



CAREER SUCCESS GUIDE



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DISCLAIMER: If you would prefer a 100% accessible version, please visit the [Career Center Roadmap](#)

Career Road Map

CSUSM
CAREER CENTER



ASSESS YOURSELF

Career fulfillment emerges from an alignment between who you are and the work that you do. Your career journey begins here with an understanding of your strengths, interests, skills, values, and personality!

EXPLORE

Once you have a good understanding of yourself regarding the world of work, the next step is to understand your best-fit major and career options.

BUILD YOUR BRAND

First impressions of who you are professionally and what you have to offer are part of your professional “brand” or identity. Your brand = your reputation.

GET CONNECTED & NETWORK

Networking is the ongoing process of developing and maintaining reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationships. Why Network? To build your reputation and brand, learn about opportunities and gain advice.

GAIN EXPERIENCE

While you’re a student, seek internships and jobs that can help you develop relevant skills and experience, gain insight into prospective careers, and increase your future marketability.

PREPARE TO LAUNCH

Continue building upon previous actions as you work toward career and graduate school goals. Implement different job search strategies, including continuing to network and attending career fairs and events. Be prepared to highlight your qualifications in interviews.



Career Success Skills

Employers emphasize 8 competencies as essential to new college hires. Candidates who demonstrate and articulate these skills will gain a competitive advantage over their peers.

CT

CRITICAL THINKING

- Summarize and interpret information and data from a diverse set of sources and individuals with an awareness of context as well as personal biases.
- Make decisions and solve problems using sound, inclusive reasoning and judgment.
- Be proactive by anticipating needs and prioritizing action steps.
- Clearly communicate actions and rationale, recognizing the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of all stakeholders.

TW

TEAMWORK

- Appreciate diverse viewpoints and shared responsibility.
- Work together and utilize strengths of each member.
- Be accountable for individual and team responsibilities.

T

TECHNOLOGY

- Navigate change, adapt, and be open to learning new technologies..
- Identify and use appropriate technology to improve productivity.
- Use technology ethically and efficiently to solve problems and accomplish goals.

L

LEADERSHIP

- Recognize and leverage personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.
- Inspire, persuade, and unite others under a shared vision
- Plan, initiate, manage, complete and evaluate projects
- Use innovative thinking to go beyond traditional methods.
- Serve as a role model to others by approaching tasks with confidence and a positive attitude.

C

COMMUNICATION

- Understand and demonstrate verbal, written, and non-verbal/body language, abilities.
- Demonstrate active listening, persuasion, and influencing skills.
- Communicate clearly so others can effectively understand.
- Respect cultural differences, diverse learning styles and communication abilities.
- Ask for guidance on tasks as needed from supervisors or staff.

P

PROFESSIONALISM

- Be present and prepared; demonstrate dependability and dedication.
- Prioritize and complete tasks to accomplish organizational goals.
- Maintain a positive personal brand.
- Act equitably with integrity and accountability.

CD

CAREER & SELF DEVELOPMENT

- Identify own strengths and areas for growth.
- Develop plans and goals for one's future career.
- Advocate for oneself and others, including networking and personal/professional development.
- Navigate and explore learning and career

EI

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- Contribute to and advocate for inclusive and equitable practices that influence individual and systemic change and empower historically marginalized communities.
- Demonstrate flexibility by keeping an open mind to new ways of thinking and by adapting to diverse ideas and environments.
- Seek local and global cross-cultural interactions and experiences.

WHO AM I? ASSESS YOURSELF

Career fulfillment emerges from an alignment between who you are and the work that you do. Your career journey begins here with an understanding of your strengths, interests, skills, values, and personality!

Interests

What activities do you enjoy? What do you dislike? These questions can help you find activities and paths to explore and the factors that motivate you in careers. The Career Center offers the *Strong Interest Inventory*, a career assessment that explores your interests in six broad areas and suggests compatible occupations based on your responses.

Personality

The *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* helps you understand your personality preferences and how you experience the world. Understanding how you operate can help you identify work tasks or environments that align with your personality.

Strengths

Everyone has natural abilities and talents but we don't always know how to describe or identify them. Knowing what you are good at can help you sift through career options and find a path that you can be successful in. Discuss your experiences and strengths with the Career Center and take the Clifton Strengths assessment to better understand what you have to offer.

Values

Your values are the things that you prioritize or view as important. In the work setting this may relate to stability and finances, work culture and relationships, or independence and ability to be creative. Come to the Career Center to discuss your values or take the Kerwin Values card sort to identify and prioritize what is most important for you in a career.

If you are interested in taking any of these assessments and talking with a career counselor, schedule an appointment on Handshake – csusm.joinhandshake.com

FIND YOUR PEOPLE

Student Organizations

Cal State San Marcos is home to 130+ student organizations, including clubs and organizations with an academic, cultural, or special interest affiliation. These organizations are a great way to meet other students with similar interests; many organizations will bring to campus guest speakers or coordinate site visits that can help build your personal and professional network. <https://www.csusm.edu/orgs/>

Take Charge of your Online Branding

The Career Center can help you develop an online brand by critiquing your LinkedIn, Portfolium and Handshake profiles. Feel free to bring your social media questions to a career counseling appointment.

EXPLORE

Once you have a good understanding of yourself regarding the world of work, the next step is to understand your best-fit major and career options. Continue your career journey by using these occupational research tools to help you explore the many paths available to you!

Research employers before you apply:

- Organizational mission, vision, values, and culture
- Size and location of employer and service area
- Employer resources and benefits offered

Evaluate employer information along with your own self-knowledge:

- Does their mission reflect my own values?
- What training and professional development opportunities are offered?
- What industries, employer size, and environment are most appealing?

Sources for Finding Information

- [CSUSM Career Center website](#) which includes Handshake & Cougar Connect
- Employer websites
- Professional association websites
- Networking and informational interviews
- LinkedIn and social media
- Career fairs



ONLINE RESOURCES

What Can I Do With this Major

Learn about several popular career areas and types of employers related to different majors. This is a good starting place whether you're exploring majors or researching potential career opportunities.

O*Net OnLine

Check out the O*Net database for updated information on nearly 1,000 occupations, across several industries. Developed under the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration, it is a trusted resource for occupational data.

Occupational Outlook Handbook

Developed and maintained by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Occupational Outlook Handbook is a great online resource on hundreds of different occupations, touching on areas including work environment, training and education, pay, and job outlook.

Additional Resources

Find additional information about different career pathways and resources for different student populations/communities.

BUILD YOUR BRAND

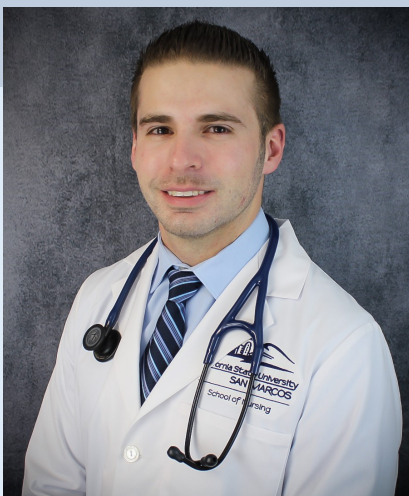
First impressions of who you are professionally and what you have to offer are part of your personal “brand” or identity. **Your brand = your reputation.** It is grounded in authenticity and reflects your unique value. How confidently you present yourself is one aspect of your personal brand.



