

# Texas A&M University-Central Texas A&M University - Central Texas Career and Professional Development Guide 2017-2018

Coaching Appointments • Career Exploration • Mock Interviews •  
Job Strategies • Career Closet Career Fairs • Internships •  
Networking • Resumes

## **Creating Connections, Preparing Warriors**

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## Career and Professional Development

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*Career and Professional Development* supports the campus community as they move through their careers. To support the development of career and life-long learning goals, we empower the campus community with the necessary professional tools to explore careers, engage with the career of choice, and embark successfully in their career field

### **Staff**

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Come See Us!

Warrior Hall, Suite 211

Phone: 254.519.5496

[tamuct.edu/cpd](http://tamuct.edu/cpd)

Monday-Friday

8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

## **Warrior Career Checklist**

### **Sophomores (30 credit hrs)**

- Use Strong Interest Inventory from Career & Professional Development to choose a major .
- Join TAMUCT organizations and plan to seek leadership roles in the future.
- Visit your social media profiles you have, & edit your content or your privacy settings. It is time to put your professional foot forward.
- Attend workshops offered by Career & Professional Development to learn more about professional skillsets such as networking & interviewing skills.
- Identify employers in your interest areas for shadowing opportunities (temporary, unpaid exposure to occupational areas of interest).
- Attend career fairs & other events on campus to network with employers that relate to your interests.

### **Juniors (60 credit hrs)**

- Determine your career-related strengths & skills; determine what you can offer an employer.
- Collect information on internships & other paid work experiences.
- Stay up-to-date with Career & Professional Development's calendar & participate in events where employers are on-campus.

- Participate in workshops offered by Career & Professional Development to learn more about professional skillsets such as network-ing & interviewing skills.
- Attend career fairs & other events on campus to gather information on potential careers & network with employers.
- Visit job listing websites (HireWarriors, Indeed, Work in Texas, USA Jobs, etc.).
- Create a list of prospective employers with contact names & info for employers you are interested in.
- Meet with your career coach to have your résumé & cover letter reviewed.

### **Seniors (90 credit hrs)**

- Get an internship or other career experience.
- Participate in workshops offered by Career & Professional Development to learn more about professional skillsets such as network-ing & interviewing skills.
- Meet with a career coach to have your résumé updated.
- Participate in interviewing work-shops or mock interviews.
- Network with recent graduates in your major about the current job market & potential employers.
- Research realistic salary expectations.
- Interview, evaluate job offers & accept one!

### **Students considering Graduate School.....**

- Conduct careful research, including talking with faculty members & Career & Professional Development.
- Speak with faculty members & students at the schools you are considering.

### **Graduate (completed undergrad)**

- Meet regularly with your faculty advisor, ask questions & keep your advisor informed of any changes in your academic career.
- Request a comprehensive description of your program, including course requirements, exams, dead-lines & expectations for the thesis.
- Visit the Writing Center for assistance with academic papers.
- Find a faculty mentor by speaking with your faculty advisor for recommendations of faculty that align with your chosen research.
- Subscribe to major specific journals & begin sending papers for conferences & publication.
- Participate in seminars or work-shops offered by your career services office to learn more about job search strategies such as net-working & interviewing skills.
- Seek internship opportunities.

*\*Regardless of where you enter Texas A&M University-Central Texas, refer to the recommended steps before to ensure you are ready for YOUR NEXT STEP!!*

## **Hire Warriors**

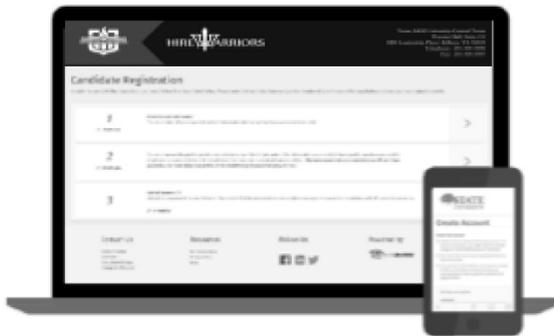
### **How to Get Started**

- Go to [tamuct.edu/cpd](http://tamuct.edu/cpd)
- Navigate to “HireWarriors Access” on the right
- For students, click “Login for Students” and enter MyCT Username and Password to sign in
- For Alumni, click “Login for Alumni”. Select “Create Account” and check the box to agree to the terms and conditions to set up your account



### How Do I Update My Profile?

- Complete the 3-step registration process to complete your profile:
- Enter your Contact Information
- Answer Profile Questions
- Upload Resume/CV



### How Do I Apply for Jobs or Internships on HireWarriors?

- Select the “Search” button on the top toolbar
- Select “Advanced Search” from the drop-down menu
- Select “Jobs” and “Job Postings” from the menu
- Choose your search criteria e.g. Job Type, Location, Industry, etc.
- Click “Results” on the right to view search results
- Save search results as “New Search” and create search name
- Select each highlighted job/internship listing to view details and apply for positions



### How Do I Sign Up for Advising Appointments?

- Click “Connect” on the top toolbar

- Select “Advising” from the drop-down menu.
- Choose an advising appointment option from the list and click “Sign Up”
- Select a time slot using the radio buttons, choose a “Topic” from the dropdown and click “Submit”
- A confirmation will appear. Click “Continue” to view your list of appointments



## Making Your Career Center Work for You

**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 résumé 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. 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 résumés 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 résumés. 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 résumé, 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.

### 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.

## Résumé 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 résumé or cover letter critique.

*“Making Your Career Center Work for You” written by Jennifer Bobrow Burns, MBA Recruiter/Business School Relationship Manager at MetLife, Global Leadership Development Program.*

## How to Find the Right Job

**Finding the job you want** takes many steps and involves just as many decisions. This checklist is designed to help you along the way and guide you to the appropriate sources. Be sure to discuss your progress with your career advisor.

### Knowing What You Want

- Choose your ideal work environment—large corporation, small business, government agency or nonprofit organization.
- Choose your ideal location—urban, suburban or rural.
- List your three most useful job skills and know which is your strongest.
- Know whether you want to work with people, data or things.
- Know whether you enjoy new projects or prefer following a regular routine.
- List some of the main career areas that might interest you.
- List your favorite leisure time activities.
- Know what kind of reward is most important to you in a job—money, security, creative authority, etc.

### Researching Career Options

- Develop a list of career possibilities to research.
- Visit your career services library and utilize the internet to learn about various careers. The Dictionary of Occupational Titles and the Occupational Outlook Handbook are valuable resources.
- Consider whether your desired career requires an advanced degree.
- Keep up with current trends in your field through trade publications, news/business magazines and newspapers.
- Identify employers interested in interviewing someone with your academic background and experience; create a list of three or more employers in the field you are considering.
- Use the internet to learn more about potential employers and check out salary surveys and hiring trends in your anticipated career field.
- Make at least three professional contacts through LinkedIn, friends, relatives or professors to learn more about your field of interest.

- Meet with faculty and alumni who work or who have worked in your field to talk about available jobs and the outlook for your field.

## Getting Experience

- Narrow down the career options you are considering through coursework and personal research.
- Participate in a work experience or internship program in your chosen field to learn of the daily requirements of the careers you are considering. Such assignments can lead to permanent job offers following graduation.
- Become an active member in one or more professional associations—consult the Encyclopedia of Associations for organizations in your field.
- Volunteer for a community or charitable organization to gain further work experience. Volunteer positions can and should be included on your résumé.

## Creating a Résumé

- Form a clear job objective.
- Know how your skills and experience support your objective.
- Use action verbs to highlight your accomplishments.
- Limit your résumé to one page and make sure it is free of misspelled words and grammatical errors.
- Create your résumé using a word processing program and have it professionally duplicated on neutral-colored paper, preferably white, light gray or beige. If you are submitting your résumé online, be sure to include relevant keywords and avoid italics, bold and underlined passages.
- Compose a separate cover letter to accompany each résumé and address the letter to a specific person. Avoid sending a letter that begins “Dear Sir/Madam.”

## Preparing for the Interview

- Arrange informational interviews with employees from companies with which you might want to interview. Use your network of acquaintances to schedule these meetings.
- Thoroughly research each employer with whom you have an interview—be familiar with product lines, services offered and growth prospects.
- Practice your interviewing technique with friends to help prepare for the actual interview.
- Using the information you have gathered, formulate questions to ask the employer during the interview.
- Arrive on time in professional business attire.
- Collect the needed information to write a thank-you letter after each interview.

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

## Evaluating Yourself

An important part of deciding what you want to do is first understanding yourself. Self-evaluation will help you analyze what is important in the work you choose and the kind of employer for whom you will work. Answer each question honestly. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.

