



Lebanese American University Byblos
Spring 2018

CSC 491: Professional Experience

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1 Introduction

The *Professional Experience* course is a standalone internship-based course that provides students with the opportunity to integrate theory and practice by working in a supervised setting. The course should provide students with practical experience in the design and construction of computing systems. Students will receive incomplete grades (I) that will be changed once the student successfully completes the internship and submits the required reports and evaluations.

1.1 Course Format

The *Professional Experience* course meets weekly where students would receive training on topics that include job search, interviewing, and the effective writing of resumes and curriculum vita. Students are expected to meet once a week for the first five weeks where they would be attending lectures and develop their own resumes and cover letters. The course will also include job interviews simulations.

1.2 Course Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Apply the classroom knowledge to a corporate setting;
2. Make professional contributions to an organization where the student is placed;
3. Experience the industrial computing environment;
4. Demonstrate an understanding to the computing profession and its entrepreneurship nature;
5. Demonstrate the ability to work with supervision and with other employees.

1.3 Course Follow-up and Reporting

Students are expected to submit to the instructor at the beginning of the Fall Semester a complete report regarding that details the work that was completed at the job site in addition to a letter from the advisor that certifies that they have completed at least 60 hours. Grading is on a pass/fail basis and based on written reports that are submitted by the student and the on-site supervisor. The student will submit *two* written reports and maintain regular contact with the instructor.

Internship Offer Letter

Students are required to submit an offer letter from the industry outlining the duties and expectations during the course of the internship. The letter must also include the start date, the end date, the hours to be worked, and the name, email, and phone of the on-site supervisor. The letter is required before the end of the Spring semester.

Internship Journal

Students should keep an informal journal of activities throughout the internship. The journal should include: *tasks performed*, *interactions made with employees*, and *meetings attended*. The journal should also note any new skills, knowledge, or insights acquired or new perspectives on older skills, knowledge, or insights. The journal is due upon the completion of 30 hours.

Internship Summary

The internship final report summarizes the internship experience by identifying the learning experiences and contributions to the organization served. In specific,

1. Acquired skills and abilities;
2. Operational details;
3. specify skills that were developed during the internship;
4. The contribution was made to the organization during the internship;
5. The highlights of the internship and how the experience could have been improved.

The final report is due in the first week of the Fall semester, at the latest.

Supervisor Evaluation

The supervisor evaluation report is submitted by the student's immediate internship supervisor reporting on the student's performance and fulfillment of duties as outlined in the Internship Offer Letter. The final report is due in the first week of the Fall semester, at the latest.

Writing a Cover Letter

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2.1 Objective

A cover letter is a vital tool in marketing yourself to prospective employers for several reasons:

- An effective cover letter will draw attention to your qualifications and experiences that are most relevant to the position for which you are applying.
- Employers often use letters to assess the written communication skills that you will need for any position.
- A letter provides you the opportunity to convey to a potential employer your interest, enthusiasm, and other personal attributes that are not easily expressed in a resume alone.

Cover letters can play an important role in helping you gain interviews. For these reasons, it is important that you prepare your written job search correspondence with as much care as you used when constructing your resume.

2.2 Components

A cover letter should have the following components:

1. Why you are writing and how you learned about the organization or opportunity
2. Why you are interested
3. Why you are qualified and would be a good match for the position
4. Do not restate what is on your resume
5. Emphasize personal attributes/strengths related to qualifications for the position

2.3 When should I send a cover letter?

Pay attention to times when you need to send a cover letter to a potential employer or contact. A cover letter should convey your interest and indicate that you are a “match” for the position.

2.4 How do I begin to compose the letter?

Use your own words! Resist the temptation to compose your letter simply by replacing a few words in the attached samples. Remember, the purpose of your letter is to showcase your individual strengths and your own written communication skills. Use the sample as a guide, but be unique.

2.5 To whom should the cover letter be addressed?

If possible, address the cover letter to a specific person, not "Dear Sir/Madam" or "To Whom It May Concern." If contact information is not available, use a position title (e.g. Dear Internship Coordinator or Dear Recruitment Manager). Make sure to use current information.

2.6 How long is a cover letter?

Cover letters should not exceed three paragraphs or one page in length. They should be clear and use concise sentences and short paragraphs. Use proper business format when constructing your cover letter. You may use the following guidelines:

1. PARAGRAPH ONE: State the reason why you are writing and the specific position you are applying for. Indicate how you learned about the employer and/or opening, and mention the name of any referring person. Explain briefly why you want to work for this practice/hospital/organization (based on your knowledge/research) and why you are a good fit for the position.
2. PARAGRAPH TWO: Briefly explain your background (education/ experience/leadership) and why you are interested and qualified (knowledge and skills). Summarize some of your strongest qualifications as they relate to the position/position description (be specific and heartfelt). State clearly why you are the best candidate.
3. CLOSING PARAGRAPH: Explain what you would gain and how you could be an asset to the position/organization. State that you look forward to an interview and/or talking to someone in more detail about the position and your qualifications. End the letter with an appropriate closing such as "Thank you for your time and consideration" or "Thank you for giving my application full consideration."

2.7 Cover Letter Tips

When you apply via email, there are a couple of options. You can write your cover letter directly into an email message (the same rules for writing a proper letter apply) and attach your resume. Or, you can attach both your resume and letter as separate documents to the email address. Send yourself a copy so you'll have a copy for your records. When you send your cover letter in the body of the email, be sure to include your contact information (email address, phone number, etc.) in your signature, so it's easy for the hiring

manager to get in touch with you. The most important part of sending an email cover letter is to follow the employer's instructions. If the job posting says to include your cover letter and resume as an attachment, attach Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF files to your message. Save the files with your name, so they don't get mixed up with other applicant's materials. Be sure to include a subject line in your email with the position for which you are applying and your name. Include a signature with all your contact information (name, address, phone, and email address) so it's easy for the hiring manager to get in touch with you.

2.8 Proof Read

Again. Using a spell checker is not enough. Many recruiters will dismiss even the most qualified candidate if there is one typo in a cover letter or resume. Reread your letter two or three times, and then give it to someone else who is a strong writer to review. Even if your letter is free of typos, poor grammar also makes a bad impression.

2.9 Thank You Note

Follow-up with employers is a critical step in the interviewing process. It is important to send a thank you note to employers immediately after the interview. A well-written, timely thank you letter tells an employer something important about your personality—that you are courteous and thoughtful. Thank you letters are used to reconfirm and reinforce your interest in a position. They can also provide a format where you can clarify answers you gave in an interview. Email is the most common method of sending a thank-you letter. Sending a thank you letter via email can be useful for getting your correspondence to an employer quickly, particularly if you expect to hear back from the employer soon after the interview. Additional options include mailing a neatly handwritten thank-you letter on a note card or typing a formal thank-you letter.

General Guidelines

- Always send a thank you letters to people who have spent time interviewing you or providing you with information about careers.
- If more than one person interviewed you, a thank you letter should be addressed to the key decision maker and another to the coordinator of the visit. Both letters may be added to your candidate file, so personalize each letter.
- In your letter to the coordinator, be sure to thank by name each of the individuals with whom you interviewed.
- Reinforce how you see yourself fitting into the organization and satisfying the requirements of the position. Creating a "match" between yourself and the position.
- Although this is a business letter, be personal to the extent that you are comfortable. You may wish to refer to one of the highlights or one of the specific points discussed

during the interview; by doing so, you will create a more personal letter and may refresh the interviewer's memory of you and the interview.

- Keep it brief?no more than one page and three to four paragraphs.
- If you are sending a thank-you letter by mail, make sure to use appropriate stationary.

Sample Thank You email

Dear Ms. Taylor,

Thank you very much for inviting me to interview with Northrop Grumman Sperry Marine Systems for the position of Engineer I ? Dept. 260. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting and interviewing with you, Mr. Miller, and Mr. Davis. I appreciated the time you spent getting to know me and my qualifications for this position. While speaking with each of you, I became even more excited about the opportunity and would like to reiterate my interest in working with and contributing to Northrop Grumman Sperry Marine Systems. Thank you very much, again and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Sean Smith

2.10 Accepting or Declining a Job Offer

Confirm your acceptance or decline of an offer in writing. Letters responding to offers are used to maintain positive, professional relationships with employers. In general, always respond to an offer by telephone first, and then follow up with a letter. The letter should include basic details such as job title, starting location and date, as well as a statement of appreciation for the opportunity to join the organization and become part of the "team." Other details such as salary, relocation agreement, benefits, and other bonuses should be included in your offer package you receive from the employer.

