BISON CAREER GUIDE

Official Handbook of the
CENTER FOR CAREER EDUCATION,
DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH (CEDAR)
(202) 806-7513 • www.howard.edu/careerservices
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Dear Howard University Students:

Welcome to you from the Division of Student Affairs! Class of 2017, as new members of the Howard University community, you will soon find yourself surrounded by an exciting world of discovery and adventure. The Center for Career Education, Development & Research (CEDAR) is a place that you will want to begin your journey. At the Center, you will not only have access to critical information and services that will help you make wise academic and career choices throughout your matriculation; you will also be exposed to unique experiences designed to strengthen your sense of purpose and direction as Howard University students.

The Center for Career Education, Development & Research (CEDAR) at Howard University is a world-class enterprise. The career professionals who staff the center are top-rated and ranked among the best in the country. Not only is the Center equipped with state-of-the-art technology; its renowned Career Fairs in the fall and in the spring provide Howard University students an opportunity to meet and greet hundreds of high-powered employers from select companies across the nation.

Class of 2016, and all Howard University students, as you move into the rhythm of the school year, please be mindful of the opportunities that await you at the CEDAR Center, located on campus. The excellent staff are available to help you discover who you “truly are” and where you want to make your professional contributions. It is never too soon to begin the steps toward making decisions that will bring you rewards—2 years, 5 years, and 10 years from now. Let’s begin today!

On behalf of the students and staff of Student Affairs, I congratulate the Class of 2017 and welcome the return of all students of HU. Please know that we wish each one of you a successful school year.

Sincerely,

Barbara L.J. Griffin, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs
Howard University
The mission of Howard University includes the provision of quality education for any student, but with emphasis upon the provision of educational opportunities for those students who may not otherwise have an opportunity to acquire an education of the type provided at Howard. In fulfilling its mission, the university does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, marital status, religion, age or handicap in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, other university-administered programs and employment.

Accreditation
Howard University is fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools/Commission on Higher Education, and by more than twenty additional professional Associations/Boards/Councils/Societies/Assemblies/Committees germane to the fifty-plus degree programs offered in the University's twelve schools and colleges.
Howard University Students:

Welcome to Howard University and the Center for Career Education, Development & Research (CEDAR). At the start of this new academic year you stand at the threshold of a life of success and accomplishment greater than you have ever dreamed or imagined. You are among an enviable group of people who have been afforded the opportunity to explore options, make monumental life decisions and chart courses that will position you to be the future leaders of the world. What an awesome opportunity!

Opportunity, however, comes with great responsibility. As the future leaders of America and the global community, it is now your responsibility to study hard, work diligently, plan effectively, and matriculate successfully, having been the watchful stewards of this great opportunity. By doing so, you join the ranks of such notable trailblazers as Thurgood Marshall, Vernon Jordan, Toni Morrison, Debbie Allen, Phyllicia Rashad, Lynn Whitfield, Elijah Cummings, David Oliver, Taraji P. Henson and countless others who continue to make stellar contributions to alma mater and the wider community.

To ensure that you are well equipped to face the world of work upon graduation, the CEDAR Center and its staff, stand ready to assist you in achieving a clear and accurate understanding of yourself, provide guidance as you explore the numerous career options at your disposal, and ultimately, bring you in direct contact with hundreds of the nation’s leading employers.

*Take some time to peruse this career guide* and become familiar with all of the outstanding career fairs, workshops, corporate presentations, internship opportunities and other programs and services we offer. *Visit the office* and meet with a counselor, have your resume critiqued, sharpen your interviewing skills, interview with employers of your choice, and ready yourself to face the world of work with confidence.

So, to the Class of 2017, I say welcome to the “Mecca!” You have embarked upon a journey of a lifetime.

To our returning students—the Classes of 2015 & 2016—I say welcome back! Now is the time to engage the CEDAR Center and put a solid career plan in place.

To the Class of 2014, I congratulate and salute you. You have run a great race. Step up and claim your prize. It’s time to execute your career plan!

To the entire student population, here’s to a successful year ahead.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Joan M. Browne, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Career Education, Development and Research (CEDAR Center)
Welcome to the Center for Career Education, Development and Research (CEDAR Center)

OUR LOCATIONS
Administrative Office & Interviewing Suite
Student Resource Center, Building 19
Corner, 6th & Bryant Streets, NW—Second Floor
Washington, DC 20059
Telephone: (202) 806-7513
Fax: (202) 462-4267
Email: Cedarrecruiting@howard.edu
Web: www.howard.edu/careerservices
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., (Mon. - Fri.)

Career Resources Library/Reading Lounge
Blackburn University Center, 1st Floor, 2397 Sixth Street,
NW, Washington DC 20059
Library Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. (Mon. - Thu.) &
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (Fri.)

OUR STAFF
Joan M. Browne, Ph.D., Director
Mrs. Jozanne Douglas, M.S., PHR, Career Specialist
Ms. Tamara Forbes, Graduate Intern—General Programs

Mission Statement
Adhering to Howard University’s core values of excellence, leadership, service, and truth, the Center for Career Education, Development and Research (CEDAR Center) provides dynamic programs and services that educate and empower students and alumni to chart successful career paths with skill and confidence. Through innovative partnerships with global employers, the CEDAR Center uses a didactic approach to career and life planning that encourages constituent job seekers to be proactive, purposeful and persistent in their pursuit of success by engaging in career development activities that will equip them to make the transition from school to work as industry trailblazers and global leaders.

Primary Objectives
• To facilitate the holistic development of Howard University students and alumni as they navigate the lifelong process of exploring, accessing, and managing successful careers.
• To equip students with the requisite tools to successfully matriculate and embark upon a career search campaign with skill and confidence.
• To provide students and alumni with direct access to career opportunities through career fairs, on-campus recruitment interviews, website information and linkages, employer information sessions, workshops, and coordination of various networking activities.
• To deliver effective career development training programs to educate students on modern career development issues, challenges, and advancement strategies.
• To develop and manage quality working relationships with student organizations, corporate partners, academic institutions, alumni, and faculty, that support the Center’s mission in the mutual satisfaction of the needs of all constituents.

OUR PORTFOLIO
The Center for Career Education, Development and Research is Howard University’s official career center charged with a mandate to deliver career services and programs that augment classroom instruction to produce career-ready graduates who are equipped to transition, with ease, from school to work. Following is a brief overview of the programs and services offered.

BISON CAREERS ONLINE
Howard University’s official career education and job-search site, Bison Careers Online is a comprehensive career development portal that offers hundreds of job listings, information and resources on how to prepare for today’s job market, and online information guides that can be downloaded on top employers, industries, and job market trends. Students may also use Bison Careers Online to take an array of career assessments—the first step in the career planning process, register for annual career fairs, on-campus interviews, and other career development activities hosted by the CEDAR Center. To take advantage of these best-in-class programs and services, create your Bison Career Link account at https://howard-csm.symplicity.com/students.

WEEKLY CAREER COACHING SERVICES
Through a series of weekly training on-site sessions and workshops offered Tuesday through Thursday between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., students receive career coaching from CEDAR Career Specialists and other expert industry partners. Sessions cover a variety of subjects, from writing a resume, identifying summer jobs and internship opportunities, to transitioning from college to career. The workshops are generally 60 to 90 minutes long and are usually held in the CEDAR Center or Blackburn Center. Access the listing of weekly training sessions and workshops through Bison Careers Online at http://www.howard.edu/careerservices. RSVP for the session of your choice by logging into your Bison Career Link account at http://howard-csm.symplicity.com/students.

INDIVIDUAL CAREER CONSULTATION
One-on-one appointments with a Career Specialist are also available by appointment only and based on the availability of the Specialists. These one-on-one sessions are typically 15 to 30 minutes long and are an excellent opportunity to review individual career and professional development strategies, explore career interest and job market trends, and receive assistance on writing and developing job search tools such as resumes, cover letters, thank-you letters, and graduate school admissions essays and personal statements. To take advantage of these sessions, students are required to make an appointment using their Bison Career Link accounts.

CAREER FAIRS
Career Exploration Weeks (Fall & Spring) — Monday, September 23 to Wednesday, September 25, 2013 and Monday, January 27 to Wednesday, January 29, 2014. These events include workshops, panel discussions, networking sessions, and the highly competitive
Career Exploration Fair, which attracts over 175 national employers and graduate schools. These weeks of activities serve as the launch pad for the fall and spring on-campus recruitment sessions and are designed to expose students and alumni to employer representatives from the private sector, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and government agencies and contractors eager to showcase employment opportunities that are available to qualified candidates.

ON-CAMPUS RECRUITMENT

The On-Campus Recruitment Program facilitates the campus-wide activities of all employers and graduate schools seeking to recruit Howard University’s best and brightest talent. Employment opportunities spanning all sectors are showcased and filled through a series of on-site employer presentations, information sessions, and interviews.

Employer Presentations and Information Sessions

Many of the employers who recruit on campus will host pre-recruitment presentations, which give students an opportunity to acquaint themselves with companies and available career opportunities prior to the interview dates. A question-and-answer session usually follows each presentation. Students are required to RSVP through their Bison Career Link accounts to participate.

On-Site Interviews

Each semester, employers advertise available full-time and internship positions through Bison Career Link and interview qualified student applicants in the CEDAR Center Interviewing Suite and in some academic departments across campus. Interviews are conducted weekly during the fall and spring recruitment periods and are typically 30, 45 or 60 minutes long. To be eligible to participate in on-site interviews, students must be registered with the CEDAR Center, be in good academic standing, and must meet the minimum criteria for the position as outlined by the recruiting company.

CAREER RESOURCES LIBRARY AND READING LOUNGE

The new Career Resources Library/Reading Lounge is located in the Blackburn University Center’s Reading Lounge. Here students can explore career options, meet with a Career Specialist for quick resume reviews, interviewing tips and network with future employers. The Library will house Internet-accessible computers for career research using a series of online libraries, company and career development literature, periodicals and guide books, job-search kiosks, daily video streaming on a variety of topics ranging from “How to complete a job application” to “Professional Ethics and Etiquette.”
A New Student’s Guide to Career Success... Go Bison!

So, you’re barely in the door and we’re already talking about what you will do when you graduate. Overwhelmed? Don’t be... the secret to your career success is to develop a career plan during your freshman year that will serve as your career compass for the next four years. In the next few pages we will explore just what you need to do to develop and execute a career plan that will lead you down the path to ultimate academic and career success. Before you know it, four years will have passed and you’ll be looking back on the activities of your freshman year, thanking yourself that you made and stuck to your plan.

Where do you begin, you ask? Let’s start with a review of why you came to college in the first place. Some of the reasons given for going to college are:

- To make a better living for myself and my family
- To meet people and learn new things about myself and life
- To develop my social skills
- To make a contribution to improving the world
- To become an expert in my field

All of these reasons can be summed up in one statement: “I came to college to lay a solid foundation for the development of my career that will result in a satisfying and fulfilling life.”

Different from a job, which is a set of specific tasks carried out for pay, a career is developed over time in a chosen field or profession. Developing a successful career requires good decision-making, and to make good career decisions you must know something about yourself (interest, values, skills, aptitude), understand the world of work, and know how and where you fit into that world.

There are five simple steps to follow:

1. Register with the CEDAR Center’s Bison Careers Online
2. Get to know YOU
3. Explore the world of work
4. Try out the work world through internships, shadowing, and coop opportunities
5. Execute your career plan

Register With Bison Careers Online

There’s no need to wait until your Junior or Senior year to start making plans for your future. Actually, the sooner you start to plan for your life after college to more successful you will be when you graduate. Contrary to popular belief, the CEDAR Center serves all students from freshman year all the way through graduate school through direct interaction with Career Specialists and through Bison Careers Online—the one-stop online portal for all you need to know to successfully execute your career plan. Give yourself a head start by registering on Bison Careers Online: www.howard.edu/careerservices. Here, you will have access to self-assessment tools, information on how to write a resume, how to ace your job or internship interviews, and much more. By signing up with the Bison Careers Online you will get first-hand information on upcoming career events like workshops, career fairs, and employer information sessions. Why wait? Take the following steps to register today!

A. How to Register
1. From any computer go to https://howard-csm.symplicity.com

B. Upload Your Resume
1. Log into your account and go to “Documents”.
2. Click on the “Resume Builder” tab and go to “Add New”.
3. You must then upload your resume. Follow the online prompts to complete this procedure.
   * Be as thorough as possible in entering the required information, as this online registration process is the precursor to signing up for interviews through NACElink, utilizing career assessment tools, and searching electronically for job and internship opportunities targeted for Howard University students and alumni.
4. Review your resume information and click “Submit”

C. RSVP for CEDAR Events
1. From your computer go to: https://howard-csm.symplicity.com/students/index.php to log into your NACElink account.
2. From the homepage of your account, click on the “Events” tab
3. Select the appropriate event type:
   a. “Career Fair (Employment Opportunities)” ➔ Click on “Submit your Resume and RSVP” ➔ Select the companies you choose to make your resume available to. (This is an optional step) ➔ Submit.
   b. “Workshops” tab ➔ Select the workshop and click “RSVP.”
   c. “Information Sessions” tab ➔ Select the session that you choose to attend from the list and then click RSVP. Note: Some events require you to select a time-slot to RSVP. Click on the “Time-slot” menu to select a time-slot to RSVP.

Getting to Know YOU!

To get to know yourself, you’ve got to spend time exploring the things you like; the things you don’t like; what is most important you; what skills you need to develop. Visit the HU CEDAR Center and schedule an appointment with a Career Specialist, who will talk with you and help you through this self-exploration. You can also take a career assessment that will help you to identify your values, interests, skills, and abilities.
Understanding the World of Work

Most people can do many things equally well. When you think about your interests and the things you like to do, you might find that you have a difficult time narrowing your interests to one career path that you want to pursue. Figuring out the one thing that you want to do for the rest of your life can be challenging, to say the least. It can even make you feel very anxious, particularly if you wait until your senior year to start thinking about all of this.

At the CEDAR Center we will provide access to information about careers, professions, graduate schools, and all of the information you will need to help you explore the world of work and make sound career decisions. Here, you can also sign up to participate in training workshops, seminars, information sessions, career fairs, and a world of other resources in our Career Resources Library (CRL). Sign up on Bison Careers Online (www.howard.edu/careerservices) and gain access to information about the hundreds of companies that come to Howard University each year to offer employment opportunities to well prepared and qualified students. These employers don’t only offer jobs to graduating seniors. They also offer internship and cooperative employment opportunities to all students, including Freshmen.

Intern… Intern… Intern…

Once you’ve started to get to know yourself better and you understand a bit more about the career options that are available to you, it is a good idea to try out a variety of careers to find the one that you feel most comfortable with. Secure internships, shadowing and cooperative employment opportunities that will help you to try out various professions before making a firm commitment to one particular field.

You will find that the more internship opportunities you secure, the easier it will be to make a solid decision about your career options when the time comes. By the time you reach senior year, you should have had three internships to your credit (an internship each summer). What this says to your future employers is that you are a serious candidate who took the time over an extended period to develop yourself, your skills, and abilities. You immediately present yourself as a qualified asset to their company.

Executing Your Plan

Would you believe it? Three years have passed and it’s senior year. Decisions… decisions… decisions! If you’ve followed all of the preceding instructions you won’t be in a state of panic. If you failed to follow these instructions, however, you might very well be in the proverbial tight spot. But, the great student that you are, you will not allow yourself to be found in this “tight spot” because by senior year, you will have laid the groundwork for the successful execution of your well-developed career plan. To save you the time and stress of developing a plan from scratch, we’ve developed a blueprint for you. This four-year career plan is not new. It is used by Career Centers nationally to help students plan successfully as they matriculate and has been adapted to fit the Howard University academic and career planning calendars. Here is what we suggest.

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### MY FOUR-YEAR CAREER PLAN

#### 1st Year Fall
- Start your HU go-to list
- Register with Bison Careers Online and create a NACElink profile: [www.howard.edu/careerservices](http://www.howard.edu/careerservices)
- Find tutoring for your courses
- October: Schedule an appointment with academic advisor
- Attend a Career Planning Workshop
- Volunteer on campus or in the community
- Review your academic plan

#### 1st Year Spring
- Join campus clubs that relate to your social and career interests
- Attend career education workshops
- Attend spring career fairs
- Look for a job on campus for the upcoming year
- Take courses to prepare for undergraduate research
- Sign up for career & life planning course in the CEDAR Center
- Consider becoming a career peer mentor

#### 1st Year Summer
- Review and update your list of strengths
- Update your NACElink profile on Bison Careers Online
- Take summer courses
- Secure your 1st general internship
- Evaluate your academic plan
- Assess your computer skills

#### 2nd Year Fall
- Visit the CEDAR Center to learn how to build a resume, cover letter
- Research Companies
- Investigate Study Abroad programs
- Apply for Career Peer Mentor Program in the CEDAR Center
- Take an online self-assessment (SIGI3 and/or MyPlan.com) available on Bison Careers Online
- Schedule a meeting with an academic advisor to go over your academic requirements
- Attend Wisdom Wednesday Workshops and participate in career webinars online
- Attend the Career Exploration Fair (1st week in October)

#### 2nd Year Spring
- Sign up for on-campus interviews for summer internships on Bison Careers Online
- Attend the Spring Career Fair
- Practice public speaking
- Start to build your career networking list
- Identify and develop a relationship with an Alumni Mentor
- Start Career Peer Mentor Training

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[www.howard.edu/careerservices](http://www.howard.edu/careerservices)
• Schedule Mock Interviews with the CEDAR Center to sharpen your interviewing skills
• Attend company information sessions
• Build relationships with your professors and campus administrations. You will soon need letters of recommendation for job, scholarship, and/or graduate school applications
• Take part in group projects and activities to build your team-player skills

2nd Year Summer
• Take summer courses if needed
• Update your NACElink profile on Bison Careers Online
• Take summer courses
• Start your 2nd internship related to your declared or intended major
• Continue dialogue with your academic and career counselor
• Conduct information interviews with people in careers that you’re interested in
• Evaluate your academic and career plan.
• Review and update your Career Network List
• Review and update your resume

3rd Year Fall
• Start to research graduate schools and programs
• Update and review your skills and interests
• Research hot topics or new trends in your field
• Attend career development workshops
• Work with faculty on undergraduate research projects
• Become a tutor or Career Peer Mentor

3rd Year Spring
• Start searching and applying for internships specific to another aspect of your major
• Prepare for graduate admissions tests
• Attend spring career fairs
• Look at current job openings to assess skills and background required
• Take leadership roles in clubs and organizations
• Practice your interviewing skills. Participate in mock interviews at the CEDAR Center
• Sign up for On-Campus Interviews for summer internships

3rd Year Summer
• Internship
• Evaluate your academic plan and take summer courses if needed
• Update your NACElink Profile on Bison Careers Online
• Review and update your cover letter and resume
• Job Shadow at least two professionals in careers that are of interest to you
• Review and update your career network list
• Enjoy the rest of your summer

4th Year Fall
• Register for graduation
• Attend the Career Exploration Fair (employment & graduate school opportunities)
• Meet with a Career Specialist to finalize your career plans
• Participate in On-Campus Interviews in the CEDAR Center
• Attend employer information sessions
• Attend financial planning workshops

4th Year Spring
• Sign up for On-Campus Interviews on Bison Careers Online
• Attend spring career fairs
• Meet with academic advisors to finalize graduation clearance
• Register with the HU Alumni Career Network: http://howard.experience.com
• Attend senior celebration events
• Send thank-you notes to professors, mentors, and others who supported you through this successful journey

4th Year Summer
• Congratulations! You are now free to take a much deserved vacation and rest up for the first day on the job
• Prepare for the world of work

Follow these tips and you will be on your way to academic and career success. Visit the CEDAR Center on the second floor of the C.B. Powell Building located on the main campus at the corner of 6th and Bryant Streets. We’re right next to the radio station, WHUR, and down the hall from the School of Communications and the Psychology Department. We’re open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily. Call us at (202) 806-7513 to schedule an appointment or attend our weekly training sessions (Tuesdays through Thursdays). Each week we schedule employer partners to spend a day in the Career Resources Library (Blackburn Center) to conduct resume critiques, career coaching, Wisdom Wednesday Workshops, and mock interviews. View the weekly schedule at www.howard.edu/careerservices or register with Bison Careers Online to receive weekly notifications of scheduled events.

Get on board today! You’ll be happy you did.

Written by Dr. Joan M. Browne, Director, CEDAR Center, Howard University.
Our diverse team members include engineers, architects, scientists, and many other technical professionals. Most importantly, our highly qualified staff members are led by principals and project managers who average 20 years of employment with SGH. These leaders provide quality of service and team continuity to support our long term client relationships.

We offer an excellent compensation and benefits package in a corporate culture based on learning and growth. To learn more about SGH and current job opportunities, visit our web site at www.sgh.com.

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And we’re recruiting the best.
Stop by our booth at Howard’s Career Exploration Fair.

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Your road to success begins here.

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“The RLDP is challenging and fast-paced! I loved the networking opportunities, the financial education and the hands-on operational experience. The program has positioned me on a fast track at AT&T.”

— Cristina, RLDP Graduate

Sold? We thought so.
www.att.jobs/RLDP

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Many students go through all four years of college without ever setting foot in their school’s career services office. Yet, outside of the academic realm, job seekers will pay hundreds, even thousands, of dollars for the very same services that are included free with the cost of tuition.

