
Welcome to CS-HU 390!

CS-HU 390: Technical Interviews, Jobs and Careers

Nilab Mousa

Motivation

- Students do not have exposure to the technical interview process
- Students underperform in interview situations
- Class site: <https://github.com/BoiseState/CS-HU390>

Goals

- Understand the technical interview process in industry
- Practice teamwork and peer feedback
- Negotiate job offers and understand the importance of managing career growth
- Demonstrate how knowledge gained in classes can be used to solve new problems

Benefits

- Help all students navigate the interview process
- Produce future fair interviewers
- Start long-term career path discussion

Upcoming Career Fairs

Virtual Career Fair: October 14 and 15, 10am–2pm, on both days

College of Engineering VIRTUAL Career Fair: Tuesday, October 27, 1-5pm

<https://career.boisestate.edu/>

<https://www.boisestate.edu/coen/news-and-events/career-fairs/>



Let's talk Resumes



Why companies want resumes?

Discussion

Tips

- Don't list everything you've ever done
 - Be strategic and prioritize
- Be honest. Don't embellish accomplishments
- Be prepared to talk about everything
- Be professional
- User-friendly name for your resume file. E.g. JaneDoeResume.pdf

Checkboxes

- ☐ Name
- ☐ Contact Info
- ☐ Objectives (optional)
- ☐ Education Information
- ☐ Skills and programming languages
- ☐ Work history
- ☐ Past projects

Contact Information

- Name
- Email address(es)
- Phone number
- Mailing address (depends)

→ Accurate Information

→ Use professional emails (fullname@host or university)

Objectives

- Some people choose to list an objective on a resume describing what sort of job they're looking for.
- You can use this as an opportunity to convey what you care about. Here are some examples:
 - “Seeking a summer internship in software engineering.”
 - “Objective: front-end software engineering position with high impact and opportunity for growth.”
 - “Design and develop experiences that bring happiness to people’s lives.”
- It's not strictly necessary to include this, but if you're strategic it can really help.

Educational History

- List Boise State University, when you're planning on graduating, and your majors /minors /emphases.
- List your GPA if it's good (usually, 3.0+). You can qualify your GPA as “CS GPA” or “Major GPA” if that makes you look better.
 - Btw, some companies expect GPA to be always listed, so if your GPA is below 3, then have other things on your resume to help your overall profile
- If you have specific relevant courses, feel free to briefly list the most important ones. Use accurate course titles and skip course numbers
- Only discuss high school if you are a freshman or you'd like someone to ask you about it during an interview.

Work History

- For each relevant job you've had in the past, briefly list the following information:
 - Name and location of the company.
 - Dates of employment.
 - Job title.
- Then, list your accomplishments (more on that in a second).
- Feel free to list work experience in other areas if you'd like to talk about it in an interview.

Work History: Accomplishments

- Use active, specific verbs.
 - “Designed,” “implemented,” “prototyped,” “tested,” “deployed,” and “maintained” are better than “worked on” or “programmed.”
- Quantify your accomplishments if possible.
 - Did you work on something that lots of people used, benefited from, or attended? If so, how many?
 - Did you save someone time or money? If so, how much?
- For tech jobs, briefly include the technologies you used.
- Be concise – it's hard to distill a whole job down to a few sentences, so try to pick the high points.

Work History: First-Timers

- By definition, you won't have any prior relevant work history when applying for a first job.
- If you're applying for a first job, feel free to discuss things like
 - other jobs you've had in other areas,
 - leadership positions in clubs or organizations,
 - independent projects you've done (if any)
- Ultimately, you're trying to show that you're **smart** and that you **work hard**. Find ways to show this.

Past Projects

- Some people have independent projects that aren't covered by their work history.
- Don't worry if you don't have any past projects – that's okay!
- If you do have projects, list
 - the name of the project,
 - who you worked with,
 - what the project was,
 - what you specifically did,
 - languages, platforms, frameworks used, and
 - (if possible) a link to the project.

Past Projects

- Be careful about listing projects from classes.
 - Class projects are more tightly scoped than independent / work projects.
 - Class projects have lots of support and starter code.
 - Recruiters and engineers may wonder why you're listing them if they're for core classes.
 - Do not put class projects on public repos -- that is academic misconduct!
- If you do want to list work you did in a class:
 - Only list class projects if the project is the work you're most proud of or, in your view, is exceptional or exemplary.
 - Clearly indicate it was a class project.
 - Clearly indicate why what you did was so awesome that it's worth listing here.
 - Include language used, group or individual project.

Technical Skills

- You should list relevant programming languages and technologies that you'd be comfortable working in.
- Be careful with what you list.
 - You may be asked to use the languages you've listed during a job interview.
 - Don't list everything you've ever seen. Just list the languages and technologies you're really comfortable with.
- It's okay to qualify languages with “familiarity with” or “some experience with.”
- You would list tools, frameworks/libraries in this section

Interests

- Do you have other interests that might be relevant to your job? Feel free to list them.
- Helps give better sense of who you are.
- Include interests judiciously; you don't need to list everything you've ever done.
- Knowledge of multiple languages is a good interest to list.
- Nifty advice: briefly describe something in a way that makes people want to learn more. For example, listing “Gourmet Cooking,” “Competitive Soccer,” or “Traveling” as hobbies might invite questions.

Formatting Advice

- Avoid small fonts. They're hard to read.
- Don't use silly fonts. They're unprofessional. Have clear separations between different topics, perhaps by using headers.
- Don't randomly **emphasize** words unless there's a good reason to do so.
- Watch out for typos, grammatical errors, and layout errors; they're distracting.
- Use whitespace strategically.
- Try not to run over one page unless you absolutely must. It's okay to be a bit short

Cover Letter

- Introduction (First Paragraph)
 - Find out hiring manager's name (LinkedIn?)
 - What position you're applying for?
 - How you found out about it?
 - What degree are you seeking?
 - Why is the company a good fit?

Cover Letter (part 2)

- Sell Your Skills (Second Paragraph)
 - Use keywords from job description in context of your experience
 - Previous job experience
 - Abilities (willingness to learn)

Cover Letter (part 3)

- Ask for interview (Third Paragraph)
 - You would love to get an interview
 - Provide your contact information
 - Let them know that you'll be in contact
 - Call back in 1-2 weeks if you don't hear back

References

- Five sample resumes from past students in the class that got good reviews from the industry
<https://github.com/BoiseState/CS-HU390/tree/master/sample-resumes>
- See similar class at Stanford, with additional useful materials:
<http://web.stanford.edu/class/cs9/>