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General Information

General Information

Personal Support and Expertise

- Job Search Advice. Career services coordinators in our office support specific academic departments and are available to meet on a one-to-one basis with students and alumni on career and employment matters. These sessions are critical to developing individual job search plans and addressing the many questions and issues that arise during the job search process. Call our office at 585-475-2301 to make an appointment. If you are a student and need an interpreter, make arrangements through https://myservices.rit.edu/2.

- Deaf and hard of hearing students and alumni at the Associate, Bachelor and Master’s degree levels, may want to work with staff in the NTID Center on Employment. Contact the Center at: 585-475-6834 (voice); 585-268-4544 (videoophone); ntidcoe@rit.edu (email).

- Career Counseling Services. Career Counselors are available to work with you through the process of career exploration, whether you are changing majors or identifying new career goals. Depending on your needs, this may include one-on-one counseling, career and personality assessments or interest inventories. Your counselor can also provide you with occupational information and suggest other resources to help you determine occupations you may want to investigate. To make an appointment, call 585-475-2301.

- Resume Critiques. We are available to give you feedback on your resume so that you are able to represent your skills and qualifications.

- Walk-In Hours. For quick questions or dealing with pressing issues. Walk-in hours are offered in the Office of Career Services & Co-op Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m. On Wednesday and Friday 9:30-11:30 a.m.

- Job Opportunities. We work hard to maintain and expand our working relationships with employers in order to post job openings or on-campus interviews for our students and alumni. These opportunities are accessible through Handshake, our web-based system. Once you have graduated, you will continue to have access to these job postings—set up a Handshake alumni account through our site.

- Graduate School Information. Information related to selecting and applying to graduate schools is available through the graduate school page on our site: https://myaccess.rit.edu/gradschool. For assistance, make an appointment to meet with our graduate school career services coordinator, responsible for helping applicants through this process.

- Mentor Network. RIT alumni, employers, and friends of the Institute volunteer to provide current students and alumni with career development support, counsel, guidance, reinforcement and constructive examples. The Mentor Network is accessible to students and alumni online through Handshake.

Programming and Events

We offer a variety of programs and events that will ultimately help you launch a successful career. Some of our key events include:

- Career Fairs. Our office sponsors two major fairs and a number of specialized career fairs throughout the year. Fairs are free and open to RIT students and alumni.

- Workshops/Info Sessions. Our staff prepares individuals for their job search through workshops and info sessions. Topics include: job search strategies, resume writing, cover letter writing, interviewing techniques, use of social media, how to work a career fair, on-the-job success, alumni-specific programs, and much more.

- Company Networking Events. Many companies schedule visits to campus because it is a great opportunity to showcase their company and meet students and alumni. It is an opportunity to learn more about companies and what they look for in candidates.

- Interview Preparation. We offer personal advice and ways to practice for interviews. Also available is an online video practice interviewing system that offers simulated interviews for job seekers to practice both verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

- Portfolio Reviews. We offer programming that brings professionals from the creative industry to campus to provide valuable feedback on your portfolio.

Online Resources

Information and resources can be accessed through the main page of our site: https://www.rit.edu/coc. Here’s a sampling:

- Handshake. Access job postings, on-campus interviews, opportunities and career fair information through this section of our site. Set up a search agent that will email you opportunities that match your search criteria. Upload a resume so that potential employers can find you. Network with industry representatives through the Mentor Network feature. Handshake is a resource that you should definitely start tapping into.

- Other Sites. Visit the web-based Tools and Resources page of our site for a complete list of sites that we subscribe to so that you have access to them. Be sure to check out CareerSearch, Vault’s Career Insider, Chegg.com, Going Global, and Glass Door. You will also find a list of recommended sites by major, for additional sources of jobs and career information.

RIT’s Online Alumni Network. A site maintained by RIT’s Office of Alumni Relations, primarily for alumni to keep informed of campus events and news and network with other alumni. Students have access within two semesters of graduation. It’s a great resource for identifying alumni that are working at a company, or in a particular city—because this information can help you make valuable contacts that will help you advance your career goals. Access the Alumni Relations website: www.rit.edu/alumni/benefits

Communications and Social Media

Not only do we connect and communicate directly with you via email, but also through a variety of social media: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram.
Suggested Career Development Activities by Class Year

First Year
- Attend Career Services workshops and employer information sessions (see Handshake for schedule).
- Attend the Fall and Spring Career Fairs (or other Career Fairs relevant to your major).
- Create or update your LinkedIn profile to connect with faculty, students, alumni, and potential employers. Join relevant LinkedIn groups.
- Schedule and attend a mock interview to practice your interviewing skills.
- Apply to co-op postings through Handshake.
- Make an appointment with your Career Services Coordinator to create a job search strategy.
- Continue involvement with campus clubs and organizations. Consider obtaining a leadership certificate through the Leadership Institute at RIT. Join a professional organization.
- Obtain a summer job that is relevant to your major and career objectives.
- Connect with RIT Career Services on social media: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- Ask your academic department about major specific opportunities or research opportunities. Seek out internships to explore careers and gain experience.
- Go to graduate school now if…
  - you cannot afford to go to graduate school now, and you haven’t applied for any scholarships, grants, fellowships and assistantships (most MBA and some PhD programs require this).
  - you have been awarded grants, fellowships, scholarships or assistantships that will help pay for your education.
  - you’re concerned that once you start earning real money, you won’t be able to return to the lifestyle of a “poor” student.
  - your study habits and mental abilities are at their peak, and you worry whether you’ll have the discipline (or motivation) to study it in-depth—and have the time and financial resources to devote to further education.
- Going to graduate school might be a good idea if you…
  - are trying to delay your entry into the “real world” with real responsibilities and real bills.
  - are clueless about your career goals.
  - aren’t prepared to devote the time and hard work needed to succeed.
  - want to stay in school longer to avoid a poor job market.
- If you are absolutely sure you want to be a college professor, doctor, lawyer,...
- Talk to faculty, friends and family who have gone to graduate school to get their perspective about the differences between being an undergraduate and a graduate student.
- Keep your grades up and sign up (and prepare) to take the required standardized tests.
- Take to faculty, friends and family who are in your targeted profession to get a realistic sense of the career path and the challenges associated with the work they do.
- Investigate creative ways to finance your education—by planning ahead you may reduce your debt.
- Research graduate schools to help you find a good match.
- Investigate the admissions process and the current student body profile of your targeted schools to evaluate your probability for admission.
- Have faith and APPLY! Remember, you can’t get in unless you apply.
- Written by Roslyn J. Bradford.