The mission of career center practitioners is to teach skills and provide services that will facilitate the career development and job search process, ranging from assessing your abilities to negotiating employment offers. Don’t overlook this opportunity; it could mean passing up the job of a lifetime.

Develop Relationships
Find a career center counselor/advisor and get to know him or her. Try to meet with your counselor/advisor at least several times throughout your career development process. Appointments are a great way to stay motivated and to accomplish career-related tasks.

A counselor/advisor will listen to your concerns and provide objective advice. You can bounce ideas off him or her, which will help you think through your options. Furthermore, when unique job opportunities come in, counselors/advisors often alert students who they know well and think might be a good fit with the position. Remember, the more you share about your skills and your goals with the staff, the better they will be able to assist you.

Attend Programs
Many career center practitioners spend the bulk of their time planning events for students. From mock interview days and networking nights to resume workshops and career fairs, at any given time there may be a number of programs going on that can assist you. Make sure you are aware of what’s taking place. Find the event calendar, whether it is online, in the paper, or through an email list-serv. As you attend programs, ask thoughtful questions to make the most of what you are learning.

Don’t Be a Stranger
Your relationship with the career center doesn’t have to end the day you don your cap and gown. Many centers offer services for alumni similar to those for students. If you haven’t found a job or even formed a plan by graduation, you still might be able to meet with counselors/advisors, use job listings and/or computers and attend programs. Check with the career center to see what is available and what time limits apply.

Programs and Services
In addition to these tips, it’s helpful to understand more about a career center’s numerous services. These programs and offerings may include:

Job Listings and Recruiting Programs

Virtually all career centers have job listings maintained in-house or by professional online services. Employers can post positions specifically for your individual college. Furthermore, many students will be able to take advantage of on-campus recruiting programs, where employers collect student resumes and conduct on-campus interviews for various job openings.

Career Fairs
The beauty of career fairs is that they bring employers to you. Often held in a large venue, you can browse their available positions, talk with them informally, and drop off resumes. Fairs may be held up to several times a year, focusing on different types of positions, such as internships or nonprofit jobs.

Internship Programs
Internships are the most valuable way to try out different career fields and gain hands-on experience while you are still a student. You can build your resume, learn the ropes, and maybe even get academic credit. You might also pave the way to a full-time position after graduation.

Workshops
Career center workshops cover skills ranging from writing an effective cover letter to honing your interview performance. Not only can you get pertinent advice from career center staff and other workshop presenters, but you will also benefit greatly from being in a group environment with your peers.

Remember, the more you share about your skills and your goals with the staff, the better they will be able to assist you.

Alumni Networks
Many schools offer students access to alumni contacts in various career fields. These graduates have volunteered to serve as a resource for information and advice. This can be one of the most helpful ways to learn about different industries, and can help you get your foot in the door.

Mock Interviews
When it comes to interviewing, practice makes perfect. The experience of having a simulated interview with a staff member can calm nerves, enhance performance, teach you how to answer tough questions, and prevent you from making big mistakes.

Resume and Cover Letter Critiques
In addition to the assistance offered during individual appointments, many offices hold specific drop-in hours where a staff member can provide a quick resume or cover letter critique.

Written by Jennifer Bobrow Burns, Assistant Dean for Career Services, Quinnipiac University.
Registration Procedures for On-Campus Interviews

Visit the CEDAR Center to familiarize yourself with the services, procedures and hours of operation. We are located on the second floor, west wing of the C.B. Powell Building, 525 Bryant Street, NW, Washington, DC 20059. Telephone: (202) 806-7513. Fax: (202) 462-4267. Email Address: huocrecruit@gmail.com. Visit our website at www.howard.edu/careerservices.

Registration
REGISTER online through our web-based software—Symplicity. This is done by completing the following steps:

2. Select for students/alumni listed under “where do you want to go.”
3. Click on register listed under “register for a new account” on the right-hand side.
4. Enter your email address in the username field.
5. Enter the school password “hutrak” in the password field.
6. Complete the registration form.
7. Make note of your username and password because you will need this information for future entry into your account on the system. NOTE: The system will email you a confirmation of your username and password.
8. You must then upload your resume. Follow the online prompts to complete this procedure.
9. Be as thorough as possible in entering the required information, as this online registration process is the precursor to signing up for interviews through Symplicity, utilizing career assessment tool(s), and searching electronically for job and internship opportunities targeted for Howard University students through our web-based medium, Symplicity.

Recruitment Schedule
1. You MUST complete Registration with the CEDAR Center (Part 1 of the process) before moving on to the next steps.
2. Visit the CEDAR Center (in person), or go to https://howard-csm.symplicity.com for a list of employers who have made arrangements to participate in on-campus recruitment activities during the semester.
3. Check the website, periodic supplements and bulletin board for additions, cancellations and changes to the recruiting schedule.
4. Review the literature to see which companies are of particular interest to you.
5. Be sure to make a note and attend the Information Sessions scheduled by the recruiting companies.

Applying to a Position
1. Log on to https://howard-csm.symplicity.com using your username and password.
2. If you are a first-time user/registrant, then you will be required to enter the school password, hutrak, to log on. You will then proceed to complete your profile, including a username and password for your future use.
3. If you have previously registered, simply use the username and password that you created when registering initially.
4. Alumni with graduation dates prior to Spring 1989 are asked to contact the CEDAR Center to update their status.
5. Click on Jobs & Internships.
6. Click on CSO Jobs.
7. Click on the job you want to apply for from the list (you may also narrow the listing by entering specific search criteria such as job function or industry type).
8. Follow instructions on the right-hand side to submit your resume. Depending on the employer you will see one of two options.
   • Application Status—which will allow you to upload your resume.
   • How to Apply—which will direct you away from Symplicity.
9. If you do not see either of these options, there will be an explanation as to why you may not apply.

Scheduling Interviews
2. Click on the Interviews tab.
3. Click on “my interviews” link in the header.
4. Click on the “Interview Request” tab.
5. Click on the “schedule interview.”
6. Select an available date and time.
7. Click on submit.
8. Once submitted, you can find the interview under the “Scheduled Interviews” tab.
9. Interviews are held in the interview suites of the CEDAR Center.
10. You are expected to fulfill interview appointments. Failure to show up will result in loss of interviewing privileges (see “No-Show Policy”).
Failure to Keep Scheduled Appointments ("No-Show" Policy)

The policy of the CEDAR Center is that students who fail to keep their interview appointments forfeit their right to be served by this office.

This policy is necessary for the following reasons: (1) the recruiter visits the campus after being informed in advance of the number of students signed up on the schedule; (2) the failure of a student to keep scheduled interviews creates a negative impression of the student and of the University and in some cases has caused an employer to drop Howard from its campus recruitment schedule; and (3) by scheduling an interview, you are reserving time that might have been given to another student. This, of course, is not fair to the other student.

For your protection, companies or agencies who do not meet their schedules will be dealt with in much the same manner as students who miss interviews. Companies or agencies who miss one schedule run the risk of being dropped from campus recruiting the following year. Because there will be unforeseen emergencies which may cause a student to miss an appointment, each student will be allowed to cancel interviews by contacting the CEDAR Center in advance (at least two class days before the interview date). You may do so by calling (202) 806-7513, if necessary, but you may not cancel appointments through other students.

A student who signs up and then fails to keep an interview appointment without canceling is recorded as a "no-show." A last-minute cancellation counts as a "no-show." Once a student registers one "no-show," that person immediately forfeits the services of this office, including interviewing privileges and resume referral. This means your name is removed from all schedules. To be reinstated to the program, you must meet with the Director and complete certain procedures.

Plant/Office Visits

A candidate being seriously considered by a prospective employer is usually invited to visit the organization at one of its locations for further interviews. One purpose of the plant/office visit is to provide you with an opportunity to meet other staff or plant personnel, and to give additional interviews to determine whether a good match is developing. However, a plant visit is not a guarantee of a job offer.

If you are invited for a plant visit, either by letter or telephone, acknowledge the invitation by mail promptly. Accept an invitation only if you are sincerely interested in exploring employment with that company. If you accept a visit and later must postpone or cancel—for a valid reason—inform the employer immediately and make alternate arrangements.

Your interviews at the plant or office will be in-depth and you will be competing with other candidates. You can expect to discuss job responsibilities, observe company operations, visit facilities where you might work, and meet other personnel of the organization. You will usually be interviewed by several people representing a cross section of the firm and department in which you would be employed. One of the most important interviews will be with your prospective supervisor. In addition to the interviews, you may be asked to take some tests (including lie detector tests). So be prepared, and make sure you get the most information possible from the plant visit.

Before leaving the facility, make sure you understand what the next step will be in the process.

The employer expects to pay for all legitimate expenses incurred by you in connection with a plant visit. Legitimate expenses are those which are necessary to get you there and cover basic transportation, food and lodging. Be sure to keep a record of your expenses along with receipts. If visits to several employers are made on the same trip, the total cost should be prorated among them.

The expense report may be your last opportunity to make a good impression on an employer, and how you handle it might make the difference. Remember that the invitation to visit is a courtesy and a privilege. Don’t abuse the privilege.

Following your plant visit, a letter should be sent to the appropriate employer representative expressing your appreciation and indicating your continued interest.

Job Offers

Most job offers are made shortly after the plant visit. Depending on your date of graduation, the employer usually gives you more than enough time to make your decision. Acknowledge the job offer—with thanks—promptly to assure the employer that you have received it. At this time you should specify a decision date, reject the offer, accept the offer, or request an extension of time for making your decision. When you accept a position, notify other employers with pending offers that you are no longer available. In declining an offer, be polite, brief and friendly. One day you may want to renew your acquaintance.

Acceptance of an employment offer is a serious commitment on both sides. Do not continue to interview, take plant visits, or search for a better offer from another employer after accepting an offer. The offer is made in good faith and should be accepted as such, with sincere intent to honor the commitment. Please see “Offer Policy for Full-Time Employment and Internships” on page 50.

Throughout your negotiations for employment, keep the CEDAR Center advised of your decisions.

All students using the CEDAR Center services or facilities are responsible for understanding and being guided by the “NACE Principles for Professional Conduct for Career Services and Employment Professionals.”
CEDAR Center Website

The CEDAR Center’s website is available 24 hours a day. You are encouraged to visit often as our website is updated frequently.

This online resource provides key information that will assist you in the career and professional development process, including direct access to schedules of campus-wide career activities (workshops, job fairs, graduate school fairs, etc.), career planning assistance, job opportunities, registration for on-campus interviews, company links, and links to other key career development resources.

The CEDAR Center’s website address is: www.howard.edu/careerservices.

For additional information or assistance, contact our office at (202) 806-7513.

Career Resources Library

The Career Resources Library (CRL) offers many services for students, alumni, faculty and staff. The wealth of career information provided by the CRL is done through the use of resource books, categorized job binders, multimedia devices, job bulletins, periodicals and magazines, computer-assisted career education and exploration tools, along with a vast array of online resources.

Some of the resources available include:

- **Employment/Internship Opportunities**: Newly developed Binder System with listings received daily by fax, email and mail from companies, the government, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations. These listings are from employers all over the United States and include internships as well as short-term openings.

- **Graduate/Professional Program Information**: A collection of graduate school application information, college and fellowship information.

- **Career Exploration/Education**: Information about career planning, career reference directories, self-assessment books, federal/other government and non-profit information, and international employment periodicals.

- **Company Information**

- **On-Campus Recruitment Information and Schedules**
Getting the Most Out of a Career Fair

Many employers use career fairs—both on and off campus—to promote their opportunities and to pre-screen applicants. Career fairs come in all shapes and sizes, from small community-sponsored events to giant regional career expositions held at major convention centers.

Most career fairs consist of booths and/or tables manned by recruiters and other representatives from each organization. For on-campus events, some employers also send alumni representatives. Large corporations and some government agencies have staffs who work the career fair “circuit” nationwide.

An employer’s display area is also subject to wide variance. It could be a simple table with a stack of brochures and business cards and a lone representative or an elaborate multimedia extravaganza with interactive displays, videos, posters and a team of recruiters.

Fashions and Accessories

Generally, the appropriate attire for career fair attendees is more relaxed than what you’d wear to an actual job interview. In most cases, “business casual” is the norm. If you’re unsure of the dress code (particularly for off-campus events), it would be wise to err on the overdressed side—you’ll make a better impression if you appear professional. Think of it as a dress rehearsal for your real interviews!

Remember to bring copies of your resume (or resumes, if you have several versions tailored to different career choices), a few pens and pencils (have backups—they have a way of disappearing), a folder or portfolio and some sort of note-taking device (paper or electronic pad). Keep track of the recruiters with whom you speak and send follow-up notes to the ones who interest you. Don’t bring your backpack; it’s cumbersome for you, it gets in the way of others and it screams “student!” instead of “candidate!”

Stop, Look and Listen

Keep your eyes and ears open—there’s nothing wrong with subtly eavesdropping on the questions asked and answers received by your fellow career fair attendees. You might pick up some valuable information, in addition to witnessing some real-life career search “dos and don’ts.”

In order to maximize your career fair experience, you must be an active participant and not just a browser. If all you do is stroll around, take company literature and load up on the ubiquitous freebies, you really haven’t accomplished anything worthwhile (unless you’re a collector of key chains, mouse pads and pocket flashlights). It is essential to chat with the company representatives and ask meaningful questions.

Here’s a great bit of career fair advice from Stanford University’s Career Fair guide:

“Create a one-minute ‘commercial’ as a way to sell yourself to an employer. This is a great way to introduce yourself. The goal is to connect your background to the organization’s need. In one minute or less, you need to introduce yourself, demonstrate your knowledge of the company, express enthusiasm and interest and relate your background to the company’s need.”

You’re a Prospector—Start Digging

The questions you ask at a career fair depend upon your goals. Are you interested in finding out about a particular career field? Then ask generalized questions about working within the industry. If you’re seeking career opportunities with a specific employer, focus your questions on the application and interview process, and ask for specific information about that employer.

Fair Thee Well

By all means, try to attend at least one career fair before beginning your formal job interviewing process. For new entrants into the professional career marketplace, this is a good way to make the transition into “self-marketing mode” without the formality and possible intimidation of a one-on-one job interview. It’s an opportunity that’s too valuable to miss.

A Few Words About Career Fair Etiquette

1. Don’t interrupt the employer reps or your fellow job-seekers. If someone else is monopolizing the employer’s time, try to make eye contact with the rep to let him or her know that you’re interested in speaking. You may be doing a favor by giving the recruiter an out. If all else fails, move to the next exhibit and plan to come back later.

2. If you have a real interest in an employer, find out the procedures required to secure an interview. At some career fairs, initial screening interviews may be done on the spot. Other times, the career fair is used to pre-screen applicants for interviews to be conducted later (either on campus or at the employer’s site).

3. Sincerity always wins. Don’t lay it on too thick, but don’t be too blasé either. Virtually all employers are looking for candidates with good communication skills.

4. Don’t just drop your resume on employers’ display tables. Try to get it into a person’s hands and at least say a few words. If the scene is too busy and you can’t get a word in edgewise, jot a note on your resume to the effect of, “You were so busy that we didn’t get a chance to meet. I’m very interested in talking to you.” Look around the display for the recruiter’s business card (or at the very least, write down his or her name and get some literature with the company’s address) and send a follow-up note and another copy of your resume.

5. If you know ahead of time that one of your “dream companies” is a career fair participant, do some prior research (at minimum, visit their Web site and, if available, view their company DVD). A little advance preparation goes a long way and can make you stand out among the masses of other attendees.
How to Stand Apart From the Crowd

Competition for jobs is at an all-time high, so it’s essential that you distinguish yourself from other job applicants. Regardless of the field that you’re entering, individuality matters. Everything you’ve experienced and brought to the table—whether it be in the classroom, during after-school jobs and internships, and through volunteer experiences—sets you apart from your fellow students. These unique experiences provide knowledge and abilities that must be demonstrated to potential employers through the resume, cover letter and interview. This is your chance to prove that you’re the best candidate for the job and will make a great addition to their team. Here are some ways to make sure your true potential shines.

What Makes You Special?

Your roommate may have the exact same major and GPA as you do, but those factors are only superficial. More importantly: everyone has his or her own set of life experiences that influence personal growth and skill development. Maybe you’ve traveled around the world, speak several languages, or were born in another country. Or perhaps you’ve worked your way through high school and college to help support your family. Numbers only tell part of the story. When an employer is evaluating you for a job, you have to make sure your unique experiences come through on your resume and cover letter so that you have the opportunity to elaborate on the details during the interview.

Go Team!

Employers want hires who can hit the ground running and work well with others in a team environment. Your academic experience has been packed with teamwork even if you don’t realize it. Just think back to all those group projects and study sessions. Many extracurricular activities from athletics and fraternities and sororities to clubs, volunteer work and student government require team participation as well. By using the language of teamwork and cooperation on your resume and cover letter, you’ve taken the first step toward proving that you’re a collaborator. During the interview you can further express what you’ve learned about yourself and others through teamwork.

Leadership 101

Teamwork is key, but employers also want candidates who can step up to the plate and take charge when it’s appropriate. If you’ve never been class president, however, don’t fear; leadership can be demonstrated in many subtle ways. In addition to traditional leadership roles, leaders also take on responsibility by providing others with information and advice. If you’ve ever helped a friend with a project, volunteered to teach a class or given a speech that motivated others, then you’ve served as a leader. During your interview, speak confidently about your accomplishments, but don’t cross the line into arrogance. Good leaders know when to show off, as well as when to listen to others.

Art of the Resume

Your resume provides the opportunity to stand out, but don’t distinguish yourself by using bright-colored paper or an unusual font. Those tactics are distracting and leave employers remembering you negatively. Instead, it’s the content of your resume that will really get you noticed. Make sure to describe each experience in clear detail; highlight not only what you did, but also what results were gained from your actions. Don’t forget to include special skills, such as foreign languages and international travel.

Cover Letter Zingers

While your resume chronicles your experiences, the cover letter lets your personality shine through. Here you can expand upon your past experiences and briefly discuss what you learned. Use concrete examples from your resume in order to showcase specific skills and characteristics. Be sure to tailor each letter to the specific organization and position, and state specifically why you want to work for the organization. Demonstrate that you’ve done your research; it will impress employers and set your letter apart from the rest.

Interview Expert

When it comes to the interview, preparation is key. Be ready to talk about everything you’ve done in a positive light, and make sure you’re well informed about the organization and industry. Focus on what distinguishes the employer from their competition and why you are a good fit. If possible, speak to alumni or other current employees to learn more. Remember, practice makes perfect; many career centers offer mock interviews with a counselor. And don’t be afraid to ask for help from friends and professionals as you review the answers to common interview questions.

Do’s and Don’ts

- **DO** dress the part. Even employers with casual dress codes expect interviewees to be dressed in professional business attire.
- **DON’T** chew gum, wear too much cologne/perfume or smoke before the interview.
- **DO** look your interviewer in the eye and offer a firm handshake.
- **DON’T** try too hard to please and appear loud or cocky.
- **DO** emphasize your skills and accomplishments.
- **DON’T** make excuses for failures or lack of experience. Instead, take responsibility for your mistakes and change the subject to something positive.

Written by Jennifer Bobrow Burns, Assistant Dean for Career Services, Quinnipiac University.

www.howard.edu/careerservices 15
Developing a Winning Resume

There is no “perfect” or “right” resume format. The format you choose will depend upon the job you hope to find and your past experiences. The following pages provide samples of various resume formats. Look them over to determine what format or combination of formats will present you in the best possible light. Remember, the purpose of a resume is to get you a job interview. The interview gets you the job.

General Resume Guidelines

Length
• A one-page resume should be sufficient for the recent graduate.

Appearance
• Use high-quality white or off-white paper.
• Type or word-process your resume and have it professionally copied.
• Make sure there are no typographical, spelling or grammatical errors.
• Information that has been crossed out or handwritten is unacceptable.
• Make sure your resume will copy well. Do a photocopy test.

Content
• Design your resume with a particular objective in mind. Present information important to the objective first. Edit.
• List information in descending order of importance.
• Be selective about what you include in your resume; never falsify or exaggerate information.
• Sell yourself—draw attention to your special abilities.

Resume Inventory
The following categories are usually found in a resume. These are merely suggestions; you should adopt those that best fit your needs.

Necessary Categories

Personal Data. Make sure your name is the most obvious piece of information on your resume. Include your address, phone number and email address. Do not include personal information such as age, marital status or health.

Objective. An objective gives your resume a focus. It should be specific enough to tell the employer the kind of work you seek, yet general enough to include the full range of jobs you will consider. This will take some thought! If the statement is so specific that it would eliminate you from consideration for other jobs in which you have interest, you might consider having a resume for each type of job (not necessarily each job). Some disciplines require objectives; others discourage their use.

Education. List your educational background in reverse chronological order, starting with your highest degree and working your way backward. Do not list your high school degree. Mention your GPA if it is 3.0 or higher. Dissertation and thesis topics are also included in this section as are honors bestowed at graduation time.

Experience. This category includes volunteer or intern experience as well as employment. Include job titles, employers, responsibilities and dates. Remember to list the city and state of each place of work. Concentrate on the positive and use action words. If your experience was not related to your field of desired employment, you should still include a description of your responsibilities. Strive to show growth or contributions you made while in each assignment.

Additional Information. Skills, activities, honors, awards, membership on committees or in honorary societies, public service or even language ability can be placed under this (or a more specific) category.

References. Do not list references on your resume. Be prepared with a typed list of references if requested by the employer. Generally, a reference sheet will consist of the name, title, business mailing address and phone number of three to five academic or business references. Do not use relatives, friends or other students as references. Be sure to obtain permission from each person you plan to list.

