

# CAREER GUIDE



**THE ISLANDERS' SOURCE TO MASTERING  
CAREER SKILLS**



**CAREER  
SERVICES**





# Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi Career Guide

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# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Islanders,

College students typically have many questions about career options and what they will do after completing their degree(s). These questions include:

- What kind of job can I get with this major?
- Is picking a major the same as picking a career?
- Where can I search for a job in my field?

Career Services will help you make thoughtful decisions regarding your career goals and find the resources to reach them. As we assist you, keep in mind that your success in achieving your career aspirations will ultimately depend on the steps you take to build experience. There is no substitute for experience...it bridges the gap between the classroom and the real world, broadens your network of contacts, and often changes the way you look at the world.

Whether you are taking your first steps, and need a sense of direction or help finding internships to build a stronger resume, or are preparing for graduation and want to promote yourself to employers, we are here to help you. We encourage you to visit us in University Center 304 so that we can help you work toward your career goals.

Sincerely,

Terri Howe  
Director, Career Services

Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi is a member of the National Association of Colleges and Employers.  
We adhere to the guidelines outlined by NACE.

## LOCATION

6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5795  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78412  
University Center 304  
Phone: 361.825.2628  
Fax: 361.825.5729

## OFFICE HOURS

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

[Career-services.tamucc.edu](http://Career-services.tamucc.edu)



## CONSULTATION

Career Counseling is available to currently enrolled students and alumni within a year of graduation. Career Counselors can help you:

- Choose a major
- Discover and explore internships and careers
- Make decisions about career goals and life plans
- Utilize career software to match you with exciting career options

## EVENTS / PROGRAMS

Career and Job Fairs are scheduled regularly.

- **All Major Career Fair** is scheduled in both Spring and Fall. This fair is designed for all majors.
- **Teacher Job Fair** is scheduled in both Spring and Fall. This fair is designed for those who are seeking employment in education K-12.
- **Graduate School Fair** is scheduled in Fall. This fair is designed for those students who are interested in continuing and pursuing an advanced degree.

**Business Etiquette Dinner** is offered every Fall. This interactive presentation offers the student a chance to learn the do's and don'ts of proper business etiquette while keeping your cool when eating.

**Get the Job Fashion Show** is an opportunity for the student to see first hand what to wear for an interview. This event occurs in the spring semester

## STUDENT EMPLOYMENT REGISTRATION AND JOB REFERRAL PROCEDURES

Working on and off campus is as easy as registering with *Hire An Islander*. Once you have registered, access to view these jobs will be verified.

- To obtain contact information, bring the job number to Career Services for a referral.
- All students are limited to 3 job referrals per day.
- After you receive the referral, it is your responsibility to contact the employer and set up the interview, or send your resume. (Referral does not guarantee you the job, they just help you get your foot in the door. The rest is up to you!)
- If the employer requests a faxed resume, we will be glad to fax it for you.

## On-Campus Part-Time Employment

The Student Employment Service (SES) is located in Career Services, University Center 304. The SES offers you a chance to expand your learning beyond the classroom both on and off campus. If you are interested in working on campus and you have been awarded College Work-Study as part of your financial assistance package, you will find these jobs on our website. If you have not been awarded Work-Study, but would still like to work on campus, there are jobs available on the Career Services website.

## Off-Campus Part-Time Employment

We also assist students in looking for off campus, part-time employment through the Job Location and Development (JLD) Program. An off campus, part-time employment experience will give you a look at your chosen field and allow you to develop and enhance skills that will increase your opportunities for internships or professional employment at graduation.

## Full-Time Employment

*Hire An Islander* offers students and alumni the opportunity to search for full-time non-degree jobs as well as full-time professional jobs requiring a degree. Our database is updated on a daily basis.

## RESOURCES

- ❑ **Career Service Website** is <http://career-services.tamucc.edu> provides updates on our services and programs, career events and on-line workshops.
- ❑ **Hire An Islander** is a career management system provided to A&M-CC students at no cost and includes: part-time and full-time job announcements; internships; personal space to upload resumes, cover letters and other materials; and access to on-campus interview schedules. Register for *Hire An Islander* at Career Services or at <http://career-services.tamucc.edu>
- ❑ **CHOICES** is one of the resources available to students to assist with career decision making. This user-friendly software program contains simple assessments that can help you understand which jobs might fit your interests and skills. The program also contains a database of over 600 jobs to explore come see us for more information.
- ❑ **Facebook**  
To get up to date information on the latest in Career Services or to read interesting work related articles, “LIKE” us on facebook. [TAMUCCCareerServices](#)
- ❑ **YouTube**  
Subscribe to our YouTube channel which has various tutorials that will demonstrate the “how to’s” of our *Hire An Islander* database. You can also view programs and events from throughout the year. Channel: [Hire An Islander](#)
- ❑ **Twitter**  
If you are a person on the go and like to know what career related things are going on around campus, Twitter is a fun way to stay connected to what is happening in Career Services. Follow us at [HireAnIslander](#).
- ❑ **Pinterest**  
If you like to collect images and articles in once place check out our pinterest page. These boards contain pins with great information for you to go and easily find again and again. Follow us at [Texas A&M University-CC Career Services](#).
- ❑ **LinkedIn**  
LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site. It is mainly used for professional networking. If you prefer to stay connected this way, connect with us at [Hire An Islander TAMUCC](#)
- ❑ **Career Chat** was designed for the student who wants to ask a quick question. Career Chat is available during regular office hours. You can access Career Chat from our website: <http://career-services.tamucc.edu>
- ❑ **Career Resource Library** is located in Career Services UC 304, includes books on resume writing, cover letters, job search strategies, industry standards and company directories.
- ❑ **Perfect Interview** allows the student to attend a virtual interview from the comfort of their home. Perfect Interview has challenging, difficult interview questions and prepares the student to answer them correctly with the assistance of a virtual coach. Login to [HireAnIslander](#) to access Perfect Interview.
- ❑ **Going Global** career and employment resources include more than 10,000 pages of constantly-updated content on topics such as: job search sources, work permit/visa regulations, employment trends, salary ranges, networking groups, cultural/interviewing advice and much more! Login to [HireAnIslander](#) to access Going Global.

# INTERNSHIP SKILLS

## INTERNSHIPS

As a student, internship experiences are excellent opportunities to confirm choice of major and affirm career interests. These opportunities can also provide the credentials needed for full-time positions. Internships provide opportunities to:

- Obtain meaningful work experience in a field.
- Earn and learn - students contribute toward financing their education.
- Apply classroom learning in a work environment.
- Network with professionals.
- Strengthen confidence, maturity, and professionalism.
- Establish professional references.
- Evaluate employers prior to accepting full-time work.

