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CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

2023-2024

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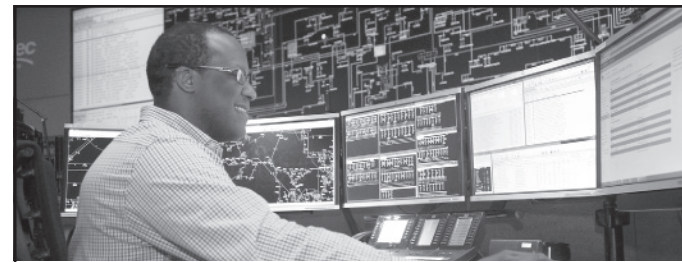
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At Career Development Services (CDS), we are committed to helping NJIT students from first-year to recent graduates reach their career goals. Through CDS students gain a clear understanding of career options, obtain relevant work experience, sharpen 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, Stryker, 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 system. Log in today from within the CDS website and activate your account for instant connections to thousands of recently posted jobs.

This *Guide* will provide you with the information that you need to get started on your road to career success. Our services are exclusively for you, and it is up to you to use them. Come and see us today. We are here to help!

Gregory Mass, Executive Director
Career Development Services

973.596.3100 | Fenster Hall, Room 400

www.njit.edu/careerservices

Career Development Services

Career Development Services (CDS) assists students and alumni by providing career guidance through self-assessment, testing, development of self-marketing skills, and career counseling. We encourage experiential learning by providing opportunities for part-time employment, cooperative education and internships, and community and public service. We present full-time opportunities offered by many of the country's top companies through career fairs, job postings, information sessions, and on-campus interviews. CDS is now using Handshake at CDS! Access this system by going to www.njit.edu/cds. For CDS information, be sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at @njitcds.

Program and Services Descriptions

The Cooperative Education (Co-op) Program is an academic program that gives students the opportunity to gain paid professional work experience before graduation. Co-op work experiences are closely aligned with a student's major studies and help to improve understanding of the relationship between classroom theory and practical application. Co-op is available to both undergraduate and graduate students during the fall and spring semesters as well as during the summer. Each academic department has individual qualifications for co-op, so check with your Career Advisor for details about your major's program.

On-Campus Interviewing is a service for students and recent alumni to meet with recruiters from a broad range of organizations. During the fall and spring semesters, company representatives are on campus interviewing students for full-time, Co-op, and internship positions. To participate, follow the procedures outlined in this *Guide* and on the website at www.njit.edu/careerservices.

Job Listings can be viewed by students and alumni 24 hours a day through Handshake at CDS on the Career Development Services' website at njit.edu/careerservices. Students and alumni can access the Handshake at CDS system by using their UCID and password. The system lists job postings in all majors and locations throughout the U.S. In addition, a comprehensive list of job search URL sites is posted on the Career Resources section of the CDS website.

Career Center Sponsors

Several of the career programs and services we offer to our students are produced in part through the generous support of our Career Center Sponsors. We are delighted to recognize the following organizations for their financial contributions and overall commitment to our students' success:



Career Fairs are hosted twice yearly by Career Development Services. On Wednesday, September 26, 2018, NJIT will host the Annual Fall Career Fair that attracts 200 companies. In Spring 2019, NJIT will host the Annual Spring Co-op and Internship Fair in February. You will have the opportunity to speak directly with the companies of your choice. Be sure to attend a "Career Fair Do's and Don'ts" workshop. NJIT students have access to a variety of virtual career fairs throughout the academic year. Also, CDS will post notifications of career fairs sponsored at other colleges, businesses, and organizations. Check our website, social media accounts, and bulletin boards across campus for this information.

Community and Public Service provides the opportunity for students to give back to the community while gaining relevant work experience that strengthens resumes. Through several options available through Career Development Services, students can work individually or in groups, on or off campus. Select courses also offer community service projects as an integral part of course content. For detailed program descriptions, go to www.njit.edu/cds/comm-service.

Workshops and Seminars

CDS hosts over 100 workshops and seminars presented by professional staff members or guest subject matter experts. These programs center on providing the most needed and relevant career advice for the benefit of students and alumni. A sampling of specialty workshops and seminars have included Speed Networking, Resume Day, Practice Interviews with Employers, and The Internship Student Panel. A complete listing of workshops and seminars for each semester is available through Handshake at CDS or on the CDS website at www.njit.edu/cds.

Additional Resources

Career Advisors are available one night per week in the Campus Center while classes are in session. CDS has also subscribed to a variety of online resources to assist students through all stages of their career and job search. These resources include FOCUS2, a career and education planning system for college students; CareerShift, a program that helps students with organizing a complete job search plan; and Big Interview, an online program where students can learn and practice interviewing skills.

On-Campus Interviewing for Students

All On-Campus Interviewing (OCI) activities are managed online through Handshake at CDS. It is imperative for you to follow all instructions to ensure that you will be able to submit your resume to companies that are conducting interviews on the NJIT campus.

