Career Development Services’ staff members are here to support you. You can request an appointment through Handshake to meet with your career advisor.

Students can submit hiring outcomes here.
Career Development Services

At Career Development Services (CDS), we are committed to helping NJIT students from first-year to recent graduates reach their career goals. Through CDS students gain a clear understanding of career options, obtain relevant work experience, sharpen job search and interviewing skills, and secure meaningful employment.

A degree from NJIT will go a long way in preparing you with the qualifications for entering a highly technological workplace. To ensure that our graduates also possess the skills most often sought by today’s employers, Career Development Services works in partnership with the academic departments and industry to more fully prepare our students for workplace entry and career success. Students engaged in NJIT’s career development programs will be among the best-prepared graduates entering the workforce this year.

Several of our career development initiatives, including our highly regarded Cooperative Education Program (Co-op), are available in all majors with such noted employers as Google, Prudential, Panasonic, Tata, ExxonMobil, Styer, UPS, Enterprise, Ericsson, Colgate-Palmolive, Johnson & Johnson, Verizon, Optum, AT&T, and hundreds more. More than 600 NJIT students enroll in Co-op each year, and gain career-related work experience for their resume. NJIT Co-ops typically earn $9,000 per each 15-week, full-time work period. Moreover, many students receive full-time job offers upon graduation from their former Co-op employers.

We host the largest employer-attended high-tech career fairs in the region in the fall and spring of each year. In addition, each semester through our on-campus interview programs we arrange hundreds of on-campus interviews with organizations from the public and private sectors. Recruiters and employers from across the nation connect with Career Development Services to find their next best and brightest employees.

Additionally, we are delighted to announce that we have recently partnered with Handshake, the nation’s fastest growing and most robust online career management and job-posting platform. All NJIT students and alumni have access to this phenomenal new tool.

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Critical Dates:

To Be Successful in On-Campus Interviewing, You Should:
1. Login to your Handshake at CDS to complete your profile, update your career preferences, and upload your resume.
2. Contact your Career Advisor to express your interest in participating in the OCI program. Your Handshake at CDS account will be activated once your resume is approved.
3. Attend the On-Campus Interviewing Orientation Workshop.
4. Check Handshake at CDS for dates, times, and locations.
5. Agree to the On-Campus Interviewing policies. It is recommended that you also participate in Practice Interviews with Employers, utilize the Big Interview system, and check to see if you have been selected to interview with a company.

Company Information Sessions
Many companies conduct On-Campus Information Sessions in which recruiters provide detailed company information and you have the opportunity to ask questions. Information Sessions come in two forms: Pre-Select sessions for students who are selected to interview, or “open” sessions which all students can attend.

Select “Jobs” and then “On-Campus Interviews” from the top navigation bar under your name, select “Events”.

At TCS, every day is an opportunity
As a TCS employee, you will have the opportunity to work on one of the most exciting and rewarding software solutions in the world. You’ll be part of a dynamic team that is dedicated to developing innovative technology solutions that make a real difference in the world. TCS is a leader in cloud, technology, and business services. At TCS, we believe in giving our employees the tools and resources they need to succeed. We offer competitive salaries, comprehensive benefits, and opportunities for professional growth.

At TCS, we believe that diversity and inclusion are key to our success. We value the unique perspectives and experiences that our employees bring to the table. We are committed to creating a workplace that is inclusive and welcoming for all.

What is Handshake at CDS?
Handshake at CDS is a one-stop system to help you manage your job search and access Career Development Services’ programs and services. This powerful online database provided by CDS helps connect you to employers as well as full-time jobs, internships, co-ops, part-time jobs, and volunteer opportunities. Handshake at CDS provides a personalized approach with job recommendations based on your major and interests. In addition, you can schedule an appointment with your CDS Career Advisor, RSVP to events and career fairs, manage your resume and cover letter, and connect with other students within the system.

How do I login to Handshake at CDS?
You can login to Handshake at CDS by going to njit.joinhandshake.com. Select Login to Handshake and enter your NJIT UCID and password.

How do I control my profile?
Profile: Your basic information should already be in your profile. You should add additional information including your Education, Work Experience, Organizations/Extracurriculars, Courses, Projects, and Skills. It is recommended that you provide a Professional Summary in the “Get to Know Me” section. You also have the ability to link to most social media accounts.

How do I search and apply for jobs, internships, co-ops, and volunteer opportunities?
Job Search: From the top navigation bar, select “Jobs.” Enter in your search criteria. You can select filters for additional search fields. With Handshake at CDS you can also create a search alert to save a search. You can then see jobs that match your interests.

Jobs and Events for You: From the top navigation bar, select “Jobs.” Enter in your search criteria. You can select filters for additional search fields. With Handshake at CDS you can also create a search alert to save a search. You can then see jobs that match your interests.

Jobs and Events for You: From the top navigation bar, select “Jobs.” Enter in your search criteria. You can select filters for additional search fields. With Handshake at CDS you can also create a search alert to save a search. You can then see jobs that match your interests.

Career Interests: You can access this section by clicking on your name at the top of the page and selecting “Career Interests.” Complete this section so that Handshake at CDS’ job matching capabilities show you the jobs that best correlate with your career goals.

How do I upload my resume, cover letter, and other job search documents?
From the top navigation bar under your name, select “Documents.” Select “Add New Document.” Name the document and select the Document Type. Upload the file and click “Add Document.”

Handshake at CDS will help you manage your job search, on-campus interviews, co-op experiences, and event and career fair registrations. There are many resources within the system to assist you from first-year through graduation. Work with your Career Advisor to help maximize these opportunities. If you have questions, you can contact Handshake at 973-956-3100 or stop by Fenster Hall, Room 200.
How to Plan for Career Success

Freshmen—Question

❑ Explore your interests and abilities through academic courses
❑ Utilize self-assessment tools through your career services office
❑ 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 any cooperative education or internship programs offered through your career services office
❑ Join university organizations that will offer you leadership roles in the future
❑ Attend job fairs and gather information on potential careers and employers
❑ Familiarize yourself with the services and resources available at your career services office
❑ Visit each social media profile you have, and either edit your content or your privacy settings. It is time to put your professional foot forward
❑ Visit your career services office website
❑ Attend a resume workshop and create a first draft of your resume

TEN BEST WAYS TO GO ONLINE... AND GET THE JOB

Almost 40% of HR managers predict resumes will soon be replaced by social-networking profiles. Even today, to get the attention of recruiters, graduates have to establish a highly visible online presence. Most students are comfortable using technology to connect with family and friends, but unsure about how to use it in a professional context.

1. Check Out Major Job Boards
   Technology is great, so as a job seeker it might seem like a no-brainer to go job hunting on the Internet. "Digital job search is attractive to young people because they’re tech savvy," said T. O’Donnell of CareerMHQ.com. However, while a broad internet search, including searching major job boards, may be one aspect of your job search, it is not effective to limit the job search to this approach. The most effective job search is a multi-leveled strategy which incorporates diversified sources and interactive strategies to access job opportunities and make contact with employers.

2. Online Job Search Engines
   A better bet is a search engine that delivers job listings directly to you. O’Donnell recommends linking.com. "They focus on company websites so there are fewer duplicates, stale or fishy listings. You can also set alerts to contact you if one of your 22,000 companies posts a new opening." It may be that Google is now becoming the #1 (unofficial) job search engine. Job hunters can search (or set up automatic alerts) for job titles, companies, cities, states, and get lists of postings that match their terms.

3. Compare Company Cultures Online
   Want to get the real scoop on what it’s like to work at your own dream company? Check out Glassdoor.com, which rates companies similar to how Yelp rates consumer services. "They accept anonymous information on companies," says O’Donnell. "They post salary ranges for jobs, feedback ratings on leadership and information on the interview process."

