

# THE CAREER CENTER

## CAL POLY POMONA CAREER GUIDE



CONNECTING STUDENTS TO THE WORLD OF WORK 2014-2015



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**Alejandra Leon** (Business Admin. Major)  
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Dear Cal Poly Pomona Students and Alumni:

Welcome to the Cal Poly Pomona Career Center. Our goal is to provide you with the resources and assistance you need for all aspects of your career planning and job search. Choosing your career, or making a professional transition, is very exciting process. We are here to help! This Career Guide will give you an overview of our services and important information about career planning, resumes, cover letters, job searching and interviewing.

We encourage you to become familiar with The Career Center and use our services as early as possible during your time at Cal Poly Pomona. Our staff is available to help you find the resources you need. If you have not yet done so, you will want to register with **BroncoConnection**, our 24/7 online job search and resources system. **BroncoConnection** will be your key to applying for jobs, and keeping in touch with the many events sponsored by The Career Center. You can register by going to [www.csupomona.edu/~career/](http://www.csupomona.edu/~career/) and clicking on the **BroncoConnection** link. Once you have registered, you will have access to job and internship postings and all the other services we provide.

We are fortunate at Cal Poly Pomona to have a full-service career center that offers advising and counseling services in addition to on-campus recruiting services and employer information sessions. Please feel free to drop by Building 97-100 in the Campus Marketplace during our drop-in advising hours and one of our Peer Advisors can introduce you to our services. Call us at 909-869-2342 for our specific drop-in advising times.

The Career Center team is eager to assist you! Please come visit us soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Munnerylyn".

Tom Munnerylyn  
Director, Career Center

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## CAREER GUIDE

2014- 2015

### California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

**The Cal Poly Pomona  
Career Center  
Building 97-100  
3801 W. Temple Avenue  
Pomona, CA 91768  
Phone: (909) 869-2342  
Fax: (909) 869-4366  
[www.csupomona.edu/~career](http://www.csupomona.edu/~career)**

#### **Operating Hours:**

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

#### **Drop-In Advising (Fall, Winter and Spring Quarters):**

Monday-Friday  
11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Note: For summer operating hours and Drop-In Advising, please see the Career Center website.

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# Getting Started: Register on BroncoConnection

## What Is BroncoConnection?

BroncoConnection is a 24/7 online job board containing on-campus, part-time, full-time, internship and volunteer opportunities posted by employers seeking to hire Cal Poly Pomona students and alumni. In addition, BroncoConnection provides access to Career Center events and On-Campus Interviews.

### BroncoConnection lets you:

- Access hundreds of job listings
- Set up job search agents
- Research employers
- Post your resume for employers to view
- View upcoming Career Center events
- Participate in our On-Campus Interview Program
- Store resumes, transcripts and other documents

### To register on BroncoConnection:

- Go to <http://www.csupomona.edu/~career/>
- Click on the BroncoConnection link
- Click on the Student Login link
- Your Username is your complete Cal Poly Pomona email address
- Your Password is your Bronco ID number
- Access **Nacelink**, a nationwide job and internship source

## Alumni Usage

Alumni receive one free year of BroncoConnection service after graduation. To obtain an alumni username and password, complete an Alumni Registration Form at the Career Center or online <http://www.csupomona.edu/~career>. If you graduated more than a year ago, Career Center services are available to you for a nominal fee. Call (909) 869-2342 for more information.

## Your BroncoConnection Home Page

Your **HOME** page displays Announcements, Shortcuts, Events, and Alerts. When a pending action exists, such as interview sign-ups, a message with a hyperlink will appear.

## Key Tabs on Your BroncoConnection Navigation Bar

The **PROFILE** tab contains your personal and academic information. It is important that you complete your profile accurately and update the information when changes occur as this information will be used to qualify you for those positions and On-Campus Interviews that are open exclusively to pre-designated majors and/or class standing. All information you provide is confidential and used only by the Career Center to better serve you.

Employers or parties outside the Career Center have no access to your account. Under "Privacy" you may choose to receive email notifications, as well as, allow your resume to be included in Resume Books provided to employers upon request. Additional features include synchronizing options and text message alerts.

Use the **DOCUMENTS** tab to store up to a total of 10 documents including resumes, cover letters, unofficial transcripts and any other documents you may wish to submit to employers. Please note: Documents must first be uploaded here before being submitted to a job posting. Additionally, when storing multiple resumes, be sure to choose a default resume. Should you decide to make your resume available to employers via a Resume Book, your default resume will be the one provided.

Use the **JOBS** tab to access posted opportunities. A variety of search filters are available to help you locate opportunities by major, position type, industry and keywords. "Advanced Search" allows you to narrow your search by posting date, location and work authorization. Search agents may be set up to notify you via email of jobs meeting your search criteria. You may also save jobs of interest to your "Favorites". The "Job List" will display all jobs matching your search criteria. Click on "Job Title" to view the job description, requirements and application instructions. Under "Application Status" you can select the resume, cover letter and other documents you wish to submit to the employer. Clicking on "Employer" from the "Job List" will take you to the employer's profile, as well as other available positions with the company.

Use the **EMPLOYERS** tab to view all active employers, including their profile, jobs posted and scheduled On-Campus Interviews. You may also save employers of interest to your "Favorites".

The **INTERVIEWS** tab tracks your requested and scheduled On-Campus Interviews and provides you with the option of canceling and/or rescheduling interviews as necessary.

From the **EVENTS** tab you may view upcoming Career Fairs, Employer Information Sessions and Workshops.

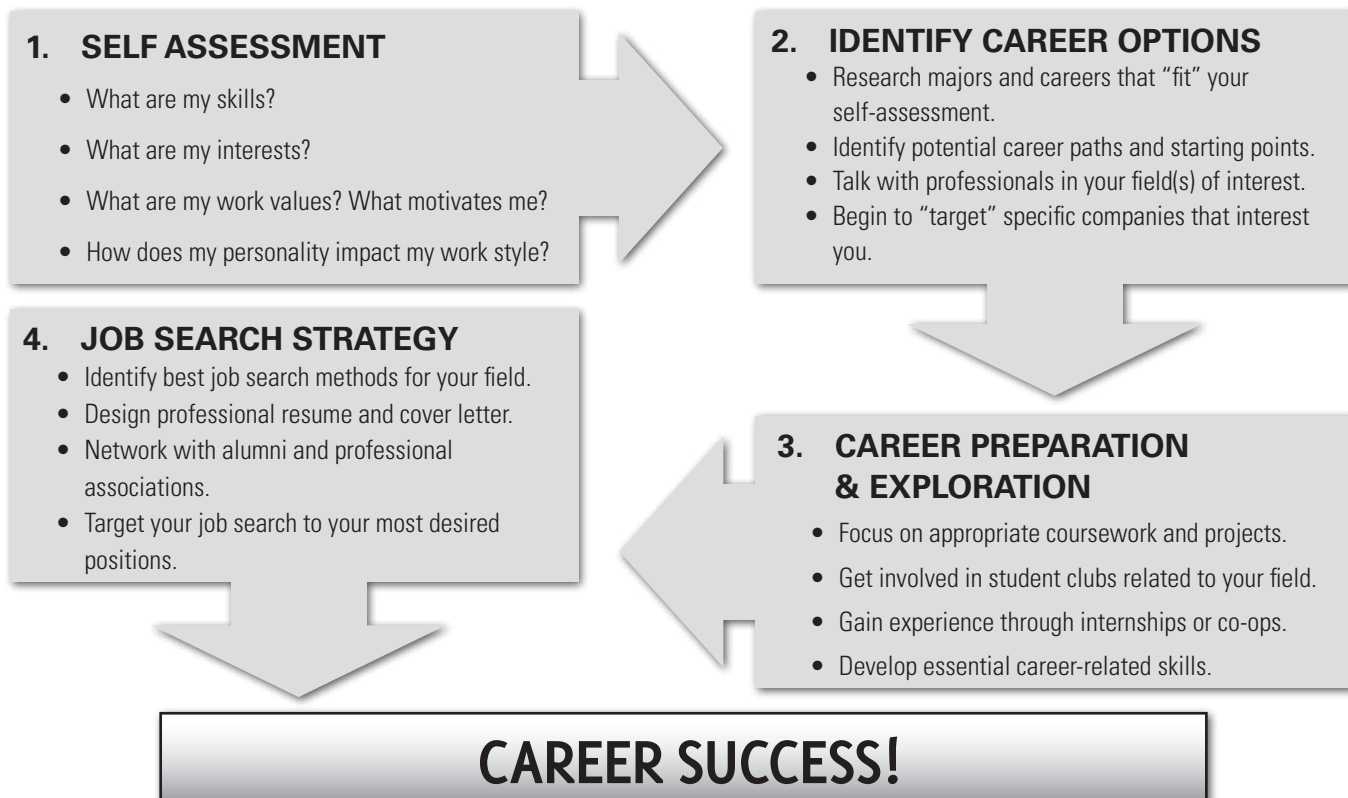
The **CALENDAR** tab provides daily, weekly and monthly access to Career Center events as well as the ability to track and maintain your personal calendar.