To Be Successful in On-Campus Interviewing, You Should:

1. Login to your Handshake at CDS account 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. Check Handshake at CDS for dates, times, and locations.
4. 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/or schedule a practice interview with your Career Advisor.

For a complete list of OCI instructions, please visit our website at www.njit.edu/cds/students/ocr.

Important Information for Students Participating in On-Campus Interviewing (OCI)

5. **Company Listings:** For a list of OCI companies and job opportunities, please login to your Handshake at CDS account. Select "Jobs" and then "On-Campus Interviews" to view the OCI opportunities.

6. **Critical Dates:** Each company that is participating in OCI is assigned a resume submission cut-off date two weeks prior to their scheduled visit to NJIT. You must submit your resume to the company through Handshake at CDS 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.

Pre-Select Information Sessions are mandatory for all selected candidates. These sessions take place before the scheduled interviews, usually from 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm the day before interviews. You must attend the entire session. If you have extenuating circumstances as to why you cannot attend, you must contact Career Development Services and make us aware of the situation prior to the information session.

Open Information Sessions can be attended by students and alumni whose majors match the company's recruiting objectives. These sessions are also usually scheduled from 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm.

For a list of Information Sessions, please go to your Handshake at CDS account and select "Events."

Getting Started on Handshake at CDS

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 complete 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 write a Professional Summary in the *Get to Know Me* section. You also have the ability to link to most social media accounts. Once you complete your profile, you can decide to make your profile public so that employers can view your information.

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*.

How do I schedule an appointment with a Career Advisor?

From the top navigation bar, select *Career Center and Appointments*. Click on *Schedule a New Appointment*. Select the category of appointment you wish to schedule. Then, under *Choose an Appointment Type*, select the type that fits your profile. You will have access to your Career Advisor's calendar. Select a time that works for you. Complete the *Appointment Request Details* and select *Request*.

You will then be taken to the overview of the appointment where you can cancel or add comments before the appointment. Make sure that you check your notifications in your account for any updates or comments regarding your appointment.

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 Search Alert* by saving a search. You can *Favorite* jobs and employers to easily find opportunities that interest you.

Jobs and Events for You: From the top navigation bar, select *For You*. In this section, you can see jobs that match your interests, additional student profiles, and events that may interest you. This is a great place to start when using Handshake at CDS.

How do I find CDS events and career fairs?

From the top navigation bar, select *Events*. You will be able to search events, find career fairs, request advising appointments, and view upcoming events.

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 CDS at 973.596.3100 or stop by Fenster Hall, Room 200.

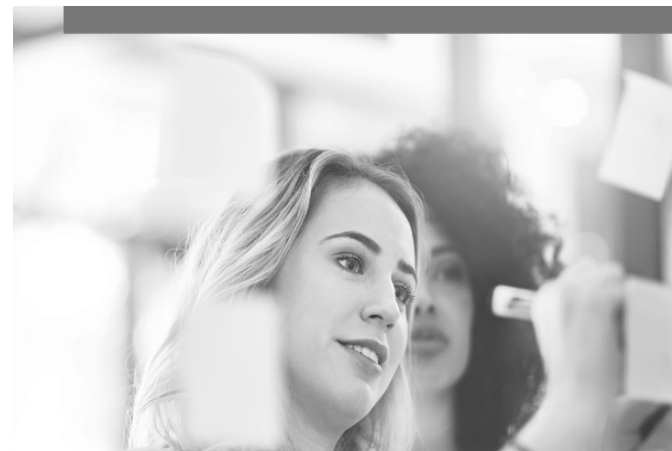
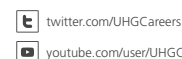



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A College Timeline

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 to 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

Sophomores—Research

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

Juniors—Making Decisions

- Complete at least five informational interviews in careers you want to explore
- Shadow several professionals in your field of interest
- Find out more about career opportunities related to your major
- Attend job fairs and employer information sessions that relate to your interests
- Narrow your career interest areas
- Research potential organizations
- Talk to recent graduates in your major about the job market and potential employers.
- Obtain an internship or other practical career experience
- Meet with a career counselor to have your resume updated
- Participate in seminars or workshops offered by your career services office to learn more about job search strategies such as networking and interviewing skills

Seniors—Job Search

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

Adapted with permission from Career Services at Virginia Tech.

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, grads 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 J.T. O’Donnell of CareerHMO.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 linkup.com. “They focus on company websites so there are fewer duplicate, stale or fishy listings. You can also set up alerts to contact you if one of their 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 grads 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. “Search 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 contact 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 tweet, ‘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 between the time they email “We got your resume” and when they sit in the interview chair, 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’d 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 at [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 repost 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 see her in a picture with a hookah. She said, ‘Aunt Peg, 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, don’t be silly 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 Jebra 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?*, warns 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 job seekers have any 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 made 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 alums of Ivies, 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 invite 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 in interview clothes, and talk to them." Downs especially recommends this tactic of networking for people who are extroverted 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 about yourself. "You need to be specific about your skills and talents," said Peggy Klaus, author of *BRAG! The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It*, "so you're able to explain what it is that you do. Prepare and rehearse little stories so it comes off conversationally."

