Reduction in Work Force Employee Guide

Office of Human Resources
1179 University Drive
Newark, Ohio 43055
740-366-9367

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Other Resources

- Policy for Reduction in Work Force
  https://go.cotc.edu/policy_2-7-25

Introduction

The Office of Human Resources provides this information to assist those affected by reduction in force. We hope you find this to be a valuable tool for you during the separation process.

The booklet contains information to help guide you, including a list of internal resources available to you. We encourage you to take advantage of the resources provided by Central Ohio Technical College. The booklet also has guidelines for internal and external job search strategies, with sample resumes included. In addition, the booklet provides questions and answers surrounding benefits options.

The Office of Human Resources is available for consultation on employment services, benefit continuation, job search techniques, and referral to counseling. For questions, please contact The Office of Human Resources, 740-366-9367.

College Resources

Benefits Administration
- Continuing benefits coverage
  - 1590 N. High Street, Suite 300, Columbus, Ohio
  - 614-292-1050
  - benefits@hr.osu.edu

COTC Office of Human Resources
- 740-366-9367
- Assistance with understanding reduction in force or layoff policies and procedures,
- Information and assistance regarding employment policies, procedures, and college employment opportunities,
- Retirement information, and
- Unemployment process.

Online Career Site
- https://go.cotc.edu/jobs
- Listing of new and vacant positions that are available at the college
- Updated weekly

The Ohio State University Employee Assistance Plan
- 1-800-678-6265
- OSUHealthPlanCS@osumc.edu
- https://osuhealthplan.com/programs-and-services/eap
- Short-term counseling and assessment for employees dealing with the emotional stresses resulting from a change in job status
- Confidential counseling and referral services

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **When should I apply for Unemployment Compensation?**
   You should file a claim as soon as you become unemployed. You may file your claim online at unemployment.ohio.gov or by telephone at 877-644-6562. Applying online will help expedite the process. For more information visit the ODJFS web site at: unemployment.ohio.gov. Your claim will begin the Sunday of the calendar week in which it is filed. Waiting more than a full week to file your application will postpone the beginning of your claim and no benefits will be paid for weeks of unemployment that occurred prior to the week of filing.

2. **What do I need to file an unemployment claim?**
   You should be prepared to provide the following information when you file an application:
   - Your social security number and either your driver's license or state ID number,
   - Your name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address,
   - Dependents' names, social security numbers, and dates of birth,
   - Bank routing and account number or debit card number for payment,
   - Alien Registration Number and expiration date of your work authorization,
   - The name, address, telephone number, and dates of employment for your most recent and any other employers from the last 6 weeks,
     - The address of Central Ohio Technical College and the dates of your employment:

       Central Ohio Technical College
       Office of Human Resources
       1179 University Drive
       Newark, OH 43055

3. **How do I apply for unemployment compensation?**
   See the ODJFS step-by-step guide at: http://jfs.ohio.gov/ouio/pdf/QuickTipsAndStepByStepGuide.pdf.

4. **How much unemployment will I receive?**
   Generally, approximately fifty percent of your average weekly wage as defined by ODJFS, not to exceed the state's annually established maximum level. This maximum level is based on (1) the statewide average weekly wage, (2) the applicant's base period wages, and (3) the number of allowable dependents. **Note:** Special provisions may apply during extraordinary circumstances such as the coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic emergency. Please visit https://unemploymenthelp.ohio.gov for any additional details.

5. **How long will it take before I receive my first unemployment check?**
   Generally, Ohio law requires that you serve a one-week waiting period after filing a new application for benefits. The waiting week is the first week claimed that meets all the eligibility requirements–no benefits are paid for this week. It may take up to four weeks from the date you file your initial claim to receive the first payment. The earliest your payment may be issued is during the third week. **Note:** Special provisions may apply during extraordinary circumstances such as the coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic emergency. Please visit https://unemploymenthelp.ohio.gov for any additional details.