If you are declining an offer, make sure you include a statement of appreciation for the offer along with the reason for declining the offer. Make sure that you write a statement, if appropriate, that leaves the door open for some possible future contact. Use proper business format and be brief when constructing an acceptance or decline letter.

3

Appendix

Network Your Way Through College and Beyond

What is Networking?

- Developing relationships or contacts
- Building partnerships that support you while you map out your career goals
- Sharing information
- Ongoing and reciprocal in nature

What it Isn't:

- A process of making cold-calls
- Using people to get jobs

Why Bother?

- Networking is not just about who you know but who knows you, you already have contacts who can become the basis for your network.
- Networking can build your base of contacts for future reference and provide a support network as you explore and pursue career goals.
- A single personal connection can lead to multiple opportunities for professional and personal growth, from job leads to lasting friendships.
- Networking helps you explore new career options and can help you keep up with changes in your field.

How to Network Effectively

Ideally, networking starts long before a job or internship search. Contacts are not only relatives and friends, but also your neighbors, former high school/college classmates, Penn State faculty/staff members, and Penn State alumni. For those of you who have been working or interning—other contacts can include current and former co-workers and supervisors. In essence you are already networking through your daily interactions with others. When looking to expand beyond your existing network, consider these steps:

1. Establish Your Goal

Before contacting anyone, decide on what kind of information or assistance you would like and can expect from the people you meet. For instance:

- Information on a career
- Referrals to specific job openings
- Advice on the best strategies to break into a career
- A secondary contact

2. Do Your Research

Interviewing and networking conversations are less stressful if you are prepared. By doing this, you will feel more confident, you'll not be at a loss for words, and you will make a positive impression.

- Make sure you do your homework on a company before you meet with one of its employees.
- Before you meet with someone make sure you know what questions you'd like to ask (see Informational Interviewing on page 10 for ideas).
- Remember, the more prepared you are, the more productive the networking experience.

3. Make Contact

When you contact someone, give them some information about you. For example, let them know that you'll be graduating soon, what your specific skills are, and the type of position/organization that you are seeking. During your conversation you might:

- Ask for information and advice for someone seeking to enter their field or find employment with their organization.
- Seek suggestions for other colleagues to talk to who have a connection to the industry or position that you are seeking. Ask them if you may use their name as a referral.
- Offer to send them a copy of your resume and ask them to keep you in mind if they should hear of any openings.

4. Send a Thank-you Note or Email

The person that you have spoken with has given you their time; a valuable resource. Express your appreciation for the meeting/interview with a note of thanks and include any actions that you will take as a result of the meeting. This step should not be overlooked, it is one tangible way that you'll begin to build your network of contacts.

5. Develop a Contacts File

Using a database or index cards, develop a contacts file in which you maintain all pertinent information about that individual. Record information from your meeting with that person as well as your anticipated next action. Through this step, you are building your relationships with contacts who might be able to help with future career opportunities.

6. Set Goals for Ongoing Networking & Follow Up

The Penn State Alumni Association offers many opportunities to connect with alumni including LionLink and Nittany Networking Events in key cities. Think about how many people you will try to call in one week, how many meetings you should attempt to schedule, and how many networking events you'll attend. As part of your goal setting, make sure that you follow up with existing contacts. Be sure to let your initial contacts know of the outcomes of your meetings. In other words, keep your contacts informed about your progress and any success you have had.

7. Always Reciprocate

When you ask others for help, be prepared to return the favor.

Successful Networkers Are:

- Open-minded and willing to meet new people
- Prepared and persistent
- Informed and up-to-date on current events (i.e., news, industry, etc.).
- Respectful of everyone they meet and thank their contacts for their time
- Able to set clear, realistic, and achievable goals
- Not afraid to ask for the information they need

I'm Ready, How Do I Find Contacts to Talk to?

- Use LionLink – a database of alumni who have volunteered their time to serve as a networking resource for students and other alumni, ready to answer questions about what they do and where they work, and serve as a career resource. For more information on LionLink, please visit studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/alumni/LionLink.shtml, or email lionlink@psu.edu.
- Engage professionals with LinkedIn and/or other social media - remember to keep your profile and interactions professional. Any information that is posted is fair game for employers and the public at large to view.
- Attend information sessions hosted by various organizations.
- Watch for events featuring guest speakers within certain fields through your academic department or student organizations, etc.

Sample Contacts File Entry

Contact Person: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Preferred Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Date Contacted: ____/____/____ by phone by email in person

Date Thank You Sent: ____/____/____

Additional Recommended Contacts: _____

Gain Experience and Develop Marketable Skills

Ways to Gain Experience

Take a Class

One easy way to get a feel for a career area is to take an academic course that will give an overview of the field. If you think that you might be interested in a business career, consider taking a course in accounting, finance, marketing, etc. If you think you'd like to do human service work, enroll in some health and human development, psychology, or sociology courses. The more you get involved in the course through individual projects, group work, and research papers, the more you will gain.

Career Planning Courses

Various career development courses are offered across the Penn State system, such as:

- Effective Career Decision-Making (CN ED 100)
- Preparation for Career Management (B A 420)
- Job Search Skills and Strategies for Educators (CN ED 303)
- Job Search Skills and Strategies for Technical Careers (AG 100/SC 101)
- Job Search Skills and Strategies for Non-Technical Careers (L A 401)

Topics include selecting an academic major, determining career goals, identifying potential employers, formulating effective job search strategies, preparing a resume, and improving interview techniques. Please consult the Schedule of Courses at schedule.psu.edu for availability by campus and semester.

Study Abroad

While most students consider study abroad an exciting way to incorporate travel into an academic program, it's also a great way to gain experience. Think of the skills you may learn: navigating a foreign country, complete with new currency and cultural norms; a sense of independence as you explore on your own, thousands of miles away from home; an appreciation of diversity as you are challenged to integrate your background and upbringing with those from other cultures. Not to mention the initiative it took for you to plan and execute such a significant event.

Participate in Extracurricular Activities

The activities you engage in outside of your academic coursework can be more than just fun. They are an excellent way to explore your career-related interests and develop many skills you will be able to transfer later to any job. If you think you may be interested in working with children, the elderly, a housing authority, etc., check out the volunteer options available in your community. If newspaper writing is a possible career choice, consider joining the staff of your campus newspaper. If you like to lead people and projects, consider getting involved with student government. Check out clubs.psu.edu for a complete listing of student organizations. There are hundreds of extracurricular activities in which you can become involved. Additionally, the contributions you make to an activity, whether it is leading meetings, chairing a committee, developing a project, recruiting new members, or organizing a conference, can be related to many potential future employment goals.

Volunteer

Many nonprofit organizations will enthusiastically accept the services of an industrious, cheerful, and interested volunteer. Becoming a volunteer shows a potential employer that you have initiative and a commitment to your community. Find organizations that you can relate to – connecting through personal values or professional aspirations – and give it your all. Not only will you give back to your community, but you will gain experience and make long-lasting networking contacts.

Join a Sports Team

Don't underestimate your involvement in physical activity as being related to your future career goals. Being a member of a sports team, whether intramural, club or Division I, will help you develop many skills that employers are seeking: time management to balance courses with practices and games; work ethic to continually improve your performance; adaptability to constantly adjust your game plan; and, of course, don't forget the obvious, teamwork.

Look for Summer Jobs/Part-Time Work/Temping

Summer jobs may not be obviously related to your long-term career goals; however, they may still be beneficial in providing income and/or employment. Some students may need to work in jobs that provide decent wages such as construction, sales, or hospitality services.



In these situations, you can develop skills transferable to professional careers after college. For example, a server could benefit from acquiring experience in training other employees in a restaurant or customer service skills.

Explore Undergraduate Research Opportunities

Penn State offers a variety of opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in research projects. These experiences allow you to work with faculty and staff in your area of interest, build specific skills, and further explore your career options. Check with an advisor in your academic department to see what type of research is being conducted or go to undergradresearch.psu.edu to review projects listed by academic college and department. If you are considering graduate school, helping out in a lab is a great way to get introduced to what may be expected when you continue your education. You will gain a deeper understanding of the research process, as well as knowledge of cutting edge developments within your field.

Apply for Experiential Internships or Cooperative Education

Internships are intended to provide professional experience related to your major and/or career plans. Internships may be for credit and/or paid and vary in length. Many internships are offered for one semester or over the summer, although some may provide more lengthy experiences by spanning a summer and an additional semester.

Because of the size and diversity of academic programs at Penn State, resources for assisting students in obtaining internships can be quite varied. Most academic departments and colleges have specific internship offices. Be sure to check with your academic college/department to identify the resources and programs in place.