## Log Out

To ensure that your information is kept private, it's recommended to use the "Log Out" link provided when ending your BroncoConnection session.

# Career Planning Process

Choosing your major and your career can sometimes be an intimidating process. But the Career Center is committed to helping you develop the skills and identify the resources you need to make these decisions wisely and successfully. Career planning and decision-making are ongoing; you will go through this process several times in your life. Using the following steps as a guide will help keep you on track in your career planning process.



The following steps/links can guide you to choose or change a major. If you need further assistance in your exploration, please schedule an appointment with a career counselor to clarify your decision.

- **Identify your major:** *Once you have determined what career interests you, the next step is to identify the major that will lead you to that career. Below are resources to explore the careers and the majors that lead to them.*

1. **“What can I do with this Major?”**  
<http://whatcanidowiththismajor.com/major/majors>
2. **Occupational Information Network (ONET)**  
(<http://online.onetcenter.org/>)—explore the tasks, knowledge, abilities, etc., required of the job to see if you can see yourself in the job.
3. **Occupational Outlook Handbook** (<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>)—explore. Click on “OOH Search/A-Z Index” and research careers.

- **Cal Poly Pomona catalog:** *Review the course descriptions. Do these classes interest you? Can you be successful in them?* CPP Catalog (<http://www.csupomona.edu/~academic/catalog/>) click on “Degree Programs” or “Colleges and Schools.”
- **Review the webpage for the major—what did you learn?** College, School & Academic Department Index ([http://www.csupomona.edu/college\\_dept\\_index.php](http://www.csupomona.edu/college_dept_index.php)) click on the college that interests you.
- **Curriculum sheets:** *Review the course requirements and flow charts* Curriculum Sheets ([www.csupomona.edu/~academic/sheets/](http://www.csupomona.edu/~academic/sheets/))—Go to your academic year (“12-13 Sheets”) and click on the major that you are interested.
- **Conduct Information Interviews:** These are informal conversations that you can have with professionals in careers that are interesting to you. Please stop by the career center for a handout on informational interviewing.
- **Visit the Career Center:** The Career Center has many resources to assist you in this process, including career counseling, drop-in assistance, a career library and online resources.

# Career Counseling and Advising Services

## What Is Career Counseling?

Career counseling is a process that enables you to plan and prepare for your professional future with a trained member of The Career Center counseling staff. Students schedule appointments with Career Counselors for a variety of reasons. A Career Counselor can help you:

- Make a decision on selecting or changing your major
- Plan for graduate school or decide if graduate school is right for you
- Interpret assessments that are designed to help you gain greater insight into your career and academic interests and strengths
- Discover the values, interests and skills that will enable you to succeed academically and professionally
- Develop a strategic plan for your job or internship search, and use effective job and internship search techniques
- Practice interviewing via a mock interview
- Learn professional etiquette appropriate to the kind of work you want to do
- Negotiate job offers, or decide on how to handle multiple job offers

The list doesn't end there; if for some reason we are not able to assist you with your situation, we will do our best to refer you to online, library or community resources that will be helpful.

To make an appointment with a Career Counselor, go to the Career Center web page <http://www.csupomona.edu/~career/> and click on "Request a Counseling Appointment" and follow the steps to schedule an appointment.

## Assessments

The Career Center offers both the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the Strong Interest Inventory, and Strengths Quest to students for a nominal fee. Assessments arranged through The Career Center must be interpreted by a Career Counselor. If you are interested in similar assessments at no cost, you can visit [www.cacareerzone.org](http://www.cacareerzone.org) to take an interest inventory, and [www.humanmetrics.com](http://www.humanmetrics.com) to take a variety of informal personality tests. Accessing <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes1.htm> will provide you with a Myers-Briggs Type code and interpretive materials. Additional assessment information can be found on the Career Center web page under "Student Services and Resources."

## Career Resource Library

The Career Center Resource Library contains books on careers in a variety of fields, resume and cover letter guides, graduate school guides and company directories. Visit us in 97-100 and one of our staff can help you locate a resource that meets your needs.

Assessments may be helpful in making decisions about majors and careers, and in discovering your innate strengths and interests. However, they are not intended to direct you to specific majors or careers or to tell you specifically what to do professionally.

## Drop-In Advising Services

The Career Center's Peer Advisors offer advising on resumes, cover letters, occupational research and career exploration on a drop-in basis daily. Drop-In Advising hours are 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Friday during fall, winter and spring quarters; contact us at (909) 869-2342 for summer hours. A Peer Advisor can refer you for a counseling appointment if your needs require an hour-long, individual appointment.

## Workshops

Throughout the year, The Career Center offers a variety of workshops on Resume Preparation, Interviewing, Job Search, Work Values, Graduate School Preparation and other topics. If you are a member of a student organization and would like to schedule a workshop for your next meeting, or would like to view a list of upcoming workshops at The Career Center, you can go to the Career Center home page at <http://www.csupomona.edu/~career> and click on the Workshops link.

## Business to Business Commercial Insurance



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To learn more contact:  
TJ Johnson  
(480)215-3100  
[tjohnson2@fedins.com](mailto:tjohnson2@fedins.com)



# On-Campus Interview Program

The On-campus Interview Program offers students and alumni the opportunity to interview with employers in a wide range of industries for entry-level professional and internship positions. To participate in the program, you must first complete an OCI Orientation and quiz which is available online at <http://www.csupomona.edu/~career>.

## Locating OCI Opportunities

To locate and apply for opportunities you must first register and post your resume on BroncoConnection. Please note: It is important to ensure that your personal (phone number, address, etc.) and academic (graduation date, year in school, and major) information on your **Profile** pages is up to date, as incorrect information may keep you from qualifying for a job opportunity.

## Uploading Your Resume

- 1) Click on "**Documents**"
- 2) Click on "**Add New**"
- 3) In the "**Label**" field, enter a title, click "**Browse**"
- 4) Click "**Submit**"

## Searching for OCI Opportunities

- 1) Click on "**Jobs**"
- 2) Select "**All Interviews**" or "**Interviews I Qualify For**", click "**Search**"
- 3) Click on "**Job Title**" to view the job description and submit resume

## Scheduling On-Campus Interviews

The process for scheduling an interview will depend on the schedule type:

**Open:** Open interviews are made available on a first-come, first-served basis. Students who meet the employer's requirements may schedule an interview when they submit required documents. **Pre-Select:** Upon review of submitted resumes, the employer will extend an invitation to selected candidates to schedule an interview.

## OCI Guidelines

**Cancellation Procedure:** The deadline for cancelling or rescheduling your interview is 11:59 p.m. two days prior to the scheduled interview. If you are unable to keep your scheduled interview, you must cancel the interview via BroncoConnection. Should an emergency occur requiring you to cancel less than two days prior to your scheduled interview, you must contact the Career Center Recruiting Coordinator. **Failure to Show:** Not appearing to a scheduled interview will not be tolerated as such behavior jeopardizes the program and may affect the employer's decision to participate in the future. Failing to show for a scheduled interview will result in a suspension of OCI privileges for one year.

## Information Sessions

Valuable insight about the company, available positions and hiring practices is given at Information Sessions. Dates can be found on BroncoConnection.

*Please refer to the OCI Guide, available at the Career Center and online, for complete program guidelines.*

## 2014-2015 Career Fairs and Events

### Part-Time Jobs for Broncos

Date: Thursday, October 2, 2014  
Time: 12:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.  
Location: University Quad

### Engineering/High-Tech Career Fair

Date: Friday, October 17, 2014  
Time: 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.  
Location: University Quad

### Hospitality Career Expo

Date: Thursday, February 19, 2015  
Time: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.  
Location: Collins College

### Fall Career Fair

Date: Thursday, October 16, 2014  
Time: 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.  
Location: University Quad

### Graduate and Professional School Fair

Date: Thursday, November 6, 2014  
Time: 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.  
Location: University Quad

### Spring Career Fair

Date: Thursday, April 23, 2015  
Time: 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.  
Location: University Quad

## Resumaniac Events *(Pre-Career Fair Resume Review)*

### Fall All Majors Resumaniac

Date: Tuesday, October 7, 2014  
Time: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Location: Career Center

### Hospitality Resumaniac

Date: Thursday, February 5, 2015  
Time: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Location: Collins College

### Spring All Majors Resumaniac

Date: Tuesday, April 14, 2015  
Time: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Location: Career Center

### Fall Engineering Resumaniac

Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2014  
Time: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Location: Career Center

### Spring Engineering Resumaniac

Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2015  
Time: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Location: Career Center



# How to Write a Resume

## Things to Consider:

- Most of your resume's content should be related to the job you are applying for. A Career Counselor can help you relate your academic study and work experience to your career goals.
  - Including some of your courses or class projects on your resume can provide employers with insight into your training for the job.
  - When describing projects, internships or work experience, focus on your accomplishments, not just your responsibilities.
  - Strike a balance between text and white space for ease of reading.
- 1. Begin with a summary or objective:** Showcase two or three of your most exciting accomplishments in brief bullet points. Or, use an objective to concisely describe the job you are seeking.
  - 2. Describe your education:** State your degree, your school and major, as well as your actual or anticipated graduation date. "California State Polytechnic University, Pomona" can be listed on either the first or second line of your education section. High school information should generally not be included after the first or second year of college, community college information is optional. You can supplement your degree information with information about academic honors (e.g., Dean's List) or class projects that relate to your career goals.
  - 3. Chronological vs. functional resumes:** In a chronological resume, the section that relates to your professional, volunteer or internship experiences is arranged by date. In a functional resume, your experience is categorized by job function (e.g., "sales", "programming", "customer service"). Many employers prefer chronological resumes. Use reverse chronological order, starting with your most recent job, when listing experiences on your resume.
  - 4. Focus on your accomplishments:** Describe your accomplishments for each job or internship, not just your responsibilities. Prospective employers are primarily interested in the value you've brought to your past employers. Most important are improvements you made and their benefit to the department or organization
  - 5. Use descriptive verbs:** Describe your experiences in bulleted phrases that start with an action word, and use past or present tenses consistently (see list below).
  - 6. Make your resume inviting to read:** Be sure your resume has sufficient white space. The margins should be at least a half-inch long. Insert white space between your sections and descriptions of your experiences. Use bold-faced type for section headings, employer names and job titles. If the document lacks eye appeal, few people will review it.