4. Write Your Resume in Digital Format
   Eighty percent of all companies are using ATS (applicant-tracking system that scans and digitizes), so keywords are key," says O’Donnell. "As recent graduates don’t have a lot of professional experience, they probably won’t get selected for an interview." There’s a way to get around that: Reverse-engineer several job descriptions. First highlight the repeating keywords: "Microsoft Office Suite," not "Motivated, self-starter;" then plug them into your resume. Presto—an ATS software-friendly, search-engine-optimized resume!

5. Embrace LinkedIn
   Think of LinkedIn as your resume... on steroids. Fill out your profile completely, but don’t stop there. Use LinkedIn to reach specific individuals—the people most likely to hire you or help you get hired. "Scare the database just like recruiters do, by job titles, companies and professions. Search for people who are in jobs one, two, or three levels above your target job," says Martin Yate, author of Knock ‘em Dead, the Ultimate Job Search Guide.

6. Tweet, Tweet
   Twitter is a favorite method for recruiters to get a quick look at who you are and how you think. It’s fairly easy to micro-blog, too. Share your career-related news or retweet nuggets of interest to people in your field.

O’Donnell says Twitter is one of her favorite ways to connect hard-to-meet people. "Username, I’d really like to connect with you on Twitter," she’ll ask. "And they’re likely to do it because it’s only a 140-character commitment. Later, you can text, ‘would you mind if I connect with you on LinkedIn?’ It’s low-risk for them so you’ll see a higher rate of return."

7. Email Etiquette
   Most job seekers go through two to six exchanges with recruiters before they email “We got your resume” and when they sit in the interview. According to Tim Sanders, author of Love is the Killer App: How to Win Business and Influence Friends, stalking a recruiter with too-frequent emails should be avoided. Don’t text a recruiter either, he warns. Texting a stranger might come across as overly familiar or even creepy.

8. Broadcast on Facebook
   Even though Facebook is usually thought of as a purely social platform, it can be useful during a job search. “I do a post to my network of friends, family and other contacts,” says Sanders, “rather than contacting strangers.” For instance: “I am on the hunt to find a job [company] because of X. Does anyone know anybody at [company]? That X has to be believable, such as, I think they make the best products in the industry.” It’s good to report a variation of that request every few days. (“You’re reaching only about 10% of your friends’ feeds at any time,” Sanders says.)

9. A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words
   Your digital footprint often precedes you, so it’s a good idea to periodically review your online identity. Enlist another set of eyes, too, for another perspective. "I helped my niece with her profile," says Peggy Klaus, author of BRAG! The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It. "I opened up her Facebook page and sent her in a picture with a hookah. She said, ‘Aunt Pep, it’s only tobacco’! And I said, ‘I don’t care! To people of my generation, a hookah means pot.’ " Klaus recommends a professional pose, conservative attire, possibly taken by a studio photographer.

10. Polish Your Online Image
    "Don’t show or say anything online that you wouldn’t want your mother or boss to see," Klaus warns. "Clean up your email address and privacy settings. Even then, be careful what you share. You don’t know who’s standing around looking over who’s shoulder, or what will be forwarded and sent around." Watch your grammar and spelling, be as tidy or edgy, and stay away from political commentary (unless that’s appropriate for the job or industry). Klaus advises. Employers value good written communication skills.

Written by Jeoba Turner, a former human resources manager, who writes about career issues, and other business topics from her home in Portland, Ore.
Ten Best Ways to Go OFFLINE… and Get the Job

Richard Bolles, author of the legendary job search book, What Color Is Your Parachute, learned that the biggest mistake he sees job hunters make is spending too long looking online and getting nowhere. Experts estimate that only 4% to 10% of online jobs are success using that method. ‘What’s a better option? Ask for leads and info from family, friends, professors, and any other folks you run into. That’s how most people find a job.’

1. Get From Online to F2F

If you’ve been spending time searching online, you may have developed virtual friendships with members of industry, special interest or alumni groups. See if you can take those relationships offline. “Maintaining contacts online is time consuming,” says Vicky Oliver author of 201 Smart Answers to Business Etiquette Questions. “Then I realized that this LinkedIn group I belong to, for the alumni of Ivey, was actually meeting in my area, so I attended an event. ‘What a great way to network.’ If there isn’t a group already meeting, set up one yourself (maybe through MeetUp.com) or invoice one person for coffee. Face time can take a relationship to a whole new level.

2. Job Fairs, Conferences and Classes

Go anywhere groups of people in your field assemble. Because everyone has a common interest, and often their intention is to make connections—conversation will flow naturally. While job fairs catering to your major and career interests are best, it may be worth casting a bigger net. “Say you hear about a medical clinical professional job fair, and maybe you’re looking for a staff accountant job. ‘Pay your money and show up anyway,’ says Kathleen Downs, recruiting manager at Robert Half International in Orlando, Fla. “There will be HR folks there, so bring your resume, dress well, and talk to them.” Downs especially recommends this tactic of networking for people who are introverted and present well.

3. Set Up Informational Interviews

Spending 20 minutes with someone in the trenches is the best way to research a position, industry or company you’ve targeted. It’s a good way to add contacts to your network too. You can have interesting, meaningful conversations. They’ll also be more likely to want to help you—possibly put in a good word on your behalf or hand-deliver your resume. “Tap your network of friends and family and keep your request simple. ‘Try some variation of this script. ‘Do you know anyone who works in sports marketing?’ Or, ‘Do you know anyone who works at Nike?’ Or, ‘Do you know anyone who might know someone who knows such a person?’ and finally, ‘Is it okay for me to contact them and mention you suggested I get in touch?’ At the end of each informational interview, ask for more leads so you get passed on to others.

4. Be the Total Package

Tattoos, body piercings, or hipster attire may be your personal image statement, but don’t let your appearance scream so loudly that people can’t hear what you’re saying. “Some girls will come in with a small nose ring, and while I don’t think there’s anything wrong with that—it doesn’t help,” says Downs. “Look as conservative as you can and remove all distractions.”

5. Tell a Story About Yourself

In addition to discussing general topics of interest, learn how to slip in a bit about your job search. “I’m looking for a staff accountant job.” Later, practice relaying more detailed, career-related information. “I have a bachelor’s in Business and related special interest in Network and Digital Design or Signal Processing.”

6. Be a Giver

Now is a great time to volunteer for a nonprofit or industry group. “Get out of the house, feel a sense of accomplishment and pay it forward,” says Kathleen Downs, author of BRAG. The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It. “You’re able to explain what it is that you do: Prepare and rehearse little stories so it comes off conversationally.”

You’re your resume is your marketing tool to prospective employers. Every piece of information in a resume should sell your skills, accomplishments, and achievements to an employer. These instructions will assist you in creating a resume that best represents you and what you offer an employer. All sections (Objective, Education, etc.) shown must be included to have a comprehensive resume. Limit your resume to one page and do not use a font size lower than 10. Remember, this document is to provide highlights of your accomplishments, not a listing of everything you’ve done. Use the Sample Resume as a format along with the following guidelines and examples.

1. Objective

In one sentence, simply state the type of work that you’d like to do. If you have one special interest, state it as a special interest (with a special interest in Network Administration) Similarly, if you have several interests, state them using the connective word “and” (with interests in Programming and Database Management). If you have no real preference, identify at least two as general using the word “or” (with general interests in Digital Design or Signal Processing).

2. Education

Include GPA only if it is 3.0 or greater. If your overall GPA is less than 3.0 and you are offered a position which is greater (e.g., all E. E. courses), use that instead (e.g., Major GPA: 3.2). Also, list all schools attended after high school and include any Certifications or additional Training Certificates, listing the most recent first and working back ward.