Fourth and Fifth Year
- Refine your ideas about the kind of job you would like after graduation.
- Begin your full-time job search 6-9 months prior to graduation. Utilize multiple resources for job searching like Handshake, online job listing sites, networking, LinkedIn and other social media sites.
- If a job or career development opportunity arises, do not hesitate to apply. If a job or career development opportunity arises, do not hesitate to apply.
- Go to graduate school now if:
  - you have been awarded grants, fellowships, scholarships or assistantships that will help pay for your education.
  - you’re concerned that once you start earning real money, you won’t be able to return to the lifestyle of a “poor” student.
  - your study habits and mental abilities are at their peak, and you worry whether you’ll have the discipline (or motivation) to study it in-depth—and have the time and financial resources to devote to further education.
- Going to graduate school might be a good idea if you…
  - are trying to delay your entry into the “real world” with real responsibilities and real bills.
  - are clueless about your career goals.
  - aren’t prepared to devote the time and hard work needed to succeed.
  - want to stay in school longer to avoid a poor job market.
- If you are absolutely sure you want to be a college professor, doctor, lawyer,...
- Talk to faculty, friends and family who have gone to graduate school to get their perspective about the differences between being an undergraduate and a graduate student.
- Keep your grades up and sign up (and prepare) to take the required standardized tests.
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For more information visit us at rit.edu/gradschool

Is Graduate School Right for You?

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College Recruitment Media and RIT’s Office of Career Services & Co-op wish to thank the above participating sponsors for making this publication available to students.
**Job Search**

**Career Fairs**

A career fair is an exciting event welcoming organizations to campus to recruit students and alumni. It is your opportunity to investigate career fields and positions; meet representatives from companies for whom you are interested in working; gather information about industries; gain an opportunity for an interview with a company.

**What to Expect at the Venue**
- A large room, with rows and rows of booths or tables with company reps standing at them.
- It will be crowded, with long lines at some tables, and loud.
- Be prepared to wait—plan your strategy ahead of time so your time is not wasted.

**Know yourself and what you have to offer. Prepare your “Personal Pitch” introduction.**

**Prepare Before the Fair**
- Search Handshake for a list of participating companies and job descriptions.
- Download the Career Fair Plus app to your phone.
- Identify and research companies of interest.
- Update your resume and have it critiqued.
- Submit your resume through the company’s website—show the recruiter you have taken initiative.

**Tips From Recruiters**
- Apply to companies you may not have considered before.
- Be clear and concise in your answers.
- Follow up with a thank you note immediately.
- Send the recruiter a thank you note immediately. Use notes about your discussion to personalise it; remind the employer that you talked with them at the career fair, reinforce how your skills and qualifications will be an asset, and reiterate your interest in an interview. Send an additional resume with your thank you note.

**Follow Up After the Event**
- Send the recruiter a thank you note immediately. Use notes about your discussion to personalise it; remind the employer that you talked with them at the career fair, reinforce how your skills and qualifications will be an asset, and reiterate your interest in an interview. Send an additional resume with your thank you note.

**Working a Career Fair From a Distance**

If you are not able to attend a career fair, there are still some ways you can take advantage of the opportunity to connect with representatives, and find out about opportunities.
- Look at the list of participating companies. If they are coming to a fair, they are most likely hiring—a company is in good financial shape or has a bright outlook if they are willing to spend the money to travel to a career fair. Many companies take the time to submit job descriptions prior to their visit to campus, go ahead and apply to them!
- Apply through the company website. Always apply to openings through their site. Even if you can come to the career fair, companies want you to submit your resume through their site because it helps them track candidates. So in this way, you are on a level playing field with people who do attend a fair.
- Use the career fair contacts. Check with the Office of Career Services & Co-op— we have a database of thousands of company contacts. Recruiters from a fair, open to being contacted, will be on a list after the fair for follow up.

Remember, no one gets hired just as a result of a career fair conversation—it is just a point of contact that can help move you along in the hiring process. You are just missing out on that initial contact a career fair can offer—but as you can see there are ways you can make up for it.

**Tips From Recruiters**
- Don’t ask: “So what does your company do?”
- Don’t ramble or take up too much of the recruiter’s time. Be confident and smile.
- Get the representative’s business card if available.
- Make notes immediately after speaking with each company.
- Explore all your options—speak with companies you may not have considered before.
- Being asked to apply through their site is a good thing, you have not wasted your time talking with the recruiter. Many companies are required to track candidates through their site.
- If recruiter works in a different area from the one you’re interested in, you can try to find out how to get in touch with a more appropriate person in the company.
- Don’t expect to be offered a job at the career fair, but you may get an interview.

**Follow up with a phone call within one week of the event.**

**Tapping the Hidden Job Market**

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

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

**Informational interviewing.** This approach allows you to learn more about your field by setting up interviews with professionals. The purpose of these interviews is to meet professionals, gather career information and investigate career options, get advice on job search techniques and get referrals to other professionals. When setting up these interviews, either by phone or letter, make it clear to the employer that you have no job expectations and are seeking information only. Interviewing also familiarizes you to employers, and you may be remembered when a company has a vacant position.

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

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

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

Students who wish to continue their studies and obtain a higher degree may do so by gaining admission to another program or university and notifying the "new" international student advisor who will process the proper forms. For further information, contact the International Student Advisors by phone at 585-475-6943 or on the mezzanine level of the Student Alumni Union. Their website is www.rit.edu/iis.

Tips for the International Student's Job Search

- Research the demand for your degree and skills-set. Your job search will be easier if you have highly marketable skills or extensive experience. Be flexible—you may need to relocate in order to find the job you want. Learn all you can about your targeted career field.
- Use all available resources in your job search. These include college-on-campus recruiting, campus or community job fairs, job postings on national job posting internet sites, company website postings, job postings in newspapers and trade publications, professional associations, resume searches on national online services, employer referrals, regional and national conferences, employment agencies, networking through your own contacts.
- Develop strong communication skills. Provide a well-prepared resume that includes desirable skills and relevant work experiences. Clearly convey your interests and ability to do the job in an interview. Be sensitive to interviewer's verbal and non-verbal cues—make sure you are being understood. Make sure you express proper non-verbal communication—for example, always look directly at the employer in order to portray confidence and honesty. If your English language skills need some work, get involved with campus and community activities, to allow you to practice speaking English.
- Interact with other international students who have successfully found employment in the U.S., and get advice from them.
- Work with the Office of Career Services & Co-op at RIT. Attend sessions on job search strategies and related topics. Work with your career services coordinator to develop a job search strategy. Attend career fairs and company information sessions to inquire about employment opportunities and to practice your networking skills. Participate in a mock interview.
- Target multi-national companies because they may value your versatile language skills and may have facilities in your home country.
- Start your job search early, and create and follow a detailed plan of action that will lead you to a great job!
Ten Best Ways to Go ONLINE... And Get the Job

6. Tweet, Tweet

A tweet is a fast, free method for recruiters to get a quick look at who you are and how you think. It’s fairly easy to micro-blog, too. Share your career-related news or retweet nuggets of interest to people in your field. O’Donnell says Twitter is one of her favorite ways to contact hard-to-reach people. “Usernames, like email addresses, are a way to connect,” she says, “so you can follow these people and when you see them in the interview chair, ask Tim Sanders, author of Love is the Killer App: How to Win Business and Influence Friends, “I saw you on Twitter,” she asks. “And they’re likely to do it because it’s only a 140-character commitment. Later, you can tweet, ‘What would you say about [company]?” he says. Sanders says that being on Twitter can open up new opportunities for you. To make it easy for people to connect with you, set up a Twitter handle using your name in your LInkedIn profile completely, but don’t stop there. Use LinkedIn to reach recruiters and find opportunities. Presto… an ATS software-friendly, search-engine-optimized resume!”