Internship positions are available to A&M-Corpus Christi students, subject to employer's requirements. Individual colleges within the university assign criteria for receipt of academic credit. You will receive assistance understanding credit requirements from Career Services. Application for credit will be through the college of your major.

If you are interested in an internship, you must register with *Hire An Islander*. Our career library is filled with hundreds of state and national internship opportunities. We also have current listings of local internships available through *Hire An Islander*.

# ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWING

## ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWING

It is easy to participate in on-campus interviews. After registering on *Hire An Islander*, complete the registration and resume sections on the website. When your profile has been approved you are ready to sign up for on-campus interviews.

Interviews are conducted in Career Services, University Center 304. Current recruiting schedules and position requirements are maintained in Career Services. Off campus interviews are scheduled by the employer.

Remember – on-campus interviews are REAL, you must:

- Meet all deadlines!
- Research!
- Keep your commitment – always be on time which is a minimum of 10 minutes early.
- Respect the employers who have invested in this process
- Dress professionally

## “No Shows”

Students who do not show up for an interview and who fail to cancel the interview according to the rules established will be automatically suspended from on-campus interviewing. The suspension will remain in effect until the student has personally sent a formal letter of apology to the recruiting organization that was “stood up”. More than one “no show” may result in a permanent suspension of on-campus recruiting privileges.

## Cancellation of Interviews

Interview may be canceled by a student for any reason up until 9:00 a.m. of the day prior to the interview. Interviews may be canceled for emergency reasons after the 9:00 a.m. deadline, but the student must provide an explanation to the Director or Associate Director as soon as is practical. Each situation will be individually reviewed. Interviews that are not properly cancelled will be dealt with as “no shows”.



### **Checklist for Freshman**

- Important: Register on the web with *Hire An Islander* at <http://career-services.tamucc.edu>
- Make an appointment for career assessment/testing and career counseling at Career Services in the University Center, 304.
- Visit the Student Employment Office at Career Services to locate jobs available as you work toward your degree. Part-time jobs will make you more marketable after graduation.
- Develop a Career Action Plan detailing the leadership activities, work experiences, and internships you wish to pursue during college.
- Join a student organization and get involved. Visit Student Activities in the University Center, 226 to find out more.
- Attend job fairs to familiarize yourself with career opportunities and possibly land a summer or part-time job and/or internship.
- Establish good relationships with your professors, advisors, and academic advisors. Discuss your career plans with them.
- If you have not selected a major, use the CHOICES Assessment computer program to investigate majors that are associated with your desired occupation.
- Study and work hard to establish good grades. Many employers have minimum grade point requirements for internships and employment.

### **Checklist for Sophomores**

- Update information or register in *Hire An Islander* if you have not already done so at <http://career-services.tamucc.edu>
- Seek career-related employment and internships. Also, seek campus leadership positions.
- Join one of the organizations you have identified in your Career Action Plan.
- Explore volunteer opportunities to learn more about your career choice and help you get valuable experience.
- Attend job fairs. These can help you to get an internship or part-time job in a field you are considering.
- Try job shadowing, spending a day working along side someone in your field or interest.
- Continue building relationships with your professors, advisors, and academic advisors. Discuss your career plans with them.
- Study hard. Remember, recruiters will be interested in your grades.



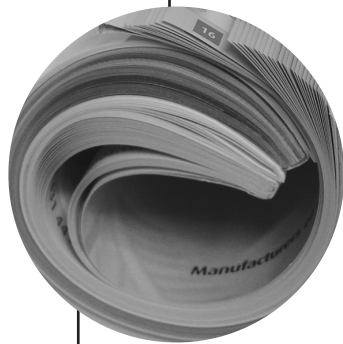
## Checklist for Juniors

- Update your information or register with *Hire An Islander* if you have not done so yet at <http://career-services.tamucc.edu>
- Formulate a list of specific job titles in which you are interested in. The CHOICES Assessment can help you.
- Meet participating professionals in career fields in which you are interested and begin to develop your career network through information interviews.
- Continue to develop leadership and organizational skills in campus organizations. Join professional and honorary organizations that meet your criteria.
- Attend on-campus and off-campus job fairs to make vital contacts with future employers.
- Attend “Get the Job” and the Business Etiquette Dinner Programs to get tips on interviewing, professional attire and business etiquette.
- If graduate or professional school is advised for your career interest area, attend the Fall Graduate School Fair. Begin writing to universities that offer academic programs you seek. Career Services can help you identify schools with appropriate programs. The University library has college catalogs on microfiche or CD-ROM.
- Keep building relations with your professors, advisors and academic advisors.
- Keep hitting those books! Good grades will pay off.

## Checklist for Seniors

- Register with *Hire An Islander* or update your information if you have not done so at <http://career-services.tamucc.edu>
- Sign up for on-campus interviews using *Hire An Islander*. Students should start interviewing the semester prior to graduation.
- This is your last chance. If you haven’t done a career-related internship, NOW is the time. Otherwise, you might lose out in the competition for jobs to students who have work experience.
- If you haven’t already done so, join professional and honorary organizations that meet your criteria and seek leadership positions. Subscribe to professional magazines or journals in your field (some are available via the Internet).
- Attend Career Services workshops to hone your job search skills. Do a practice or mock interview at Career Services. You can have it recorded for future reference.
- Attend programs such as “Get the Job” and “Business Etiquette Dinner” to gain an edge on interviewing.
- Attend job fairs. Great companies come to our campus in search of great employees. It could be you.
- Apply for graduate or professional schools of interest.
- Maintain regular contact with your professors and other references to keep them apprised of your job search progress. Get letters of reference from them and your employers.
- Make plans to attend the Teacher Job Fair to talk with recruiters from districts you are interested in.
- Don’t let up on your studying. Remember recruiters are interested in your demonstrated success and academic achievement.
- Notify Career Services as soon as you accept a position or have been accepted into a graduate program so we can celebrate with you!

*Planning a career direction and finding the position you want is a full-time job in itself and requires a personal commitment of time and energy. The sheer number of options and amount of information available to you can be quite overwhelming. However, your job will be much easier if you map out a plan of action and carefully track your efforts. Your first step is to realize that you are going to be selling a product-you! You must figure out how best to market your product, and that involves a careful and thorough assessment of yourself and what you can bring to a future employer.*



## **Self-Evaluation**

Before you try to market yourself to potential employers, you need to know something about what you are looking for and what you have to offer. The more you know about your interests, skills, abilities, values, goals, and personal qualities, the greater your opportunities are for finding the most suitable career.

## **Networking Skills**

Networking is gathering information from and making contacts through the people you already know. Learn how networking can help you with your career search.