Cooperative education is often confused with internships since it, too, provides professional relevant experience. However, cooperative education differs from internships in that it is an alternating work experience blended into the academic program, typically within the science and engineering disciplines. Therefore, a student will leave the University multiple times during the baccalaureate degree program to obtain cooperative experience with an employer.

Workshops and Seminars

Several hundred seminars and outreach programs are offered each year on a wide range of topics such as career planning, resume writing, interview skills, job and internship search strategies, and graduate school applications. Workshops are posted on Career Services' website as they are offered.

Also, Career Services staff members respond to requests for programs from student organizations, residence hall floors/areas, and faculty. If you are a member of an organization and wish to schedule a presentation on one of the topics above with a focus on your organization's career needs, simply contact the Career Services office at 865-5131 or careerworkshops@psu.edu.

Classes related to my areas of interest:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Organizations I am in or would like to join:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Other opportunities I'd like to explore:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

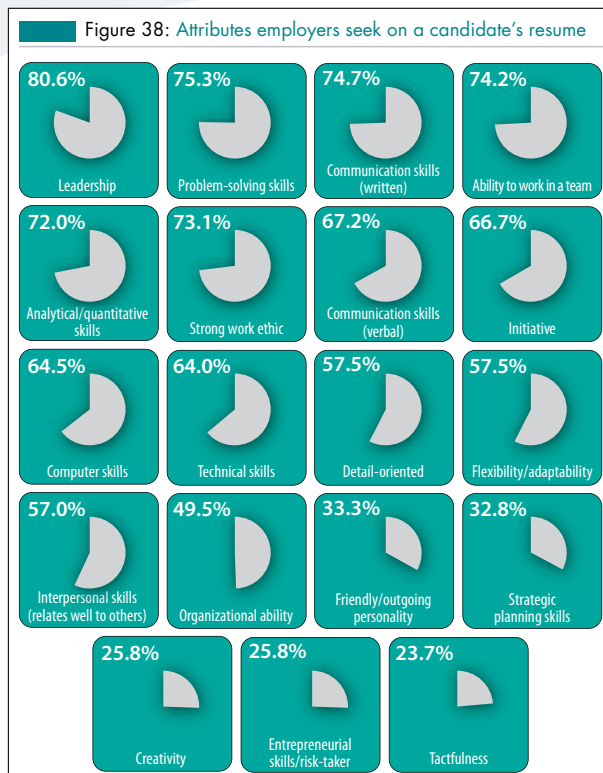


Figure 39: Influence of attributes

Attribute	2013 Average Influence Rating*	2012 Average Influence Rating*
Has held leadership position	4.0	3.9
Major	4.0	3.9
High GPA (3.0 or above)	3.8	3.6
Has been involved in extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, student government, etc.)	3.6	3.7
School attended	3.1	3.0
Has done volunteer work	2.8	3.1
Is fluent in a foreign language ¹	2.4	N/A
Has studied abroad ¹	2.3	N/A

¹Attribute not included in prior years' surveys.

*5-point scale, where 1=No influence at all, 2=Not much influence, 3=Somewhat of an influence, 4=Very much influence, and 5=Extreme influence.

Figure 42: Employers' hiring preferences relative to experience, by percent of respondents

Hiring Preference	2013	2012	2011
I prefer to hire candidates with relevant work experience	71.0%	73.7%	72.4%
I prefer to hire candidates with any type of work experience (doesn't matter if it's relevant or not, just some type of experience)	19.9%	17.5%	17.6%
Work experience doesn't typically factor into my decision when hiring a new college graduate	4.8%	4.1%	5.3%
Other	4.3%	4.6%	4.7%

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Resumes

Resumes often serve as your initial contact with employers and are the most critical item in determining whether or not you will obtain an interview. It is a brief "advertisement" of your skills, knowledge, and relevant experience. If you are seeking positions across industries, you may need to have several versions of your resume specific to each type of job you are seeking.

Ideally your resume should emphasize your strong points while expressing your uniqueness and individuality. Therefore, you should present yourself clearly, succinctly, and confidently. Use the suggestions here to develop your resume and consult the samples provided to gather ideas

Do not copy these examples verbatim!

Anita Job
123 Goingsmy Way
College Town, PA 54321
(814)123-4567
princesspower10@gmail.com

Objective

To obtain a challenging position with a growing company where I can utilize my skills and knowledge

Education

Pennsylvania State University, Class of 2015

Major: HDFS, GPA 3.2

Minor: Psych

**Must support self by working to pay for school

Courses: HDFS 239, HDFS 315, PSYCH 212, PSYCH 281

Experience

XYZ Agency, Inc., Sept. 11 - current

As a Life Skills Volunteer, I provide direct service for delinquent youth. I am responsible for providing physical care, ensuring safety, and monitoring daily activities. I work with the Life Skills Coordinator to carryout treatment plans.

Human Resources Job Shadow, Pittsburgh, PA, 12/2011 & 3/2012

- Over semester and spring break, I followed an HR Professional around the office. I sat in on various meetings and learned about Human Resources.

Jobs:

Findlay Dining Commons, Server

Stahl Community Pool, Lifeguard

Activities:

THON

Typically, employers spend less than 15 seconds reviewing your resume before making the decision to consider you for an interview.

OBJECTIVE:

- One or two concise, easy-to-read statements focusing on the type of position you are seeking, the skills you want to utilize, and or the tasks in which you want to become involved.
- Avoid cliches or jargon, such as, "To contribute to the profitability of an employer" or "A challenging position offering opportunity for growth and advancement."

EDUCATION:

- List degrees in reverse chronological order—most recent first. Keep the information easy to scan.
- You may want to include details relevant to the job you are seeking, such as courses, special projects, a minor or area of emphasis, etc.
- Education Abroad experiences should also be listed here as well. Use the same format as your Penn State entry.
- Most employers expect to see your GPA (either overall, major or both).

Compare this resume to the one on the facing page. Both have the same information, but which do you think represents the candidate best?



Need some help?

Resume Workshops

Workshops are offered throughout each semester. No sign-up is required. See the schedule of dates, times, and locations on the Career Services website at studentaffairs.psu.edu/career. Also, an online resume workshop is available year-round through ANGEL.

Resume Review and Feedback

Drop-In Counselors can review your resume on a first-come, first-serve basis, weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or until 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays during the fall and spring semester in the Bank of America Career Services Center.

Resume Examples

The resumes on pages 23-27 are examples of different ways good resumes have been written. Additional resume examples are located on our website and in the Career Information Center, in the Bank of America Career Services Center.

GPA:

- If your cumulative GPA is a 3.0 or above, it is beneficial to list it.
- Be sure that your GPA matches what an employer would find on your official University transcript. That means no rounding up!
- If your cumulative GPA is below a 3.0, consider listing both your Major GPA and your cumulative GPA, or you may prefer to list your Major GPA alone. It is recommended that you visit with your academic advisor to discuss the best method for calculating this GPA if it is not listed on your degree audit.
- If you work a substantial amount of hours per week to pay college expenses while attending college full-time, you may include a statement highlighting this within your Education section. This kind of statement can serve as justification for a GPA that may not be an accurate representation of your true potential.

