CAREER SERVICES CENTER
www.subr.edu/careerservices

2022 - 2023
CAREER GUIDE
CAREER PLANNING AND CAMPUS RECRUITING

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
AND AGRICULTURAL & MECHANICAL COLLEGE
Table of Contents

GETTING STARTED
Career Services .......................................................... 3
Jobs4Jags .................................................................. 5
Making Career Services Work for You ......................... 6
A College Timeline: How to Plan for Success ............. 7

RESUMES AND CORRESPONDENCE
The Top Ten Pitfalls in Resume Writing ......................... 8
Developing a Winning Resume .................................... 10
Resume Sample .......................................................... 12
References Page Sample ............................................. 12
Developing a Winning CV ........................................... 13
Power Verbs for Your Resume ...................................... 14
Email Correspondence ................................................ 15

SOCIAL MEDIA
Work Your Network: Developing a Noticeable LinkedIn Profile .............................................. 16
Social Networking Websites ........................................ 17
Clean Up Your Social Media Identity ......................... 18

CAREER SEARCH STRATEGIES
Getting the Most Out of a Career Fair ......................... 19
Creating an Elevator Pitch in Two Minutes or Less ...... 21
Business Etiquette Blunders and How to Fix Them ...... 23
Professional Etiquette .................................................. 24
Dining Etiquette at the Interview Meal ......................... 25
Don’t Forget the Small Companies .............................. 26
Federal Jobs: Working for Uncle Sam ......................... 27

INTERVIEWING
Ten Rules of Interviewing ........................................... 28
Students With Disabilities: Acing the Interview .......... 29
Dressing for the Interview ............................................ 30
Career Clothes Closet .................................................. 31
Are You Ready for a Behavioral Interview? ................. 32
S.T.A.R. Method of Behavioral Interviewing ............... 33
Questions Asked by Employers ................................. 34
The Site Visit/Interview: One Step Closer ................. 35
The Art of Negotiating ................................................ 36

ADVERTISER INDEX
Gwinnett County Public Schools ................................ 34
Mickey Leland Energy Fellowship Program ................ 9
Orange County Schools ............................................. 4
Science, Mathematics & Research for Transformation (SMART) Scholarship for Service Program .......... 9

Southern University and A & M College
Career Services Center
Southern University
T.H. Harris Hall, Suite 1100
E.C. Harrison Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA 70813

Telephone: 
(225) 771-2200
Fax: 
(225) 771-3272
Hours: 
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday

Staff:

Tamara Foster-Montgomery
Executive Director

Franchesca Simmons
Assistant to the Executive Director

Eric Pugh
Professional Development Instructor

Dr. Melanie Johnson
Professional Development Instructor
Dear SU Jaguar:

The Career Services Center hopes you will find this year’s edition of the Southern University Career Guide a valuable resource. It will serve as your guide to using the Center most effectively in the year ahead. We hope that you will take the time to read it carefully and thoroughly.

The process of seeking employment is a serious one and requires students to register early with the office. (The interviewing season begins in September and ends in April.) Registering with Career Services makes it possible to better align full-time, co-op and summer employment opportunities between you and the many potential employers seeking your academic discipline and abilities. By participating in job fairs, seminars, employer information sessions, campus interviews, or career counseling sessions with our staff, you will begin to see the link between your classroom learning and the world of work.

Our staff is here to assist you in every way we can through a wide range of programs, services and resources, which are tailored to create the job search skills necessary to keep the SU Jags a “cut above the rest” in today’s demanding search for rewarding employment.

Visit Career Services (T.H. Harris Hall, Suite 1100) soon and often. Become familiar with our homepage at www.subr.edu/careerservices and register with our office. Remember, your career search can be made simpler and more rewarding if you regularly utilize the services provided by the office. Allow this academic year to launch the beginning of your future success. And above all, remember that we are here to serve you!

Sincerely,

James E. McKeever
Tamara Foster-Montgomery
Director

Introduction

The employment interview ranks among the most important undertakings in the life of a graduating senior or a student job-seeker. In many instances, the approximately 30 minutes spent with an interviewer can significantly affect the entire course of events in the life of a college student. In view of this above, the interview becomes a matter of increased importance.

There are several responsibilities placed upon the individual who is considering an interview appointment with any agency. One who is sincerely concerned about forming a good initial impression will be interested in ensuring the following: familiarity with the company or agency, promptness in reporting to the interview, proper grooming and poise. These responsibilities will be discussed in more detail later.

Although it is important that one interested in securing employment makes every effort to present a good impression, it is not necessary that he or she becomes so overwhelmed with interview preparation as to cause anxiety, frustration, calculated answers or nervousness. In general, all that is required is for one to learn what is expected of him or her in the job.

Mission Statement

The mission of Career Services is to coordinate and provide those direct and supportive services required to effect the compatibility between knowledge acquired by our students and the employment needs of the public and private sector. As well as to aid students in developing, evaluating and effectively initiating and implementing career plan.

Purpose of Career Services

Career Services provides comprehensive career services to students (and alumni, when possible) to enhance their educational development. The Center offers assistance:

1. In choosing their careers and college majors,
2. In obtaining appropriate work experience prior to graduation to enhance their chosen careers and majors,
3. In obtaining information and skills on how to seek employment and
4. In furthering their chosen careers by obtaining employment or continuing into graduate or professional school.

As a unit of the Division of Student Affairs, the Center’s mission is in harmony with the Division’s Mission. Career Services provides support and enhancement of formal educational experiences. As part of the larger community that is Southern University, the Center seeks to provide career services, which are not only comprehensive, but also preeminence in the state and region.

Courses Offered By Career Services

Career Services assists students and graduates in identifying their individual capabilities, interests, skills and acquired knowledge for meaningful vocational opportunities beginning with their freshman year. Career Services provides students, beginning at the sophomore year, with opportunities for internships, cooperative (co-op) education jobs and summer employment. Students are permitted to work full-time and obtain course credit while on co-op assignments.

Sincerely,

James E. McKeever
Tamara Foster-Montgomery
Director

Career Services

Career Services Center
P.O. Box 10980
Baton Rouge, LA 70813
(225) 771-3220 Office
(225) 771-3272 Fax

Career Services

www.subr.edu/careerservices

Course Description

Cooperative Education (COOP201, COOP103, COOP101)

The Cooperative Education courses (COOP201-01, COOP103-01, COOP101-01) are courses which a student may enroll in upon acceptance of an offer of employment for a co-op position which is directly related to their major. The student will alternate semesters of work with semester of study, or may engage in parallel employment of working a minimum of 20 hours while going to school. An evaluation of the student is done in the areas of (1) judgment (2) relations with others (3) ability to learn (4) attitude and application toward work (5) dependability (6) quality of work (7) punctuality and attendance, course work and the evaluation is graded by the instructor. The course provides for three academic credit hours and may be used to satisfy the elective curriculum requirement. Upon completion of the course the student is expected to have shown competence in time management, workplace communication, and an understanding of their major through reflection and debriefing conducted by the instructor.

Cooperative Education COOP201-Professional Development

Learn how to chart your career through an investigation of careers, the world of work, and the career planning process. Emphasis is placed upon assisting the student to clarify and formulate realistic career goals and an appropriate career plan and strategy to achieve those goals. Interesting professionals provide essential information on career development; writing winning resumes, entrepreneurship, investing, interviewing, developing a portfolio and a host of other career and life planning information.

The Aim of Recruitment

The primary purpose of any agency representative’s visit to a college campus is to recruit the best individual possible for the agency he or she represents. All employers, civilian or governmental, are aware of the relationship of manpower to finished product. As such, agencies are willing to expend whatever is necessary, within sound economical boundaries, to attract good potential employees.