## **Researching Employers**

Your task in the career search is to find the most suitable position for yourself. This section will show you how to use your research and investigative skills to discover job openings and prepare for an interview.

## **Your Resume**

A resume is a critical tool in your job search. It is a summary of your qualifications and experience used to elicit further interest from a prospective employer. This section contains guidelines on constructing a resume that will get you noticed.

## **Cover Letters**

Letter-writing skills are essential to your job search. Excellent cover and thank you letters often make a difference in whether or not you are considered for a position. See this section for tips on writing winning letters.

## **Interview Preparation**

For most fields, without an interview you will not get a job. It is in this stage of your job search that you convince an employer to hire you. This section shows you how to make the best possible impression during an interview.

## **Career Fairs**

Attending career fairs can be extremely beneficial to your career search. This section gives you tips on preparing for a career fair, what to expect during the career fair, and how to follow up with employers afterwards.

## **Evaluating Job Offers**

This section outlines the factors you will want to consider when determining whether or not you will accept a position.

## **From College to Career**

This section gives tips that can help you to excel in the workplace.



Recruiting experts agree that a very small percentage of jobs are found by combing through classified sections of newspapers. In fact, around 80 percent of jobs are found through networking.



## What is Networking?

Networking is simply gathering information from and making contacts through the people you already know. How do you start establishing a network? After you have professional objectives in mind, begin talking to people you know such as:

- Friends and family
- Classmates and professors
- Former employers
- Colleagues from professional, community, and religious groups
- Former teachers and faculty from schools you have attended

The key to creating a network is to obtain the names of at least two additional contacts each time you talk to someone. The types of questions you should ask when obtaining further contacts are:

- What organizations should I investigate?
- Do you know anyone who works in or is associated with my field of interest?
- May I mention your name when contacting other people or organizations?

## Develop a Tracking System

Develop a method of keeping track of each conversation, phone call, letter, interview, follow-up and promise. Without a good organizational system, you could become confused.

## Be Professional

As you begin to make professional contacts, make sure you dress and act the part. Conduct yourself in a manner that will convince your professional contacts that you can do the job. This will also help you obtain other referrals much more easily.

## Return the Favor

Networking is a give-and-take proposition. Send thank you letters after each meeting or helpful phone conversation. Keep in touch with members of your network and give back to it whenever possible.

## Informational Interviews

You can collect information on your chosen field via informational interviewing. Informational interviewing is simply asking questions of different members of your network. Remember to ask for the names of at least two more contacts during an informational interview.

### *Questions you may want to ask during an informational interview are:*

- What aspect of your job was the biggest challenge when you first started?
- What qualifications do you seek of new employees?
- What are the things you like or dislike about your job?
- If you could start over again in this field, what would you do differently?
- Should I have a particular certification or achieve a higher-level degree in order to advance in this field?
- What classes and activities in college best helped prepare you to enter this field?
- How can I make myself a more desirable job candidate?
- What kinds of job titles would I probably have in this field?
- What life experiences have most helped you acquire and develop knowledge of this field?
- Are there any professional groups you would recommend I join?
- How do you see this industry changing in the future?
- Who else should I contact within the field?

# RESEARCHING EMPLOYERS



Before applying for a position within an organization, you should first do some research to find out essential information about it. You should do this to discover the employer's needs and make sure your qualifications are a good fit for the organization. You also need to have as much information about the organization as possible before going into an interview, because the interviewer may ask you pointed questions to assess how much you know about the company.

Make sure you are familiar with *at least* these aspects of an employer:

- Name, age, and location(s)
- Product lines and/or services
- Parent company and/or subsidiaries
- Financial picture of organization, assets, stock picture, recent mergers, etc.
- Major competitors
- Growth history
- Career possibilities
- Deadline for application

You can find this information in the following resources:

## Your Career Guide

This Career Guide is an excellent resource to reach organizations that are actively recruiting college graduates like yourself. Take time to carefully review the career opportunities that these companies have placed in your Career Guide. These advertisements will typically include open positions and contact information. You can then contact the organization if you desire additional information. Be sure to check out the on-line version of this publication at [www.Career-Guides.net](http://www.Career-Guides.net).

## The Employer's Website

You can frequently locate an employer's website by typing the company name into many search engines. Most employers have specific sections of their own websites devoted to employment opportunities.

## Internet

There are numerous other places on the Internet that contain employer information as well.

### Job Search Assistance Sites

The following sites have valuable information that will help you in your job search. Some of the sites give you the option to post your resume on-line and search through available job opportunities, while others provide more

general recruitment information about employers and enable you to link to their websites.

### Job Search Assistance Websites

- [www.Career-Guides.net](http://www.Career-Guides.net)
- [www.HBCUcareers.com](http://www.HBCUcareers.com)
- [www.Collegegrad.com](http://www.Collegegrad.com)
- [www.Collegerecruiter.com](http://www.Collegerecruiter.com)
- [www.usajobs.com](http://www.usajobs.com)
- [wwwIndeed.com](http://wwwIndeed.com)

### Websites for Researching Graduate Schools

- [www.gradsource.com](http://www.gradsource.com)
- [www.gradschools.com](http://www.gradschools.com)
- [www.graduateguide.com](http://www.graduateguide.com)

### Websites for Finding Internships

- [www.Internships.com](http://www.Internships.com)
- [www.usaintern.com](http://www.usaintern.com)
- [www.internmatch.com](http://www.internmatch.com)

### Websites for Researching a Company

- [www.Wetfeet.com](http://www.Wetfeet.com)
- [www.Glassdoor.com](http://www.Glassdoor.com)
- [www.Reuters.com](http://www.Reuters.com)
- <http://finance.yahoo.com>
- <http://www.google.com/finance>

### Websites for Researching Occupations

- [www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco)
- [www.online.onetcenter.org](http://www.online.onetcenter.org)

## Trade Associations

These organizations produce membership directories, journals and informational briefs. Find associations that match your career interest and then write to ask for their membership list or any printed material they offer. If they publish job listings or have a resume referral service, these could prove to be a great asset to you. And if they have student memberships, then all the better. Remember, almost every type of field or industry that exists has a trade association affiliation.



A resume is one of the most important elements of your job search, and will need to be updated periodically throughout your career as you gain new skills and experience. Your resume will serve as the first impression potential employers will have of you. Employers spend an average of less than 60 seconds reviewing any resume. For these reasons, it is essential for your resume to project a clear and concise picture of your skills, professional qualities, achievements, and goals.

The tips below will help you begin constructing your resume. They are meant solely as guidelines, and you should always check with your career services office and follow their recommendations.