5. Embrace LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the best bet. LinkedIn allows you to get your resume on the job market. A better bet is a search engine that delivers job listings directly to the recruiters between the time they email “We got your resume” and “We’re interested,” experts estimate that only 4% to 10% of online job seekers have any success using that method. What’s a better option? Ask for leads and info from friends, and if you don’t know any other folks you run into. That’s how most people find a job.

4. Write Your Resume in Digital Format

Get your digital footprint on the web. Your online identity isn’t the same as your offline identity, but it’s still important. Sanders says, “Get your digital presence in order, and if you’re a manager or a professional, be sure you’re showing up the right way.”

3. Compare Company Cultures Online

Go anywhere groups of people in your field assemble. Because everyone has a common interest, people often share who they think is the most interesting in the industry. Sanders says, “It’s going to be a really good idea to do some online research about companies, industries and people you’re interested in. It’s the only way to research in 2015.”

2. Online Job Search Engines

Get on the job hunt. Job boards are a means to an end. There are job boards and online job boards. In 2015, there are 22,000+ companies that post a new opening every day. It may be that Google is now becoming the #1 (unofficial) job search engine. Job hunters can search out job titles, companies, cities, states, and get lists of postings that match their terms.

1. Check Out Major Job Boards

Technology is great, so as a job seeker it might seem like a no-brainer to go online to find your next job. “Digital job search is attractive to young people because they’re tech savvy,” says O’Donnell. “But don’t get fooled.”

Ten Best Ways to Go OFFLINE... And Get the Job

2. Job Fairs, Conferences and Classes

Go anywhere groups of people in your field assemble. Because everyone has a common interest, people often share who they think is the most interesting in the industry. Sanders says, “It’s going to be a really good idea to do some online research about companies, industries and people you’re interested in. It’s the only way to research in 2015.”

1. Get From Online to F2F

Develop the ability to strike up a casual conversation about things that interest you, such as karaoke, city bikes or house- or restaurant cooking. “You’re reaching only about 10% of your friends’ feeds at any time, Sanders says.)

7. Put on a Happy Face

Be cheerful, upbeat, approachable and positive. Sanders says, “It’s important to project happiness even if you’re not happy.”

6. Be a Giver

If you’ve been spending time searching online, you may have developed virtual friendships with members of industry, special interest or alumni groups. See if you can take your relationships offline. “Maintaining contacts made online is time consuming,” says Vicky Oliver author of Business EQ: “I realized this that if I do anything for my job, I’ll be doing it for the rest of my life.”

5. Tell a Story About Yourself

Now is a great time to volunteer for a nonprofit or industry group. You get out of the house, meet new people and you can engage in step two, which is an information-gathering conversation. “The best way to find a job is to be in conversation with people serving on their boards that may be able to help you, and you’d never make your acquaintance otherwise,” says Downs.

4. Get from Online to F2F

Develop the ability to strike up a casual conversation about things that interest you, such as karaoke, city bikes or house- or restaurant cooking. “You’re reaching only about 10% of your friends’ feeds at any time, Sanders says.)

3. Set Up Informational Interviews

“Spending 20 minutes with someone in the trenches is the best way to research a position, industry or company you’ve targeted. It’s a good way to add contacts to your network too. You can have interesting, meaningful conversations. They’ll also be more likely to want to help you—possibly put in a good word on your behalf or hand-deliver your resume.”

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Turning Your Internship Into a Full-Time Position

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

A growing number of employers are using internships as a way to gain a first-in-depth look at prospective employees. In this respect, both you and your employer have a common goal—namely, to determine if there is a good fit between you. This will culminate in receiving a full-time job offer. In your learning experience is that it can serve as your passport to future employment opportunities. Getting your foot in the door by landing the internship or co-op is only half of the challenge in turning your career dreams into a reality. The more vital half is to build a reputation during this career experience that will culminate in receiving a full-time job offer.

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After all, the learning agenda is what distinguishes a short-term job from an internship or co-op that will culminate in a full-time job offer. A correlation between your learning goals and the daily work you are asked to perform. Maintain a journal of your activities and accomplishments in order to monitor your progress. Seek regular reviews from your supervisor to assess your performance and reinforce the fact that you are valuable to the organization.

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

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

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

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

10. Have Fun!
Last but not least, enjoy learning, sharpening your skills and developing professionally and personally. Participate in work-related social functions and become an active member in your work community. Make your internship or co-op experience work for you. It can be the first link in the chain of your career.
Transferable Skills

If you’re wondering what skills you have that would interest a potential employer, you are not alone. Many college seniors feel that most (if not all) of their courses haven’t sufficiently prepared them to begin work after graduation. And like these students, you may have carefully reviewed your work history (along with your campus and civic involvement) and you may still have a difficult time seeing how the skills you learned in college will transfer to the workplace. But keep in mind that you’ve been acquiring skills since childhood. Whether learning the value of teamwork by playing sports, developing editing skills working on your high school newspaper or developing countless experiences where you’ve acquired a range of skills—many that you may take for granted.

What Are Transferable Skills?
A transferable skill is a “portable skill” that you deliberately (or inadvertently, if you haven’t identified them yet) take with you to other life experiences.

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

Transferable skills supplement your degree. They provide an employer concrete evidence of your readiness and qualifications for a position. Identifying your transferable skills and communicating them to potential employers will greatly increase your success during the job search.

Remember that it is impossible to complete college without acquiring transferable skills. College and community activities, class projects and assignments, athletic interests, internships and summer/part-time jobs have provided you with countless experiences where you’ve acquired a range of skills—many that you may take for granted.

Identifying Transferable Skills

While very closely related (and sometimes overlap), transferable skills can be divided into three subsets:
- Working With People
- Working With Things
- Working With Data/Information

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

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

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

Easy Steps to Identify Your Transferable Skills

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

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

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

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

“While working for Jones Engineering, I gained experience in 3D modeling and drafting.”

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

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

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

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

Using Transferable Skills in the Job Search

Your success in finding the position right for you will depend on your ability to showcase your transferable skills. You will also need to demonstrate how you can apply these skills at an employer’s place of business. Consult the staff at your career services office to help you further identify relevant transferable skills and incorporate them on your resume and during your interviews. During each interview, be sure to emphasize only those skills that would be of particular interest to a specific employer.

Transferable skills are the foundation upon which you will build additional, more complex skills as your career unfolds. Start making your list of skills and you’ll discover that you have more to offer than you realized!

Additional Tips to Help Identify Your Transferable Skills

1. Review your list of transferable skills with someone in your field(s) of interest to help you identify any additional skills that you may want to include.

2. Using a major job posting website, print out descriptions of jobs that interest you to help you identify skills being sought. (Also use these postings as guidelines for terminology on your resume.)

3. Attend career fairs and company information sessions to learn about the skills valued by specific companies and industries.

Written by Rosita Smith.