A recruiter’s presence on a college campus is not a chance occurrence. Students should be aware of the amount of preparation that goes into a recruiter’s visit. Some of the necessary preparations for the recruitment visit involve the following: a survey of the agency’s manpower requirements, coordination with the various placement offices for recruiting visits and arrangements for transportation and lodging.
Responsibilities of the Student

Responsibilities required of the student. Possible results from any interaction, we have outlined some objectives normally have certain motives or causes for their actions. Whether the actions are reflected as appropriate or inappropriate, they do affect the actor and other individuals involved. To ensure that students understand their obligations, to be called upon to answer as the primary cause, motive, or agent; or able to answer for one’s conduct and obligation.” In view of the first portion of the definition, it is implied that individuals normally have certain motives or causes for their actions. Failure to consider either of these objectives, in sufficient depth, may result in a loss to the potential employer and to his/her organization.

Responsibilities of the Recruiter

The adjective “responsible” is defined by Webster as: “liable to be called upon to answer as the primary cause, motive, or agent, or able to answer for one’s conduct and obligations.” In view of the first portion of the definition, it is implied that individuals normally have certain motives or causes for their actions. Whether the actions are reflected as appropriate or inappropriate, they do affect the actor and other individuals involved. To ensure that students understand their obligations and conduct themselves in a manner that achieves the best possible results from any interaction, we have outlined some responsibilities required of the student.

Responsibilities of the Recruiter

1. Students interested in securing employment have the primary responsibility of registering with Career Services.
2. Students should exercise care in filling out the required information requested in preparation for interviews. All responses to items, e.g., current address, permanent address, email address, telephone number and grade point average, must be accurate.
3. Students who complete user profiles online and plan to interview for employment are required to upload a neatly typed resume two days prior to their interview.
4. It is the responsibility of each student utilizing the services of the Center to have the Registrar’s Office provide the Center with a copy of his/her transcript.
5. Education majors should make every effort to ensure that additional forms necessary to complete a “placement packet” (e.g., evaluation sheets, letters of recommendation) are returned to the Center as soon as possible. (Education Majors ONLY)
6. The absence of any information needed to complete the registration process may result in the suspension of services.
7. Prior to his/her first interview, the student should analyze his/her interests and abilities and carefully consider his/her career objective. He/she should read available literature and consult other sources for information about the employer. He/she should organize thoughts in order that he/she may intelligently ask and answer questions.
8. In his/her interview, the student should recognize that he/she is representing his/her school, as well as him/herself, and should be punctual and thoroughly businesslike in conduct.
9. The student should promptly acknowledge an invitation to visit an employer’s premises. He/she should accept invitations only when he/she is sincerely interested in exploring employment with that employer.
10. As soon as a student decides not to accept an offer, he/she should immediately notify the employer.
11. The student should not continue to present him/herself for interviews after he/she has accepted an employment offer.
12. When the student accepts an employment offer, he/she should do it in good faith and with the sincere intention of honoring his/her commitment.
13. The student should keep Career Services advised concerning employment negotiations. Recruiters also have certain responsibilities to the college and its students.

Responsibilities of the Recruiter

1. The number of interviewers brought on campus by an employer should be adequate to cover the prearranged schedule.
2. Recruiters will be permitted to interview only those students who have officially registered with Career Services and signed up on their Interview Schedule. All interviews will be scheduled and candidates seen in the Center. No recruiting will be allowed in departments, classrooms, hallways, etc., unless by special permission of the Director.
3. As soon as possible following an interview, the employer should communicate with the student and Career Services concerning the outcome of the interview.
4. The employer should give the student reasonable time to consider his/her offer.
5. The employer should accept the student’s decline of a job offer as a final decision.
6. Prior to or at the time of employment, the employer should clearly explain to the student all conditions pertaining to employment.

GET REGISTERED IN A FEW SIMPLE STEPS!
1. Go to www.subr.edu/careerservices.
2. Click on the “Student Services” tab.
3. Log in to Handshake or sign up to register for your account.
4. Upload your resume.
5. Upon approval your can browse career opportunities.

Students must schedule an appointment to take advantage of one-on-one resume review sessions and mock interviews.

Contact the center today!
Making Career Services 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 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 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 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 rights to resume workshops and career fairs, at any given time there may be a number of programs going on that can assist you. Make sure you are aware of what’s taking place. Find the event calendar, whether it is online, in the paper, or through an email. 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 wear your cap and gown. Many centers offer services for alumni similar to those for students. If you haven’t found a job or even formed a plan by graduation, you still might be able to meet with counselors/advisors, use job listings and/or computers and attend programs. Check with the career center to see what is available and what time limits apply.

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

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

Internship Programs
Internships are the most valuable way to try out different career fields and gain hands-on experience while you are still a student. You can build your resume, learn the ropes, and maybe even get course 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.

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

Written by Jennifer Bobrow Burns, MBA Recruiter/Business School Relationship Manager at MetLife, Global Leadership Development Program.

A College Timeline—How to Plan for Success

Freshmen—Explore
- Explore your interests and abilities through academic courses.
- Utilize career assessment tools through Career Services.
- Consider volunteer positions to help you build your resume and broaden your experience.
- Collect information on internships, cooperative education, and other paid work experiences.
- Learn about the Cooperative Education/Internship Program offered through Career Services.
- Join university organizations that will offer you leadership roles in the future.
- Attend on-campus career and job fairs to gather information on potential careers and employers.
- Familiarize yourself with the services and resources available at Career Services.
- Visit the Career Services website.
- Attend a resume workshop and create a first draft of your resume.

Sophomores—Research
- Choose a major that you will enjoy studying for the next two years.
- Enroll in the Professional Development Class.
- Obtain an internship/field experience or other experience-based education, such as cooperative education.
- Take on more responsibilities in extracurricular activities.
- Explore at least three career options available to you through your major.
- Attend on-campus job fairs and employer information sessions that relate to your major.
- Identify organizations and associations in your interest areas for shadowing opportunities.

Juniors—Making Decisions
- Complete at least five information interview in careers you want to explore.
- Shadow several professionals in your field of interest.
- Find out more about career opportunities related to your major.
- Attend career and job fairs and employer information sessions that relate to your interests.
- Narrow your career interest areas.
- Research potential organizations in the Career Resource Center and talk to recent graduates in your major about the job market and potential employers.
- Obtain internships or other practical career experience.
- Meet with a Career Advisor to have your resume updated.
- Participate in Career Services seminars to learn more about job search strategies such as networking and interviewing skills.

Seniors—Job Search
- Stay up-to-date with the Career Services calendar and participate in on-campus recruiting activities.
- Participate in interviewing skills seminars or the mock interview program.
- Develop a list of prospective employers with contact names and addresses from organizations you are interested in pursuing.
- Determine your career-related strengths and skills, determine what you have to offer an employer.
- Visit Career Services to have your updated resume reviewed.
- Visit job listing websites.
- Draft a cover letter that can be adapted for a variety of employers and have it reviewed.
- Research information on realistic salary expectations.
- Go on employment interviews, evaluate job offers and accept one!
The Top Ten Pitfalls in Resume Writing

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Research the company. Read whatever literature the company has placed in the career library. For additional information, call the company. Ask for any literature it may have, find out how the company is structured and ask what kind of turnover the department experiences. Ask what they like about the position and the company; more important, ask what they don’t like about it.

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

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

A resume is a written document that is used to highlight the skills, contributions and experiences that represent the personal brand you want to portray to potential employers to secure an interview.

Resume Types

Decide the resume style you prefer to use, based on the message you want to convey to employers:
- **Chronological** – Highlight information starting with the most recent. Prioritize your sections so you start with the most important first!
- **Functional** – Highlight information in categories based on commonly grouped skills. This type is useful for those with gaps in experience or a wide variety in work history, but it can demonstrate similar skills.