6. **How long may I receive unemployment compensation?**
   The usual maximum period is 26 weeks. However, the number of benefit weeks you are entitled to depends on the number of qualifying weeks you have earned in your base period. ODJFS will calculate this for you. **Note:** Special provisions may apply during extraordinary circumstances such as the coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic emergency. Please visit https://unemploymenthelp.ohio.gov for any additional details.

7. **Will I be paid for unused vacation?**
   Pay out of unused vacation will be made on your last paycheck. The maximum payout is 240 hours for administrative and professional staff and up to the amount earned in the three years of just completed service for support staff.

8. **What happens to my unused sick time?**
   There is no pay out of unused sick time. However, if you return to work for a state entity within ten years, the forfeited hours will be reinstated. To be reinstated for your sick time, documentation of your balance is required and may be requested from the college's payroll office.

9. **Do I get paid for unused compensatory time?**
   Yes, this will appear on your last pay.

10. **Do I need to do anything with my Ohio Public Employees Retirement Systems (OPERS) account?**
    For complete information about your OPERS benefits, contact OPERS directly at 1-800-222-7377 or www.opers.org.

11. **How can I withdraw my Alternative Retirement Program (ARP) contributions?**
    If you have an ARP account and terminate your employment with COTC, you will need to contact your ARP vendor and indicate that you will no longer be making contributions to your account. You have the option to leave your account with your current vendor, move your money to another qualified account, or to receive a refund of your contributions.

12. **What access do I have to a Supplemental Retirement Account (SRA)?**
    In addition to federal guidelines, each carrier has their own set of rules and policies. Please contact your SRA vendor to discuss your options. Please note, withdrawing your funds may carry state and federal tax consequences and possible penalties.

13. **Am I still eligible to utilize funds contributed to my Flexible Spending Account (FSA)?**
    Yes, however, only expenses incurred through your last day of employment are eligible for reimbursement. All claims must be filed by the plan year's deadline, which is March 31 of every year.

14. **Can I withdraw my unused funds from my FSA?**
    No. Funds may only be used to reimburse eligible expenses as outlined by the IRS. Any funds remaining in your account after the plan year's deadline, must be forfeited as required by IRS guidelines.

15. **How can I continue my health insurance?**
    Both Ohio and federal law provide for insurance continuation. You may continue medical, dental, and vision insurance for up to 18 months by enrolling in COBRA continuation of coverage. You will be required to pay monthly premiums to continue this coverage. Coverage is not automatic and, therefore, requires that you complete a "COBRA Election Form," which will be mailed to your home address directly from TrustmarkBenefits following separation of employment. The election form must be completed and returned within 60 days from the later of the date you lose coverage, or the date Trustmark (formerly CoreSource) provides the COBRA notice (i.e., COBRA Election Form) to you. More details and premium rates are available at https://hr.osu.edu/benefits/cobra/.

16. **Can I continue Group Term Life Insurance?**
    Group Term Life Insurance may be converted to an individual life policy through Minnesota Life. To obtain more information, contact The Ohio State University's Office of Human Resources Customer Service at (614) 292-1050. Application must be submitted within 30 days of your separation from the college.

17. **How will this affect my employee tuition assistance benefits?**
    If you are affected by a reduction-in-force while participating in the employee tuition assistance program, you will be granted an extension of your eligibility for the remainder of that term only.

18. **What happens to dependent tuition assistance eligibility?**
    If your dependents are currently eligible, they remain eligible for the remainder of the term during which you are terminated.

Job Search Techniques

Resume Writing

To write an effective resume, you must first understand the purpose of a resume. A resume is the key that opens the door to an interview. Your resume must highlight your skills, accomplishments, and work experience in a way distinguishing you from the thousands of other candidates applying for positions. A good resume presents a thumbnail sketch of your experience. A winning resume grabs the reader's attention and increases your chances of being called in for an interview.