3. Honors/Awards

Include scholarships, honor societies, honor programs, and special awards. Also include any recognition from your community, job, or service organizations.

4. Key Courses

Include courses that are directly related to your Objective, not basic courses taken by all students. If you have a special interest in Networking and have taken courses in Networking, those courses should be listed by name. Do not include course numbers.

5. Computer Skills

Must be included, regardless of your major. Categorize according to Proficient (know very well), Working (know enough to work with) and Familiar (limited knowledge). Computer Science majors may wish to identify skills categorized by Languages, Operating Systems, Databases, and Applications.

6. Projects

This category should be added after Computer Skills, especially if Work Experience is weak or nonexistent. Include Senior or Master’s Projects, course projects, and/or challenging class assignments. Use the same format for Projects as shown in Work Experience.

7. Work Experience

Format with bullets as shown. Begin each phrase with a Power Verb, emphasizing special accomplishments. Use fragmented sentences and avoid personal pronouns such as I, me, or we.

8. Professional Affiliations

Include any and all organizations with which you have an affiliation such as IEEE, ASME, NSBE, SHPE, etc. However, write the full organization name instead of using the initials. List all offices held and positions of leadership, such as President, Secretary or Committee Chair.

9. Hobbies/Interests

Any activities that you enjoy, such as music, reading, or sports.

10. Leadership/Activities

Include your participation in organizations with which you have more than just an interest, such as a specific varsity or intramural sport, fraternity, sorority, campus organization, or club. Include community activities as well, and list all leadership positions and offices held.

Every piece of information in a resume should sell your skills, accomplishments, and achievements to an employer.
NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Power Verbs for Your Resume

adapted, acknowledged, accomplished, achieved, acquired, acted, adapted, addressed, adjusted, administered, admitted, advanced, advised, agreed, allocated, alluded, allocated, allowed, altered, amended, analyzed, appointed, apportioned, appraised, approved, approximated, arbitrated, arranged, ascended, ascertained, assessed, assigned, assisted, attained, attended, augmented, authorized, associated, balanced, balanced, boosted, brainstormed, built, calculated, catalogued, centralized, certified, chained, charted, clarified, classified, coached, collected, commissioned, committed, communicated, compared, compiled, composed, computed, conceptualized, concluded, consented, consolidated, contracted, converted, convinced, cooperated, coordinated, correlated, corresponded, counseled, created, critiqued, customized, debugged, deciphered, dedicated, delegated, demonstrated, designated, designed, determined, developed, devised, diagnosed, directed, disadvantaged, dispatched, displayed, drafed, 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Sample Graduate Student’s Resume

Michael Sanchez
456 Ferry Ave
Newark, NJ 07102
(201) 555-5555
Michael_Sanchez@gmail.com
www.linkedin.com/in/ms4556

OBJECTIVE:
To secure a position in the field of IT Administration with an interest in Management and Security in IT.

EDUCATION
New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), Newark, NJ
M.S., IT Administration and Security, Expected Graduation: May 2023
GPA: 3.56
B.S., Information Technology, May 2021
GPA: 3.73

HONORS/AWARDS
Dean’s List Multiple Semesters, NJIT Provost’s Scholarship (2016-Present)

KEY COURSES

COMPUTER SKILLS
Programming Data Structures & Algorithms, Security & Privacy in Computer Systems

PROJECTS
• Network Responder: Utilized Java Sockets to manipulate server and client applications to communicate with one another.
• 18-Wheel Responder: Worked on a production of an 18-wheel trailer fully loaded with complex systems for digital broadcast in 4K HD resolution through satellite connection.

WORK EXPERIENCE
Fusion Storm Inc., New York, NY
IT Intern
2021-Present
• Perform data analysis of ticketing system data dump.
• Present findings to Engineering team on the ticketing system, which leads to streamlining a more efficient way of acknowledging and handling incoming tickets.
• Utilize PowerShell to create various scripts parsed through for pertinent content and printed the information into CSV format for end users.
• Create scripts that are incorporated into a bigger automated project.

Bank of America, New York, NY
Universal Banker I
2021-2023
Compiled with all operational, security and control policies to enhance the security posture of the bank
• Demonstrated the ability to multitask while executing sales, withdrawals, deposits and payment transactions.
• Assisted with daily operations and balancing of ATM and Coin Machines.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE: Habitat for Humanity

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS: Vice President of Graduate Student Association

How to Avoid the Rejection Email
7 Things You Need to Know About Applicant Tracking Systems

When you apply for a job online, you are most likely using a system known as an Applicant Tracking System (ATS). These technical systems are used by Human Resource departments to track and evaluate the numerous candidate resumes and cover letters that come into an organization.

The following tips will ensure that your application materials include the necessary keywords and content to pass through the system.

1. Avoid Resume Templates
   The layout and formatting included on resume templates can cause errors with the applicant tracking system. Avoid using stock resume templates and create your resume as a regular Microsoft Word document with simple formatting.

2. Simple Formatting
   Use simple formatting in your resume and resist the temptation to add a border or add shading the background of your resume. Create section headers such as “Summary of Qualifications,” “Education,” “Related Work Experience,” and more to signify where the information is located on your resume. Incorporate bolded fonts to introduce a new section and/or add underlining. Additionally, the standard for a college student or recent college graduate seeking full-time employment is a one-page resume.

3. Clean Fonts
   Choose a sans serif font for your resume for a crisp, clean, easy-to-read look. Some of the most popular sans serif fonts include Calibri, Arial, and Tahoma.

4. Use Keywords
   Applicant Tracking Systems score resumes based on keywords. The system assigns a value to each resume, assessing the qualifications and skills against what is contained in the job description. Resumes that score the highest are passed along to a recruiter or a hiring manager for further review. Carefully read each job description before you apply and identify the primary qualifications and skills. Highlight the ones that you possess and include those key phrases and words into your resume.

5. Document Header & Footer
   Never place your contact information in the header or footer. It’s very tempting to do this in order to ensure that it carries over to each page of your resume, but doing so will cause an error in the system.

6. Dates
   Make sure to list the years of employment for every previous job or, more specifically, the month and year of both the start and departure dates. The ATS system does not pick up semester information. Since the business world operates on a 12-month calendar, showing employment dates that correspond with the business calendar instead of semesters will provide better context. Also, be sure to right justify all dates on your resume.

7. Images, Charts & Graphs
   Let your experience and qualifications shine without the distraction of other objects. Do not include headshots, charts of proficiency levels or graphs in your resume, as it’s not standard practice and they can cause errors in system.

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

Avoid using stock resume templates and create your resume as a regular Microsoft Word document with simple formatting.
**Tips for Writing Cover Letter**

1. **Thank-You Letter**
   - After an interview, it is advisable to send a thank-you letter to the recruiter, both as a professional courtesy and as a method of continuing your communication with the company. The letter should be mailed or emailed within one or two days of your interview.
   - The letter need only be two or three paragraphs in length.
   - State the date and place you had your interview and reiterate your strongest selling points.
   - You may also use the thank-you letter to present important information about your qualifications that may have been omitted during your interview.
   - If you interviewed with more than one person, send the thank-you letter to either the main contact person or the individual who will be making the hiring decision (or both, if you feel it is appropriate).

2. **Letter of Acknowledgment**
   - **Company Visit Invitation**
     - Acknowledge it and, if interested, state what dates would be convenient for you, avoiding weekends and holidays. Do not delay. Procrastination makes a bad impression.
   - **Offers of Employment**
     - Acknowledge receipt of offer, restating title of position and salary and expressing your appreciation. Indicate the date you will let the company know your decision and be sure to act before that date.