Additional Categories

Language Ability. You can list this separately or in the “Additional Information” section if there is a likelihood that this ability will be used by employers. Specify the language(s) you read, write and/or speak and your facility in each.

Military. In the functional resume your military experience can be included in the “Experience” category. A chronological resume would list military experience either under a separate heading or in chronological order under “Experience.”

Publications. List articles you have published and those which have been accepted for publication.

Research. Give the employer insight into your professional abilities and training by listing research projects in your field on which you have participated.

Extracurricular Activities. Employers often look to extracurricular activities to indicate how you developed your interests and leadership abilities during college. The extracurricular activities you list should include organizations in which you are a member and offices you have held. You may also wish to include awards, honors, hobbies and interests in this category. Avoid listing controversial activities, particularly those that are political or religious in nature.
Action Verbs for Resume Development

accomplished  accelerated  achieved  administered  allocated  amended  amplified  analyzed  appointed  approved  arbitrated  arranged  assisted  attained  audited  augmented  awarded  
broadened  budgeted  built  
calculated  catalogued  classified  collected  communicated  compiled  completed  
computer  conceived  conceptualized  condensed  conducted  consolidated  constructed  contracted  contributed  contrived  controlled  convicted  coordinated  correlated  created  
delegated  delivered  demonstrated  designed  determined  developed  devised  devoted  diagrammed  directed  distributed  documented  drafted  
edited  eliminated  enlarged  erected  established  evaluated  examined  executed  expanded  extended  
facilitated  forecasted  formalized  formulated  fortified  founded  
gathered  generated  governed  guided  
handled  harmonized  headed  
implemented  improved  increased  
initiated  installed  instituted  instructed  interpreted  interviewed  introduced  invented  investigated  issued  
launched  listed  lobbied  
maintained  managed  marketed  moderated  modified  monitored  
negotiated  normalized  
offered  operated  organized  originated  overhauled  
performed  planned  prepared  presented  preserved  presided  processed  produced  programmed  promoted  proposed  provided  
recommended  recorded  recruited  rectified  reduced  regulated  reinforced  reorganized  researched  restored  revamped  reviewed  revised  
scheduled  selected  
served  solved  streamlined  structured  studied  suggested  summarized  superseded  supervised  systematized  
taught  terminated  traced  trained  translated  traveled  trimmed  
uncovered  unified  unraveled  used  utilized  
widened  won  wrote

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• Salary advance for eligible candidates
• One of the highest paying public school districts in NC

Wake County Public School System
Department of Human Resources
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For more information about employment, visit www.wcpss.net/employment.html

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RALEIGH #1 BEST CITY TO LIVE BLOOMBERG/BUSINESS WEEK — SEPTEMBER 2011

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The Top Ten Pitfalls in Resume Writing

1. **Too long.** Most new graduates should restrict their resumes to one page. If you have trouble condensing, get help from a technical or business writer or a career center professional.

2. **Typographical, grammatical or spelling errors.** These errors suggest carelessness, poor education and/or lack of intelligence. Have at least two people proofread your resume. Don’t rely on your computer’s spell-checkers or grammar-checkers.

3. **Hard to read.** A poorly typed or copied resume looks unprofessional. Use a plain typeface, no smaller than a 12-point font. Asterisks, bullets, underlining, boldface type and italics should be used only to make the document easier to read, not fancier. Again, ask a professional’s opinion.

4. **Too verbose.** Do not use complete sentences or paragraphs. Say as much as possible with as few words as possible. *A, an* and the can almost always be left out. Be careful in your use of jargon and avoid slang.

5. **Too sparse.** Give more than the bare essentials, especially when describing related work experience, skills, accomplishments, activities, interests and club memberships that will give employers important information. Including membership in the Society of Women Engineers, for example, would be helpful to employers who wish to hire more women, yet cannot ask for that information.

6. **Irrelevant information.** Customize each resume to each position you seek (when possible). Of course, include all education and work experience, but emphasize only relevant experience, skills, accomplishments, activities and hobbies. Do not include marital status, age, sex, children, height, weight, health, church membership, etc.

7. **Obviously generic.** Too many resumes scream, “I need a job—any job!” The employer needs to feel that you are interested in that particular position with his or her particular company.

8. **Too snazzy.** Of course, use good quality bond paper, but avoid exotic types, colored paper, photographs, binders and graphics. Electronic resumes should include appropriate industry keywords and use a font size between 10 and 14 points. Avoid underlining, italics or graphics.

9. **Boring.** Make your resume as dynamic as possible. Begin every statement with an action verb. Use active verbs to describe what you have accomplished in past jobs. Take advantage of your rich vocabulary and avoid repeating words, especially the first word in a section.

10. **Too modest.** The resume showcases your qualifications in competition with the other applicants. Put your best foot forward without misrepresentation, falsification or arrogance.

The Three Rs

**Research, Research, Research.** You must know what the prospective company does, what the position involves and whether you will be a fit, before submitting your resume. And that means doing research—about the company, about the position and about the type of employee the company typically hires.

**Research the company.** Read whatever literature the company has placed in the career library. For additional information, call the company. Ask for any literature it may have, find out how the company is structured and ask what qualifications the company generally looks for in its employees. Ask if there are openings in your area, and find out the name of the department head and give him or her a call. Explain that you are considering applying to their company, and ask for their recommendation for next steps. Thank that person for the information, and ask to whom your resume should be directed.

The Internet is another key tool to utilize in your research. Most companies have Web sites that include information regarding company background, community involvement, special events, executive bios or even past annual reports. Be sure to take advantage of the World Wide Web during your job search.

**Research the position.** The more you know about the position, the better able you will be to sell yourself and to target your resume to that position. If possible, interview someone who does that same job. In addition to finding out the duties, ask if there is on-the-job training, whether they value education over experience (or vice versa) and what kind of turnover the department experiences. Ask what they like about the position and the company; more important, ask what they don’t like about it.

**Finally, research yourself.** Your goal is not just to get a job. Your goal is to get a job that you will enjoy. After you find out all you can about the company and the position, ask yourself honestly whether this is what you really want to do and where you really want to be. The odds are overwhelming that you will not hold this position for more than two or three years, so it’s not a lifetime commitment; however, this first job will be the base of your lifetime career. You must start successfully so that future recommendations will always be positive. Furthermore, three years is a long time to spend doing something you don’t like, working in a position that isn’t challenging or living somewhere you don’t want to live.

One last word of advice: Before you go to the interview, review the version of your resume that you submitted to this employer. The resume can only get you the interview; the interview gets you the job.
# Chronological Resume

**Format and Content Description**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Street Address</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>City, State ZIP</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone (include area code)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email Address</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJECTIVE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Be specific.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>List most recent degree first, major, institution and date of graduation or expected graduation. Point out areas of specialization in academic work, honors, etc.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If applicable, include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis Title</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty Research Advisor</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publications</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You may wish to add an addendum that identifies the courses you have taken, grouped into two or three meaningful categories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPERIENCE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Your job title, name of organization and description of your duties, including the variety of assignments, amount of responsibility, number of people supervised, special accomplishments and dates. Include military service if applicable.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/LEADERSHIP</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title, name of organization, brief (optional) description of what you did and dates.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SKILLS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>List any language and/or computer skills.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Sample**

**MARK WILLIAMS**

<table>
<thead>
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<th><strong>Campus</strong></th>
<th><strong>Permanent</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2251 Sherman Ave., NW</td>
<td>999 East 55th Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, DC 20001</td>
<td>New York, NY 11010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(202) 723-xxxx</td>
<td>(212) 555-xxxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:markwilliams@howard.edu">markwilliams@howard.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:mark.williams@yahoo.com">mark.williams@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OBJECTIVE**
Marketing position in the consumer electronics industry.

**EDUCATION**
Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing
Howard University, May 20xx

**EXPERIENCE**
Marketing/Sales Intern, XYZ Company, Rockville MD (month/20xx–Present)
Market personal computer hardware and software. Develop and implement marketing and advertising strategies. Design and develop educational and entertainment software for personal computers. Participate in numerous microcomputer trade shows.

Management Trainee/Salesperson, International Cars, Newark, NJ (month/20xx–month/20xx)
Performed sales work for auto parts store with annual sales exceeding $35 million. Position required use of interpersonal skills to work effectively with customers and employees. Maintained a large store inventory utilizing a computerized inventory system. Supervised and trained sales personnel. Implemented parts department reorganization for enhanced work flow. Developed effective in-store and window displays.

Salesperson, Smith Company, Washington, DC (month/19xx–month/19xx)
Performed general merchandise sales for large catalog chain store. Handled cash, performed inventory control and completed clerical tasks.

**LEADERSHIP**
American Marketing Association
Vice President, Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Society
Boys & Girls Club, Washington, DC

**LANGUAGE SKILLS**
 Fluent in Spanish

**COMPUTER SKILLS**
Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, Internet Explorer

A chronological resume presents your education and work experience in a straightforward, reverse chronological order. If the majority of your work experience is related to your stated job objective, the chronological style can be effective. Please note that this chronological resume is reformatted as a functional resume in the next example.
### Functional Resume

#### Format and Content Description

- **NAME**
  - Street Address
  - City, State ZIP
  - Phone (include area code)
  - Email Address

- **OBJECTIVE**
  - Be specific.

- **EDUCATION**
  - Most recent degree first, major, institution, date of graduation. List honors, if applicable.

- **SKILLS OR AREAS OF EFFECTIVENESS**
  - In this section, isolate three to five of your strongest demonstrated skills. The skills you select should be essential to the type of job you have identified in your “Objective.”
  - For each skill you have chosen, summarize your accomplishments and experiences that pertain. You need not mention the specific job in this section, as you will do so in the “Employment History” section. Be specific in discussing how you demonstrated your skills and, whenever possible, concentrate on the results you achieved in using the particular skills.

- **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**
  - Job title, employer, duties and dates.

- **ACTIVITIES/LEADERSHIP**

- **LANGUAGE/COMPUTER SKILLS**

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#### Sample

**MARK WILLIAMS**

2251 Sherman Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20001

(202) 723-xxxx

markwilliams@howard.edu

- **OBJECTIVE**
  - Marketing position in the consumer electronics industry.

- **EDUCATION**
  - Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing
    Howard University, May 20xx

- **AREAS OF EFFECTIVENESS**
  - **MARKETING/SALES**
    - Marketed personal computer hardware and software.
    - Developed and implemented marketing and advertising strategies.
    - Performed sales work for auto parts chain store with annual sales exceeding $35 million.
    - Recognized for impressive sales record and received quarterly awards for outstanding performance.
    - Performed general merchandise sales for large catalog sales store.
    - Participated in numerous microcomputer trade shows.

  - **ORGANIZATION/PLANNING**
    - Designed and developed educational and entertainment software for personal computers.
    - Developed peripheral hardware for microcomputers.
    - Implemented parts department reorganization for enhanced work flow.
    - Developed effective in-store and window displays.

  - **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**
    - Communicated effectively with customers and employees.
    - Revised policy manuals and developed curricula for training sessions.
    - Supervised and trained sales personnel.
    - Presented material to supervisors and managers on peripheral hardware for inventory control.

- **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

- **ACTIVITIES**
  - American Marketing Association
  - Vice President, Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Society
  - Boys & Girls Club, Washington, DC

- **LANGUAGE SKILLS**
  - Fluent in Spanish

- **COMPUTER SKILLS**
  - Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, Internet Explorer

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A functional resume differs from a chronological resume by concentrating on your skills that relate to your stated objective rather than on the jobs you have had. A functional resume is particularly effective if your work experience has not been closely related to your job objective, if you are changing careers or if you are seeking a promotion. In this format you elaborate on the skills necessary to perform the desired job and how you have demonstrated those same skills in a different type of job.
Electronic Resumes

I
n today’s Internet-driven world, having an electronic resume—one that can be easily emailed—is imperative for job-seekers.

Your resume is your introduction to employers and should be a succinct, one-page summary of your education, skills, accomplishments and work history. Remember, first impressions are important. If you present yourself in an organized and interesting way, you’ll have an advantage over someone who may be equally qualified for the job but has a sloppy, error-filled resume.

The following general format is an appropriate resume outline:

**Name, Address, Telephone Number and Email Address:**
All your contact information should be placed at the top of your resume.
- Do not use nicknames.
- Include a permanent address and phone number with area code. (Be sure your answering machine has a neutral greeting.)
- Use an email address that sounds professional.

**Objective:**
An objective tells employers about the kind of work you want to do.
- Be specific about the job you want. An example of this would be: “To obtain an entry-level position as a Java programmer in a financial institution.”
- Tailor your objective (and resume) to each employer you contact.

**Education:**
Recent graduates should list their educational background first.
- List your most recent educational information at the beginning of this section.
- Include your degree (B.A., B.S., etc.) and graduation date. Also, be sure to list your major and minor concentrations and the college or university you attended.
- Mention your GPA if it is 3.0 or higher.
- Be sure to list academic honors, sororities, fraternities and any volunteer work you may have done as a student.

**Work Experience:**
Give a brief overview of the work you’ve done while a student. Concentrate on the skills you’ve developed. Use active verbs (action words) to describe your job duties. Always list your jobs in reverse chronological order—put your last job first and work backward from there. Include the following:
- Job title • Company name
- Job location (city, state) • Dates of employment
- Job tasks with emphasis on specific skills and achievements

**Other Information:**
- List any special skills. Do you know sign language? Are you bilingual? If so, mention it.
- Include any leadership positions in volunteer or community organizations.

**File Formats**
You may find that some employers request that resumes be submitted in ASCII plain text format, while others state that resumes may be submitted as a rich text file. What does this mean? Essentially, a file format is the way information is stored in a file so that a program can properly open and save the file. The format is usually indicated by the three-letter extension after the file name. For example, when you save a document in Microsoft Word, the program stores it with a .doc file extension.

**Rich Text Format** supports bold characters, underlining, italics and other formatting. Nearly all modern word processors can correctly interpret RTF formatting. If you are emailing your resume to someone who has an old word processor, however, he or she may have trouble opening an RTF document. In that case, you should save your resume in plain text (or text only) format, which is identified by the .txt file extension. This format does not recognize or display any special formatting or enhancements (such as bold or italics) but will be readable by the recipient.

There are many considerations that go into building an effective resume, and if you are starting from scratch, the task can seem intimidating. However, a well-written resume can be a tremendous help in landing a job. “Today’s job market is competitive,” says Laureen Grieve, vice president of FastWork.com. “A well-crafted resume can get you that interview, so it pays to take the time to do it right.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOE SMITH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2235 California St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego, CA 92120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>619-555-6789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:joesmith@yourisp.com">joesmith@yourisp.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OBJECTIVE**
An entry-level position as a software developer.

**EDUCATION**
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, May 20xx
University of California, Los Angeles
Cumulative GPA: 3.78

**WORK EXPERIENCE**
Freelance Computer Programmer, September 20xx-Present
Create and maintain Web sites for local businesses in the San Diego area.
Intern, June-August 20xx
Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, WA
Worked as a software engineer on SNA server 3.0. Implemented name-space providers (Windows 98/NT DLLs written in C) for a variety of network protocols, including TCP/IP, Netware, IPX, Lanman and Banyan VINES.
Undergraduate Research Assistant, September 20xx-May 20xx
University of California, Los Angeles Laboratory for Computer Science
Worked with Professor Kenneth Ng in the parallel and distributed operating group. Ported UNIX applications to XOK, a prototype implementation for the Intel x86 processor.
Lab Attendant, September 20xx-May 20xx
Center for Academic Computing, University of California, Los Angeles
Maintained computer hardware and assisted users on the Windows 95 operating system.
Cashier and Stocker, Summers 19xx and 20xx
Book Soup, West Hollywood, California
Worked as a cashier and stocker in one of the largest independent bookstores in Los Angeles.

**COMPUTER SKILLS**
Languages and Software

**Operating Systems**
UNIX (Linux, Ultrix, SunOS), Windows 95/98, Macintosh.

Written by John Martalo, a freelance writer based in San Diego.
Every resume you send needs an accompanying cover letter, which can be used to inquire about possible job openings in your field or to apply for known vacancies. The main function of a cover letter is to spark an employer’s interest in you so he or she will want to read your resume.

The letter should be concise; limit your cover letter to one page. (You can go into details in the interview, should you get one.)

Develop one basic letter that can be changed slightly for each different position for which you apply. It is essential, however, that you type each letter individually. Mass-produced letters are usually recognized as such and connote a lack of sincere interest in the organization to which you have written.

While your letter should follow a standard business format, try to make it as personal as possible. Identify the individual who will be in a position to say, “You’re hired,” and direct your correspondence to him/her.

In order to personalize your letters, obtain information about the business, industry, agency or school in which you are interested and refer to this knowledge in your letter. Your letter is often the first contact between you and a prospective employer, and your research will leave a good impression.

There are several types of letters that one may use in a job campaign. These may be divided into two broad categories: (1) letters of application, and (2) follow-up letters of various kinds. Observe the following basic rules regardless of the type of letter:

1. Use resume paper (and matching envelope) of the usual business correspondence size (8 1/2” x 11”).
2. Use a word processor or typewriter for your correspondence, and type only on one side of the paper.
3. The letter should be neat in appearance. Proofread carefully for form, spelling, punctuation and English usage.
4. Keep the letter brief and to the point. Employers will lose interest if they are required to read through irrelevant information.

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**Letter of Application**

Identify the position for which you are applying and the way you learned about it. (If the letter is unsolicited, identifying the position for which you are applying is all that is necessary.)

- Indicate why you are applying for this particular position.
- Describe your main qualifications. Keep the letter sales-oriented.
- Refer the reader to your enclosed resume.
- Request action! Under no circumstances should you adopt a subservient attitude.

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**Sample Letter of Application**

2251 Sherman Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20001

April 7, 20XX

Mr. Steven Barrons
Director of Campus Relations
ABC Corporation
954 Park Blvd.
Villanova, PA 19085

Dear Mr. Barrons:

I am interested in applying for the sales representative position recently advertised in *The Washington Post*. The skills I have developed from my work experience and academic background support my strong interest in a sales career.

As you can see from my resume, the internship I had with XYZ Corporation provided an opportunity for me to gain practical experience with account maintenance and cold-calling new accounts. In addition, I have worked as a waiter for the past four years, learning firsthand how to effectively deal with customers and their demands. I have been formally commended by the management several times, being named “Employee of the Month.”

Ever since I decided to pursue a sales career, ABC Corporation has been at the top of my list of prospective employers. The strides your company have taken in the computer software market—namely the development packages for use by pharmacies and hospitals—make ABC a leader in the industry.

I would very much like an opportunity to speak with you regarding the sales representative position. I will call you late next week to discuss my qualifications for the position, or you can reach me in the meantime at (202) 555-0000. Thank you for considering me for this position.

Sincerely,

*James R. Wolfe*

James R. Wolfe
Enclosure
Thank-You Letter

After an interview, it is advisable to send a thank-you letter to the recruiter, both as a professional courtesy and as a method of establishing communication with the company. The letter should be mailed within one or two days of your interview and need only be two or three paragraphs in length. State the date and place you had your interview and reiterate your strongest selling points.

If you interviewed with more than one person, send the thank-you letter to either the main contact person or the individual who will make the hiring decision (or both, if you feel it is appropriate).

Letter of Acknowledgment

1. Plant Visit Invitation

   Acknowledge it and, if interested, state what dates would be convenient for you, avoiding weekends and holidays. Do not delay; procrastination makes a bad impression.

2. Offers of Employment

   Acknowledge receipt of offer, restating title of position and salary and expressing your appreciation. Indicate the date you will let the company know your decision and be sure to act before that date.

Letter of Refusal

   In declining an offer of employment, express your appreciation for the offer and for the company’s interest in you.

Letter Seeking Additional Information

   Indicate an interest in the company and its offer, if an offer of employment has been made.
   - Be specific about the information that you need.
   - Express your appreciation for the cooperation that you anticipate.

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Sample Thank-You Letter

2251 Sherman Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20001

April 12, 20XX

Ms. Debbie Noel
President
Avery Communications
129 West Ave.
College Park, MD 20742

Dear Ms. Noel:

Thank you for taking the time to interview me at Howard University on April 11. I enjoyed talking with you and learning more about the mechanical design position with Avery.

As I mentioned during our interview, I have had experience as an intern with Honeywell IAC. I have also taken advanced classes in material engineering at Howard University. I greatly enjoy this career field and wish to apply my interest and knowledge to Avery Communications.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to interview with you. I look forward to speaking with you again soon.

Sincerely,

Carol Jones

Carol Jones
Letter of Acceptance

Indicate your acceptance of the offer of employment; restate position classification, compensation offered and the starting date, if previously established.

• Refer to the date of the original offer.
• Indicate your travel plans and anticipated arrival date if the initial assignment is at a considerable distance from your home.
• Express your appreciation.

Remember that your letters represent you! Therefore, good letter writing is a skill worth developing...a skill that can be extremely helpful to you in the years ahead.

Sample Letter of Acceptance

2251 Sherman Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20001

May 23, 20XX

Mr. Peter Smith
Director
Universal Company
4593 Stafford Lane
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am writing to confirm receipt of your letter offering me a position in Universal Company’s technical training program at an annual salary of $30,000. I am very pleased to accept this offer, and I am proud to have been selected for the program.

I will contact your office for more details, such as when the training session begins. Thank you for the offer and for your consideration throughout the past few weeks.