Great resumes entice hiring managers with the following components:
- A summary of your qualifications, strengths, and skills,
- Selected accomplishments and your most relevant industry expertise,
- Work experience chronologically (with titles and dates),
- Computer and related technical skills,
- Professional affiliations, and
- College and post-graduate education (if applicable)

As you begin your job search, you may find that your earlier work experience is less applicable or valuable in the current marketplace. Your first step is defining your experiences so you can better sell yourself. There are many online resources to assist you in determining your talents and identifying what skills are in demand in the current job market. The Business Reference section at your local library may also provide you with additional resources. You must present your strengths in a clear and concise manner. Make interviewers excited about you!

Your resume should be on white or off-white paper in a single font such as Times Roman, Arial, or any other clear and easy-to read typeface. Avoid very small or very large print, multiple changes in point-size, and italics. Use bold lettering sparingly, to enhance its impact. Put your name at the top of each page with a page number. Keep top, bottom, left, and right margins at about one inch each. Keep the resume between one and two pages–any additional information may be provided at the interview.

If your field warrants it, you may also include a separate "technical profile" of hardware, software, protocols, and/or programming languages. This is especially a good idea for those in high-technology fields. As a rule, the hotter the skill, the earlier on the list it should be. If you happen to know what skills a job requires, put them first. These lists may be placed directly after the "summary" or after the body of your resume "work experience" and before the "education" section.

Your "work experience" may be listed in two different ways. There is the "functional resume," which centers on your skills and accomplishments. This may be a good choice if your work was as a contract worker or a consultant. This style of resume focuses on results and accomplishments. For example, you may list areas where you saved the business money or solved problems on the job. You may also list publication credits, courses taught, and sales goals exceeded.

The most common resume format is the "chronological resume." A chronological resume begins with a description of your most recent position followed by all other work experiences. The section outlining your education should be placed at the bottom of your resume, highest degree first, followed by lesser degrees, certifications, and relevant coursework. The exception is when you are a recent graduate with no work experience; in that case your education should go right under the summary. As soon as you have even six months to one year of work experience, place your education at the very end.

Ending the resume with the phrase, "references available on request" is optional and largely out-of-date because many applications include a place for references. Take your list of references with you to all interviews. Type the reference page in the same font and on the same paper as your resume. Your references should be listed in alphabetical order and include the contact's name, title, organization, address, phone number, and relationship to you

Writing a great resume is challenging. It may be hard to be objective about yourself. Even harder may be using the right buzzwords to add value and marketability to your work history. There are many online resources available to guide you. Use keywords like "resume writing" or "job search techniques" in your Internet searches.

Sample: Functional Resume Outline

Name
Address
City, State Zip
Phone

Summary: Seasoned professional with _____ years of experience…

This section should highlight your applicable strengths

Technical Profile: *If appropriate, list your technical skills here*

Hardware: IBM…

Software: Windows, MS Office…

Employment History:
- *Bullet point list of specific skills and accomplishments*
- *Implemented quality control measures that cut the percentage…(example)*

1995-present   Name of Company, Title *(list most recent employer first)*

1990-1995   Name of Company, Title

(To make a great impression, your resume should highlight your past 10 to 12 years of relevant work experience, and then summarize any previous positions)

Education: List your most recent educational experiences first

The font for this example is Arial 11

Sample: Chronological Resume Outline

Name
Address
City, State Zip
Phone

Summary: Seasoned professional with ___ years of experience…

This section should highlight your applicable strengths

Technical Profile: *If appropriate, list your technical skills here*
Hardware: IBM…

Software: Windows, MS Office

Employment History: *list most recent employer first*

1995-present   Name of Company   City, State
Title

Either bullet point responsibilities, accomplishments, and skills or write out a brief paragraph discussing your responsibilities, accomplishments, and skills. If you write in paragraph form, make sure you are consistently using appropriate punctuation and grammar.

As Senior Consultant, reported to _____ and responsible for the … (example)

(To make a great impression, your resume should highlight your past 10 to 12 years of relevant work experience, and then summarize any previous positions)

Education: *List your most recent educational experience first*

The font for this example is Times New Roman 11

Job Search Techniques

Interviews

Sometimes your first contact with a potential employer will be over the phone, a telephone interview. He or she will not hire you over the phone, but they may decide not to hire you—so be prepared! Make sure you are on time–if the interviewer says he or she is going to call between 10 a.m. and noon on Saturday, be there ready early to take the call. What else should you do to prepare for the phone interview?