6. Be a Giver

Now is a great time to volunteer for a nonprofit or industry group. You'll get out of the house, feel a sense of accomplishment and pick up some new skills. Maybe best of all: "Nonprofits have people serving on their boards that may be able to help you, and you'd never make their acquaintance otherwise," says Downs.

7. Put on a Happy Face

A job search can be stressful, especially if it's protracted, but "don't bring your emotional baggage with you," when you're out and about, says Klaus. "You may have just had a fight with your girlfriend, but you still you have to act as if you're delighted to be there."

8. Gyms, Coffee Shops and Bike Paths

Develop the ability to strike up a casual conversation about things that interest you, such as karaoke, city bikes or house-roasted coffee. (Geeky is good.) The low-risk first step prepares you to engage in step two, which is an information-gathering career-related conversation, and finally, the actual job interview.

Plus, by meeting people everywhere you go, you can engage innumerable pairs of eyes and ears helping you look for a job, which is what often leads to success. "The best way to find a job is still friends of friends," says Oliver. "Build a network of connections so that you hear about a job *before* it's posted."

9. Network From Within

Taking a not-perfect-fit job at a dream company is a great way to network and develop relationships from the inside. "Say you want to be a software developer at Apple, but you're offered a junior quality control position. Take it and in a few years you may be right where you want to be," says Tim Sanders, author of *Love is the Killer App: How to Win Business and Influence Friends*. Don't worry about getting stuck in your first role. If you're a talented person who makes a good fit with the corporate culture, a smart company will find a way to train and promote you.

10. Rinse and Repeat

Even after you're hired, don't stop adding to your network and nurturing your contacts. In an uncertain world, no job is permanent; we're all temporary employees.

Written by Jebra Turner, a former human resources manager, who writes about career issues, and other business topics from her home in Portland, Ore.

Resume Instructions

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 3.0 or greater. If your overall GPA is less than 3.0 and your average in your major is 3.0 or 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 backward.

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 Knowledge (know well 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 Chairperson.

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.**

Power Verbs for Your Resume

accelerated	compared	excelled	maintained	repaired
accommodated	compiled	executed	marketed	reported
accomplished	composed	exercised	measured	represented
achieved	computed	expanded	mediated	researched
acquired	conceptualized	expedited	minimized	reserved
acted	concluded	explained	mobilized	resolved (problems)
activated	confirmed	extended	modeled	restored
adapted	consented	extracted	moderated	retrieved
added	consolidated		modernized	revamped
addressed	constructed	fabricated	modified	reviewed
adjusted	contracted	facilitated	monitored	revised
administered	contributed	familiarized	motivated	revitalized
admitted	converted	fashioned	multiplied	revived
advanced	convinced	figured		
advised	cooperated	finalized	negotiated	sanctioned
aided	coordinated	forecasted		satisfied
alleviated	correlated	formulated	officiated	scheduled
allocated	corresponded	fostered	operated	screened
allowed	counseled	founded	orchestrated	scrutinized
altered	created	fulfilled	organized	secured
ameliorated	critiqued		originated	served
amended	customized	generated	overhauled	set goals
analyzed		grew		settled
appointed	debugged	guaranteed	performed	shaped
apportioned	deciphered	guided	persuaded	smoothed
appraised	dedicated		pioneered	solicited
apprised	delegated	hired	planned	solved
approved	deliberated		polished	sought
approximated	demonstrated	identified	prepared	spearheaded
arbitrated	designated	illustrated	prescribed	specified
arranged	designed	implemented	prioritized	spoke
ascertained	determined	improved	processed	stimulated
assembled	devaluated	improvised	procured	streamlined
assessed	developed	increased	produced	strengthened
assigned	devised	indexed	programmed	studied
assisted	diagnosed	indicated	projected	submitted
attained	directed	inferred	promoted	substantiated
attested	disbursed	influenced	publicized	suggested
audited	dispatched	informed	purchased	summarized
augmented	displayed	initiated		supervised
authored	drafted	innovated	queried	supplemented
authorized		inspected	questioned	surveyed
	eased	inspired		sustained
balanced	eclipsed	instituted	raised	synthesized
bolstered	edited	instructed	rated	systematized
boosted	educated	integrated	realized	
brainstormed	elevated	interceded	recommended	tabulated
budgeted	elicited	interpreted	reconciled	tailored
built	employed	interviewed	recorded	traced
	empowered	introduced	recruited	trained
calculated	enabled	invented	rectified	transacted
catalogued	encouraged	investigated	reduced (losses)	transformed
centralized	endorsed	involved	refined	translated
certified	engineered	issued	referred	transmitted
chaired	enhanced		reformed	
charted	enlarged	judged	regarded	updated
clarified	enlisted	justified	regulated	upgraded
classified	enriched		rehabilitated	
coached	enumerated	launched	reinforced	validated
collaborated	envisioned	led	rejuvenated	valued
collected	established	licensed	related	verified
commissioned	estimated	lightened	relieved	visualized
committed	evaluated	linked	remedied	
communicated	examined		remodeled	wrote

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

Sample Undergraduate Student's Resume

Elizabeth Jones

www.linkedin.com/in/jd1234
 155 University Ave., Newark, NJ 07102
 Email: jd1234@njit.edu Phone: 973.555.5555

PROFILE:

A skilled Computer Engineer focused within networking and applications. Computer skills include programming languages, operating systems, database systems, and networking applications. Experience working in IT, web design, and helpdesk roles.