<p align="center">Anita Job 123 Goingmy Way College Town, PA 54321 (814)123-4567 abc123@psu.edu</p>					
<p>OBJECTIVE To obtain a summer internship with the administration of a social services agency where I can apply my knowledge of child development and organizational behavior</p>					
<p>EDUCATION The Pennsylvania State University May 2015 Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Studies GPA: 3.17 Minor in Psychology Work 25-30 hours per week while a full-time student in order to pay tuition and expenses</p> <p>Coursework:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Adolescent Development</td> <td>Introduction to I/O Psychology</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Family Development</td> <td>Introduction to Developmental Psychology</td> </tr> </table>		Adolescent Development	Introduction to I/O Psychology	Family Development	Introduction to Developmental Psychology
Adolescent Development	Introduction to I/O Psychology				
Family Development	Introduction to Developmental Psychology				
<p>EXPERIENCE</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> <p>XYZ Agency, Inc. Life Skills Volunteer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a range of direct services for the care and rehabilitation of delinquent youth • Instruct and monitor 25 residents during structured daily activities • Assist with the development of treatment goals for residents; implement treatment plans under supervision of Life Skills Coordinator </td> <td> <p>State College, PA Sept. 2011 - present</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <p>Human Resources, H.J. Heinz Corporation Job Shadower/Observer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gained broad exposure to a variety of departments within the human resources function at Heinz World Headquarters, a Fortune 500 company, including Benefits, Executive Personnel, Personnel/Recruiting, etc. • Completed 20-25 total hours of observation of each function within HR during winter break; encouraged to return for further shadowing opportunities over spring break following initial positive experience </td> <td> <p>Pittsburgh, PA December 2011 & March 2012</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>XYZ Agency, Inc. Life Skills Volunteer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a range of direct services for the care and rehabilitation of delinquent youth • Instruct and monitor 25 residents during structured daily activities • Assist with the development of treatment goals for residents; implement treatment plans under supervision of Life Skills Coordinator 	<p>State College, PA Sept. 2011 - present</p>	<p>Human Resources, H.J. Heinz Corporation Job Shadower/Observer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gained broad exposure to a variety of departments within the human resources function at Heinz World Headquarters, a Fortune 500 company, including Benefits, Executive Personnel, Personnel/Recruiting, etc. • Completed 20-25 total hours of observation of each function within HR during winter break; encouraged to return for further shadowing opportunities over spring break following initial positive experience 	<p>Pittsburgh, PA December 2011 & March 2012</p>
<p>XYZ Agency, Inc. Life Skills Volunteer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a range of direct services for the care and rehabilitation of delinquent youth • Instruct and monitor 25 residents during structured daily activities • Assist with the development of treatment goals for residents; implement treatment plans under supervision of Life Skills Coordinator 	<p>State College, PA Sept. 2011 - present</p>				
<p>Human Resources, H.J. Heinz Corporation Job Shadower/Observer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gained broad exposure to a variety of departments within the human resources function at Heinz World Headquarters, a Fortune 500 company, including Benefits, Executive Personnel, Personnel/Recruiting, etc. • Completed 20-25 total hours of observation of each function within HR during winter break; encouraged to return for further shadowing opportunities over spring break following initial positive experience 	<p>Pittsburgh, PA December 2011 & March 2012</p>				
<p>ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Findlay Dining Commons, Server</td> <td>Fall 2011</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stahl Community Pool, Lifeguard</td> <td>Summers 2010 & 2011</td> </tr> </table>		Findlay Dining Commons, Server	Fall 2011	Stahl Community Pool, Lifeguard	Summers 2010 & 2011
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Appearance of Your Resume Length

- One page is the most common length, because most students lack sufficient experience for two pages. Individuals with added experience and/or degrees may need a two-page resume to present the relevant details adequately.
- Resume length may also vary by career field. Consult with professionals in your field and/or Career Services Counselors to discuss the resume length best for your situation.

Margins

- One inch margins all around are recommended to keep your resume from looking cluttered with text.
- Half inch margins may be acceptable if necessary, but no smaller.

Font

- Use a plain typeface, such as Arial or Times New Roman
- Font size should be between 10 and 12 points.
- Headings and/or your name may be emphasized by using a larger font size.
- Asterisks, bullets, underlining, boldface type and italics should be used only to make the document easier to read.

Spacing

- Use consistent spacing throughout your resume for a pleasing presentation.
- Bullet points should be single-spaced.
- Allow enough space between headings to show that a new section has begun.

CHRIS R. STUDENT
crsXXXX@psu.edu

SCHOOL ADDRESS
1855 Nittany Street
Erie, PA 16509
(814) 555-5678

HOME ADDRESS
5678 North Z Street
Anytown, PA 12345
(234) 555-8910

OBJECTIVE: To obtain an internship or co-op experience in Mechanical Engineering.

EDUCATION: **B. S. in Mechanical Engineering, May 2015**
Penn State Erie – The Behrend College, Erie, PA
GPA 3.25

Relevant Courses

Engineering Thermodynamics	Electrical Circuits and Power Distribution
Strength of Materials	System Dynamics
Fluid Flow	Technical Writing

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE: **Manufacturing Process In-class Project** Spring 2012
Sponsored by CompanyX Consumer Products, Co.

- Implemented Statistical Process Control into manufacturing process
- Responsible for trouble-shooting in the processing and packaging of over-the-counter pharmaceuticals
- As part of a team, wrote standard operating procedures for production floor to be reviewed and approved by the FDA
- Combined efforts with Quality Assurance, Research and Development, and Engineering to implement new processes
- Installed, inspected, and validated system upgrades to process control equipment

LEADERSHIP: **Landscapes Plus**, Bradford, PA June 2009-August 2009
Crew Leader

- Successfully led 5 crew members in the completion of 17 commercial and residential landscaping projects; received positive feedback from clients regarding satisfaction with results
- Promoted to Crew Leader based on performance in two previous summers as a Crew Member

ACTIVITIES: American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Member, 2011-present

- Entertainment Committee Chairperson, 2012 - 2011
- Professional Development Chairperson, 2013 - present

Independent Travel throughout Europe, Summer 2012

- Developed creative solutions to maximize travel to 5 countries on a limited budget

Big Brothers Big Sisters, Big-Brother, 2011-2012

- Served as a Big-Brother for a 7-year old boy in Erie County

SKILLS: Advanced knowledge of AutoCAD
Basic knowledge of Spanish

EXPERIENCE:

- Give details of your accomplishments and responsibilities rather than a general list of duties. Numbers make strong statements and can enhance credibility; these numbers can show volume, percentages, dollar amounts.
- Do not be discouraged if you have never had employment in your field. Instead, focus on your strengths, skills, and accomplishments.
- Summer and/or part-time work experiences can demonstrate skill sets that you have developed, even if not directly related to your career goals.
- If you have not yet gained paid work experience, community involvement, volunteer work, and extracurricular activities are all experiences that may be included in detail on a resume.

As a first-year student or sophomore, it is appropriate to include information from your high school years on a resume. However, as you continue to grow professionally and gain experiences that demonstrate increasing relevance to a particular career field, you may begin to omit items that are outdated or that no longer effectively highlight your current abilities. Typically, it is recommended that information from high school years be omitted from your professional resume by the time you begin your junior year at Penn State.

Layout

- Pre-formatted templates are easy to spot and allow little room for uniqueness.
- Starting with a blank document offers greater flexibility and more effective space usage on the page.
- Use a table or tab stops to help organize information in a visually pleasing manner.

Bullet Points

- Each bullet should be no more than 1-2 lines long.
- Use up to 5-6 bullets to describe each listed experience.
- Describe duties involved in various positions or highlight skills and qualities that you developed that are related to the position you would like to obtain.

SKILLS:

- Technology-based or computer skills, foreign language knowledge, and other field-specific skill sets and certifications are appropriate to include.
- Indicate your level of knowledge or aptitude in the skill sets you choose to highlight using qualifiers such as "Proficient in..." or "Fluent in..."
- List skills and languages with which you are familiar or have basic knowledge—just be sure to describe that level accurately. Remember—you could be tested on that knowledge in an interview!
- Special certifications relevant to your field could also be included here.

Compare this resume to the one on the facing page. Notice how the type of experience highlighted can change as a student gains more professional experience.

Type of paper

- A resume prepared carefully with a good laser printer can be very effective.
- Use good quality paper; a white or off-white shade is generally preferred.

Proofread

- Proofread your resume several times, and then have a friend or Career Counselor proofread it again.
- A mistake on your resume will leave a poor first impression with the employer.

JENNIFER C. CHAO
335 West Beaver Avenue
State College, PA 16801
jcc@psu.edu
(123) 111-2131

OBJECTIVE: To obtain a position in the field of Information Technology with specific interest in SAP

EDUCATION: The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA May 2013
Bachelor of Science in Management Information Systems
Major GPA: 3.66/4.0

Universidad de Barcelona, Seville, Spain Spring 2012
Courses in European Union Economics and Leadership in a Cross-Cultural World

EXPERIENCE: **Johnson & Johnson, New Brunswick, NJ** May 2011 – December 2011
Logistics Analyst Co-op

- Managed automated order processing to allow international customers to order directly via EDI or FTP
- Oversaw the Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI) for Global Affiliates to reduce and maintain their on-hand inventory
- Coordinated weekly orders and ensured that databases were updated with new forecasts and safety stock measurements as needed at the beginning of every month
- Analyzed international forecasts and supported the creation of a web page to be posted on the Johnson & Johnson Intranet
- Assisted in the Global Air-Freight Data collection Project (GAP) to reconsider Johnson & Johnson freight carriers and their rates

Smeal College of Business, University Park, PA August 2010 – May 2011
Undergraduate Researcher, Center for Supply Chain Research

- Assist faculty researchers in collecting data to study the effect of information technology on customer service in the transportation industry
- Gained an understanding of how e-Business supports and enhances supply chain management

SKILLS:

- Worked extensively with simulation programming languages such as Perl and ARENA
- Professionally trained in Mercia Lincs (CRP system), MFG/Pro (Manufacturing, Planning, and Costing system), and in COACT (Order Processing System)
- Accurately maintained Database Management systems

ACTIVITIES: **Penn State Asian American Student Caucus**
President, Spring 2012 – present

- Led weekly meetings and organized various events throughout the semester
- Coordinated fundraising efforts increasing club budget by 15%

Member, Spring 2012 – present

- Participated in professional development workshops on networking and resumes

Alpha Beta Chi Service/Social Sorority, Penn State Chapter
Philanthropy Chair, Fall 2010 – Spring 2011

- Organized participation in AIDS walk and Diabetes walk as well as visits to a local nursing facility in State College, PA

Member, Operations Committee, Penn State Dance Marathon (THON), Spring 2010

Resume Formats

Chronological Format

Present education and work experience in reverse chronological order, describing responsibilities and achievements under each entry. This is the most appropriate format if you have experience directly related to your career goal.