## **Stand Out**

Be cautious if you choose to use a resume wizard or template; they tend to generate resumes that all look alike. Individualize your resume, but be sure not to overdo it. You want your resume to be distinctive, but always remain streamlined and conservative for easy readability.

## **Structure of Your Resume**

The overall structure you choose for your resume will depend on what suits your employment history and experiences best. The following are the most widely recognized resume formats:

### ***Chronological***

This is the most common resume format, and probably the easiest to prepare. The chronological resume emphasizes employment and/or experience history, listing these elements in reverse chronological order. (In other words, your most recent experience is listed first.) This format is especially useful for new graduates or those with limited work experience.

### ***Functional (Skill-Based)***

The functional resume emphasizes skills and attributes that can be applied to a variety of employment situations. Your skills are broken down into categories that quickly communicate to employers what you can do for them. This format is useful for candidates without direct employment-related experience, or for those who wish to work in fields unrelated to their academic background.

### ***Combination***

For many candidates, a combination of elements from the chronological and functional resume formats works best.

### ***Targeted***

Some candidates prefer to focus on specific job “targets,” and tailor a different resume for each target. With this format, your skills can be redirected with each resume to hit each target most effectively.

## **Elements of the Resume**

### ***Contact Information***

List your name, address, telephone number(s), and e-mail address. Make sure your e-mail address sounds professional or neutral. If necessary, set up an alternate screen name to use for business contacts exclusively. Above all, make sure that any potential employer can easily contact you! Other personal information such as religion, age, marital status, etc. should not be included.

### ***Objective/Summary of Qualifications***

There are differing viewpoints as to whether an objective will help or hurt your chances in the job market.

***Check with your career services office for their recommendations.*** If you decide to use an objective, state the type of position you are seeking. Also, consider including in your objective how you will benefit the employer—not what you are seeking from the employer. An alternative to an objective is a summary

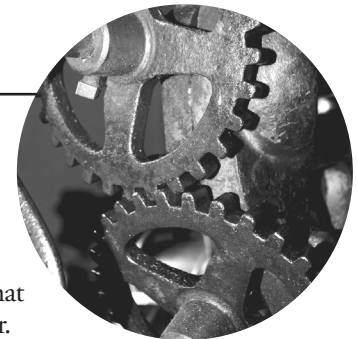
of qualifications. The summary of qualifications simply includes skills/traits that you can bring to an employer.

### ***Educational Background***

List names and locations of educational institutions attended, degree(s) awarded with completion dates, majors and minors, and anticipated or actual dates of graduation.

### ***Employment History***

List employment experience in reverse chronological order, including any summer/part-time jobs and internships. Use action words to describe your duties and achievements, and be sure to indicate when and how increases of responsibility occurred.



## Action Words

The following list of words is useful when describing your job duties. These words represent skill areas that you may have that would be beneficial to a prospective employer.

## References

You can list references as the final major category of the resume or as an attachment page. Check with your career services office for their recommendations.

## Optional Items

If any of these items are related to your objective and can help sell you as a job candidate, you may want to consider including them:

- G.P.A. (if 3.0 or above) or major G.P.A.
- Academic awards, honors, or scholarships
- Special projects/research
- Personal skills/computer skills
- Extracurricular activities/community service
- Leadership

## ACTION WORDS

accomplished  
accelerated  
achieved  
adapted  
administered  
analyzed  
appraised  
assisted  
budgeted  
built  
calculated  
charted  
compiled

composed  
conducted  
consolidated  
controlled  
created  
delegated  
delivered  
demonstrated  
developed  
diagnosed  
directed  
discovered  
distributed

earned  
edited  
eliminated  
established  
evaluated  
examined  
exhibited  
expanded  
expedited  
explained  
facilitated  
formulated  
generated

handled  
implemented  
improved  
increased  
initiated  
instituted  
launched  
maintained  
managed  
mastered  
mediated  
motivated  
negotiated

observed  
obtained  
operated  
organized  
participated  
performed  
planned  
presented  
processed  
produced  
programmed  
proposed  
recommended

recruited  
reduced  
reinforced  
researched  
reviewed  
scheduled  
supervised  
strengthened  
translated  
updated  
wrote

## Editing Your Resume

### Length

Ideally, your resume should be one page. You should make certain all pertinent information is included. If your resume requires more than one page, label the second page with your name and the page number.

### Appearance

The body of the resume should be an eleven or twelve point standard font of no color other than black. Fonts such as Arial, Helvetica, or Times New Roman are always a safe bet when constructing a resume that has a professional appearance. Spacing and

size of the page are key elements to ensure optimum readability. Print your resume on quality 8½" x 11" paper in white or conservative colors.

### Accuracy

Proofread carefully for spelling and grammar and ask someone else to proofread your resume. Accuracy is essential; nothing stands out like spelling or grammatical errors!





**Electronic/Scannable Resumes**

In all likelihood, you will be submitting your resume electronically to on-line job search sites, or sending it to organizations that scan resumes and keep them on file electronically. When doing this, compose your resume according to the following guidelines:

***Electronic Resumes***

- Use a common word processing program such as Microsoft Word
- Pay attention to the format the employer requests. For example, some employers prefer a PDF file, others prefer a plain text file
- E-mail the resume to yourself as a test before sending it to employers
- Forward a hard copy of your resume and cover letter as a follow-up

***Scannable resumes***

- Print on one side of the paper only
- Use non-decorative fonts such as Helvetica, Arial, and Times New Roman
- Avoid graphics, shading italics, underlining, and boldface text
- Avoid using horizontal and vertical lines
- Use all upper-case letters to emphasize words
- Include a “Key Word” section and list words that the scanning program may be seeking (e.g., web development, administration, negotiation, html, etc.)
- Use plain white paper

# CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

MODEL

**Your Name**  
Your Address  
City, State, Zip  
Area Code/Phone Number  
E-mail Address

**Objective** A position as/a position in the field of...

**Education** **Name of University**, City, State  
Degree(s) received, Major(s), Minor(s), Date degree(s) received,  
GPA (if it is a 3.0 or higher)

**Skills/  
Attributes** ■ List of acquired skills that supports your objective

**Employment  
Experience** **Most Recent Job Title** Dates Employed  
Name of Employer, City, State  
■ What you did, duties performed, responsibilities, accomplishments.

**Next Job Title (Before Most Recent)** Dates Employed  
Name of Employer, City, State  
■ What you did, duties performed, responsibilities, accomplishments.

**Next Job Title** Dates Employed  
Name of Employer, City, State  
■ What you did, duties performed, responsibilities, accomplishments.