1. What do you do best? Are these activities related to people, things or data?
2. Do you communicate better orally or in writing?
3. Do you consider yourself a leader of a team or group?
4. Do you see yourself as an active participant in a group or team?
5. Do you prefer to work by yourself?
6. Do you prefer working under supervision?
7. Do you work well under pressure?
8. Does working under pressure cause you anxiety?
9. Do you like taking responsibility?
10. Would you rather follow directions?
11. Do you enjoy new projects and activities?
12. Do you prefer to follow a regular routine?
13. Rank the following things in order of importance to you when thinking about a job:
  - Career Advancement       Prestige of Employer
  - Location       Salary
  - People (Boss and Colleagues)       Type of Work
14. Do you prefer to work a regular 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule or an irregular schedule?
15. Would you like a job with a lot of travel, a moderate amount, or a small amount?
16. What kind of work environment do you prefer?
  - Indoors       Urban Setting
  - Outdoors       Suburban Setting
  - Rural Setting
17. What size of organization would you like to work for?
18. Are you willing to move?
19. Do you prefer to work for a nonprofit or for-profit organization?
20. Are there other factors to consider?

*Adapted with permission from the University Career Services department at Rutgers University, New Brunswick Campus.*

## Google Me: Reputation Management

Cultivating your digital footprint is critical to your overall career; your personal brand during your job search is no exception. More than 80% of recruiters\* reported that they would search for candidates online. The most common sites for checking out candidates are LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, and Pinterest. Given this staggering statistic, it's important to take control of your online reputation.

## Google Yourself

The first step is to identify what's already out there. Use common search engines to investigate everything that is associated with your full name. Try search combinations, such as your full name with your college or

university. Does what you see support the professional image you are seeking to create? What you find in your research is on stage for all to see. Recruiters are well versed in how to conduct strategic online searches for candidates. Update your privacy settings and clean up your social sites as needed.

### Privacy Settings

While privacy settings limit access to portions of your social sites, it doesn't remove content from the web altogether. Keep in mind that once content is shared on the internet, generally speaking, it never goes away completely. Be mindful of future posts, comments, and photos.

## Social Media Cleaning Software

Found some pictures, particular words, or posts which need to be cleaned up? If so, use a social media cleaning software to help you polish up your social profiles. Search for social media cleaning software, select the program that meets your needs, and scrub down your profiles.

## Turn Off Features

We can't control what others post or comment, but we can control where it appears. If you have family, friends, or acquaintances that share content, tag you in pictures, or comment on your social sites, manage where that information appears. Adjust your profile settings.

## Develop Your LinkedIn Profile

To establish a professional and polished brand, create and develop your profile. LinkedIn is recognized as the online business community and you should be an active member. Unlike Facebook or other social sites, LinkedIn should communicate your professional brand in a manner that will help you network. It is ideal for identifying job opportunities and professional development. This platform allows you to connect with recruiters, follow news from companies of interest, read informative articles, and even network with fellow alumni.

## Improve Your SEO

Once you have cleaned up your social media profiles and completed your LinkedIn profile, improve your visibility online by boosting your search engine optimization (SEO). Get active on social media sites where you want to be found and noticed. Start sharing relevant business information, comment on statuses, posts, and updates to share your unique perspectives, and even post some of your own original content. The goal is to position yourself as a knowledgeable resource to others in your network and within your desired industry. The social sites where you have the most activity will float to the top of the search engine list when hiring managers search for you.

To increase your relevancy, make sure that your social media profiles contain keywords that are prominent in your desired industry. Generating "keyword rich" profiles and posts will allow your content to be found specifically in relationship to your desired industries and career path.

## Dual Personas

Avoid creating multiple profiles in one social media platform. Both profiles can often be found through a strategic online search. Having "dual personas" can come across to potential employers as if you have something to hide. Maintain one profile per site, adjust your privacy settings as needed, and post or share content that reinforces your personal and professional brand.

## Create a Personal Website

Perhaps you aren't a fan of social media sites and wondering how to cultivate your online brand. If so, create a personal website or independent blog. Establishing a personal website allows you to have an online presence while maintaining greater control of the content. Websites should have a tab for your resume, portfolio of work, pre-professional/professional affiliations, awards and honors, blog posts and more. Don't forget to include a professional headshot. List your personal website on your resume when applying for positions and on your personal business cards for networking.

*\* Joyce, Susan P. "What 80% of Employers Do Before Inviting You For An Interview," The Huffington Post. The Huffington Post, INC.*

*Gala Jackson, M.Ed. is a Millennial Expert & Career Management Consultant with InterviewSnob, a career consulting boutique for millennials. Connect with Gala @interviewsnob and check out her website at [www.interviewsnob.com](http://www.interviewsnob.com)*

## 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) and/or 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 performed 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 how 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 résumé 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 website, 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 résumé.)
3. Attend career fairs and company information sessions to learn about the skills valued by specific companies and industries.

*Written by Rosita Smith.*

### Power Verbs for Your Résumé

accelerated  
accommodated  
accomplished  
achieved  
acquired  
acted  
activated  
adapted  
added  
addressed  
adjusted

administered  
admitted  
advanced  
advised  
aided  
alleviated  
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altered  
ameliorated  
amended  
analyzed  
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apportioned  
appraised  
apprised  
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approximated  
arbitrated  
arranged  
ascertained  
assembled  
assessed  
assigned  
assisted  
attained  
attested  
audited  
augmented  
authored  
authorized

balanced  
bolstered  
boosted  
brainstormed  
budgeted  
built

calculated  
catalogued  
centralized  
certified  
chaired  
charted  
clarified  
classified

coached  
collaborated  
collected  
commissioned  
committed  
communicated  
compared  
compiled  
composed  
computed  
conceptualized  
concluded  
confirmed  
consented  
consolidated  
constructed  
contracted  
contributed  
converted  
convinced  
cooperated  
coordinated  
correlated  
corresponded  
counseled  
created  
critiqued  
customized

debugged  
deciphered  
dedicated  
delegated  
deliberated  
demonstrated  
designated  
designed  
determined  
devalued  
developed  
devised  
diagnosed  
directed  
disbursed  
dispatched  
displayed  
drafted

eased  
eclipsed  
edited  
educated  
elevated  
elicited  
employed  
empowered  
enabled  
encouraged  
endorsed  
engineered  
enhanced  
enlarged  
enlisted  
enriched  
enumerated  
envisioned  
established  
estimated  
evaluated  
examined  
excelled  
executed  
exercised  
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expedited  
explained  
extended  
extracted

fabricated  
facilitated  
familiarized  
fashioned  
figured  
finalized  
forecast  
formulated  
fostered  
founded  
fulfilled

generated  
grew  
guaranteed

guided

hired

identified

illustrated

implemented

improved

improvised

increased

indexed

indicated

inferred

influenced

informed

initiated

innovated

inspected

inspired

instituted

instructed

integrated

interceded

interpreted

interviewed

introduced

invented

investigated

involved

issued

judged

justified

launched

lectured

led

licensed

lightened

linked

maintained

marketed

measured

mediated

minimized

mobilized

modeled

moderated  
modernized  
modified  
monitored  
motivated  
multiplied

negotiated

officiated  
operated  
orchestrated  
organized  
originated  
overhauled

performed  
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pioneered  
planned  
polished  
prepared  
prescribed  
prioritized  
processed  
procured  
produced  
programmed  
projected  
promoted  
publicized  
purchased

queried  
questioned

raised  
rated  
realized  
recommended  
reconciled  
recorded  
recruited  
rectified  
reduced (losses)  
refined  
referred

reformed  
regarded  
regulated  
rehabilitated  
reinforced  
rejuvenated  
related  
relieved  
remedied  
remodeled  
repaired  
reported  
represented  
researched  
reserved  
resolved (problems)  
restored  
retrieved  
revamped  
reviewed  
revised  
revitalized  
revived

sanctioned  
satisfied  
scheduled  
screened  
scrutinized  
secured  
served  
set goals  
settled  
shaped  
smoothed  
solicited  
solved  
sought  
spearheaded  
specified  
spoke  
stimulated  
streamlined  
strengthened  
studied  
submitted  
substantiated

suggested  
summarized  
supervised  
supplemented  
surveyed  
sustained  
synthesized  
systematized

tabulated  
tailored  
traced  
trained  
transacted  
transformed  
translated  
transmitted

updated  
upgraded

validated  
valued  
verified  
visualized

wrote

*Adapted with permission from the Career Resource Manual of the University of California, Davis.*

# Functional Résumé

## Whitney Warrior

www.linkedin.com/whitneywarrior38 ■ (254)999-9999 ■ whitneywarrior38@yahoo.com

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### OBJECTIVE

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To obtain a position as a Human Resources Generalist with AIG Financial Advisors

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### EDUCATION

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#### Bachelor of Arts in English

Texas A&M University-Central Texas, Killeen, TX

Expected Spring 2016

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### RELEVANT COURSEWORK

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Advanced Composition  
Principles of Financial Management

Compensation Management  
Human Resource Management

Technical Writing and Editing  
Human Resources Law

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### PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

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#### Human Resource

- Assisted 100's of applicants individually with information regarding eligibility for loans
- Processed credit card applications by completing thorough background checks and collaborating with credit card companies to determine interest rates
- Trained new employees in effective sales techniques that increased profits by 60%

#### Finance

- Executed tasks in a timely fashion in a fast-paced bank environment such as keeping track of transactions which totaled over \$10,000 per day
- Followed a regular schedule with children and managed a budget of \$200 per week to cover any expenses
- Participated in a group project that allowed students to manage a fictional \$50,000 investment portfolio and led the class in growth and overall profit of portfolio
- Marketed different items to customers in a bank setting and successfully opened over 250 new accounts for customers

#### Communication/Customer Service

- Communicated with children and parents to ensure that all needs were being met and parents were satisfied with childcare quality
- Scheduled personal shopping appointments for approximately 25 customers weekly and provided excellent customer service by selling at least \$100 of merchandise per appointment
- Consulted with customers to meet their financial needs while following company protocol and policies

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### WORK HISTORY

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Child Care Services, Charlie & Lauren Jones, Temple, TX

August 2013-Present

Bank Teller, Bank of America, Temple, TX

May 2010-May 2012

Sales Associate, All That & Then Some, Goldwaithe, TX

June 2008-December 2009

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### LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

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Success Team Facilitator, National Society of Leadership and Success

August 2013-May 2014

- Assembled a team of 10 students and guided their leadership goal-setting process for 2 semesters
- Chose topics and led discussions that resulted in a 100% completion rate of students' goals

# Chronological Résumé

## Kerri Warrior

5104 Glen Oak Drive Copperas Cove, TX 76542 254-444-4444 warrior@gmail.com

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### Professional Profile

Innovative, technically-oriented marketing professional with Adobe, InDesign, and Photoshop experience. Extensive experience using various social media platforms including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Hootsuite.