3. **Letter of Refusal**
   - In declining the offer of employment, express your appreciation for the offer and for the company’s interest in you.

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

5. **Letter of Acceptance**
   - Indicate your acceptance of the offer of employment; restate position classification, compensation offered, and the starting date if previously established.
   - Refer to the date of the original offer letter.
   - Indicate your travel plans and anticipated arrival date if the initial assignment is at a considerable distance from your home.
   - Express your appreciation.

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

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**STANDARD COVER LETTER OUTLINE**

- **Address**
  - City, State ZIP Code
  - Month/Day/Year

- **Name**
- **Title**
- **Company**
- **Street Address**
- **City, State ZIP Code**

**Dear [Mr./Mrs.]**

1st paragraph (Purpose)—State why you are writing and the type of position or field of work in which you are interested. Indicate how you learned of this position. If there is not a specific position available, indicate how your interest originated. Demonstrate briefly your knowledge of the specific company.

2nd paragraph (Background and Qualifications)—Refer the employer to an enclosed resume and/or application form. If you have had related experience or specialized training, elaborate on the details that would be of special interest to the employer. Be as specific as you can about your qualifications. Explain to your reader where and how you developed these qualifications. Your goal here is to match your skills to the employer’s needs. Explain how you would fit into the position and the organization.

3rd paragraph (Request for action)—Close your letter by making a specific request for an interview and/or information. If you are requesting an interview, provide your contact information. Finally, include a statement expressing your appreciation for the employer’s consideration.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Name
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 our family, it is appropriate to keep a professional tone when communicating with prospective employers.

Email is a powerful tool in the hands of a knowledgeable job seeker. Use it wisely and you will shine. Use it improperly, however, and you’ll brand yourself as immature and unprofessional. It’s surprising 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 you should follow when emailing cover letters, thank-you notes and replies to various requests for information. Apply the following advice to every email you write:

- Use a meaningful subject header for your email—one that is appropriate to the topic.
- Always be professional and businesslike in your correspondence. Address the recipient as Mr., Ms., or Mrs., and always verify the correct spelling of the recipient’s name.
- Be brief in your communications. Don’t overload the employer with lots of questions in your email.
- Ditch the emoticons. While a smiley face or an LOL (laughing out loud) may give you some comfort and familiarity, do not use such expressions in your email communications with business people.
- Do not use strange fonts, wall-paper or multicolored backgrounds.
- Sign your email with your full name.
- Avoid using slang.
- Be sure to proofread and spell-check your email before sending it.

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., don’t assume the email guidelines and you will give yourself an advantage over other job seekers who are unaware of how to professionally converse with their contemporaries in an informal manner.

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

Dear Ms. Personnel:

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to confirm my acceptance of your employment offer at XYZ Corporation. In the meantime, thank you for everything you have done. I look forward to the opportunity to join your team and contribute to the success of your projects.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Sample Thank You for Interview Letter

Dear Ms. Personnel:

Thank you very much for offering me the position of Programmer in your Information Systems Department. I appreciate your discussion of the details of this position with me and I am looking forward to considering this offer.

There are some aspects of the position that are very appealing to me. However, I believe that it is in our mutual best interest that I decline your kind offer. This has been a very difficult decision for me, but I believe that it is the appropriate one for my career at this time.

Thank you for your time and consideration. It was a pleasure meeting you and your staff. Your confidence in me is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Sample Thank You for Interview Letter

Dear Dr. McMillan:

Thank you for interviewing with the Chemical Engineer position at John Doe Incorporated. I enjoyed meeting with you and learning more about your company, projects, and employees.

My enthusiasm for the position and my interest to work with John Doe were strengthened as a result of the interview and your support of our company. We are excited to lead our project planning software MS Project with your previous setup and similar objectives. By using such a software system, you can organize tasks and help reduce manufacturing downtime and increase productivity. I believe my experience in the field is appropriate to the job requirements, and I am sure that I could make a significant contribution to your company over time.

Please feel free to call me at 973.555.5555 if I can provide you any additional information.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Sample Letter Declining the Job Offer

Dear Ms. Personnel:

Thank you for your letter offering me the position of Programmer in your Information Systems Department. I appreciate your discussion of the details of this position with me and I am looking forward to considering this offer.

There are some aspects of the position that are very appealing to me. However, I believe that it is in our mutual best interest that I decline your kind offer. This has been a very difficult decision for me, but I believe that it is the appropriate one for my career at this time.

Thank you for your time and consideration. It was a pleasure meeting you and your staff. Your confidence in me is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Sample Letter Declining the Job Offer

Dr. Julie McMillan
Director of Human Resources
John Doe Incorporated
1231 Broad Street
Newark, NJ 07102

March 12, 20XX

Dear Dr. McMillan:

Thank you for interviewing with the Chemical Engineer position at John Doe Incorporated. I enjoyed meeting with you and learning more about your company, projects, and employees.

My enthusiasm for the position and my interest to work with John Doe were strengthened as a result of the interview and your support of our company. We are excited to lead our project planning software MS Project with your previous setup and similar objectives. By using such a software system, you can organize tasks and help reduce manufacturing downtime and increase productivity. I believe my experience in the field is appropriate to the job requirements, and I am sure that I could make a significant contribution to your company over time.

Please feel free to call me at 973.555.5555 if I can provide you any additional information.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Sample Thank You for Interview Letter

Email Correspondence

Dear Ms. Personnel:

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to confirm my acceptance of your employment offer at XYZ Corporation. In the meantime, thank you for everything you have done. I look forward to the opportunity to join your team and contribute to the success of your projects.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Sample Thank You for Interview Letter

Dear Ms. Personnel:

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to confirm my acceptance of your employment offer at XYZ Corporation. In the meantime, thank you for everything you have done. I look forward to the opportunity to join your team and contribute to the success of your projects.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
International Students and the Job Search

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

Strong Communication Skills
You can help the employer make an informed hiring decision if:
- Provide a well-prepared resume that includes desirable skills and relevant employment experiences.
- Clearly convey your interests and ability to do the job in an interview.
- Understand English when spoken to you and can effectively express your thoughts in English.

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

Be sensitive to the interviewer’s verbal and nonverbal cues. Some international students may not realize when their accent is causing them to be misunderstood. Interviewers are sometimes too embarrassed or important to ask for a re-statement. Be sensitive to the interviewers’ nonverbal communication. Always look directly at the employer in order to portray confidence and honesty.

If your English language skills need some work, get involved with campus and community activities. These will allow you to practice speaking English. This will also help you in the future. These activities and the opportunity to network are a great way to make new contacts.

Career Center
The career center is a valuable resource in your job search. Be aware, however, that some employers using the career center won’t interview students who are not U.S. citizens. The career center can help you to participate in some campus interviews, there are numerous ways to benefit from the campus career center.

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

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

Written by Rosita Smith.

Career fairs provide an excellent opportunity to meet with company representatives, learn about employment opportunities, and make a great first impression. Employers use career fairs as a tool to reach a large number of appropriate students who plan to attend a career fair, preparation before the fair is crucial. This quick guide will help you to get the most out of the NJIT and other Career Fairs.

Several Weeks Before the Fair
Register Online: Most career fairs have an online registration component. Registration for NJIT career fairs is available online at www.njit.edu/cf. By registering online, you will get into the fair faster and get access to information about the fair via email.

Once you register, its important for you to review the online list of companies that are scheduled to attend the fair. Links to company websites are available so that you can learn about a company’s mission, products, and services. Be sure to target the companies who seek your major and who match your interests, abilities, and your personality.