- Take steps to minimize background noise, which can be very distracting and imply that you are disorganized;
- Research the employer—information may be found on employer websites, from your public library, or by calling the employer's public relations department;
- Keep a copy of your resume in your hand;
- Have a pencil and paper ready to take notes on what they are looking for and any questions you may have;
- Prepare questions ahead of time; and
- Be prepared to give them a choice of three times you are available for a face-to-face interview.

At least one face-to-face interview may be scheduled and perhaps more than one will be required. Some interviews are conducted one-on-one, some with multiple interviewers at once. Some employers will ask you to meet with a series of individuals, or they may ask you to meet with all those individuals assembled in one room. Adequate preparation is a great antidote to any nervousness (Appendix).

1. Before you go into your interview, prepare your resume carefully and be ready to answer both general and specific questions. Bring at least two (2) copies of your resume with you and two (2) copies of your list of references. Prepare a list of your own job-related questions. The interviewer does not need to get the impression that all you are looking for is the money and/or benefits. Do not mention money or benefits at this stage of the interview process. Remember that you are trying to show the interviewer(s) what you can do for them, not question them to see if they have what you want.

2. The interviewer wants to know that you view this as a great opportunity to become part of their organization, and that you know and care about the organization's needs. One tangible way to demonstrate this interest is by talking about the advance research you did your local library or on the Internet. Consult the employer's web site and review annual reports, magazine articles, and professional journals for insight into the business. By knowing the employer, you will be able to ask intelligent questions about the company and the position.

3. Be outgoing and positive! Tell them your strengths. For example, if they are moving toward a high-performance culture and you have related experience, tell them where and when you did this, and what great results you obtained. Emphasize those areas in your experience that will solve customer problems and meet their needs.

4. Re-summarize the job description. Get them to expand on the job description and explain how your skills relate to their qualifications.

Close the interview. "I am very interested in this position. When can I expect to hear back from you?" Express your sincere interest in the employer and the position. Always send a follow-up/thank you letter immediately after your interview.

Job Search Techniques

Many organizations like COTC use a behavioral based interview style. The questions you are asked by an interviewer will require you to provide **real-life examples** of what you have done in **specific** situations. For example, you may be asked to describe a time when you were going to miss a deadline. You will be asked to explain the **situation**, your **action** (the steps you took to work through it), and the **result**. Most employers are looking for candidates who can demonstrate the following qualities:

- Leadership abilities–you can take charge in a situation,
- Technical skills–you can do the work involved in the job,
- Teamwork–able to work in a group effort,
- Flexibility–willing to be flexible and juggle priorities to get the job done,
- Motivation–determined to work hard and succeed,
- Communication–effective and clear communicator and able to get your point across, and
- Intellectual competence–general problem-solving skills.

Internet Postings

For more external exposure, you may decide to post your resume with one of the many Internet-based services (Appendix). By posting your background on the Internet, you increase the number of people that may see it. While you are searching the sites listed, check out the various employers open positions.

It is important to know that when searching electronically, employers look for key words on resumes to locate candidates that match a position's qualifications. Clearly, state your most relevant skills and accomplishments using concise language. If a company's computer is programmed to search for the word "finance" in a resume database, for example, and your resume states that you "managed financial accounts and services," you may not match up. Check in the Career Section at your local library for books or look online to identify resources on how to write "electronic resumes." There are reference materials that will help you write resumes specifically to be placed on the Internet.

Appendix

Cover Letter: Do's and Don'ts

Do	Do not
Address the letter to a specific individual whenever possible.	Use awkward salutations such as "To whom it may concern" or "Dear Sir or Madam".
Develop a bridge between yourself and the employer at the very beginning by explaining how you learned of the vacancy.	Begin each sentence or paragraph with "I".
Give a brief statement emphasizing your qualifications for this position. Keep the whole letter to about 3 to 4 paragraphs.	Write too long of a letter.
Customize the letter and contact person for each employer.	Write a generic letter, send a customized letter to the wrong company, nor forget to sign the letter.
Have someone look it over.	Rely on "spell check;" it will not catch everything.
	Refer to other employers in your cover letter
Know your source	Refer to ads that were never placed.