Sincerely,

Jennifer S. Lane

Enclosure
Email Correspondence

F or most of us, sending and receiving email is simple and fun. We use it to communicate with friends and family and to converse with our contemporaries in an informal manner. But while we may be unguarded in our tone when we email friends, a professional tone should be maintained when communicating with prospective employers.

Email is a powerful tool in the hands of a knowledgeable job-seeker. Use it wisely and you will shine. Use it improperly, however, and you’ll brand yourself as immature and unprofessional. It’s irritating when a professional email doesn’t stay on topic or the writer just rambles. Try to succinctly get your point across—then end the email.

Be aware that electronic mail is often the preferred method of communication between job-seeker and employer. There are general guidelines that should be followed when emailing cover letters, thank-you notes and replies to various requests for information. Apply the following advice to every email you write:

1. Use a meaningful subject header for your email—one that is appropriate to the topic.
2. Always be professional and businesslike in your correspondence. Address the recipient as Mr., Ms. or Mrs., and always verify the correct spelling of the recipient’s name.
3. Be brief in your communications. Don’t overload the employer with lots of questions in your email.
4. Ditch the emoticons. While a ☺ or an LOL (laughing out loud) may go over well with friends and family, do not use such symbols in your email communications with business people.
5. Do not use strange fonts, wallpapers or multicolored backgrounds.
6. Sign your email with your full name.
7. Avoid using slang.
8. Be sure to proofread and spell-check your email before sending it.

Neal Murray, former director of the career services center at the University of California, San Diego, sees a lot of email from job-seekers. “You’d be amazed at the number of emails I receive that have spelling errors, grammatical errors, formatting errors—emails that are too informal in tone or just poorly written,” says Murray. Such emails can send the message that you are unprofessional or unqualified.

When you’re dealing with employers, there is no such thing as an inconsequential communication. Your emails say far more about you than you might realize, and it is important to always present a polished, professional image—even if you are just emailing your phone number and a time when you can be contacted. If you are sloppy and careless, a seemingly trivial communication will stick out like a sore thumb.

Thank-You Notes

If you’ve had an interview with a prospective employer, a thank-you note is a good way to express your appreciation. The note can be emailed a day or two after your interview and only needs to be a few sentences long, as in the following:

Dear Ms. Jones:

I just wanted to send a quick note to thank you for yesterday’s interview. The position we discussed is exactly what I’ve been looking for, and I feel that I will be able to make a positive contribution to your organization. I appreciate the opportunity to be considered for employment at XYZ Corporation. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you need further information.

Sincerely,

John Doe

Remember, a thank-you note is just that—a simple way to say thank you. In the business world, even these brief notes need to be handled with care.

Cover Letters

A well-crafted cover letter can help “sell” you to an employer. It should accomplish three main things:

1. Introduce yourself to the employer. If you are a recent college graduate, mention your major and how it would apply to the job you are seeking. Discuss the organizations/extracurricular activities you were involved in and the part-time jobs you held while a student, even if they might seem trivial to you. Chances are, you probably picked up some transferable skills that you will be able to use in the work world.
2. Sell yourself. Briefly state your education and the skills that will benefit the employer. Don’t go into a lot of detail here—that’s what your resume is for—but give the employer a sense of your strengths and talents.
3. Request further action. This is where you request the next step, such as an appointment or a phone conversation. Be polite but sincere in your desire for further action.

Tips

In addition to the guidelines stated above, here are a few tips to keep in mind:

1. Make sure you spell the recipient’s name correctly. If the person uses initials such as J.A. Smith and you are not certain of the individual’s gender, then begin the email: “Dear J.A. Smith.”
2. Stick to a standard font like Times New Roman, 12-point.
3. Keep your email brief and businesslike.
4. Proofread everything you write before sending it.

While a well-crafted email may not be solely responsible for getting you your dream job, rest assured that an email full of errors will result in your being overlooked. Use these email guidelines and you will give yourself an advantage over other job-seekers who are unaware of how to professionally converse through email.

Written by John Martalo, a freelance writer based in San Diego.
Letters of Recommendation

Candidates for employment, graduate school, scholarships or any activity for which others will evaluate their talents and abilities will need to request letters of recommendation. The content and quality of these letters, as well as the caliber of the people who write them, are critical to the selection process.

Selecting People to Serve as References
Select individuals whom you feel are knowledgeable of your skills, work ethic, talents and future capacity. The selection of your references is critical, as a reference that is ill-informed could sabotage all the great work you have done in a matter of minutes. Choose people who have known you for a minimum of six months. The longer they have known you the better, but they must have had regular contact with you to observe your growth and development. A reference from someone who may have known you several years ago but you have not spoken to in a year or more is not in a position to critique your skills.

If you must choose between several people, select those who know you the best but who also hold a higher rank in their profession. A department head is a better candidate than a graduate assistant or an instructor. Never choose someone on status alone, continue to choose people based on how well they know you and how much they want to assist you in your job search. Do not choose people who are not committed to you or who are not very familiar with your background.

Try to Meet Face to Face
Never assume someone will want the responsibility to serve as your reference. Make an appointment to discuss your career goals and purpose of the letter of recommendation. Determine if the person would want the responsibility of serving as your reference, which involves not only writing a letter supporting your skills, but also handling any phone inquiries and responding to other questions which may be posed by a selection committee. Persons who serve as a reference have responsibilities that go beyond the words they put on paper. They should feel strongly about your success and desire to do whatever they can to assist you in reaching your goals. You have come too far to let someone jeopardize your future.

A personal meeting is always best because you can observe your potential reference’s body language to see how interested he or she is in assisting you. A slow response to a question or a neutral facial expression may be this person’s way of trying to show you that he/she does feel comfortable serving as your reference. Trust your instincts. If you don’t feel that you want to pursue this person as a reference you are not required to inform them of your decision. At any rate, always thank the person and end the meeting on a positive note.

Help Them Help You
You must assist your reference-givers so they can do the best job possible. Provide them with a copy of your current resume, transcript, job descriptions for the type of employment you desire or other detailed information related to the purpose of the letter. Provide a one-page summary of any achievements or skills exhibited with the person who will be writing the letter. They may not remember everything you did under their supervision or time spent with you. Finally, provide them with a statement of future goals outlining what you want to accomplish in the next few years.

An employer will interview you and then contact your references to determine consistency in your answers. You should not inflate what you are able to do or what you may have completed in work or school assignments. A reference is looked upon as someone who can confirm your skill and ability level. Any inconsistencies between what you said in your interview and a reference’s response could eliminate you from further consideration. The key is to keep your references informed of what you are going to be discussing with employers so there is a clear understanding of what is valued by the employer.

What’s the Magic Number?
Each situation will dictate the appropriate number of references that will be required. The average would be three to five letters of recommendation. Generally, references are people whom you have known professionally; they should not be family or friends. When selecting people as references, choose people who know you well and have the most to say pertaining to the purpose of the letter. One person may be very appropriate for a reference for employment, while another would be best for use in admission to graduate or professional school or a scholarship application.

Encourage your reference to use strong, descriptive words that provide the evidence of your interpersonal skills initiative, leadership, flexibility, conflict resolution, decision-making, judgment, oral and written communication skills, and grasp of your field of study. Education Majors are encouraged to request a letter from the cooperating teacher, supervising teacher, professor(s) in your major, and a current or former employer.

Maintain Professional Courtesy
Give your reference writers ample time to complete their letters and provide a self-addressed stamped envelope. Make it as easy for them as possible so they don’t have to spend valuable time searching for the proper return address and a stamp. Follow up with your letter writers and let them know the status of your plans and search. They will want to know how you are doing and whether there is anything else they may do to increase your candidacy. You never know when you will need their assistance again, and it is just good manners to keep those who care about you informed of your progress. Finally, many times when two or more candidates are considered equally qualified, a strong letter of reference can play an important role in determining who is selected for the position.

Maintaining a good list of references is part of any professional’s success. Continue to nurture valuable relationships with people who will want to do whatever they can to aid in your success. Your personal success is based on surrounding yourself with positive people who all believe in you. No one makes it alone; we all need a little help from our friends.

Written by Roseanne R. Bensley, Career Services, New Mexico State University.
Looking for a job on the Internet? If so, you are not alone—the Internet has quickly become one of the most popular job search methods. As a link to the global universe, it has revolutionized the way prospective employees search for jobs. Still, it’s not magic; the Internet will not automatically find a job for you. Like any other job-hunting strategy, using the Internet successfully requires effort.

The key to being successful using the Internet is knowing what you want and how to get it. New Internet search technology includes job search agents and mega-search tools. Job search agents, such as www.jobsleuth.com, www.nationjob.com, and www.careermosaic.com, are automated programs or services that search job databases and notify users when listings match their requirements. Mega-search tools, such as www.careerbuilder.com/jobssearch.html, www.upseek.com, and employment911.com, are sites or software programs that allow users to search more than one online site at a time and combine all the results on one list to review.

Think Before You Act

Before using the Internet tools described above, job-seekers should ask themselves some key questions:

- What do I want to do? What skills do I have and what are my interests? (Identifying general activities/tasks rather than job titles can be helpful.)
- Who do I want to work for? What industry interests me? (Target specific companies if possible. Otherwise, consider whether you’d like to work for a Fortune 500 firm, high-tech company, startup, family-friendly company, etc.)
- Where do I want to live? Is there a specific city, state, region or country that interests me? (Think about weather conditions, recreation and other things that are important to you.)

In addition, when looking at various sites, question the information you are viewing. Are the job listings current? Who runs the service? Is there a fee for use? Do you know anyone who has used the service in the past?

Don’t Waste Your Time

Managing time online can be very important during the job search. Here are some tips to help you use your time wisely:

- Begin your online job search by visiting large information databases. (Do this every few days; daily visits may be too frequent to turn up new information.)
- Use links from the large information databases to take you to smaller sites where you can investigate specific employers or find networking contacts. Again, visit these sites every few days.
- Use search engines to locate new resources specific to the job you want.

Realistically, your Internet job search strategies should be limited to about 25% of the total time used to look for a job. Don’t neglect conventional job search strategies, such as on-campus interviewing, perusing newspaper want ads or conducting informational interviews. One recent graduate unwisely spent all his time on the Internet looking for jobs; he was unemployed for six months. One day while talking with a friend, he learned about a job opening in his town that had been available for over two months. He hadn’t heard of the opening because it wasn’t posted on the Internet.

The Internet is a tool, and like all tools it is only as good as the skill and diligence of the user. Many new users of this technology become frustrated or overwhelmed by the size and constantly changing nature of Internet job search sites. But patience and dedication can pay big rewards when you find the job of your dreams.

E-Networking

Networking on the Internet can be very valuable in your job search. E-networking, which combines traditional networking with the power of the Internet, allows for the creation of a virtual community of contacts that can provide critical information on job leads and industry trends. The following sites can help you in your e-networking efforts: www.wetfeet.com and www.fastcompany.com/community

There are several advantages to e-networking:

- No need to pick up a telephone and speak to a stranger
- Usually results in a quick response to your inquiry
- Allows simplicity in managing a circle of new contacts
- Most importantly, everyone with an email address is available to you.

Here are some guidelines to follow when using an e-network strategy:

- Cast a wide net—attempt to reach numerous contacts in different fields. You never know when a marketing executive might know the right person for you to contact in human resources.
- Identify yourself and what you are trying to accomplish when you reach an e-network contact.
- Be upfront and honest during all e-networking correspondence. Even though you may never meet face-to-face or even speak on the phone, these are still significant business contacts.
- At all times, maintain a professional and respectful tone. Email tends to make individuals more casual in their communication with strangers, but do remember that you are trying to make a good impression.

Written by Dr. Juan I. Vigil. Dr. Vigil runs a consulting firm, The Vigilant Group, Inc., in Hawaii.
Many people use the classified ads as their sole job search technique. Unfortunately, statistics show that only 10% to 20% of jobs are ever published—which means that 80% to 90% of jobs remain hidden in the job market. For this reason, networking remains the number one job search strategy.

### Networking Defined

A network is an interconnected group of supporters who serve as resources for your job search and ultimately for your career. Some great network contacts might include people you meet at business and social meetings who provide you with career information and advice. Students often hesitate to network because they feel awkward asking for help, but it should be an integral part of any job search. Though you might feel nervous when approaching a potential contact, networking is a skill that develops with practice, so don’t give up. Most people love to talk about themselves and their career. Some great network contacts might include people you serve as resources for your job search and ultimately for your professional development, finding suitable mentors, increasing your chances of promotion and perhaps finding your next job.

Second, know yourself—your education, experience and skills. Practice a concise, one-minute presentation of yourself so that people will know the kinds of areas in which you are interested. Your networking meeting should include the following elements: introduction, self-overview, Q&A, obtaining referrals and closing.

### Eight Keys to Networking

1. **Be Prepared** First, define what information you need and what you are trying to accomplish by networking. Remember, your purpose in networking is to get to know people who can provide information regarding careers and leads. Some of the many benefits of networking include increased visibility within your field, propelling your professional development, finding suitable mentors, increasing your chances of promotion and perhaps finding your next job.

2. **Be Targeted** Identify your network. For some, “I don’t have a network. I don’t know anyone,” may be your first reaction. You can start by listing everyone you know who are potential prospects: family members, friends, faculty, neighbors, classmates, alumni, bosses, co-workers and community associates. Attend meetings of organizations where you are going to meet someone who could lead you to your next job.

3. **Be Professional** Ask your networking prospects for advice—not for a job. Your networking meetings should be a source of career information, advice and contacts. Start off the encounter with a firm handshake, eye contact and a warm smile. Focus on asking for one thing at a time. Your contacts expect you to represent yourself with your best foot forward.

4. **Be Patient** Heena Noorani, research analyst with New York-based Thomson Financial, recommends avoiding the feeling of discouragement if networking does not provide immediate results or instant answers. She advises, “Be prepared for a slow down after you get started. Stay politely persistent with your leads and build momentum. Networking is like gardening; You do not plant the seed, then quickly harvest. Networking requires cultivation that takes time and effort for the process to pay off.”

5. **Be Focused on Quality—not Quantity** In a large group setting, circulate and meet people, but don’t try to talk to everyone. It’s better to have a few meaningful conversations than 50 hasty introductions. Don’t cling to people you already know; you’re unlikely to build new contacts that way. If you are at a reception, be sure to wear a nametag and collect or exchange business cards so you can later contact the people you meet.

6. **Be Referral-Centered** The person you are networking with may not have a job opening, but he or she may know someone who is hiring. The key is to exchange information and then expand your network by obtaining additional referrals each time you meet someone new. Be sure to mention the person who referred you.

7. **Be Proactive** Stay organized and track your networking meetings. Keep a list of your contacts and update it frequently with the names of any leads given to you. Send a thank-you note or email if appropriate. Ask if you can follow-up the conversation with a phone call, or even better, with a more in-depth meeting in the near future.

8. **Be Dedicated to Networking** Most importantly, networking should be ongoing. You will want to stay in touch with contacts over the long haul—not just when you need something. Make networking part of your long-term career plan.

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**Questions to Ask During Networking Meetings**

- What do you like most (least) about your work?
- Can you describe a typical workday or week?
- What type of education and experience do you need to remain successful in this field?
- What are the future career opportunities in this field?
- What are the challenges in balancing work and personal life?
- Why do people enter/leave this field or company?
- Which companies have the best track record for promoting minorities?
- What advice would you give to someone trying to break into this field?
- With whom would you recommend I speak? When I call, may I use your name?

**Do’s & Don’ts of Networking**

- Do keep one hand free from a briefcase or purse so you can shake hands when necessary.
- Do bring copies of your resume.
- Don’t tell them your life story; you are dealing with busy people, so get right to the point.
- Don’t be shy or afraid to ask for what you need.
- Don’t pass up opportunities to network.

Written by Thomas J. Denham, director of the Siena College Career Center in Loudonville, N.Y. He can be reached at www.siena.edu/denham.
Career professionals—and parents—are warning young job seekers that using social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, may be hazardous to your career. After all, do you want your potential employer to see photos of you at last weekend’s party? Certainly, those photos could diminish your prospects of landing a job. However, more job seekers are using social networking to enhance their preparation for interviews, garner an advantage over less-wired peers, and even gain an edge with recruiters. One example of a constructive use of social networking websites is gathering background information about the recruiters with whom you will interview. By finding out about topics that will interest the recruiter, you may gain an upper hand in the interview process. In addition, stronger connections with a potential employer can be made by talking about the clubs he or she belongs to and even friends you have in common—information that can be discovered on Facebook. Research on professional sites like LinkedIn can also be used to prepare for site visits. By using the alumni connections available through LinkedIn, you can gain added insight into potential employers. If you are interviewing with a company, search for alumni who are working there. You can have conversations with alumni via LinkedIn that you wouldn’t have in an interview, such as, “do you like it at the company?” or “can you negotiate salary?”

Networking Rules
When you seek and maintain professional connections via social networking sites, follow the same etiquette you would if you were networking by phone and in person. Remember that every contact is creating an impression. Online, you might tend to be less formal because you are communicating in a space that you typically share with friends. Just as you would not let your guard down if you were having dinner with a potential employer, you must maintain a positive and professional approach when conversing with networking contacts online. Ask good questions, pay attention to the answers, and be polite—this includes sending at least a brief thank-you note anytime someone gives you advice or assistance.

If It’s OK for Mom, It’s OK for Facebook
The more controversial aspect of the interplay between social networking and job searching is the privacy debate. Some observers, including career counselors, deans, and parents, worry that students put themselves at a disadvantage in the job search by making personal information available on Facebook and Twitter pages. More and more companies are using such websites as a screening tool. Concern about privacy focuses on two areas: social life and identity/affiliations. Parents and career counselors argue that job-seekers would never show photos of themselves at a party in the middle of an interview, so why would they allow employers to see party photos on a Facebook page? Students often respond that most employers do not even use social networking sites and that employers already know that college students drink. While it may be true that senior managers are less likely to be on Facebook, young recruiters may be active, and in many cases, employers ask younger employees to conduct online searches of candidates. Why risk losing a career opportunity because of a photo with two drinks in your hand?

Social Networking Websites

It’s easy to deduce that if an employer is comparing two candidates who are closely matched in terms of GPA and experience, and one has questionable photos and text on his or her online profile and the second does not, that the second student will get the job offer.

Identity—Public or Private?
Identity and affiliations are the second area where social networking and privacy issues may affect your job search and employment prospects. Historically, job-seekers have fought for increased protection from being asked questions about their identity, including religious affiliation and sexual orientation, because this information could be used by biased employers to discriminate. Via social networking sites, employers can now find information that they are not allowed to ask you.

Employers can no longer legally ask these questions in most states, however, some students make matters like religion, political involvement, and sexual orientation public on their Web pages.

You would never include religious and political affiliations as well as sexual orientation or transgender identity (GLBT) on your resume, so do you want this information to be available via social networking sites? There are two strategies to consider. One approach is that if you wish to only work for an employer with whom you can be openly religious, political, or GLBT then making that information available on your Web page will screen out discriminating employers and make it more likely that you will land with an employer open to your identity and expression.

A second approach though, is to maintain your privacy and keep more options open. Investigate potential employers thoroughly and pay special attention at site visits to evaluate whether the company would be welcoming. This strategy is based on two perspectives shared by many career professionals. First, as a job-seeker, you want to present only your relevant skills and experience throughout the job search; all other information is irrelevant. Second, if you provide information about your identity and affiliations, you may be discriminated against by one person in the process even though the company overall is a good match.

Strategies for Safe and Strategic Social Networking
1. Be aware of what other people can see on your page. Many recruiters are now using these sites and other recruiters ask their colleagues to do searches on candidates.
2. Determine access intentionally. Some career counselors advocate deactivating your Facebook or Twitter accounts while job searching.
3. Set a standard. If anything appears on your page that you wouldn’t want an interviewer to see, remove the offending content.
4. Use social networking to your advantage. Use these sites to find alumni in the companies that interest you and contact them before you interview in your career center or before a site visit. In addition, use social networking sites and Internet searches to learn more about the recruiters who will interview you before the interview.

Written by Harriet L. Schwartz.
Transferable Skills

If you’re wondering what skills you have that would interest a potential employer, you are not alone. Many college seniors feel that four (or more) years of college haven’t sufficiently prepared them to begin work after graduation. And like these students, you may have carefully reviewed your work history (along with your campus and civic involvement) and you may still have a difficult time seeing how the skills you learned in college will transfer to the workplace.

But keep in mind that you’ve been acquiring skills since childhood. Whether learning the value of teamwork by playing sports, developing editing skills working on your high school newspaper or developing countless skills while completing your coursework, each of your experiences has laid the groundwork for building additional skills.

What Are Transferable Skills?
A transferable skill is a “portable skill” that you deliberately (or inadvertently, if you haven’t identified them yet) take with you to other life experiences.

Your transferable skills are often:
• acquired through a class (e.g., an English major who is taught technical writing)
• acquired through experience (e.g., the student government representative who develops strong motivation and consensus building skills)

Transferable skills supplement your degree. They provide an employer concrete evidence of your readiness and qualifications for a position. Identifying your transferable skills and communicating them to potential employers will greatly increase your success during the job search.

Remember that it is impossible to complete college without acquiring transferable skills. Campus and community activities, class projects and assignments, athletic activities, internships and summer/part-time jobs have provided you with countless experiences where you’ve acquired a range of skills—many that you may take for granted.