# Action Words for Resume Building

## Worked with Others

Advised  
Aided  
Assisted  
Chaired  
Coached  
Collaborated with  
Consulted with  
Helped  
Instructed  
Interacted with  
Mentored  
Met with  
Participated in  
Motivated  
Partnered with  
Referred  
Served  
Supported  
Taught  
Teamed with  
Trained  
Worked with

## Communicated

Addressed  
Advertised  
Answered  
Briefed  
Corresponded with  
Debated  
Explained  
Facilitated  
Informed  
Interpreted  
Interviewed  
Persuaded  
Presented  
Publicized  
Responded to

## Created or Revised Something

Authored  
Built  
Composed

Conceived  
Conceptualized  
Corrected  
Created  
Designed  
Developed  
Drafted  
Edited  
Enhanced  
Expedited  
Generated  
Implemented  
Improved  
Initiated  
Instituted  
Invented  
Modified  
Originated  
Planned  
Restructured  
Reorganized  
Revamped  
Simplified  
Streamlined

## Analyzed Data or Processes

Assessed  
Appraised  
Audited  
Calculated  
Computed  
Estimated  
Evaluated  
Examined  
Forecasted  
Inspected  
Investigated  
Measured  
Monitored  
Researched  
Surveyed  
Tested

## Operated Equipment

Installed  
Maintained

Programmed  
Ran  
Serviced  
Utilized

## Worked with Money or Contracts

Administered  
Appropriated  
Authorized  
Balanced  
Controlled  
Directed  
Dispersed  
Enforced  
Financed  
Funded  
Governed  
Invested  
Monitored  
Negotiated

Oversaw  
Purchased

## Organized Something

Arranged  
Assembled  
Catalogued  
Compiled  
Coordinated  
Filed  
Invoiced  
Itemized  
Organized  
Routed  
Scheduled  
Stocked  
Staged  
Tracked

# Transferable Skills

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

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

## What Are Transferable Skills?

A *transferable* skill is a "portable skill" that you *deliberately* (or inadvertently, if you haven't identified them yet) take with you to other life experiences.

Your transferable skills are often:

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

Transferable skills supplement your degree. They provide an employer concrete evidence of your readiness and qualifications for a position. Identifying your transferable skills and communicating them to potential employers will greatly increase your success during the job search. Remember that it is impossible to complete college without acquiring transferable skills. Campus and community activities, class projects and assignments, athletic activities, internships and summer/part-time jobs have provided you with countless experiences where you've acquired a range of skills—many that you may take for granted.

## Identifying Transferable Skills

While very closely related (and with some overlap), transferable skills can be divided into three subsets:

- Working With People
- Working With Things
- Working With Data/Information

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

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

### Working With People

- Selling
- Training
- Teaching
- Supervising
- Organizing
- Soliciting
- Motivating
- Mediating
- Advising
- Delegating
- Entertaining
- Representing
- Negotiating
- Translating

### Working With Things

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

### Working With Data/Information

- Calculating
- Developing databases
- Working with spreadsheets
- Accounting
- Writing
- Researching
- Computing
- Testing
- Filing
- Sorting
- Editing
- Gathering data
- Analyzing
- Budgeting

## Easy Steps to Identify Your Transferable Skills

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

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

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

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

*"While working for Jones Engineering, I performed 3D modeling and drafting."*

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

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

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

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

## Using Transferable Skills in the Job Search

Your success in finding the position right for you will depend on your ability to showcase your innate talents and skills. You will also need to demonstrate how you can apply these skills at an employer's place of business. Consult the staff at your career services office to help you further identify relevant transferable skills and incorporate them on your resume and during your interviews. During each interview, be sure to emphasize only those skills that would be of particular interest to a specific employer. Transferable skills are the foundation upon which you will build additional, more complex skills as your career unfolds. Start making your list of skills and you'll discover that you have more to offer than you realized!

## Additional Tips to Help Identify Your Transferable Skills

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

*Written by Rosita Smith.*

# Academic Projects

**I**ncluding academic projects in your resume is a way to demonstrate your proficiency as an emerging professional in your field. It can also show that you are aware of cutting edge technology, information, research and resources. Following are some examples of how you can format your academic projects on your resume.

## SAMPLE 1

If a project was large and you can create multiple bullet statements to describe the work you did, you may want to list the experience similar to a job by giving it a title, listing the class the project was for and year completed:

### ACADEMIC PROJECTS:

**Preparation and Analysis of Financial Statements**, "Financial Accounting for Decision Making Activity" (2014)

- Prepared quarterly and annual fiscal statements for mock company revenues in excess of \$5000.
- Reviewed balances, adjusted entries and entered data for all clients.
- Calculated depreciation for company's inventory valued at \$1000.

**Small Business Accounting**, "Managerial Accounting for Decision Making" (2013)

- Created estimates and invoices of T-shirt sales.
- Tracked sales, sales taxes, and customer payments totaling over \$5000.
- Created business plan and sales and expense forecasts.

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MEDICAL SCHOOL  
TO PRACTICE INSURANCE.

Remember graduating from college and passing your MCATs, then spending the next four years of your life getting through classes like clinical epidemiology, neurology and radiology so you could practice medicine? Today's financially driven managed care environments make having a practice difficult. Hurrying patients in and out of the office to make a quota and going into negotiations to prescribe treatments that don't coincide with a patient's policy aren't practicing medicine. We'd like to prescribe a solution: Move your profession to the United States Air Force. Get back to what's important — practicing medicine.

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## SAMPLE 2

If you have many projects, you may want to create one bullet statement to address each project, presenting a list of bullet statements beneath the title Academic Projects, omitting a project title and class for each:

### ACADEMIC PROJECTS

- Served as Quality Assurance expert to create and develop website for client starting online business focused on sale of specialty backpacks. Provided evaluation of website throughout project lifecycle and assisted team members in execution of duties.
- Used Java language including GUI's (Applets and Windows Applications) to design program to function as ATM machine, allowing users to deposit, withdraw, monitor, review, open, modify and close their accounts.
- Used Rational Rose software to design user system requirements similar to system of Enterprise Rent-A-Car, receiving top grade from Manager of Enterprise Rent-A-Car.
- Used software ERWin 3.5.2. and Oracle8i Lite to design database for airline company, allowing employees to access and extract information from database using Structured Query Language.
- Researched cost and benefits for hotel owner seeking to upgrade telecommunications networks in Mexico. Presented owner with report outlining cost and how and where networks would be installed.

When describing your projects, remember to include the objective, your role, the tasks or activities performed & the outcome or result

# Sample Resumes

*Combination functional and chronological resume created for a specific position*

## NANCY LITERATE

1000 College Park Way  
Our Town, CA 91000  
Day (909) 999-5555 Evening (626) 999-4444  
literate001@csupomona.edu

### PROFESSIONAL GOAL

Guideline Administrator with Northrop Grumman.

### SUMMARY

- Five years of professional background in producing self-help and training manuals.
- Excellent presentation skills to groups from 5-100.
- Experience organizing large events for up to 500 people.
- Reliable and adaptable; learn new systems quickly and take initiative.

### RELEVANT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

#### Administration

- Managed all aspects of training and self-help manual production from initial composition to product distribution.
- Supervised staff of 15 and achieved highest productivity level of any department in company.
- Interpreted and clarified daily work activities for completion of contract requirements.
- Maintained direct communications with operations managers and key staff to ensure product integrity.

#### Technology

- Extensive experience using Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Photoshop.
- Developed instructional and motivational presentations for new employees.
- Utilized English language including grammar, punctuation, and principles of composition for authoring or editing purposes.
- Prepared graphic designs and layouts using IBM PC and Macintosh computers.