### Education

#### **Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing, Concentration in Management**

May 2014

Texas A&M University-Central Texas, Killeen, TX: Magna Cum Laude

#### **Associate of Business Administration**

August 2014

Central Texas College, Killeen, TX

### Professional Experience

#### **Activities Director**

May 2014-Present

Peloton Ridge Country Club, Harker Heights, TX

- Plan, advertise, market, and promote all club events and activities by coordinating with fitness instructors and trainers to develop activities
- Create a variety of contests using social media that have increased followers by 25% within 1 month
- Conduct market analyses and adjust marketing efforts accordingly
- Utilize design thinking to identify target market and to develop a new business strategy

#### **Market Coordinator**

July 2013-May 2014

*Starting Position:* Marketing Intern

Lone Star Realty & Property Management, Killeen, TX

- Marketed and advertised 1,350 rental units that spanned across 5 cities. Averaged 90% occupancy rate
- Designed the new website by adding over 700 property pages. Increased visits by 40%
- Created Excel rentals lists to correspond with daily changes in rent amounts, vacancies, and evictions
- Created a customer retention plan in an effort to decrease customer turnover and increase satisfaction
- Gathered and analyzed customer feedback data via surveys using Survey Monkey
- Aided in the preparation and organization of a training manual for future marketing coordinators

#### **Student Ambassador**

January 2013-May 2014

Central Texas College, Killeen, TX

- Educated 250 high school students about Central Texas College and the importance of education
- Created a marketing plan for recruitment that aligned with the university's mission, vision, and values
- Recruited and assisted more than 50 students through the college admission process
- Planned, marketed, advertised, and promoted campus events such as Geekfest which welcomed over 1,500 visitors and New Student Orientation which accommodated over 200 students per semester

#### **Assistant Manager**

April 2011-December 2012

*Starting Position:* Retail Sales Associate

Body Central, Killeen, TX

- Supervised a team of 12-15 sales associates. Helped build and manage a positive store culture by creating incentives for meeting sales goals, conducting bi-monthly trainings, and incorporating sales competition for motivation. Interviewed, selected, hired, trained, and mentored sales associates
- Set and met individual sales goals. Assisted in meeting benchmark sales goals that were set by the company for 6 consecutive months

### Professional Affiliations

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**, American Advertising Federation-Central Texas, Killeen, TX

July 2013-Present

**Inducted Member**, National Society of Leadership and Success

August 2013-Present

# Federal Résumé

## JAMES WARRIOR

1002 Warrior Drive. • Killeen, TX 76549

Cell: 333-222-5555

Email: james.warrior@my.tamuct.com

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Citizenship: U.S.  
Veteran's Preference: 60% SCD

**OBJECTIVE:** Operations Manager (Senior Command Representative)

Announcement Number: WCIS166806671668102P

**PROFILE:** Extensive experience leading operations for innovative and groundbreaking technology in the areas of healthcare and communications. Demonstrated expertise in project management focusing on design and implementation of research and development. Excellent interpersonal and verbal communication skills serving as key advisor to senior special staff (executives). Successfully delegated authority on multi-million dollar projects; resulting in project completion of company goals totaling \$120 million. Proven managerial skills in sustainment, maintenance and readiness policy and programs. Prior military experience in complex and highly technical missions. 30+ graduate course hours, Organizational Behavior, Financial Management, Business Strategy, Workforce Plan & Employment, and Complex Project Management

### EDUCATION

**Masters of Business Administration** (GPA 3.8)

May 2015

Texas A&M University-Central Texas, Killeen, Texas 76549

**Bachelors of Business Administration in Accounting** (GPA 3.5)

August 2013

Texas A&M University-Central Texas, Killeen, Texas 76549

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Operations Manager**

11/01/14-Present

IBM, 11501 Burnet Road, Austin, Texas 78758

40 hours/week

Supervisor: Robert Gray, 222-359-9869. May be contacted.

\$82,000/yr.

**Operational and Strategic Leadership:** Review financial statements, sales and activity reports to identify areas needing cost reduction or program improvement. Direct and coordinate activities of businesses concerned with the production, pricing, sales and distribution of products. Manages the execution of complex and highly technical projects in the healthcare and communications industries. Develop and implements product-marketing strategies for advertisement campaigns. Locates and recommends new facility locations for product research and development. Revamped training program, record keeping policies and procedures.

**Supervisory/Management:** Build complex (virtual included) project management teams totaling 25 key personnel focused on innovation in healthcare and communications. Rotate employees to target key performance areas; while monitoring adjustments for workflow and skill level. Prepare performance reviews for 5 project managers with projects totaling \$120 million. Serve as advisor to executive teams on project management cycle and personnel.

**(Federal Résumé-page 2)**

**Project Manager**

IBM, 11501 Burnet Road, Austin, Texas 78758  
Supervisor: Stacy Morris,

08/11/13- 10/31/14  
40 hours per week

**Operational and Strategic Leadership:** Managed project execution to ensure adherence to budget, schedule and scope. Developed and updated project plans for information technology projects including information such as project objectives, technologies, specifications, schedules, funding and staffing. Monitored and tracked milestones and deliverables. Conferred with project personnel to identify and resolve problems. Performed risk assessments to develop response strategies. Established and executed project communication plans. Defended and justified budgetary requests. Successfully developed and issued guidance and operational procedures for \$14 million project.

**Budget Analyst (GS-8568-09)**

Accompany Defense Contracts, 2039 CTSF Fort Hood, TX 76544  
Supervisor: Timothy Frank, 254-936-8274. May be contacted.

06/27/10-08/10/13  
40 hours per week  
\$62,000/yr.

**Budget and Program Cost Analysis:** Performed budget formulation review and preparation of budget estimates and financial plans. Analyzed data for prior, and current year in preparing financial plans. Forecasted projected financial expenditures for specialized equipment and contractual employment. Served as advisor to key senior personnel with current organizational obligations by identifying favorable organizational conditions resulting in \$100,000 contractual savings. Successfully reviewed organizational historical data of funding requests. Frequently interfaced with senior personnel and governmental agencies.

**Intelligence Analyst**

U.S. Army, 1CD, ASTB, Fort Hood, Texas 76544  
Supervisor: Frank Gilbert, 254-936-8366. May be contacted.  
Clearance: Top Secret

05/16/03-06/20/10  
40 hours per week  
\$49,000/yr.

**Intelligence Analyst:** Trained operational security classes consisting of more than 300 service members regarding planning, production of data into reports and presentations. Work with other department supervisors to improve personnel reporting standards that made business more efficient. Maintained accountability of systems and equipment worth over \$400,000. Responsible for information security and physical security for 250 member organization.

**HONORS/AWARDS**

The National Society of Leadership and Success  
Army Achievement Medal  
National Defense Service Medal

05/2013  
06/2007  
03/2005

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*Other categories to include on your federal résumé, as it relates to the position: Technical/computer skills, publications, presentations, leadership activities, volunteer work, etc.*

# Preparing Your Cover Letter

After countless hours constructing your résumé, don't treat your cover letter as an afterthought. It is recommended to send a cover letter, whether it is requested or not. Your cover letter is an opportunity to have a conversation with the employer, and illustrate the reasons why you feel you are qualified for the position you are seeking.

## Formatting your Cover Letter

- A cover letter should be formatted in a traditional business letter format.
- Your full address is presented at the top of the page, followed by the date.
- You can substitute your résumé header for your address on a cover letter.
- Below your information, place the employer's name and mailing address.
- The best letters are addressed to the intended reader, not an unnamed individual.
- Paragraphs should rarely be more than seven sentences.
- The salutation should be addressed to a specific person, followed by a colon, not a comma.
- The closing should allow 3-4 lines for a handwritten signature.

## Research the Company and Industry

Research the employer and industry, and make connections between their needs and your skills, knowledge, and abilities. Don't hesitate to dig deep; annual and fiscal reports can provide a hint about the employer's goals and needs. If every other sentence begins with "I" or "My," this is an indication that you need to refocus on the goals of the employer.