Power Verbs for Your Resume

- increased
- underlined
- indicated
- influenced
- initiated
- examined
- studied
- improved
- performed
- persuaded
- planned
- polished
- prepared
- organized
- prioritized
- processed
- produced
- promised
- projected
- publicized
- purchased
- queried
- questioned
- raised
- realized
- recommended
- recruited
- rectified
- reduced
- losses
- refused
- referred
- reformatted
- regulated
- rehabilitated
- reinforced
- rejuvenated
- related
- relieved
- remedied
- repaired
- reported
- represented
- researched
- reserved
- resolved
- problems
- restored
- retrieved
- revamped
- reviewed
- revised
- revitalized
- reviewed
- sanctioned
- satisfied
- scheduled
- screened
- scrutinized
- secured
- served
- set
- goals
- shaped
- settled
- smooth
- solved
- sought
- spoke
- stipulated
- strengthened
- streamlined
- studied
- submitted
- substantiated
- summarized
- supplemented
- surveyed
- synthesized
- systematized
- tabulated
- tailored
- targeted
- traced
- transformed
- transmitted
- updated
- upgraded
- validated
- verified
- visualized
- wrote

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

Projects/Labs: Elaborate on team, individual class projects or labs that demonstrate how you used your knowledge and skills in class or work settings. Emphasize leadership roles.

Experience or Work History: Indicate dates of employment (month/year), name of employer, city and state, title of each position. Describe your duties, responsibilities, notable achievements and/or results. Use active verbs and eliminate pronouns like “I,” “me,” and “my.” You may want to have one section for related work experience and a separate section for other experience. Employment relevant to your job objective should be elaborated on; unrelated experience should be mentioned briefly.

Activities or Interests: Mention extracurricular activities, professional memberships and affiliations, community activities, or hobbies. Be sure to note leadership roles.

Optional Categories: Military record, licenses/certifications, publications, research projects, other experiences (e.g., volunteer, travel).

Tips for Designing Your Resume

- Standard serif (Times New Roman, Palatino) and sans serif (Arial, Helvetica) fonts work best. Avoid decorative fonts. You can use two different fonts—sans serif for the headings and standard serif for the rest of the text.
- Font sizes: 9 to 10 points are standard; twice as small is readable.
- Use vertical and horizontal lines sparingly, leave at least a quarter-inch of space around the lines.
- Avoid shading, shadowing, and boxes.

If you are using bullets to organize information—use bullets, not cute symbols, like check marks or asterisks.

- Use standard serif (Times New Roman, Palatino) and sans serif (Arial, Helvetica) fonts. Use two different fonts—sans serif for the headings and standard serif for the rest of the text.
- Avoid using italics and underlining. Use bold for emphasis.
- Font size is also important; sizes between 9 and 10 points work best.

A resume is a collection of your skills and qualifications. Its purpose is to organize relevant facts, which will serve as your personal advertisement. Think of yourself as a product that you’re selling to prospective employers. How you package yourself allows a hiring manager to determine if you are a strong candidate.

Your resume should be well-planned, distinctive, and professional in appearance. A good format and well-written text improves readability. Consistency in date, punctuation, indentation, style and tense is important. Each statement needs to be accurate and not overly inflated. Avoid revealing potentially sensitive information unnecessarily, or selling your accomplishments short.

For most students and new alumni, a one-page resume is most appropriate. Be concise, but not too concise. Don’t leave off relevant information that will entice a hiring manager to interview you. If a second page is needed, repeat your name at the top just in case the pages get separated. Never go beyond two pages.

Planning Your Resume

Before you can write a persuasive resume, you need to answer the following questions:

- What is the employer looking for in a potential candidate?
- What skills/qualities can you offer an employer?

Contents of a Resume

- Identifying Information. Your name, address, phone number and e-mail address are typically included; however, you may choose to include a phone number and e-mail address, to keep your identity safe, especially if you’re applying for jobs online. Add your mailing address if it’s to be used during the interview process. Include your personal website, online portfolio, or résumé, if applicable.

- Job Objective (optional). A brief statement indicating the type of work and position you’re seeking.

- Summary of Qualifications. A brief statement highlighting your skills, experience, professional achievements, and important qualifications.

- Education. Include your degree, major, GPA, and expected date of graduation. Include degrees from other institutions attended.

- Projects/Labs. Elaborate on team, individual class projects or labs that demonstrate how you used your knowledge and skills in class or work settings. Emphasize leadership roles.

- Experience or Work History. Indicate dates of employment (month/year), name of employer, city and state, title of each position. Describe your duties, responsibilities, notable achievements and/or results. Use active verbs and eliminate pronouns like “I,” “me,” and “my.” You may want to have one section for related work experience and a separate section for other experience. Employment relevant to your job objective should be elaborated on; unrelated experience should be mentioned briefly.

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- Use vertical and horizontal lines sparingly, leave at least a quarter-inch of space around the lines.
- Avoid shading, shadowing, and boxes.

If you are using bullets to organize information—use bullets, not cute symbols, like check marks or asterisks.

- Position your name at the top of the page on its own line; followed by your contact information; followed by your website URL (if applicable).

- Play up your—i.e. a little larger, bolded.

- Can add a subtle color.

- Don’t overdo it—italics, bold, caps, four different font sizes, etc.

Resume Review

After you have written a draft of your resume, have someone give you feedback. Your career services coordinator in the Office of Career Services & Co-op is available to review your resume with you. It is also a good idea to get someone in your field to review it for an industry perspective. Or stop by on hours which are available every day—see our website for times.
RESUME, PORTFOLIO & CORRESPONDENCE

Job Search Correspondence

Hot Tips:
- A cover letter should accompany each resume.
- Cover letters should highlight your experiences and stress previous accomplishments.
- Cover letters should not repeat information verbatim from your resume!
- Always personalize your correspondence by sending it to a specific person within the organization. Do research to get a name—call the company, look in trade journals, etc.
- Don't be afraid to spelling, grammar, accuracy and neatness!
- Be decisive—use active rather than passive verbs.
- Send a networking letter to generate an informational interview with an individual in the field in which you are interested.
- Research the organization before writing the cover or networking letter—target every letter to a specific position or type of work.
- Don't oversize the word "I" in your letters.
- Close your cover and networking letters by indicating when you will call to set up an interview. If you say you're going to call, make sure you do call.
- Use professional, high quality paper for your resume and cover letter.
- A cover letter should be typed individually on 8½" x 11" good quality paper.
- Follow-Up Letter/Thank-You Note:
  - Follow-up letter is written to thank the person who interviewed you. The letter also serves to remind the interviewer of who you are and what position you are interested.
  - Thank the interviewer for the opportunity to be interviewed.
  - Mention the date and place of your interview.
  - Refer to details of your conversation.
  - Restate your interest in, and strongest qualifications for the position.
- Letter to Accept an Offer:
  - This letter is written to confirm your acceptance of an offer.
  - Accept offer in first sentence.
  - Restate the position, starting salary, and starting date.
  - Express gratitude and enthusiasm.
  - Indicate arrangements you will be making.
- Letter to Decline an Offer:
  - This letter is written when you have decided to turn down an offer.
  - Decline the offer; be truthful, but tactful.
  - Restate the position, starting salary, and starting date.
  - Express gratitude and enthusiasm.
  - Indicate arrangements you will be making.