Resume: Do's and Don'ts

Do	Do not
Include grade point average, both cumulative and major, if a recent graduate with little experience.	Lie about your grade point average.
Have a broad objective covering the skills you would like to use. Specialize the resume if you know exactly where the resume is going (if you decide to have an objective).	Make your objective so specific that some employers will pass over you.
Keep the resume brief. Clearly, cover all the essential information.	Assume the longer the resume, the more qualified you must be.
Proofread carefully for spelling, punctuation, and typos. Have someone else proofread as well.	Rely on "spell check;" it will not catch everything.
Proofread your resume from an outsider's perspective. Does it make sense?	Use unfamiliar abbreviations or unnecessary jargon.
Focus on relevant, job-related school activities and work experience.	List personal statistics such as your weight, height, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, age, *et cetera*.
Send a Thank You note even if you are not interested in the position.	Handwrite your resume.
	Copy it so many times that it is illegible.
	Use colored ink.
	Fax your resume from your current employer or use your current employer's letterhead.
	Leave unprofessional away messages on the voicemail for the phone number on your resume.

Appendix

Vital Questions to Ask in an Interview

Applicants should be prepared to ask relevant questions at the end of each interview. Prepared applicants walk away from an interview feeling that they know everything there is to know about the job, department, and organization. The information received in an interview will assist you in making an intelligent career choice.

1. What are the employer's strengths and weaknesses compared to its competition?

2. How important do upper management and your supervisor consider the functions of this department? (You need to know if the department is low on the totem pole for budget expenditures and growth.)

3. Are there any weaknesses in the department that the manager is working on improving? (Try to determine the environment of the job.)

4. What is the organization's plan (mission) for the next five years and how does this department fit in?

5. Could you explain the organizational structure to me? (What is the reporting structure in this department? What are acceptable channels of communication? Ask for an organizational chart.)

6. How will my performance be measured? By whom? (How will I be evaluated?)

7. What are the day-to-day responsibilities in this job? (You want to avoid any surprises.)

8. Could you describe your management style and the type of employee who works well with you?

9. What are some of the skills and abilities you see as necessary for someone to succeed in this job? (You are trying to find out what qualities and talents your boss values versus what the job description requires.)

10. What is the employer's policy on providing seminars and workshops so employees can keep up with or acquire new skills?

11. Are there any restraints or cutbacks planned that would decrease the budget?

12. What specific computer equipment and software do you use?

13. What is your training/orientation process like? (How will I be acclimated to my new role?)

Appendix

Job Search Log

The Job Search Log was created to assist you in organizing and documenting your job search process. Use this to keep track of the resumes you send and the contacts you make. For example, if you contacted the human resources office, list the date you contacted them; the name and phone number of the person you contacted; the date you need to follow-up with them (action date); and any comments or next steps (e.g., sent resume, follow-up to schedule an appointment).

Sample Job Search Log

Contact Date	Department/ Company	Contact Name	Phone	Action Date	Comments/ Next Steps

Appendix

Internet Sites for Job Seekers

The Internet is a primary tool/resource for you during your job search. Employers post positions on the Internet, and there are also internet sites out there to help you write your cover letter and resume and prepare for an interview (e.g. careers.wsj.com).

Below we have listed a handful of internet job sites. These are just a few of the more common job sites. You have the option to look at the positions employers have posted, or you can post your resume on these sites.

Internet Sites	Address
CareerBuilder	www.careerbuilder.com
ComputerJobs.com	www.computerjobs.com
Dice.com	www.dice.com
HigherEdjobs.com	www.higheredjobs.com
Monster.com	www.monster.com
Indeed.com	https://www.indeed.com
Linkedin.com	https://www.linkedin.com/
Zip Recruiter	https://www.ziprecruiter.com/