## CAR – Challenge, Action, Result

Too often, cover letters are equated to résumés. They are actually more similar to interviews. When writing, assume that you are answering the interview question, "Tell me about yourself, and why you would be a good match for this position and our company?"

Demonstrate your value to an employer through your past experience:

- Identify the Challenges you encountered in various professional situations
- Describe the Actions you took to meet the challenges
- Explain the Results of your efforts

*Consider leading with the results of your efforts before presenting the challenge of the assignment; this allows you to appear more positive.*

## Tailoring your Cover Letter

As cover letters can be more personal and conversational than a résumé, it is even more important not to use "canned" cover letters. Although using a generic cover letter may save you time in the application period, your resulting job search will take much longer. Think of it from the employer's perspective: A letter that is broad enough for use for multiple jobs will not give him/her the detail necessary to make a hiring decision. Ensure that you utilize your cover letter to expand upon details in your résumé, and not just repeat them.

*Reprinted with permission from New Mexico State University's 2014-2015 Career Planning Guide.*

Your Present Address  
City, State, ZIP Code  
Date

Person's Name  
Title  
Company

Street Address

City, State, ZIP Code

Dear Mr., Miss, Mrs., Ms., etc. \_\_\_\_\_:

First Section: State the reason for the letter, name the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and if relevant, indicate from which resource (newspaper, job announcement) you learned of the opening. If an employee of the company has suggested you apply, you should give the name, title, and department where that person is employed. Briefly describe why this particular company interests you, and what relevant knowledge, skills or abilities you bring to the position.

Second Section: This is the main section of your letter and should be utilized to draw parallels between your experience, skills and knowledge, and the needs of the employer. Indicate why you are interested in the position, the company, its products or services, and, above all, what you can offer the employer. If you are a recent graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. If you have some practical work experience, point out your specific achievements or unique qualifications. A cover letter can be compared to an interview. Introduce yourself, draw connections between your experiences and the position, and encourage the employer to get to know you in a way that a résumé's format does not allow. A well-written body of a cover letter allows the employer to feel as though they have met you, and understand your passion for their field, company and position.

Final Section: Indicate your desire for a personal interview and your flexibility as to the time and place. Repeat your phone number in the letter and offer any assistance to facilitate a timely response. Finally, close your letter with a statement or question to encourage a response. For example, state that you will be in the city where the company is located on a certain date and that you would like to set up an interview. You could also ask if the company will be recruiting in your area, or if additional information or references are needed.

Sincerely,

(your handwritten signature)

Type your name

## Email Correspondence

For 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.

We aware that email 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:

Use a meaningful subject header for your email—one that is appropriate to the topic.

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.

Be brief in your communications. Don't overload the employer with lots of questions in your email.

Ditch the emoticons. While 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. Do not use strange fonts, wallpapers or multicolored backgrounds. Sign your email with your full name. Avoid using slang. 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:

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:

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."

Stick to a standard font like Times New Roman, 12-point.

Keep your email brief and businesslike. 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.*

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

## 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?

- Identify your true strengths, interests and values to help you discover what is right for YOU—not your friends or parents.
- Keep your grades up and sign up (and prepare) to take the required standardized tests.
- Talk to faculty, friends and family who have gone to graduate school to get their perspective about the differences between being an undergraduate and a graduate student.
- 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.
- Investigate creative ways to finance your education—by planning ahead you may reduce your debt.
- Research graduate schools to help you find a good match.
- Investigate the admissions process and the current student body profile of your targeted schools to evaluate your probability for admission.
- Have faith and APPLY! Remember, you can't get in unless you apply.

*Written by Roslyn J. Bradford.*

### Developing a Winning Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A Curriculum Vitae or CV is a professional document that is used for marketing your background for a variety of purposes, mostly within academia or research. It can be multiple pages, but should be focused. Use the following tips to help you get started on your CV.

## Common Uses

Graduate school admission, graduate assistantship or scholarship application

Teaching, research and upper-level administrative positions in higher education

School administration positions (superintendent, principal, and department head)

Research and consulting in a variety of settings

Academic departmental and tenure reviews

College or university service appointments

Professional association leadership positions

Publishing and editorial board reviews

Speaking engagements

Grant proposal

**From the *Arts* to the *Sciences* We Have  
the Degree Program for You!**



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<https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/artsandsciences/>  
Or call our main office at 254-519-5441



College of  
Arts and Sciences  
tamuct.edu

## Education

Include the following information:

Name of institution(s) where obtained or working toward a degree, listed in reverse chronological order

Official name of degree(s) and/or certification(s) obtained or currently working toward

Add Master's Thesis, Project and/or Dissertation title(s)

Name of advisor

## Additional Sections

Depending on your background, you may want to add additional sections to your résumé:

Teaching Experience and Interests

Research Experience and Interests

Related Experience: Internships, Practicum and/or Fieldwork

Grants Received and Academic Awards

Special Training

Scholarships and Fellowships

*Written by Veronica Rahim, Career Services Consultant, Center for Career Opportunities, Purdue University, for the 2011-2012 Career Planning Handbook.*

## Foundational Standards

Found in most standard résumés:

- **Heading**—name, address, professional email and phone number. A website with professional content (e.g., a portfolio) can be listed in the heading as well. Use the direct URL to the proper page, so the recruiter doesn't have to search your entire site.
- **Objective**—should be specific to the position for which you are applying.
- **Format**—standard margins of one inch, type size from 10-12 points and easy-to-read fonts.
- **Content**—the organization of your document should be rearranged depending on the potential employer. For example, if your education section speaks more to your qualifications for the desired position, it should appear before your employment experience.
- **Experience**—highlight paid, unpaid, school and extracurricular experiences that relate to your desired objective.

- Skills—technical/computer, language, leadership, laboratory to name a few.

## 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, Executive Director of Development at San José State University, College of Engineering.*

## **Job Search Strategies: Pros and Cons**

There are many ways to look for a job, some of which are better than others. Presented below are some of the most popular ways, as well as helpful hints and pros and cons of each.

Strategies	Tools, Pros, Cons and Helpful Hints
<p><b>INTERNET</b>            Search online job banks and company websites.            Submit résumé online/post on job boards.</p>	<p><b>Tools:</b> Access to the web and an electronic résumé  <b>Pros:</b>            Actual job openings. Many employers use a wide variety of job listing services. Many listings have free to low-cost access. Worldwide geographic reach.  <b>Cons:</b>            Competition is growing as use of the internet increases. Pay attention to multiple listings—one position posted on a few sites—to avoid applying multiple times.  <b>Hints:</b>            Use the web frequently as information and sites change quickly.</p>
<p><b>NETWORKING</b>            Talk to everyone you know to develop a list of possible contacts; ask for information on job/companies and to circulate your résumé.</p>	<p><b>Tools:</b> List of contacts, résumés and business attire  <b>Pros:</b>            May learn of unadvertised openings. May result in a courtesy interview. Often results in a closer match of your interests to a job.  <b>Cons:</b>            A contact in itself is not enough to get you a job. You may exhaust all leads without landing a job. Quite time-consuming.  <b>Hints:</b>            Follow through on all leads. Keep broadening your network of contacts.</p>
<p><b>SOCIAL MEDIA</b>            LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter</p>	<p><b>Tools:</b> Access to the internet, social media accounts and an electronic résumé  <b>Pros:</b>            Access to wide variety of employers, contacts and current job openings.  <b>Cons:</b>            Employers can view your information and/or pictures. Be sure your profile is professional, or use a separate account for connecting to employers.  <b>Hints:</b>            Follow your favorite companies. Show off your education and skills. Display an appropriate photo. Perform a search on your name to review your internet presence, and clean up the results if necessary.</p>
<p><b>ON-CAMPUS RECRUITING</b>            Follow specific procedures to secure on-campus interviews.</p>	<p><b>Tools:</b>            Scheduling interviews, employer literature, résumés and business attire  <b>Pros:</b>            One of the primary ways in which companies recruit for technical and business positions.</p>

	<p>Cons: May be less effective for nontechnical/nonbusiness candidates.</p> <p>Hints: Use the interview schedule as a way to identify possible employers, even if you don't get to interview on campus with those employers.</p>
<p><b>TARGETED MAILING</b> Develop a good cover letter tailored to a specific type of job and the needs of the company. Send letter with résumé to selected companies.</p>	<p>Tools: List of well-researched companies, tailored cover letters and résumés</p> <p>Pros: Better approach than the mass-mailing method. Investment of time and effort should merit stronger response from employers.</p> <p>Cons: Requires a significant investment of time in researching companies and writing cover letters as well as following up with contacts.</p> <p>Hints: Try to find out who is in charge of the area in which you want to work; send your materials to that person. Great method when used in conjunction with networking.</p>
<p><b>IN-PERSON VISIT</b> Visit many companies. Ask to see person in - specific department. Submit résumé and application, if possible.</p>	<p>Tools: Business attire, company address list and résumés</p> <p>Pros: Résumé and application are on file with the company.</p> <p>Cons: Requires a great deal of time to make a relatively small number of contacts.</p> <p>Hints: Research the companies prior to your visit. Ask for a specific person or ask about a specific type of job.</p>
<p><b>RESUME REFERRAL</b> Register with one of the many national referral services. As jobs are listed by employers, the data bank of registrants is searched for matches. If your materials match, they are sent to the employers.</p>	<p>Tools: Registration form supplied by service</p> <p>Pros: Another way to monitor the job market and get your qualifications to the attention of employers.</p> <p>Cons: May involve a fee. Often more helpful to those in technical or specialized fields. May not learn of the status of your materials.</p> <p>Hints: Use only in conjunction with other job search strategies.</p>