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

**Publications Coordinator**, LEGOLAND, Carlsbad, CA 8/20XX-Present  
**Administrative Assistant**, Taco Bell Corp, Irvine, CA 7/20XX-8/20XX  
**Customer Service Representative**, Colorcraft Inc., Vista, CA 8/20XX-8/20XX

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, June 20XX**  
Bachelor of Arts in English, Concentration in American Literature  
Overall Grade Point Average: 3.2  
Additional coursework: Computer Graphics, Communications, Journalism

### AFFILIATIONS

American Society for Training and Development 6/20XX-present  
President, National Association of Female Executives 9/20XX-8/20XX

*Chronological - Recent graduate with a Master's degree*

## BEA EDUCATED

123 Career Road  
Grad Town, CA 92000  
626-555-9999 (Home) 626-999-5555 (Mobile)  
educ001@csupomona.edu

### OBJECTIVE

Seeking a social service position where I can utilize my skills and educational background to effect positive change in the community.

### EDUCATION

**California State Polytechnic University, Pomona** 6/20XX

Master of Social Work

Thesis Title: Career Conflicts Affecting Adult Female Victims of Domestic Violence

**San Diego State University, San Diego, CA** 6/20XX

Bachelor of Arts in Spanish

### EXPERIENCE

**Counseling Intern**, Psychological Services, Cal Poly Pomona 9/20XX-Present

- Counseled individuals and couples with personal and career concerns.
- Facilitated groups and workshops on communication skills and assertiveness.
- Served multicultural student population, students with mental and physical disabilities, and re-entry students.

**Resource Counselor**, Community Social Services, Santa Ana, CA 11/20XX-8/20XX

- Assisted clients in their homes, community and job sites with vocational and community living objectives.
- Maintained an average caseload of 50 clients per month. Performed administrative duties.

**Eligibility Worker**, Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, CA 6/20XX-10/20XX

- Managed a caseload of 200 clients from low income, multicultural populations.
- Determined eligibility of services, researched clients' personal data, and provided referrals to various community service agencies.

### SPECIAL SKILLS

- Fluent in Mandarin Chinese
- Co-chaired and organized large fundraising event for L.A. County Women's Resource Center resulting in \$50,000 in donations. 1/20XX-6/20XX
- Excellent communication skills gained through class presentations and counseling internships.
- Proficient in research methodology and in the use of related software.
- Skilled in program assessment, implementation and development.

**IVANNA WORK**

3801 West Temple Avenue, Pomona, CA 91768  
 Cell: 909-869-7659 Email: bbronco@csupomona.edu

**PROFILE**

Energetic and results oriented professional seeking the position of Food and Beverage Manager at the Sheraton Universal.

- Bilingual: read, write and speak fluently in both English and Spanish.
- TIPS (Training for Intervention ProcedureS) certified
- Possession of ServSafe Certification

**EDUCATION**

**Bachelor of Science Degree candidate, Hospitality Management.** The Collins College of Hospitality Management, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, Pomona, CA (Anticipated Graduation June 20XX)

- GPA: 3.50
- President, Club Managers Association of America (CMAA), Cal Poly Pomona Student Chapter (20XX-Present)
- Member, Eta Sigma Delta International Hospitality Management Society (20XX-Present)
- Member, United Culinarians (20XX-Present)

**ACADEMIC PROJECTS**

- Conceptualized and developed design, including interior furnishings, menu, and branding for mock Asian fusion restaurant.
- Created Access database to track inventory and ordering of perishable and nonperishable food items.
- Developed low fat non-dairy dessert topping, designed packaging and established marketing plan.

**EXPERIENCE**

**Shift Director.** Planet Hollywood, Los Angeles, CA (June 20XX-Present)

- Direct food and beverage promotion and operations for highly visible night club/theme restaurant seating 420 guests, generating over \$10 million annually.
- Manage up to 22 shift associates including wait staff, bussers and bartenders
- Participate in interviewing and hiring and facilitate new employee training.
- Execute private parties for VIP and celebrity guests, ensuring guest satisfaction and confidentiality.
- Conceptualized and implemented Monday Night Football promotion, securing corporate sponsor and increasing sales by 33%.
- Received "Employee of the Month" recognition four times in 24 months.

**Guest Relations Lead.** Disneyland Resort, Anaheim, CA (March 20XX-June 20XX)

- Provided leadership and direction for up to 25 cast members engaged in providing guest tours, responding to inquiries, addressing special needs and ensuring guest satisfaction.
- Coached and counseled cast members to ensure appropriate conduct is demonstrated and correct procedures are followed.
- Addressed guest concerns and create service solutions to ensure greater satisfaction.
- Facilitated "Mickey's Roll Call" and cascade new information and procedures to cast.
- Anticipated and met changing labor needs and deployed staff to ensure appropriate coverage.
- Coordinated VIP and backstage tours for celebrity guests and dignitaries.
- Recognized for providing outstanding guest service.
- Promoted from Guest Relations Host in nine months.

**CHRISTOPHER HOPE**

12345 South 132nd Street (909) 999-3333  
 San Dimas, California 91000 hope002@csupomona.edu

**EDUCATION**

**California State Polytechnic University, Pomona 6/20XX**  
 Bachelor of Science in Business Administration  
 Major: Accounting, Cumulative GPA: 3.81

**RELATED EXPERIENCE**

**Accounting Clerk** 9/20XX-present  
 Chartwell Travel Services, Rialto, California  
 Handled collections, billing, payroll and correspondence.  
 Prepared budgets for tours and monitored actual expenditures.

**Consultant** 10/20XX-6/20XX

Senior Project, Cal Poly Pomona  
 Served on a four member team which developed a detailed marketing and budget plan for future business ventures for the Ontario Convention Center.

**Bookkeeper** 9/20XX-8/20XX

World Banking Corporation, Nassau, Bahamas  
 Recognized as Outstanding Employee in 20XX.  
 Maintained accounts receivable and wire confirmations.  
 Designed simpler, more comprehensive record-keeping system.  
 Performed audit with CPAs.

**Salesperson** 8/20XX-6/20XX

Macy's Department Stores, Montclair, California  
 Generated retail sales in men's clothing department. Performed extensive customer service and directed inventory control and displays.

**HONORS**

Dean's Honor List, 12 quarters, Cal Poly Pomona  
 Golden Key Honour Society

**ACTIVITIES/ INTERESTS**

- Cal Poly Society of Accountants, Treasurer 20XX-20XX
- Cal Poly Pomona, Associated Students, Inc. 20XX-20XX
- Organizations Commissioner
- Student Affirmative Action Committee
- Annual Blood Drive Coordinator 20XX-20XX
- Golden Key Society, Member 20XX-20XX
- Rose Float Committee, Member 20XX-20XX

**SPECIAL SKILLS**

Speaking and writing ability in Spanish.  
 Computer literate in Windows, Access, Excel, Quickbooks and PowerPoint.

# The Scannable Resume

In today's high tech labor market, many companies employ scanning technology to efficiently match candidates with job openings. The employer first uses a scanner to transfer a copy of your resume into their database. Once added to the database, optical character recognition (OCR) software may be used to read and screen resumes based on criteria established by the employer. The resumes meeting the employer's criteria are then highlighted or "kicked out" as matches. If your resume is not readable by both the scanner and OCR software, it will not be deemed a match and therefore may never be seen by the recruiter. To ensure that your resume is seen, a scannable version should always be provided upon initial submission. If you choose, you may provide a "presentation" version with enhanced formatting at the time of your interview.

## Plain Text vs. MS Word Document

If you format your resume as a Plain Text document (Text Only, Rich Text or ASCII), your resume will be scannable; however, due to the antiquated look of these styles, many job seekers prefer to format their resumes using MS Word for a more professional look. Whichever you choose, keep in mind that when posting on job banks, it is safest to copy and paste from a Plain Text document. When provided, always follow the employer's directions for posting.

## Formatting Your Scannable Resume in MS Word

Should you choose to create a Word document, the following formatting rules should be followed:

- Create as a MS Word document
- Do not use templates
- One page is preferred; never more than 2 pages (For 2-page resume: include header with complete contact information top of each page and indicate page number "1 of 2" and "2 of 2" at bottom of page)
- Margins should be no greater than 1 inch; no smaller than .5 inch
- Left align or justify text
- Use Arial or Times typeface
- Use 10-12 pt. font for text (no larger than 14 pt. for titles); use no more than 2 sizes of font
- Space between text can be as small as 5 pt.
- Do not indent more than 5 spaces
- There should be no more than 5 spaces between text
- Use bullet statements; avoid paragraphs
- Bullets should be a solid circle or solid square only
- No italics, script, underlining, columns, horizontal or vertical lines
- Remove hyperlinks
- Use key words that correlate to the job announcement
- Print on 8.5" x 11" white or ivory bond weight paper
- Paper should have no watermarks

## Responding via Email

Type your cover letter in the body of your email (do not provide the cover letter as an attachment). Provide your Word document as an attachment and paste a copy of your Text Only version in the body of your email beneath your cover letter. The pasted version will serve as your "insurance policy", should the employer be leery of opening your attachment, or, need a Text Only version.

## Responding via Post

When mailing, send your resume in a 9" x 12" envelope. Do not fold or staple your resume; use a paperclip for any attachments.

## Sample Scannable Resume

### BILLY BRONCO

3801 West Temple Avenue, Pomona, CA 91768  
(555) 123-4567  
Email: bbronco@csupomona.edu

### OBJECTIVE

Assistant Brand Management position for an International Retailer.