Do you have an upcoming job interview but nothing to wear?

You can schedule a Handshake appointment to “shop” the Cougar Career Closet for free professional clothing and then schedule an appointment for a free professional headshot. Your resume and cover letter are also part of your brand, allowing you to articulate your strengths, skills, and experience. Career Center staff can critique resumes and cover letters during appointments or submitted via Handshake.

Now that you’re all dressed up, let’s take your picture!



Remember to schedule your appointments through [Handshake!](#)

RESUME TIPS

A resume is part of your professional brand. You'll know your resume is in good shape if you are getting contacted for interviews. A recruiter typically screens a resume within a matter of seconds; therefore, it's important to strategically position your content in an appealing format.

Keep the following in mind as you develop your document:

FORMAT

- Margins: Use .5" (smallest) to 1" all around
- Font Size: Aim for no smaller than 10 point for text in the body of the resume, larger font size recommended for name and section headings
- Font Style: Vary the style of the section headings by using bold, all caps, or italics and choose a sans-serif font when possible (includes Arial, Calibri, Franklin Gothic Book, and Helvetica)
- Use of templates: Avoid pre-made templates available on Microsoft Word, Canva, etc. as these may not be screened properly by Applicant Tracking System (ATS) software
- Length: 1 page recommended for most new grads; academic resumes or CVs and federal resumes can be longer
- Order of sections: Consider relevance to job posting (most important placed toward the top)
- Type: Most employers prefer a reverse chronological resume (lists most recent experience at the top of each section); in some cases, a functional or skills-based resume may be appropriate (please review with a career counselor to determine best format for your needs)
- Numbers: Write out all numbers below 10 (one, two, three, etc.) and use digits for 10 and above. Or you can use digits throughout (1, 2, 3, etc.)
- Dates: Use the longer en dash between dates as opposed to a hyphen

CONTENT

DO:

- Maintain a master resume so that you have a complete record of your past experiences
- Consider your resume a marketing document and modify your resume as needed according to position type
- Write in first person without using "I": "Promote events through social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn) by posting marketing material 3 times per week" vs. third person "Promotes events..."
- Showcase Education towards the top of your resume, especially if applying for an internship
- Use short, bulleted phrases with a focus on identifying action steps and quantifying outcomes (refer to the STAR method to describe Situation, Task, Action, Result)
- Incorporate keywords consistent with job posting

DON'T:

- Use passive phrases such as "Responsible for", and "Duties include"
- Avoid using personal pronouns ("my," "our," etc.)
- Include an objective statement; a summary statement is a more effective tool
- Use uncommon abbreviations, jargon, or slang
- Repeat the same verb many times (use the Career Guide's list of action verbs for reference)

Note: These suggestions refer to resumes used for most jobs within the U.S. marketplace. If applying for a position abroad or within the federal government, please meet with a career counselor for additional guidance.

RESUME EXAMPLE

Kendra Communication

Name should be slightly larger font size than body of resume

760-777-7777 • kc@cougars.csusm.edu • San Marcos, CA 92078 • www.linkedin.com/kc/

Use a professional email address and have a professional voicemail; include LinkedIn url if profile is up-to-date and comprehensive

Career Target: Public Relations

Recent Communication graduate pursuing entry-level opportunities in Public Relations. Effective communicator with experience building media lists, writing press releases, and conducting creative research. Enthusiastic team player who is driven and collaborative. Key strengths include:

Content Creation • Research • Client Communications • Public Relations • Social Media Management • Event Planning

Consider adding a branding statement or qualifications summary aligning with job postings and skills/abilities

Education

Bachelor of Arts in Communication 05/18

California State University San Marcos (CSUSM)

Write full name of degree(s) and date of expected graduation; may also list academic honors, GPA (3.0 or greater in most cases), and/or relevant coursework

Communication Experience

Group experience by sections according to relevance to job posting

Arts and Entertainment Editor 09/17–05/18

The Cougar Chronicle, CSUSM, San Marcos, CA

- Covered campus arts events and reported on happenings; produced two articles per week
- Developed engaging content for campus newspaper including movie and book reviews
- Adhered to internal edit/review policy by soliciting constructive feedback on content

⇒ Start each bullet point with an action verb, being mindful of verb tense

Public Relations Intern 06/17–08/17

Fidelitas Development, San Diego, CA

- Maintained media list and updated database for upcoming stories
- Helped write press material, creative pitches, blog content, and other client communications
- Fielded publicity requests and general inquiries for the Public Relations department
- Conducted creative research for client campaigns

⇒ Quantify accomplishments when appropriate

⇒ Consider paid and unpaid opportunities

Other Experience

Server 09/15–Present

Tabu Sushi, San Marcos, CA

- Provide patrons with a comfortable and friendly dining experience in fast-paced environment
- Demonstrate knowledge of menu and communicate options to patrons

Volunteer Experience

Alternative Spring Break, Habitat for Humanity, Wilmington, DE 03/18
Collaborated with student group to build home for family in need

Don't forget to add campus involvement or leadership activities, on or off campus

Leadership Activities and Affiliations

Vice President 09/17-05/18

American Association of University Women (AAUW), CSUSM

Coordinated logistics, including event set-up/breakdown, registration, and tabling for career exploration workshop at local high school

Assisted in planning a speaker series featuring local community leaders; marketed event via Facebook and Instagram, attracting 50% more participants than previous year

Member 09/16-05/18

Communication Society, CSUSM

Computer Skills

Social Media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter

Software: Adobe InDesign, Microsoft Office

Highlight skills based on relevance to job posting

Be sure to check out our [resume and cover letter samples](#) and to have your [resume critiqued](#) by a Career Center staff member!

ACTION VERB LIST FOR RESUME HELP

Start your phrases describing job responsibilities with action verbs. Avoid using "duties included" or "responsible for." Please note that all verbs here are listed in past tense and may need to be modified depending on their use.