<p><b>EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES</b> Respond to employment agency ads in newspapers; check phone book for names of agencies to contact.</p>	<p><b>Tools:</b> Résumés and business attire</p> <p><b>Pros:</b> Fee-paid jobs for graduates in technical fields or those with marketable experience.</p> <p><b>Cons:</b> May be less help to non-technical/inexperienced graduates. Be wary if you, instead of the employer, have to pay a fee.</p> <p><b>Hints:</b> Identify agencies that specialize in your field. Make frequent contact with your counselor to obtain better service.</p>
<p><b>WANT ADS</b> Scan want ads. Mail résumé with cover letter tailored to specific job qualifications.</p>	<p><b>Tools:</b> Newspapers, journals, newsletters, trade magazines, cover letters and résumés</p> <p><b>Pros:</b> Involves minimal investment of time in identifying companies. Résumé and cover letter are sent for actual job opening.</p> <p><b>Cons:</b> Résumé and cover letter will compete with large number of others. Ads follow job market; least effective in times of economic downturn.</p> <p><b>Hints:</b> Use as a meter on the job market in a certain career field. Try to get your materials in as early as possible.</p>
<p><i>Adapted and reprinted with permission from Career Services, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA.</i></p>	

## 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?”

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 done specialized work on 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

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

## Federal Jobs: Working for Uncle Sam

So you want to work for the federal government? You are not alone. Uncle Sam employs approximately 2.1 million civilian workers worldwide. Federal employees receive a generous benefits package, and as of 2015 they earned an average salary of \$84,153. 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 point 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. 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 website ([opm.gov](http://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](http://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 résumés, which can be made searchable, allowing recruiters from federal agencies to find résumés during applicant searches. Applicants can also use these résumés 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 website 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 website. But you should also make sure to visit the websites 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, Employer Relations Coordinator, Drew 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 résumé before it can be processed. The OPM created the USAJOBS Résumé Builder in an effort to help applicants create a résumé which can be used for most government agencies—go to [my.usajobs.gov](http://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.*

## Your 60 Second Commercial

Three Things:

1. Research the employers' current facts, including new products, services, or acquisitions
2. Identify where you fit based on your qualifications and skill set
3. Honestly answer this question: Do you want to have this opportunity?

YES? OK, your goal is to create a positive and lasting impression in 60 seconds or less...GO!  
INTRODUCTION...Hello, my name is...

OPPORTUNITY...Identify the opportunity you researched and cite your source—just enough to show you have done your research...

QUALIFICATIONS...Identify the qualifications, skills, and experiences you possess that would make you a likely fit for that opportunity.

Make the connection between their opportunity and your qualifications.

Express your genuine interest in learning more about the opening.

CLOSING...Thank them for their time. Have a resume readily available!

It might sound like this:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. (PAUSE, it's a conversation). I recently read an article in the *Times* about your company's plans for business growth in the Northeast. During my summer internship with ABC Company, I worked in a team environment on a variety of marketing and website development projects to expand ABC's business. As a junior majoring in economics and working part-time as supervisor at Campus Information

Services, I continue to build my communication, management, and leadership skills. I'd be interested in learning more about your plans for expansion in the Northeast. Thank you for your time.

*Excerpted and adapted from "Your 60-Second Commercial" by the University Career Services Department at Rutgers University, New Brunswick Campus.*

## Business Casual vs. Professional

Have an interview or professional event coming up? Learn how to decode dress code.

Tips for Success in Any Business Situation

When in doubt, dress conservatively.

A suit with appropriate accessories will suffice in most situations.

Make sure your attire is wrinkle-free.

Stick with solid colors, tighter-woven fabrics and simple patterns.

Use only a modest amount of jewelry and/or fragrance.

Check your hair for wind "damage" and your suit for lint or misalignment upon arrival at your interview or event. This will prevent \_\_\_\_\_that horrible broccoli-in-between-the-teeth thing, too!

Suit jacket or cardigan can be added for a classy look

Keep colors to:

More colors and patterns are acceptable

Suit jacket or business dress

Khaki pants, nice trousers or \_\_\_\_\_fingertip-length skirt

Suit pants or slacks

Skirts and dresses extend to knee

Flats or heels acceptable

Low heels acceptable

Jacket or vest can be added for classy look

Keep colors to:

Collared shirt

More colors and patterns are acceptable

Suit or sports jacket

Tie optional

Khaki pants or nice trousers

Suit pants or nice trousers

Dress shoes

*Adapted with permission from Purdue University.*

## 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 résumé (or résumés, 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 “do’s 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, mousepads 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 résumé 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 résumé 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 résumé.
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 website. A little advance preparation goes a long way and can make you stand out among the masses of other attendees.

## Work Your Network

### Developing a Noticeable LinkedIn Profile

Technology has revolutionized the hiring process. In 2003, LinkedIn introduced an online business-networking platform that gave candidates and recruiters unprecedented access to over 332 million users across the globe, making the search for the right job and the right candidate a more efficient process. As a current or recent graduate, you may be unsure about how to best use LinkedIn. Is it like Facebook? What information should be in my profile? How do I use it to network or find a job?

#### Is LinkedIn Like Facebook?

Nope, LinkedIn isn't like Facebook. LinkedIn isn't about personal details, like what you did last weekend. While you have a profile and a profile picture, the focus is business. This platform is where you showcase your educational background, relevant experience, volunteer experience, your skills, knowledge of your desired industry, interaction with other business professionals, and communicate your "value proposition" to employers.

#### What Should Be Included In My Profile?

A polished LinkedIn profile is the crux of successful online networking. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don't overthink it. It's easy to create a profile you can be proud to share with other professionals. To help you get started, use the following tips for constructing a professional profile beyond just your work experience.

##### 1. Headshot

LinkedIn profiles that have a headshot are more likely to be viewed by recruiters. Unlike your Facebook picture, your LinkedIn picture should be business-oriented. Your profile picture should be a preview of what it would be like to see you come in for an interview. Look professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies are strictly prohibited if you want to land the job!

##### 2. Keyword Rich Headline

The second most important piece of your profile is the headline. This is an opportunity to announce to the global business community who you are or who you seek to become. Use this prime real estate to your advantage by incorporating keywords from your desired job or industry.

##### 3. Summary

The summary section is your 30-second elevator pitch. Use this section to introduce yourself and highlight significant skills, qualifications, and interests in your desired field. Be sure to communicate passion and enthusiasm for the industry and the work.

#### 4. Education

The education section is the place to list your full degree, indicate your institution, and graduation or anticipated graduation date. Be sure to include any minors, study abroad experiences and certificate programs related to the degree.

#### 5. Language

Share that you have the ability to speak a second language; include the language and proficiency level. Sharing this information can give you a competitive advantage over other candidates.

#### 6. Samples of Your Work

LinkedIn offers a great feature for users to upload samples of their work. Showcasing samples of presentations, research projects, senior capstone assignments, and portfolios add value and credibility to your profile.

#### 7. Volunteer Experience

Employers take note of volunteer experience. Be sure to include the name of the organization, your role within the organization and length of involvement. Also include details such as fundraising results, event coordination, management experience and more. Your volunteerism, in many cases, can be as valuable as work experience, especially if it is related to your desired industry.

#### 8. Awards and Honors

Highlight any awards and honors received during your collegiate academic career including nonacademic awards received for community or civic engagement. List the full name of the award (avoid acronyms), awarding organization or department, and the year the award was received.

#### 9. Select Your Skills

Identify your top industry-specific, technical and general skills. Adding this information to your profile will allow others to endorse your skill set, giving you instant credibility. A solid list of at least 8-10 skills demonstrates value and capability.

#### 10. Share Your Interests

Disclosing your personal interests and hobbies can help demonstrate your work-life balance. Personal interests can sometimes score a few extra “top candidate” points, but be sure to avoid sharing too much personal information. Remember, the LinkedIn profile is a platform for professionals.

## How Do I Network to Land the Job?

Now that you have completed your profile, land the job by using these top features to start connecting with other professionals:

### Customize the Invitation to Connect

Every time you send a message to connect with someone on LinkedIn, make sure that you customize the text. Share who you are, why you want to connect, and how you found or know the individual. For example, if you met them in-person, tell them where you met and when.

### Alumni Connections Feature

LinkedIn offers users a dynamic tool that connect individuals who share the same alma mater. Search for alumni who are practicing in your desired field, have the same degree, attended your institution during a specific time period, and more. Many individuals are happy to assist their fellow alumni with career advice and even hire alums. Don't forget to showcase your school pride in that customized invitation to connect!

## Follow Companies, Join Groups, and Connect With Recruiters

Start following your dream companies on LinkedIn and join industry specific groups. Be the first to know about company news and job postings. As you start following companies, make note of who is posting updates and job announcements. Use those clues to connect with recruiters and company leaders.