Identifying Transferable Skills
While very closely related (and with some overlap), transferable skills can be divided into three subsets:
• Working With People • Working With Things
• Working With Data/Information

For example, some transferable skills can be used in every workplace setting (e.g., organizing or public speaking) while some are more applicable to specific settings (e.g., drafting or accounting).

The following are examples of skills often acquired through the classroom, jobs, athletics and other activities. Use these examples to help you develop your own list of the transferable skills you’ve acquired.

Working With People
• Selling • Training • Teaching • Supervising
• Organizing • Soliciting • Motivating • Mediating
• Advising • Delegating • Entertaining
• Representing • Negotiating • Translating

Working With Things
• Repairing • Assembling parts • Designing
• Operating machinery • Driving
• Maintaining equipment • Constructing • Building
• Sketching • Working with CAD • Keyboarding
• Drafting • Surveying • Troubleshooting

Working With Data/Information
• Calculating • Developing databases
• Working with spreadsheets • Accounting • Writing
• Researching • Computing • Testing • Filing • Sorting
• Editing • Gathering data • Analyzing • Budgeting

Easy Steps to Identify Your Transferable Skills
Now that you know what transferable skills are, let’s put together a list of your transferable skills. You may want to work with someone in your career services office to help you identify as many transferable skills as possible.

Step 1. Make a list of every job title you’ve held (part-time, full-time and internships), along with volunteer, sports and other affiliations since starting college. (Be sure to record officer positions and other leadership roles.)

Step 2. Using your transcript, list the classes in your major field of study along with foundation courses. Include electives that may be related to your employment interests.

Step 3. For each job title, campus activity and class you’ve just recorded, write a sentence and then underline the action taken. (Avoid stating that you learned or gained experience in any skill. Instead, present your skill more directly as a verifiable qualification.)

"While working for Jones Engineering, I gained experience in 3D modeling and drafting."

NOT "While working for Jones Engineering, I gained experience in 3D modeling and drafting."

"As a member of the Caribbean Students Association, I developed and coordinated the marketing of club events."

NOT "As a member of the Caribbean Students Association, I learned to market events."

Step 4. Make a list of the skills/experiences you’ve identified for future reference during your job search.

Using Transferable Skills in the Job Search
Your success in finding the position right for you will depend on your ability to showcase your innate talents and skills. You will also need to demonstrate how you can apply these skills at an employer’s place of business. Consult the staff at your career services office to help you further identify relevant transferable skills and incorporate them on your resume and during your interviews. During each interview, be sure to emphasize only those skills that would be of particular interest to a specific employer.

Transferable skills are the foundation upon which you will build additional, more complex skills as your career unfolds. Start making your list of skills and you’ll discover that you have more to offer than you realized!

Additional Tips to Help Identify Your Transferable Skills
1. Review your list of transferable skills with someone in your field(s) of interest to help you identify any additional skills that you may want to include.
2. Using a major job posting Web site, print out descriptions of jobs that interest you to help you identify skills being sought. (Also use these postings as guides for terminology on your resume.)
3. Attend career fairs and company information sessions to learn about the skills valued by specific companies and industries.

Written by Rosita Smith.
Marketing Your Liberal Arts Degree

As liberal arts graduates enter the job market, their direction may not be as obvious as that of their technically trained counterparts. For the most part, engineering or computer science majors know exactly where to target their efforts. Liberal arts majors are less fortunate in that regard—such a heading cannot be found in the want ads. Yet if they learn to target their aptitudes, they have as good a chance as anyone to find meaningful work.

Students are no longer necessarily hired just because they have a particular degree. Math and physics majors are getting engineering jobs and liberal arts majors are getting accounting jobs. The reason new graduates are being hired is because they have specific skills that meet the needs of the employer.

No one is more suited to this approach than the liberal arts major. What you need to do, explains one career advisor, is to find out what you really want to do—regardless of your major. “Students often ask, ‘What can I do with a major in philosophy?’ But that’s the wrong question. The real questions are, ‘What fascinates me? How can I connect my interests with a job? What do I really want to be doing in 20 years?’”

Conduct in-depth research on any companies that appeal to you, and try to match their needs to your wants.

Once you have answered those questions, look at possibilities for matching your interests with a job. There are more options than you might think. Don’t get stuck on titles. For instance, if you want to be an autonomous problem-solver, someone with good communication skills who can do a good job of synthesizing sources (as in writing term papers), forget about the titles and look at the job descriptions. Management consultants, career specialists, personnel managers, teachers or trainers within organizations and schools are just a few options.

As a liberal arts major, you have to do much more work in terms of researching different job markets and finding out where there is a demand. Conduct in-depth research on any companies that appeal to you, and try to match their needs to your wants. You must be specific, however. It is possible to be too general, too open and too flexible.

To be successful, you should combine your long-term vision with short-term specificity. Present yourself to your potential employer as someone who both understands the broad goals of the company and has the ability to grow and contribute in the long run. But most importantly, show how you can excel in that specific job. And this, most likely, will involve some specialized skills. If you’ve taken business courses, had work experiences or utilized a computer in your liberal arts work, point out those strengths.

Once you’ve taken the time to determine your real interests and have set some long-term goals, map out a plan—long- and short-term—on how to get there. Resources are plentiful—from the Occupational Outlook Handbook or Dictionary of Occupational Titles to numerous general job search books, as well as those dealing with specific topics such as What to Do with a Degree in Psychology, The Business of Show Business, etc.

Your liberal arts education has equipped you to take a broad topic and research it. Use those skills to make the connection between what you want and what companies need. Once you find job descriptions that match your long-term interests, set about shaping your resume and, if need be, getting the additional specific skills, training or certification to get that first job.

Your first job may not match your long-term goal. But it’s the first step. And that, at this point, is the all-important one.

**WHAT LIBERAL ARTS GRADUATES ARE DOING**

A sampling of the wide range of positions filled by liberal arts graduates:

- Accountant
- Administrative assistant
- Advertising account executive
- Air traffic controller
- Artist
- Auditor
- Bank manager
- Business systems analyst
- Buyer
- Child support enforcement officer
- Claims examiner
- Communications specialist
- Computer specialist
- Copywriter
- Counselor
- Customer service representative
- Editor
- Employee relations specialist
- Engineering planner
- Financial consultant
- Graphic designer
- Hotel manager
- Human resource specialist
- Industrial designer
- Interpreter/translator
- Journalist
- Librarian
- Management consultant
- Marketing representative
- Medical/dental assistant
- Museum coordinator
- Office administrator
- Outpatient therapist
- Paralegal
- Photographer
- Probation officer
- Product specialist
- Psychologist
- Public relations specialist
- Quality engineer
- Recreation administrator
- Research analyst
- Restaurant manager
- Retail manager
- Sales representative
- Social worker
- Speech pathologist
- Stockbroker
- Systems analyst
- Tax consultant
- Teacher
- Technical writer
- Transportation specialist
- Underwriter
- Urban planner
- Writer
Turning Your Internship Into a Full-Time Position

One of the best benefits of an internship or cooperative education experience is that it can serve as your passport to future employment opportunities. Getting your foot in the door by landing the internship or co-op is only half of the challenge in turning your career dreams into a reality. The more vital half is to build a reputation during this career experience that will culminate in receiving a full-time job offer.

A growing number of employers are using internships as a way to gain a first in-depth look at prospective employees. In this respect, both you and your employer have a common goal—namely, to determine if there is a good fit between you. Here are ten tips to becoming a savvy intern and making powerful career moves:

1. **Exhibit a Can-Do Attitude**
   Pass the attitude test and you will be well on your way to success. Attitude speaks loud and clear and makes a lasting impression, so make sure that yours is one of your greatest assets. Take on any task assigned—no matter how small—with enthusiasm. Take the initiative to acquire new skills. Accept criticism graciously and maintain a sense of humor.

2. **Learn the Unwritten Rules**
   Get to know your co-workers early in your internship. They will help you figure out quickly the culture in which you will be working. Being the “new kid” is like being a freshman all over again. You will need to adapt, observe, learn and process a large volume of information. Watch closely how things get done. Ask questions and pay attention to how people interact with each other.

3. **Take Your Assignments Seriously**
   Build a reputation for being dependable. Be diligent and accurate in your work. You may encounter a great deal of ambiguity in the work environment, so seek direction when in doubt and do whatever it takes to get the job done. As an intern, you will generally start out by performing small tasks, asking a lot of questions and learning the systems. Your internship supervisor knows that there will be an initial learning curve and will make allowances for mistakes. Learn from your errors and move on to your next task. From there, your responsibilities and the expectations of others are likely to grow.

4. **Meet Deadlines**
   Always assume the responsibility to ask when an assignment is due. This will help you to understand your supervisor’s priorities and to manage your time accordingly. Alert your boss in advance if you will be unable to meet expectations. This will show respect and professional maturity.

5. **Set Realistic Goals and Expectations**
   Invest actively in the most critical element of your internship—that is, the learning agenda which you set up with your supervisor at the beginning of the assignment. Your learning agenda should target specific skills and competencies that you wish to acquire and demonstrate. After all, the learning agenda is what distinguishes a short-term job from an internship. It is up to you to establish a correlation between your learning goals and the daily work you are asked to perform. Maintain a journal of your activities and accomplishments in order to monitor your progress. Seek regular reviews from your supervisor to assess your performance and reinforce the fact that you mean business.

6. **Communicate Respectfully**
   Assume that everyone else knows more than you do. However, don’t be afraid to present useful ideas that may save time or money or solve problems. Make sure, however, that your style does not come across as cocky. Employers value assertiveness but not aggressiveness. Find out the proper way to address individuals, including customers. Maintain a pleasant and respectful demeanor with every person, regardless of his or her rank.

7. **Be Flexible**
   Accept a wide variety of tasks, even those that may not relate directly to your assignments or those that may seem like grunt work. Your willingness to go the extra mile, especially during “crunch time,” will help you carve the way to assuming greater responsibilities.

8. **Be a Team Player**
   Learn how your assignment fits into the grand scheme of things and keep a keen eye on getting the job done. In today’s work environment, success is often defined along the lines of your ability to get along with and interact with others. You’re a winner only if your team wins.

9. **Get a Mentor**
   Identify at least one individual to serve as your mentor or professional guardian. It should be someone who is willing to take a personal interest in your career development and success. Once you know your way around, begin to network wisely and get “plugged in” by associating with seasoned employees who may share their knowledge, perspectives and insights. Get noticed, because many more people will have a role in determining your future than you might at first realize.

10. **Have Fun!**
    Last but not least, enjoy learning, sharpening your skills and developing professionally and personally. Participate in work-related social functions and become an active member in your work community.

    Make your internship or co-op experience work for you. It can be the first link in the chain of your career.

Written by Lina Melkonian, Director of Development at San José State University, College of Engineering.
Federal Jobs: Working for Uncle Sam

So you want to work for the federal government? You are not alone. Uncle Sam employs approximately 1.8 million civilian workers worldwide. Federal employees receive a generous benefits package, and as of 2009 they earned an average salary of $72,572. As the largest employer in the U.S., the federal government offers a variety of career opportunities unparalleled in the private sector. Federal employees work with (and create) cutting-edge technology. They create policy, programs and services that impact the health, safety and welfare of millions of people worldwide.

But with these benefits come bureaucracy. If you do not like working within a system and following a defined chain of command, a federal job might not be for you. This bureaucracy is evident in the hiring process as well. Federal agencies follow strict hiring procedures, and applicants who do not conform to these procedures are left by the wayside. Typically, the federal hiring process can stretch on for months. In fact, many career professionals recommend that students applying for federal jobs begin the process at least two semesters before their graduation date.

Types of Federal Jobs
Federal jobs are separated into two classes: competitive service and excepted service positions. Competitive service jobs, which include the majority of federal positions, are subject to civil service laws passed by Congress. Job applications for competitive service positions are rated on a numerical system in which applications are awarded points based on education, experience and other predetermined job qualification standards. Hiring managers then fill the position from a pool of candidates with the highest points totals.

Hiring managers for excepted service agencies are not required to follow civil service hiring procedures or pick from a pool of candidates who have been rated on a points system. Instead, these agencies set their own qualifications requirements, as occurs in private industry. However, both competitive service and excepted service positions must give preference to veterans who were either disabled or who served in combat areas during certain periods of time. The Federal Reserve, the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency are examples of some excepted service agencies. (For a complete list, visit usajobs.gov/ei6.asp.) It’s important to note that even agencies that are not strictly excepted service agencies can have excepted service positions available within them.

OPM and USAJOBS
The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) acts as the federal government’s human resources agency. OPM’s Web site (opm.gov) is expansive and contains a wealth of information for anyone interested in federal jobs, including federal employment trends, salary ranges, benefits, retirement statistics and enough links to publications and resources to keep a research librarian busy for days. Linked to the OPM site is the USAJOBS site (usajobs.gov), which has its own set of tools and resources that will be familiar to any standard job site user. USAJOBS acts as a portal for federal employment with thousands of job listings at any one time.

Searching for Federal Jobs
Federal agencies now fill their jobs like private industry by allowing applicants to contact the agency directly for job information and applications. However, most of these positions can be accessed through the USAJOBS site. All competitive service positions must be posted on the USAJOBS site, and although agencies are not required to post their excepted service positions on USAJOBS, many do.

Registered visitors to USAJOBS can create and post up to five resumes, which can be made searchable, allowing recruiters from federal agencies to find resumes during applicant searches. Applicants can also use these resumes to apply directly to jobs that have an online application option. In addition, job applicants can create as many as ten “search agents,” which search for job openings using certain criteria (such as location, job type, agency, salary requirements), and email matching postings directly to their inbox. Applicants can also search for jobs directly using the “search jobs” button on the USAJOBS homepage.

Remember, excepted service positions are not required to be posted on the USAJOBS site. If you are interested in employment with an excepted service agency, be sure to visit the recruitment section of its Web site for postings that may not have made it onto the USAJOBS site. It is often worthwhile to look at the sites of agencies that you do not associate with your field of study. If you are interested in the environment, you should definitely visit the EPA’s Web site. But you should also make sure to visit the Web sites of other agencies that you don’t associate with your major. It’s not unusual for a biology major, for example, to find a job with Homeland Security or the Department of Defense.

How to Apply
There is no general way to submit an application to OPM or to individual federal agencies. Instead, students should refer to each job posting for specific directions. Whether for competitive service or excepted service positions, federal job postings can be intimidating. A typical posting can run over 2,000 words and include sections on eligibility requirements, educational requirements, necessary experience, salary range, job duties and even a description of how applicants are evaluated.

Most importantly, all federal job postings include a section titled “How to Apply.” Instead of letting this avalanche of information overwhelm you, use it as a resource to help you put together the best application possible, paying particularly close attention to the “How to Apply” section. If you do not follow the instructions and procedures closely, your application may not be processed. “I would emphasize that applicants should carefully read the ‘fine print’ of all printed and online materials and applications,” says Dr. Richard White, Director of Career Services at Rutgers University. “Applicants who dot all their i’s and cross all their t’s gain a competitive advantage and rise to the top of the application pool.”

Federal agencies require specific information on your resume before it can be processed. The OPM created the USAJOBS Resume Builder in an effort to help applicants create a resume which can be used for most government agencies—go to my.usajobs.gov to get started. Agencies may also request that you submit additional forms for application (many of which are available on USAJOBS). Strictly following the “How to Apply” instructions will ensure that your application has all the information necessary.

Written by Chris Enstrom, a freelance writer from Nashville, Ind.
Are you looking for more from your future career than just a steady income? Do you find the traditional employment track unappealing? Do you want the chance to make a real impact in your community or even the world? Then a career in the nonprofit sector may be the answer.

What Is a Nonprofit?

Nonprofits (also known as not-for-profits) are organizations that promote a cause or provide a public service and are granted tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service under section 501 of the Federal Tax Code. Nonprofits are often at the forefront of advocacy, social issues and scientific research. Some manage and promote the arts, culture or even history in communities across the nation. Political and labor groups are nonprofit organizations, as are professional and trade organizations. The broad category of nonprofits also includes non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that provide critical services to areas affected by war or natural disasters. Some promote environmental issues on an international scale.

With all these categories, it’s no wonder that over 1.5 million nonprofit organizations in the United States employ 8.7 million people or 5.9% of the total workforce. Amy Butler from the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that, “Health professionals, educators, other professionals, health technicians, administrative support workers, and service occupations account for the majority of paid workers in the nonprofit sector,” in her 2009 “Wages in the Nonprofit Sector” article.

Is a Nonprofit Right for You?

Most nonprofit employees are not motivated by money or a prestigious title. Instead, they find fulfillment in a career that contributes to the welfare of others or advances a particular cause. Depending on your interests and beliefs, working for a particular nonprofit can be both challenging and fulfilling. You often work with people who share your altruism and passion about an issue or cause. And unlike the private sector or government, there are usually endless opportunities in entry-level positions where related experience is not required.

But working for a nonprofit is not all bliss and passion, nor is it an escape from work-related stress. Nonprofit employees may not have to meet sales goals or make money for their owners or shareholders, but they are still held accountable for their decisions by their funding sources and constituents. Some organizations are highly politicized. Resources tend to be limited for staff development, bonuses or the latest equipment. Nonprofit workers must learn to work effectively with a broad range of people, including their clients, elected officials, volunteers, donors and local civic leaders.

Top management is usually held accountable to a board of advisors or board of directors. The latter group has governing power, including the power to terminate top management. Instability in funding is often a frustrating factor among nonprofits (especially among the smaller ones), as it must be sought each year from a variety of sources. Today, receiving grants is becoming more difficult. Grantors are demanding increased accountability and results in exchange for their financial support.

Opportunities

Take a look at the current job openings in the nonprofit sector and you will see a broad range of jobs. Positions with arts organizations can include curators, writers, performing artists and event planners. Health agencies often hire counselors, researchers and lobbyists. All nonprofit companies require the services of grant writers, fundraisers (also known as development officers), accountants, information technology workers and office managers. While idealism and passion may be the fuel to energize an organization, solid administrative skills including writing, strong interpersonal skills, multiple business and political contacts, and good business acumen are highly valued and required to ensure the stability and longevity of an organization.

But Will I Earn Enough?

Because of the wide variety of agencies in staff size, organization budget and scope of activities, it is nearly impossible to provide a salary range based on position. For example, the salary of the executive director of the Red Cross would be six figures, while the executive director of a two-person organization whose services are narrow and local may be in the low 30s. The Chronicle of Philanthropy periodically publishes the salaries of top executives in nonprofits. In general, the larger an organization and the wider its scope, the greater the salary—though it may still be below the national average. Career advancement is also more likely within a larger organization.

How and Where to Find Nonprofit Positions

If you are interested in working for a nonprofit organization, talk to others in the field to help you decide if the nonprofit sector is right for you. Schedule an appointment with three or four directors and program administrators to find out the differences (and similarities) between various agencies. Ask about the types of people typically hired and the types of jobs available. Find out what makes the field satisfying—and frustrating. Ask about pay, advancement and the skills most highly sought. Read public literature about different agencies, and serve as a volunteer with an agency of interest to you to become acquainted with the staff and the agency’s services. Volunteer positions sometimes become paid positions or provide you with solid leads and the “inside track” to paid positions.

When you are ready to apply for specific positions, use local resources such as the United Way, your local newspaper and the Internet, using the key word nonprofit. Opportunity Knocks (www.opportunityknocks.org) provides a comprehensive print and online version of nonprofit job opportunities throughout the United States. Many organizations (especially larger ones like the Red Cross) have their own Web sites that list job openings.

Wherever you choose to look, a job with a nonprofit organization can be a great way to start your career—and do something good for your community.

Written by Rosita Smith.
Jump-Starting Your International Job Search

For students who enjoy experiencing new cultures and exploring different cities, the prospect of working overseas after graduation may be tempting. Keep in mind, however, that international jobs are not all glamour and excitement, and it may not be easy to identify the right position when you’re thousands of miles away from a potential employer. But if you’ve got a strong yen to teach in Japan or want to make your mark in Germany’s financial district, use these tips to get a jump-start on your international job search.

1. Understand the Pros and Cons of Working Abroad
   **Pros**
   - Builds your resume and gives you an edge in a competitive job market.
   - Provides you with a broader worldview and prepares you professionally to enter the realities of the global economy.
   - Instills a greater appreciation and understanding of diverse cultures.
   - Helps you sharpen your career goals prior to graduate school or U.S. employment.
   - Makes you more marketable to employers seeking international experience.

   **Cons**
   - Often lacks the common comforts of home.
   - Distances you from your family and friends. (This could be considered a pro by some.)
   - Culture shock and language barriers may make the transition—and perhaps your entire stay—difficult.

2. Be Clear About Your Objectives
   - Are you looking for a career or just a job?
   - Are you going abroad for the short or the long term?
   - Do you want summer, part-time or full-time employment?
   - Do you want to travel extensively both inside and outside the country?
   - Are you targeting English-speaking countries? Do you want to work in Europe, Africa or another continent?
   - What salary and benefits do you require?

3. Get Help
   - Meet with your career advisor monthly to discuss your plans.
   - Get tips on how to prepare an international resume and cover letter.
   - Consult both print and electronic resources.

4. Inventory Your Strengths
   - Determine what skills, education and experience international employers require.
   - Identify and then demonstrate your qualities such as professionalism, motivation, flexibility, initiative and maturity.
   - Sell your background: languages, college degree(s), internships, study abroad experience and international coursework.

5. Establish Your International Job Search Game Plan
   - Determine factors that will influence your job choice, such as salary, location, duration of stay and language requirements.
   - Select one to three countries of interest and then research them politically, economically and socially.