**Honors** Awards, scholarships, merits, etc. and dates received

**Other  
Activities** Extracurricular activities, club memberships, group affiliations, etc.  
that support your objective along with applicable dates

References available upon request

# CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

SAMPLE

**Richard Resume**  
1111 Main Street  
(555) 555-5555  
[rresume@email.com](mailto:rresume@email.com)

- Objective** A programmer position in the software development and engineering field.
- Education** **ABC University**, Anytown, US  
Bachelor of Science, Computer Science, Business minor, 4/20\_\_
- Languages/  
Software**
- Access
  - MODULA-2
  - Oracle
  - .NET
  - Assembly
  - SQL
  - C
  - SAS
  - C++
  - JAVA
  - Visual Basic
  - FOCUS
- Hardware**
- IBM PC/AT/IT/Ps-w's and compatible
  - Ethernet networks using Novell or Windows NT servers
  - Cisco 2500, 4000, and 7000 series routers
  - AS 400 and 4380 IBM Mainframes
- Employment  
Experience**
- Programmer/Analyst*** 8/20\_\_-present  
Anytown Bowling and Billiards, Anytown, US
- Developed and performed maintenance on applications in an IBM Mainframe environment. Produced user requested reports in SAS.
- Programmer*** 6/20\_\_-4/20\_\_  
ABC University Bookstore, Anytown, US
- Developed and implemented inventory system in Access using Visual Basic and C. Responsible for the overall technical and maintenance support of the system.
- Computer Lab Assistant*** 8/20\_\_-4/20\_\_  
ABC University, Anytown, US
- Provided technical assistance on operations and use of lab equipment. Provided tutorial help on class projects.
- Honors**
- Technical Achievement Scholarship, 20\_\_  
Distinguished Honor Graduate, US Army Leadership Course, 20\_\_
- Other  
Activities**
- Member, Association of Computer Machinery, 20\_\_-present  
Volunteer Host ABC University Career Day, 20\_\_  
U.S. Army, Sergeant/E-5, March 97-present  
Volunteer, ABC Basic Programming Contest, 20\_\_  
Anytown Festival Staff, 19\_\_-20\_\_

References available upon request

***Your Name***

Your Address  
City, State, Zip  
Area Code/Phone Number  
E-mail Address

**OBJECTIVE**

A position as/a position in the field of...

**EDUCATION**

**Name of University**, City, State  
Degree(s) received, Major(s), Minor(s), Date degree(s) received  
GPA if it is a 3.0 or higher

**RELATED SKILLS**

**Name of Skill** • An accomplishment that illustrates or documents this skill

**Name of Skill** • An accomplishment that illustrates or documents this skill

**Name of Skill** • An accomplishment that illustrates or documents this skill

**ACTIVITIES**

Extracurricular activities, club memberships, group affiliations, etc. that support your objective

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Most Recent Job Title**, Name of Employer, City, State Dates Employed

**Next Job Title** (*Before Most Recent*), Name of Employer, City, State Dates Employed

**Next Job Title**, Name of Employer, City, State Dates Employed

**Least Recent Job Title**, Name of Employer, City, State Dates Employed

**REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

**Jessica Jobseeker**

1111 Main Street  
Anytown, US 22222  
(555) 555-5555  
[jjobseeker@email.com](mailto:jjobseeker@email.com)

**OBJECTIVE**

A challenging position requiring organizational skills and creativity to coordinate convention events.

**EDUCATION**

**ABC University**, Anytown, US  
Bachelor of Science in Sociology  
Minor in Spanish  
Graduated Cum Laude, 4/20\_\_ GPA 3.8

**RELATED SKILLS**

**Event Planning**

- Collaborated with students to organize and implement various campus entertainment and activities
- Promoted and advertised campus shows
- Attended programming retreats which provided information and instruction about event planning

**Leadership**

- Served on the Executive Board of two campus organizations
- Recruited members for a campus club
- Directed research sessions for an ABC University professor
- Facilitated group discussions as program mentor for child mentoring program
- Spoke on a panel for ABC University’s Sociology Department

**Language**

- Capable of communicating with native Spanish speakers
- Studied in Mexico, Summer 20\_\_
- Resided in native home where only Spanish was spoken

**ACTIVITIES**

Member of Campus Productions Programming Groups  
Study Abroad: Guadalajara Mexico, Summer 20\_\_  
Independent Research Project, Psychology Dept, fall 20\_\_  
Mentor, Child Education Program, Anytown School District

**EMPLOYMENT**

<b>Substitute Teacher</b> , Anytown School District, Anytown, US	10/___ - 6/___
<b>Intern</b> , XYZ Consulting, Anytown, US	9/___ -12/___
<b>Accounts Payable Assistant</b> , A Plus Accounting, Anytown, US	6/___ - 9/___
<b>Sales Consultant</b> , Q Mart Department Store, Anytown, US	2/___ - 5/___

**REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

**JANE SMITH**

Present Address: 1111 Main Street, Anytown, US 22222, 555-555-5555

E-mail address: jsmith@email.com

Permanent Address: 1234 Main Street, Anytown, US 22222

**EDUCATION**

ABC University, Anytown, US

Bachelor of Arts in Communications, May 20\_\_

Overall GPA 3.4; Major GPA: 3.6

Relevant Courses: Interpersonal Communication, Marketing, Psychology

Relevant Projects: Developed Marketing Strategy for local chapter of PRSSA

**EXPERIENCE**

Associate Manager, My Store, Anytown, US, June 20\_\_ - present.

Supervised staff of 10 part-time employees. Increased sales 25% in 6 months. Utilized team-building, goal setting, and business knowledge to improve employees' skills. Maintained company web site. Opened and closed store in absence of owner. Created window and in-store displays.

President, College Honor Society, ABC University, Anytown, US, August 20\_\_ - present.

Utilized leadership skills to increase membership and encourage active participation in the organization.

Planned and conducted monthly meetings. Contacted guest speakers and organized fundraisers.

Salesperson, Smith County Fast Food, Anytown, US, January 20\_\_ - June 20\_\_.

Interacted with customers and utilized suggestive selling techniques. Increased sales by 15%. Salesperson of the month twice. Created product displays. Conducted inventory. Assisted in training new sales staff.

**SKILLS, HONORS, AND ACTIVITIES**

American Marketing Association, Treasurer: Managed \$16,000 budget, 2009-2010 Alpha Phi Omega

National Service Fraternity, Membership Chair, 2000-present

Graduated top 10% of high school class with 3.8 GPA; Senior Class President

80% self supporting in college; work 25 hours per week as full-time student

Big Brothers/Big Sisters Volunteer

PRSSA - Attended National Conference, 20\_\_, 20\_\_

Computer Skills: Windows Vista, Microsoft Office 2007, Dreamweaver, Photoshop, Visual Basic

Speak fluent Spanish





*Effective letters are just as important as a strong resume. Well-written letters will command the attention of prospective employers and ensure that others will remember you, helping to develop a strong network of contacts.*

The following are types of letters you will be writing to prospective employers. Make sure that every letter you write is addressed to a specific person, and not a form or copied letter. If necessary, phone the organization to ascertain the correct person to receive correspondence. Write down the correct spelling of the person's name and title, and remember to proofread your letter carefully.