## Share Content

Position yourself as a knowledgeable resource. Share interesting industry or work productivity articles. Comment on posts shared by others in your network. Reinforce your professional brand by sharing your knowledge and perspectives.

*Gala Jackson, M.Ed. is a Millennial Expert & Career Management Consultant with InterviewSnob, a career consulting boutique for millennials. Connect with Gala @interviewsnob and check out her website at [www.interviewsnob.com](http://www.interviewsnob.com)*

## Informational Interviews

One of the easiest and most effective ways to meet people in a professional field in which you are interested is to conduct informational interviews. Informational interviewing is a networking approach which allows you to meet key professionals, gather career information, investigate career options, get advice on job search techniques and get referrals to other professionals.

The art of informational interviewing is in knowing how to balance your hidden agenda (to locate a job) with the unique opportunity to learn firsthand about the demands of your field. Thus, never abuse your privilege by asking for a job, but execute your informational interviews skillfully, and a job may follow.

## What motivates professionals to grant informational interviews?

The reasons are varied. Generally, most people enjoy sharing information about themselves and their jobs and, particularly, love giving advice. Some may simply believe in encouraging newcomers to their profession and others may be scoping out prospects for anticipated vacancies. It is common for professionals to exchange favors and information, so don't hesitate to call upon people.

## How do you set up informational interviews?

One possible approach is to send a letter requesting a brief informational interview (clearly indicating the purpose of the meeting, and communicating the fact that there is no job expectation). Follow this up with a phone call to schedule an appointment. Or, initiate a contact by making cold calls and set up an appointment. The best way to obtain an informational interview is by being referred from one professional to another, a process which becomes easier as your network expands.

## How do you prepare for informational interviews?

Prepare for your informational interviews just as you would for an actual job interview: polish your presentation and listening skills, and conduct preliminary research on the organization. You should outline an agenda that includes well-thought-out questions.

Begin your interview with questions that demonstrate your genuine interest in the other person such as, "Describe a typical day in your department." Then proceed with more general questions such as, "What are the employment prospects in this field?" or "Are you active in any professional organizations in our field and which would you recommend?" If appropriate, venture into a series of questions which place the employer in the advice-giving role, such as, "What should the most important consideration be in my first job?" The whole idea is for you to shine, to make an impression and to get referrals to other professionals.

Always remember to send a thank-you letter to every person who grants you time and to every individual who refers you to someone.



**Congratulations to the  
class of 2018!**

[invisibleworkers.org/invisible5](http://invisibleworkers.org/invisible5)

## Network Your Way to a Job

By Thomas J. Denham

**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.

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 jobs and are willing to give realistic—and free—advice.

## Eight Keys to Networking

**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.

**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.

**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 potential prospects are: family members, friends, faculty, neighbors, classmates, alumni, bosses, co-workers and community associates. Attend meetings of organizations in your field of interest and get involved. You never know where you are going to meet someone who could lead you to your next job.

**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.

**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.”

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

## 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 résumé.
- 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.

*Thomas J. Denham is the managing partner and career counselor of Careers in Transition LLC.*

## Social Networking Websites

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?

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 (LGBTQ) on your résumé, 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 LGBTQ 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. Recruiters use these sites or 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.

*“Social Networking Websites” written by Harriet L. Schwartz.*

## Business Etiquette Blunders

### And How to Fix Them

Getting a handle on business etiquette is even more important in this digital age, when the HR process is in flux and the “rules” aren’t always clear. Here are some of the top etiquette complaints from recruiters, and ways you can avoid those mistakes so that even old-school interviewers will be impressed with your good manners and social graces.

### No Show = No Job

This should go without saying, but actually showing up to an interview is necessary to lock down a job offer. Yet, too many candidates casually blow off interviews. One of the easiest ways to make a good impression is to arrive for interviews 10-15 minutes early, so you have plenty of time to get settled and perhaps check your appearance one last time.

If something pressing does come up, immediately call to cancel or reschedule. Decided you don’t want the job after all? Don’t just disappear. It’s not only rude, but every industry has a grapevine, and word of flakiness gets around. Failing to show for an on-campus interview can have even more severe consequences, so make sure you know the cancellation and no-show policy.

### Too Negative

“Keep your emotional baggage outside the interview door,” says Peggy Klaus, author of BRAG! The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It. We all have days when the alarm doesn’t go off, the weather is a mess, and there’s no parking spot. Don’t whine. Be enthusiastic, eager, flexible, and most of all—likeable. “Do not expect the interviewer to entertain you, or do your job for you by drawing you out,” she adds.

### Thankless

Sending a thank-you note is an important way to demonstrate good manners. It doesn’t have to be handwritten, but it should be considered and specific. “An email is fine, but make sure it shows thought and effort,” says Klaus. “Don’t do it in the elevator on the way down. Do it with forethought, so you can translate what you got out of the interview.”

If you do a round of interviews with three people, say, then send three slightly different thank-you notes that day, or the next. (Get business cards so you have everyone’s contact information close at hand.)

### Too Familiar

When emailing someone you don’t know well, be a bit formal: Capitalize words, don’t use texting shorthand, and start with a salutation. “You don’t send an email to a New York Times bestselling writer and say ‘Hey, I need to know...,’” complains Martin Yate, author of [NYT bestseller] Knock ‘em Dead, the Ultimate Job Search Guide. “No, you start with ‘Dear Martin...’ and finish with ‘Thank you for your time. Sincerely, your name.’”

“Similarly, if everyone in the office calls your interviewer ‘Sam,’ adjust that to ‘Ms. or Mr. Jones,’” says Yate. “Be respectful of the people who can put food on your table.”

### What Dress Code?

Dressing appropriately for an interview is a balancing act. One level in formality above what people normally wear on the job is just right. For men, if you'd wear khakis and a polo shirt on the job, wear dress slacks and a blazer to the interview. Women should follow a similar "step up" plan. (Scope out company dress codes during informational interviews.)

"On an interview, you're dressing to get hired, not dated," says Yate. "Your dress must be conservative and clean cut. It shows respect for the occasion, job, company, interviewer, and most of all—for yourself."

## Dining Disaster

You may have an opportunity to interview at lunch or dinner. It can be doubly nerve wracking to think about what you'll say, as well as how to keep the spaghetti on your fork. "If you eat like a caveman with a mastodon on your plate, you won't be invited to dine with the chairman of the board, or important clients," Yate says. Don't drink, even if your interviewer does, so that you can keep your wits about you, and be courteous to the wait staff. Consider ordering an easy-to-manage entrée.

## Clueless About the Employer

It's so easy to do online research, that there's no reason for you not to know about a prospective employer—the company and the individual. How much will employers care if you don't do your due diligence? One applicant at IBM was asked if he knew what those three letters stood for. He did not. Next! (In case you ever interview at IBM, the answer is International Business Machines.)

## Annoying Devices

"We get complaints about candidates taking a cell phone call, or checking email, or texting in a meeting," says Kathleen Downs, recruiting manager at Robert Half International in Orlando, Fla. "It's a mistake to not silence a phone during a meeting. Even in the waiting room, we've had phones go off and it's an inappropriate ring tone, like a hip-hop song with swear words."

Make sure you have a greeting on your voicemail—some employers won't leave a message if they aren't sure they've reached the right party. And if your phone number is blocked, they can't call you back if you don't leave a message. "I've called candidates and gotten obnoxious voicemail messages, 'You know who this is. You know what to do,'" she says. That's not the way to win over a recruiter.

## Poor Profile

Employers often complain of inappropriate photos or comments on an applicant's social media profile. "You can try to make that info private, but somehow, somehow, there's a way to get to it," Downs says. She has her Facebook profile set to private, and directs business contacts to her LinkedIn profile. "Don't ever post anything racy. For example, don't post a picture of yourself in a bikini—even if you look good!"

## Tattoos and Piercings

Tribal tattoos, hair dyed colors not seen in nature, or dreadlocks may turn off conservative employers. If your personal style doesn't go over well in interviews, cover up (easy with some tattoos) or get a makeover ASAP.

"A guy with a piercing came to an interview with a tongue ring in," says Downs. "I told him to go to the restroom and take it out. It was stuck. He had to go to the tattoo parlor a few miles away and have it cut out."

If your personal style is more important to you than a position with a company, spend a little more time researching the corporate culture of a company before you apply, so you can find the right fit.

*Written by Jebra Turner, a former human resources manager, who writes about career issues, and other business topics. She lives in Portland, Ore., and can be reached at [www.jebra.com](http://www.jebra.com).*

## What Happens During the Interview?

The interviewing process can be scary if you don't know what to expect. All interviews fit a general pattern. While each interview will differ, all will share three common characteristics: the beginning, middle and conclusion.

The typical interview will last 30 minutes, although some may be longer. A typical structure is as follows:

- Five minutes—small talk
- Fifteen minutes—a mutual discussion of your background and credentials as they relate to the needs of the employer
- Five minutes—asks you for questions
- Five minutes—conclusion of interview

As you can see, there is not a lot of time to state your case. The employer may try to do most of the talking. When you do respond to questions or ask your own, your statements should be concise and organized without being too brief.