Prepare Your Resumes: Some job seekers bring two to three versions of their resume. Based upon company research, they will hand out the appropriate resume to match what qualifications a company is seeking. Depending upon your major, it is recommended that you bring 25 - 50 copies of your resume to the NJIT career fair. Your Career Advisor can help you to prepare your resume or can review it for you prior to the career fair.

Prepare Your Commercial: It is recommended that you prepare a 30 second commercial about yourself for each employer who you plan to meet at the career fair. This commercial should contain accurate statistical information supported by personal anecdotes. It’s important to positively promote yourself and talk with confidence about your education, relevant skills and related experiences. Self-promotion is rarely easy for anyone. Be sensitive to the interviewer’s verbal and nonverbal cues. Many employers use the career fairs as a tool to reach a large number of appropriate students who plan to attend a career fair, preparation before the fair is crucial. This quick guide will help you to get the most out of the NJIT and other Career Fairs.

Familiarize Yourself With the Career Fair Navigator (CFN) Tool: This tool will help you to prepare and manage your time at the career fair. With this tool, you will be able to view a number of workshops and career fair preparation events which you can attend before the career fair. The most important feature of CFN is that you will be able to view all employers that are scheduled to attend the career fair and the table number tabled at throughout the day with a detailed map included to your convenience. This tool is also available on your mobile device or by using the QR Code and best used from your mobile device.

Prepare Your Wardrobe: Professional dress is the recommended attire for a career fair. For men, a suit and tie are suggested. This suit should be in a conservative color such as black, blue, or gray. For women, a simple suit, dress, or pantsuit outfit is recommended. Keep jewelry and perfume minimal. Shoes should be comfortable for a lot of walking and standing, but must also be professional and clean. Sneakers and sandals are not acceptable. Bring a tote bag or briefcase to hold company materials and a folder to hold your resumes. Do not bring a backpack.

Strategize Your Approach: Research, research, research! One of the main pieces of feedback that employers relay to CDS is that job seekers must conduct extensive company research as part of their career fair preparation. Employers will expect you to know most of these basic facts about their company to take you seriously as a candidate.

- Size of company (do they have 50 or 5,000 employees?)
- Nature of products or service they make or sell
- Target market (are their clients other businesses or consumers?)
- General company history (have they been around 50 years or 5 months?)

Additional information that you should research includes:
- Leaders/competitors in the industry
- Specific information about various departments (marketing, IT, accounting)
- Company event calendar (cubicle and casual Fridays or buttoned up blue suits)
- Recent news about the company (mergers, layoffs, expansions to other countries)
- Information from the company’s annual report
- Nature of the advertised position (skills required or experience)
- Types of positions for which the company is recruiting (co-op, full-time?) This information is in the career fair booklet which you will obtain on the day of the fair.

1-2 Days Before the Fair
Review the Online Career Fair List of Companies for Newly Added Companies: There are always several companies who register late for a career fair. Don’t miss them! They could be your future employer! Research them and their website using the same techniques as above.

- Check Your Resume and Prepare Your Wardrobe: Make sure your outfit is clean and ready to go! Press it so that there are no wrinkles!

On the Big Day!
What to Bring: Bring a pen for note taking, multiple copies of your resume, a folder to hold all of your materials, and a bag to hold company materials and give-aways! Most important: bring a great and professional attitude.

While You Are at the Fair: Before meeting with employers, make a plan of which tables you wish to visit. Determine where employers are located and in what order to visit them. Once you have your game plan, it is time to introduce yourself with your brief commercial. You should state the type of position in which you are interested. Also, remember to ask each employer for a business card for follow-up correspondence. Be aware of time demands on employers. There are many students waiting to meet each employer and it is important for you to not monopolize an employer’s time. Remember to keep your questions brief, be courteous and professional. This is your opportunity to sell and to represent yourself, your department, and NJIT.

After the Career Fair
Applying Online: After a career fair, some employers may tell you to apply online through their company website to be considered.
A NETWORK IS an interconnected group of supporters who serve as resources for your job search and ultimately for your career. Some great network contacts might include people you meet at business and social meetings who provide you with career information and advice.

Students often hesitate to network because they feel awkward asking for help, but it should be an integral part of any job search. Though you might feel nervous when approaching a potential contact, networking is a skill that develops with practice, so don’t give up. Most people love to talk about themselves and their jobs and are willing to give realistic—and free—advice.

Many people use the classified ads as their sole job search technique. Unfortunately, statistics show that only 10% to 20% of jobs are ever published—which means that 80% to 90% of jobs remain hidden in the job market. For this reason, networking remains the number one job search strategy.

By Thomas J. Denham
Eight Keys to Networking

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

   Second, know yourself—your education, experience and skills. Practice a concise, one-minute presentation that will interest the recruiters, 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.

   Networking requires cultivation that takes time and effort for the process to pay off quickly. Networking does not produce instant answers. Networking requires cultivation that takes time and effort for the process to pay off quickly. Networking does not produce instant answers. Networking requires cultivation that takes time and effort for the process to pay off quickly. Networking does not provide immediate results or instant answers. She advises, “Be prepared for a slow down after you get started. Stay positively persistent with your leads and build momentum. Networking is like gardening: You do not plant the seed, then quickly harvest. Networking requires cultivation that takes time and effort for the process to pay off.”

2. **BE TARGETED** Identify your network. For some, “I don’t have a professional network. I don’t know anyone,” may be your first reaction. You can start by listing everyone you know who are potential prospects: family members, friends, faculty, neighbors, classmates, alumni, bosses, co-workers and community associates. Attend meetings of organizations in your field of interest and get involved. You never know where you are going to meet someone who could lead you to your next job.

   Networking Rules

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

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

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

Questions to Ask During Networking Meetings

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

Social Networking Websites

Career professionals—and parents—are warning young job seekers that using social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, may be hazardous to your career. After all, do you want your potential employer to see photos of you at last weekend’s party? Certainly, those photos could diminish your prospects of landing a job. Moreover, job seekers are using social networking to enhance their preparation for interviews, garner an advantage over less-wired peers, and even gain an edge with recruiters.

One example of a constructive use of social networking websites is gathering background information about the recruiters with whom you will interview. By finding out about topics that will interest the recruiters, you may gain an upper hand in the interview process. In addition, stronger connections with a potential employer can be made by talking about the clubs he or she belongs to and even friends you have in common—information that can be discovered on Facebook.

Research on professional sites like LinkedIn can also be used to prepare for site visits. By using the alumni connections available through LinkedIn, you can gain added insight into potential employers. If you are interviewing with a company, search for alumni who are working there. You can have conversations with alumni via LinkedIn that you wouldn’t have in an interview, such as, “do you like it at the company” or “can you negotiate salary?”

Networking requires cultivation that takes time and effort for the process to pay off quickly. Networking does not produce instant answers. Networking requires cultivation that takes time and effort for the process to pay off quickly. Networking does not provide immediate results or instant answers. She advises, “Be prepared for a slow down after you get started. Stay positively persistent with your leads and build momentum. Networking is like gardening: You do not plant the seed, then quickly harvest. Networking requires cultivation that takes time and effort for the process to pay off.”

Social Networking Websites continued

If It’s OK for Mom, It’s OK for Facebook

The more controversial aspect of the interplay between social networking and job searching is the privacy debate. Some observers, including career counselors, deans, and parents, worry that students put themselves at a disadvantage in the job search by making personal information available on Facebook and Twitter pages. More and more companies are using such websites as a screening tool.

Concern about privacy focuses on two areas: social life (like photos and biographical data) and career considerations. Parents and career counselors argue that job-seekers would never show photos of themselves at a party in the middle of an interview, so why would they allow employers to see party photos on a Facebook page? Students often respond that most employers do not even use social networking websites but that employers already know that college students drink.

