, so don't say or do anything to leave a negative impression. Second, adhere to whatever instructions the employer has provided. If a job posting says "no calls," for example, don't call. Third, if the job posting lists a *close date*, don't call or write before then because the company is still collecting applications and will not have made a decision about

EXHIBIT 6 Application Letter

In this response to an online job posting, Dalton Smith highlights his qualifications while mirroring the requirements specified in the posting. He grabs attention immediately by letting the reader know he is familiar with the company and the global transportation business.

Position			Supply Chain Pricing Analyst			Apply
Position code	T23-6678	Location	Tacoma, WA	Status	Full-time	

Sea-Air Global Transport has an immediate opening for a supply chain pricing analyst in our Tacoma, WA, headquarters. This challenging position requires excellent communication skills in a variety of media, a polished customer service presence both in person and over the phone, and proven aptitude in statistical analysis and business mathematics.

The minimum educational requirement for this position is a bachelors degree or equivalent, preferably in business, statistical methods, or applied mathematics. Experience in customer service is highly desirable, and experience in transportation or logistics is a major plus.

[Click here](#) to learn more about Sea-Air or [click here](#) to explore the attractive compensation and benefits packages we offer all employees.

← Smith's application letter echoes the language of the job posting.

27225 Eucalyptus Avenue
 Long Beach, CA 90806
 March 13, 2015

Sea-Air Global Transport
 5467 Port of Tacoma Rd., Suite 230
 Tacoma, WA 98421

Dear Hiring Manager:

Sea-Air Global Transport consistently appeared as a top transportation firm in the research I did for my senior project in global supply chain management, so imagine my delight when I discovered the opening for an export pricing analyst in your Tacoma headquarters (Position Code: T23-6678). With a major in business and a minor in statistical methods, my education has been ideal preparation for the challenges of this position.

In fact, my senior project demonstrates most of the skills listed in your job description, including written communication skills, analytical abilities, and math aptitude. I enjoyed the opportunity to put my math skills to the test as part of the statistical comparison of various freight modes.

As you can see from my résumé, I also have more than three years of part-time experience working with customers in both retail and commercial settings. This experience taught me the importance of customer service, and I want to start my professional career with a company that truly values the customer. In reviewing your website and reading several articles on Lloyd's List and other trade websites, I am impressed by Sea-Air's constant attention to customer service in this highly competitive industry.

My verbal communication skills would be best demonstrated in an interview, of course. I would be happy to meet with a representative of your company at their earliest convenience. I can be reached at dalton.k.smith@gmail.com or by phone at (562) 555-3737.

Sincerely,

Dalton Smith

→ The first sentence grabs attention by indicating knowledge of the company and its industry.

← The opening paragraph identifies the specific job for which he is applying.

← In this discussion of his skills, he echoes the qualifications stated in the job posting.

→ The reference to his résumé emphasizes his customer service orientation and also shows he has done his homework by researching the company.

← In the close, he politely asks for an interview in a way that emphasizes yet another job-related skill.

→ The letter doesn't include a handwritten signature because it was uploaded to a website along with his résumé.

inviting people for interviews. Wait a week or so after the close date. If no close date is given and you have no other information to suggest a time line, you can generally contact the company starting a week or two after submitting your résumé.³³ Keep in mind that a single instance of poor etiquette or clumsy communication can undo all your hard work in a job search, so maintain your professional behavior every step of the way.

When you follow up by email or telephone, you can share an additional piece of information that links your qualifications to the position (keep an eye out for late-breaking news about the company, too) and ask a question about the hiring process as a way to gather some information about your status. Good questions to ask include:³⁴

- Has a hiring decision been made yet?
- Can you tell me what to expect next in terms of the hiring process?
- What is the company's timeframe for filling this position?
- Could I follow up in another week if you haven't had a chance to contact me yet?
- Can I provide any additional information regarding my qualifications for the position?

Whatever the circumstances, a follow-up message can demonstrate that you're sincerely interested in working for the organization, persistent in pursuing your goals, and committed to upgrading your skills.