Format

Keep the following rules of thumb in mind when preparing the resume:
- **Margins** – Top: 0.5” - 1”; Sides and Bottom: 0.5” - 1”
- **Font Size and Style** – 10-12; simple, readable fonts (e.g., Calibri, Arial, Times New Roman), single spaced
- **Balance** – white space and text space
- **Length** – Undergraduate level - 1 page; Graduate and Ph.D. - 2 pages; Education, Nursing and Medicine can have more than 1 page
- **Templates** – Refrain from using them! Use resume samples as a guide to create your own document, unique to your skills and qualifications
- **Order** – Heading, Objective (if included) and Education are listed first, in that order

Content

The makeup of your document should be deliberate and powerful:
- **Prioritize** – Top two-thirds of the page receive priority when highlighting key categories and skills
- **Own the Order** – Highlight the most relevant categories first; Experience does not always have to follow Education

Heading

Highlight your personal contact information in a way that makes sense for your spacing needs. Include:
- **Name**, which should be bold and in larger print (14-20 font size)
- Permanent and/or current addresses (listing both signals a transition, e.g., graduation)
- One professional email address without the hyperlink
- One reliable telephone number
- You do not need to label contact information e.g., Email: somebody@gmail.com, just indicate: somebody@gmail.com

Objective

This optional statement should focus on your desired job title, if you choose to have one
- **Use phrases such as “To obtain an internship in accounting or finance” or “Seeking full-time employment in engineering design, research or development”**
- You can also include specialized interests/areas of focus to help distinguish yourself
- It is not necessary or expected that you highlight your skills or to extensively express what you want to gain from the experience in this section

Reprinted with permission from the Career Planning Handbook of Purdue University.

Education

- **Name of institution and location, e.g., Southern University and A&M College, Baton Rouge, LA**
- **Official name of degree and major, e.g., Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering**
- **Concentrations, Minors- separate line, e.g., Minor Organizational Leadership**
- **Month and year of graduation (future or past, you do not need to indicate expected/anticipated graduation, just indicate month and year, e.g., May 2014**
- **Optional overall and/or major GPA and scale, e.g., 3.9/4.0**
- **Omit high school information, unless 1) freshman or 2) significant or related to field**

Experience

Highlight employment, volunteer and school experiences that relate to your desired objective:
- **Potential titles for this section: Experience, Professional Experience, Related or Relevant Experience**
- **Use the core four- company name, position held, month/year of start and finish, city and state. Country, if not in U.S.**
- **Emphasize relevant skills, specific accomplishments and/or contributions**
- **Bullet formula= Power Verb (Skill) + Identifiable Task + [Method/Purpose/Result]**
- **Use important keywords and hot topics relevant to your field**
- **Do not mention names of previous supervisors or advisors (Reference Page Only)**

Related or Relevant Courses

- **List at least seven courses to emphasize exposure to related subjects/skills**
- **Consider courses taken as part of concentration, minor and/or specialized electives**
- **Do not include required courses for your degree as they do not distinguish you from other candidates**

Skills

- **Potential titles to consider: Technical/Computer Skills, Language Skills**
- **Acceptable to categorize or list together if they are all in the same category; just list them, e.g., Adobe Illustrator**
- **Microsoft Word and PowerPoint are considered universal skills so you don't need to list them. Only mention Microsoft if you have extensive knowledge of additional Microsoft Office programs.**
- **Indicate your level of proficiency and be sure you can use them “on the job”**
- **Skills like communication and teamwork should be highlighted within the context of your experiences; use your bullet statements to provide evidence of these skills**

Additional Sections

Depending on your background, you may want to add additional sections to your resume:
- **Most commonly listed after Education:**
  - **Professional Affiliations**
  - **Study Abroad**
  - **Certifications or Licensure**
  - **Leadership (very impressive to employers)**
  - **Activities or Extracurricular Involvement or Student Organizations**
  - **Published or Honors or Awards**
  - **Community Service or Volunteer**

Do Not Include

- **Photographs, marital status, salary requirements, age, race, national origin, visa status or references**

References Available Upon Request

- **References should not be listed on a resume. An employer typically only asks for them during or after an interview**
- **On a separate page, list 3-5 references, centered—name, position, company, address, phone and email**
- **Copy and paste the same heading from your resume to the top of the references page**

Reprinted with permission from the Career Planning Handbook of Purdue University.
Resume Sample

John R. Smith
907 F Street NW • Washington, D.C. 20004
(212) 573-8888 • Johnrsmith@gmail.com

EDUCATION
University of Thurgood Marshall
Houston, TX
Expected Graduation Date: May 2018
Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Chemical Engineering A-304 \& GPA 3.94

 Relevant coursework: Biochemical Engineering I & II; Chemical Process Engineering, Air/water treatment, Chemistry, Oil & Gas, Biofuels, Calculus I & II; Abstract Geometry

SKILLS AND SOFTWARE PROFICIENCIES
Microsoft Office • C++ • Java Script • MS InfoPath • Conflict Resolution Skills • GIS • MathCAD • ASPEN • 10-Key • 75 WPM • Fluent in English and Spanish

WORK & LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE
Spring 2016
Shell Oil Company
Houston, TX

Wanted with Chemical Engineers in various departments on several expansion projects:
- Recommended and implemented innovations program for scrap oil facilities, saving $30 million in new facility construction costs.
- Managed and completed more than forty (40) projects in less than three (3) months.
- Designed presentations for supervisor to present to potential clients based upon analysis of market opportunities.

Summer 2015
Camco-Phillips, Inc.
Phoenix, AZ

Assisted Chemical Technology Group with the focus on the optimization of production.
- Recommended and implemented new switching center design, which resulted in improved equipment maintenance and switching operations.
- Achieved a hundred forty-five (145) percent increase in productivity for the department.
- Recommended and implemented new switching center design, which resulted in increased productivity.
- Designed and plan the layout of equipment.

Spring 2014
University of Thurgood Marshall
Houston, TX

Research Assistant
A significant position with Big Brother/Big Sister Program, assisting program coordination, distribution of materials, event planning, general office needs and field projects.
- Trained staff on use of new programs and developed online reservation system that increased productivity, what allowed fifteen (15) percent reduction in staffing needs.
- Recruited and trained over twenty-five (25) volunteers, which saved $500,000 dollars in operating and administrative costs.
- Increased the number of participants to over seventy-five (75) percent in three (3) months.

ACTIVITIES & HONORS
National Dean’s List 2015, 2016, 2017 • University of Thurgood Marshall, SSA President • Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE), Recording Secretary • National Society of Black Engineers • Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. • National Honor Society • National Merit Scholar • Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) Scholarship Recipient • TMCF 2013 Leadership Institute

References Page Sample

John R. Smith
907 F Street NW • Washington, D.C. 20004
(212) 573-8888 • Johnrsmith@gmail.com

References:

Name of Reference, Position
Company or Organization of Reference
Company or Organization Address
Phone Number
Email Address

Name of Reference, Position
Company or Organization of Reference
Company or Organization Address
Phone Number
Email Address

Name of Reference, Position
Company or Organization of Reference
Company or Organization Address
Phone Number
Email Address

Comment: (1) The format of the heading should reflect that of your resume.
Comment: (2) You can opt to list this depending on number of references.
Comment: (3) Repeat as necessary.

Developing a Winning 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. Note: CV format and content may vary between disciplines. Therefore, consult with scholars within your discipline for current protocol.