EDUCATION

New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), Newark, NJ
 B.S., Computer Engineering, Expected Graduation: May 2024 GPA: 3.73
Union County College, Cranford, NJ
 A.S., Engineering, May 2022 GPA: 3.65

HONORS/ AWARDS

Dean's List, Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship

KEY COURSES

Digital Electronics, Computer Architecture, Digital Data Communication, Computer Communications Networks

COMPUTER SKILLS

Proficient: UNIX, Windows 7/8/10, Sun Solaris, TCP/IP, C++
 Working Knowledge: C, Oracle, Java, JavaScript, HTML
 Familiar: SQL, Visual Basic, Dream Weaver, Photoshop

PROJECTS

- Passenger Seatbelt Controller: Assembled using Assembly Language and concepts of circuit design.
- Stress Meter: Collaborated with an engineering group to build an open analog circuit which measures stress levels of individuals utilizing resistance on prospects' finger tips with Arduino software.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Global Network Solutions, New York, NY
Intern 2022-Present

- Reduce number of computer issues through the design and implementation of an employee MIS training system.
- Create new company website that improves client satisfaction by implementing new customer service features such as account access, order status and new product recommendations based on previous orders.
- Assist in networking Windows on a LAN to increase employee communication and file-sharing capabilities.

New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), Newark, NJ
PC Lab Assistant 2019-2022

- Helped lab assistants communicate with each other by implementing a new database tracking system.
- Provided PC maintenance including system upgrades, troubleshooting and repair to over 50 computers.
- Assisted students in creating accounts and helped them log into the system.
- Configured printers, scanners, and other peripherals.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS: Vice President of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, Member of Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)

HOBBIES/ INTERESTS: Electronics and car repair

ACTIVITIES: Sports enthusiast, NJIT Intramural Soccer Team

Sample Graduate Student's Resume

Michael Sanchez
456 Ferry Ave
Newark, NJ 07102
(201) 555-5555
Michael_Sanchez6@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 2024

GPA: 3.56

B.S., Information Technology, May 2022

GPA: 3.73

HONORS/ AWARDS

Dean's List Multiple Semesters, NJIT Provost's Scholarship (2016-Present)

KEY COURSES

Computer Systems and Networks, Database System Design & Management, Network Management and Security, Programming Data Structures & Algorithms, Security & Privacy in Computer Systems

COMPUTER SKILLS

Windows 7/8/10, Mac OS, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, HTML, CSS, PowerShell Scripting, C++, Java

PROJECTS

- Network Responder: Utilized Java Sockets to manipulate server and client applications to communicate with one another.
- 18-Wheel Trailer: 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

2023-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

Complied 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.

Job Search Correspondence

Many resumes you send will need an accompanying cover letter, which can be used to inquire about possible job openings in your field or to apply for known vacancies. The main function of a cover letter is to entice the employer's interest in you so s/he will read your resume. The letter should be concise. You should be able to tell your story on one page. You can go into details in the interview, should you get one.

You may develop one basic letter that can be changed slightly for the different positions for which you are applying. It is essential, however, that you word-process each letter individually. Mass-produced letters are usually recognized as such and connote a lack of sincere interest in the organization to which you have written.

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

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

There are several types of letters that may be used in a job campaign. They may be divided into two broad categories: (1) letters of application; and (2) follow-up letters of various kinds. All letters you write should be in good form, carefully planned, and contain the desired information. The following basic rules should be observed regardless of the type of letter.

1. The letter should be neat in appearance and proofread carefully for grammar, form, spelling, punctuation, and English usage. The letter is the applicant's personal representative.
2. Keep the letter brief and to the point. Employers will lose interest if they are required to read through irrelevant information.
3. Candidates should define the objectives of their letters and focus the content of the letter to best meet their goals.
4. In all letters, avoid such things as negative approaches, boastfulness, exaggeration, insincerity, and inconsistency.

Emailed Letters

Information about how to send and format letters via email can be found in the article "Email Correspondence" on page 16 of this *Guide*.

Letter of Application

- Identify the position for which you are applying and the way in which you learned about it. If the letter is unsolicited, identifying the position for which you are applying is all that is necessary.
- Indicate why you are applying for this particular position.
- Indicate your main qualifications. Keep the letter sales-oriented; you are trying to sell yourself.
- Refer the reader to your enclosed resume.
- Request action!