In fact, many employers conduct online searches of candidates. Why risk losing a career opportunity because of a photo with two drinks in your hand? It’s easy to deduce that if an employer is comparing two candidates who are closely matched in terms of GPA and experience, and one has questionable photos and text on his or her online profile and the second does not, that the second student will get the job offer.

Identity—Public or Private?

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

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

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

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

Strategies for Safe and Strategic Social Networking

1. Be aware of what other people can see on your page. Recruiters use these sites or ask their colleagues to do searches on candidates.

2. Determine access intentionally. Some career counselors advocate deactivating your Facebook or Twitter accounts while job searching.

3. Set a standard. If anything appears on your page that you wouldn't want an interviewer to see, remove the offending content.

4. Use social networking to your advantage. Use these sites to find alumni in the companies that interest you and contact them before you interview in your career center or before a site visit. Add your LinkedIn connections to your email list. While that can feel a bit intimidating, don’t overthink it. It’s easy to create a profile you can be proud to share with other professionals. To help you get started, use the following tips for constructing a professional profile beyond just your work experience.

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

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

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

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

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

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**Do’s & Don’ts of Networking**

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

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**New Jersey Institute of Technology**

**Work Your Network: Developing a Noticeable LinkedIn Profile**

1. **LinkedIn is Like Facebook?**

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

2. **What Should Be Included In My Profile?**

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

1. **Headshot**

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

2. **100-Word Rich Headline**

The second most important piece of your headline is the professional experience you have, which remains important. To optimize career visibility on LinkedIn, make sure that you customize the text. Share who you are, why you want to connect, and how you found or know the individual. For example, if you met them in-person, tell them where you met and when.

3. **Summary**

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

4. **Education**

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

5. **Language**

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

6. **Samples of Your Work**

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

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**New Jersey Institute of Technology**

**Social Networking Websites continued**
To increase your relevancy, make sure that your social media profiles contain keywords that are prominent in your desired industry.

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

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

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

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

“Joyce, Susan P”
“50% of Employers Do Before Interviewing You For An Interview,” The Huffington Post / The Huffington Post, ZINC

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

Turn Off Features
While privacy settings limit access to portions of your social sites, it doesn’t remove content from the web altogether. Keep in mind that once content is shared on the internet, generally speaking, it never goes away completely. It’s important to consider that once content is shared on the internet, generally speaking, it never goes away completely and in mind that once content is shared on the internet, generally speaking, it never goes away completely. It’s important to consider that once content is shared on the internet, generally speaking, it never goes away completely.

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There’s No Swimsuit Competition
Recruiters will judge you by your profile photos. Do they tell the right story? Do they give off any photography of yourself online that isn’t even too glamorous? That’s a really big turn off to employers, says Vicky Oliver, author of 201 Smart Answers to Business Etiquette Questions. “Dress in photos as you would in an interview.”

Remove unflattering pictures, videos, and unfavorable comments you’ve posted on social networks. Post a high-quality headshot, not a selfie. This also applies across all platforms (Important: Don’t forget to check out photos where friends have tagged you on Facebook. If you’re pictured at a party with a drink in hand, delete the tag. Adjust privacy settings to prevent that from happening again.

Blot Out the Bitter
Have you ever gone online while under the influence of a foul mood? Bad idea. “Whatever you wouldn’t do at the networking event, don’t do online,” says Oliver. Some examples of social media gaffes: Posting about parties, dates, getting into parties with your friends, or using obscenities, fault grammar, typos, or cryptic texting shortcuts.

“I personally would never put a thumbs-down sign on posting a personal opinion online, but if you have something to say online...” Joyce, Susan P

“Blot Out the Bitter”
“Dress in photos as you would in an interview.” Vicky Oliver, author of 201 Smart Answers to Business Etiquette Questions

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 profile info 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. Use the resume keywords and set up cross-links between all your social media profiles: LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram all rank high in Google searches.

Witnees Protection Program
Some job seekers may privately they’ve gone into lockdown mode and blocked 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 cleaning up 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.”

“Believe on Your New Path to Success”
“Believe on Your New Path to Success”

Netiquette Tips
Don’t be too casual in your language. Use appropriate or not, so it can be helpful to have a second set 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.

Don’t be too casual in your language. Use appropriate or not, so it can be helpful to have a second set 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.

Gala Jackson, M. Ed. is a Millennial Expert + Career Management Consultant with InterviewSaaS, a career consulting boutique for millennials. Connect with Gala on twitter: @InterviewSaaS and check out her website at www.interviewsas.com.

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

To increase your relevancy, make sure that your social media profiles contain keywords that are prominent in your desired industry.
What Happens During the Interview?

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

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

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

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

It Starts Before You Even Say Hello

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

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

How’s Your Small Talk Vocabulary?

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

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

The Recruiter Has the Floor

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

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

Employers see people who are diligence and motivation. This can be demonstrated by your answers to these innocent-sounding questions.

It’s Your Turn to Ask Questions

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

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

The Close Counts, Too

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

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

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

Expect the Unexpected

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

For example, surprise questions could range from, “Tell me a joke” to “What time period would you like to have lived in.”

These are not the kind of questions for which you can prepare in advance. Your reaction time and the response you give will be evaluated by the employer, but there’s no way to anticipate questions like these. While these questions are not always used, they are intended to force you to react under some stress and pressure. The best advice is to think and give a natural response.

Evaluations Made by Recruiters

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

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

Choose What to Talk About

Start with the job posting and make a list of all the preferences and requirements. Then try to match them with your own knowledge, skills, and experience. Make sure that you have examples ready for as many of the preferences listed as possible. If leadership experience is preferred, scrutinize your past for examples of it. If the job requires good teamwork skills, be prepared with examples from your past. But also be prepared to talk about things not listed specifically in the job posting. Find out all you can about the company and the job you are interviewing for. If you have certain experience or knowledge that you think would make you do the job better, don’t hesitate to talk about it. The employer is looking for the best candidate for the job. Looking beyond the job posting could help separate you from other applicants.

New Jersey Institute of Technology

Selling Brand “You” in the Interview

By Chris Enstrom

FOR THE MOST PART, modesty is an admirable trait. But it’s of little use during a job interview. The purpose of an interview is to find the best candidate for a particular job. Employers want to know about the knowledge, skills, attributes and experience that distinguish you from other job candidates, and they won’t know what makes you special unless you tell them. However, most employers won’t go out of their way to hire someone who comes across as cocky or arrogant. So how do you balance the two? How do you put your best foot forward without seeming conceited and egotistical?

It’s not easy to do, but you may have to leave out some of your most impressive skills and achievements. Talking about skills, accomplishments or experience with no relevance to the job does not help the interviewer identify you as a strong job candidate, and could easily be interpreted as bragging.

Many recent college graduates make the mistake of limiting their discussion to their college coursework, or jobs they had that are directly related to the one they are applying for. But this is a mistake. “Students should be willing to talk about any type of knowledge or skills that they have acquired that are relevant to the job they are interviewing for,” says Micael Kemp, retired Director of Career Services at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Volunteer experience, leadership positions in a sorority or fraternity, extracurricular activities, and
Qualities Desired in New College Graduates

By Businesses, Industries and Government Agencies

Energy, Drive, Enthusiasm and Initiative
• Hard-working, disciplined and dependable
• Eager, professional and positive attitude
• Strong self-motivation and high self-esteem
• Confident and assertive, yet diplomatic and flexible
• Sincere and preserves integrity
• Ambitious and takes risks
• Uses common sense

Adapts Textbook Learning to the Working World
• Quick learner
• Asks questions
• Analytical; independent thinker
• Willing to continue education and growth
• Committed to excellence
• Open-minded, willing to try new things

even work experience at retail or fast-food jobs can be sources of information. "Many students underplay work experience gained at places like grocery stores or fast-food restaurants," she continues. "But employers deeply appreciate people who have gotten their hands dirty and aren't afraid to work hard."