Sample Resume—Co-op

Sally Smith
E-mail: sally.smith@co-op.com
Permanent Address: 123 Front Street
City, State, Zip: Rochester, NY 14653

OBJECTIVE: To obtain a cooperative education position designing, programming, writing, or testing games. Available (monthly) to (monthly), 2015.

EDUCATION:

RESUME, PORTFOLIO & CORRESPONDENCE

Sample Resume—Full-Time

Simone Clouseau
Industrial designer, game designer, and art director. Highly skilled in creating an entry-level position at an industry leader in furniture and house decor.

Education
- Rochester Institute of Technology Bachelor of Science in Game Design and Development Software Major: Interactive Media Minor: Writing Concentration: Environmental Media

Project Experience
- Project Name: Design and development of a video game for iOS market. Designed and programmed game mechanics, art and all user interface aspects.

Skills
- Design: Motion, Video, UI/UX, Video Games, Rigging/Animation
- Programming: C#, CSS, HTML, basic PHP, Java
- Operating Systems: Windows 95/98/XP/7/8, Ubuntu, UNIX/Linux

Projects
- (project name): (Development Time: 6 months) A puzzle RPG made in RPGMaker VX. You are for 2014 indie Game Maker Contest. Designed individual project. Focus on developing puzzles and objects. Utilized third-party scripts and sprite generations. Edited character designs in Photoshop CS5.

Experience
  - Responsible for the creative direction of converting eighteen 3D models into 2D models. Responsible for the creative direction of converting eighteen 3D models into 2D models. This also included re-imagining the character's animation.
- Creative Director: Daydreams Win, Inc. July – August, 2015
  - Responsible for the creative direction of character design and animation. Designed new character concepts and characters for the series. Implemented new techniques into the series.
- Studio Manager: Ruggles, Inc. September – December 2015

Activities
-Steam (Mr. Alpine, Doe Present)
-中华民族 (Chairman of Dragon's Dynasty, Doe President)
-Alternative (Chairman, Doe President)

References
- Rebecca Simmons, Consumer Affairs Manager (Outside of Business)
- Stephen Han, Consumer Affairs Manager (Outside of Business)

Contact Information
- 555-555-5555
- simoneclouseau@gmail.com
- simoneclouseau@rit.edu

www.rit.edu/oce
Subject Line: Cost Accounting Supervisor Application

Dear Ms. Smith:

Please accept this e-mail as application for the Cost Accounting Supervisor position currently available with your company, as advertised on Indeed.com. My resume is attached for your review and consideration.

I offer a solid financial background and database management systems education, as well as extensive practical experience in financial applications of automated systems. My experience also includes monthly cost analysis/reporting and interface with accounting and administrative management. I am confident that with my abilities/ strengths I can make an immediate and valued contribution to ABC Corporation.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future to schedule an interview at your convenience. I hope to learn more about your company’s plans and goals and how I might contribute to its continued success.

Best regards,

James Sharpe
Developing Your Portfolio

Whether you are a designer, illustrator, photographer, or artist it is important for you to have an effective way to show your work and talent to potential employers or clients. The portfolio is a crucial part of the hiring process. It may not only get you an interview, but it also may clinch a job offer. Although creating a strong portfolio may seem like a daunting process, it doesn’t have to be. Here are some steps to help you create a compelling portfolio:

1. Selecting Samples
   - The first step is deciding which pieces to include—the goal is to select items that best represent your core strengths and industry experience while showcasing your creativity, technical ability, and range.
   - Use feedback from faculty or creative industry professionals to select your best work.
   - The portfolio should reflect a high level of quality.
   - Show your range, but do not include everything you have ever done.
   - Select pieces that are relevant to the employer or gallery you are approaching based on research.
   - Include a piece in different stages to show progression of ideas and problem solving.
   - Be sure you have permission to share any work that belongs to clients or employers.

2. Organizing Items
   - If properly organized, your portfolio will demonstrate to clients how your skills will meet their needs and how they can profit from hiring you.
   - Use consistent graphic theme—color, type, size.
   - Create a title page with your personal contact information.
   - Develop a sequence for your work starting with your strongest work but don’t forget the final image leaves a lasting impression.
   - Include a caption with each piece (include project title, your role, technology/process).

3. Portfolio Format
   - Printed
     - Traditionally the contents of a portfolio have been presented using color, with your work print out of scanned work. This method of showcasing your work is being replaced or at least supplemented by digital formats, but in some cases it may make sense to have your digital work included as well.
     - There is always the option of creating a unique portfolio book or case that matches your career goals. Keep in mind, that while it makes sense to have a physical portfolio, it doesn’t have to be. Here are some steps to help you create a compelling portfolio:

   - Simple design/format—it should not distract from your work.
   - Your name, contact info and a link to printer-friendly resume.
   - A short description of each piece (title, client name with their permission, your role in the project, date, and any software or special skills used).
   - BIG images (start at 800 x 600)
   - Scrolling through the work is preferred. You risk irritating visitors by showing too many samples or requiring clicking.
   - Attention to detail—spell and grammar check all text!
   - No errors/disfunction. Ask someone to take it for a test drive. Make sure your online portfolio can be accessed using a variety of platforms and browsers before directing anyone to your site. See if it is intuitive.

Find the Right Online Solution

You can create a unique portfolio and you don’t have to be a web designer. Find technology that you feel comfortable with (for example, blogs are a great free option, just use the ability to upload photos and write captions).

We recommend RIT students and alumni use Behance or Portfolium for your online portfolio (free to create). Be sure your Behance and Portfolium are one of the leading online platforms to showcase your work and allows potential employers to discover talent.

When signing up, be sure to use your RIT email to become part of the RIT university gallery showcase page.

Showing Your Work

Be prepared to show your work in different formats—lap top or tablet (with fully charged battery), printed pieces, and/or online.

Never bring a flash drive or disc and assume the interviewer will be able to import information. As you can see, there is not a lot of time to state your case. The employer may try to do most of the talking. When you do respond to questions or ask your own, your statements should be concise and organized without being too brief.

It Starts Before You Even Say Hello

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

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

How’s Your Small Talk Vocabulary?

Many recruiters will begin the interview with some small talk. Topics may range from the weather to sports and will rarely focus on anything that brings out your skills. Nonetheless, you are still being evaluated. Recruiters are trained to evaluate candidates on many different points. It is important to make sure you communicate on an informal basis. This means you should not only get along with the interviewer, but also be respectful of him or her.

The Recruiter Has the Floor

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

As the interview turns to talk about your qualifications, be prepared to deal with aspects of your background that could be construed as negative, i.e., low grade point average, no participation in outside activities, no related work experience. It is up to you to convince the recruiter that although these points appear negative, positive attributes can be found in them. A low GPA could stem from having to fully support yourself through college; you might have no related work experience, but plenty of experience that shows you to be a loyal and valued employee. Many times recruiters will ask why you chose the major you did or what your career goals are. These questions are designed to determine your goal direction. Employers seek people who have direction and motivation. This can be demonstrated by your answers to these innocent-sounding questions.