### EDUCATION

**Bachelor of Science, Business Administration: International Business, Marketing Minor**, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (June 20XX)

### ACADEMIC PROJECTS

**Brand Equity Research Assistant**, Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Spring 20XX)

- Collected and examined cross-cultural brand equity data from various journals and databases.
- Reviewed and summarized literature on brand equity formation, management, and transferability.

**International Marketing Seminar**, Hitotsubashi University, Japan (Fall 20XX)

- Developed strategies to promote sales of instant coffee in team of 4 for a multinational company's Japanese coffee division.
- Conceptualized and developed 4 commercials and 2 public relations events.

### EXPERIENCE

**Tax Advisory Intern**, Deloitte & Touche, LLP, Los Angeles, CA (May-Aug. 20XX)

- Researched and wrote articles for Tax Director to highlight implications of tax rule changes.
- Analyzed tax returns and financial statements to assist in the completion of tax returns for corporations, partnerships, and individuals.

**International Trade Intern**, U.S. Department of Commerce, Commercial Service, Los Angeles, CA (June-Aug. 20XX)

- Researched and developed objectives, goals, and budget plans for fiscal year 20XX for Middle East team consisting of 25 commercial officers in the US and abroad.
- Drafted team proposal currently being implemented by the division to promote trade opportunities such as International Buyer Program shows and educational seminars.
- Contacted international trade liaisons to assess export opportunities for small companies.

### AFFILIATIONS

**Community Service Coordinator**, Beta Alpha Psi, National Honors Business Fraternity (Jan.-June 20XX)

- Organized 4 community service events for over 40 students in local chapter.
- Acted as liaison between Beta Alpha Psi and local community.

### SKILLS

**Languages:** Write and speak Cantonese and Mandarin; converse in Japanese.

**Technical:** Microsoft Office, HTML, JavaScript, Chinese & Japanese Word.

## Cover Letter Outline

Your street address  
City, State Zip Code  
Email address  
(Area Code) Phone Number

Current Date

Employer's Name  
Position or Title  
Company Name  
Address  
City, State Zip Code

Dear Sir or Madam: (use name if available)

**First Paragraph**—State the reason for the letter, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying and the source of awareness/contact with the company (Career Center, new media, friend, official website, career fair).

**Second Paragraph**—This paragraph *should demonstrate your qualifications*. Communicate what you can do for the organization as an employee/intern and why they should hire you. You may want to highlight particularly relevant aspects of your resume, experience and/or educational preparation. You can also include relevant skills or qualifications that you did not include in your resume.

**Third Paragraph**—This paragraph is *designed to show interest*. Indicate why you are interested in the position, the organization, and its products or services; refer to research you have conducted on the position and employer. Try to stimulate interest in you as a possible employee/intern.

**Last Paragraph**—In the final paragraph, *you ask for action*. Indicate your desire for an interview and flexibility as to the time and place. You may want to indicate that you will follow-up with a phone contact on a particular day or week to arrange an interview. Be positive in your attitude. Expect an appointment.

Sincerely,

*Sign your name here*

Your typed name here

## Sample Cover Letter

110 University Drive  
Pomona, CA 91768  
rsell@csupomona.edu  
(909) 869-xxxx

April 29, 20XX

William P. Smith, General Manager  
Weber Building Center  
3121 Orchard  
Los Angeles, CA 92719

Dear Mr. Smith:

I read with interest your job announcement for a Merchandising Management Trainee, listed on *BroncoConnection* at the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona Career Center. As a college graduate with the background and skills you are seeking, I believe I am a strong candidate for the position.

I will receive a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration this June. My job experience includes two summers as an assistant in a hardware store where I was responsible for merchandise presentation, inventory control and customer service. My college course work complements my work experience and focuses on developing basic business knowledge, analytical ability and good communication skills. In addition, my student activities included leadership for my college council, where I planned and supervised several fund-raising projects and a membership drive. The enclosed resume expands upon my qualifications.

The opportunity of joining Weber Building Center is exciting because of my familiarity with your product line and your reputation as the leader in the building supplies field. The success of your new solar equipment center for home improvement illustrates a progressive merchandising philosophy that would utilize my strongest skills.

I believe I can make a valuable contribution to your team and would appreciate the opportunity to talk with you about my qualifications at your earliest convenience. I can be reached at (909) 869-xxxx. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Ralph Sell*

Ralph Sell

# Letters of Recommendation

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

## Selecting People to Serve as References

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

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

## Try to Meet Face to Face

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

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

## Help Them Help You

You must assist your reference-givers so they can do the best job possible. Provide them with a copy of your current resume, transcript, job descriptions for the type of employment you desire or other detailed information related to the purpose of the letter. Provide a one-page summary of any achievements or skills exhibited with the person who will be writing the letter. They may not remember everything you did under their supervision

or time spent with you. Finally, provide them with a statement of future goals outlining what you want to accomplish in the next few years.

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

## What's the Magic Number?

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

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

## Maintain Professional Courtesy

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

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

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



# Job Search

## Getting Prepared

The first step in job searching is ensuring that you are ready to tackle the demands of the job market. Here are some areas you want to be sure to cover before you start looking for your next great opportunity.

**Know the relevant skills and training you bring to the job, and be able to describe them to potential employers:** The ability to recall examples of when and how you have used your strongest skills in professional, academic and personal situations will help you succeed in even the toughest interviews. Develop a 30 to 60 second verbal description of those skills and how you want to use them to achieve your professional goals.

**Do the research needed to make smart choices about applying for jobs that are a good fit:** It is only natural to use the job search process to explore different work environments (e.g., large vs. small organizations, different industries), but employers will expect that you have researched their organization and the kind of job you are interested in. Perhaps you want to make a difference in the lives of others, or maybe you want to be part of an innovative team. . .no matter what is driving you, employers expect that you can describe why you are interested in working at their organization.

**Use resumes and cover letters that will generate interviews:** The Career Center provides ample resources, including reference materials and drop-in advising, to get your resumes and cover letters ready for the job market. The key is making sure your resume clearly and concisely describes your skills, training and experience that are most relevant to the job. You can include courses, class projects, internships, volunteer experiences and community or campus leadership positions on your resume.

**Be ready to interview by telephone or in-person:** The next time your phone rings, it could be an employer who wants to set up an interview, or even take a few minutes to get to know you before scheduling one. When you are job searching, it is important to use your "interview voice" whenever you answer your telephone or meet new people. You never know when an opportunity will present itself. In addition, determine what days and times you have available for interviews.

**Line up your references:** Reference checks are often the final stage of the hiring process, and employers will expect that you can provide names and contact information for references when asked. It is important for you to make sure that your references are ready to provide positive feedback about you and know you are providing their contact information to potential employers. References like faculty members, supervisors and professional colleagues make the best references, because they can describe your academic and professional track record and your potential for success.

## Job Search Techniques

A range of job search techniques can be utilized to ensure that you are making the most of the time you have to look for a new job or internship. Responding to published job postings can be done on your own at any time of day or night. Participating in organizations, networking, and informational interviewing are more interactive and will require you to manage your time.

**Published Job Postings:** Job openings are frequently published on the Internet, in newspapers and trade publications. You can also link to jobs posted by employers seeking Cal Poly Pomona students and alumni from <http://www.csupomona.edu/~career/> by clicking on the link to BroncoConnection. Many job posting websites, including BroncoConnection, require that you register in order to review jobs or to upload resumes and cover letters to potential employers.

Internet job sites are easy to find. Some of the most common are [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com), [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com) and [www.hotjobs.com](http://www.hotjobs.com). You can use "meta-search" sites like [www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com) or [www.simplyhired.com](http://www.simplyhired.com) to search more than one site at once. Use a variety of search terms to access the greatest number of job listings. This means using words that describe what you would like to do, and not just job titles.

Jobs published on the Internet and in print are the easiest to find and apply for, and they also attract the greatest number of applicants. If you meet most of the qualifications stated for a job, it is often a good idea to apply. Because of the large number of posted jobs and applicants, you may need to apply to a significant number of jobs each week in order to secure interviews.

**Networking:** Most job search experts recommend networking to help boost job hunting success, and with good reason. According to a recent survey conducted by The Career Center, more Cal Poly Pomona graduates report obtaining their jobs via networking (including referrals from family, friends, and faculty) than through any other means.

**Informational Interviewing:** Meeting with people who work in a professional field of your interest, or arranging to accompany someone during part of their workday to get to know their job, are both good ways to gather information about careers. They can also be effective ways to meet people and build your own network. While it is always easiest to make arrangements for informational meetings or job shadowing experiences with people you know or are referred to, many professionals will agree to participate in these activities if they are contacted in a way that does not put them on the spot to deliver a job or hiring interview. The Career Center publishes a guide for Informational Interviewing that can give you some ideas on how to develop these kinds of opportunities.

## Optimizing Your Results

Responding to Job Listings → Attending Job Fairs, Clubs, Volunteering → Creating your own network/  
informational interviewing

Passive

Interactivity Increases

Highly Interactive

*Consider using a variety of job search techniques, ranging from those you can do on your own time to those that are more interactive and require you to attend events or meetings.*

# Network Your Way to a Job

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

## Networking Defined

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

## 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.”

- 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.