   - Identify the country’s major industries, employers and jobs.
   - Use several job search methods such as targeted mailings, classified ads, international employment agencies/headhunters, internships, job fairs and networking with alumni connections, family and friends.

6. Create a Job Search Prospect List From One or More of the Following Categories:
   **Business**
   - U.S. Businesses
   - Investment or Import/Export Banks
   - U.S. Based Multinational Corporations
   - Foreign Businesses
   - Telecommunications Firms
   - High-Technology Companies

   **Government**
   - U.S. Government
   - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
   - U.S. International Development Corporation Agency
   - U.S. Foreign Service or CIA
   - U.S. Department of State or Defense
   - International Schools
   - United Nations Children’s Fund
   - World Health Organization
   - International Labor Organization
   - International Red Cross

   **Non-Profit/International Organizations**
   - U.S. Peace Corps
   - Volunteers for Peace
   - United Board of World Ministries

   **Education**
   - Japan Exchange and Teaching Program
   - International School Teaching, Translating or Interpreting
   - International Fellowships

   **Service Jobs**
   - Nanny Services
   - Youth Programs

7. Implement Your Game Plan
   - Send out resumes and cover letters regularly.
   - Follow up.
   - Practice, practice and practice your interviewing skills.
   - Interview on the phone or in-person, if possible.
   - Prepare for rejection.
   - Evaluate and review your progress and job targets.
   - Negotiate salary, moving expenses and benefits—then accept or reject offers.

8. Be Persistent and Prepared
   - Commit the necessary time and effort to conduct a successful search.
   - Overestimate the amount of work you will need to put into this project.
   - Organize your job search folders and “to do” lists and maintain accurate records.
   - Save up for the costs of airfare, housing, transportation and living expenses.
   - Be prepared to obtain a work permit, visa and passport.
   - Pack up!

Written by Thomas J. Denham
As an international student you may want to seek employment after graduation, and in all probability, you will be employed at some point during your studies at Howard University. Whether you desire to gain valuable work experience or just make enough money to help meet daily expenses, it is important that you become familiar with the primary employment categories, requirements, and processes for students in a SEVIS visa status (F-1 or J-1). The Office of Enrollment Management has a supportive team of advisors located at our Blackburn University Center who work exclusively with international students. Their role is to help international students meet immigration requirements and protect their immigration status while in the United States.

International Students’ Office
Room 119, Blackburn University Center
Howard University
Washington, DC 20059
202-806-7517
www.howard.edu/internationalservices

Every visa type has different employment specifications and processes. F-1 and J-1 students are permitted to work on or off campus provided they meet the eligibility requirements and obtain authorization when necessary. Off-campus work must be related to your field of study and certain conditions apply. International students are eligible to work up to 20 hours per week while school is in session and full-time hours when school is not in session or during the student’s annual break. This applies to both undergraduate and graduate students. As long as you are enrolled at the university, maintaining your status and following the guidelines for on and off-campus employment, you can continue to work. Non-compliance with employment regulations may be a violation of status that could result in the withdrawal of an F-1 status and the student having to leave the United States.

F-1 STUDENTS: PRACTICAL TRAINING

There are two types of Practical Training: Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT).

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Curricular Practical Training is for international students who wish or need to engage in off-campus employment in their field of study. It must be a requisite part of your curriculum, fundamental to your thesis research or part of a co-operative education program. It allows an F-1 student to work for a maximum of 12 months over the course of their studies at an off-campus job. This type of employment is for students who have not yet graduated and in general, students must have completed nine months (two consecutive semesters) of study in F-1 status. Authorization for CPT is granted by the University and not a federal agency. If a student completes 12 months of CPT, s/he will not be eligible to get OPT. However, students can take advantage of CPT employment/internship activities which have a cumulative total of less than 12 months and still be eligible for OPT.

CPT applications are processed in the International Students’ Office (119 Blackburn University Center), but require signatures from each student’s faculty advisor and authorized personnel at the Center for Career Education, Development and Research (CEDAR Center).

Center for Career Education, Development and Research (CEDAR Center)
C.B. Powell Building
525 Bryant Street, NW
Washington, DC 20059
202-806-7513
www.howard.edu/careerservices

There is no fee for this application, but students should be prepared to register for a course which links the CPT to their academic experience. In some cases, students may work on campus while receiving funds from an outside source (i.e., not Howard University). Those students should also apply for CPT before starting any activity linked to that payment. Immigration considers stipends for travel, food, lodging and the provision of books, food, lodging, and travel expenses as income. Therefore, students participating in summer internships where they receive the aforementioned must apply for CPT.

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

OPT provides an opportunity to apply knowledge gained through your academic program to a practical work experience in the United States. As an F-1 student you are eligible for a total of 12 months of OPT upon completion of your degree program. This employment must be directly related to your major field of study and eligible students do not need a job offer in order to apply for OPT. However, you will have 3 months from your employment authorization start date to attain employment.

Authorization must be acquired from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and you can begin employment on or after the date indicated on your Employment Authorization Card (EAC). This authorization can take up to 90 days to obtain. A student however, may submit an OPT application up to 90 days before the end of program date listed on his/her I-20. Students cannot begin work before the date on the EAC and there is no way to expedite the request for permission to work.

STEM Extension

Additionally, students who have completed a degree in a STEM field (Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics), may apply for an additional 17 months of employment authorization, for a total of 29 months of employment approval. An updated list of STEM designated degrees can be found at www.ice.gov/sevis/stemlist.htm. Students must file an application with the USCIS to apply for this extension and may only work for an E-verify
employer during the extended period. During the STEM Extension, students may change employers or work for multiple employers, provided that all employers are enrolled in the E-verify system. E-Verify is an Internet-based system that allows businesses to determine the eligibility of their employees to work in the United States. It is the student’s responsibility to inquire whether his/her current or potential employer participates in E-Verify.

**J-1 STUDENTS**

As a graduate or professional J-1 student you are eligible for academic training employment authorization for up to 18 months or the length of your program. The nature of the work must be directly related to your academic program as it provides an opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge obtained to a practical work experience. Doctoral students are eligible for an additional 18 months of post-doctoral academic training. Authorization for this type of employment is granted by the University’s International Students’ Office.

**H1-B STATUS**

If an employer wishes to retain your services after the OPT or academic training period has expired, they can do so under the H-1B visa program. This work authorization is issued by the USCIS for up to of six years (two three-year periods). A bachelor’s degree is usually required for this type of visa status and the standard processing time for an H1-B application is two to three months. This process can, however, be expedited via Premium Processing. Under the Premium Processing Service, USCIS guarantees petitioners (employers) that, for a stipulated processing fee, it will provide a response within 15 calendar days of receipt of the H1-B application.

While the content of this article attempts to provide guidelines for international students regarding employment in the United States, it should not be construed as legal advice or as pertaining to specific situations. International students should therefore contact an advisor at Howard University’s International Students’ Office for additional information and assistance. You may also visit the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

Written by Mrs. Jozanne Douglas, Career Specialist, CEDAR Center, Howard University

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**PART INFO GETTING PLUS PART IDEA SHARING**

Equals total government connecting.

USA.gov is your official source for federal, state and local government information. From Social Security to product recalls, it’s the place to find the info you need. And now you can also share your ideas and opinions with your government. To make your total government connection, visit USA.gov.

A public service message from the U.S. General Services Administration.
International Students and the Job Search

Looking for a job is seldom easy for any student. For you, the international student, the job search process can be especially confusing. You may lack an understanding of U.S. employment regulations, or perhaps you are unaware of the impact your career choice has on your job search. You may also be unsure about your role as the job-seeker and the resources used by American employers to find candidates.

The following is an overview of the issues most relevant to international students in developing a job search strategy. Additional information about the employment process and related topics can be found through your career center and on the Internet.

Bureau of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Regulations

As an international student, you should only obtain employment-related information from an experienced immigration attorney or your campus USCIS representative. Advice from any other resource may be inaccurate. Once you have decided to remain in the United States to work, contact the international student services office or the office of human resources on your campus and make an appointment with your USCIS representative. In addition to helping you fill out necessary forms, the USCIS representative will inform you of the costs associated with working in the United States.

Importance of Skills and Career Field

Find out if your degree and skills-set are currently in demand in the U.S. job market. An advanced degree, highly marketable skills or extensive experience will all make your job search easier. Find out what region of the United States holds the majority of the jobs in your field; you may need to relocate in order to find the job you want. Learn all you can about your targeted career field by talking to professors, reading industry publications and attending professional meetings and regional conferences.

Role of Employers

It is the employer’s responsibility to find the right people for his or her company—not to help you find a job. The interview is successful when both of you see a match between the employer’s needs and your interest and ability to do the job.

The employer (through hiring managers, human resources staff or employment agencies) will most likely use several resources to find workers, including:

- College recruiting
- Campus or community job fairs
- Posting jobs on the company Web site or on national job posting sites on the Internet
- Posting jobs in major newspapers or trade publications
- Posting jobs with professional associations
- Resume searches on national online services
- Employee referrals
- Regional and national conferences
- Employment agencies (“headhunters”)

Are you accessible to employers through at least some of the above strategies? If not, develop a plan to make sure your credentials are widely circulated. Notify as many people as possible in your field about your job search.

Strong Communication Skills

You can help the employer make an informed hiring decision if you:

- Provide a well-prepared resume that includes desirable skills and relevant employment experiences.
- Clearly convey your interests and ability to do the job in an interview.
- Understand English when spoken to you and can effectively express your thoughts in English.

It’s important to be able to positively promote yourself and talk with confidence about your education, relevant skills and related experiences. Self-promotion is rarely easy for anyone. But, it can be especially difficult for individuals from cultures where talking about yourself is considered inappropriate. When interviewing in the United States, however, you are expected to be able to explain your credentials and why you are suitable for the position.

Be sensitive to the interviewer’s verbal and nonverbal cues. Some international students may not realize when their accent is causing them to be misunderstood. Interviewers are sometimes too embarrassed or impatient to ask for clarification, so be on the lookout for nonverbal clues, such as follow-up questions that don’t match your responses or sudden disinterest on the part of the interviewer. Also, make sure you express proper nonverbal communication; always look directly at the employer in order to portray confidence and honesty.

If your English language skills need some work, get involved with campus and community activities. These events will allow you to practice speaking English. The more you use the language, the more proficient you will become. These activities are also a great way to make networking contacts.

Career Center

The career center can be a valuable resource in your job search. Be aware, however, that some employers using the career center won’t interview students who are not U.S. citizens. Though this may limit your ability to participate in some campus interviews, there are numerous ways to benefit from the campus career center:

- Attend sessions on job search strategies and related topics.
- Work with the career services staff to develop your job search strategy.
- Attend campus career fairs and company information sessions to inquire about employment opportunities and to practice your networking skills.

It’s a good idea to get advice from other international students who have successfully found employment in this country and to start your job search early. Create and follow a detailed plan of action that will lead you to a great job you can write home about.

Written by Rosita Smith.
Your academic knowledge and skills may be spectacular, but do you have the social skills needed to be successful in the workplace? Good professional etiquette indicates to potential employers that you are a mature, responsible adult who can aptly represent their company. Not knowing proper etiquette could damage your image, prevent you from getting a job and jeopardize personal and business relationships.

Meeting and Greeting

Etiquette begins with meeting and greeting. Terry Cobb, human resource director at Wachovia Corporation in South Carolina’s Palmetto region, emphasizes the importance of making a good first impression—beginning with the handshake. A firm shake, he says, indicates to employers that you’re confident and assertive. A limp handshake, on the other hand, sends the message that you’re not interested or qualified for the job. Dave Owenby, human resources manager for North and South Carolina at Sherwin Williams, believes, “Good social skills include having a firm handshake, smiling, making eye contact and closing the meeting with a handshake.”

The following basic rules will help you get ahead in the workplace:

- Always rise when introducing or being introduced to someone.
- Provide information in making introductions—you are responsible for keeping the conversation going. “Joe, please meet Ms. Crawford, CEO at American Enterprise, Inc., in Cleveland.” “Mr. Jones, this is Kate Smith, a senior majoring in computer information systems at Northwestern University.”
- Unless given permission, always address someone by his or her title and last name.
- Practice a firm handshake. Make eye contact while shaking hands.

Dining

Shirley Willey, owner of Etiquette & Company, reports that roughly 80% of second interviews involve a business meal. Cobb remembers one candidate who had passed his initial interview with flying colors. Because the second interview was scheduled close to noon, Cobb decided to conduct the interview over lunch. Initially, the candidate was still in the “interview” mode and maintained his professionalism. After a while, however, he became more relaxed—and that’s when the candidate’s real personality began to show. He had terrible table manners, made several off-color remarks and spoke negatively about previous employers. Needless to say, Cobb was unimpressed, and the candidate did not get the job.

Remember that an interview is always an interview, regardless of how relaxed or informal the setting. Anything that is said or done will be considered by the interviewer, cautions Cobb.

In order to make a good impression during a lunch or dinner interview, make sure you:

- Arrive on time.
- Wait to sit until the host/hostess indicates the seating arrangement.
- Place napkin in lap before eating or drinking anything.
- When ordering, keep in mind that this is a talking business lunch. Order something easy to eat, such as boneless chicken or fish.
- Do not hold the order up because you cannot make a decision. Feel free to ask for suggestions from others at the table.
- Wait to eat until everyone has been served.
- Keep hands in lap unless you are using them to eat.
- Practice proper posture; sit up straight with your arms close to your body.
- Bring food to your mouth—not your head to the plate.
- Try to eat at the same pace as everyone else.
- Take responsibility for keeping up the conversation.
- Place napkin on chair seat if excusing yourself for any reason.
- Place napkin beside plate at the end of the meal.
- Push chair under table when excusing yourself.

Eating

Follow these simple rules for eating and drinking:

- Start eating with the implement that is farthest away from your plate. You may have two spoons and two forks. The spoon farthest away from your plate is a soup spoon. The fork farthest away is a salad fork unless you have three forks, one being much smaller, which would be a seafood fork for an appetizer. The dessert fork/spoon is usually above the plate. Remember to work from the outside in.
- Dip soup away from you; sip from the side of the spoon.
- Season food only after you have tasted it.
- Pass salt and pepper together—even if asked for only one.
- Pass all items to the right. If the item has a handle, such as a pitcher, pass with the handle toward the next person. For bowls with spoons, pass with the spoon ready for the next person. If you are the one to reach to the center of the table for an item, pass it before serving yourself.
- While you are speaking during a meal, utensils should be resting on plate (fork and knife crossed on the plate with tines down).
- Don’t chew with your mouth open or blow on your food. The interviewer will usually take care of the bill and the tip. Be prepared, however, if this doesn’t happen and have small bills ready to take care of your part, including the tip. Never make an issue of the check.

Social skills can make or break your career. Employees have to exhibit a certain level of professionalism and etiquette in their regular work day, and particularly in positions where they come in contact with clients. Be one step ahead—practice the social skills necessary to help you make a great first impression and stand out in a competitive job market.

Written by Jennie Hunter, a professor at Western Carolina University.
Ten Rules of Interviewing

Before stepping into an interview, be sure to practice, practice, practice. A job-seeker going to a job interview without preparing is like an actor performing on opening night without rehearsing.

To help with the interview process, keep the following ten rules in mind:

1. **Keep your answers brief and concise.** Unless asked to give more detail, limit your answers to two to three minutes per question. Tape yourself and see how long it takes you to fully answer a question.

2. **Include concrete, quantifiable data.** Interviewees tend to talk in generalities. Unfortunately, generalities often fail to convince interviewers that the applicant has assets. Include measurable information and provide details about specific accomplishments when discussing your strengths.

3. **Repeat your key strengths three times.** It’s essential that you comfortably and confidently articulate your strengths. Explain how the strengths relate to the company’s or department’s goals and how they might benefit the potential employer. If you repeat your strengths then they will be remembered and—if supported with quantifiable accomplishments—they will more likely be believed.

4. **Prepare five or more success stories.** In preparing for interviews, make a list of your skills and key assets. Then reflect on past jobs and pick out one or two instances when you used those skills successfully.

5. **Put yourself on their team.** Ally yourself with the prospective employer by using the employer’s name and products or services. For example, “As a member of __________, I would carefully analyze the __________ and __________.” Show that you are thinking like a member of the team and will fit in with the existing environment. Be careful though not to say anything that would offend or be taken negatively. Your research will help you in this area.

6. **Image is often as important as content.** What you look like and how you say something are just as important as what you say. Studies have shown that 65 percent of the conveyed message is nonverbal; gestures, physical appearance and attire are highly influential during job interviews.

7. **Ask questions.** The types of questions you ask and the way you ask them can make a tremendous impression on the interviewer. Good questions require advance preparation. Just as you plan how you would answer an interviewer’s questions, write out specific questions you want to ask. Then look for opportunities to ask them during the interview. Don’t ask about benefits or salary. The interview process is a two-way street whereby you and the interviewer assess each other to determine if there is an appropriate match.

8. **Maintain a conversational flow.** By consciously maintaining a conversational flow—a dialogue instead of a monologue—you will be perceived more positively. Use feedback questions at the end of your answers and use body language and voice intonation to create a conversational interchange between you and the interviewer.

9. **Research the company, product lines and competitors.** Research will provide information to help you decide whether you’re interested in the company and important data to refer to during the interview.

10. **Keep an interview journal.** As soon as possible, write a brief summary of what happened. Note any follow-up action you should take and put it in your calendar. Review your presentation. Keep a journal of your attitude and the way you answered the questions. Did you ask questions to get the information you needed? What might you do differently next time? Prepare and send a brief thank-you letter. Restate your skills and stress what you can do for the company.

In Summary

Because of its importance, interviewing requires advance preparation. Only you will be able to positively affect the outcome. You must be able to compete successfully with the competition for the job you want. In order to do that, be certain you have considered the kind of job you want, why you want it and how you qualify for it. You also must face reality: Is the job attainable?

In addition, recognize what it is employers want in their candidates. They want “can do” and “will do” employees. Recognize and use the following factors to your benefit as you develop your sales presentation. In evaluating candidates, employers consider the following factors:

- Ability
- Loyalty
- Personality
- Acceptance
- Recommendations
- Outside activities while in school
- Impressions made during the interview
- Character
- Initiative
- Communication skills
- Work record

Written by Roseanne R. Bensley, Career Services, New Mexico State University.
Students With Disabilities: Acing the Interview

The traditional face-to-face interview can be particularly stressful when you have a disability—especially a visible disability. Hiring managers and employers may have had little prior experience with persons with disabilities and may react with discomfort or even shock to the appearance of a wheelchair, cane or an unusual physical trait. When this happens, the interviewer is often so uncomfortable that he or she just wants to “get it over with” and conducts the interview in a hurried manner. But this scenario robs you of the opportunity to present your credentials and could prevent the employer from identifying a suitable, qualified candidate for employment.

It is essential that you understand that interviewing is not a passive process where the interviewer asks all the questions and you simply provide the answers. You, even more than applicants without disabilities, must be skilled in handling each interview in order to put the employer representative at ease. You must also be able to demonstrate your ability to manage your disability and be prepared to provide relevant information about your skills, experiences and educational background. In addition, you may have to inform the employer of the equipment, tools and related resources that you will need to perform the job tasks.

To Disclose or Not to Disclose

To disclose or not to disclose, and when and how to disclose, are decisions that persons with disabilities must make for themselves during the job search process. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), you are not legally obligated to disclose your disability unless it is likely to directly affect your job performance. On the other hand, if your disability is visible, it will be evident at the time of the interview so it may be more prudent to acknowledge your disability during the application process to avoid catching the employer representative off guard.

Reasons for Disclosing

You take a risk when you decide to disclose your disability. Some employers may reject your application based on negative, preconceived ideas about persons with disabilities. In addition, you may feel that the issue is too personal to be publicized among strangers. On the other hand, if you provide false answers about your health or disability on an application and the truth is uncovered later, you risk losing your job. You may even be held legally responsible if you failed to inform your employer and an accident occurs that is related to your disability.

Timing the Disclosure

The employer’s first contact with you will typically be through your cover letter and resume, especially if you initially contacted the organization. There are many differing opinions on whether one should mention the disability on the resume or in the cover letter. If you are comfortable revealing your disability early in the process, then give careful consideration to where the information is placed and how it is stated. The cover letter and resume should primarily outline relevant skills, experiences and education for the position for which you are applying. The reader should have a clear understanding of your suitability for the position. Therefore, if you choose to disclose your disability, the disclosure should be brief and placed near the end of the cover letter and resume. It should never be the first piece of information that the employer sees about you. The information should also reveal your ability to manage your disability while performing required job functions.

When You Get the Interview

As stated earlier, it may not be wise to hide the disability (especially a visible disability) until the time of the interview. The employer representative may be surprised, uncomfortable or assume that you intentionally hid critical information. As a result, more time may be spent asking irrelevant and trivial questions because of nervousness, rather than focusing on your suitability for the position. Get assistance from contacts in human resources, your career center or workers with disabilities about the different ways to prepare the interviewer for your arrival. Take the time to rehearse what you will say before making initial contact. If oral communication is difficult for you, have a career services staff person (or another professional) place the call for you and explain how you plan to handle the interview. If you require support for your interview (such as a sign language interpreter), contact human resources in advance to arrange for this assistance. Advance preparation puts everyone at ease and shows that you can manage your affairs.