When the interview is over, you will walk out the door. The conclusion of the interview usually lasts five minutes and is very important. During this time the recruiter is judging your overall performance.

It’s important to remain enthusiastic and courteous. Often the conclusion of the interview is indicated when the recruiter stands up. However, if you feel the interview has reached its conclusion, feel free to stand up first. Shaker the recruiter’s hand and thank him or her for considering you. Being forthright is a quality that employers will respect, indicating that you have presented your case and the decision is now up to the employer.

Expect the Unexpected

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

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

Evaluations Made by Recruiters

The employer will be observing and evaluating you during the interview. Eric S. Stanton, author of Successful Personal Recruitment and Selection, suggests some excellent strategies for making the most of the interview:

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

It’s Your Turn to Ask Questions

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

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

The Close, Counts, Too

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

It’s important to remain enthusiastic and courteous. Often the conclusion of the interview is indicated when the recruiter stands up. However, if you feel the interview has reached its conclusion, feel free to stand up first. Shaker the recruiter’s hand and thank him or her for considering you. Being forthright is a quality that employers will respect, indicating that you have presented your case and the decision is now up to the employer.

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INTERVIEWING
Ten Rules of Interviewing

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

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

1. Keep your answers brief and concise. If asked to give more detail, limit your answers to two to three minutes per question. Tape yourself and see how long it takes you to fully answer a question.
2. Include concrete, quantifiable data. Interviewers tend to talk in generalities. Unfortunately, generalities often fail to convince interviewers that the applicant has assets. Include measurable information and provide details about specific accomplishments when discussing your strengths.
3. Repeat your key strengths three times. It’s essential that you comfortably and confidently articulate your strengths. Explain how the strengths relate to the company’s or department’s goals and how they might benefit the potential employer. If you repeat your strengths then they will be remembered and—if supported with quantifiable accomplishments—they will more likely be believed.
4. Prepare five or more success stories. In preparing for interviews, make a list of your skills and key assets. Then reflect on past jobs and pick out one or two instances when you used those skills successfully.
5. Put yourself on their team. Alify yourself with the prospective employer by using the employer’s name and products or services. For example, “As a member of __________ and __________, I would carefully analyze the __________ and __________.” Show that you are thinking like a member of the team and will fit in with the existing environment. Be careful though not to say anything that would offend or be taken negatively. Your research will help you in this area.
6. Image is often as important as content. What you look like and how you say something are just as important as what you say. Studies have shown that 65 percent of the conveyed message is nonverbal; just as important as what you say. Studies have shown that 65 percent of the conveyed message is nonverbal. Your attire, grooming, and first impressions all contribute to your overall message. The way you present your personality will more likely be believed.
7. Ask questions. The types of questions you ask and the way you ask them can make a tremendous impression on the interviewer. Good questions require advanced preparation. Just as you plan how you would answer an interviewer’s questions, write out specific questions you want to ask. Then look for opportunities to ask them during the interview.
8. Don’t ask about benefits or salary. The interview process is a two-way street whereby you and the interviewer assess each other to determine if there is an appropriate match.
9. Maintain a conversational flow. By consciously maintaining a conversational flow—a dialogue instead of a monologue—you will be perceived more positively. Use feedback questions at the end of your answers and use body language and voice intonation to create a conversational interchange between you and the interviewer.
10. Research the company, product lines and competitors. Research will provide information to help you decide whether you’re interested in the company and important data to refer to during the interview.

In Summary

Because of its importance, interviewing requires advance preparation. Only you will be able to positively affect the outcome. You must be able to compete successfully with the competition for the job you want. In order to do that, be certain you have considered the kind of job you want, why you want it and how you qualify for it. You also must face reality: Is the job attainable? In addition, recognize what it is employers want in their candidates. They want “can do” and “will do” employees. Recognize and use the following factors to your benefit as you develop your sales presentation. In evaluating candidates, employers consider the following factors:

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

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

Questions Asked by Employers

Personal
1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your hobbies?
3. Why did you choose to interview with our organization?
4. Describe your ideal job.
5. What can you offer us?
6. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?
7. Can you name some weaknesses?
9. Have you ever had any failures? What did you learn from them?
10. Of which three accomplishments are you most proud?
11. Where is your role model? Why?
12. How does your college education or work experience relate to this job?
13. What motivates you most in a job?
14. Have you had difficulty getting along with a former professor/supervisor/coworker and how did you handle it?
15. Have you ever spoken before a group of people? How large?
16. Why should we hire you rather than another candidate?
17. What do you know about our organization (products or services)?
18. Where do you want to be in five years? Ten years?
19. Do you plan to return to school for further education?

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

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

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

Before you begin interviewing, think about these questions and possible responses and discuss them with a counselor or a career advisor. Conduct mock interviews and be sure you are able to communicate clear, unlearned answers to interviewers.

Visit our website at rit.edu/emcs/oce/student/interviewing
INTERVIEWING

Are You Ready for a Behavioral Interview?

“Tell me about a time when you were on a team, and one of the members wasn’t carrying his or her weight.”

This is one of the leading questions in your job interview, and you could be in for a behavioral interview. Based on the premise that the best way to predict future behavior is to determine past behavior, this style of interviewing is popular among recruiters.

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

Behavioral vs. Traditional Interviews

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

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

✓ Expect the interviewer to probe further and will not allow you to theorize or generalize about events.

✓ The interviewer will ask you to provide details and will not allow you to theorize or generalize about events.

✓ The interviewer will be a more structured process that will concentrate on areas that are important to the interviewer, rather than allowing you to concentrate on areas that you may feel are important.

✓ Most interviewers will be taking notes throughout the interview.

The behavioral interviewer has been trained to objectively collect and evaluate information and works from a profile of desired behaviors that are needed for success on the job. Because the behaviors a candidate has demonstrated in previous positions are likely to be repeated, they will test for shared situations in which you may or may not have exhibited these behaviors. Your answers will be tested for accuracy and consistency. If you are an entry-level candidate with no previous related experience, the interviewer will look for behaviors in situations similar to those of the target position:

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

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

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

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

"Can you give me an example?" 

"What did you do?" 

"What did you say?" 

"What were you thinking?" 

"How did you feel?" 

"What was your role?" 

"What was the result?" 

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

How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

✓ Recall recent situations that show favorable behaviors or actions, especially those involving coursework, work experience, leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning and customer service.

✓ Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to give details of how you behaved.

✓ Be sure each story has a beginning, a middle and an end, i.e., be ready to describe the situation, your action and the result or outcome.

✓ Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable).

✓ Be honest. The interviewer will find out if your story is built on a weak foundation.

✓ Be specific. Don’t generalize about several events; give a detailed accounting of one.