If you don't land a job at your dream company on the first attempt, don't give up. You can apply again if a new opening appears, or you can send an updated résumé with a new unsolicited application letter that describes how you have gained additional experience, taken a relevant course, or otherwise improved your skill set. Many leading employers take note of applicants who came close but didn't quite make it and may extend offers when positions open up in the future.³⁵

Interviewing with Potential Employers

An employment interview is a formal meeting during which you and a prospective employer ask questions and exchange information. The employer's objective is to find the best talent to fill available job openings, and your objective is to find the right match for your goals and capabilities.

As you get ready to begin interviewing, keep in mind two vital points. First, recognize that the process takes time. Start your preparation and research early; the best job offers usually go to the best-prepared candidates. Second, don't limit your options by looking at only a few companies. By exploring a wide range of firms and positions, you might uncover great opportunities that you would not have found otherwise. You'll increase the odds of getting more job offers, too.

Most employers interview an applicant multiple times before deciding to make a job offer. At the most selective companies, you might have a dozen or more individual interviews across several stages.³⁶ Depending on the company and the position, the process may stretch out over many weeks, or it may be completed in a matter of days.³⁷

THE TYPICAL SEQUENCE OF INTERVIEWS

The interviewing process starts with a *screening stage*, in which an employer filters out applicants who are unqualified or otherwise not a good fit for the position. Screening can take place on campus, at company offices, or via telephone or computer. If your screening interview will take place by phone, try to schedule it for a time when you can be focused and free from interruptions.³⁸

The next stage of interviews helps the organization narrow the field a little further. During this selection stage, show interest in the job, relate your skills and experience to the organization's needs, listen attentively, ask insightful questions that show you've done your research, and display enthusiasm. Typically, if you're invited to visit a company, you will talk with several people in succession, such as a member of the human resources department, one or two potential colleagues, and one or more managers, including your

potential supervisor. At Google, for example, recruits talk with at least four interviewers, both managers and potential colleagues.³⁹

If the interviewers agree that you're a good candidate, you may receive a job offer, either on the spot or a few days later, by phone, mail, or email. In other cases, you may be invited back for a final evaluation, often by a higher-ranking executive. The objective of this *final stage* is often to sell you on the advantages of joining the organization.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

You can expect to encounter several types of interviews. In a *structured interview*, the interviewer (or a computer) asks a series of prepared questions in a set order. In contrast, in an *open-ended interview*, the interviewer adapts his or her line of questioning based on the answers you give and any questions you ask. Many of your interviews will be conventional one-on-one interviews, with just you and a single interviewer. However, in a *panel interview*, you will meet with several interviewers at once. Some organizations perform a *group interview*, in which one or more interviewers meet with several candidates simultaneously. A key purpose of the group interview is to observe how the candidates interact with one another.⁴⁰

Perhaps the most common type of interview these days is the *behavioral interview*, in which you are asked to relate specific incidents and experiences from your past.⁴¹ A *situational interview* is similar to a behavioral interview except that the questions focus on how you would handle various hypothetical situations on the job. A *working interview* is the most realistic of all: You actually perform a job-related activity during the interview. You may be asked to lead a brainstorming session (sometimes with other job candidates), solve a business problem, engage in role playing, or even make a presentation.⁴²

Because the interview process takes time, start seeking interviews well in advance of the date you want to start work. Some students start their job search as early as nine months before graduation. Early planning is even more crucial during downturns in the economy because many employers become more selective when times are tough. Whatever shape the economy is in, try to secure as many interviews as you can, both to improve the chances of receiving a job offer and to give yourself more options when you do get offers.

WHAT EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN AN INTERVIEW

Interviews give employers a chance to go beyond the basic data of your résumé to get to know you and to answer two essential questions. The first is whether you can handle the responsibilities of the position. Naturally, the more you know about the demands of the position, and the more you've thought about how your skills match those demands, the better you'll be able to respond.