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 make the hiring decision (or both, if you feel it is appropriate).

Letter of Acknowledgment

1. **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.
2. **Offers of Employment**
Acknowledge receipt of offer, restating title of position and salary and expressing your appreciation. Indicate the date you will let the company know your decision and be sure to act before that date.

Letter of Refusal

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

Letter Seeking Additional Information

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

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.

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.

Tips for Writing Cover Letters

- ✓ Write to a specific person, using his or her name and title. Never send a cover letter addressed "Dear Sir or Madam" or "To whom it may concern." Usually you can obtain a specific name by calling the organization or looking in a business directory. If possible, address your letter to a specific person (i.e., the person for whom you would be working), in addition to the Human Resources Department.
- ✓ Demonstrate that you know something about the organization.
- ✓ Target your skills and experience. Present any relevant background that may be of interest to the person you are writing. The "selling" paragraph highlights specific results achieved by you in those areas known to be important to successful job performance.
- ✓ When appropriate, use the specific vocabulary of the industry. Every field has its own terminology (however, avoid over-use).
- ✓ Define your next step. Don't close your letter without a request for action (i.e., how and when the employer can contact you for an interview).
- ✓ Express your appreciation. Include a statement expressing your appreciation for the employer's consideration of your employment candidacy.
- ✓ Edit. Cross out all unnecessary words. Proofread your typed letter and have someone else proofread it.
- ✓ Keep a copy for your file. After the application deadline passes, you will want to contact the employer about the status of your application.

STANDARD COVER LETTER OUTLINE

Name	Address
Title	City, State ZIP Code
Company	Month/Day/Year
Street Address	
City, State ZIP Code	
Dear Mr./Ms. _____:	
<i>1st paragraph</i> (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.	
<i>2nd paragraph</i> (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.	
<i>3rd paragraph</i> (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	

Sample Letters

Sample Cover Letter

Mr. Wayne Hill
Manager of Human Resources
Sample Corporation
234 Main Street
Newark, NJ 07102

March 12, 20XX

Dear Mr. Hill:

I am applying for the position of Systems Analyst that was advertised with Career Development Services at NJIT. The job description fits very well with my education, experience, and career interest.

Your position requires experience in computer systems and financial applications software. I have training in hardware and many software programs and applications, with an emphasis on systems analysis and database administration. My practical experience in my college's computing lab as a programmer and as a student consultant for the system users gave me valuable exposure to complex computer operations. Additionally, I worked as a cooperative education student in computer operations for a large financial institution where I gained knowledge of financial systems. My enclosed resume provides more details about my qualifications.

I am confident that I can perform the job effectively. Furthermore, I am genuinely interested in the position and in working for Sample Corporation. If you would like additional information about my qualifications or would like to schedule an interview to discuss how my background may be an asset to Sample Corporation, please feel free to contact me via e-mail at gracekim@samplemail.com or by phone at 555.555.5555. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Grace Kim

Grace Kim

Sample Thank You for Interview Letter

Dr. Julie McClean
Director of Human Resources
John Doe Incorporated
1233 Broad Street
Newark, NJ 07102

April 22, 20XX

Dear Dr. McClean:

I thank you for interviewing me yesterday for the Chemical Engineer position. I enjoyed meeting with you and learning more about your company, projects, and site.

My enthusiasm for the position and my interest in working with John Doe were strengthened as a result of the interview and tour of your plant. While touring the plant, you mentioned that in recent months the company has been having a problem with manufacturing downtime, which resulted in productivity loss. During my internship, I worked extensively with the project planning software MS Project to assist my previous employer solve similar difficulties. By using such a software system, you can organize tasks that may help reduce manufacturing downtime and increase productivity. I think my experience fits nicely with 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.

Again, thank you for the interview and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Raquel Diaz

Raquel Diaz

Sample Letter of Acceptance

Inside address
City, State ZIP
Date

Joan T. Personnel
Human Resources Director
Sample Corporation
100 Rainbow Street
Bridgewater, NJ 00000

Dear Ms. Personnel:

I am writing to confirm my acceptance of your employment offer of April 16 and to tell you how delighted I am to have been accepted into the Management Training Program at the Sample Corporation.

The day you suggested, Monday, June 20, sounds like a perfect starting date, and I will report to you and Mr. Trainer at 9:00 a.m. in the ninth-floor conference room.

In the meantime, thank you for everything you have done. I appreciate your providing me with this exceptional learning opportunity and I look forward to contributing to the success of Sample.

Sincerely,

Lydia Brown

Lydia Brown

Sample Letter Declining the Job Offer

September 27, 20XX

John Doe Incorporated
222 Main Street
Newark, New Jersey 07100

Dear Ms. Johnson:

Thank you very much for offering me the position of Programmer in your Information Systems Department. I appreciate your discussing the details of this position with me and affording me the opportunity and time to consider this offer.