Teaching

Accommodated	Enforced
Adapted	Evaluated
Advised	Explained
Advocated	Facilitated
Assisted	Fostered
Clarified	Graded
Coached	Guided
Communicated	Informed
Consulted	Initiated
Cooperated	Instructed
Coordinated	Schooled
Counseled	Served
Demonstrated	Set goals
Developed	Shepherded
Empowered	Stimulated
Enabled	Taught
Encouraged	Trained

Management/ Leadership

Accelerated	Initiated
Accomplished	Judged
Achieved	Launched
Administered	Led
Analyzed	Leveraged
Appointed	Lobbied
Assigned	Managed
Attained	Marshalled
Authorized	Maximized
Capitalized	Motivated
Chaired	Named
Compelled	Obliterated
Conducted	Officiated
Consolidated	Orchestrated
Contracted	Oversaw
Controlled	Piloted
Coordinated	Pioneered
Curtailed	Planned
Decided	Presided
Delegated	Prioritized
Delivered	Propelled
Designated	Produced
Directed	Realigned
Drove	Rebuilt
Energized	Recommended
Enforced	Regulated
Exceeded	Restructured
Facilitated	Scheduled
Governed	Spearheaded
Harmonized	Steered
Headed	Strategized
Hired	Strengthened
Improved	Supervised
Increased	Transformed

Technical

Adjusted	Maintained
Assembled	Manufactured
Built	Mapped
Calculated	Navigated
Calibrated	Operated
Coded	Overhauled
Computed	Positioned
Computerized	Programmed
Constructed	Remodeled
Designed	Repaired
Devised	Selected
Dissected	Serviced
Engineered	Solved
Eradicated	Trained
Fabricated	Upgraded
Installed	Utilized

Creative

Acted	Imagined
Arranged	Improvised
Brainstormed	Innovated
Composed	Inspired
Conceptualized	Instituted
Cooked	Integrated
Crafted	Introduced
Created	Invented
Demonstrated	Made
Designed	Modeled
Developed	Originated
Devised	Performed
Discovered	Pioneered
Drew	Predicted
Energized	Produced
Entertained	Redesigned
Established	Reimagined
Fashioned	Renovated
Founded	Rejuvenated
Forged	Revitalized
Formed	Shaped
Generated	Sketched
Illustrated	Sparked

Research

Analyzed	Investigated
Ascertained	Justified
Authenticated	Located
Collected	Observed
Compared	Organized
Concluded	Perceived
Conducted	Predicted
Critiqued	Proved
Detected	Questioned
Diagnosed	Read
Differentiated	Researched
Discovered	Reviewed
Distinguished	Selected
Evaluated	Studied
Examined	Summarized
Explored	Surveyed
Extracted	Synthesized
Gathered	Systematized
Hypothesized	Tabulated
Identified	Tested
Inspected	Uncovered
Interpreted	Verified
Interviewed	

ACTION VERB LIST FOR RESUME HELP



Helping

Advised	Fostered
Advocated	Guided
Aided	Helped
Assessed	Listened
Assisted	Mentored
Believed	Oriented
Championed	Perceived
Clarified	Referred
Coached	Rehabilitated
Counseled	Represented
Demonstrated	Saved
Educated	Shepherded
Empowered	Suggested
Expedited	Supported
Familiarized	United

Administrative

Approved	Operated
Arranged	Prepared
Catalogued	Processed
Centralized	Proofread
Charted	Purchased
Classified	Recorded
Collated	Retrieved
Collected	Scheduled
Compiled	Screened
Dispatched	Selected
Distributed	Separated
Documented	Specified
Executed	Standardized
Generated	Structured
Implemented	Systematized
Inspected	Tabulated
Inventoried	Validated
Monitored	

Results/Achieved

Accomplished	Pinpointed
Achieved	Procured
Adapted	Projected
Attained	Propelled
Captured	Qualified
Commanded	Proposed
Completed	Provided
Concluded	Raised
Contributed	Realized
Cut	Recognized
Decreased	Recommended
Delivered	Reduced
Demonstrated	Revamped
Directed	Revised
Dominated	Revitalized
Doubled	Risked
Drove	Saved
Elevated	Simplified
Eliminated	Sold
Established	Solved
Exceeded	Spearheaded
Expanded	Steered
Furnished	Stimulated
Implemented	Streamlined
Improved	Strengthened
Increased	Structured
Introduced	Submitted
Leveraged	Succeeded
Lowered	Supported
Maintained	Surpassed
Mastered	Transferred
Masterminded	Transformed
Maximized	Tripled
Multiplied	Trouble-shot
Obliterated	Uncovered
Opened	Unified
Optimized	United
Orchestrated	Upgraded
Overcame	Utilized
Perfected	Widened
Piloted	Won

Financial

Achieved	Expanded
Administered	Exported
Allocated	Financed
Analyzed	Forecast
Appraised	Inspected
Audited	Investigated
Balanced	Managed
Budgeted	Marketed
Calculated	Memorized
Checked	Monetized
Commercial-ized	Optimized
Commoditized	Ordered
Computed	Organized
Curtailed	Planned
Decreased	Procured
Diversified	Projected
Diverted	Rendered
Elevated	Researched
Evaluated	Selected
	Transferred
	Verified

Communication

Accentuated	Lectured
Addressed	Mediated
Advised	Moderated
Advocated	Motivated
Appreciated	Negotiated
Arbitrated	Networked
Articulated	Persuaded
Authored	Presented
Briefed	Printed
Brainstormed	Promoted
Collaborated	Published
Communicated	Publicized
Conceived	Queried
Consulted	Read
Conveyed	Reconciled
Corresponded	Recruited
Deciphered	Responded
Detailed	Reported
Documented	Revamped
Drafted	Rewrote
Edited	Spoke
Emphasized	Suggested
Enlisted	Summarized
Exhorted	Talked
Formulated	Transcribed
Influenced	Translated
Informed	Updated
Interpreted	Verbalized
	Wrote

ALL ABOUT APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS

Most Human Resources (HR) departments use a hiring technology known as an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to screen candidates. The ATS helps HR identify candidates to interview based on specified parameters. According to Glassdoor, the average job posting receives approximately 250 applicants. Of these 250 applicants, 4 to 6 will be called in to interview, and one candidate will be offered the job. Jobscan indicates that more than 98.2% of Fortune 500 organizations use ATS. Understanding the basics of how an ATS functions may be helpful in optimizing your chances of being interviewed for a certain role; however, being intentional about networking may provide the most help for your job search compared to constant resume revising. Often, even if your resume is first screened by an ATS, a human recruiter or hiring manager will make the final determination about whom to interview.

ATS Basics:

- An ATS is a company's centralized database for candidates, job openings, interview tools, placements, and analytics. It may at times be referred to as hiring software, human capital management, talent lifecycle management, or recruiting software.
- ATS systems parse information from application materials based on criteria determined by the employer.
- Some companies (Amazon, LinkedIn, Google) use their own internal ATS.
- ATS may rely on different techniques to screen candidates. Some may use "knockout questions" such as "Do you have a valid Commercial Driver's License?" whereas others may rely on frequency of included keywords to screen candidates.

How to Optimize Your Resume for the ATS:

- Identify industry-specific key words from the company and the job description to incorporate into your resume while also providing context about your achievements. It's also wise to conduct additional research on key skills typical of the functional role.
- Be specific and avoid overused buzz words such as "results-driven" and "dynamic".
- Keep formatting simple and easy to read (avoid fancy graphics, charts, and text boxes).
- Do not use a ready-made template, as the content may not be screened correctly. If you're in need of a resume sample, please refer to the existing examples available in this Guide and in the Resources section of Handshake.
- Develop and submit your resume in a Word document, since this format is generally scanned correctly by an ATS. Consider saving your resume in a PDF if emailing to a recruiter or networking contact.
- Avoid placing information such as your contact information into the header or footer on the first page of your resume, as some ATS may not be able to read the content. If your resume is longer than one page, you can include a header with your name and page number on subsequent pages.
- The bottom line is that it's important to be aware of the constantly changing technological landscape of HR. Creating a resume that stands out for content and not for design will be advantageous in complying with most ATS. Please visit the Career Center for additional help in updating your resume and conducting a targeted job search.