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

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

Use the STAR Method as You Prepare

STAR answer Example from above
S Describe a Situation Working on a team
T Describe a Task Building a canoe out of concrete
A Describe the Action you took Offered help to team mate who was struggling (leadership), arranged tutoring (problem solving).
R Describe the Result Team mate was supported, project completed for a grade.

Don’t Forget the Basics

It will always be important to put your best foot forward and make a good impression on the interviewer with appropriate attire, grooming, a firm handshake and direct eye contact. Since the behavioral interviewer is looking for past actions only, all you need to do next remember your own past. Using your STAR stories, highlight the skills the employer is seeking that you possess. There is no substitute for promptness, courtesy, preparation, enthusiasm and a positive attitude.

INTERVIEWING

Technical Interviews

A part of the interview process for engineering, computing or other technical positions, you should expect to encounter technical questions as part of the interview or an entire interview dedicated to technical aspects of the job. Employers want to evaluate your knowledge or skills in the areas that are most relevant to the position for which you are being interviewed.

How to Prepare for Technical Interviews or Questions

Review the job description: Make a list of the skills and requirements that will be needed as part of the job. Think about your skills and experience in relation to the job description. Where are your strengths? Did you learn and use those skills in a lab or project or on a past co-op? Where are your weaknesses? Can you brush up on those skills prior to the interview? How would you learn those skills before the job starts?

• Study: A technical interview or technical questions are like an exam. Review old labs and projects, keeping in mind the job description. Look for possible technical questions in what you’ve already learned. Search online for examples of technical questions and answer them.

• Practice the answering process: In the interview you may be asked to solve problems on paper or on a white board. Practice explaining the steps needed to solve the problem while you are working through the question.

During the Interview

Be sure to write the question or problem down, verify your assumptions about the problem and don’t be afraid to ask for clarification. You must have as much information as you can before you start answering a question. For example, if an interviewer asks you design a house, you’ll need to ask for: validation: is the house going to be a single house or a multi-family house? Memory: what was the size? Speed? Configuration Process technology? What is the difference between = and == in C? What is the difference between a = and == in C? Memory: What types C#C#MS memories have you designed? What were those size? Speed? Configuration Process technology? Electronics Hardware: You have two switches to control the light in the long corridor. You want to be able to turn the light on the entrance, the corridor and turn it off at the other end. Do the wiring circuit.

Brain Teaser Questions

Brain teaser questions are a special sub-group of technical questions. On the surface, these questions do not seem to be related to the job or the skills listed in the job description. The interview wants to see how well you analyze the problem, evaluate your options and come up with a solution. An example would be: “Why is a manhole cover round?”

To prepare, do an internet search for brain teaser questions and familiarize yourself with examples. Don’t try to prepare answers for every question you find. Your goal is to be able to recognize a brain teaser question and have a process for coming up with an answer. Most of all, stay calm!

General Interview Preparation

Review the information available for interview preparation overall: Rules for being on time, dressing for success, eye contact and posture, etc. is just as important in a technical interview. Don’t focus on the technical aspect so much that you forget everything else!
Case Study Interviews

INTERVIEWING

Case interviews are a crucial part of the hiring process. Designed to test an applicant’s knowledge of business and financial models, their ability to think fast, and sometimes even how well they work as a part of a team, the case interviews can be a grueling experience. In this competitive job market, you need all the preparation you can get. And the case interview is the biggest hurdle individual’s face.

Simply put, a case interview is the analysis of a business question. Unlike most other interview questions, it is an interactive process. Your interviewer will present you with a business problem and ask you for your opinion. Your job is to ask the interviewer logical questions that will permit you to make a detailed recommendation. The majority of case interviewers don’t have a specific answer that you, the candidate, are expected to give. What the interviewer is looking for is a thought process that is both analytical and creative.

Case interviews vary somewhat in their format. The classic and most common type of case interview is the business case, in which you’re presented with a business scenario and asked to analyze it and make recommendations. Most cases are presented in oral form, though some involve handouts or slides, and a few are entirely written. Another variation on the case interview is the group-case interview, where three to six candidates are grouped together and told to solve a case cooperatively. Consultants from top consulting firms now ask candidates to do presentations, and in this format they may allow you a couple of hours to prepare your PowerPoint show. They will try to arrange site visits for several candidates to take place at the same time, so there may not be much flexibility… but you’ll never know if the employer is flexible unless you ask.

1. An invitation to an on-site interview is NOT a guarantee of a job offer. It is a chance to examine whether or not you will be a good match for the job and for the organization.
2. If invited to an on-site interview, respond promptly if you are really interested in this employer. Decline politely if you are not. Never go on an on-site interview for the sake of the trip. Document the name and phone number of the person coordinating your trip. Verify who will be handling trip expenses. Most medium- and large-size companies (as well as many smaller ones) will pay your expenses, but others will not. This is a very important, because expenses are handled in various ways: 1) the employer may handle all expenses and travel arrangements; 2) you handle your expenses and arrangements (the employer may assist with this), and the employer will reimburse you later; 3) the employer may offer an on-site interview, but will not pay for your travel.
3. Know yourself and the type of job you are seeking with this employer. Don’t say, “I am willing to consider anything you have.”
4. Thoroughly research the potential employer. Read annual reports, newspaper articles, trade journals, etc. Many companies have websites where you can read their mission statements, find out about long-term goals, read recent press releases, and even view corporate photos. Don’t limit your research only to company-controlled information. The internet can be a valuable investigative tool. You may uncover key information that may influence—positively or negatively—your decision to pursue employment with a given organization.
5. Bring extra copies of your resume, copies of any paperwork you may have forwarded to the employer: names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of your references; an updated college transcript; a copy of your best paper as a writing sample; a notebook, a black and/or blue pen for filling out forms and applications; and names and addresses of past employers.
6. Bring extra money and a change of clothes. Also, have the names and phone numbers of those who may be meeting you in your case plans change unexpectedly. Anything can happen and you need to be ready for emergencies.

The Site Visit/Interview: One Step Closer

While on-campus screening interviews are important, on-site visits are where jobs are won or lost. After an on-campus interview, strong candidates are usually invited to visit the employer’s facility. Work with the employer to schedule the on-site visit at a mutually convenient time. Sometimes employers will try to arrange site visits for several candidates to take place at the same time, so there may not be much flexibility… but you’ll never know if the employer is flexible unless you ask.

A site visit is a two-way street. You are there to evaluate the employer and to determine if your expectations are met for job content, company culture and values, organizational structure, and lifestyle (both at work and leisure). Take time to evaluate how the employees interact, and also assess the physical work environment.

Take note of how the employees interact, and also assess the physical work environment.

10. Soon after the site visit, record your impressions of your performance. Review the business cards of those you met or write the information in your notebook before leaving the facility. You should have the names, titles, addresses and phone numbers of everyone who was involved in your interview so you can determine which individuals you may want to contact about case interview information. A thank-you letter should be written to the person(s) who will be making the hiring decision. Stay in touch with the employer after you’ve pursued a career with them.