There are many aspects of the position that are very appealing to me. However, I believe 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 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,

Jack Mitchell

Jack Mitchell

Email Correspondence

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

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

Be aware that email is often the preferred method of communication between job seeker and employer. There are general guidelines that should be followed when emailing 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 ☺ or an LOL (laughing out loud) may go over well with friends and family, do not use such symbols in your email communications with business people.
- Do not use strange fonts, wallpapers or multicolored backgrounds.
- Sign your email with your full name.
- Avoid using slang.
- Be sure to proofread and spell-check your email before sending it.

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

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

Thank-You Notes

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

Dear Ms. Jones:

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

Sincerely,

John Doe

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

Cover Letters

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

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

Tips

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

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

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

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

International Students and the Job Search

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

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

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

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

Importance of Skills and Career Field

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

Role of Employers

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

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

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

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

Strong Communication Skills

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

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

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

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

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

Career Center

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

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

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

Written by Rosita Smith.

Working the NJIT Career Fair

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 applicants face to face. If you 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/cds. By registering online, you will get into the fair faster and get access to information about the fair via email. Once you register, it is important for you to review the online list of companies who 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 NJIT's 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 information about why you are interested in working for their company and what skills you can offer the employer. Practice this commercial alone or with friends until you are comfortable saying it again and again.

Familiarize Yourself With the Career Fair Navigator (CFN)

Tool: This tool will help you 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. 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 mobile friendly so it is accessible at www.njitcfn.com 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 grey. 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

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 and/or services offered (manufacture glassware or offer financial services?)
- 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 environment/culture (cubicles and casual Fridays or buttoned up blue suits)
- Recent news about the company (mergers, layoffs, expansion 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 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 shine and to represent yourself, your department, and NJIT!

After the Career Fair

Applying Online: At the career fair, some employers may tell you to apply online through their company website to be considered

for a position. You should follow their instructions as this is a direction that many companies are taking. If their online system allows you a comments section, you should reference that you met with their recruiter (state recruiter's name if you have it) at the NJIT career fair and the date of the fair.

Follow-up: Send a thank-you email or letter if you feel that a company was a good prospect for you. Plan your message carefully as this is a way for you to remind the recruiter about why you are interested in, and are a good fit for, their positions. You can use the format of a cover letter to help you in creating this letter (see Tips for Writing Cover Letters and Sample Letters.)

Career Fairs are a great way for you to market yourself to prospective employers. You should not take attending a career fair lightly. It is a real avenue that employers use in evaluating candidates. Many students attend career fairs so competition is high. You need to shine and stand out if you want to make a good impression with an employer. Being prepared can pay off and lead to interviews, contacts, and job offers!

NJIT Career Fairs

PLEASE VISIT OUR CAREER FAIR PAGE TO :

View the list of employers and

Find information on how to participate in a fair.

Contact Career Development Services at 973.596.3100 or visit our website at www.njit.edu/careerservices for details about registration and other requirements!

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Ad
KEEP AMERICA
BEAUTIFUL

Network

Your Way

to a
Job

By Thomas J. Denham

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

A NETWORK IS an interconnected group of supporters who serve as resources for your job search and ultimately for your career. Some great network contacts might include people you meet at business and social meetings who provide you with career information and advice.

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

Social Networking Websites

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

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

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

Networking Rules

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

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 of yourself so that people will know the kinds of areas in which you are interested. Your networking meeting should include the following elements: introduction, self-overview, Q&A, obtaining referrals and closing.

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.



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

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



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?

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

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

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

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 strategies to consider. One approach is that if you wish to only work for an employer with whom you can be openly religious, political, or LGBTQ then making that information available on your Web page will screen out

discriminating employers and make it more likely that you will land with an employer open to your identity and expression.

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

Strategies for Safe and Strategic Social Networking

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

"Social Networking Websites" written by Harriet L. Schwartz.

Do's & Don'ts of Networking

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

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.

Work Your Network Developing a Noticeable LinkedIn Profile

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

Is LinkedIn Like Facebook?

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

What Should Be Included In My Profile?

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

1. Headshot

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

2. Keyword Rich Headline

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

3. Summary

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

4. Education

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

5. Language

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

6. Samples of Your Work

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

7. Volunteer Experience

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

8. Awards and Honors

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

9. Select Your Skills

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

10. Share Your Interests

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

How Do I Network To Land The Job?

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

Customize the Invitation to Connect

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

Alumni Connections Feature

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

Follow Companies, Join Groups, and Connect with Recruiters

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

Share Content

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

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Google Me: Reputation Management

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

Google Yourself

The first step is to identify what's already out there. Use common search engines to investigate everything that is associated with your full name. Try search combinations, such as your full name with your college or university. Does what you see support the professional image you are seeking to create? What you find in your research is on stage for all to see. Recruiters are well versed in how to conduct strategic online searches for candidates. Update your privacy settings and clean up your social sites as needed.