### **Inquiry Letter**

This letter is written to express interest in employment within an organization and to obtain information about any possible openings. Since this letter is not written in response to a job posting, communicate flexibility while being specific about the type of job you would like. Include your resume with this letter. Indicate when you will be checking back with the organization.

### **Application Letter**

The letter is written to express interest in a known vacancy or job posting. After expressing your interest in the specific position, briefly summarize how your background and skills relate to the job requirements. Again, include your resume and indicate when you will be checking back with the organization.

### **Application Status Check Letter**

Two or three weeks after sending an application to or interviewing with an employer, you may want to send a letter asking about the status of your application. Recap your history of contact with the employer (dates of correspondence and interviews, etc.). Reiterate your interest in the position and express appreciation for the employer's cooperation and time.

### **Thank You Letter**

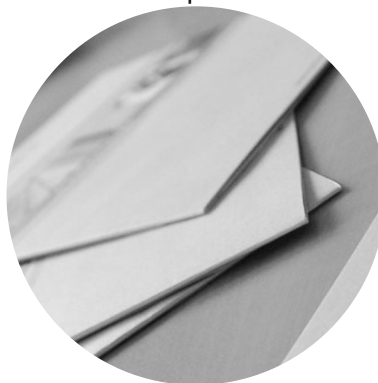
You should always send a thank you letter within 24 hours of a job interview. This letter should be brief, but be sure to express appreciation for the interviewer's time. Mention a few key points discussed during the interview, and indicate your continued interest in the position. Thank you letters reflect well on you and may help you when hiring decisions are made.

### **Rejection Letter**

If you decide to turn down an offer of employment with an organization, always send a letter to the employer briefly explaining the reasons for your decision, even if you have already declined verbally. This letter helps support your network of contacts; you never know when you may have to contact this employer again. Always thank the employer for the opportunity and consideration of your candidacy.

### **Acceptance Letter**

After accepting a position with an employer, always send a letter of acceptance. Express appreciation for the opportunity of joining the organization, and briefly confirm the terms of employment (title of position, salary, responsibilities, benefits, and start date).



Your Address  
City, State, and Zip Code  
Date

Contact's Name  
Title  
Company Name  
Address  
City, State, and Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. (Contact's Last Name):

Get the employer's attention in the opening paragraph and arouse interest in you. When indicating your reason for writing the letter, indicate where you received information about the vacancy or position.

In your middle paragraphs, give details of your background that will show the reader why you should be considered as a candidate. Create desire on the part of the reader.

Refer the reader to your general qualifications on your enclosed resume or other materials. Use as much space as needed to tell your story, but keep it brief and to the point.

In your closing paragraph, ask for action. Ask for an appointment suggesting a time when you will be available. A positive request is harder to ignore than a vague hope.

Sincerely,

Your Handwritten Signature

Your Typed Name

Enclosure

### Cover Letter Tips:

- Always enclose a cover letter when you mail your resume
- Your cover letter should be brief—no more than one page in length
- Cover letters should be individually typed and signed and should follow standard formatting for business letters, such as the sample that appears on this page
- Proofread your letter carefully for typographical and grammatical errors

Your Address  
City, State, and Zip Code  
Date

John Williams  
System Administrator  
Superior Diagnostic Services  
123 Main Street  
Townsville, IN 55555

Dear Mr. Williams:

I recently noticed a vacancy at your organization for the position of Computer Programmer in a recent issue of Tech World. I have been working in a computer environment for several years, and I am anxious to learn more about this opportunity.

I recently graduated from ABC University with a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology. I have acquired a great deal of hands-on experience during the last few years through many detailed class projects. Most recently, I have developed large Access inventory systems using C++ and Visual Basic.

I believe my combination of education and experience are an excellent match for the qualifications of your position. I have enclosed my resume for your review. I am very interested in meeting you to discuss this opportunity within your organization. If you would like any additional information, my number is (444) 555-1212. I will be in the Anytown area from May 5 through June 16, and would greatly appreciate the opportunity of meeting with you during that time. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Handwritten Signature

Your Typed Name

Enclosure

Your Address  
City, State, and Zip Code  
Date

Name of Interviewer  
Title of Interviewer  
Company Name  
Address  
City, State, and Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. (Last Name of Interviewer):

In the first paragraph, state when and where you had your interview. Thank the interviewer for his or her time, and reaffirm your interest in the organization.

In the second paragraph, mention something that particularly appeals to you about the prospect of working for them. Also, reinforce a point or two in support of your application.

If after the interview you thought of something you wish you had said, the third paragraph of the letter is a good place to bring that up. You can also restate your understanding of the next steps in the hiring process.

In the last paragraph, thank the employer for considering your application and ask for further communication.

Sincerely,

Your Handwritten Signature

Your Typed Name

Your Address  
City, State, and Zip Code  
Date

Ms. Angela Chastain  
Director of Human Resources  
Modern Advertising  
345 Center Drive  
Centertown, PA 55555

Dear Ms. Chastain:

Thank you for meeting with me last Thursday, August 8, to discuss the position of copywriter at Modern Advertising, Inc. I was quite impressed with the enthusiasm you displayed for your company's future and the helpfulness of your office personnel. Learning about Modern's present media campaign for the Pennsylvania Sausage Company was exciting and demonstrated your creative approach to advertising. Modern Advertising is a company with which I want to be associated.

Your description of the special qualifications needed for this position was especially interesting. My ability to work under pressure and meet tight deadlines has already been proven in the advertising position I held with The Slippery Rock Rocket. As I stated at our meeting, I enjoyed the challenge of a competitive environment in which success is based on achievement.

I would also like to mention that since our meeting I have received the College Reporter's Award for an article of mine published in the Rocket. This is my first national award, and I am quite encouraged by this approval of my work.

Again, thank you for considering me for the position of copywriter. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Your Handwritten Signature

Your Typed Name

# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Interviews allow employers to assess you as a complete person, rather than just your qualifications on the printed page. Employers want to gauge whether or not you would be a good “fit” for their organization. This is also an opportunity for you to find out the same thing about the employer. Most employers consider the interview to be the most important part of the hiring decision.