Functional Format

Your experience is explained under major skill headings, while job titles, employers, and dates are listed separately. This type of resume is especially useful when your degree or work experiences are not directly related to your career objective.

Combination Format

In many instances, the combination of both the chronological and the functional formats may be the most effective. This is especially the case when some past experiences are more directly related to future goals than others. This format allows for experiences to be separated into different categories—related and unrelated—making the strongest impact by placing the most related experiences first, regardless of the dates during which the experiences took place.

The resume on this page shows a combination format. The facing page illustrates elements of a functional resume.

Addison A. Anderson aaa0000@psu.edu (717) 555-2222	
<u>Home Address</u> 22 Oak Lane Chambersburg, PA 17222	<u>School Address</u> 101 Smith Street Middletown, PA 17057
OBJECTIVE	To obtain a full-time position in Sports Management
EDUCATION	Penn State Harrisburg, Harrisburg, PA May 2013 B.S. Finance Major G.P.A. – 3.23 <u>Relevant Courses include:</u> Financial and Managerial Accounting; Management; Statistical Foundations; Financial Management of the Business Enterprise; Risk Management of Financial Institutions; Money and Banking; Business Strategy
SPORTS EXPERIENCE	Morgan Academic Support Center for Student-Athletes, University Park, PA Summer 2013 Tutor <ul style="list-style-type: none">Learned about the challenges facing student athletes and how academics affect NCAA regulations and eligibilityTutored student-athletes in various Business and Finance courses including Financial and Managerial Accounting and Corporation Finance The Chambersburg Country Club, Chambersburg, PA Summers 2009 – 2010 Tennis Club Assistant <ul style="list-style-type: none">Prepared the tennis courts and surrounding areas for daily playSold tennis-club items to members of the country clubCoordinated and led various sporting events for members and their families
BUSINESS EXPERIENCE	Bank of America, Chambersburg, PA Summer 2012 Finance Office Assistant <ul style="list-style-type: none">Entered data on financial accounts into the customer database systemReviewed and processed summary statements for corporate clientsAnalyzed end of the month and end of the fiscal year reports and updated totals in Microsoft Excel Nationwide Insurance, Carlisle, PA Summer 2011 Assistant Web Master <ul style="list-style-type: none">Tracked and monitored the activity and hits that the website experiencedDesigned two staff-only sections of the in-house portion of the webpageDeveloped a tutorial to enable staff to enter new web pages in a consistent mannerMet weekly with the Web Master to devise a long-term plan for the website
LEADERSHIP	Penn State Harrisburg THON Chair, Penn State Dance Marathon 2011 – 2012 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Organized support for dancers of a 46-hour dance marathonHelped raise money during canning events Volleyball Captain, Penn State Harrisburg Intramurals 2009 – 2010 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Served as captain for our Intramurals volleyball teamCoordinated practices and game schedules
SPORTS ACTIVITIES	Tennis Club; Golf Club; Intramural Chair; three-year letterman in high school; First Team All-Conference in Tennis and Golf

ACTIVITIES:

- List the most relevant activities and offices held first. Include college, community, professional, and occasionally, outstanding high school activities.
- Consider adding brief explanatory details of the position and your accomplishments.
- Include hobbies and interests only if they are relevant to the job objective or if they reveal characteristics important to the job.
- This section can add individuality and flavor to your resume, so you may want to include unusual or interesting items.

HONORS/AWARDS:

- This section is optional.
- Include only if you have several honors.
- If you have only one or two honors, you can include them in a combined section along with your activities.

Action Word List:

Achieved
Administered
Advised
Advocated
Allocated
Analyzed
Anticipated
Applied
Approved
Arranged
Assessed
Assisted
Attained
Audited
Balanced
Briefed
Budgeted
Built
Calculated
Cared

Coached
Collaborated
Collected
Comforted
Communicated
Compared
Completed
Composed
Computed
Conducted
Consulted
Contributed
Converted
Coordinated
Counseled
Created
Decided
Defined
Delegated
Demonstrated
Designed
Developed
Devised
Diagnosed
Directed

Documented
Drafted
Edited
Eliminated
Enforced
Enhanced
Ensured
Established
Estimated
Evaluated
Examined
Exceeded
Expanded
Facilitated
Financed
Formulated
Fostered
Founded
Gained
Generated
Guided
Helped
Identified
Implemented
Improved

Increased
Initiated
Instructed
Integrated
Interpreted
Introduced
Invented
Investigated
Launched
Learned
Led
Maintained
Managed
Mastered
Maximized
Mediated
Mentored
Met
Minimized
Modified
Monitored
Negotiated
Observed
Obtained
Offered

Operated
Organized
Overcame
Oversaw
Participated
Partnered
Performed
Planned
Prepared
Presented
Prioritized
Produced
Programmed
Projected
Promoted
Proposed
Provided
Raised
Ran
Received
Recommended
Reduced
Reorganized
Reported
Researched

Responded
Reviewed
Revised
Screened
Served
Sold
Solved
Strategized
Streamlined
Strengthened
Studied
Succeeded
Supervised
Supported
Targeted
Taught
Teamed with
Tested
Trained
Upgraded
Utilized
Validated
Visualized
Won
Wrote

Anita Job

337 Maple Lane, Springfield, PA 19064

610-555-1111 | afjXXX@psu.edu

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a full-time public relations position within the non-profit or government industry

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Communications, May 2014 – Penn State Brandywine, Media, PA
Major GPA: 3.3; Overall GPA: 3.1

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

Public Relations Intern — Summer 2013
XYZ Transportation Institute, Chevy Chase, MD

PROJECT & EVENT COORDINATION

- Coordinated outreach activities of the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)
- Managed a multi-state government relations project to facilitate the implementation and evaluation of research products developed by the Federal Highway Administration
- Coordinated LTAP government relations activities

TRAINING & SUPERVISION

- Coordinated the strategic planning process for the LTAP center
- Conducted training for local governments on various computer applications
- Supervised 5 student workers

RESEARCH & WRITING

- Assisted in all facets of contracted research program including writing proposals, collecting data, managing financial resources, and generating reports
- Served as Assistant Editor of the LTAP quarterly newsletter, which is distributed to several state local governments and legislative institutions

WORK EXPERIENCE

Silver Springs Outlet — Silver Springs, MD — Summer 2012
Comfort Inn Banquets — Springfield, PA — Fall 2010 to Present
The Gap, Inc. — King of Prussia, PA — Summer 2010
H&M — King of Prussia, PA — Summer 2009

ACTIVITIES

Intramural Volleyball and Softball, Special Olympics Volunteer, Big Brother/Big Sister Program

SKILLS

Computer: Microsoft Publisher; Adobe InDesign; Dreamweaver
Language: Fluent in Speaking Spanish; Proficient in Writing/Reading Spanish

REFERENCES:

- Most organizations will not expect references on your resume.
- You may want to prepare a list of references on a separate page formatted to match your resume for use when employers request references.
- Usually, three to five references are appropriate. Consider individuals familiar with your academic achievements, leadership and teamwork skills, and/or your work habits.
- Include the referee's name, title, organization, mailing address, phone number, and email address.
- You should always seek prior approval from individuals you plan to list as references.



Correspondence

Cover Letter

1. Address by name and title of the individual with the power to hire you, if at all possible. Try to avoid, sir, madam or to whom it may concern.
2. Adapt the letter carefully to specific details of the job opportunity.
3. Open with an idea that captures the attention of the prospective employer so that the letter and resume are considered worth reading.
4. Highlight and draw attention to the points in your resume that uniquely qualify you for the position.
5. Close your letter with a request for an interview.
6. Use a business letter format and maintain a professional tone.
7. Special attention should be given to grammar, spelling, and neatness. The cover letter should represent your very best efforts. It may be beneficial to have a friend, relative, or member of the Career Services staff review your letter prior to sending it to an employer.