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, 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
- Post Doc Application

Foundational Standards
Use the following information from the Developing a Winning Resume on pages 12 and 13:

- Education
- Special Training
- Research Experience and Interests
- Related Experience: Internships, Practicum and/or Fieldwork
- Grants Received and Academic Awards
- Attended Conferences, Symposia, and Workshops
- Professional association leadership positions
- College or university service appointments
- Academic departmental and tenure reviews
- Teaching, research and upper-level administrative positions in higher education
- Graduate school admission, graduate assistantship, or scholarship application
- Speaking engagements
- Grant proposal
- Post Doc Application

Additional Sections
Depending on your background, you may want to add additional sections to your resume:
- 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

Reprinted with permission from the Career Planning Handbook of Purdue University.
Power Verbs for Your Resume

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

Be aware that email is often the preferred method of communication between job-seeker and employer. There are general guidelines that should be followed when emailing:

- 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 about your email.
- Ditch the emoticons. While a big smiley (:) may go over well with friends and family, do not use such symbols in your emails with business people.
- Do not use strange fonts, wallpapers or multicolored backgrounds.
- Be sure to proofread and spell-check your email before sending it.
- 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 about your email.
- Ditch the emoticons. While a big smiley (:) may go over well with friends and family, do not use such symbols in your emails with business people.
- Do not use strange fonts, wallpapers or multicolored backgrounds.
- Be sure to proofread and spell-check your email before sending it.
- 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 about your email.
- Ditch the emoticons. While a big smiley (:) may go over well with friends and family, do not use such symbols in your emails with business people.
- Do not use strange fonts, wallpapers or multicolored backgrounds.
- Be sure to proofread and spell-check your email before sending it.
- 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 about your email.
- Ditch the emoticons. While a big smiley (:) may go over well with friends and family, do not use such symbols in your emails with business people.
- Do not use strange fonts, wallpapers or multicolored backgrounds.
- Be sure to proofread and spell-check your email before sending it.

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.

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.

---

Email Correspondence

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 a strong asset to your company. I appreciate the opportunity to be considered for employment at XYZ Corporation. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information.

Sincerely,
John Doe

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, events or activities you have 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 a 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.

Adapted with permission from the Career Resource Manual of the University of California, Davis.
Work Your Network

Developing a Noticeable LinkedIn Profile

Technology has revolutionized the hiring process. In 2003, LinkedIn introduced the professional 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 best to use LinkedIn, but it’s 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, it’s more like a resume. LinkedIn is a platform where you showcase your educational background, relevant experience, work 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 Cruz 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 worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile a customized invitation to connect. This is an opportunity to announce to the global business community who you are or who you seek to become. Use this space to introduce yourself and your qualifications to others.

Profile Information

1. Personal Information
   - Complete your profile with a current picture, your name, and your industry experience.
2. Summary
   - Use this section to introduce yourself and highlight your career accomplishments, skills, and education.
3. Experience
   - List your professional experience in reverse chronological order, emphasizing your accomplishments and contributions.
4. Education
   - Include your education, including any certifications or degrees earned, and the institutions attended.
5. Skills
   - List your skills in a bullet point format.
6. Volunteering and Projects
   - Share any volunteer work or projects you have completed.
7. Volunteer Experience
   - If you have volunteered, be sure to include the name of the organization, the role within the organization and any fundraising results, event coordination, management experience and more. Your volunteerism, in many cases, can be as valuable as your work experience.
8. Awards and Honors
   - Highlight any awards and honors received during your college career, including non-academic 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. Add a quick introduction to how this skillset will allow others to endow your skillset, giving you instant credibility. A solid list of at least 8-10 skills demonstrates value and capability.
10. Share Your Interests
    - Disclose 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, look over your summary and make sure that self-disclosures are strictly prohibited if you want to land the job!

2. Keyword Rich Headline

The summary section is your 30-second elevator pitch. Use

3. Alumni Connections Feature

LinkedIn offers users a dynamic tool that connects 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.

4. Education

Many individuals are happy to assist their fellow alumni with career advice and even hiring. Don’t forget to showcase your school pride in that customized invitation to connect.

5. 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 everything you do online may be seen by others, even if you are communicating in a space that you typically share with friends. Just as you would not let your employer know what you typically share with friends, just as you would not let your employer know that you are networking with a potential employee, you must maintain a positive and professional approach when conversing with networking contacts online.

Networking Rules

When networking, keep in mind the following:

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

2. Volunteer

C

C
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 yourself partying at your local bar? Could they diminish your prospects of landing a job? Recruiters often use these sites to evaluate job seekers. Since you are already in the job interview 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’ academic careers, which 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.

LinkedIn is an online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t worry. It is easy to create and edit your profile. Make sure you are professional and smile. Keep in mind that selfies tend to get de-emphasized. Consider your profile your first impression to a global online business community. While that can feel a bit intimidating, do...
Clean Up Your Social Media Identity

T he social media profiles of job candidates are an area of scrutiny for recruiters. In fact, there are now even online research analysts who will comb the internet for damaging information on job applicants. On the flip side, there are “scrub services” that will clean up a job hunter’s digital footprint. Here are several ways to take a DIY approach to scrubbing your online presence.

Google Your Name
Search for your name online occasionally to see what comes up, or set up automatic name alerts at Google.com/alerts. You may discover results for many other people with your name, possibly with embarrassing or outrageous content. To find the real “you,” try tweaking your name (e.g., Sam versus Samson) or add some additional identifying modifiers (perhaps your city or school). Search for your name on all the networks to which you’ve ever belonged, including Facebook and YouTube. (Recruiters check everywhere.) After a thorough review, ask yourself: Will this social media profile foster callbacks, interviews and job offers? If not, keep reading.

Keep Some Mystery
“Most new grads grow up texting, Skypeing, Tweeting, Facebooking and reading or creating blogs,” says Jenny Foss, who operates Ladder Recruiting Group in Portland, Ore. “Older, more experienced competitors aren’t ‘native social media people’.” That’s the plus; the minus is you have to shift your mindset from “impressing the guys” to “promoting myself as a polished professional.”

Foss recommends you adjust the privacy settings on your social media profiles. LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Blogspot all rank high in Google searches.

Witness Protection Program
Some job seekers are so concerned about privacy they’ve gone to such lengths as blocking all of their profiles. Unfortunately, that makes recruiters wonder what they’re trying to hide. Plus, many of them seek employees with social media skills, so cleanup what’s out there is usually better than shutting it down.

What Would Your Mother Say?
Many career coaches and recruiters say that the rule of thumb for social media content is: Would you want your mother or employer to see it? No? Then don’t post it.

“Self-censorship is the main key,” says Alexandra Levit, author of Blind Spots: The 10 Business Myths You Can’t Afford to Believe on Your New Path to Success. “Always think before you post, because if there is a single person out there who you don’t want to see your content, I guarantee it will get back to them.” You may be too close to the situation to judge what’s appropriate or not, so it can be helpful to have a second pair of eyes to look over your profiles. Select someone who’s about the same age as your target employers, experienced in your field, or at least in the hiring process.

Netiquette Tips
Dan Schawbel, a personal branding expert and author of Me 2.0, offers these tips to keep your digital reputation clean:

• Don’t over-promote yourself or people will get turned off.
• Do share industry insights, useful resources, quotes and facts with your audience.
• Don’t send your resume to employers on Facebook.
• Do build a relationship through tweeting before you email buzz.
• Don’t come to an interview without researching the company and the hiring manager online, using LinkedIn first.

Get LinkedIn
This is the single best social media platform for job seekers because of its professional focus. Some savvy employers are now even requesting LinkedIn profiles into as part of the job application process. One of the most powerful aspects of this profile is the recommendations from previous bosses and co-workers. Testimony from others is proof positive of your professionalism. Make good use of keywords and set up links between all your social media profiles. LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Blogspot all rank high in Google searches.

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 over-dressed side—you’ll make a better impression if you appear professional. Think of it as a dress rehearsal for your real interviews!

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

Stop, Look and Listen
Keep your eyes and ears open—there’s nothing wrong with 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 ‘tricks 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 They 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 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 interview. It’s an opportunity that’s too valuable to miss.
What Is an “Elevator Pitch”?  

An “Elevator Pitch” is a concise, carefully planned, and well-practiced marketing message about your professional self that anyone should be able to understand in the time it would take to ride up an elevator. It should contain a “hook” or “theme” and go no longer than 60 seconds; resonate with your unique personality and interests and contain a follow up request for a business card, a referral, or future meeting.

Why Do You Need It?  

It helps get your foot in the door with potential employers whether on the phone, email or in person at a conference, chance social networking event, or through an informal face-to-face chance encounter through a friend or relative. You will have a ‘ready-made’ two sentence to answer the “Tell Me About Yourself” or “What are you hoping to do when you graduate?”  

It forces you to figure out what your primary skill sets are and what makes you valuable.  