COVER LETTER TIPS

BENNETT BIOLOGY

San Marcos, CA 92078 ■ bbiology@cougars.csusm.edu ■ 760-750-4839

Replicate heading from resume for consistency

February 14, 2021

Identify a specific person to address on your cover letter

Dr. Susan Hume
Wondfo USA San Diego Office
6042 Cornerstone Ct, W.
Unit E
San Diego, CA 92121

Dear Dr. Hume:

The first paragraph provides an opening to discuss your interest in the organization and how you were referred

I am writing today to express my interest in the Research Assistant internship at Wondfo that I learned about through Professor Han at California State University San Marcos. I am sincerely interested in the opportunity to expand my knowledge base within the local biotechnology industry and learn from an organization that provides solutions to help manage chronic diseases.

The middle paragraphs provide an opportunity to showcase your writing ability and further express your qualifications

I possess the necessary qualifications to succeed in this internship. I volunteered this past semester in Dr. Kennedy's lab, which focuses on how the immune system functions to protect and maintain epithelial barriers. In this role, I kept meticulous notes and communicated frequently with Dr. Kennedy about the progress of various experiments. As a Biology student with a concentration in Molecular & Cellular Biology, I've also taken upper-division coursework including Immunology and its lab, which afforded me the opportunity to gain experience in laboratory techniques including hemagglutination, ELISAs, immunoprecipitation and Western blot assays.

In addition to my related biology coursework and experience, I am an active member of my campus community, most recently serving on the board of our student government, Associated Students, Inc. as the liaison to the College of Science and Math. In this position, I worked both independently and within a multidisciplinary team of other student representatives and leaders. I advocated for students in my college by outlining their concerns to college leadership and effectively managed a \$1500 budget allocated for student activities.

Use the final paragraph to reiterate your interest. Let the employer know how you can be contacted but avoid overly aggressive statements about your plans to follow up

In sum, I believe I am a strong candidate for the Research Assistant internship due to a combination of relevant coursework and subject matter knowledge as well as experience working in a collaborative professional environment. I look forward to demonstrating my commitment to the Wondfo mission of constructing "first-class products while providing outstanding customer service." Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Bennett Biology

Cover Letter Tips:

- Replicate the header from your resume for consistency
- Address your cover letter to a person whenever possible (avoid "To Whom It May Concern")
- Keep your cover letter to one page
- Follow this general format:

1st paragraph: describe how you found the position and your particular interest in that organization (relating to the mission, values, or services provided; avoid stating how you hope to benefit)

2nd paragraph: in this longest section (one or two paragraphs), focus on addressing the job posting requirements and how you meet them, providing specific examples that are more in-depth than your resume

3rd paragraph: reiterate your interest in the position, offer your thanks for consideration, and remind the hiring manager of how you can be reached for follow up; avoid statements like "I will follow up with you to schedule an interview in x days" as most organizations discourage phone calls

REFERENCE LIST TIPS

- Replicate the header from your resume for consistency
- Do not include references on your resume; instead, create a separate page of references
- List 3-5 people who can attest to your professional qualifications, personal qualities, and work ethic; this may include supervisors, professors, mentors, and colleagues
- Avoid listing family members/friends as references
- Include full details for each of your references: name, title, department/organization, address, phone number, email, as well as your relationship
- Be sure to ask permission before listing the contact on your reference list; also, be sure to let them know each time the reference list is provided to an employer

SAMANTHA SALES

Son Marcos, CA 92078 • (760) 456-7890
ssotes@cougars.csusm.edu • linkedIn.com/ssales

Replicate heading from resume and cover letter for consistency

REFERENCE LIST

Dr. Ariana Cruz, Professor

College of Business Administration CSUSM
San Marcos, CA 92096
(760) 725-3340
acruz@csusm.edu

Mason Samuels, Colleague

San Diego Association of Governments 405 A Street, Suite 500
San Diego, California 92101
(619) 699-1901
msamuels@sandag.org

Dr. Tony Trent, Professor

College of Business Administration CSUSM
San Marcos, CA 92096
(760) 725-3345
ttrent@csusm.edu

Penny Williams, Supervisor

San Diego Association of Governments 405 A Street, Suite 500
San Diego, California 92101
(619) 699-1900
pwilliams@sandag.org

Typically it's appropriate to include 3-5 references. Include contact information such as address, phone and email, as well as your relationship to the reference. Be sure to ask the person in advance whether they would be willing to serve as a positive reference!

THANK YOU NOTE TIPS

- Send thank you notes in the following instances: to an employer after the interview, to a professor or supervisor who has served as a reference, to a contact who has provided an informational interview, etc.
- It's best practice to send a thank you note as soon as possible (within 24 hours after an interview)
- Obtain business cards during the interview so you can send thank you notes, ideally to each interviewer
- An email thank you note is appropriate; however, to set yourself apart consider sending a handwritten note
- Keep the note concise, and ensure you review for grammatical errors/typos

SAMANTHA SALES

San Marcos, CA 92078 • (760) 456-7890
ssotes@cougars.csusm.edu • linkedIn.com/ssales

Replicate heading from other application materials

June 10, 2019

David McCarthy
Director of Business Development
Prolific Applications
453 W. D Street
Encinitas, CA 92024

Dear Mr. McCarthy:

Use the first paragraph to refresh the employer's memory about your interaction

Thank you for taking the time to interview me yesterday for the position of Account Executive at Prolific Applications. I enjoyed our discussion and truly resonate with the company's emphasis on people-focused operations. I would be thrilled to continue exercising my relationship-building capacity in the position of Account Executive at Prolific Applications.

The second paragraph may be used as an opportunity to further highlight your winning qualities and characteristics for the position. It's also a good time to relate a particular detail of your conversation back to the employer

Having worked in a commission-based retail role throughout my time as an undergraduate Communication student, I am familiar with the challenge of winning sales and clients. I have enjoyed applying my Communication coursework to real world experiences, and I thrive on competition. Learning more about the sales process at Prolific Applications was very interesting, and I appreciated your outline of the three call phases of onboarding a new client.

The last paragraph should be used to remind the employer about your interest and how you can be reached for an interview

Thank you again for your time and consideration of my application for the Account Executive role. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future based on the timeframe that you highlighted during our discussion. If there is any additional information you need from me in support of my application for the position, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Samantha Sales

GET CONNECTED & NETWORK

DEVELOP AN ELEVATOR PITCH

An elevator pitch is a 30–60 second “commercial” about yourself, based on the idea that you could share this information with someone during an elevator ride. This can be tailored to different networking events or even the “Tell me about yourself” question in interviews.