Your present address
City, State, Zip

Date

Person's Name
Title
Company
Address

Each cover letter should be tailored to the organization to which you are applying. Your letter should not read as if you just filled in the blanks.

Dear Ms. Jones:

FIRST PARAGRAPH:

Attract the employer's interest by briefly touching on your specific interest in the company and/or position. If you have been referred by someone, here is where you mention it. Avoid such stereotypical, overused first sentences as "This is in answer to your advertisement," or "I am a senior in Psychology at Penn State." You want to convince the reader that you are interested in them by specifically outlining why you want to work for them and how you would contribute to the organization.

MIDDLE PARAGRAPH:

Describe your interest in the position, in the field of work, or in the organization. If you have a related class, student activity, volunteer or work experience, be sure to mention pertinent data or accomplishments to show that you have specific qualifications or skills for this particular type of work. Refer to key aspects of the resume which relate to the job or employer, but don't restate complete sections of the resume.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH:

Mention your interest in discussing the job in person (i.e., ask for an interview). Express appreciation for being considered and include a statement about your desire to have an interview.

Sincerely,

(handwritten signature)

Your typed name

Cover Letter Sample - Internship

101 Nittany Pike
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702

Date

Dee Ziner
Account Executive
Advertising, Inc.
One Promotions Way
New York, New York 10001

This candidate demonstrates an understanding of the internship requirements and is effective at relating specific details about his accomplishments and skills to the employer's needs.

Dear Ms. Ziner:

To succeed in advertising, one must possess a flair for creativity, the ability to work effectively with clients and associates, initiative, and perseverance. Through this letter I would like to demonstrate such qualities and express an interest in an Account Services internship with Advertising, Inc. When I read the announcement posted to my department's listserv, I was immediately drawn to the opportunity for professional development that this position would allow in regard to client relations and media placements.

I have enclosed a resume for your review, which outlines my experience in the field of advertising and promotion. As an advertising salesperson for my local newspaper, I work successfully with a variety of clients and with the media in designing and arranging advertisements. My responsibilities in this position enhanced my skills in writing, design, promotion, marketing, and follow-through. I quickly learned to identify appropriate markets and to promote the newspaper as an effective medium to reach those markets.

Much of my success is due to my customer orientation, my skills in identifying client needs, and in marketing the services of my employer. I am a self-starter, persistent, and possess the ability to learn quickly. I feel these skills and experiences would be a strong addition to your firm and am excited about the prospect of putting them to work for you.

I hope you agree that my qualifications seem to be a match for this internship. If so, I would appreciate the opportunity for an interview. I look forward to speaking with you.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Mark E. University

Cover Letter Sample - Full-Time

Note that this candidate refers to the research she's done on the company and expresses a sincere interest. She also points out the amount and types of her relevant experiences in the field.

2014 Pittsburgh Pike
Fayette, PA 15438

Date

James Donovan
HR Administrator
Xyntek, Inc.
301 Oxford Valley Rd.
Monroeville, PA, 15146

Dear Mr. Donovan:

After reading your brochure and researching Xyntek, Inc., I became quite interested in possible employment in IT software and systems consulting. I am submitting this letter in application for this position.

I have a great deal of experience using several programming languages, including SQL, ORACLE, JavaScript, HTML, CSS and XML. In addition, I have worked with jQuery and Microsoft .NET.

In my internship at XYZ Corporation I was part of a team responsible for the design, development and production of database candidate processing systems for their human resources department. My specific role involved testing and trouble-shooting databases as they were developed. This has proven very successful for XYZ and has increased efficiency of the recruiting process for the HR administrators. I've also been web page editing on contract. In a project for the Fayette Federal Credit Union, I developed an internal search engine and an online loan application, and kept their web page up to date and added new features as needed.

I am an enthusiastic hard worker with the desire to learn many new concepts and skills. I would enjoy applying my skills and talents to a position with Xyntek, Inc. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time.

Cordially,

Mary E. Smith

Letter of Interest or Prospecting Letter

You may find that you are sincerely interested in a particular organization, but they have no jobs currently available that suit your interests. A prospecting letter will introduce you to the company in the event that positions open up matching your qualifications.

1. State why you are interested in working for that organization.
2. Demonstrate the skills you possess that could benefit the organization.
3. Outline an action plan. Ask for an interview or indicate when and how you will follow-up.
4. Thank the reader for his or her time and consideration.

321 Beaver Avenue
State College, PA 16801

Date

Terra Justice
Marketing Director, XYZ Company
54 Shady Lane
Yourtown, Anystate 54321

Notice how this candidate relates her personal, interests, abilities and values to the type of organization that she would like to work for following graduation.

Dear Ms. Justice,

Sustainability has long been a passion of mine. As I complete my senior year at Penn State, my interest in working for an organization that shares my passion has become paramount. Recognizing the need to preserve natural resources and look for sustainable business practices is something in which all companies should be engaging. I was excited to learn of the ways that XYZ Company has been making strides to become a nationally recognized green organization within the retail industry. As I look to the future and consider where I would like to begin my career after college, the XYZ Company seems like the perfect fit.

Throughout my time at Penn State, I have been involved in numerous student organizations that reflect my professional interests. As early as my freshman year, I was representing green initiatives as an EcoRep within my residence hall. I went on to become an active member of EcoAction, where I helped to educate students about sustainability through events and informational workshops. I put theory into practice through my involvement in the Penn State Marketing Association, by encouraging more electronic communication, less printing, and a more conscious effort to be mindful of environmental concerns. Due to my encouragement, PSMA took on a new client, working with them on how to market their green practices to enhance their customer base.

Academically, I pursued a minor in Environmental Inquiry, in addition to my major in Marketing. With a solid business background obtained through my coursework in the nationally ranked Smeal College of Business, I recognize that business is more than just the bottom line. It is about building and maintaining relationships; relationships that are founded on a common set of values.

I believe that XYZ Company and I share common values. This, coupled with my professional aptitude, would make me a respected employee within your Marketing department. During the week of March 15, I will be in your area and would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you further about any potential openings that you expect within the next few months. I will be graduating in May 2012 and could be available for work as early as June. I have attached my resume for your reference, which includes my contact information.

I appreciate your time and consideration, and look forward to talking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Dawn Greenfield

Thank-You Letter

1. As soon after the interview as possible, a letter should be sent to express your appreciation for the opportunity to present yourself.
2. Use the letter to express your continued interest in the position and organization. Some details of things which impressed you are a nice way to personalize your letter and convey your interest more convincingly.
3. Supply any additional information that was requested at the time of the visit or interview.
4. It is acceptable to email your thank-you letter. Be sure it retains the degree of professionalism you would have in a hard copy letter.

1234 College Ave.
Reading, PA 19607

Date

William Johnson
LMO Pharmaceutical Company
9183 Short Hills Road
Philadelphia, PA 19111

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview with you on Friday, October 23, 2013. The Account Representative position we discussed is a wonderful opportunity for which I feel uniquely qualified.

As we discussed, my background in both the sciences and business will enable me to interact effectively with physicians and pharmacists. Not only am I able to discuss the technical aspects of your products, I understand marketing techniques and the importance of the bottom line.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or email. Again, thank you for meeting with me. I look forward to speaking with you again soon.

Sincerely,

Martin A. Student



Acceptance Letter of Second Interview or of Job Offer

1. Be businesslike but also tailor your letter to the specific employer, so you look sincere and genuinely interested in the company and job. Never copy example letters.
2. Write to the person who wrote and/or interviewed you.
3. Thank the person and/or show your enthusiasm for the offer.
4. State what you are accepting.
5. Concisely, yet descriptively, give some details about what has impressed you about the company and/or interview.

1001 Progress Avenue
Hazleton, PA 18201

Date

Harold Sherman
XYZ Corporation
678 5th Avenue
Albany, NY 12208

Dear Mr. Sherman:

Thank you for your recent offer of employment as a management trainee with XYZ Corporation. I am pleased to accept this offer. The position sounds quite challenging, particularly the 12 month rotation among your regional plants. I am looking forward to this challenge and believe I will be successful at meeting it.

I understand that your offer involves a starting date of June 6, 20XX. I also understand that the salary offered is \$43,500, plus benefits as discussed at my most recent interview. I will contact you within the next several weeks to discuss travel and moving details as you requested.

Once again, thank you for your offer. I am excited about becoming part of the XYZ Corporation team.