It helps you do the hard work needed to deliver an effective “cover letter” that entices an employer to read your resume and grant you an interview.

Common Mistakes By Recent College Graduates  

• Lack of confidence in what you have to offer — “I don’t have a lot of experience yet.”  
• Lack of focus or goals — “I have a lot of interests and don’t want to limit myself.”  
• Inability to articulate the learning and skills gained from your academic major — “I know my major has nothing to do with my interest in starting my own business, but…”

Using Career Labels to Get Started  

Begin with your education or areas of career experience and work your way to your skills or how you operate. “Competency” is a set of behaviors that describe what you do—your professional identity. “Expertise” is the competencies or skills you use to perform your work. “Competency” is a set of behaviors that describe excellent performance in a particular work context; a bundle of skills. A “skill” is something you can do well.

• Types of businesses—name the environments in which you have worked or want to work in. Ex: nonprofit, startup companies, Fortune 500 companies, government agencies, etc.

• Special strengths—the things that make you different from others who perform the same work (your competition). Do you have a special certification, unique approach to a problem, or exceptional technical knowledge?  

• Connection to groups such as SHRM?

Delivery  

An elevator pitch isn’t much good if first you don’t come across as a credible, likable individual. To achieve that, remember your business etiquette. The first thing you have to do is introduce or re-introduce yourself. Stick out your hand, put your face and name back in context for them. Only then should you explain how they can help you. And after you deliver a pitch, try to give a really brief review of your talents, education, or skill set.

• 30-60 seconds in length  
• Sound the part—show confidence and let your passion across as a credible, likeable individual. To achieve that, remember your business etiquette. The first thing you have to do is introduce or re-introduce yourself. Stick out your hand, put your face and name back in context for them. Only then should you explain how they can help you. And after you deliver a pitch, try to give a really brief review of your talents, education, or skill set.

• 30-60 seconds in length  
• Sound the part—show confidence and let your passion across as a credible, likeable individual. To achieve that, remember your business etiquette. The first thing you have to do is introduce or re-introduce yourself. Stick out your hand, put your face and name back in context for them. Only then should you explain how they can help you. And after you deliver a pitch, try to give a really brief review of your talents, education, or skill set.

30-60 seconds in length  
• Sound the part—show confidence and let your passion

Basic structure to begin with:  

Hi, my name is ___________ and I ___________. (this can be a hook or ‘soft skills’). I’m looking to ___________. I will be graduating from the College of Business and ___________ with a degree in ___________.

Examples  

Example 1  

Hi, my name is John Smith, and I am a senior Environmental Sciences major. I am looking for a position that will allow me to demonstrate my research and analysis skills. Over the past few years, I have been strengthening these skills through my work with a local watershed council on conservation strategies to support water quality and habitats. Eventually, I would like to develop education programs on water conservation awareness. I am aware that your organization is...
Example 2
Hello, my name is Carol Smith. I am a Computer Science major and I hope to become a computer programmer when I graduate. I have had a couple of internships where I worked on several program applications with a project team. I enjoy developing computer applications for simple business solutions. The position you have listed in job-klegs seems like it would be a perfect fit for someone with my skills. I would like to hear more about the organizations and the opportunities that are available.

Develop Your Elevator Pitch

Step 1: Research the Employer
1. Preview the list of organizations participating in the event and plan a strategy for the day. Put together an “A” list and a “B” list of employers you want to target. Contact your career services office to see what employers may be recruiting on campus.
2. Research all the employers on your “A” list. Look for current facts about each employer, including new products, services or acquisitions.
3. Write down some key facts about the employer.
   (a) ____________________________
   (b) ____________________________
   (c) ____________________________
4. Review job descriptions pertinent to your major for employer requirements. Note specific knowledge, skills, and abilities they seek.
5. List academic or employment experiences and activities where you demonstrated these skills.

The employer is seeking:
My qualifications and selling points:

(a) ____________________________
(b) ____________________________
(c) ____________________________
(d) ____________________________
(e) ____________________________
(f) ____________________________

Step 2: Develop Your Introduction
Review the examples. Using the information above, prepare and practice an elevator pitch to use when meeting employer representatives.

My personal qualities:

(a) ____________________________
(b) ____________________________
(c) ____________________________

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 on 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. Don’t whine. Be enthusiastic, eager, flexible, and most of all—likeable. Don’t 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 testing 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 then go on with ‘Thank you for your time. Sincerely, your name.”

Similarly, if everyone in the office calls your interviewee ‘Sam,’ adjust that to ‘Mr. 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, 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.)
Professional Etiquette

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

Meeting and Greeting

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

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

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

Dining

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

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

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

Eating

Follow these simple rules for eating and drinking:

• Start eating with the implement that is farthest away from your plate. You may have two spoons and two forks. The spoon farthest away from your plate is a soup spoon. The fork farthest away is a salad fork unless you have three forks, one being much smaller, which would be a seafood fork for an appetizer. The dessert fork/spoon is usually above the plate. Remember to work from the outside in.
• Dip soup away from you; sip from the side of the spoon.
• Season food only after you have tasted it.
• Pass salt and pepper together—even if asked for only one.
• Pass all items to the right. If the item has a handle, such as a seafood fork, pass it before serving yourself.
• While you are speaking during a meal, utensils should be resting on plate (fork and knife crossed on the plate with tips down). Don’t chew with your mouth open or blow on your food.

The interviewer will usually take care of the bill and the tip. Be prepared, however, if this doesn’t happen and have small bills ready to take care of your part, including the tip. Never make an issue of the check.

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

Written by Jennie Hunter, a professor at Western Carolina University.

Dining Etiquette at the Interview Meal

Tips and strategies to help you successfully navigate the interview meal with poise and polish.

I. Accepting the Interview Invitation

• RSVP (respondez ci your plate—please respond to the invitation within 24 hours.
• Write down the date, time, location and the name and phone number of the person with whom you will meet. Also ask exactly where to meet inside the restaurant.
• Verify the information the day before the interview.

II. The Day of the Interview

• Arrive a few minutes early to organize yourself and check your appearance.
• Turn off your cell phone and other electronic devices.
• Enter the building with a warm, professional confidence.
• Greet your host with a firm handshake and a smile as you introduce yourself.

III. Before You Are Seated

• Follow your host’s cue and wait to be directed to take a seat at the table.
• Enter your chair from the right.

IV. After You Are Seated

• Do not place keys, phones, purses, sunglasses or other items on the table.
• Wait for your host to place their napkin on their lap before you do. Sometimes the waitstaff will place your napkin on your lap for you, so be observant.
• Fold the napkin in half and place it on your lap with the crease facing your waist.
• Use good posture and do not cross your legs under the table. Keep both feet flat on the floor, or cross your ankles.
• Avoid touching your hair and face and do not apply makeup at the table.
• If you excuse yourself, exit from the right side of the chair, place your napkin on the seat of your chair and remember to slide the chair under the table until you return. When you return, enter your chair from the right and place your napkin on your lap under your chair.
• Start the place setting for a moment and follow your hosts before leading a sip of water or disturbing the silverware.

V. Ordering

• Follow your host’s cue and pay attention to any recommendations they make regarding menu selections. It will be a hint from them as to the level of hospitality they wish to extend to you. If you are not given recommendations you can ask for one. Try to select a menu option comparable to what your host orders.
• Remember to order menu items that are neat and easy to eat with a knife and fork such as chicken breast, cut vegetables and roasted potatoes. Do not order messy food such as spaghetti or lobster.
• Do not order alcohol during an interview as you will need to be focused and mentally sharp to make the best impression possible.
• Do not smoke during the interview.

VI. The Four-Course Place Setting

1. Bouillon cup
2. Butter spreader
3. Napkin
4. Salad fork (if the salad will be served before the main entrée)
5. Dinner fork
6. Place plate
7. Dinner knife
8. Salad knife (if the salad will be served before the main entrée)
9. Soup spoon
10. Water goblet
11. Iced tea glass
12. Dessert spoon
13. Dessert fork

VII. Navigating the Place Setting

• Your bread plate will always be on your left.
• Your dinner plate will always be in the center.
• Your glassware will always be on your right.
• Forks will always be on your left and knives on your right.
• Begin using silverware from the outside and work your way toward the dinner plate.