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**Students often  
hesitate to network  
because they feel  
awkward asking for  
help, but it should  
be an integral part of  
any job search.**

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- 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.

*Written by Thomas J. Denham, managing partner and career counselor of Careers in Transition LLC.*

# Tapping the Hidden Job Market

Your off-campus job search should neither begin nor end with the help wanted ads. Studies have shown that only 15 percent of available jobs are ever advertised. It takes much more than merely perusing the classifieds. By employing a number of methods, you constantly increase your chances of landing a job. Some techniques you might use:

**Networking.** Probably the most effective way to meet potential employers and learn about possible jobs is to tap into your personal network of contacts. You might think it's too early to have professional contacts, but think about everyone you know—family members and their friends/co-workers, professors, past employers, neighbors and even your dentist. Don't be afraid to inform them of your career interests and let them know that you are looking for work. They will likely be happy to help you and refer you to any professionals they think can be of assistance.

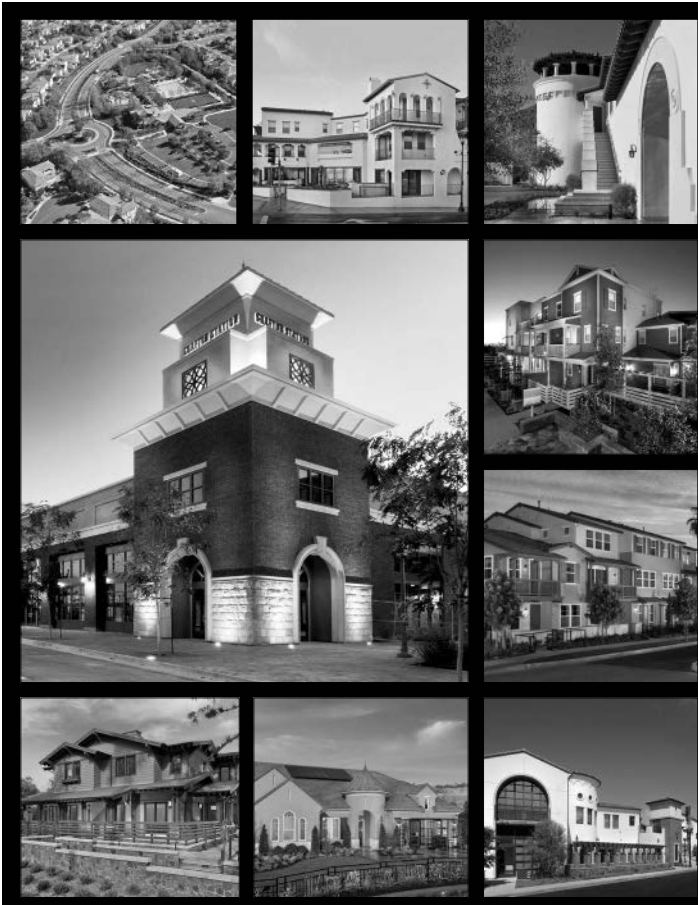
**Informational interviewing.** This approach allows you to learn more about your field by setting up interviews with professionals. The purpose of these interviews is to meet professionals, gather career information and investigate career options, get advice on job search techniques and get referrals to other professionals. When setting up these interviews, either by phone or letter, make it clear to the employer that you

have no job expectations and are seeking information only. Interviewing also familiarizes you to employers, and you may be remembered when a company has a vacant position.

**Temporary work.** As more companies employ the services of temporary or contract workers, new graduates are discovering that such work is a good opportunity to gain experience in their fields. Temporary workers can explore various jobs and get an inside look at different companies without the commitment of a permanent job. Also, if a company decides to make a position permanent, these "temps" already have made good impressions and often are given first consideration.

**Electronic job search.** One source of jobs may be as close as a personal computer. Various online resume services let you input your resume into a database, which then can be accessed by companies searching for applicants who meet their criteria. Companies also post job listings on websites to which students can directly respond by sending their resumes and cover letters.

Persistence is the key to cracking the hidden job market. Attend meetings of professional associations and become an active member. After you begin the above processes, and your network base expands, your search will be made easier. Employers will appreciate your resourcefulness—and view you as a viable candidate.



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# Ten Best Ways to Go Online...and Get the Job

**A**lmost 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. But after months of trolling job boards with no response, they wonder "What's wrong with me?"

Nothing, according to O'Donnell. Estimates are that only 4% to 10% of the people who look for jobs online ever find one. It's a long-shot. The "underbelly of the job posting world," she says, "is that many listings are already filled, were just fishing expeditions, or are outright scams."

## 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."

TweetAJob.com, where recruiters tweet jobs, is another engine O'Donnell likes because, "job search success is often just a matter of timing and this is immediate. You can respond quite quickly and be one of the first people in their inbox."

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'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 high 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," she 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. She lives in Portland, Ore., and can be reached at [www.jebra.com](http://www.jebra.com).*

# Getting the Most Out of a Career Fair

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

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

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

## Fashions and Accessories

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

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

## Stop, Look and Listen

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

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

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

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

## You’re a Prospector—Start Digging

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

## Fair Thee Well

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

## A Few Words About Career Fair Etiquette

1. Don’t interrupt the employer reps or your fellow job-seekers. If someone else is monopolizing the employer’s time, try to make eye contact with the rep to let him or her know that you’re interested in speaking. You may be doing a favor by giving the recruiter an out. If all else fails, move to the next exhibit and plan to come back later.
2. If you have a real interest in an employer, find out the procedures required to secure an interview. At some career fairs, initial screening interviews may be done on the spot. Other times, the career fair is used to pre-screen applicants for interviews to be conducted later (either on campus or at the employer’s site).
3. Sincerity always wins. Don’t lay it on too thick, but don’t be too blasé either. Virtually all employers are looking for candidates with good communication skills.
4. Don’t just drop your resume on employers’ display tables. Try to get it into a person’s hands and at least say a few words. If the scene is too busy and you can’t get a word in edgewise, jot a note on your resume to the effect of, “You were so busy that we didn’t get a chance to meet. I’m very interested in talking to you.” Look around the display for the recruiter’s business card (or at the very least, write down his or her name and get some literature with the company’s address) and send a follow-up note and another copy of your resume.
5. If you know ahead of time that one of your “dream companies” is a career fair participant, do some prior research (at minimum, visit their website). A little advance preparation goes a long way and can make you stand out among the masses of other attendees.

# Dealing With Stress in the Job Search

Searching for a job after college can be an extremely stressful endeavor. All of the elements of the job search—researching employers, perfecting and targeting your resume, writing cover letters, preparing for interviews—take time. And as a soon-to-be college graduate finishing up your last year of school, time is not something you have a lot of. Every student and every job search is different. However, no matter your major, degree, or employment aspirations, there are steps that you can take to make the necessary task of finding a job less stressful.

## Put Your Job Search in Perspective

College seniors about to enter the job market can be broadly placed into two camps: 1) Those who know exactly what they want to do after college, 2) and those who have no clue. Both types of students often bring added pressure to the job search process that is, for the most part, self-inflicted.

Students from the first camp set their sights high during the job search. They know what their dream job is, and anything less will be a disappointment. However, very rarely will a student fresh out of college be able to step into a position that fits their definition of an ideal job.

Occasionally, students are able to move into their idea of a perfect job right out of college, but students must be careful not to feel frustrated if that's not the case. Often, they will have to work up the career ladder a few rungs until they arrive at the job they truly want. Just accepting this fact will take away some of the pressure.

For students who are vague on what career to pursue after college, the idea of looking for a job can be even more stressful. Not knowing what type of job or career to pursue is a common anxiety among recent college graduates. Keep in mind that the process of looking for a job will probably alleviate this concern.

## Make Sure You Are Ready

Many students approaching college graduation simply are not ready to enter the job market. Instead, these students may decide to travel, do volunteer work, or simply take time off to decompress before pursuing a full-time career. Other students may decide to seek a graduate degree or even a second bachelor's degree before entering the job market. There is nothing wrong with delaying your job search as long as you do it for the right reasons.

But escaping the job search by entering into the process of applying to graduate schools when this is not really what you want to do is one of the biggest mistakes students can make. Once you've made a decision to pursue employment, don't hesitate to do so. However, students who legitimately decide to delay their job search should keep in mind that they might lose advantages, such as college job fairs, college career services, on-campus interviews and other services that colleges and universities provide. If you're ready to start your career, this is the time to do it.

## Get Moving and Keep Moving

Most college students are well acquainted with procrastination. Pulling an "all nighter" to cram for a test or write a term paper has almost become a college rite of passage. When it comes time to look for work students tend to procrastinate for various reasons: fear of failure ("what if nobody hires me?"), perfectionism ("I need to find the perfect job."), lack of information ("where do I start?"), distractions ("I need time to go out with my

friends."), and the sheer size of the task before them ("I'll never find the time to get this all done.").

Looking for a job is a big task, and while you may have been able to learn a semester's worth of chemistry the night before a final, you're not going to be able to cram the job search into the week before graduation. The single best thing you can do to relieve job-search stress is to simply get started. Procrastination is the worst thing you can do in terms of creating stress during the job search.