Tips on Managing the Interview

Prior to the Interview

1. Identify a career services staff person to help you prepare employers for their interview with you.
2. Arrange for several taped, mock interview sessions to become more confident in discussing your work-related skills and in putting the employer representative at ease; rehearse ahead of time to prepare how you will handle inappropriate, personal or possibly illegal questions.
3. If your disability makes oral communication difficult, create a written narrative to supplement your resume that details your abilities.
4. Determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can respond to questions related to this topic.
5. Be sure that your career center has information for employers on interviewing persons with disabilities.
6. Seek advice from other workers with disabilities who have been successful in finding employment.
7. Review the general advice about interviewing outlined in this career guide.

During the Interview

1. Put the interviewer at ease before starting the interview by addressing any visible disability (if you have not done so already).
2. Plan to participate fully in the discussion (not just answer questions); maintain the appropriate control of the interview by tactfully keeping the interview focused on your abilities—not the disability.
3. Inform the employer of any accommodations needed and how they can be achieved, thereby demonstrating your ability to manage your disability.
4. Conclude the interview by reiterating your qualifications and giving the interviewer the opportunity to ask any further questions.

Written by Rosita Smith.
Dressing for the Interview

Depending upon your fashion style, whether it is the latest trends for the club scene or merely college senior casual, a job interview may be cause for some drastic wardrobe augmentation.

For your interviews, some of your individualism might have to be shelved or kept in the closet. In most business and technical job interviews, when it comes to your appearance, conservativism and conformity are in order.

While many companies have adopted the “office casual” dress code, don’t try to set new standards in the interview. When in doubt, it is better to be too conservative than to be too flashy. For men and women, a suit is the best bet.

Here are some guidelines:

MEN

• A two-piece suit will suffice in most instances.
• Solid colors and tighter-woven fabrics are safer than bold prints or patterns.
• Bright ties bring focus to the face, but a simple pattern is best for an interview. (A tip for larger men: Use a double Windsor knot to minimize a bulky appearance.)
• Wear polished shoes with socks high enough so no skin is visible when you sit down and cross your legs.

WOMEN

• A suit with a knee-length skirt and a tailored blouse is most appropriate.
• Although even the most conservative organizations allow more feminine looks these days, accessories should be kept simple. Basic pumps and modest jewelry and makeup help to present a professional look.
• Pants are more acceptable now but are not recommended for interviews.

Staying Within a Budget

For recent graduates just entering professional life, additions to wardrobes, or complete overhauls, are likely needed. Limited funds, however, can be an obstacle. Image consultant Christine Lazzarini suggests “capsule wardrobing.” For example, by mixing and matching, she says, an eight-piece capsule wardrobe can generate up to 28 ensembles.

Before shopping, Lazzarini advises establishing a budget, 50% of which should be targeted for accessories. For women, “even a brightly colored jacket could be considered an accessory when it makes an outfit you already have look entirely different.”

The most important piece in any wardrobe is a jacket that is versatile and can work with a number of other pieces, according to one fashion expert. This applies to men and women. “If you focus on a suit, buy one with a jacket which may be used with other skirts or trousers,” says a women’s fashion director for a major national retailer. “Then add a black turtleneck or a white shirt. These are the fashion basics that you can build on.”

A navy or black blazer for men can work well with a few different gabardine pants. Although this kind of ensemble would be just as expensive as a single suit, it offers more versatility.

One accessory recommended by company representatives is a briefcase. “When I see one,” says one recruiter, “it definitely adds to the candidate’s stature. It is a symbol to me that the individual has done some research and that he or she is prepared.”

A Final Check

And, of course, your appearance is only as good as your grooming. Create a final checklist to review before you go on an interview:

• Neatly trimmed hair
• Conservative makeup
• No runs in stockings
• Shoes polished (some suggest wearing your sneakers on the way to an interview and changing before you enter the interview site)
• No excessive jewelry; men should refrain from wearing earrings
• No missing buttons, crooked ties or lint

You want your experience and qualifications to shine. Your appearance should enhance your presentation, not overwhelm it.

Taking a Casual Approach

“Office casual” is becoming the accepted mode of dress at more and more companies. The rules, however, for casual attire are subject to tremendous company-to-company variance. At some, “casual day” is a Friday-only observance, where the dress code is slightly relaxed—a sports coat and slacks for men and slacks and a sweater for women. At others, especially entrepreneurial computer companies, it’s shorts and sandals every day.

The safest fashion rule for new employees to follow is dress about the same as your most conservatively attired co-worker. As a new hire, don’t try to “push the boundaries” of casual attire.

Fashion Arrests: 1) Never wear blue denim jeans or shorts unless the vast majority of others do; 2) Don’t dress too provocatively—you’re at work, not at a dance club; 3) “Casual” doesn’t mean “sloppy”—your clothes should always be free of stains or holes; 4) Workout wear belongs at the gym.

Play It Safe: 1) Chinos or corduroy slacks are usually a safe bet for both sexes; 2) As for formal business attire, buy the best that your budget will allow; 3) If you will be seeing clients, dress appropriately for their workplace, not yours; 4) Go to the mall—most department and specialty stores have sections devoted to this style of office attire.
Tell me about a time when you were on a team, and one of the members wasn’t carrying his or her weight.” If this is one of the leading questions in your job interview, you could be in for a behavioral interview. Based on the premise that the best way to predict future behavior is to determine past behavior, this style of interviewing is popular among recruiters.

Today, more than ever, each hiring decision is critical. Behavioral interviewing is designed to minimize personal impressions that might cloud the hiring decision. By focusing on the applicant’s actions and behaviors, rather than subjective impressions that can sometimes be misleading, interviewers can make more accurate hiring decisions.

A manager of staff planning and college relations for a major chemical company believes, “Although we have not conducted any formal studies to determine whether retention or success on the job has been affected, I feel our move to behavioral interviewing has been successful. It helps concentrate recruiters’ questions on areas important to our candidates’ success within [our company].” The company introduced behavioral interviewing in the mid-1980s at several sites and has since implemented it companywide.

Behavioral vs. Traditional Interviews

If you have training or experience with traditional interviewing techniques, you may find the behavioral interview quite different in several ways:

✓ Instead of asking how you would behave in a particular situation, the interviewer will ask you to describe how you did behave.

✓ Expect the interviewer to question and probe (think of “peeling the layers from an onion”).

✓ The interviewer will ask you to provide details and will not allow you to theorize or generalize about events.

✓ The interview will be a more structured process that will concentrate on areas that are important to the interviewer, rather than allowing you to concentrate on areas that you may feel are important.

✓ You may not get a chance to deliver any prepared stories.

✓ Most interviewers will be taking notes throughout the interview.

The behavioral interviewer has been trained to objectively collect and evaluate information and works from a profile of desired behaviors that are needed for success on the job. Because the behaviors a candidate has demonstrated in previous positions are likely to be repeated, you will be asked to share situations in which you may or may not have exhibited these behaviors. Your answers will be tested for accuracy and consistency.

If you are an entry-level candidate with no previous related experience, the interviewer will look for behaviors in situations similar to those of the target position:

“Describe a major problem you have faced and how you dealt with it.”

“Give an example of when you had to work with your hands to accomplish a task or project.”

“What class did you like the most? What did you like about it?”

Follow-up questions will test for consistency and determine if you exhibited the desired behavior in that situation:

“Can you give me an example?”

“What did you do?”

“What did you say?”

“What were you thinking?”

“How did you feel?”

“What was your role?”

“What was the result?”

You will notice an absence of such questions as, “Tell me about your strengths and weaknesses.”

How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

✓ Recall recent situations that show favorable behaviors or actions, especially those involving coursework, work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning and customer service.

✓ Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to give details if asked.

✓ Be sure each story has a beginning, a middle and an end; i.e., be ready to describe the situation, your action and the outcome or result.

✓ Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable).

✓ Be honest. Don’t embellish or omit any part of the story.

✓ The interviewer will find out if your story is built on a weak foundation.

✓ Be specific. Don’t generalize about several events; give a detailed accounting of one event.

A possible response to the question, “Tell me about a time when you were on a team and a member wasn’t pulling his or her weight” might go as follows: “I had been assigned to a team to build a canoe out of concrete. One of our team members wasn’t showing up for our lab sessions or doing his assignments. I finally met with him in private, explained the frustration of the rest of the team and asked if there was anything I could do to help. He told me he was preoccupied with another class that he wasn’t passing, so I found someone to help him with the other course. He not only was able to spend more time on our project, but he was also grateful to me for helping him out. We finished our project on time and got a ‘B’ on it.”

The interviewer might then probe: “How did you feel when you confronted this person?” “Exactly what was the nature of the project?” “What was his responsibility as a team member?” “What was your role?” “At what point did you take it upon yourself to confront him?” You can see it is important that you not make up or “shade” information and why you should have a clear memory of the entire incident.

Don’t Forget the Basics

Instead of feeling anxious or threatened by the prospect of a behavioral interview, remember the essential difference between the traditional interview and the behavioral interview: The traditional interviewer may allow you to project what you might or should do in a given situation, whereas the behavioral interviewer is looking for past actions only. It will always be important to put your best foot forward and make a good impression on the interviewer with appropriate attire, good grooming, a firm handshake and direct eye contact. There is no substitute for promptness, courtesy, preparation, enthusiasm and a positive attitude.
Turning the Tables in the Interview

You’ve sat through most of the interview and have answered all the recruiter’s questions. You know you’ve made a good impression because you prepared for the interview and your answers were articulate and decisive. You’ve come across as a very bright, capable candidate when the recruiter asks something you didn’t anticipate: “Do you have any questions?”

If you don’t have any questions prepared and you try to cover your mistake by asking a spur-of-the-moment question, chances are you will damage your chances for a successful interview. Some recruiters refuse to hire people who don’t ask intelligent questions. Don’t ask questions just for the sake of asking questions—make sure it is information that you need.

Prepare Questions in Advance

You should have a list of questions prepared for this crucial part of the interview. Every question you ask should demonstrate your interest and confirm your knowledge of the organization.

You should read publications in the field. You can get information about new products or policies by surfing the employer’s Web site or by reading general magazines or trade publications. It is appropriate to address some of your questions to what you have read. Ask about new products, how research and development is structured at the company, management strategies at the company, how the company has changed, and potential product growth.

Some of the publications providing a wealth of information are Fortune, Forbes, BusinessWeek and The Wall Street Journal.

Questions Not to Ask

Not only should you know what questions to ask during the interview, but it is important to know what questions not to ask. You don’t want to alienate the recruiter by putting him or her on the defensive.

The following areas should generally be avoided:

1. Avoid asking questions that are answered in the company’s annual report or employment brochure. Recruiters are familiar enough with their own information to recognize when you haven’t done your homework. If some information in the annual report isn’t clear to you, by all means ask for clarification.

2. Don’t bring up salary or benefits in the initial interview. The majority of companies recruiting are very competitive and will offer approximately similar salaries and benefits. The recruiter may choose to bring up the information, but you should not initiate the topic.

3. Avoid asking any personal questions or questions that will put the recruiter on the defensive. This includes questions such as the interviewer’s educational background, marital status, past work experience and so on.

4. Don’t ask questions that have already been answered during the interview. If you have prepared a list of questions and some of them have been addressed during the interview, do not repeat them unless you need clarification.

Questions You Should Ask

Now that you know what you shouldn’t ask during the interview, determine what questions you should ask.

1. Ask specific questions about the position. You need to know what duties will be required of the person in the position to see if there is a fit between your interests and qualifications and the job you seek.

2. Try to find out as much as possible about qualities and skills the recruiter is looking for in job candidates. Once you determine the necessary qualities, you can then explain to the recruiter how your background and capabilities relate to those qualities.

3. Ask questions concerning advancement and promotion paths available. Every company is different and most advancement policies are unique. Try to find out what the possible promotion path is to see if it fits your career goals. You may also want to ask about periodic performance evaluations.

4. It is appropriate to ask specific questions about the company’s training program if this information is not covered in company literature.

5. Ask questions about location and travel required. If you have limitations, this is the time to find out what is expected in the position.

Some Final Advice

The key to a successful interview is good communication and rapport with the recruiter. One of the fastest ways to damage this kind of relationship is by exhibiting ignorance about the company and asking inappropriate questions.

Listed below are questions you might ask during the interview. (Used with permission from Career Planning Today, C. Randall Powell.)

- How much travel is normally expected?
- Can I progress at my own pace or is it structured?
- How much contact and exposure to management is there?
- Is it possible to move through the training program faster?
- About how many individuals go through your training program each year?
- How much freedom is given and discipline required of new people?
- How often are performance reviews given?
- How much decision-making authority is given after one year?
- How much input does the new person have on geographical location?
- What is the average age of top management?
- What is the average time it takes to get to _______ level in the career path?
## Guide to Appropriate Pre-Employment Inquiries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCEPTABLE</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>UNACCEPTABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Have you worked for this company under a different name?”</td>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>Former name of applicant whose name has been changed by court order or otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Have you ever been convicted of a crime under another name?”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicant’s place of residence</td>
<td>ADDRESS OR DURATION OF RESIDENCE</td>
<td>Birthplace of applicant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long applicant has been a resident of this state or city</td>
<td></td>
<td>Birthplace of applicant’s parents, spouse or other relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Can you, after employment, submit a work permit if under 18?”</td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>Requirement that applicant submit a birth certificate, naturalization or baptismal record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Are you over 18 years of age?”</td>
<td></td>
<td>Questions that tend to identify applicants 40 to 64 years of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“If hired, can you furnish proof of age?”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Requirement that applicant submit a birth certificate, naturalization or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>baptismal record</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicant’s religious denomination or affiliation, church, parish, pastor</td>
<td>RELIGION</td>
<td>Applicant’s religious denomination or affiliation, church, parish, pastor or religious holidays</td>
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<tr>
<td>or religious holidays observed</td>
<td></td>
<td>observed</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Do you attend religious services or a house of worship?”</td>
<td></td>
<td>“This is a Catholic/Protestant/Jewish/atheist organization.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicant may not be told “This is a Catholic/Protestant/Jewish/atheist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>organization.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement by employer that if hired, applicant may be required to submit</td>
<td>WORK DAYS AND SHIFTS</td>
<td>Requirement that applicant produce naturalization papers or first papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proof of authorization to work in the United States</td>
<td></td>
<td>Whether applicant, parents or spouse are citizens of the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages applicant reads, speaks or writes fluently</td>
<td>NATIONAL ORIGIN OR ANCESTRY</td>
<td>Applicant’s nationality, lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent or parentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant’s academic, vocational or professional education; schools</td>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>Date of arrival in United States or port of entry; how long a resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attended</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nationality of applicant’s parents or spouse; maiden name of applicant’s wife or mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant’s work experience</td>
<td>EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>Language commonly used by applicant, “What is your mother tongue?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant’s military experience in armed forces of United States, in a</td>
<td>CHARACTER</td>
<td>How applicant acquired ability to read, write or speak a foreign language</td>
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<td>state militia (U.S.) or in a particular branch of U.S. armed forces</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Have you ever been convicted of any crime? If so, when, where and what</td>
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<tr>
<td>was the disposition of case?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Names of applicant’s relatives already employed by this company</td>
<td>RELATIVES</td>
<td>Marital status or number of dependents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and address of parent or guardian if applicant is a minor</td>
<td></td>
<td>Name or address of relative, spouse or children of adult applicant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and address of person to be notified in case of accident or emergency</td>
<td>NOTICE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY</td>
<td>“With whom do you reside?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations, clubs, professional societies or other associations of</td>
<td>ORGANIZATIONS</td>
<td>“Do you live with your parents?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>which applicant is a member, excluding any names the character of which</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>indicate the race, religious creed, color, national origin or ancestry of</td>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>its members</td>
<td></td>
<td>Requirement of submission of a religious reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“By whom were you referred for a position here?”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Can you perform all of the duties outlined in the job description?”</td>
<td>PHYSICAL CONDITION</td>
<td>“Do you have any physical disabilities?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement by employer that all job offers are contingent on passing a</td>
<td></td>
<td>Questions on general medical condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physical examination</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inquiries as to receipt of workmen’s compensation</td>
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</tbody>
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*www.howard.edu/careerservices*
The Site Visit/Interview: One Step Closer

While on-campus screening interviews are important, on-site visits are where jobs are won or lost. After an on-campus interview, strong candidates are usually invited to visit the employer’s facility. Work with the employer to schedule the on-site visit at a mutually convenient time. Sometimes employers will try to arrange site visits for several candidates to take place at the same time, so there may not be much flexibility… but you’ll never know if the employer is flexible unless you ask.

1. An invitation to an on-site interview, often referred to as the “plant trip,” is NOT a guarantee of a job offer. It is a chance to examine whether or not you will be a good match for the job and for the organization.

2. If invited to a plant trip, respond promptly if you are sincerely interested in this employer. Decline politely if you are not. Never go on a plant trip for the sake of the trip. Document the name and phone number of the person coordinating your trip. Verify who will be handling trip expenses. Most medium- and large-size companies (as well as many smaller ones) will pay your expenses, but others will not. This is very important, because expenses are handled in various ways: 1) the employer may handle all expenses and travel arrangements; 2) you handle your expenses and arrangements (the employer may assist with this), and the employer will reimburse you later; 3) the employer may offer an on-site interview, but will not pay for your interview.

3. Know yourself and the type of job you are seeking with this employer. Don’t say, “I am willing to consider anything you have.”

4. Thoroughly research the potential employer. Read annual reports, newspaper articles, trade journals, etc. Many companies have Web sites, where you can read mission statements, find out about long-term goals, read recent press releases, and view corporate photos. Don’t limit your research only to company-controlled information. The World Wide Web can be a valuable investigative tool. You may uncover key information that may influence—positively or negatively—your decision to pursue employment with a given organization.

5. Bring extra copies of your resume; copies of any paperwork you may have forwarded to the employer; names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of your references; an updated college transcript; a copy of your best paper as a writing sample; a notebook; a black and/or blue pen for filling out forms and applications; and names and addresses of past employers.

6. Bring extra money and a change of clothes. Also, have the names and phone numbers of those who may be meeting you in case your plans change unexpectedly. Anything can happen and you need to be ready for emergencies.

7. Your role at the interview is to respond to questions, to ask your own questions and to observe. Be ready to meet people who are not part of your formal agenda. Be courteous to everyone regardless of his or her position; you never know who might be watching you and your actions once you arrive in town.

8. Don’t forget your table manners. Plant trips may include several meals or attendance at a reception the night before your “big day.” When ordering food at a restaurant, follow the lead of the employer host. For example, don’t order the three-pound lobster if everyone else is having a more moderately priced entree. If you have the “dining jitters,” some authorities suggest ordering food that is easy to handle, such as a boneless fish fillet or chicken breast.

9. Many employers have a set salary range for entry-level positions and others are more negotiable. Though salary should not be brought up until an offer is extended, it is wise to know your worth in advance. In as much as you are a potential employee, you also represent a valuable skills-set product. You should know what kind of product you have created, its value and what the company is willing to buy. Contact your campus career center to obtain more information on salaries.

Take note of how the employees interact, and also assess the physical work environment.

10. Soon after the site visit, record your impressions of your performance. Review the business cards of those you met or write the information in your notebook before leaving the facility. You should have the names, titles, addresses and phone numbers of everyone who was involved in your interview so you can determine which individuals you may want to contact with additional questions or follow-up information. A thank-you letter should be written to the person(s) who will be making the hiring decision. Stay in touch with the employer if you want to pursue a career with them.

A site visit is a two-way street. You are there to evaluate the employer and to determine if your expectations are met for job content, company culture and values, organizational structure, and lifestyles (both at work and leisure). Take note of how the employees interact, and also assess the physical work environment.

Just as any good salesperson would never leave a customer without attempting to close the sale, you should never leave an interview without some sort of closure. If you decide that the job is right for you, don’t be afraid to tell the employer that you feel that there is a good fit and you are eager to join their team. The employer is interested in hiring people who want to be associated with them and they will never know of your interest if you don’t voice your opinion. Keep in mind that although the employer has the final power to offer a job, your demeanor during the entire interviewing process—both on and off campus—also gives you a great deal of power.