ELEVATOR PITCH TIPS

- Think about your pitch in advance, so you’ll be ready to share it.
- Include your name, major, and educational (college) background.
- Mention your career interests and any relevant experience, organizations, or accomplishments.
- Try to find common ground with the person to whom you’re speaking.
- Be sure to sound conversational, not as though you’ve memorized your pitch.

GET LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is the largest online professional networking site worldwide. Use LinkedIn to build your professional brand, network, and search for opportunities.



2018 CSUSM Career Center “Mix and Match” Event

STRATEGIES FOR USING LINKEDIN EFFECTIVELY

1. Craft an informative profile headline.
2. Display an appropriate photo. (Check dates to get your free professional headshot taken by the Career Center.)
3. Develop a Summary statement that showcases your career interests, skills, and experience. Include relevant key words for your industry of interest.
4. List your educational information accurately, and include any academic honors or highlights.
5. Fill out your experience completely. A complete profile will be seen by more recruiters on LinkedIn.
6. Update your status regularly.
7. Share your work by incorporating projects, photos, or other media.
8. Build your network by sending personalized invitations.
9. Join groups to increase your visibility and connect with people who have similar career interests.
10. Utilize the CSUSM alumni feature to identify alumni with a common school affiliation.

For more information and tips, check out these links:

[LinkedIn Login](#)

[LinkedIn Help](#)

BUILD & MANAGE YOUR NETWORK

What is Networking?

Networking is the ongoing process of developing and maintaining reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationships.

Why Network?

- Build your reputation and brand.
- Learn about opportunities, advice, and connections.
- Collaborate and share information with others.

Many studies reveal that the majority of jobs are obtained through networking.

Who is in your Network?

- Family, friends and their contacts
- Neighbors and their contacts
- Classmates and roommates
- Faculty and staff
- Current and former colleagues and supervisors
- Student organization members
- Find a mentor on [Cougar Connect](#)

Conduct Informational Interviews

One of the best ways to find out about the realities of a career or job is to talk to people currently employed in the field. Through informational interviews, you identify individuals in your field or industry of interest and contact them to gain insight into their career path.

- Find someone to interview through online research or your network of contacts.
- Request an introduction through your referral or contact directly via phone, email, or LinkedIn.
- Request 20-30 minutes of their time to speak in person, by phone, or virtually.
- Do research in advance about the position, company, and field. Try to familiarize yourself with the interviewee's bio or LinkedIn profile.
- Develop a list of questions to ask, but be prepared to listen carefully and adapt to their responses.
- Dress professionally, if meeting in person.
- Bring a resume, in case they request to see it or offer advice.
- DO NOT ask for a job/position.
- DO NOT ask their salary.
- Within 24 hours of the interview, send a typed or handwritten note thanking the person for their time and advice.
Follow up on any advice or contacts shared, and keep them updated or share information to continue the professional relationship.

Note: If you're nervous about contacting someone for an informational interview, know that many people enjoy helping students by sharing advice and enjoy talking about their career paths. Some busy professionals may not respond, but many will because they remember what it was like to start/change career paths.



LinkedIn Profile Checklist

PHOTO: It doesn't have to be fancy - just use your cellphone camera in front of a plain background. Wear a nice shirt and don't forget to smile!

HEADLINE: Tell people what you're excited about now and the cool things you want to do in the future.

SUMMARY: Describe what motivates you, what you're skilled at, and what's next.

EXPERIENCE: List the jobs you held, even if they were part-time, along with what you accomplished at each. Even include photos and videos from your work.

ORGANIZATIONS: Have you joined any clubs at school or outside? Be sure to describe what you did with each organization.

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn profile for David Xiao. At the top, there is a search bar and a navigation menu. The profile header includes a profile picture of David Xiao, his name, title 'Econ Major and Aspiring Financial Analyst', location 'San Francisco Bay Area | Financial Services', and previous roles/education: 'Berkeley Ventures' and 'University of California, Berkeley'. There are buttons for 'Improve your profile' and 'Edit Profile', and a '153 connections' badge. Below the header is a 'Background' section with a 'Summary' subsection. The summary text reads: 'I'm a senior at Berkeley, starting to look for roles in the financial industry. As an economics major, I'm fascinated by the invisible forces that shape our world. Why does one company succeed and another fail? Is it possible to predict which idea will be the next big thing? As such, I've taken lots of microeconomics coursework and have interned with a local venture capital firm. And now I'd like to put that experience to good use, analyzing tomorrow's up-and-coming companies.' The 'Experience' section lists a 'Venture Capital Internship' at Berkeley Ventures from May 2013 to September 2013 (5 months) in Berkeley, CA. The description states: 'Conducted research on 20 startup companies and presented my findings to the fund's board, leading to a new \$1.5 million investment.' Below this is a presentation titled 'INTRODUCTION TO VENTURE CAPITAL' with a caption: 'A presentation I gave to my classmates, based on what I learned at Berkeley Ventures'. The 'Organizations' section lists 'Berkeley A Capella' as 'Lead Singer' from March 2012 to Present, with a description: 'Schedule and perform at events for one of Berkeley's oldest a cappella groups, including last year's Cal-Stanford game.'

Continued >>

EDUCATION: Starting with college, list all the educational experiences you've had - including summer programs.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE & CAUSES: Even if you weren't paid for a job, be sure to list it. Admissions officers and employers often see volunteer experience as just as valuable as paid work.

SKILLS & EXPERTISE: Add at least 5 key skills - and then your connections can endorse you for the things you're best at.

HONORS & AWARDS: If you earned a prize in or out of school, don't be shy. Let the world know about it!

COURSES: List the classes that show off the skills and interests you're most excited about.

PROJECTS: Whether you led a team assignment in school or built an app on your own, talk about what you did and how you did it.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Ask managers, professors, or classmates who've worked with you closely to write a recommendation. This gives extra credibility to your strengths and skills.

Education

University of California, Berkeley
Economics, B.A.
2010 – 2014 (expected)

Volunteer Experience & Causes

Big Buddy
Skyline High School
September 2012 – May 2013 (9 months) | Education
Mentored an Oakland high school student through the college application process, helping him get into his dream school.

Skills & Expertise

Most endorsed for...

- 12 Economics
- 11 Start-ups
- 10 Due Diligence
- 10 Venture Capital
- 10 Management

Honors & Awards

The Achievement Award Program
UC Berkeley
Four-year scholarship awarded to community-minded students with a proven track record of academic success.

Courses

University of California, Berkeley

- Microeconomic Theory (Econ 101A)
- International Monetary Economics (182)
- Public Economics (230A)

Projects

Venture Capital Financing in India
May 2013
For our international Monetary Economics course, Paul and I decided to study the emerging venture capital industry in India. By looking at data from the World Bank, we were able to understand the challenges and opportunities facing this nascent sector. And we developed a series of recommendations for overcoming these challenges, which we delivered to our professor in a final term paper.

5 team members

David Xiao
Econ Major and Aspiring Financial Anal...

Paul Smith
Student at UC Berkeley

Recommendations Received (2)

Venture Capital Internship
Berkeley Ventures

Tim Lee
Partner

“David spent the summer with us at Berkeley Ventures and made an immediate impact. He showed us a brand new technique for firm analysis that he had just learned in school and came through with recommendations that opened our eyes to a unique set of opportunities.