The second essential question is whether you will be a good fit with the organization and the target position. This line of inquiry includes both a general aspect and a specific aspect. The general aspect concerns your overall personality and approach to work. All good employers want people who are confident, dedicated, positive, curious, courteous, ethical, and willing to commit to something larger than their own individual goals. The specific aspect involves the fit with a particular company and position. Just like people, companies have different "personalities." Some are intense; others are more laid back. Some emphasize teamwork; others expect employees to forge their own way and even compete with one another. Expectations also vary from job to job within a company and from industry to industry. An outgoing personality is essential for sales but less so for research, for instance.

WHAT YOU SHOULD LOOK FOR IN AN INTERVIEW

Remember that an interview is a two-way conversation: The questions you ask are just as important as the answers you provide. By asking insightful questions, you can demonstrate your understanding of the organization, you can steer the discussion into areas that allow you to present your qualifications to best advantage, and you can verify for yourself

EXHIBIT 7**Ten Questions to Consider Asking an Interviewer**

Use this list as a starting point when you are planning the questions to ask in a job interview.

Question	Reason for Asking
1. What are the job's major responsibilities?	A vague answer could mean that the responsibilities have not been clearly defined, which is almost guaranteed to cause frustration if you take the job.
2. What qualities do you want in the person who fills this position?	This will help you go beyond the job description to understand what the company really wants.
3. How do you measure success for someone in this position?	A vague or incomplete answer could mean that the expectations you will face are unrealistic or ill defined.
4. What is the first problem that needs the attention of the person you hire?	Not only will this help you prepare, but it can signal whether you're about to jump into a problematic situation.
5. Would relocation be required now or in the future?	If you're not willing to move often or at all, you need to know those expectations now.
6. Why is this job now vacant?	If the previous employee got promoted, that's a good sign. If the person quit, that might not be such a good sign.
7. What makes your organization different from others in the industry?	The answer will help you assess whether the company has a clear strategy to succeed in its industry and whether top managers communicate this to lower-level employees.
8. How would you define your organization's managerial philosophy?	You want to know whether the managerial philosophy is consistent with your own working values.
9. What is a typical workday like for you?	The interviewer's response can give you clues about daily life at the company.
10. What are the next steps in the selection process? What's the best way to follow up with you?	Knowing where the company is in the hiring process will give you clues about following up after the interview and possibly give you hints about where you stand.

Sources: Heather Huhman, "5 Must-Ask Questions at Job Interviews," Glassdoor blog, 7 February 2012, www.glassdoor.com; Joe Conklin, "Turning the Tables: Six Questions to Ask Your Interviewer," *Quality Progress*, November 2007, 55; Andrea N. Browne, "Keeping the Momentum at the Interview; Ask Questions, Do Your Research, and Be a Team Player," *Washington Post*, 29 July 2007, K1.

whether this is a good opportunity. Plus, interviewers expect you to ask questions and tend to look negatively on candidates who don't have any questions to ask. For a list of good questions that you might use as a starting point, see Exhibit 7.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A JOB INTERVIEW

Thorough preparation is key to success in interviewing. Here are some pointers to help you prepare:

- Learn about the organization, including its operations, markets, and challenges.
- Learn as much as you can about the people who will be interviewing you, if you can find their names.
- Plan for the employer's questions, including questions about tough decisions you've made, your perceived shortcomings, what you didn't like about previous jobs, and your career plans (see Exhibit 8 on the following page).
- Plan questions of your own to find out whether this is really the job and the organization for you and to show that you've done your research.
- Bolster your confidence by removing as many sources of apprehension as you can. Instead of dwelling on your weaknesses, focus on your strengths so that you can emphasize them to an interviewer.
- Polish your interview style by staging mock interviews.
- Present a professional appearance, with appropriate dress and grooming.
- Be ready when you arrive and bring along a pen, paper, a list of questions, copies of your résumé, an outline of your research on the company, and any correspondence you've had regarding the position.
- Double-check the location and time of the interview and map out the route beforehand.
- Relax and be flexible; the schedule and interview arrangements may change when you arrive.