## What Employers Look for in a Candidate

- Self-confidence/ability to communicate
- Work ethic: teamwork, leadership, initiative, flexibility, ability to handle conflict
- Intelligence, critical thinking
- General personality: poise, enthusiasm, creativity, high energy level, interpersonal skills
- Personal management, self-knowledge
- Qualifications-Can you relate your academic program, skills, and/or prior work or internship experience to the needs of an employer?



## Key Points to Remember:

### *Do:*

- Arrive 10-15 minutes early
- Maintain good eye contact with the interviewer
- Use a firm, professional handshake
- Listen carefully to the interviewer’s questions
- Be aware of your body language; maintain good posture, appear relaxed and not fidgety
- Show enthusiasm, confidence, courtesy, and honesty
- Keep a positive attitude about former employers, supervisors, and co-workers; be tactful and do not criticize former employers even if discussing an unpleasant situation
- Maintain a professional image-don’t let the employer’s casual approach fool you
- Always present the best of your background and qualifications
- At the close of the interview, establish a date for your next communication
- Always remember to thank the interviewer for his/her time

### *Don’t:*

- Give terse or rambling answers to questions; find a balance
- Be too casual with language or use non-words (“thinking words” like “um...” “uh...”)
- Address the interviewer by his/her first name unless invited to do so
- Dominate the interview or appear arrogant; do not interrupt the interviewer when he/she is speaking
- Criticize yourself or your former employers
- Discuss your personal problems

### *What to Bring:*

- Directions to the interview site
- Name(s) and title(s) of interviewer(s)
- Extra copies of your resume
- Reference lists
- Portfolio of work samples, if applicable
- Good quality pen and pencil
- Leather folder (black or dark color) or briefcase

# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

## What to Wear

The following are general tips; some organizations may vary somewhat on what is considered appropriate or inappropriate interview attire. Researching the organization beforehand may yield some insight into these standards. However, when in doubt, it is always best to err on the conservative side.

### *Dress Tips for Men*

- Single or double-breasted suit in small pinstripe or solid shades of navy or charcoal gray.
- Shirts: Light colors, starched cotton. Non-button down collar and long sleeves.
- Shoes: Well-polished, black or brown leather lace-up wingtip or slip-on dress shoes.
- Ties: Solid, thin striped, or small geometric print. Bottom of tie should meet the belt line.
- Accessories: Long, dark socks in solid dark color that complements suit. No jewelry besides wedding band and watch.



### *Dress Tips for Women*

- Suit or tailored dress in solid shades of navy, gray, or black with skirts hemmed above the knee. May also wear pant suit.
- Blouses: White or pastel colors. Silk, cotton, or polyester material with long sleeves and conservative neckline.
- Polished, closed toe shoes with low heels.
- Accessories: Subtle makeup. Nails should be neat with no polish or a clear neutral color. One ring per hand with exception of wedding set. Avoid carrying a purse if holding a briefcase or portfolio.







## Practice Answers to Questions Before the Interview

You will generally be asked two types of questions during an interview: traditional and behavioral.

### Traditional Questions

Traditional questions are designed to pinpoint aspects of your basic personality, work ethic, history, attitude, etc. When practicing answers to traditional interview questions, try to develop answers that illustrate how your education and life experience can benefit the employer. If you have done a thorough self-assessment and know why you want to work for this employer and in this field, you will be able to answer traditional questions easily.

- What are the two or three things most important to you in your job?
- What is your philosophy of life?
- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your short-term and long-term career goals? How do you plan to achieve them?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization? / Why should we hire you?
- What do you know about our organization?
- What did you learn from co-op, internship, or part-time job experiences?
- Why did you choose this career?
- Why would you like to work for this company?

### Behavioral Questions

Behavioral questions are designed to examine how you have responded to specific situations in the past as an indicator of how you may behave in the future. When practicing answers to behavioral questions, think about how you have dealt with specific problems in the past. Consider how your qualifications and attributes enabled you to demonstrate leadership, initiative, and problem-solving ability.

- How have you demonstrated initiative?
- How have you motivated yourself to complete an assignment or task that you did not want to do?
- Tell me about the riskiest decision that you have made.
- Can you tell me about an occasion where you needed to work with a group to get a job done?
- What was the greatest challenge you ever faced, and how did you approach it?
- What did you do in your last job to effectively plan and organize?
- Tell me about a time on any job when stressful situations or problems tested your coping skills. How did you handle it?
- What leadership positions have you held? Describe your leadership style.
- Tell me about a time when you failed at something. If you could do it again, what would you do differently?
- Describe your involvement in a team situation in which you were not in a leadership role.

## Questions to Ask the Interviewer

Before closing the interview, the interviewer will usually give you an opportunity to ask questions. It is always good to do this because it shows that you are interested in the position. The following are questions you may wish to ask the interviewer:

- Please describe a typical day on the job.
- What personal qualities, skills, or experience would help someone do well in this position?
- What are the company's plans for future growth?
- What are the most challenging aspects of this job?
- Describe the position in terms of the overall department structure.
- What are typical career paths within this organization?

- What types of initial and future training programs do you offer?
- Can you explain the performance evaluation and promotion process?
- What is the retention rate of people in this position?
- What makes your organization different from your competitors?

## Follow Up!

Always send a thank you letter to the organization within 24 hours after an interview. Be sure to reiterate your interest in the organization and position. Call the interviewer within two weeks of the interview to inquire about the status of your application as well.

Numerous benefits and opportunities are available to you when you attend a career fair, regardless of your chosen major or your future goals. However, simply attending a career fair is not enough; you need to make your participation count. If you understand what to expect at a career fair and take the proper steps to prepare beforehand, you will receive the maximum benefit from the event and increase your chances of obtaining interviews.

## Benefits of Attending a Career Fair

- Increase your chances of receiving an interview with an employer
- Expand your network of contacts and receive job search advice from experienced recruiters
- Investigate positions, occupations and /or career fields you could pursue with your specific major and background
- Learn more about employers and available co-op, internship or permanent career opportunities

## What to Expect at a Career Fair

- Employers expect students to be prepared. Ask thoughtful questions and have a polished resume.
- Employers expect to interact with students seeking employment as well as those simply researching careers and employers.
- Most recruiters are not authorized to hire candidates on the day of the fair. Your goal should be to land an interview, not a job offer.
- Employers' goals are to be exposed to as many job candidates as possible. You will have a relatively short amount of time to sell yourself and make a positive impact on the employer.

## Before the Career Fair

### *Target your top five companies*

If possible, obtain a list of the employers who will be attending the career fair, and select the top five organizations you would most like to visit. Make sure that at a minimum you research these organizations before you attend the career fair. (Refer to the “Researching an Employer” section of this guide for researching tips.) The more you can show an employer that you know about their organization, the more likely you are to leave a positive impression.