## It Starts Before You Even Say Hello

The typical interview starts before you even get into the inner sanctum. The recruiter begins to evaluate you the minute you are identified. You are expected to shake the recruiter's hand upon being introduced. Don't be afraid to extend your hand first. This shows assertiveness.

It's a good idea to arrive at least 15 minutes early. You can use the time to relax. It gets easier later. It may mean counting to ten slowly or wiping your hands on a handkerchief to keep them dry.

## How's Your Small Talk Vocabulary?

Many recruiters will begin the interview with some small talk. Topics may range from the weather to sports and will rarely focus on anything that brings out your skills. Nonetheless, you are still being evaluated.

Recruiters are trained to evaluate candidates on many different points. They may be judging how well you communicate on an informal basis. This means you must do more than smile and nod.

## The Recruiter Has the Floor

The main part of the interview starts when the recruiter begins discussing the organization. If the recruiter uses vague generalities about the position and you want more specific information, ask questions. Be sure you have a clear understanding of the job and the company.

As the interview turns to talk about your qualifications, be prepared to deal with aspects of your background that could be construed as negative, i.e., low grade point average, no participation in outside activities, no related work experience. It is up to you to convince the recruiter that although these points appear negative, positive attributes can be found in them. A low GPA could stem from having to fully support yourself through college; you might have no related work experience, but plenty of experience that shows you to be a loyal and valued employee.

Many times recruiters will ask why you chose the major you did or what your career goals are. These questions are designed to determine your goal direction. Employers seek people who have direction and motivation. This can be demonstrated by your answers to these innocent-sounding questions.

## It's Your Turn to Ask Questions

When the recruiter asks, "Now do you have any questions?" it's important to have a few ready. Dr. C. Randall Powell, author of *Career Planning Today*, suggests some excellent strategies for dealing with this issue. He says questions should elicit positive responses from the employer. Also, the questions should bring out your interest in and knowledge of the organization.

By asking intelligent, well-thought-out questions, you show the employer you are serious about the organization and need more information. It also indicates to the recruiter that you have done your homework.

## The Close Counts, Too

The interview isn't over until you walk out the door. The conclusion of the interview usually lasts five minutes and is very important. During this time the recruiter is assessing your overall performance.

It is important to remain enthusiastic and courteous. Often the conclusion of the interview is indicated when the recruiter stands up. However, if you feel the interview has reached its conclusion, feel free to stand up first.

Shake the recruiter's hand and thank him or her for considering you. Being forthright is a quality that most employers will respect, indicating that you feel you have presented your case and the decision is now up to the employer.

## Expect the Unexpected

During the interview, you may be asked some unusual questions. Don't be too surprised. Many times questions are asked simply to see how you react.

For example, surprise questions could range from, "Tell me a joke" to "What time period would you like to have lived in?" These are not the kind of questions for which you can prepare in advance. Your reaction time and the response you give will be evaluated by the employer, but there's no way to anticipate questions like these. While these questions are not always used, they are intended to force you to react under some stress and pressure. The best advice is to think and give a natural response.

## Evaluations Made by Recruiters

The employer will be observing and evaluating you during the interview. Erwin S. Stanton, author of *Successful Personnel Recruiting and Selection*, indicates some evaluations made by the employer during the interview include:

1. How mentally alert and responsive is the job candidate?
2. Is the applicant able to draw proper inferences and conclusions during the course of the interview?
3. Does the applicant demonstrate a degree of intellectual depth when communicating, or is his/her thinking shallow and lacking depth?
4. Has the candidate used good judgment and common sense regarding life planning up to this point?
5. What is the applicant's capacity for problem-solving activities?
6. How well does the candidate respond to stress and pressure?

## Questions Asked by Employers

### Personal

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your hobbies?
3. Why did you choose to interview with our organization?
4. Describe your ideal job.
5. What can you offer us?
6. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?
7. Can you name some weaknesses?
8. Define success. Failure.
9. Have you ever had any failures? What did you learn from them?
10. Of which three accomplishments are you most proud?
11. Who are your role models? Why?
12. How does your college education or work experience relate to this job?
13. What motivates you most in a job?
14. Have you had difficulty getting along with a former professor/supervisor/co-worker and how did you handle it?

15. Have you ever spoken before a group of people? How large?
16. Why should we hire you rather than another candidate?
17. What do you know about our organization (products or services)?
18. Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?
19. Do you plan to return to school for further education?

## Education

20. Why did you choose your major?
21. Why did you choose to attend your college or university?
22. Do you think you received a good education? In what ways?
23. In which campus activities did you participate?
24. Which classes in your major did you like best? Least? Why?
25. Which elective classes did you like best? Least? Why?
26. If you were to start over, what would you change about your education?
27. Do your grades accurately reflect your ability? Why or why not?
28. Were you financially responsible for any portion of your college education?

## Experience

29. What job-related skills have you developed?
30. Did you work while going to school? In what positions?
31. What did you learn from these work experiences?
32. What did you enjoy most about your last employment? Least?
33. Have you ever quit a job? Why?
34. Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution to an employer.
35. Give an example of a time in which you worked under deadline pressure.
36. Have you ever done any volunteer work? What kind?
37. How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?

## Career Goals

38. Do you prefer to work under supervision or on your own?
39. What kind of boss do you prefer?
40. Would you be successful working with a team?
41. Do you prefer large or small organizations? Why?
42. What other types of positions are you considering?
43. How do you feel about working in a structured environment?
44. Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
45. How do you feel about working overtime?
46. How do you feel about travel?
47. How do you feel about the possibility of relocating?
48. Are you willing to work flextime?

Before you begin interviewing, think about these questions and possible responses and discuss them with a career advisor. Conduct mock interviews and be sure you are able to communicate clear, unrehearsed answers to interviewers.

## Questions to Ask Employers

1. Please describe the duties of the job for me.
2. What kinds of assignments might I expect the first six months on the job?

3. Are salary adjustments geared to the cost of living or job performance?
4. Does your company encourage further education?
5. How often are performance reviews given?
6. What products (or services) are in the development stage now?
7. Do you have plans for expansion?
8. What are your growth projections for next year?
9. Have you cut your staff in the last three years?
10. How do you feel about creativity and individuality?
11. Do you offer flextime?
12. Is your company environmentally conscious? In what ways?
13. In what ways is a career with your company better than one with your competitors?
14. Is this a new position or am I replacing someone?
15. What is the largest single problem facing your staff (department) now?
16. May I talk with the last person who held this position?
17. What is the usual promotional time frame?
18. Does your company offer either single or dual career-track programs?
19. What do you like best about your job/company?
20. Once the probation period is completed, how much authority will I have over decisions?
21. Has there been much turnover in this job area?
22. Do you fill positions from the outside or promote from within first?
23. What qualities are you looking for in the candidate who fills this position?
24. What skills are especially important for someone in this position?
25. What characteristics do the achievers in this company seem to share?
26. Is there a lot of team/project work?
27. Will I have the opportunity to work on special projects?
28. Where does this position fit into the organizational structure?
29. How much travel, if any, is involved in this position?
30. What is the next course of action? When should I expect to hear from you or should I contact

you?

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## 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 résumé, especially if you initially contacted the organization. There are many differing opinions on whether one should mention the disability on the résumé 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 résumé 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 résumé. 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 résumé 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.*

**BENEFITS:** What kinds of benefits can you expect at your first job out of college? That depends because they vary from employer to employer. The Big Three include Medical Insurance, 401(k), and vacation and sick time. Some employers still provide coverage with no out-of-pocket expense to workers, but most company plans now require the employee to pay part of the benefits, often in the form of payroll deductions. Some examples include, but are not limited to, dental insurance, stock options, vision insurance, prescription drug plans, life insurance, flexible spending accounts, and tuition reimbursement.

**SOFT BENEFITS:** These are usually very popular with employees and cost the company very little or nothing. They may be included in the company's culture, or they may be negotiated with an employer. Some examples include, but are not limited to, telecommuting, flextime, sports leagues, personal projects, and on-site facilities such as restaurants, gyms, or day care.

*Excerpted from "The Benefits of Company Benefits" by John Martalo, a freelance writer based in San Diego.*

## Dealing With Stress in the Job Search

### MAINTAIN PERSPECTIVE

Whether you know exactly what you want to do after college, or you still have no idea at the moment you graduate, you are likely placing pressure on yourself to make big decisions.

The job search is not a sprint, it's a marathon, \_\_\_\_\_so pull back from the big picture and focus \_\_\_\_\_on first steps.

### ARE YOU READY?

I've Known Since 5th Grade I Was Going to \_\_\_\_\_Be a \_\_\_\_\_.

Congratulations! You're probably already working on your goals. Still stressed?

Reassess your goals and the next steps to reassure yourself you are on track

Treat yourself to a breather (i.e., travel or volunteer work)

I Still Have No Idea What I Want to Do

Use the self-assessment tools in your career center

Consider careers related to your hobbies

Travel and volunteer work can help direct your focus

### Regarding Graduate School

If you decide to take a break between graduation and your job search, make note of key deadlines for enrollment in graduate programs.

If you remain undecided about your career goals, graduate school is not a place to "hide out"—invest in your future with intent.