Privacy Settings

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

Social Media Cleaning Software

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

Turn Off Features

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

Develop Your LinkedIn Profile

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

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 Personas

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

Create a Personal Website

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

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

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Clean Up Your Social Media Identity

The social media profiles of job candidates are an area of scrutiny for recruiters. In fact, there are now even online research analysts who will comb the Internet for damaging information on a firm's applicants. (On the flip side, there are "scrub services" that will clean up a job hunter's digital footprint.) Here are some simple ways to take a DIY approach to scrubbing your online presence.

Google Your Name

Search for your name online occasionally to see what comes up, or set up automatic name alerts at Google.com/alerts. You may discover results for many people with your same name, possibly with embarrassing or outrageous content. To find the real "you," try tweaking your name (e.g., Sam versus Samuel) or add some additional identifying modifiers (perhaps your city or school).

Search for your name on all the networks to which you've ever belonged, including Facebook and YouTube. (Recruiters check everywhere.) After a thorough review, ask yourself: *Will this the social media profile foster callbacks, interviews and job offers?* If not, keep reading.

Keep Some Mystery

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

Foss recommends you adjust the privacy settings on your accounts. But you're not safe even then since companies can change privacy policies. When possible, it is better to remove negative or overly private content than hide it.

There's No Swimsuit Competition

Recruiters will judge you by your profile photos. Do they tell the right story? "Don't post sexy photographs of yourself online. Don't even be too glamorous. That's a really big turnoff 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, the same one 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 or in 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 posting wars with your friends, or using obscenities, faulty grammar, typos, or cryptic texting shortcuts.

"I personally would never put a thumbs-down sign on someone's comment," Oliver says. "I would not write anything negative, no snippy commentary at all."

Get LinkedIn

This is the single best social media platform for job seekers because of its professional focus. Some savvy employers are now

Content You Should NEVER Share

These may seem really obvious, but people lose jobs (and job offers) every day because of them:

- Don't refer to a company by name; they may get alerts when mentioned online.
- Don't complain about your job or boss.
- Refrain from making snarky comments about co-workers or customers.
- Don't reveal your drug/drink habits.
- Never make discriminatory or inflammatory remarks.
- Don't share intimate relationship details.
- Don't brag about skipping work, playing games or sleeping on the job.
- Do not broadcast an employer's confidential information.

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.

Make good use of keywords and set up cross-links between all your social media profiles. LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram all rank high in Google searches.

Witness Protection Program

Some job seekers are so concerned about privacy 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.

"Self-censorship is the main key," says Alexandra Levit, author of *Blind Spots: The 10 Business Myths You Can't Afford to Believe on Your New Path to Success*. "Always think before you post, because if there is a single person out there who you don't want to see your content, I guarantee it will get back to them."

You may be too close to the situation to judge what's appropriate or not, so it can be helpful to have a second pair of eyes to look over your profiles. Select someone who's about the same age as your target employers, experienced in your field, or at least in the hiring process.

Netiquette Tips

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

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

Written by Jebra Turner, a former human resources manager, who writes about career issues, and other business topics from her home in Portland, Ore.

What Happens During the Interview?

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

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

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

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

It Starts Before You Even Say Hello

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

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

How's Your Small Talk Vocabulary?

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

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

The Recruiter Has the Floor

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

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

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

It's Your Turn to Ask Questions

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

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

The Close Counts, Too

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

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

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

Expect the Unexpected

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

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

Evaluations Made by Recruiters

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

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

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?

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.

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 a 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.

Advice From the Experts

Interviewing Tips From On-Campus Recruiters

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 do not 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 this material is adapted from Recruiting Trends by L. Patrick Scheetz, Ph.D., Collegiate Employment Research Institute. © Michigan State University.

Qualities Desired... continued

Knowledge of Computers

- Established word processing, spreadsheet, database and presentation software skills
- Excellent computer literacy
- Firm understanding of mobile computing
- 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?
8. Define success. Failure.
9. Have you ever had any failures? What did you learn from them?
10. Of which three accomplishments are you most proud?
11. Who are your role models? Why?
12. How does your college education or work experience relate to this job?
13. What motivates you most in a job?
14. Have you had difficulty getting along with a former professor/supervisor/co-worker and how did you handle it?
15. Have you ever spoken before a group of people? How large?
16. Why should we hire you rather than another candidate?
17. What do you know about our organization (products or services)?
18. Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?
19. Do you plan to return to school for further education?

Education

20. Why did you choose your major?
21. Why did you choose to attend your college or university?
22. Do you think you received a good education? In what ways?
23. In which campus activities did you participate?
24. Which classes in your major did you like best? Least? Why?
25. Which elective classes did you like best? Least? Why?
26. If you were to start over, what would you change about your education?

27. Do your grades accurately reflect your ability? Why or why not?
28. Were you financially responsible for any portion of your college education?

Experience

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

Career Goals

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

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

Questions to Ask Employers

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

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Are You Ready for a Behavioral Interview?

Tell me about a time when you were on a team, and one of the members wasn't carrying his or her weight." If this is one of the leading questions in your job interview, you could be in for a behavioral interview. Based on the premise that the best way to predict future behavior is to determine past behavior, this style of interviewing is popular among recruiters.