Sonia Zabatka, Etiquette Coaching, Training and Consulting
March 2011

www.subr.edu/careerservices
You will do well in a small company if you are:

- Enthusiastic
- A risk-taker
- A quick learner
- Responsible enough to get things done on your own
- Willing to do some lesser limitations, and it’s up to you to make the best or worst of that freedom.
- A small business often has a strong company culture. Learn that company’s culture, it will help you on your way up the corporate ladder.

**Finding a Job in a Small Company**

One of the first steps to finding a job in a small business is contacting a hiring manager. Good timing is critical. As small businesses have been at the forefront of innovation, economic growth and job creation, and there’s no reason to doubt that they’ll continue to be the engine of new employment in the future. A small business can mean sporadic job openings, so you need to network. A small business tends to fill its labor needs informally through personal contacts and recommendations from employees.

Job hunters must find their way into the organization and approach someone with hiring authority. This means you must take the initiative. Once you have someone’s attention, you must convince him or her that you can do something for the company.

**Types of Federal Jobs**

Federal jobs are divided 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 who have been rated.

Hiring managers for excepted service agencies are not required to follow civil service hiring procedures or pick from a competitive service applicant pool. 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 a war or defense campaign.

The Federal Civil Service Reserve, the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency are examples of some excepted service agencies. Employers are also required to fill positions that are not strictly excepted service agencies can have excepted service positions available within them.

**OPM and USAJOBS**

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) acts as the federal government’s human resources agency. OPM’s website (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. Links to the USAJOBS site (usajobs.gov), which has its own set of tools and resources that will be familiar to any standard job site user. USAJOBS acts as a portal for federal employment with thousands of job listings at any one time.

**Searching for Federal Jobs**

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

Registered visitors to USAJOBS can create and post up to five resume profiles to suit different job needs. You can find what federal agencies are looking for from federal agencies to find resumes during applicant searches. Applicants can also use these resumes to apply directly to jobs, and employers can review them. In addition, job applicants can create as many as ten “search agents,” which will scan for job openings using certain criteria (such as location, job type, agency, salary range) and email matches directly to their inboxes. Applicants can also search for jobs directly using the “search jobs” button on the USAJOBS homepage.

**How to Apply**

There is no general way to submit an application to OPM or to federal agencies. Instead, students should refer to each job posting for specific directions. Whether for competitive service or excepted service positions, federal job postings may 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 waiting for an avalanche of information overwhelming you, use it as a resource to help you put together the best application possible, paying particular attention to the “How to Apply” section. If you do not follow the instructions and procedures closely, your application may not be considered. In addition, 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 don’t follow all the rules and cross all their gain a competitive advantage and rise to the top of the applicant pool.”

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

**How to Find the Small Companies**

Don’t forget the Small Companies

You must be able to work with everyone in the organization.

- You must be able to work with everyone in the organization.
- You have to be ready to learn new things fast.
- You may be eligible for stock options and profit sharing.
- You have the opportunity to be involved in the creation or growth of something great.
- You are given more responsibility and are not limited by someone else’s ideas. You are given more responsibility and are not limited by someone else’s ideas.
- Your ideas and suggestions will be heard and given more weight.
- Career advancement and salary increases may be rapid in a growing company.
- You have the opportunity to be involved in the creation or growth of something great.
- You can be part of a team that is working on the front lines of new ideas.
- You have less job security due to the high rate of failure for a small business.
- You may be involved in the entire organization rather than in a narrow department.
- You may be eligible for stock options and profit sharing.
- The environment is less bureaucratic; there are fewer rules and regulations and thus fewer red tape to determine what to do and whether you’re succeeding or failing.
- Successes and faults are more visible.
- Starting salaries and benefits may be more variable.
- A dominant leader can control the entire organization.
- This can lead either to more “political games” or a healthy, happy atmosphere.
- You must be able to work with everyone in the organization.

**Are You Right for a Small Company?**

Because most small companies do not have extensive training programs, they look for motivated employees. You will do well in a small company if you are:

- Self-motivated
- A generalist with many complementary skills
- A good communicator, both oral and written

**Federal Jobs: Working for Uncle Sam**

S o 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 $82,125. Further, the Federal government offers a variety of career opportunities unparalleled in any other sector. Federal employees work with (and create) cutting-edge technology. They create policy, programs and services that impact the health, wealth and welfare of millions of people state-wide.

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 you start your federal job search as early as possible to begin the process at least two semesters before their graduation date.
Ten Rules of Interviewing

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

2. Include concrete, quantifiable data. Interviewers tend to like generalities. Unfortunately, generalities often fail to convince interviewers that the applicant has assets. Include measurable information and give scores about specific accomplishments when discussing your strengths.

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

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

5. Put yourself on their team. Ally yourself with the prospective employer by using the employer’s name and product or service. For example, “As a member of __________, I would carefully analyze and….” Show that you are thinking like a member of the team and will fit in with the existing environment. Be careful though not to say anything that would offend or place the call for you and explain how you plan to handle the issue. Your research will help you in this area.

6. Image is often as important as content. What you look like and how you say something are just as important as what you say. Studies have shown that 67 percent of the conveyed message is nonverbal, gestures, physical appearance and attire are highly influential during job interviews.

7. Ask questions. The types of questions you ask and the way you ask them can make a tremendous impression on the interviewer. Good questions require advance preparation. Just as you plan how you would answer an interview question, you should prepare to use feedback questions at the end of your answers and use body language and voice inflection to create a conversational interchange between you and the interviewer.

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

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

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

In Summary

Because of its importance, interviewing requires advance preparation. Sometimes your first contact with the employer may be through a cover letter and resume. If you have not done so already, obtain a copy of the company’s personnel policy. As an incentive for good performance, the personnel representative may be willing to allow you to complete the interview in your home or office. Make sure you are prepared for the interview.

Tips on Managing the Interview

1. Identify a career services staff person to help you prepare for your interview with the employer.

2. Arrange for several taped, mock interview sessions to become more comfortable 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 you need help on how to handle questions, or for an alternative path to follow, contact the employer representative to determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can plan ahead to pursue an acceptable career.

4. Be sure that your career center has information about the or career center representative that may be helpful to you. A written narrative to supplement your resume that details your disabilities can help to remove some of the barriers that may be encountered.

5. Determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can plan ahead to pursue an acceptable career.

6. Be sure that your career center has information about the or career center representative that may be helpful to you. A written narrative to supplement your resume that details your disabilities can help to remove some of the barriers that may be encountered.

7. Seek advice from other workers with disabilities who have been successful in finding employment.

8. Review the general advice about interviewing outlined in this career guide.

During the Interview

1. 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 the questions); maintain the appropriate control of the interview by tactically keeping the review 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. Complete the interview by reiterating your qualifications and giving the interviewer the opportunity to ask any further questions.

Written by Roseanne B. Bensley, Career Services, New Mexico State University.

The traditional face-to-face interview can be particularly stressful when you have a disability—especially a visible disability. 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 physically challenged individual. When this happens, the interviewer is often so uncomfortable that he or she may 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 Do Not to Do

To disclose or not to disclose, and when and how to disclose, is a decision 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 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. Sometimes your disclosure may lead to re-employment based on negative, preconceived ideas about persons with disabilities. In addition, you may have to inform the employer about the different ways to prepare the interviewer for your disabilities not the disability.

To Determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can plan ahead to pursue an acceptable career.

To Determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can plan ahead to pursue an acceptable career.

To Determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can plan ahead to pursue an acceptable career.

To Determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can plan ahead to pursue an acceptable career.

To Determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can plan ahead to pursue an acceptable career.

To Determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can plan ahead to pursue an acceptable career.

To Determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can plan ahead to pursue an acceptable career.

To Determine any technical support, resources and costs that might be necessary for your employment so that you can plan ahead to pursue an acceptable career.

Written by Rose Anne Smith.

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

When You Get the Interview

As stated earlier, it may not be wise to hide the disability (especially a visible one) during the first interview. However, when the employer representative is informed, they can be achieved, thereby demonstrating your ability to manage your disability.

Conclude the interview by reiterating your qualifications and giving the interviewer the opportunity to ask any further questions.

Written by Rose Anne Smith.

When You Get the Interview

As stated earlier, it may not be wise to hide the disability (especially a visible one) during the first interview. However, when the employer representative is informed, they can be achieved, thereby demonstrating your ability to manage your disability.

Conclude the interview by reiterating your qualifications and giving the interviewer the opportunity to ask any further questions.

Written by Rose Anne Smith.
Dressing for the Interview

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

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

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

Here are some guidelines:

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

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

Staying Within a Budget

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

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

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

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

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

A Final Check

And, of course, your appearance is only as good as your grooming. Create a final checklist to review before you go on an interview:
- Neatly trimmed hair
- Conservative makeup
- No runs in stockings
- Shoes polished (some suggest wearing your sneakers on the way to an interview and changing before you enter the interview site)
- No excessive jewelry; men should refrain from wearing earrings.
- No missing buttons, crooked ties or lint

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

Taking a Casual Approach

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

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

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

Play It Safe
- Chinos or corduroy slacks are usually a safe bet for both sexes.
- As for formal business attire, buy the best that your budget will allow.
- If you will be seeing clients, dress appropriately for their workplace, not yours.
- Go to the mall—most department and specialty stores have sections devoted to this style of office attire.

What is the Career Clothes Closet?

The Career Clothes Closet will aid our students in looking their best in the professional world. As a student, it may be hard to attain funds to purchase appropriate interviewing attire. Therefore, the Career Services Center has implemented a program called the “Career Clothes Closet” that will ensure students a start in their future endeavors. We will provide students with “new or gently used” clothing donated by alumnus, business professionals, faculty, staff, students and other professional organizations.

In order to participate in this program, students must:
- Bring a current SU I.D., unofficial transcript and complete an application of request (Hardship Application Form).
- Bring an updated resume for critiquing by one of the career counselors.
- Schedule a mock interview with our mentors/professionals/counselors.
- Attend two information sessions or two events sponsored by Career Services or other academic units.

After requirements are met, the student may choose their business attire of choice for the interviewing experience. For more information on the Career Clothes Closet, call us at (225) 771-2200. All questions concerning the Career Clothes Closet should be directed to Mrs. Tamara Foster-Montgomery or Ms. Kathy Scott.

Donations are solicited from alumnus, business professionals, faculty, staff and students. Appropriate donation items include...
- Men’s business suits (black, navy or gray)
- Women’s business suits (black, navy or gray)
- Button-up business professional shirts for men and professional suit appropriate blouses for women
- Professional slacks for men and women
- Conservative ties

All donated attire MUST be...
- Appropriately cleaned
- Placed on hangers

Delivered to:
Career Services Center
E.C. Harrison Drive
T.H. Harris Hall, Suite 1100 Baton Rouge, LA 70813

Career Clothes Closet (CCC) Open: Fridays Only 12:00pm – 2:00pm
Tell me about a time when you were on a team, and one of the members wasn’t carrying his or her weight. If this is one of the leading questions in your job interview, you could be in for a behavioral interview. Based on the premise that the best way to predict future behavior is to determine past behavior, this style of interviewing is popular among recruiters.

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

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

**Behavioral vs. Traditional Interviews**

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

- Instead of asking how you would behave in a particular situation, the interviewer will ask you to describe how you did behave.
- *Expect the interviewer to probe and question (think of peeling the layers from an onion).*
- The interviewer will ask you to provide details and will not allow you to theorize or generalize about events.
- The interview will be a more structured process that will concentrate on areas that are important to the interviewer, rather than allowing you to concentrate on areas that you may feel are important.
- You may not get a chance to deliver any prepared stories.
- Most interviewers will be taking notes throughout the interview.

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

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

- “Describe a major problem you had in your previous job and how you went about resolving it.”
- “Give an example of when you had to work with your hands to accomplish a task or project.”
- “What class did you like the most? What did you like about it?”
- “How did you feel when you confronted this person?”
- “Exactly what was the nature of the project?”
- “What was your role?”
- “What was the result?”

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

**How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview**

- **Recall recent situations that show favorable behaviors or actions, especially those involving coursework, work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning and customer service.**
- Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to give details if asked.
- Be sure each story has a beginning, a middle and an end, i.e., be ready to describe the situation, your action and the outcome or result.
- Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable).
- Be honest. Don’t embellish or omit any part of the story. The interviewer will find out if your story is built on a weak foundation.
- Be specific. Don’t generalize about several events; give a detailed accounting of one event. A possible response to the question, “Tell me about a time when you were on a team and a member wasn’t pulling his or her weight” might go as follows: “I had been assigned to a team to build a canoe out of concrete. One of our team members wasn’t showing up for our lab sessions or doing his assignments. I finally met with him in private, explained the frustration of the rest of the team and asked if there was anything I could do to help. He told me he was preoccupied with another class that he wasn’t passing, so I found someone to help him with the other course. He not only was able to spend more time on our project, but he was also grateful to me for helping him out. We finished our project on time and got a ‘B’ on it.”

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

- “Can you give me an example?”
- “What did you do?”
- “What did you say?”
- “What were you thinking?”
- “How did you feel?”
- “What was your role?”
- “What was the result?”

**Don’t Forget the Basics**

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

**Behavioral Questions and Answer Example:** “Describe a time when you demonstrated effective problem-solving skills.”

**Example Answer:** “During my role as an Event Planning Intern at Company X this past summer, I managed all of the details and supervised a group of five in order to successfully host certain events.”

**Situation:**

- Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to give details if asked.
- Example: After reviewing the company’s annual report, I noticed that the attendance at our events had dropped by 30% in the past 3 years, and I wanted to find a solution to this problem.

**Task:**

- Explain how the situation changed, and how you were expected to address this change.
- Example: “First, I collected feedback by sending out a questionnaire to past attendees and partners on ways to improve our events. I gathered this research, and used it to design a new, more effective promotional packet using Software X.”

**Action:**

- Clarify the specific action steps that you took in order to address the task at hand.
- Include, concrete and quantifiable data to provide specific details in your response.
- Example: “Company X was able to utilize both my solutions and feedback from the community to host even better events. After implementing some of these strategies, our attendance to our events by 20% in the first year. I learned that it is essential to continually adapt strategies through marketing and research to increase participation.”

**Result:**

- Explain how your actions contributed to the overall end product.
- Example: “I increased attention to our events by 20% in the first year. I learned that it is essential to continually adapt strategies through marketing and research to increase participation.”

**Prepare for the behavioral interview:**

- LISTEN to the question
- THINK of an event, scenario, project, situation
- ORGANIZE your thoughts within 5-8 seconds
- SHARE your story effectively using the following method

**S.T.A.R. Method of Behavioral Interviewing**

- Describe the setting in which your interview response takes place
- Example: “What were you doing? Who were you working with? What project were you working on?”

- Show us why we should hire you. And have good examples relating to their field of study.
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. Are you willing to work flextime?
9. How do you feel about the possibility of relocating?
10. Do you prefer large or small organizations? Why?

Education
11. Why did you choose your major?
12. Why did you choose to attend your college or university?
13. Do you think you received a good education? Why?
14. In which campus activities did you participate?
15. Which classes in your major did you like best? Least? Why?
16. Which elective courses did you like best? Least? Why?
17. If you were to start over, what would you change about your education?
18. Do your grades accurately reflect your ability? Why or why not?
19. Were you financially responsible for any portion of your college education?