Written by Roseanne R. Bensley, Career Services, New Mexico State University.
Positive Comments
Made by Prospective Employers Regarding the Interview

Compiled and edited by: Samuel M. Hall, Jr., former Director, Career Services Office, Howard University

1. Mature
2. Personable and poised
3. Good presentation
4. Carries self well
5. Well-organized thoughts
6. Good work history
7. Friendly
8. Mature, related thoughts clearly
9. Composed, communicates well
10. Mature, responsible, and prepared
11. Presents himself well
12. Very good communication
13. Very impressive resume and personality
14. Very bright, aggressive
15. Well groomed, poised
16. Personable, inquisitive
17. Very promising, positive
18. Pleasant
19. Experience and analysis excellent
20. Shows poise
21. Articulate, good questions
22. Poised, self-confident, good eye contact
23. Very, very outstanding student
24. Good prospect

25. I was very impressed
26. Well prepared
27. Has potential
28. Excellent interview
29. Asked good questions
30. Knew exactly what he wanted
31. Assertive, personable
32. Good solid prospect
33. Bright, articulate & confident
34. Impressive, ambitious
35. Outstanding candidate
36. Super
37. Determined, good potential
38. Solid candidate
39. Talks well
40. Strong motivation
41. Very good technical skills
42. A go-getter, aggressive
43. Prepared, enthusiastic
44. Very professional style
45. Good course selection
46. Good verbal skills
47. Self-assured

Negative Comments
Made by Prospective Employers Regarding the Interview

Compiled and edited by: Samuel M. Hall, Jr., former Director, Career Services Office, Howard University

1. Nice guy—but grades too low
2. Low key
3. Questionable
4. Could be more vocal
5. Very shy, doesn’t come across well
6. Nice person but not for this company
7. Very quiet
8. Weak GPA
9. Grades are low
10. Not sufficiently competitive
11. Average, subdued, no drive, not competitive
12. Needs to improve verbal skills
13. Needs to be punctual
14. Not very knowledgeable
15. Voice too soft, no inflection
16. Needs to brush up on interviewing
17. Not well prepared—no research on company
18. Unorganized in interview
19. Should display more confidence
20. No preparation
21. Did not have interest in manufacturing
22. Student visa, should not be on schedule
23. Not much practical experience
24. No further interest

25. Needs interview skills
26. Not aggressive enough
27. Does not demonstrate the level of desire or determination needed
28. Didn’t project confidence
29. Maturity level low
30. Didn’t display very much interest
31. Student will not relocate
32. Problem with conceptualization
33. Doesn’t present himself well
34. Should be more forceful
35. Not prepared at all, very reserved
36. Tended to “you know” a lot
37. Didn’t know anything about the company
38. Too soft spoken
39. Narrow geographical preference
40. Needs stronger presentation
41. Needs to open lines of communication
42. Needs to improve on dress appearance
43. Rather unsure of self
44. Poor English skills
45. Should develop more poise
46. Too low key
47. No match—low grades, marginal candidate
Pre-Employment Testing

You are about to graduate and, finally, you don’t have to worry about taking tests any more. Right? Well… not necessarily. An increasing number of employers are using pre-employment testing to help them find the most qualified candidates for the job. In a tight job market, it’s not surprising that employers are turning to pre-employment testing to make sure that they get the most out of their most important investment—their employees. “Companies use pre-employment testing because it is expensive to hire the wrong person,” says Kurt Helm, Ph.D., President and founder of Helm and Associates, Inc., a company that designs and sells pre-employment tests. “Along with the resume, cover letter, and interview, pre-employment testing is another tool employers can use to make sure they hire the right person for the job.”

Types of Pre-Employment Tests

As the name implies, pre-employment tests are given to job candidates before a job offer is made. For the purposes of this article, pre-employment tests refer to tests designed to measure an applicant’s knowledge, skill, or suitability for a particular job. Whether they are computer-based or written, there are two broad categories of pre-employment tests: personality tests and aptitude tests.

Aptitude Tests

For many employers, your college degree proves that you have the knowledge and training to perform a particular job. But sometimes, employers need more direct proof. Aptitude tests measure how well job applicants can perform a specific task related to the job they are applying for. For example, a student applying for a job as a computer programmer may be asked to create a specific program using C++ in a UNIX system, or a student applying for a job in publishing might be asked to read and correct a sample manuscript. Sometimes, the applicant will be asked to complete the task at the place of employment under rigid time constraints. Other times, the applicant will be able to take the test home with them and return it days or even weeks later.

Personality Tests

Having the knowledge and skills required to do a job does not guarantee that you will be a good employee. You must be able to work well with fellow employees and with your supervisors and managers. “Most terminations that occur in organizations occur because of personality conflicts,” says Dr. Helm. “Employers say things like ‘she didn’t fit in with our corporate culture,’ or ‘he didn’t work well with his managers.’” With this in mind, employers often give potential employees personality tests to see how well they will fit within the corporate culture. These tests attempt to measure a variety of personality factors ranging from how you manage your time and your daily activities to how well you follow orders or collaborate with others.

Preparing for Pre-Employment Tests

First, find out if any type of pre-employment test will be used. This information can be found in job postings or on the HR section of company Web sites. You can also ask the employer directly about pre-employment testing when an interview is scheduled. “The employer almost always tells job applicants if there is going to be any type of pre-employment testing during the initial stages of the application process,” says John Kniering, the Director of Career Services at the University of Hartford. “But it never hurts to bring the question up yourself if you are unsure.” In some instances, employers will even provide candidates with sample questions from pre-employment tests. Nobody likes a pop quiz, and knowing that a test is coming and what it will be testing will enable you to be more relaxed. Be sure to take a close look at the qualifications and skills listed on the job description. Almost without exception, those are the skills for which you are going to be tested.

More often than not, however, there is little you can do to prepare for a pre-employment test. Pre-employment tests designed to access your aptitude will quiz you about information accrued over years of study and experience. You can’t cram for these types of tests. Personality tests, on the other hand, are given to ascertain how you will interact with co-workers and fit in with the corporate climate. Dr. Helm suggests that students respond to personality tests as honestly as they can. “Most personality tests contain ‘lie scales,’ which help measure how much effort applicants put into trying to look good in the eyes of the employer,” he says. “These scales are used to adjust the applicants’ test results and give more accurate reports.”

However, there are some common sense things you can do to ensure you will perform your best. Read the test directions carefully, and be sure to ask for clarification if you have any questions about how to take the test. On timed tests, save the difficult questions for the end so you have time to answer the easier questions. And just as you did for your tests in college, make sure you get a good night’s sleep before testing.

Legal Issues

Employers must be able to show that pre-employment tests used to make hiring decisions tests skills and attributes relevant to the job being filled. “There must be a link between what the test measures and what the job requires,” says Dr. Helm. For aptitude tests, this link is often obvious, but for tests measuring attitude or personality, the connection may be harder to make. “Companies that use employment tests are responsible for making sure that the job description demonstrates the need for behavior or attitudes that the employment test measures,” Dr. Helm adds.

Employers must also take measures to ensure that pre-employment tests do not unfairly screen out people with disabilities. Tests must measure a job candidate’s knowledge, attributes, and skills, not his or her disabilities. Tell potential employers about any personal disability that you feel puts you at a disadvantage when taking a pre-employment test so that they can make accommodations to ensure the test is applied fairly.

Written by Chris Enstrom, a free-lance writer from Nashville, Ind.
Congratulations! You’ve successfully managed your second interviews and have been offered a job! Perhaps you’ve even received offers from more than one employer. Whether it’s one offer or more, your euphoria is sometimes quickly replaced by anxiety about the decisions which lie ahead. You may be wondering, “Is this the ‘right’ job for me?” or “Am I going to be happy in this job, or should I just take it because I need a job, period?” Careful evaluation of your job offer and some serious thought as to how well the position and organization meet your needs can enable you to make the best choice for yourself. One of our staff members can help you sort out your options.

In evaluating your job offer, there are three critical questions you should address:

1. How closely does the offer match your career goal? Think back to when you started your job search. What was important to you? What factors regarding a job, organization and work environment were on your “wish list”? Have they changed? How well does this position fit these factors? Below are some factors you may want to consider in evaluating your offer. Some of these may not be important to you, and there may be other factors not listed which are extremely important to your decision.

2. Do you need additional information about the offer (or anything) in order to make a decision? It is not unusual to discover, as you’re weighing different factors about the offer, that you have additional questions, lack some factual data, or simply need a better sense of what the job and organization are like. If this is the case, STOP! Don’t go any further in your deliberations until you address these issues. You may need to call one of your interviewers and ask additional questions, or contact an alum who works for the organization. If you need a better understanding of what it would be like during a day on the job, call the employer (if they are local) and ask to spend an afternoon observing an entry-level employee in the job you’re considering. Most employers will be willing to accommodate you. If you have other questions or concerns which impact your decision, you should discuss them with a representative from our office.

3. Are there issues you may want to negotiate, which would bring the offer closer to your goal? Perhaps the issues which concern you about the offer can be changed. If the job seems ideal except for location, then you might want to raise the issue with the employer. Some start dates are non-negotiable because training classes must begin together. In some instances, however, the start date can be adjusted.

Written by Virginia Lacy. Adapted with permission from Northwestern University’s Career Services Guide; © 1998 Virginia Lacy.

Factors for Consideration

- Nature of the work
- Organizational culture
- Level of autonomy
- Travel
- Salary
- Mentoring
- Lifestyles of employees
- Stability of organization
- Quality of higher management
- Support for continuing education/advanced degree
- Level of responsibility
- Location
- Work hours
- Benefits
- Variety of work
- Stability of industry
- Advancement opportunities
- Training and development opportunities
- Opportunities to learn and grow in job/company
- Transferability of skills/experience from job
- Prestige of job or organization
Job Offer Policy

Students at Howard University should be able to make effective job offer decisions. To do so, they must be able to explore all of the options open to them. This includes applying for fellowships, considering graduate and/or professional school, participating in the On-Campus Recruiting Programs, and exploring other career options.

We recognize that many employers want to make offers to summer interns. However, forcing a student to make a hasty decision pertaining to permanent employment precludes his or her exploration of other options. This can lead to reneging on job offers, which is against our policy. Therefore, to create a more positive image of employers recruiting on campus and to ensure that students have the opportunity to make sound decisions, all employers participating in the On-Campus Recruiting Program must follow these guidelines.

We expect employers to honor all offers made to students and that no conditions will be placed on the offer (e.g., “We have 8 offers outstanding for 6 openings and will accept the first 6 students who get back to us,” etc.). No incentives (e.g., exploding offers) may be offered to induce students to accept offers early.

FALL OFFERS
Students interviewing during the fall 2013 semester must be given at least until January 17, 2014 to make a decision on an employer offer or option. We also expect you to respect our students’ academic examination schedule (December 2 - December 13, 2013).

SPRING OFFERS
Students interviewing during the spring 2014 semester must be given at least until April 25, 2014 to make an informed decision on their offer or option. Students interviewing for summer jobs after April 11, 2014 must be given two weeks from the date of their offer to make a decision.

We expect employers to honor all offers made to students and that no conditions will be placed on the offer.

SUMMER OFFERS
Students interviewing for summer jobs during the spring 2014 semester must be given until April 25, 2014 to make a decision on their offer or option. Students interviewing for summer jobs after April 11, 2014 must be given two weeks from the date of their offer to make a decision.

Students receiving offers for permanent employment from recruiting employers as a result of their summer 2013 internship must be given until December 2, 2013 to make a decision on their offer or option.

Students receiving offers for summer 2014 employment from recruiting employers as a result of their summer 2013 internship must be given until December 2, 2013 to make a decision on their offer or option.

IMPORTANT NOTE TO EMPLOYERS
Howard University and the CEDAR Center hold institutional membership in the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), and as such adhere to and hold participating employers accountable for knowledge of and operation under the Principles for Professional Practice. By agreeing to conduct recruitment activities at Howard University it is expected that you have read, understand and will adhere to the outlined ethical principles pertaining to employment practices.

For questions regarding this policy contact us at cedarrecruiting@howard.edu or at 202-806-7513.
The Art of Negotiating

An area of the job search that often receives little attention is the art of negotiating. Once you have been offered a job, you have the opportunity to discuss with the employer the terms of your employment. Negotiations may be uncomfortable or unsatisfying because we tend to approach them with a winner-take-all attitude that is counterproductive to the concept of negotiations.

Negotiating with your potential employer can make your job one that best meets your own needs as well as those of your employer. To ensure successful negotiations, it is important to understand the basic components. The definition of negotiation as it relates to employment is: a series of communications (either oral or in writing) that reach a satisfying conclusion for all concerned parties, most often between the new employee and the hiring organization.

Negotiation is a planned series of events that requires strategy, presentation and patience. Preparation is probably the single most important part of successful negotiations. Any good trial attorney will tell you the key to presenting a good case in the courtroom is the hours of preparation that happen beforehand. The same is true for negotiating. A good case will literally present itself. What follows are some suggestions that will help you prepare for successful negotiating.

Research
Gather as much factual information as you can to back up the case you want to make. For example, if most entering employees cannot negotiate salary, you may be jeopardizing the offer by focusing on that aspect of the package. Turn your attention to other parts of the offer such as their health plan, dental plan, retirement package, the type of schedule you prefer, etc.

Psychological Preparation
Chances are that you will not know the person with whom you will be negotiating. If you are lucky enough to be acquainted, spend some time reviewing what you know about this person’s communication style and decision-making behavior.

In most cases, however, this person will be a stranger. Since most people find the unknown a bit scary, you’ll want to ask yourself what approach to negotiating you find most comfortable. How will you psyche yourself up to feel confident enough to ask for what you want? How will you respond to counteroffers? What are your alternatives? What’s your bottom line? In short, plan your strategy.

Be sure you know exactly what you want. This does not mean you will get exactly that, but having the information clear in your head will help you determine what you are willing to concede. Unless you know what you want, you won’t be able to tell somebody else. Clarity improves communication, which is the conduit for effective negotiations.

Practice
Rehearse the presentation in advance using another person as the employer. If you make mistakes in rehearsal, chances are that you will not repeat them during the actual negotiations. A friend can critique your reasoning and help you prepare for questions. If this all seems like a lot of work, remember that if something is worth negotiating for, it is worth preparing for.

Dollars and Sense
Always begin by expressing genuine interest in the position and the organization, emphasizing the areas of agreement but allowing “wiggle room” to compromise on other areas. Be prepared to support your points of disagreement, outlining the parts you would like to alter, your suggestions on how this can be done and why it would serve the company’s best interests to accommodate your request.

Be prepared to defend your proposal. Back up your reasons for wanting to change the offer with meaningful, work-related skills and positive benefits to the employer. Requesting a salary increase because you are a fast learner or have a high GPA are usually not justifiable reasons in the eyes of the employer. Meaningful work experience or internships that have demonstrated or tested your professional skills are things that will make an employer stop and take notice.

It is sometimes more comfortable for job-seekers to make this initial request in writing and plan to meet later to hash out the differences. You will need to be fairly direct and assertive at this point even though you may feel extremely vulnerable. Keep in mind that the employer has chosen you from a pool of qualified applicants, so you are not as powerless as you think.

Sometimes the employer will bristle at the suggestion that there is room to negotiate. Stand firm, but encourage the employer to think about it for a day or two at which time you will discuss the details of your proposal with him/her. Do not rush the process because you are uncomfortable. The employer may be counting on this discomfort and use it to derail the negotiations. Remember, this is a series of volleys and lobes, trade-offs and compromises that occur over a period of time. It is a process—not a singular event!

Once you have reached a conclusion with which you are both relatively comfortable, present in writing your interpretation of the agreement so that if there is any question, it will be addressed immediately. Negotiation, by definition, implies that each side will give. Do not perceive it as an ultimatum.

If the employer chooses not to grant any of your requests—and realistically, he or she can do that—you will still have the option of accepting the original offer provided you have maintained a positive, productive and friendly atmosphere during your exchanges. You can always re-enter negotiations after you have demonstrated your worth to the organization.

Money Isn’t Everything
There are many things you can negotiate besides salary. For example, benefits can add thousands of dollars to the compensation package. Benefits can range from paid personal leave to discounts on the company’s products and services. They constitute more than just icing on the cake; they may be better than the cake itself. Traditional benefits packages include health insurance, paid vacation and personal/sick days. Companies may offer such benefits as child care, elder care or use of the company jet for family emergencies. Other lucrative benefits could include disability and life insurance and a variety of retirement plans. Some organizations offer investment and stock options as well as relocation reimbursement and tuition credits for continued education.

Written by Lily Maestas, Counseling and Career Services, University of California, Santa Barbara.
Is Graduate School Right for You?

At some point in your college career, you must decide what you would like to do after graduation—and that includes whether or not to attend graduate school. If you’re trying to determine whether graduate school is right for you, here are some pointers to help you make an enlightened decision.

1. Should I consider going to graduate school?
   Going to graduate school might be a good idea if you…
   • want to be a professor, lawyer, doctor, investment banker or work in any profession that requires a post-secondary education.
   • wish to develop additional expertise in a particular subject or field to maximize your future earning potential and opportunities for career advancement.
   • are deeply interested in a particular subject and wish to study it in-depth—AND have the time and financial resources to devote to further education.
   Going to graduate school might not be a good idea if you…
   • are trying to delay your entry into the “real world” with real responsibilities and real bills.
   • are clueless about your career goals.
   • aren’t prepared to devote the time and hard work needed to succeed.
   • want to stay in school longer to avoid a poor job market.

2. Is it better to work first or attend graduate school immediately after I complete my undergraduate degree?
   Work first if…
   • you would like to get some real-world work experience before investing thousands of dollars in a graduate degree.
   • the graduate school of your choice prefers work experience (most MBA and some Ph.D. programs require this).
   • you cannot afford to go to graduate school now, and you haven’t applied for any scholarships, grants, fellowships and assistantships, which could pay for a great deal of your education.
   Go to graduate school now if…
   • you are absolutely sure you want to be a college professor, doctor, lawyer, etc., and need a graduate degree to pursue your dream job.
   • you have been awarded grants, fellowships, scholarships or assistantships that will help pay for your education.
   • you’re concerned that once you start earning real money, you won’t be able to return to the lifestyle of a “poor” student.
   • your study habits and mental abilities are at their peak, and you worry whether you’ll have the discipline (or motivation) to write papers and study for exams in a few years.

3. I am broke. How will I pay for tuition, books, fees and living expenses?
   • Family: You’ve likely borrowed from them in the past; maybe you’re lucky enough for it to still be a viable option.
   • Student Loans: Even if you’ve taken out loans in the past, another $50,000 - $75,000 may be a sound “investment” in your future.

   • Fellowships/Scholarships: A free education is always the best option. The catch is you need a high GPA, good GRE/GMAT/LSAT/MCAT scores and the commitment to search out every possible source of funding.
   • Teaching/Research Assistantships: Many assistantships include tuition waivers plus a monthly stipend. It’s a great way to get paid for earning an education.
   • Employer Sponsorship: Did you know that some companies actually pay for you to continue your education? The catch is they usually expect you to continue working for them after you complete your degree so they can recoup their investment.

4. What are the pros and cons of going to graduate school full-time vs. part-time?
   Benefits of attending graduate school full-time:
   • you’ll be able to complete your degree sooner.
   • you can totally commit your intellectual, physical and emotional energy to your education.
   • ideal if you want to make a dramatic career change.
   Benefits of attending graduate school part-time:
   • work income helps pay for your education.
   • you can take a very manageable course load.
   • you can juggle family responsibilities while completing your degree.
   • allows you to work in the function/industry/career of your choice while continuing your education.
   • employer will often pay for part (or all) of your graduate degree.

5. Assuming I want to go to graduate school in the near future, what should I do now?
   a. Identify your true strengths, interests and values to help you discover what is right for YOU—not your friends or parents.
   b. Keep your grades up and sign up (and prepare) to take the required standardized tests.
   c. Talk to faculty, friends and family who have gone to graduate school to help you find a good match.
   d. Talk to faculty, friends and family who are in your targeted profession to get a realistic sense of the career path and the challenges associated with the work they do.
   e. Investigate creative ways to finance your education—by planning ahead you may reduce your debt.
   f. Research graduate schools to help you find a good match.
   g. Investigate the admissions process and the current student body profile of your targeted schools to evaluate your probability for admission.
   h. Have faith and APPLY! Remember, you can’t get in unless you apply.

Written by Roslyn J. Bradford
Developing Proper Work Habits

Compiled by: Henrietta Duncan, Former Associate Director

Attitude and Conduct

It is especially important that you develop good work habits and demonstrate a pleasant, courteous attitude when performing your job.

Important Points to Remember

1. Get to work on time and stay until the workday is over.
2. Follow instructions well.
3. Start a job as soon as it is given to you and stick to it until it’s completed to supervisor’s satisfaction.
4. Cooperate with and show respect to coworkers.
5. Develop positive attitude towards job.
6. Show respect for others.
7. Cooperate with worksite supervisors and coworkers.
8. Do not engage in long personal conversations with coworkers.
9. Use office telephones for official business. Only in emergencies should they be used for personal reasons.
10. Do not have your friends call or visit you on the job.
11. Check your appearance—it is very important and will affect the way you feel about yourself as well as how others judge you.

Job-Keeping Skills

1. Ability to do the job well—develop your know-how and competence.
2. Initiative—working on your own without constant direction.
3. Dependability—being there when you are needed.
4. Reliability—getting the job done.
5. Efficiency—being accurate and capable.
7. Maturity—handling problems well.
8. Cheerfulness—being pleasant to be with.
9. Helpfulness—willing to pitch in and help out.
10. Unselfishness—helping in a bind even though it is not your responsibility.
11. Perseverance—carrying on with a tedious project.
12. Responsible—taking care of your duties.
13. Creative—looking for new ways to solve your employer’s problems.

Internal Blocks

Some internal blocks to job satisfaction are due to repeated work habits that are not consistent with company policy. The following internal blocks could hurt your job-keeping efforts.

1. Absence or constant tardiness without cause
2. Troublemaking
3. Too much attention to outside interest
4. Lack of initiative
5. Disloyalty
6. Irresponsibility
7. Misrepresentation
8. Lack of adaptability
9. Carelessness
10. Unwillingness to follow rules
11. Laziness
12. Too little or too much ambition
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Educational Housing Services ............. Inside Back Cover
Fairfax County Public Schools .................... 13
George Mason University ......................... 55
High Point University ............................... 54
Iowa State University,
Genetics Graduate Program ..................... 54
J.P. Morgan .................................................. Inside Front Cover
Jefferson School of Health Professions .......... 55
Loyola University Maryland ....................... 56
University of Nevada School of Medicine .... 50
Northern Trust ........................................... 9
The Princeton Review ................................ 17
Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Inc. ................. 9
Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine .. 56
USA.gov ..................................................... 37
Verizon Wireless ....................................... Inside Back Cover
Wake County Public School System ............ 17
Worcester Polytechnic Institute ................... 53
World Wildlife Fund ................................. 54

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