We don't normally hire undergrads as interns but after working with David, we will again!

November 13, 2013, Tim managed

CLAIM YOUR HANDSHAKE ACCOUNT

Using Handshake

Handshake is a free Career Center tool available to all CSUSM students and alumni (for six months after graduation), as well as all Alumni Association members.

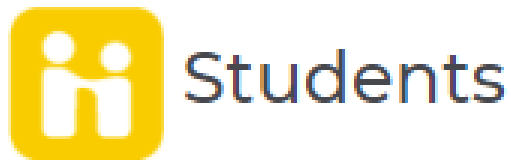
Handshake allows you to:

- Search for on-campus, off-campus, part-time, and full-time jobs.
- Narrow down positions by keyword and geographic area, with a focus on jobs for college students and recent graduates.
- Read students' reviews of companies and positions.
- Apply to jobs directly through the system.
- Submit resumes and cover letters for critique by Career Center staff.
- Register for upcoming events offered through the Career Center and companies.
- Schedule an appointment with a career counselor or for the Cougar Career Closet.

LOGIN TO HANDSHAKE IN 4 EASY STEPS

Step 1– [Login to Handshake](#)

Step 2: Click the “Student” icon and enter your CSUSM username and password



Sign in with your CSUSM Username and Password

Keep me signed in

Sign in

Step 3: Complete your profile to personalize your job feed!

Step 4: Start searching for your future career or make an appointment to see a Career Counselor!

WHAT IS COUGAR CONNECT?

Cougar Connect is a mentorship program offering you "flash mentoring" opportunities. These are 30 minute or less meetings with CSUSM alumni, faculty and staff, and employer supporters offering you life and career advice.



HOW DOES IT WORK?

Claim your profile at csusm.peoplegrove.com. Search the database for a mentor in your area of interest. PRO TIP: Take the short matching quiz for a list of suggested mentors.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!

Cougar Connect makes it easy for you to connect with a potential mentor. The program offers email templates or you can create your own. You can suggest a meeting time right in your email.



WHY DO I NEED A MENTOR?



Whether you are currently looking for a job or not, mentors can offer you advice throughout your college career. Our mentors have the knowledge and expertise to help you navigate college, career exploration, job search and the transition from college to career.

FIND A

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GAIN EXPERIENCE

Experience can take many forms:

- Part-time or full-time employment
- [Internships](#)
- Volunteer, service learning or leadership experience
- Course-based projects or personal projects
- Find a mentor on [Cougar Connect](#)

Benefits to Gaining Experience:

- Apply theory to practice, and acquire new skills
- Explore and make decisions about future career options
- Build your network of connections and potential references

Strategies for Success:

- Establish clear objectives with your supervisor
- Learn the organizational culture
- Document your new skills, projects, and responsibilities in your resume and online platforms such as LinkedIn or Handshake

Professional Associations

- Membership in professional associations is typically open to students with similar professional interests and goals (such as biotechnology, social work, human resources or journalism)
- Students can often join at reduced rates or for free
- Professional association websites include information about relevant jobs, graduate programs, and networking events
- Professional groups offer a great opportunity to connect with people already working in your field

Internships

• [Credit Internships](#)

Academic internships are a great opportunity to gain work experience (paid or unpaid) while earning credit. Many of CSUSM's academic departments offer credit-bearing internship courses.

• [Non-Credit Paid Internships](#)

Non-credit internships are great opportunities for career exploration and gaining short-term work experience within career fields of interest. These internships are ideal for students not seeking credit.

• [On-Campus Employment](#)

Student Assistant positions are available at multiple CSUSM departments and include various positions. This is a great opportunity to gain experience in different fields. For a step-by-step guide on how to obtain an on-campus position, please visit our student employment website:

PREPARE TO LAUNCH

PARTICIPATE IN JOB FAIRS

The Career Center offers job fairs each semester where multiple organizations promote their organization and job openings. For information about the CSUSM fairs and other networking events, check the [Career Center website](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR JOB FAIR SUCCESS

- Research participating organizations. Develop questions to ask recruiters.
- Bring multiple copies of your resume, although you may be asked to apply online.
- Dress in professional attire with a clean, well-groomed appearance.
- Establish good eye contact, present a firm handshake, introduce yourself with confidence, and smile!
- Keep an open mind, ask lots of questions, and visit with a variety of representatives.
- Within 24-hours, send thank you notes to employers that piqued your interest.

BE READY TO ASK QUESTIONS

- What positions do you anticipate having open this year?
- What hiring do you plan to do in the next three to four months?
- What skills and qualities are needed to be successful in your organization?
- What led you to choose your employer?
- Can you describe your company/organizational culture?

CREATE AN ONLINE PORTFOLIO

Another strategy to highlight your work is to create an online portfolio. One free portfolio resource available to CSUSM students is [Portfolioium](#), where you can upload work samples and projects for viewing by potential employers.



CSUSM Career Center Job Fair Spring 2019

PREPARE TO LAUNCH

HOW TO STAND OUT AT A VIRTUAL JOB FAIR

Prepare for the Fair:

- o Research participating employers: review the information they have posted on Handshake, visit their websites to review mission, vision, and current job/internship opportunities.
- o Engage in self-reflection regarding your top skills, interests, and qualifications.
- o Create a polished resume, for quick editing and tailoring based on what you learn at the fair.
- o Check out the Career Success Guide for tips and see Handshake Resources for examples.
- o Practice with Microsoft Teams or Zoom so you are used to communicating in that format.
- o Dress to make a positive first impression.

Recommendations for Virtual Job Fair Participants:

- o Keep an open mind: remember that organizations hire for a range of positions, across different disciplines and roles. Use this opportunity to network and develop new connections.
- o Visit all the organizations to learn about potential opportunities.
- o If you are in a group session, take note of questions that your peers ask and learn from the employer's responses.

Communication Strategies:

- o Introduce yourself by name, major, and year.
- o Keep all written communication professional. Proofread before sending to avoid any typos.
- o Avoid repeating questions that have been addressed, while building on the conversation.
- o For 1 on 1 sessions:
 - o Prepare examples of your experiences that relate to the skills and requirements the employer may be looking for
 - o Try to be in a quiet space with good lighting so the employer can see and hear you well
 - o Use headphones if available and test out your audio ahead of time
 - o Look into the camera and show enthusiasm!

Examples of Potential Questions (don't be shy to ask!):

1. What internships or entry-level positions are available in < your field of interest > at your organization?
Possible follow-up: Are these opportunities remote or in-person?
2. What is your application process?
3. What specific qualifications, education, or experience do applicants need to have?
4. How competitive is your hiring process?
5. What skills or qualities do you seek that set applicants apart?
6. How long is your typical hiring process?
7. Are there certain times of year to apply?
8. What is your current hiring outlook?
9. What does onboarding and training look like for new employees?
-Possible follow-up: How are you integrating new employees virtually?
10. How would you describe your organizational culture?
11. What do you like most about working for <name of company>?
12. May I contact you with further questions?