Story Time

Reading off a list of knowledge, experience, and accomplishments makes for a short and boring interview. Your job during the interview is to keep the interviewer interested in what you are saying. Many career advisors suggest that job candidates prepare a reservoir of stories that they can pull from during the interview. People are naturally drawn to stories. It's why we read novels and why we watch movies. Also, stories allow job candidates to show interviewers their skills and knowledge instead of just telling them. Interviewers need more than just your word that you have a particular skill or attribute. They need specific examples, and stories are a good way of providing that.

Stories have the added benefit of being easy to remember—for you, as you use a particular story to demonstrate your qualifications during the interview—and for the interviewer who must access your skills and attributes after the interview is completed. Demonstrating a particular job attribute through a story has the added benefit of sounding less boastful than stating the qualification directly. Saying that you are a good leader sounds boastful; explaining how you led a team of volunteers during a record food drive is admirable.

Make sure that everything you discuss is relevant to the job.

Once you have created a list of job skills and requirements from the job posting and your own research of the company and the position, sit down and try to come up with stories to demonstrate each. Of course, certain things cannot be demonstrated through a story (a high GPA, or a certain degree or academic specialty), but that information is already apparent to the interviewer from your resume. However, stories can be used in situations that at first might not be apparent. For example, instead of simply stating that you are proficient with a particular piece of software, you can tell the interviewer how you applied the software to accomplish a particular task. Keep your stories short and to the point. An interview is not a creative writing class. There is no need to supply vivid descriptions or unrelated background information. In fact, many career advisors suggest that students keep their stories limited to one minute.

Final Advice

Take time to prepare for the interview. Never walk into an interview with the intention of "winging it" no matter how qualified you think you are for the position. If you are having trouble coming up with stories or examples for the interview, make sure you talk to friends, family members, co-workers, professors and career advisors. Often those around us can see skills and attributes that we do not.

Students sometimes make the mistake of telling employers about job-related knowledge or experience that they don't have. While candor is an admirable trait, such frankness is out of place in a job interview. Employers don't want to know why you can't do the job, but why you can do it.

Employers want to hire people who are excited and proud of the work that they have done. They want to know that you will bring that same type of proﬁciency and enthusiasm to their company. "You have a responsibility during the interview—not to brag, but to give the employer the best picture you can of what they will get if they hire you," says Kemp. "It's your responsibility to make sure they get that information, whether or not they ask good questions."

Written by Chris Enstrom, a freelance writer in Nashville, Ind.

Research organizations in advance of interviews—Since most on-campus interviews are relatively short, it is important that you use this time to sell yourself to an employer. Don't waste this opportunity by spending too much time on issues that could have been answered by surfing the company's website and/or viewing its DVD. Displaying your knowledge about a potential employer will greatly enhance your chances of interview success.

Define your career goals and the opportunities you want—One of the keys to making a successful sale is product knowledge. In the case of job interviews, that product is you. You need to perform a thorough self-evaluation well in advance of your interviews. Know what your strengths, weaknesses, skills and abilities are and be prepared to discuss them during the interview.

Be enthusiastic and sincere during your interviews—It is important for you to convey a genuine sense of interest during the interview. You must appear eager and flexible, but not too rehearsed. Don't fixate on being nervous. Even seasoned pros can have the "interview jitters." Above all, never be late for an interview appointment.

Be honest—Don't claim interest in an employer if you really don't intend to work for that organization. Don't lie on your resume or during the interview. While you should never draw attention to your weaknesses, don't attempt to hide a shortcoming by being untruthful. Learn how to deal with perceived (or real) weaknesses before your interviews by talking to a campus career services professional and/or reading books on job interviewing techniques.

Be realistic—Carefully evaluate what an employer has to offer you... and what you have to offer the employer. Don't accept a position that isn't suited to you just because you need a job. Although most entry-level salaries have been on the rise, do not set your starting salary expectations too high. If a starting salary seems inordinately low, but is for a position that you really want, you might be able to arrange for an early salary review.

Some of the material is adapted from Recruiting Trends by L. Patrick Scheetz, Ph.D., Collegiate Employment Research Institute © Michigan State University.

Advice From the Experts

Interviewing Tips From On-Campus Recruiters

Knowledge of Computers
• Established word processing, spreadsheet, database and presentation software skills
• Excellent computer literacy
• Familiar understanding of mobile technology
• Networking in its many forms: social, face-to-face and technological
• Programming experience a plus

Communications Skills
• Good writing skills
• Excellent oral communication skills
• Listens well: compassionate and empathetic
• Excellent problem-solving and analytical skills
• Creative and innovative

Leadership Skills
• Organizational skills and attention to detail
• Accepts and handles responsibilities
• Action-oriented and results-driven
• Loyal to employers
• Customer-focused
• Team-spirited; understands group dynamics
• Always willing to help others
• Mature, poised and personable
• Diversity aware; treats others with respect and dignity

Oriented to Growth
• Acceptance of an entry-level position; doesn’t view required tasks as "menial"
• Academic excellence in field of study
• Views the organization’s total picture, not just one area of specialization
• Willing to accomplish more than required

Source: Recruiting Trends by L. Patrick Scheetz, Ph.D., Collegiate Employment Research Institute © Michigan State University.
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?
9. Have you ever had any failures? What did you learn from them?
10. Of which three accomplishments are you most proud?
11. Who are your role models? Why?
12. How does your college education or work experience relate to this job?
13. What motivates you most in a job?
14. Have you had difficulty getting along with a former professor/supervisor/co-worker and how did you handle it?
15. Have you ever spoken before a group of people? How large?
16. Why should we hire you rather than another candidate?
17. What do you know about our organization (products or services)?
18. Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?
19. Do you plan to return to school for further education?

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

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

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

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

Questions to Ask Employers

1. Please describe the duties of the job for me.
2. What kinds of assignments might I expect the first six months on the job?
3. Are salary adjustments geared to the cost of living or job performance?
4. Does your company encourage further education?
5. How often are performance reviews given?
6. What products (or services) are in the development stage now?
7. Do you have plans for expansion?
8. What are your growth projections for next year?
9. Have you cut your staff in the last three years?
10. How do you feel about creativity and individuality?
11. Do you offer flextime?
12. Is your company environmentally conscious? In what ways?
13. In what ways is a career with your company better than one with your competitors?
14. Is this a new position or am I replacing someone?
15. What is the largest single problem facing your staff (department) now?
16. May I talk with the last person who held this position?
17. What is the usual promotional time frame?
18. Does your company offer either single or dual career-track programs?
19. What do you like best about your job/company?
20. Once the probation period is completed, how much authority will I have over decisions?
21. Has there been much turnover in this job area?
22. Do you fill positions from the outside or promote from within first?
23. What qualities are you looking for in the candidate who fills this position?
24. What skills are especially important for someone in this position?
25. What characteristics do the achievers in this company seem to share?
26. Is there a lot of team/project work?
27. Will I have the opportunity to work on special projects?
28. Where does this position fit into the organizational structure?
29. How much travel, if any, is involved in this position?
30. What is the next course of action? When should I expect to hear from you or should I contact you?
A suit with a knee-length skirt and a tailored blouse is most
Casual” doesn’t mean “sloppy”—your clothes should
Pants are more acceptable now but are not recommended
Don’t dress too provocatively—you’re at work, not at
Neatly trimmed hair
Solid colors and tighter-woven fabrics are safer than bold
Shoes polished (some suggest wearing your sneakers on
Conservative makeup
No runs in stockings
Never wear denim jeans or shorts unless the vast
Be specific
No excessive jewelry; men should refrain from wearing

"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 inter-
view, you could be in for a behavioral interview. Based
on the premise that the best way to predict future behavior is to deter-
mine 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
estimations that might cloud the hiring decision. By focusing
on the applicant’s actions and behaviors, rather than subjective
impresionsthat can sometimes be misleading, interviewers can
make more accurate hiring decisions.