Additionally, students need to think of looking for a job as a process; something they need to work on every week if not every day. Don't apply for one job at a time and await the result. This is a recipe for disaster. Keep actively pursuing a job until you actually accept an offer.

## Have Reachable Goals

Since finding and securing a job is such a large process, students need to break it up into attainable goals. Make sure you write the goals down and know when they've been accomplished. Having goals can reduce job search stress in two ways: First, it breaks a large process down into smaller, manageable chunks; and second, reaching goals provides the job seeker with a sense of accomplishment. As you move forward in the job search, you'll find the stress replaced by a feeling of accomplishment.

## Deal With Interview Anxiety

For many students, going on a job interview is the most stressful part of the entire job search process. The best way to alleviate some of this stress is simply to prepare. Make sure you know everything you can about the employer and the position, and make sure that you know exactly what skills, experience, and ideas you can bring to that employer. Prepare answers to all the common questions that employers ask (such lists can be found online or in your career office), as well as other questions that are related specifically to your field of study and the position for which you are applying.

Also, make sure that you prepare a list of questions to ask the employer during the interview. Intelligent questions show that you have done your homework and that you have seriously thought about the position you are interviewing for. Lastly, make sure you go through a "mock interview." By practicing your interview answers in front of a friend or a career counselor, you will be able to hone your interview skills and get rid of the pre-interview jitters.

## Last Words of Advice

Think positively. Also, remember that a little stress can be a good thing if it doesn't paralyze you. It can keep you motivated, and keep you reaching toward your goals. But when you feel your stress level getting out of hand, take a break. Walking the dog, working out at the gym, going for a swim—any type of physical activity—is a great way to relieve stress. And if your stress level continues to rise, just take a break from the search. A few days not thinking or worrying about it can do wonders for your stress level. You can then re-enter the job search process refreshed and ready to land the job you want.

*Written by Chris Enstrom, a freelance writer from Nashville, Ind., from interviews with career center directors Dr. Jeff Garis (Florida State University) and Deidre Sepp (Marist College).*

# 10 Rules of Interviewing

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

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

## 1 **Keep your answers brief and concise.**

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

## 2 **Include concrete, quantifiable data.**

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

## 3 **Repeat your key strengths three times.**

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

## 4 **Prepare five or more success stories.**

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

## 5 **Put yourself on their team.**

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

## 6 **Image is often as important as content.**

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

## 7 **Ask questions.**

The types of questions you ask and the way you ask them can make a tremendous impression on the interviewer. Good questions require advance preparation. Just as you plan how you would answer an interviewer's questions, write out specific questions you want to ask. Then look for opportunities to ask

them during the interview. Don't ask about benefits or salary. The interview process is a two-way street whereby you and the interviewer assess each other to determine if there is an appropriate match.

## 8 **Maintain a conversational flow.**

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

## 9 **Research the company, product lines and competitors.**

Research will provide information to help you decide whether you're interested in the company and important data to refer to during the interview.

## 10 **Keep an interview journal.**

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

### **In Summary**

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

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

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

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

# 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?



# Behavioral Interviewing

“Tell me about a time when you were on a team, and one of the members wasn’t carrying his or her own 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 gaining wide acceptance among employers. By focusing on the applicant’s past actions and behaviors, rather than subjective impressions that can sometimes be misleading, interviewers can make more accurate hiring decisions.

Behavioral questions concentrate employers’ questions on areas they believe are important to candidates’ success. If you have training or experience with traditional 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 behaved in the past.
- Expect the interviewer to follow up, question and probe (think of “peeling the layers from an onion”).
- The interviewer will ask you to provide details, and may not allow you to theorize or generalize about several 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 more important.

The behavioral interviewer works from a profile of desired behaviors that are needed for success on the job. Your answers will be tested for accuracy and consistency.

- Employers predetermine the skills they want, and then ask very pointed questions to determine if the candidate possesses those skills. To identify which skills an employer might be seeking, talk with others in the field, read the company literature (especially job descriptions), and listen closely during the company information session.
- Recall recent situations that show favorable behaviors, actions or skills, especially involving coursework, projects, work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning, and customer service.
- Use examples from extracurricular activities such as running a marathon, your volunteer work, exhibiting paintings in an art show, climbing Mt. Whitney, biking across country or other personal accomplishments.
- Prepare short descriptions of each situation and be ready to give details if asked.
- Be honest. Don’t embellish your examples or omit important facts.
- Always listen carefully to each question, ask for clarification if necessary, and answer the question completely.

## Use the STAR Model

	<b>STAR Answer</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>S</b>	Describe a <b>Situation</b>	When I was working at XYZ employer.
<b>T</b>	Describe a <b>Task</b>	I was assigned to inventory all the widgets for the employer.
<b>A</b>	Describe the <b>Action</b> you took	I created a chart of all the departments using widgets on Microsoft Excel and recorded my inventory results by color and size.
<b>R</b>	Describe the <b>Result</b> of your action	As a result, my employer has a complete inventory of widgets for the first time. This inventory has allowed us to improve our production of widgets.

## Sample Behavioral Interview Questions

These are often difficult questions to answer on the fly. Careful preparation is the key to effective answers:

- Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
- Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to extricate yourself from a difficult situation.
- Give a specific example of a time where you used good judgment and logic to solve a problem.
- By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments.
- Describe a time in which you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
- Describe the system you use for keeping track of multiple projects. How do you track your progress so that you can meet deadlines? How do you keep yourself focused?
- Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn?
- Give me an example of an important goal you’ve set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.
- Describe the most significant or creative presentation which you have had to complete.
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.

# 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.

## biginterview

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DESIGN AND RECORD YOUR OWN VIRTUAL PRACTICE INTERVIEWS AND VIEW TUTORIALS FOR ANSWERING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.

## Log-in instructions for practice interviews

### STEP 1

Go to <http://csupomona.biginterview.com/register>

### STEP 2

Enter the school code "cpp1208", followed by your name and school email address.

### STEP 3

Click "Create Account". Then wait for the Big Interview confirmation e-mail to arrive in your SCHOOL email address. Click "Verify" in the email, and you'll be able to start using Big Interview. You'll then be ready to start practicing!



# 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 your
- Go to the mall—most department and specialty stores have sections devoted to this style of office attire.

# Writing a Thank-You Letter After an Interview

**T**hank-you letters are an integral part of the interview process. They are the primary vehicle for positive follow-up to the interview and are an opportunity to show professionalism, confirm interest and send the message, one more time, that you are the right person for the position.

A recent survey by CareerBuilder.com found that:

- Nearly 15% of hiring managers would reject the job candidate who neglected to send a thank-you letter after the interview.
- 32% said they would still consider the thankless prospect but that their opinion of him or her would diminish.

As you can see, after a job interview, a thank-you note is a must. Your letter should be:

- Sent promptly (within 24 hours of an interview)
- Friendly but professional
- Business letter format (email is acceptable, but a business letter is more impressive. Email is also a good back-up to send in addition to a business letter).

## Example 1

Dear Mr. Gonzales:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me about the Marketing Manager position today. The job seems like a very good match for my skills and interests. The strategies you outlined are exciting and I know I would be able to “hit the ground running.” In addition to my B.S. degree in Marketing Management and my experience as a marketing intern, I will bring strong communication skills, ideas and energy to your team. I have solid organizational skills and know how to implement projects in the areas you mentioned. I am very interested in becoming a part of your organization and look forward to hearing from you soon regarding this opportunity.

Sincerely,

## Writing a Thank-You Letter

1. Follow standard format for a business letter, including your address, the date, and the recipient’s address.
2. Address the recipient(s) formally as “Dear Mr. Smith”, or “Dear Ms. Lee”.
3. Start by thanking the interviewers for the opportunity to interview for the position.
4. Briefly restate your interest in and qualifications for the position.
5. (Suggested) Mention something specific from the interview that increased your interest in the position or the company.
6. State your positive anticipation of hearing back from the employer regarding the position.
7. End with a formal closing. “Sincerely”, or “Regards” or “Best Regards” are common business closings.
8. Your thank-you letter should be concise. One paragraph or two short paragraphs is sufficient. (It is not as long as a cover letter).
9. Be sure you proofread your letter. It must be free from mistakes.

## Example 2

Dear Ms. Jones,

Thank you for taking the time to discuss the Account Executive position at Henderson Avionics with me. After meeting with you and Ms. Johnson, I am further convinced that my background and skills coincide with the qualifications for this position. In addition to my education and experience, I will bring excellent attention to detail and ingenuity to this position, as we discussed.

Thank you also for introducing me to the team and showing me the campus. I am very motivated at the prospect of working with your organization and believe I would be a strong asset to your team. I look forward to hearing from you regarding my candidacy for this position.

Best Regards,

*Excerpted and revised with permission from Daily Writing Tips (www.dailywritingtips.com)*

# 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.*

# Professional Etiquette

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

## Meeting and Greeting

Etiquette begins with meeting and greeting. Terry Cobb, owner of HR-Employment Solutions, emphasizes the importance of making a good first impression—beginning with the handshake. A firm shake, he says, indicates to employers that you're confident and assertive. A limp handshake, on the other hand, sends the message that you're not interested or qualified for the job. Dave Owenby, human resources manager for North and South Carolina at Sherwin Williams, believes, "Good social skills include having a firm handshake, smiling, making eye contact and closing the meeting with a handshake."

