

business

# Odd Jobs

by Camille Bains, The Canadian Press

**LOOKING FOR A SUMMER JOB?**

**HERE ARE SOME TIPS:**

**Getting started:** Write your resume to target a specific job. Don't use the same resume for all jobs.

**Free resume help:** Try your local Human Resources Centre for Youth. Call 1-800-935-5555 for the address.

**Consider:** All your past experiences including babysitting, paper routes, volunteer work, computer skills, participation in team sports.

**Job postings:** At community centres, churches, YWCA/YMCA Boys' and Girls' Clubs, local Human Resources Centre for Youth.

**Likely places to look:** Concession stands, video arcades, parks, day camps, service stations, farms, fast-food restaurants.

**Where:** Think about how you are going to get to work. Is there a bus nearby?

**Network:** Let teachers, parents' friends, neighbours and other acquaintances know you're looking for work.

**When Jane Alkouri** thinks of her summer job two years ago, she can't help but laugh. "The place was a Gong Show," Alkhoury says of the job she landed after graduating from high school. It was in a lab that promised balding people a fresh crop of hair.

"You had to apply these funny-looking solutions on their heads... and then you'd have to put a heat cap on their heads for 15 minutes and repeat the procedure twice." The lab drew customers through newspaper advertisements, but didn't provide any guarantees on hair growth.

Unlike working at traditional places such as concession stands, service stations or day camps, out-of-the-ordinary jobs such as Alkhoury's leave a lasting impression.

Although she can make fun of her job now, the experience taught her to start looking for summer work as early as possible. She's not alone when it comes to quirky stories about summer jobs.

When Lyle Baker was 16, he worked as a quarry for the Vancouver police department's dog squad.

Baker's job was to hide – in an abandoned building or up a tree – before police officers let their dog-in-training loose to find him. "I was the actual prey," Baker says of the summer job that he got through friends. It lasted part time for two years while he finished high school.

Heather Anne Britton landed her job through a technical college, where an instructor recommended

68 Pine Street  
Cookeville  
P7A 5X3

June 12, 2002

Ms. Holly Peters  
Manager  
Cool Threads Clothing Store  
25 Main Street  
Cookeville  
A1B 2C3

Re: Applications for salesperson

Dear Ms. Peters: **1**

I am interested in applying for the position of salesperson at the Cool Threads Clothing Store, which was advertised in the June 10 edition of the Cookeville News. **2**

As a high school student, I have developed organizational and communication skills through my involvement in school sports and by coaching junior soccer. By specializing in economics and accounting, I also understand how business operates. I have enclosed my resume with further details. **3**

I would enjoy being a part of your company and am available for an interview at your convenience. You can contact me at 555-1212 or leave a message at 555-1234. I look forward to hearing from you. **4**

Sincerely,

*Jane Dough*

Jane Dough

**Address** your covering letter to the person responsible for hiring. Don't use Dear Sir/Madam or To Whom It May Concern. Call the business and get the exact name and title of the person. Ask for the correct spelling.

**Paragraph 1:** State your interest in the company and the type of job you want. If you learned of the job through an advertisement, refer to it in the opening paragraph.

**Paragraph 2:** Highlight the experience and skills you can offer the company. Use dynamic verbs like accomplished, created, improved, produced, specialized, organized, and established. Refer to your resume for further details.

**Paragraph 3:** Request an interview and leave a number where you can be reached. Have others check the letter for spelling or grammatical errors.

**Neatness counts.** Do it on a computer or typewriter and use quality paper.

**Keep it short** – one page is ideal. Briefly describe your skills and experience. Employers are looking for energetic people who can communicate well, solve problems, learn how to use technology and work well with others. Be sure to include any references that show you have these skills.

(From Looking for a Job, a Guide for Youth, a publication of Human Resources Development Canada.)



her because of her outgoing personality. As a park naturalist at the Okanagan Lake Provincial Park in British Columbia, Britton gave talks on wildlife, conducted nature walks, caught bats and fed a rattlesnake. She had to keep the snake food – dead mice and rats – in her home freezer.

"I was living with somebody else and I had to clearly mark the box, 'Dead mice, do not eat.'"

Britton also had to ensure a neighbouring cat didn't eat the mice she would thaw out on the sidewalk.

An unusual summer job can provide benefits besides being the source of entertaining stories. Britton says her job helped her develop new skills, as well as giving her the chance to work in an environment she loved.

"It was an awesome experience; it got me out there believing that I could actually do something." f

**ONLINE**  
Want to learn more?  
Check out these Internet sites:

Site of the Student Employment Network, an organization that helps students in their job searches.  
[www.studentsjobs.com/](http://www.studentsjobs.com/)

If you want a job in one of Canada's national parks, this is the site for you.  
[parkscanada.pch.gc.ca/Employment/jobs/english/students\\_e.htm](http://parkscanada.pch.gc.ca/Employment/jobs/english/students_e.htm)