After the Fair:

- o Review and organize your notes regarding employers and opportunities.
- o Follow up as advised by recruiters: Connect via LinkedIn if recommended or tailor your application materials and apply online.
- o Send brief thank you notes to recruiters with whom you connected within 24 hours.

PREPARE TO LAUNCH

SAMPLE EMAIL TO CONTACT

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name,

My name is Mary Marketing, and I am a junior Business Administration: Marketing major at Cal State San Marcos. I was looking through alumni on LinkedIn who also studied marketing and came across your profile. Digital marketing is an area that I'm exploring, and I wondered if you would be open to answering a few questions about your career path. Would you be available to meet sometime in the next month? I can be flexible according to your schedule. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

SAMPLE LIST OF INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- Can you tell me about your career path?
- How did you decide to pursue the work you do?
- What are tasks you do on a typical work day?
- What are your favorite parts of the job?
- What are the biggest challenges? What do you like least about your job?
- What are the most critical skills needed for this field?
- What do you think are the biggest trends in this industry?
- What training, experience, or advice would you recommend for someone wanting to go into this field?
- What are typical career paths, from entry level positions to opportunities for advancement?
- What is the salary range for a person in this field from entry level to top salary?
- Are there any relevant professional associations you recommend?
- What are some related occupations?
- Can you refer me to others who would be helpful for me to meet?

ATTEND NETWORKING EVENTS:

Networking events offer an opportunity to meet others in a group-based setting. They are often organized to provide people within the same profession or region an opportunity to meet and share advice or resources.

- Set a goal in advance to meet new people, ranging from one person to several, depending on your networking experience and personality preferences.
- Try to research attendees in advance or check out the nametags upon checking in.
- Arrive early/on time. Greet your host(s) and consider offering assistance.
- Introduce yourself to someone standing alone or ask to join a small group.
- Ask questions about the other person, such as how they know the host or why they're attending this event. Be a good listener.
- If you've made a good connection, you can ask to exchange business cards or contact information. Then follow up within 72 hours of the event.
- Always thank the host(s) while leaving.



2018 CSUSM Career Center "Mix and Match" Event

EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWING

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

- **One on One:** One interviewer interviews an applicant.
- **Panel:** Several interviewers interview an applicant.
- **Group:** Multiple applicants interviewed at the same time.
- **Screening:** Initial interview to refer potential applicants to a second, in-depth interview.
- **Live Video:** Interview via Skype, Zoom or other interface.
- **Recorded Video:** Series of answers are recorded in a specified amount of time.
- **Second Interview:** More in-depth interview at the employer site. (half hour to all day)
- **Meal Interview:** Interview that includes a meal such as lunch or dinner.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN INTERVIEW

- Attend *Resume/Cover Letter, Interview and Salary Negotiation* workshops.
- Watch *Big Interview* videos, practice answering questions, and record your interview responses.
- Schedule mock interviews with a career counselor.
- Find out the 4 Ws: Who, What, When, Where.
- Research the company on their website and Linked In.
- Dress professionally: Take advantage of *Cougar Closet* and *Suit Up* events.
- Bring your resume to the interview, maybe even a portfolio.
- Plan to arrive early to allow time for the unexpected (traffic, parking).

AREAS COVERED IN THE INTERVIEW

Introduction

- Establish relationship with interviewer and provide first impression through appearance, manner, and personal energy.
- Show enthusiasm for the job and interest in the employers' organization.
- A solid handshake, confident smile and direct eye contact are essential.

Discussion of Qualifications and Goals

- Communicate skills, experience and goals.
- Employers are looking for skills and qualifications that fit the position and personal qualities required for success in the job, as well as goals appropriate to the organization.

Closing

Summarize strengths and interests.

- Ask how and when employer will be in touch concerning next steps.
- Ask for a business card/contact information to send a follow up email or handwritten card within 24 hours (thank interviewers for the opportunity and express your interest in the position).

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) Tell me about yourself (academics, relevant work experience, activities and interests, personal qualities valued by the employer).
- 2) Why are you interested in this position?
- 3) Describe your most recent role.
- 4) What extracurricular activities were you involved in and what did you learn from them?
- 5) Why should I hire you?
- 6) Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- 7) Why do you want to work as a ...?
- 8) What led you to choose your major field of study? ...this chosen career?
- 9) Why did you apply for a position with our organization?



EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWING

SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

- What are 3 of your strengths? What is a weakness?
- What was your most successful life experience? Why do you think it was successful?
- How do you handle criticism?
- What qualifications do you have that will make you successful in our organization?
- What motivates you to put forth your best effort?
- Describe a problem or challenge you had in your last job and how you handled it?

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

It's good to have 2-3 questions prepared:

- What are you looking for in this position?
- What are the biggest challenges the person in this position will face?
- What are prospects for future growth in your organization?
- How would you describe your organization's culture and management style?

BEHAVIORAL

- Describe a situation where you led a team with diverse interests and objectives.
- Tell me about a situation when you demonstrated initiative.
- Describe a time when you went above and beyond what was required.
- Use STAR to answer questions (Situation, Task, Action, Result).
- Look at job description to decide which highlights will STAR in your story.

*STAR EXAMPLE:

"Tell me about a situation requiring both big picture and detail oriented thinking."

• **Situation** - *I was elected to the Campus Visiting Speakers Bureau for 2018-2019 and was responsible for getting 3 to 5 speakers with a budget of \$56,000.*

• **Task** - *My goal was to generate a list of speakers for the planning committee who would make the final decision. The speakers needed to appeal to the entire campus community, be available within budget when the auditorium was available, and convey a motivational message.*

• **Action(s)** - *I reached out to the rest of the planning committee, students in my dorm, and my Marketing class for speaker suggestions. Then, I used their suggestions to identify 15 speakers who fit the budget. I researched the speakers' career profiles and reviews of past speaking events. I led 3 student focus group to generate a prioritized list of speakers. I connected with speakers' agents to check for availability, verify fees and travel and submitted the top 5 to the committee for their decision.*

• **Result** - *The planning committee was "wowed" by the speakers I submitted as well as my attention to detail. From my list, they selected motivational speaker Cindy Jones to appear on September 15. We sold all 2,500 tickets and received positive evaluations from attendees.*

EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWING

ILLEGAL QUESTIONS

If you're asked an illegal question during an interview, typically it's because the interviewer is new to interviewing or unfamiliar with employment law. It's generally best to assume good intentions and consider the following strategies:

Reframe the question

Interviewer: "Do you have children?"

Your response: "If you're concerned about my availability to work, I have an excellent attendance record and have been recognized by previous supervisors for my dependability."

Answer with a question

Interviewer: "Were you born in the U.S.?"

Your response: "Are you asking if I am legally authorized to work in the U.S.?"

Clarify the question

Interviewer: "Are you married?"

Your response: "I'm willing to answer the question but I am curious about how it relates to the position. Can you please clarify?"