Sincerely,

Jane C. Doe

When a rejection is received, special consideration should be given to your response. Don't take this rejection letter as a definite NO! A demonstrated interest in the company and respectful letter may lead to further consideration for other positions as they become available.

1. Acknowledge receipt of the letter.
2. Thank the interviewer for considering your application, indicate that you are still interested in a position with the company, and give some specific information to illustrate what you like about the company, position, or both.

Rejection Letter

1. It is important to turn down a site visit or job offer graciously.
2. Write to the person who wrote you.
3. Thank her/him for the offer.
4. Briefly state that you are declining and why (don't get too personal).

Searching For a Job or Internship

Key Steps

Whatever your goal, you need to:

1. Know what you want to do and the skills you bring
2. Identify and target the employers that have what you want
3. Develop effective marketing materials: resumes, cover letters and interview skills
4. Secure and successfully engage in the interview process
5. Evaluate and accept (and often decline) your offers

Seems simple, right? Just remember that you will be repeating the steps for each employer you pursue. While there will be disappointments along the way and things you cannot control may have a great impact (like the economy), keep focused on your goals and work the process.

While some job search methods will work better for you and the career field you are pursuing than others (see listing on page 40), it is important to diversify your search and use multiple methods with your own personal spin that sets you apart.

STEPS 1 & 2

The most important steps in the job search are identifying what kind of job you want, what you have to offer, and finding the employers that offer the opportunities you are targeting. Employers are most interested in individuals who have focused their career interests. Therefore it is important to:

- Identify and be prepared to discuss your interests, skills, experiences, knowledge, and attributes.
- Identify and research employers that have the type of positions and environment that fit your interests.

Don't get caught without experience

Through internships or other experiential opportunities, you will benefit enormously from getting real world work exposure. Employers expect you to supplement your academic background with work experience. You also get the chance to develop contacts in your chosen career. The people in your network can be valuable for advice, information, and job leads. Remember to check with your academic college about internship possibilities.

This information is applicable across all levels of the job search—for undergraduate and graduate students looking for internships or entry-level jobs, alumni with more experience looking to change careers or move up in their current field. Many of the methods are timeless and will be useful for the remainder of your professional life.

STEPS 3 & 4

Effectively promoting your skills and experiences will catch the attention of employers. Your communications might take the form of resumes or cover letters, informational interviews, networking, meeting at a career fair, or telephone calls. You must express why you are interested in that particular employer and position and why you believe you are qualified for the job.

Refer to the articles on Resume Writing, Correspondence, Interviewing, and Job Offers and Acceptances in this Guide for tips. Check with your campus career office for more resources and information on both online and in-person workshops.

STEP 5

As you can see, the job search process involves a great deal of thought and time to eventually have offers to consider. Deciding on the best offer for you is an important final step and often involves sensitive communications and some negotiating.

REPEAT STEPS 1-5

For even highly qualified people, rejection and disappointment are part of the job search process. You might need to look at the amount of time you are spending on job search activities to determine if you are doing enough. You might also need to reassess your job objectives—are they focused enough? Are you following up on leads? Are your resumes and cover letters tailored to the positions you are seeking? Are your interview skills strong enough?

Job Search Methods

There are many ways to look for job opportunities. The most successful job search plan is one in which a variety of search strategies are used. Presented below are some of the most popular strategies for the job search as well as benefits, challenges, and tips.

STRATEGY/TOOLS	BENEFITS	CHALLENGES	TIPS
CAREER FAIRS Attend career fairs sponsored by Career Services and academic colleges	Opportunity to meet with a number of recruiters in person and in one location; Build networking contacts	Not all fields and areas of study are equally represented; Students with very specific career goals may benefit from seeking field-specific or geographically-specific fairs	Plan ahead and research companies attending; Follow up to learn about opportunities in your area of interest
ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWING Add the OCI option to your Nittany Lion Career Network account, view the orientation session on ANGEL and search for jobs from employers interviewing on campus.	Primary way in which companies recruit for business and technical positions; Employers are specifically seeking Penn State students to fill employment openings	Not all industries use on-campus interviewing as a recruitment strategy	Check job listings on a weekly basis paying close attention to deadlines
MITTANY LION CAREER NETWORK Update your personal and academic information, upload a resume, search for job postings and leads/prospects postings, find details on information sessions and more.	Access to a wide variety of jobs posted by employers who are not coming on campus to interview	Not all fields and areas of study are equally represented	Check job postings regularly as they come in on a daily/weekly basis
NETWORKING Talk to everyone you know to develop a list of contacts; Ask for information on jobs/companies and circulate your resume	One of the top job search strategies to identify potential job opportunities and learn more about a position, company, or industry	Takes time and effort to build your network; Requires skill in organizing contacts and following through on recommendations received	Join online networking programs: LionLink, or Penn State Career Connection, the Career Services LinkedIn group; Check with your college/department for contacts.
TARGETED SEARCH Identify the types of organizations you would like to work for, develop a targeted list, and research companies	Allows you to be more proactive and take charge of your search, instead of waiting for companies to post positions	Takes investment of time to research and tailor your resume/cover letter to the organization and the position	Use resources such as CareerBeam, your local Chamber of Commerce, and employer directories
INTERNET Scan job openings on various job search and employer websites	May help you identify types of positions available	Overwhelming number of sites and positions to sift through; May not receive responses	Check listing of recommended sites in this <i>Guide</i>
PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS Research professional associations related to your career interests, as most provide a "career opportunities" section on their website	A source of networking information and career opportunities; Build contacts with individuals who share your professional interests	Entry-level positions may be limited; May need to belong to association to access job postings	Ask faculty to suggest professional associations to research; Use Career Information Center resources to identify top associations
EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES Inquire whether these agencies offer experiences in your career areas	Helpful in identifying local businesses and employment opportunities	May have fees associated with the employment services	Research each agency before signing any contract; Talk to others who have used employment agencies

Using Online Resources in Your Job Search

You can find a lot of information about job listings, salary statistics, employer information, and more online.

To have a successful online job search:

- post an online-friendly version of your resume to professional networking & job sites
- research and target employers
- check employer sites for job postings
- network through blogs, social networking sites like Facebook, LinkedIn & Twitter

Below is a list of several helpful career sites.

Nittany Lion Career Network

studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/students/NLCN.shtml

This easy-to-use database has many internship and full-time opportunities especially for Penn Staters. NLCN accounts have already been created for all registered Penn State students. Login to your account today and use the job search agent feature that sends you email updates with jobs that meet your skills and needs.

Career Information Center Online Resources

studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/cic/

Access major, internship, and career information from WetFeet, Vault, CareerBeam, What Can I Do With This Major?, and more.

See page 8 for more information on the resources available.

Career Information Center Handouts & Salary Information

studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/cic/handouts.shtml

Download career-specific handouts on topics ranging from Consulting to Careers in Sports and access the latest starting salary information from NACE.

Job Search Via Social Media

LinkedIn ~ Facebook ~ Twitter

Social media sites are excellent places to learn about careers and internships and cultivate a professional network. Recruiters are also using social media tools like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter to identify and connect with potential candidates.

If you choose to search for jobs on these networks, be aware that companies are using them to conduct background checks on applicants looking for jobs. They want to uncover questionable judgment, illegal activity, or other things that they consider to be red flags. Some companies even gain access to information that students might consider relatively private by asking interns who have strong campus connections to perform online background checks.

Exercise CAUTION: Recruiters report that students who use these sites to brag about drinking habits, illicit drug use, etc. are likely to hurt their chances of obtaining job offers. Students who would never dream of bringing up such subjects in an interview or showing a recruiter risqué photographs sometimes do that very thing online, thinking that a company will never uncover this information. That's a dangerous—and incorrect—assumption.

Investigate the privacy settings on social networking sites and use good judgment before you post.

See page 16 for more tips on how to manage your online presence.

Other Career Sites

www.quintcareers.com
www.rileyguide.com
www.simplyhired.com
www.collegegrad.com
www.onedayonejob.com

Looking for industry-specific job search resources? Check out the Salaries, Guides and Handouts link in the Career InformationCenter on our website.



Avoiding Scams while Hunting for Jobs and Internships

Enter with Caution: Tips for Avoiding Job Posting Scams

- Do not give your personal bank account, PayPal account, or credit card numbers to a new employer.
- Do not agree to have funds or paychecks direct deposited into any of your accounts by a new employer— you should know them first. Most employers give the option of direct deposit or a paycheck, and make these arrangements during your first day or week of actual employment—not before.
- Do not forward, transfer, send by courier (e.g., FedEx, UPS), or “wire” any money to any employer, or on behalf of any employer, using your personal account(s).
- Do not transfer money and retain a portion for payment.
- Do not respond to suspicious and/or “too good to be true” unsolicited job emails.
- In general, applicants do not pay a fee to obtain a job (but there are some rare exceptions—so be careful, and consult with a Career Services professional first).
- Do not pay to participate in high priced international internships (not only are these internships unpaid, but the students must pay the organization to intern with them).
- Stay away from high-pressure sales pitches that require you to pay now or risk losing out on an opportunity.