Experience
20. What job-related skills have you developed?
21. Did you work while going to school? In what positions?
22. What did you learn from these work experiences?
23. What did you enjoy most about your last employment? Least?
24. Have you ever quit a job? Why?
25. Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution to an employer.
26. Give an example of a time in which you worked under deadline pressure.
27. Have you ever done any volunteer work? What kind?
28. How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?

Career Goals
29. Do you prefer to work under supervision or on your own?
30. What kind of boss do you prefer?
31. Would you be successful working with a team?
32. Do you prefer large or small organizations? Why?
33. What other types of positions are you considering?
34. How do you feel about working in a structured environment?
35. Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
36. How do you feel about working overtime?
37. How do you feel about travel?
38. How do you feel about the possibility of relocating?
39. 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 clearly, unrehearsed answers to interviewers.

The Site Visit/Interview: One Step Closer

While on-campus screening interviews are important, most interview sites are won or lost. After an on-campus interview, strong candidates are usually invited to visit the employer’s facility. Work with the employer to schedule the on-site visit at a mutually convenient time. Sometimes employers will try to arrange site visits for several candidates to take place at the same time, so there may be a great deal of flexibility—but you’ll never know if the employer is flexible unless you ask.

1. An invitation to an on-site interview is NOT a guarantee of a job offer. It is a chance to examine whether or not you will be a good match for the job and for the organization.
2. If you are invited to an on-site interview, respond promptly if you are sincerely interested in this employer. Decline politely if you are not. Never go on an on-site interview for the sake of the trip. Document the name and phone number of the person coordinating your trip. Verify who will be handling trip expenses. Most medium- or large-size companies (as well as many smaller ones) will pay your expenses, but others will not. This is very important, because expenses are handled in various ways: 1) the employer may handle all expenses and travel arrangements; 2) you handle your expenses and arrangements (the employer may assist with this); or the employer will reimburse you later. 3) the employer may offer an on-site interview, but will not pay for your travel.
3. Know yourself well and the type of job you are seeking with this employer. Don’t say, “I am willing to consider anything you have.”
4. Thoroughly research the potential employer. Read annual reports, newspaper articles, trade journals, etc. Many companies have websites where you can read their mission statements, find out about long-term goals, read recent press releases, and view corporate photos. Don’t limit your research only to company-controlled information. The internet can be a valuable investigative tool. You may uncover key information that may influence—positively or negatively—your decision to pursue employment with a given organization.
5. Bring extra copies of your resume; copies of any paperwork you may have forwarded to the employer; names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of your references; an updated college transcript; a copy of your best paper or writing sample; a notebook; a black and/or blue pen for filling out forms and applications; and names and addresses of past employers.
6. Bring extra money and a change of clothes. Also, have the names and phone numbers of those who may be meeting you in case your plans change unexpectedly. Anything can happen, and you need to be ready for emergencies.
7. Your role at the interview is to respond to questions, to ask your own questions and to observe. Be ready to meet people in a formal agenda. Be courteous to everyone regardless of his or her position; you never know who might be watching you and your actions once you arrive in town.
8. Don’t forget your table manners. Plant trips may include several meals or attendance at a reception the night before your “big day.” When ordering food at a restaurant, follow the lead of the employer host. For example, don’t order the three-pound lobster if everyone else is having a more moderately priced entree. If you have the “living in jitters,” some authorities suggest ordering food that is easy to handle, such as a boneless fish fillet or chicken breast.
9. Many employers have a set salary range for entry-level positions and others are more negotiable. Though salary should not be brought up until an offer is extended, it is wise to know your worth in advance. In much as you are a potential employee, you also represent a valuable skills-set product. You should know what kind of product you have created, its value and what the company is willing to pay. Contact your campus career center to obtain more information on salaries.
10. Soon after the site visit, record your impressions of your performance. Review the business cards of those you met or write the information in your notebook before leaving the facility. You should have the names, titles, addresses and phone numbers of everyone who was involved in your interview so you can determine which individuals you may want to contact with additional questions or follow-up information. A thank-you letter should be written to the person(s) who will be making the hiring decision. Stay in touch with the employer if you want to pursue a career with them.

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

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

Written by Rosanne R. Bender, Career Services, New Mexico State University.
The Art of Negotiating

Always begin by expressing genuine interest in the position and the organization. Be enthusiastic, but don’t let the job or the organization influence your decision on agreement or being comfortable about “wiggling” room to compromise on other areas. Be prepared to support your points of disagreement, outlining the parts you would like to alter and identifying reasons on how this can be done and why it would serve the company’s best interests to accommodate your requests.

Prepare to defend your proposal. Back up your reasons for wanting to change the offer, meaningfully, work-related skills and positive benefits to the employer. Requesting a salary increase because you are a fast learner or have a high GPA are usually not justifiable reasons in the eyes of the employer. Meaningful work experience or internships that have demonstrated or tested your professional skills are things that will make an employer stop and take notice. It is sometimes more comfortable for job-seekers to make this initial request in writing and plan to meet later to hash out the differences. The good trial attorney will tell you the key to presenting a good case is the art of negotiating. Once you have been offered a job, you have the opportunity to discuss the terms of agreement. There are many things you can negotiate besides salary. If the employer chooses not to grant any of your requests—whether it be relocation reimbursement, tuition reimbursement and stock options as well as health care, clothing and entertainment in each city listed. Therefore, to compare salaries in different cities. For further information about the data below, please refer to www.bestplaces.net/cost-of-living. To compare information from other sources, refer to these websites: www.salary.com and www.homefair.com/real-estate/salary-calculator.asp

The Cost of Living Index

The following is a selection of cities where many graduating students accept offers. The cost of living index is based on the composite price of goods, housing, utilities, transportation, health care, clothing and entertainment in each city listed. Use this calculation to compare salaries in different cities.

for more information about the data below, please refer to www.bestplaces.net/cost-of-living. To compare information from other sources, refer to these websites: www.salary.com and www.homefair.com/real-estate/salary-calculator.asp.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City #1</th>
<th>Salary = $</th>
<th>City #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$81,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missoula</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleston</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulder</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa City</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albuquerque</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoenix</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Lake City</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carson City</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Beach</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raleigh</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Beach</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleston</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>116</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheyenne</td>
<td>103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dollars and Sense

Always begin by expressing genuine interest in the position and the organization. Be enthusiastic, but don’t let the job or the organization influence your decision on agreement or being comfortable about “wiggling” room to compromise on other areas. Be prepared to support your points of disagreement, outlining the parts you would like to alter and identifying reasons on how this can be done and why it would serve the company’s best interests to accommodate your requests.

Prepare to defend your proposal. Back up your reasons for wanting to change the offer, meaningfully, work-related skills and positive benefits to the employer. Requesting a salary increase because you are a fast learner or have a high GPA are usually not justifiable reasons in the eyes of the employer. Meaningful work experience or internships that have demonstrated or tested your professional skills are things that will make an employer stop and take notice. It is sometimes more comfortable for job-seekers to make this initial request in writing and plan to meet later to hash out the differences. The good trial attorney will tell you the key to presenting a good case is the art of negotiating. Once you have been offered a job, you have the opportunity to discuss the terms of agreement. There are many things you can negotiate besides salary. If the employer chooses not to grant any of your requests—whether it be relocation reimbursement, tuition reimbursement and stock options as well as health care, clothing and entertainment in each city listed. Therefore, to compare salaries in different cities. For further information about the data below, please refer to www.bestplaces.net/cost-of-living. To compare information from other sources, refer to these websites: www.salary.com and www.homefair.com/real-estate/salary-calculator.asp.

The Cost of Living Index

The following is a selection of cities where many graduating students accept offers. The cost of living index is based on the composite price of goods, housing, utilities, transportation, health care, clothing and entertainment in each city listed. Use this calculation to compare salaries in different cities.

for more information about the data below, please refer to www.bestplaces.net/cost-of-living. To compare information from other sources, refer to these websites: www.salary.com and www.homefair.com/real-estate/salary-calculator.asp.