Inquiry Area	Illegal Questions	Legal Questions
National Origin/ Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you a U.S. citizen? • Where were you/your parents born? • What is your "native tongue"? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you authorized to work in the United States? • What language do you read/speak/write fluently? (This question is okay only if this ability is relevant to the performance of the job.)
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How old are you? • When did you graduate? • What's your birth date? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you over the age of 18?
Marital/ Family Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's your marital status? • With whom do you live? • Do you plan to have a family? When? • How many kids do you have? • What are your child-care arrangements? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? • Would you be able and willing to travel as needed for the job? (This question is okay if it is asked of all applicants for the job.) • Would you be able and willing to work overtime as necessary? (This question is okay assuming it is asked of all applicants for the job.)
Affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What clubs or social organizations do you belong to? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List any professional or trade groups or other organizations that you belong to that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How tall are you? How much do you weigh? (Questions about height and weight are not acceptable unless minimum standards are essential for the safe performance of the job.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of the job?
Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any disabilities? • Please complete the following medical history. • Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list them and give dates when these occurred. • What was your last physical exam? • How's your family's health? • When did you lose your eyesight? How? • Do you need an accommodation to perform the job? (This question can be asked only after a job offer has been made.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job? (This question is okay if the interviewer has thoroughly described the job.) • Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job-related functions? • As part of the hiring process, you will be required to undergo a medical exam. (Exam results must be kept strictly confidential, except medical/safety personnel may be informed if emergency medical treatment is required, and supervisors may be informed about necessary job accommodations, based on exam results.)
Arrest Record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever been arrested? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever been convicted of _____? (The crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)
Military	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you've been in the military, were you honorably discharged? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what branch of the Armed Forces did you serve? • What type of training or education did you receive in the military?

EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWING

*NOTE: There may be some exceptions to the following guidelines—research the organization.

HAIR	Neatly trimmed. Hair out of face. Tie back if long hair. Shave facial hair.
JEWELRY	Keep it simple and conservative. Remove all body piercings other than earrings and cover tattoos.
BODY ODOR	Avoid strong perfume or cologne to avoid triggering allergies.
CLOTHES	Skirts and dresses should hit at or just above the knee. Jacket sleeves just below the wrist. Belts and shoes same color. Ties touch top of belt. Need professional clothes? Check out the <i>Cougar Closet</i> and attend <i>Suit Up!</i>
HANDS	Clean and trim fingernails.
SHOES	Close-toed polished shoes—no scuffs.
ACCESSORIES	Folder or padfolio to hold extra copies of your resume or related work. No cell phones. Small purse (shoulder strap preferred) or briefcase/laptop bag.

DINING TIPS: INTERVIEWING OVER A MEAL

- Turn off cell phone/personal technology device during an interview or meal.
- Don't apply lipstick, comb your hair, blow your nose or use a toothpick at the table.
- Put purse or wallet on your lap, chair, seat next to you or on the floor under your seat.
- Place your napkin in your lap when you sit down and keep it there throughout the meal. Keep your free hand on your lap while you eat.
- Lean forward when you take a mouthful of food to avoid spilling on your clothing.
- Pass the salt and pepper together even if only one is requested.
- Break off bite-size portions of bread over bread and butter plate before buttering. Use the bread and butter plate to hold olives, radishes and other finger foods.
- Cut food two to three slices at a time. Pass dishes or bread baskets to the right.
- Don't gesture with utensils or rest your utensils half on or half off the plate like oars.
- Bread plates are on the left and drink glasses are on the right.
- Avoid alcohol while interviewing.
- Order something easy to eat and avoid the most expensive item on the menu; ask your host for recommendations.
- Leave eating utensils across the center of the plate to signal you've finished eating.
- When you leave, fold your napkin and place it on the left side of your table setting.

To gain dining confidence, plan to attend one of our Etiquette Dinners!



GRADUATE SCHOOL

Questions to Ask Yourself When Considering Graduate School

- Is a graduate degree necessary or required for the career I am pursuing?
- How will I finance graduate school? Some graduate programs, particularly doctoral degrees in the sciences, may offer significant financial support while others will primarily offer loans.
- Do I need to take a gap year(s) to gain more experience or improve my academic record and become a stronger candidate?
- How much time will additional education require? A masters degree or accelerated bachelor program will take 2-3 years while a doctoral degree can take 5+ years.

Explore

- Research occupations with ononline.org, Occupational Outlook Handbook or professional associations' websites to learn about the education and experiences necessary for the jobs you are interested in.
- Research prerequisite courses that you need to take for graduate programs. Health careers, in particular, require certain courses be completed to apply.
- Do an informational interview with a professional or graduate student to learn about their experiences.
- Visit admissions representatives at Career Center events or attend campus open houses to learn about their programs.

Prepare

- Meet with a career counselor to discuss a timeline for applying to graduate school.
- Develop relationships with faculty members and supervisors who might write you letters of recommendation and start early to get to know them. Strong letters come from people who truly know you and your goals.
- Gain experience through volunteering, internships, or research. Try to shadow people in your field to learn about the profession and even their graduate school experience, if applicable.

Apply

- Sign up for standardized tests (GRE, GMAT, MCAT, etc.) if it is necessary for your program. Develop a study schedule to set yourself up for success.
- Start drafting your personal statement/statement of purpose a few months in advance to give time to edit.
- Request letters of recommendation from faculty and employers. Let them know early to give them as much time as possible (2 months or so) to write a strong letter.
- Conduct a mock interview with a career counselor. Some programs will require an interview and you will want to be prepared!

Testing

- GRE – General graduate program tests. There are some programs that require a GRE Subject test (ex: GRE Psychology Subject Test)
- LSAT – Law School
- GMAT – Business School
- MCAT – Medical School
- PCAT – Pharmacy School
- DAT – Dental School
- OAT – Optometry School

Visit the Career Center website for more information about researching [Graduate and Professional School](#) and information regarding personal statements, statement of purposes and CV's.

SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Congratulations! Now that you've secured a job after assessing your interests, articulating your strengths and experience through resumes and interviews, and networking to find opportunities...what comes next? In order to continue building your career and attaining success in the workplace, consider the following strategies for office culture/communications, goal setting, and continued professional development.

General Office Culture/Communications

- Observe your organizational and department culture, including appropriate attire; ask your supervisor if you are unsure.
- Show courtesy and consideration to all co-workers, not just your supervisors.
- Respect peoples' time and keep email communications to the point. Target your emails to appropriate recipients; be mindful of emails you forward and reply all.
- Maintain professionalism through any phone or written communications.
- Express gratitude and give credit when appropriate.
- Know that a learning curve exists. Be willing to observe, learn, and contribute.

Networking & Professional Development

- Look within and beyond your immediate department/organization for opportunities to meet others. Set attainable networking goals such as one new contact per week/month.
- Join a relevant professional organization to continue your networking and development. Check with your organization for funding support.
- Reflect and re-evaluate your professional and personal goals on an ongoing basis. Think about what you hope to achieve, then set a measurable goal and timeframe.
- Keep an open mind and be willing to take risks and try new activities or challenges.
- If your goal is advancement, identify what skills and knowledge are required for your desired position. Then work backwards toward these skills.





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