EXHIBIT 8

Twenty-Five Common Interview Questions

Chances are you'll hear many of these questions during your job interviews, so spend some time thinking about your responses.

Questions About College

1. What courses in college did you like most? Least? Why?
2. Do you think your extracurricular activities in college were worth the time you spent on them? Why or why not?
3. When did you choose your college major? Did you ever change your major? If so, why?
4. Do you feel you did the best scholastic work you are capable of?
5. How has your college education prepared you for this position?

Questions About Employers and Jobs

1. Why did you leave your last job?
2. Why did you apply for this job opening?
3. Why did you choose your particular field of work?
4. What are the disadvantages of your chosen field?
5. What do you know about our company?
6. What do you think about how this industry operates today?
7. Why do you think you would like this particular type of job?

Questions About Work Experiences and Expectations

1. What was your biggest failure?
2. Describe an experience in which you learned from one of your mistakes.
3. What motivates you? Why?
4. What do you think determines a person's progress in a good organization?
5. Are you a leader or a follower?
6. What have you done that shows initiative and willingness to work?
7. Why should I hire you?

Questions About Work Habits

1. Do you prefer working with others or by yourself?
2. What type of boss do you prefer?
3. Have you ever had any difficulty getting along with colleagues or supervisors? With instructors? With other students?
4. What would you do if you were given an unrealistic deadline for a task or project?
5. How do you feel about overtime work?
6. How do you handle stress or pressure on the job?

Sources: Alison Green, "The 10 Most Common Job Interview Questions," *U.S. News & World Report*, 24 January 2011, <http://money.usnews.com>; "Most Common Interview Questions," Glassdoor blog, 29 December 2011, www.glassdoor.com; *The Northwestern Endicott Report* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Placement Center).

HOW TO FOLLOW UP AFTER AN INTERVIEW

Touching base with a prospective employer after an interview, either by phone or in writing, shows that you really want the job and are determined to get it. It also brings your name to the interviewer’s attention again and reminds him or her that you’re waiting to know the decision.

Send a follow-up message within two days of the interview, even if you feel you have little chance of getting the job. These messages are often referred to as “thank-you notes,” but they give you an important opportunity to go beyond merely expressing your appreciation. You can use the message to reinforce the reasons you are a good choice for the position, modify any answers you gave during the interview if you realize you made a mistake or have changed your mind, and respond to any negatives that might have arisen in the interview.⁴³ Email is usually acceptable for follow-up messages, unless the interviewer has asked you to use other media.

If you haven’t heard from the interviewer by the promised date or within two weeks after the interview, you have the option of sending a message of inquiry. Such a message is particularly appropriate if you’ve received a job offer from a second firm and don’t want to accept it before you have an answer from the first.

Building Your Career

Even after an employer hires you, you should continue improving your skills to distinguish yourself from your peers and to make yourself more valuable to current and potential employers:⁴⁴

- Acquire as much relevant technical knowledge as you can, build broad-based life experience, and develop your social and communication skills.
- Learn to respond to change in positive, constructive ways; this will help you adapt if your “perfect” career path eludes your grasp.
- Keep up with developments in your industry and the economy at large; read widely and use social media tools to find and follow experts in your chosen field.
- Learn to see each job, even so-called entry-level jobs, as an opportunity to learn more and to expand your knowledge, experience, and social skills.
- Take on as much responsibility as you can outside your job description.
- Share what you know with others instead of hoarding knowledge in the hope of becoming indispensable; helping others excel is a skill, too.
- Understand the big picture; knowing your own job inside and out isn’t enough.

Best wishes for success in this course and in your career!

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PART 1

Setting the Stage: The Business of Business

- CHAPTER 1** Developing a Business Mindset
- CHAPTER 2** Understanding Basic Economics
- CHAPTER 3** The Global Marketplace
- CHAPTER 4** Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility

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