### WORK YOUR GOALS

Write your goals down and check them off when they've been accomplished. You'll find the stress replaced by a feeling of accomplishment. Some broad goals (refine the list as needed):

Search for opportunities (not just 1)

Network to learn about opportunities

Research companies, locations, job outlooks

Write resumes (not just 1) and correspondence

Practice interviewing (answering and asking questions)

Network to practice interviewing

Acquire information for effective negotiation

Did we mention you should network? Network for fun and relaxation, and to broaden or narrow your perspective!

GET MOVING —————AND KEEP MOVING

**Why Procrastination Happens**

Fear of failure (you will fail, and it's ok. You'll learn from failure)

Perfectionism (no such thing, just something for which to strive)

Lack of information (you're reading the right guide! Well done!)

Distractions (not always a bad thing, but manage your time)

The sheer size of the task (see "Work Your Goals")

**Waiting for a Reply**

Don't wait for one! Recruiters have a daunting task in front of them—choosing from several qualified candidates for the "perfect fit", and that process takes time. Actively pursue several opportunities until you accept an offer. When you accept an offer, kindly inform others considering you to remove you from consideration.

*Excerpted from "Dealing With Stress in the Job Search" by Chris Enstrom, a freelance writer from Nashville, Ind., from interviews with career center directors Dr. Jeff Garis (now retired from Penn State) and Deidre Sepp (Marist College). Graphics by Nan Mellem.*

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## Veterans

### **TRANSLATING MILITARY TERMS INTO CIVILIAN LANGUAGE**

First we want to thank you for your service to our country. We know that during your time serving in the United States military you practiced a variety of strategic methods. Now the OCPD wants to assist you in being strategic with your job search. The purpose of this section is to teach you how to translate your military experience into civilian terms. You have a unique set of skills acquired through military training and work experience which are highly sought after by many employers. It is important to showcase your talent and abilities in ways they will understand.

When drafting your résumé or job application avoid using military specific terms as most civilian employers will not understand their meaning. Instead use descriptive titles that are familiar to civilians. One exception to this rule might be when the job announcement already contains military specific terms or acronyms related to a specific military skill set or piece of equipment. In this case it would be appropriate to actually use the acronym or military term in your resume. Otherwise it is best to always write out the terms or explain their meaning using descriptive civilian terms.

Whenever possible use numbers percentages and include results. For example instead of saying "Processed and prepared TDY orders" say " Processed and prepared over 50 business related travel documents weekly with a 100% accuracy rate and prior to all established deadlines" .

Also do not list your military training unless it relates to the specific job you are applying for. If the course does relate to the job you should include information regarding the course content. For example: if you attended the Army's Warrior Leadership Course (WLC) do not just list the class title and date attended. Instead write "Attended a 4 week Leader Development course which included training on effective communication skills employee counseling decision making ethics resource management leadership styles and training management and was ranked in the top 5% of the class".

## WHERE TO START

### Strengths Quest

OCPD provides veterans the opportunity to take the Clifton StrengthsFinder and learn how to use your top five strengths to achieve career success. Take part in this great opportunity to develop a strengths-based resume cover letter and interview. You will learn about your natural talents and how these were evident in your military career and how they will also assist you in your civilian career.

### Military Documentation

A good way to identify your skills strengths and experience is to use the many documents available to you from the military. Effective in 2013 several branches of DoD combined their databases and created a

"Joint Services Transcript" (JST) listing of all of your military training and work experience on one transcript. These documents can provide the basis for developing your resume. To obtain a free copy of your transcript go to the following websites: Army Navy Marines Coast Guard (Active Duty Reserve and Veterans): <https://jst.doded.mil>

Air Force: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/transcripts.asp>

VMET (Verification of Military Experience and Training): <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/vmet/index.jsp>

\*The VMET database contains records of individuals who served in Army Navy Air Force and Marine Corps on or after October 1 1990 but cannot be used as an official transcript for college credit.

Also remember to review and use information contained in other military documents to include annual performance evaluations and letters of commendations or recommendations. These documents can be a great resource to help you write accomplishment statements for your resume.

## MILITARY TERMS, ACRONYMS AND THEIR CIVILIAN EQUIVALENT

NCO/NCOIC.....	Supervisor Manager or Coordinator
Platoon Leader.....	Supervisor of a 20-44 person team
Company Commander.....	Operations Manager
07 and above.....	Senior Director, Chairman, President, Managing Director
05 and 06.....	Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating, Officer Program Director
04.....	Senior Administrator Department, Head Program Manager
01 to 03.....	Executive Administrator, Manager Project, Officer,
W01 to W05.....	Director, Specialist Facilitator, Technical Manager, Technical Specialist
E7 to E9.....	Director, Supervisor, Department Manager, Operations Manager Senior Advisor
E4 to E6.....	Assistant manager, Line Supervisor, Section Leader Task leader Supervisor Foreman
E1 to E3.....	Production Worker Assembler, Technician Assistant Apprentice
Commanded.....	Supervised
Soldiers.....	Personnel

Squad.....	9-12 person team
Unit/Platoon/Brigade.....	Size of staff/team
Mission/Sortie.....	Organizational goal
DEERS.....	An enrollment & eligibility database system
NCO Academy.....	Leadership or Management training
PCS.....	Relocation
TDY.....	Business related travel
SOP.....	Standard policies and procedures
DoD.....	Department of Defense
War College.....	Executive Leadership School
Command & Staff College...	Senior Leadership School
Driving Tanks.....	Operated heavy equipment
Repaired M-ATV.....	Maintained large diesel engines
Recruiter school.....	In-depth 3-week sales training course
CAC Operator.....	Water and Aircraft Pilot
MOS.....	Job title duties
MEDEVAC.....	Emergency medical evacuation
Motorpool.....	Fleet vehicle
DFAC or Mess Hall.....	Cafeteria or dining facility
In Theater.....	Assigned location
Deployment.....	Temporary assignment
RECON.....	Gather information
In Garrison.....	Permanent assignment
Hazmat.....	Safety Regulations
Iraq Afghanistan.....	Abroad overseas

## **MILITARY TERMS TO AVOID**

Military personnel transitioning to the civilian workforce face the unique challenge of learning or relearning the terminology of prospective employers. Thinking like they think is key. Military experiences and language are difficult to convey in civilian terms and some terms should therefore be avoided.

IED  
Hot LZ DZ  
Leaving the Wire  
Combat  
Casualties  
OEF  
FORSCOM  
Enemy Combatant  
OIF  
FOB

## **Veterans**

### **HOW TO USE THE JST TO CREATE A WINNING RESUME**

Below is a sample JST description for the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) of Infantryman for a Staff Sergeant E-6 in the United States Army. The JST also includes the college credit recommendations (SH = semester hour credits; V = vocational level; L= lower level; U = upper level)



duty in the Armed Forces during certain specified time periods or in military campaigns are entitled to preference over others in competitive external hiring. Veteran preference does not guarantee a federal job; it simply provides a slight boost. Below is the point system:

**TP** - 5 Point Preference (no disability connection - must meet specified time frames)

**CP** - 10 Point Compensable Disability Preference for 10%-20% disability

**CPS** - 10 Point 30% Compensable Disability Preference for 30% disability

**XP** - 10 point disability preference for Purple Heart recipients, or 0% SCD or pension recipients. Also, certain qualified spouses, parents, and widows/widowers of Veterans

*\* Must have received either an Honorable or a General discharge to qualify for preference.*

## **ADDITIONAL VETERAN EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES**

**Veteran Employment Center (VEC)** [www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/jobs](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/jobs)

VEC is the first government-wide product that provides verified job seekers the tools to translate military skills into plain language and build a profile that can be shared instantly with public and private employers that have real job opportunities. Currently, there are over 1.5 million jobs listed on the VEC, and hundreds of employers have made commitments to fill more than 165,000 positions with Veterans, transitioning Service members, Guard and Reserve members, and their families. Here are some of the benefits you get from the VEC:

- **Skills Translator:** Translate military occupational codes into civilian skill equivalents for a powerful profile and learn about related civilian career paths.
- **Profile & Resume Builder:** Seamlessly import results from the skills translator into an online profile that you can download or publish to employers on the VEC.
- **Veterans Job Bank (VJB):** The VJB allows you to search over 1.5 million jobs in addition to all federal jobs - including positions reserved especially for Veterans.
  - **Employer Commitments:** View a list of hundreds of employers and organizations that have made a commitment to hire or train individuals like you.
  - **Other Resources:** The VEC contains or links to a broad set of other informational resources designed to help you find meaningful career opportunities.

**VA for VETS- Your Gateway to a VA Career** [www.vaforvets.va.gov](http://www.vaforvets.va.gov)

If you are interested in a career with the VA, this site offers a resume builder, military skills translator, career assessments, career coaching and the ability to search and apply for jobs.

**VetSuccess on Campus** [www.tamuct.edu/departments/vetsuccess](http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/vetsuccess)

Texas A&M University-Central Texas has a full-time VetSuccess on Campus Counselor available to assist you with your VA educational benefits, vocational exploration, career counseling, general VA benefits, and employment assistance. For more information, assistance, or to schedule an appointment, contact the Veterans Affairs office at (254) 519-5423 or visiting Founder's Hall Room 221.