Written by Roseanne R. Renley, Career Services, New Mexico State University.
Choosing Between Job Offers

Corporate culture comprises the attitudes, experiences, beliefs and values of an organization. What’s the hierarchy of the organization? Is there a dress code? Is overtime paid? Do they value creativity? Is it more important to have the opportunity to discuss the terms of your employment? Negotiations may be uncomfortable or unsettling because you tend to approach them with a win-win, take-all I-win counterproductive to the concept of negotiations.

Factor in Benefits

There are three aspects to a work environment: 1) the physical workspace, 2) the “corporate culture” of the employer, and 3) the “corporate culture” of the employer. Your boss and fellow co-workers make up the last part of the work environment. Hopefully, you will like the people you work with, but you must, at least, be able to work well with them professionally. You may not be able to get a good sense of your potential co-workers or boss during the interview process. But if you do develop strong feelings one way or the other, be sure to take them into consideration when making your final decision.

Like What You Do

Recent college graduates are seldom able to land their dream jobs right out of school, but it’s still important that you at least like what you do before accepting a job offer, make sure you have a very good sense of what your day-to-day duties will be. What are your responsibilities? Will you be primarily working in teams or alone? Will your job be more creative or more administrative? Will your work be challenging? What level of stress can you expect with the position?

Location, Location, Location

Climate, proximity to friends and family and local population (i.e., urban vs. rural) should all be evaluated against your desires and preferences. A job located too far away from your current address, will the employer pay for part or all of your moving expenses? Even if you are looking at a local job, location can be an important consideration. At the end of each work commute will cost you time, money and probably more than a little frustration. Make sure the tradeoff is worth it.

Time Is On Your Side

It is acceptable to request two or three a day to consider a job offer and depending on the employer, the position and how long you have been working in the field, even a week of consideration time is acceptable. If you’ve already received another offer or expect to hear back from another employer, make sure you have time to consider both offers. But don’t ask for too much time to consider. Like all of us, employers don’t like uncertainty. They may be willing to accommodate your request one way or another as soon as you can.

It’s Your Call

Once you make a decision, act quickly. If you are accepting a position, notify the hiring manager by phone followed by a confirmation letter on or after the letter short and date the agreed upon salary and the start date. When rejecting an offer, make sure to thank the employer for their time and interest. It always pays to be polite in your correspondence. You never know where your career path will take you and it might just take you back to an employer you initially rejected. Written by Chris Enstrom, a freelance writer from Nashville, Ind.

The Art of Negotiating

A n area of the job search that often receives little attention is the art of negotiation. Once you have been offered a job, you have the opportunity to discuss the terms of your employment. Negotiations may be uncomfortable or unsettling because you tend to approach them with a win-win, take-all I-win counterproductive to the concept of negotiations.

Negotiation

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

Research

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

Psychological Preparation

Chances are that you will not know the person with whom you will be negotiating, but you are lucky enough to be acquainted, spend some time reviewing what you know about this person’s company, background and work habits. In most cases, however, this person will be a stranger. Since you are a fast learner or have a high GPA are usually not justifiable reasons in the eyes of the employer. Meaningful work experience or internships that have demonstrated or tested your professional skills are things that will make an employer stop and take notice. It is sometimes more comfortable for job-seekers to make this initial request in writing and plan to meet later to hash out the differences. You will need to be fair but direct and assertive at this point even though you may feel extremely vulnerable. Keep in mind that the employer has chosen you from a pool of qualified applicants, so you are not powerless as you think.

Sometimes the employer will bribe at the suggestion that there is room to negotiate. Stand firm, but encourage the employer to think about it for a day or two at which time you will discuss the details of your proposal with him/her. Do not rush the process because you are uncomfortable. The employer may be prepared to defend the terms in order to deter the negotiation. Remember, this is a series of volleys and lobbs, trade-offs and compromises that occur over a period of time. It is a process—not a singular event!

Once you have reached a conclusion with which you are both relatively comfortable, present in writing your interpretation of the agreement so that if there is any question, it will be addressed immediately. Negotiation, by definition, implies that each side will do. Do not perceive it as an ultimatum. You can still accept any of your requests—and realistically, he or she can do that—you will still have the option of accepting the original offer provided you have maintained a positive, professional relationship during your exchanges. You can always re-enter negotiations after you have demonstrated your worth to the organization.

Money Isn’t Everything

There are many things you can negotiate besides salary. For example, benefits can be used to sweeten the bargain or the Compensation package. Benefits can range from paid personal leave to discounts on the company’s products and services. They constitute more than just a sugar on the cake, they may be better than the cake itself! In addition, benefits packages include health insurance, paid vacation and personal/sick days. Companies may offer such benefits as child care, elder care or use of the company jet for family vacations. Other motivational benefits include disability and life insurance and a variety of retirement plans. Some organizations offer investment and stock options as well as relocation reimbursement and tuition credits for continued education. Written by Lily Macext, Career Counselor, Career Services, University of California, Santa Barbara.
The following is a selection of cities where many graduating students accept offers. The cost of living index is based on the composite price of groceries, housing, utilities, transportation, health care, clothing and entertainment in each city listed. Use the calculation to compare salaries in different cities. For further information about the data below, please refer to www.bestplaces.net/cost-of-living.

To compare information from other sources, refer to these websites: www.salary.com and www.homefair.com/real-estate/salary-calculator.asp.

**Salary Comparison Equation**

City #1 \( \times \) Salary = $_______

City #2

What is the New York City equivalent of a $50,000 salary in Chicago?

New York City 168 \( \times \) $50,000 = $81,553

Chicago 103

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Average City, USA 100
Boise, ID 107
Boston, MA 100
Buffalo, NY 74
Burlington, VT 124
Baltimore, MD 88
Boston, MA 141
Bisbee, ID 107
Bloomington, IN 102
Chapel Hill, NC 128
Charleston, SC 109
Chattanooga, TN 88
Cheyenne, WY 103

Montgomery, AL 99
Phoenix, AZ 99
Portland, OR 99
Salt Lake City, UT 82
San Antonio, TX 92
San Francisco, CA 143
Springfield, IL 87
Minneapolis, MN 108
Chardon, OH 98
Houston, TX 98

Little Rock, AR 88
South Bend, IN 83
St. Louis, MO 84
Columbus, OH 82

Fresno, CA 105
Des Moines, IA 82
Billings, MT 107
Cleveland, OH 79

San Francisco, CA 243
Iowa City, IA 105
Omaha, NE 88
Salt Lake City, UT 115

Denver, CO 115
Kansas City, KS 85
Las Vegas, NV 99
Richmond, VA 95

New Haven, CT 113
Lexington, KY 95
Princeton, NJ 162
Seattle, WA 96

Stamford, CT 167
New Orleans, LA 99
Newark, NJ 99

Wilmington, DE 98
Portland, ME 118
Albuquerque, NM 101
Virginia Beach, VA 110

Miami, FL 119
Baltimore, MD 88
Santa Fe, NM 120

Albany, NY 102
St. Paul, MN 102
Columbia, SC 99

Atlanta, GA 97
Boston, MA 141
Albany, NY 102
St. Louis, MO 84

Honolulu, HI 199
Ann Arbor, MI 111
Buffalo, NY 74
Charleston, TN 88
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