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

**Behavioral vs. Traditional Interviews**

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

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

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

✓ The interviewer will ask you to provide details and will not
allow you to 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 objec-
tively 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 is likely to be repeated, you will be asked to share
situations in which you may or may not have exhibited
these behaviors. Your answers will be tested for accuracy and
consistency.

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

Describe a major problem you have faced and how you dealt with it.
Give an example of when you had to work with your hands to
accomplish a task or project.
What class did you like the most? What did you like about it?
Follow-up questions will test for consistency and determine if
you exhibited the desired behavior in that situation.

**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 question to the interview, “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
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
the project on time and got a ‘B’ for it.”

The interviewer might then probe: “How did you feel
when you confronted this person?” “Exactly what was the nature of
the project?” “What was his or her responsibility as a team member?”
“What was your role?” “What did you say?” “What was the result?”
You can see it is important that you not make up or “shade”
information and why you should have a clear memory
of past incidents.

**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 behav-
ioral interviewer is looking for past actions. 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.

**T**

**Are You Ready for a Behavioral Interview?**

**D**

**Dressing for the Interview**

**D**

**Dressing for the Interview**

__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
✓ No excessive jewelry; men should refrain from wearing
earings
✓ No missing buttons, crooked ties or lint

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

Taking a Casual Approach

Office “casual” is becoming the accepted mode
of dress at more and more companies. The rules, how-
ever, can vary from company to company. Some
companies have what is known as “casual day”
or “casual Friday.”

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dress at more and more companies. The rules, how-
ever, can vary from company to company. Some
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At some companies, “casual day” is a Friday-only observance, where the dress code is
lightly relaxed—a sports coat and slacks for men
and slacks and a sweater for women. At others, especially
technical and entrepreneurial computer companies, it’s shorts
and sandals every day.

The safest fashion rule for new employees to follow is
dress about the same as your most conservatively attired
coworker. As a new hire, don’t try to "push the bound-
aries" 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, best the budget will
allow

✓ If you will be seeing clients, dress appropriately for
your workplace, not yours

✓ Go to the mall—most department and specialty stores
have sections devoted to this style of office attire

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Students With Disabilities: Acing the Interview

The traditional face-to-face interview can be particularly stressful when you have a disability—especially a visible disability. Hiring managers and employers may have had little prior experience with persons with disabilities and may react with discomfort or even shock to the appearance of a wheelchair, cane or an unusual physical trait. When this happens, the interviewer is often so uncomfortable that he or she does not want to “get it over with” and conducts the interview in a hurried manner. But this scenario robs you of the opportunity to present your credentials and could prevent the employer from identifying a suitable, qualified candidate for employment.

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

To Disclose or Not to Disclose

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

Reasons for Disclosing

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

Timing the Disclosure

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

When You Get the Interview

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

Tips on Managing the Interview

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

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

Written by Rosita Smith.
The Art of Negotiating

A n area of the job search that often receives little attention is the art of negotiating. Once you have been offered a job, you have the opportunity to discuss the terms of your employment. Negotiations may be uncomfortable or unsatisfying because we tend to approach them with a winner-take-all attitude that is counterproductive to the concept of negotiations. Negotiating with your potential employer can make your job offer one that best meets your own needs as well as those of your employer. To ensure successful negotiations, it is important to understand the basic components. The definition of negotiation is that it relates to employment as a series of communications (either oral or in writing) that reach a satisfying conclusion for all concerned parties, most often between the new employer and the hiring organization.

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

Research

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

Psychological Preparation

Chances are that you will not know the person with whom you will be negotiating. If you are lucky enough to be acquainted, spend some time reviewing what you know about this person’s communication style and decision-making behavior. In most cases, however, this person will be a stranger. Since most people find the unknown a bit scary, you’ll want to ask yourself what approach to negotiating you find most comfortable. How will you psyche yourself up to feel confident enough to ask for what you want? How will you respond to counteroffers? What are your alternatives? What’s your bottom line? In short, plan your strategy.

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

Practice

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

Dollars and Sense

Always begin by expressing genuine interest in the position and the organization, emphasizing the areas of agreement but allowing “wiggle room” to compromise on other areas. Be prepared to support your points of disagreement, outlining the parts you would like to alter, your suggestions on how this can be done and why it would serve the company’s best interests to accommodate your request. Be prepared to defend your proposal. Back up your reasons for wanting to change the offer with meaningful, work-related skills and positive benefits to the employer. Requesting a salary increase because you are a fast learner or have a high GPA are usually not justifiable reasons in the eyes of the employer. Meaningful work experience or internships that have demonstrated or tested your professional skills are things that will make an employer stop and take notice.

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

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

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

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

Money Isn’t Everything

There are many things you can negotiate besides salary. For example, benefits can add thousands of dollars to the compensation package. Benefits can range from paid personal leave to discounts on the company’s products and services. They constitute more than just icing on the cake; they may be better than the cake itself. Traditional benefit packages include health insurance, paid vacation and personal/sick days. Companies may offer such benefits as child care, elder care, or use of the company jet for family emergencies. Other lucrative benefits could include disability and life insurance and a variety of retirement plans. Some organizations offer investment and stock options as well as relocation reimbursement and tuition credits for continued education.

Written by Lily Maestas, a former Career Counselor at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

AN IMPORTANT PART of deciding what you want to do is first understanding yourself. Self-evaluation will help you analyze what is important in the work you choose and the kind of employer for whom you will work.

Answer each question honestly. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.

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

Adapted with permission from the University Career Services department at Rutgers University, New Brunswick Campus.
USE THE FOLLOWING guidelines to develop an introduction when meeting employers during interviews, career days, and other networking events. Your goal is to create a positive and lasting impression in a brief amount of time.

**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) ______________________________________________________________________________________________

4. Review job descriptions pertinent to your major for employer requirements. Note specific knowledge, skills, and abilities they seek. List academic or employment experiences and activities where you demonstrated these skills.

   The employer is seeking:  
   (a) ____________________________  
   (b) ____________________________  
   (c) ____________________________

   My qualifications and selling points:  
   (a) ____________________________  
   (b) ____________________________  
   (c) ____________________________

5. Review the employer’s mission statement and look for key words that indicate the personal qualities the organization values in its employees. List 2 or 3 of your personal qualities that closely match.

   My personal qualities:  
   (a) ____________________________  
   (b) ____________________________  
   (c) ____________________________

**Step 2: Develop Your Introduction**

Review the sample below. Using the information above, prepare and practice a brief 60-second commercial or introduction to use when meeting employer representatives.

Hello, my name is ____________. I am currently a junior, majoring in economics and working part-time as a supervisor at Campus Information Services. This role has enhanced my communication, management, and leadership skills. In addition, I had an internship over the summer with ABC Company where I worked in a team environment on a variety of marketing and website development projects. I recently read an article about your company’s plans for business growth in the Northeast, and I’m interested in learning more.

Notes:
Practice your introduction with a friend or career counselor so it sounds conversational rather than rehearsed. You may want to break your opening remarks into two or three segments rather than delivering it all at once.

Good luck with your all-important first impression!

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