### *Prepare a resume*

A well-written, error free resume is a must. Make sure you have multiple copies of your resume and a list of references to distribute at the career fair. Refer to the “Your Resume” section of your Career Guide for information on resume writing.

### *Create a list of questions to ask employers*

By asking meaningful questions to employers you show that you have an interest in their company and that you have good listening and communication skills. Be sure to prepare a short list of questions to ask employers. Refer to “Questions to Ask An Interviewer” in the “Interview Preparation” section of this guide for a list of possible questions you may wish to ask.

### *Prepare to answer questions*

You may not sit down to a formal interview, but employers are likely to ask you questions that would be asked during an interview. Review and practice answers to the traditional and behavioral questions that interviewers may ask in the “Interview Preparation” section of this guide.

### *Sell yourself*

Be prepared to introduce yourself to each employer with your name, a firm handshake, a copy of your resume, and your objective. (Why are you attending a career fair and what type of career are you seeking?) Practice this introduction before the career fair so you will be comfortable interacting with employers at the career fair.

### *Be professional*

Present a professional appearance and dress as if you were attending a job interview. If you are in doubt about what to wear at a career fair, refer to “What to Wear” in the “Interview Preparation” section of this Career Guide.

### *Arrive early*

In order to avoid long lines you should plan to arrive at career fairs early. You will spend less time waiting in lines and more time visiting with employers.



## CAREER FAIRS

### During the Career Fair

#### *Use your time wisely*

Survey the room to determine where employers are located and in what order you plan to visit them. If there is a long line to speak with one of your “chosen” companies, keep moving and return later. Your goal should be to make contact with as many employers as possible.

#### *Be confident*

Project enthusiasm, confidence, and sincerity. Smile, walk confidently with good posture and make consistent, direct eye contact.

#### *Introduce yourself*

When it is your turn to speak with an employer, greet him/her with a firm handshake, a copy of your resume and a brief summary of why you are attending the career fair and/or the type of career you are seeking.

When appropriate, be sure to ask one or more of the questions that you prepared.

#### *Prepare for follow-up*

Thank the employer for his/her time, and be sure to leave a copy of your resume. Ask the employer for a business card or company literature for the follow-up protocol. If the employer says they do not have a position in your field, ask for the address of the Human Resources Department so you can write a letter and send your resume. Nearly all employers hire all majors. The person you are speaking with may not be aware of all opportunities offered by the company.

As soon as you walk away from the employer, jot down a few notes about your conversation so you will have a few memorable points to mention in your follow-up letter.

### After the Career Fair

#### *Follow up!*

Send thank you letters to employers you met within a week of the fair. This shows the employer that you have a genuine interest in their organization and position and may give you a competitive edge over those candidates that do not follow up. Review the “Cover Letters” section of this Career Guide for tips on constructing powerful thank you letters.

#### *Be persistent*

If you have observed the follow-up protocols as outlined by the employer, it is appropriate to send a letter inquiring about the status of your application after a reasonable amount of time has passed.

## EVALUATING JOB OFFERS

*Listed below are factors you will want to consider when determining whether or not you will accept a position. While salary is an important factor, be sure you weigh your starting salary against the salary potential of the position and the cost of living of the geographic area where you plan to live. Also, consider these factors:*

### Job/Employer Related Factors

- Potential for career advancement
- Work schedule (traditional “9:00-5:00” or flexible hours)
- Work environment/attire (formal vs. informal)
- Bonus or commission plans
- Benefits such as profit sharing, 401K plan, insurance, etc.
- Travel
- Reputation and stability of employer
- Size of employer
- Ability to gain a mentor
- Type of industry

### Geographic/Life-Style Factors

- Geographic location
- Climate
- Social life for singles, couples or family
- Commute to work
- Availability of suitable housing
- Size and type of community (suburban, metropolitan, rural)



*The less formal atmosphere of your academic career may not provide you with enough opportunities to hone the skills you will need to develop in the workplace. Take time to consider the following as you begin your new career.*

## **Be a Dependable Employee**

Be punctual to work and meetings, and avoid frequent absenteeism. Meet established deadlines. Be someone that can be counted on to get the job done.

## **Master Your Job Tasks**

If you want to move up, you must first prove that you understand and can accomplish the basic requirements of the job.

## **Understand Expectations**

Determine what is expected of you from the very beginning. This includes developing clear deadlines for your projects.

## **Exceed Expectations**

Work hard and plan to do more than is expected. Show enthusiasm and take initiative. Avoid “it’s not my job” thinking.

## **Strive for Excellence**

Always do the best you can. Work towards providing your employer with the highest quality final product possible.

## **Ask for Feedback**

Keep your supervisor informed of your progress and ask for regular feedback on your performance. If any assignments are unclear, ask for clarification instead of proceeding in the wrong direction because you are fearful of looking foolish.

## **Adapt to the Corporate Culture**

Learn your organization’s style and culture and be willing to adapt to it. Companies expect their employees to “fit in” and accept the corporate culture. If you don’t understand it, you are more likely to make errors that could hurt your progress. Learn the corporate culture by familiarizing yourself with the employee handbook, observing co-workers’ behavior, and asking questions when in doubt.

## **Develop Strong Oral and Written Communication Skills**

Every job, including technical ones, requires some degree of communication skills. Look for opportunities to make oral presentations and written reports and do them conscientiously and carefully.

Learn to be a good listener to ensure you fully understand instructions. Demonstrate patience and sensitivity with others; avoid public confrontation or complaining. Learn to be tactful when working on a team; consider what others on the team have to say and work with them. Proofread all written work carefully for content, spelling and grammar before submitting it.

## **Establish Positive Working Relationships**

Get to know and be known by others in your work environment, and be professional and courteous at all times. Maintain confidences and avoid gossip because it can be destructive and puts you in a bad light.

You may correspond with customers, clients, business contacts, and co-workers via telephone and e-mail. When doing so, it is vital to maintain a professional image. The following tips will help sharpen these skills in the workplace.

### **Phone**

- Call during typical business hours
- Have all necessary information in front of you
- Call from a quiet location, or reduce/eliminate background noise
- Notify people when they are on a speakerphone
- Make sure voice mail messages are concise and professional. Be sure to clearly state your full name, telephone number (with extension if applicable) and reason for calling

### **E-mail**

- Write in complete sentences; don’t use one-word replies
- Use the subject line to specify the point of the message (not for informal greetings)
- Structure your e-mails like a business letter, and including greetings and closings
- Review the content of your e-mail to make sure the point of the message is clear
- Be sure to use correct grammar and to perform a spell check before sending







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