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

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

Behavioral vs. Traditional Interviews

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

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

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

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

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

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

"What class did you like the most? What did you like about it?"

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

"Can you give me an example?"

"What did you do?"

"What did you say?"

"What were you thinking?"

"How did you feel?"

"What was your role?"

"What was the result?"

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

How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

- ✓ Recall recent situations that show favorable behaviors or actions, especially those involving coursework, work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning and customer service.
- ✓ Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to give details if asked.
- ✓ Be sure each story has a beginning, a middle and an end; i.e., be ready to describe the situation, your action and the outcome or result.
- ✓ Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable).
- ✓ Be honest. Don't embellish or omit any part of the story. The interviewer will find out if your story is built on a weak foundation.
- ✓ Be specific. Don't generalize about several events; give a detailed accounting of one event.

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

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

Don't Forget the Basics

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

Dressing for the Interview

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

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

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

Here are some guidelines:

MEN

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

WOMEN

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

Staying Within a Budget

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

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

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

A navy or black blazer for men can work well with a few different gabardine pants. Although this kind of ensemble would be just as expensive as a single suit, it offers more versatility. One accessory recommended by company representatives is a briefcase. "When I see one," says one recruiter, "it definitely adds to the candidate's stature. It is a symbol to me that the individual has done some research and that he or she is prepared."

A Final Check

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

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

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

Taking a Casual Approach

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

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

Fashion Arrests

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

Play It Safe

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

Students With Disabilities: Acing the Interview

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

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

To Disclose or Not to Disclose

To disclose or not to disclose, and when and how to disclose, are decisions that persons with disabilities must make for themselves during the job search process.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), you are not legally obligated to disclose your disability unless it is likely to directly affect your job performance. On the other hand, if your disability is visible, it will be evident at the time of the interview so it may be more prudent to acknowledge your disability during the application process to avoid catching the employer representative off guard.

Reasons for Disclosing

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

Timing the Disclosure

The employer’s first contact with you will typically be through your cover letter and resume, especially if you initially contacted the organization. There are many differing opinions on whether one should mention the disability on the resume or in the cover letter. If you are comfortable revealing your disability early in the process, then give careful consideration to where the information is placed and how it is stated. The cover letter and resume should primarily outline relevant skills, experiences and education for the position for which you are applying. The reader should have a clear understanding of your suitability for the position. Therefore, if you choose to disclose your disability, the disclosure should be brief and placed near the end of the cover letter and resume.

It should never be the first piece of information that the employer sees about you. The information should also reveal your ability to manage your disability while performing required job functions.

When You Get the Interview

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

Tips on Managing the Interview

Prior to the Interview

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

During the Interview

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

Written by Rosita Smith.



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The Art of Negotiating

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

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

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

Research

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

Psychological Preparation

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

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

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

Practice

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

Dollars and Sense

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

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

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

Sometimes the employer will bristle at the suggestion that there is room to negotiate. Stand firm, but encourage the employer to think about it for a day or two at which time you will discuss the details of your proposal with him/her. Do not rush the process because you are uncomfortable. The employer may be counting on this discomfort and use it to derail the negotiations. Remember, this is a series of volleys and 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—and realistically, he or she can do that—you will still have the option of accepting the original offer provided you have maintained a positive, productive and friendly atmosphere during your exchanges. You can always re-enter negotiations after you have demonstrated your worth to the organization.

Money Isn't Everything

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

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

Evaluating Yourself

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

1. What do you do best? Are these activities related to people, things or data? _____
2. Do you communicate better orally or in writing? _____
3. Do you consider yourself a leader of a team or group? _____
4. Do you see yourself as an active participant in a group or team? _____
5. Do you prefer to work by yourself? _____
6. Do you prefer working under supervision? _____
7. Do you work well under pressure? _____
8. Does working under pressure cause you anxiety? _____
9. Do you like taking responsibility? _____
10. Would you rather follow directions? _____
11. Do you enjoy new projects and activities? _____
12. Do you prefer to follow a regular routine? _____
13. Rank the following things in order of importance to you when thinking about a job:

<input type="checkbox"/> Career Advancement	<input type="checkbox"/> Prestige of Employer
<input type="checkbox"/> Location	<input type="checkbox"/> Salary
<input type="checkbox"/> People (Boss and Colleagues)	<input type="checkbox"/> Type of Work
14. Do you prefer to work a regular 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule or an irregular schedule? _____
15. Would you like a job with a lot of travel, a moderate amount, or a small amount? _____
16. What kind of work environment do you prefer?

<input type="checkbox"/> Indoors	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Setting
<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/> Suburban Setting
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural Setting
17. What size of organization would you like to work for? _____
18. Are you willing to move? _____
19. Do you prefer to work for a nonprofit or for-profit organization? _____
20. Are there other factors to consider? _____

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

Your 60-Second Commercial

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:

My qualifications and selling points:

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| (a) _____ | (a) _____ |
| (b) _____ | (b) _____ |
| (c) _____ | (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.

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