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

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

## Dining

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

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

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

- Arrive on time.
- Wait to sit until the host/hostess indicates the seating arrangement.
- Place napkin in lap before eating or drinking anything.
- When ordering, keep in mind that this is a talking business lunch.

Order something easy to eat, such as boneless chicken or fish.

- Do not hold the order up because you cannot make a decision. Feel free to ask for suggestions from others at the table.
- Wait to eat until everyone has been served.
- Keep hands in lap unless you are using them to eat.
- Practice proper posture; sit up straight with your arms close to your body.
- Bring food to your mouth—not your head to the plate.
- Try to eat at the same pace as everyone else.
- Take responsibility for keeping up the conversation.
- Place napkin on chair seat if excusing yourself for any reason.
- Place napkin beside plate at the end of the meal.
- Push chair under table when excusing yourself.

## Eating

Follow these simple rules for eating and drinking:

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

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

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

*Written by Jennie Hunter, retired professor, Western Carolina University.*

# Federal Jobs: Working for Uncle Sam

**S**o you want to work for the federal government? You are not alone. Uncle Sam employs approximately 2.7 million civilian workers worldwide. Federal employees receive a generous benefits package, and as of 2012 they earned an average salary of \$81,709. As the largest employer in the U.S., the federal government offers a variety of career opportunities unparalleled in the private sector. Federal employees work with (and create) cutting-edge technology. They create policy, programs and services that impact the health, safety and welfare of millions of people worldwide.

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

## Types of Federal Jobs

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

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

## OPM and USAJOBS

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

## Searching for Federal Jobs

Federal agencies now fill their jobs like private industry by allowing applicants to contact the agency directly for job information and applications. However, most of these positions can be accessed through the USAJOBS

site. All competitive service positions must be posted on the USAJOBS site, and although agencies are not required to post their excepted service positions on USAJOBS, many do.

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

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

## How to Apply

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

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

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

*Written by Chris Enstrom, a freelance writer from Nashville, Ind.*

# Turning Your Internship Into a Full-Time Position

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

A growing number of employers are using internships as a way to gain a first in-depth look at prospective employees. In this respect, both you and your employer have a common goal—namely, to determine if there is a good fit between you.

Here are ten tips to becoming a savvy intern and making powerful career moves:

## 1. Exhibit a Can-Do Attitude

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

## 2. Learn the Unwritten Rules

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

## 3. Take Your Assignments Seriously

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

## 4. Meet Deadlines

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

## 5. Set Realistic Goals and Expectations

Invest actively in the most critical element of your internship—that is, the learning agenda which you set up with your

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

## 6. Communicate Respectfully

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

## 7. Be Flexible

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

## 8. Be a Team Player

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

## 9. Get a Mentor

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

## 10. Have Fun!

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

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

*Written by Lina Melkonian, Executive Director of Development at San José State University, College of Engineering.*



# Why a Sales Career at Landsberg?

Landsberg

ORORA

Landsberg, Orora's North American packaging solutions group, started business in 1947 and has now grown to more than 55 locations across North America, Europe and Asia. At Landsberg, we understand that success is not merely measured by the packaging products and solutions we sell, but the business partnerships with our Sales Representatives.

## *Landsberg offers you:*

- Unlimited Earnings Potential
- Career Growth Opportunities
- Generous Benefits Package
- Extensive Training
- Personal Development



## *Landsberg wants you to succeed:*

All of our Sales Representatives experience an intense and comprehensive training program, which includes proven selling skills, philosophies, and administrative and management techniques.

With our time-tested philosophies and winning sales techniques, we equip our Sales Representatives with the essential tools for success. With hard work, motivation and unrelenting commitment, each Sales Representative has the opportunity for unlimited earnings potential.

## *Landsberg has you covered:*

Our benefits package includes an excellent starting salary, health, life and disability insurance and profit sharing/401(k).

**Landsberg Offers**  
**The complete package**

# Graduate School Basics

*Good reasons for going to graduate school include:*

- You have done your research and know you want to work in a field or at a level that requires post-graduate study prior to entry.
- You are very certain that you are ready to devote time to discipline-specific study to develop expertise, qualify you for advancement, or enhance earning potential.
- You are passionate about your choice and know where you want graduate school to take you.
- If you can't get funding, you are prepared to undertake loans to finance your graduate education, and return to a student lifestyle.

*Reasons not to go to graduate school:*

- You want to avoid looking for a job because you don't know what you want to do.
- You've heard that the job market isn't great, so you want to delay looking for a job.
- You want to extend the joys of the undergraduate years and avoid entering the "real world".

*Ready to go, the Council on Graduate Schools has developed the following timeline to help you prepare.*

*You should start preparing as appropriate for your program of interest. All times indicated below are approximate. You should study deadlines for specific programs carefully since they may vary significantly depending on the program to which you apply.*

## Summer

Write a draft of your statement of purpose. This is the most important part of your application and can be the deciding factor in the admissions decision. It will be evaluated for quality of writing as well as for clarity of professional goals.

Browse through college bulletins and department brochures.

## September

Meet with faculty members to discuss your statement of purpose and ask for letters of recommendation.

Sign up for standardized tests (paper/pencil test times vary, computerized testing is offered every month) such as the GRE and GMAT.

Request fellowship information and applications from graduate schools and programs.

## October

Take standardized tests (check your special discipline as test dates vary).

## November

Order transcripts and ask if your records office can send a transcript with your fall quarter grades in time to meet the program deadlines.

Complete applications (first create a draft). Give your recommenders (references) the forms to fill out and the addresses to which they should send their letters. It is helpful to them if you provide copies of your statement of purpose.

## February

Contact programs about the possibility of visiting. A personal visit can often enhance your chance of being accepted. Departments will sometimes help with travel expenses.

## April

If you are applying for need based financial aid programs, you may have to file a copy of your federal income tax return.

*Prepared by Council of Graduate Schools—<http://www.cgsnet.org>*

## The Personal Statement

Everyone finds it difficult to write a personal statement; however, don't get discouraged. With strong forethought and clear presentation, you can write a powerful essay that will dramatically increase your chances for admission.

Excellent guidelines are available to help you write a good personal statement at:

<http://uga.berkeley.edu/apa/personalstatement/>  
[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/pw/p\\_perstate.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/pw/p_perstate.html)

After you have written your first draft, have it proofread for mistakes or awkward phrases. The Writing Center, located in Building 1, Room 220, is a good resource for general proofreading. During drop-in hours at The Career Center, a Career Counselor can review your personal statement for organization and content.

## Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation are required for almost every graduate school application and are a very important part of the application process. Usually grades and test scores factor in most heavily; however, your letters of recommendation could be the deciding factor in the admission process. Strong letters of recommendation can strengthen your application and if there are deficiencies in your application, they can help to outweigh them.

Some basics to consider:

- Provide them with stamps, etc...
- Ask faculty to tailor the letter for you ("Would you feel comfortable writing a strong letter of recommendation?" "What would you be able to say about me?")
- **Give faculty 4-6 weeks advance notice**
- Waive disclosure, but know what will be in letter
- Ask for one more letter than required

For detailed information about securing strong letters of recommendation, visit <http://career.berkeley.edu/Grad/GradLetter.stm>.

## Curriculum Vitae

A CV or Curriculum Vitae is:

- Your life history
- Your job history
- Your achievements (publication, research, etc.)
- Your skills

For more information, visit the Career Center or <http://www.cvtips.com/>.

## Valuable Resources and Web Sites

[www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)

[www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com)

[www.gradschool.com](http://www.gradschool.com)

[www.review.com](http://www.review.com)

[www.wiredscholar.com/preparing/content/index.jsp](http://www.wiredscholar.com/preparing/content/index.jsp)

[www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/home.htm](http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/home.htm)

[www.utexas.edu/world/univ/](http://www.utexas.edu/world/univ/)

[www.mba.com](http://www.mba.com)

[www.ets.org/gre](http://www.ets.org/gre)

<http://www.mbainfo.com/>



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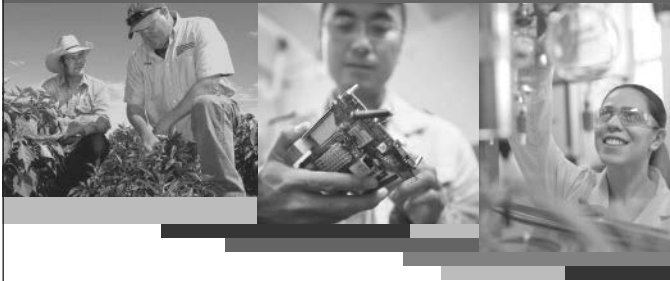
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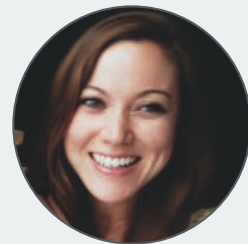
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1 Data as of March 2014  
2 According to published information as of April 2014  
3 Data as of May 2014



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