Warning: Signs of a Possible Scam

- Often found via broad-based employment web sites or sent as unsolicited email directly to you
- Makes claims such as: “Work from home – make thousands from your computer. Work as much or as little as you want.”
- “Company” does not have a web site, or it is very poorly organized or developed
- Uses domain names that do not exist (e.g., @InMail24.com and others) or free mail services like Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.
- Asks you for personal information that may include social security number and/or bank account information (for “credit check” purposes) prior to any face-to-face interview
- Job advertised is not the same as the one offered to you
- Job involves money transfers of any kind and/or as part of the interview process
- Emails sent to you contain poor spelling, grammar, and punctuation
- “Employer” asks you to generate “leads” as part of your interview

***If it seems too good to be true,
it probably is!***

Job Scam Email: An Example

Hello,

If you are seriously looking for income and want to work when your schedule permits, we can help you. We are currently looking for online workers. You will need to have available computer and internet access. All you do is online. No experience required.

So, if you are interested and need more info on this job, please email me at my business email: ashleyr@worksj.com

*Best regards,
Ashley Randall*

P.S. Please send all emails to: ashleyr@worksj.com



Investigate: Resources for Researching Possible Scams

Check with your local consumer protection agency, state Attorney General's Office, Federal Trade Commission, and the Better Business Bureau to see if any complaints have been filed about a company with which you intend to do business.

- Better Business Bureau : www.bbb.org
- National Association of Attorneys General: www.naag.org
- Federal Trade Commission: www.ftc.gov

You may file a consumer complaint with the FTC by calling (1-877-382-4357) or by using the FTC's online filing system, located at www.ftc.gov. Click on "File a Complaint Online."

Help –I've Been Scammed! What Can I Do?

- Close all bank accounts at the bank(s) where transactions were made related to the scam.
- Order a credit report from all three credit bureaus every 2 to 3 months—look for unusual activity.
- Victims of payment-forwarding scams should contact their local Secret Service field agent. The Secret Service handles complaints of international fraud.
- Fraud victims should file a police report with local law enforcement officials.
- Victims should report the company name, the job posting, and all contact names to the job sites where the scam was posted.
- Victims should permanently close all email addresses that were associated with the job fraud where possible.

Content adapted from "How to Avoid Job Scams while Job Hunting" – a publication of the Academic and Career Planning Center at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College



Since we can't warn you about every scam out there, it is up to you to learn how to recognize the warning signs. If you EVER have concerns about whether a job or internship opportunity is legitimate, please contact the Career Services office for guidance.

Please visit studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/students/disclaimer.shtml to read the full disclaimer which describes the shared responsibility among Penn State Career Services and internship/job seekers in researching and identifying potential concerns about the legitimacy of employers and their respective postings.

Interviewing

The interview is one of the most important steps in the job search process, and thorough preparation is essential. To interview effectively you need to know what you have to offer, what the employer is like, and the kind of position you want. Being able to answer questions with relevant details and in a conversational manner is very important.

First Impressions: It is always important to make a good impression on the interviewer.

- Arrive at least 10 minutes early
- Look polished: Dress professionally, avoid perfume or cologne, and wear only simple jewelry
- Give a firm handshake, make good eye contact and smile

The Purpose of an Interview:

- For the interviewer to determine a match between you and the organization/school
- For you to sell your qualifications and skills
- To determine if the organization or graduate school is what you want
- To secure a job offer

The 3 criteria employers are looking for in candidates:

- 1) Can you do the job? (skills)
- 2) Will you do the job? (interest/motivation)
- 3) Are you a good fit with the organization? (personal qualities)

As such, they will be asking a variety of questions to determine if you match their needs. There are many types of interview styles or formats. Described below are some of the most common. You may encounter any or all of these, sometimes in the same interview.

Traditional Interview Questions

Traditionally employers have asked questions designed to help them gain a feel for who you are and what makes you unique: your motivation level, your background and strong points, your interest in the position, and the aspects of your personality that may affect how you perform on the job, such as organization, interpersonal skills, decision making, teamwork, etc. The questions asked might be seeking expansion of information presented on your resume, or focus on the qualities and skills that you can bring to the table.

Behavioral Interview Questions

Based on the premise that the best way to predict future behavior is to examine past behavior, behavioral interviewing is now widespread among recruiters. The technique involves asking a series of questions designed to get the candidate to talk about how he or she handled certain situations in the past. Interviewers feel that they can make more accurate hiring decisions by focusing on an applicant's past actions and behaviors, rather than subjective impressions of a candidate's self-proclaimed qualities.

Here's how it goes: Typically, the interviewer will have determined several behavioral characteristics that would be most important for on-the-job success and will base questions on the characteristics identified. You will be asked to share situations in which you may or may not have exhibited these behaviors. You won't be able to theorize or generalize about events, rather, you will be asked to provide details. The interview will be a more structured process that will concentrate on areas identified by the interviewer, rather than on areas that you may feel are important.

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 inquiries as, "Tell me about your strengths and weaknesses."

One of the supposed benefits of this technique for employers is that candidates cannot prepare for these questions in advance. However, you can help yourself by anticipating the types of questions you might receive and dredging your memory for examples of past behavior. You may be able to guess at some of the questions by analyzing the job requirements beforehand.

Mock Interview Studio

An in-house studio offers videotaped mock interview training to students who want to practice their skills and receive feedback on their performance. Mock interviews are available by appointment; speak to the staff assistant in the Bank of America Career Services Center to schedule a mock interview. The training center is open weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

How to Prepare for Behavioral Interview Questions:

- Think of recent situations that demonstrate some of the most commonly sought after behaviors, especially leadership, teamwork, initiative, planning, and customer service.
- Prepare short descriptions of each situation; remember STAR
S—Describe the Situation.
T—What Task(s) did you identify that had to be completed?
A—What Action did you take?
R—What were the Results of your actions?
- Be honest. Don't exaggerate or omit any part of the story.
- Be specific. Don't generalize about several events; give a detailed account of one event.

Case Interview Questions

Another common interview format, especially for consulting firms, is the case interview. It is also probably one of the most difficult and feared formats around. In it, you'll be asked to analyze a hypothetical business problem and come up with solutions on the spot. Case interview questions are designed to test your ability to think analytically under stress, with incomplete information. Every case interview problem presented is trying to judge all or some of the following:

- Your ability to identify key concepts, process thoughts in an orderly manner, and separate important facts from irrelevant facts.
- Your insight and knowledge of relevant issues in a business problem scenario. Some examples: competitive threats, barriers to entry, competitive advantages, target marketing, pricing strategies, etc. Your goal is to recognize which type of business analysis is appropriate for the specific case(s) presented.
- Your ability to come up with a new approach to a problem, find a hurdle that nobody else had noticed, offer an insightful remark.

Helpful Hints for Case Interviews:

- Listen carefully to the material presented. Take notes if you want to, and be sure to ask questions if you are unsure about details.
- Take your time. If you need a minute or two to collect your thoughts and work through your answer, say so.
- Offer a general statement or framework up front to serve as an outline for your answer. As you proceed with your answer, draw on the outline of your framework.
- Focus on key, broad issues first.
- Orient your answer toward action. Suggest specific steps that can be taken to solve a problem, not just theory.
- Be conscious of resources. If it relates to the problem, ask your interviewer about the budget, capital, and other resources that the client can allocate to the solution.
- To do well, you need to enjoy the intellectual challenge of analyzing tough problems and coming up with reasonable solutions.



Photo by Patrick Mansell

Refer to the charts on page 21 to review the attributes employers seek in candidates.

How Can I Best Prepare for Interviews?

Know yourself, first. Know what kind of job you want and what makes you feel qualified. Think about what information you want to include in your responses. Don't go in "cold" and expect to do well, but don't memorize, either.

Research the employer. First get the basics, including the company's size, location(s), product(s), or service(s). Then look for details relevant to the position you seek: job description, training, advancement paths, etc. You may need to look several places to get this information, including:

1. The company's information session, if they are holding one. You can find a list of information sessions under the "Events" tab in Nittany Lion Career Network.
2. The Career Information Center in the Bank of America Career Services Center or online at studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/cic
3. Company websites, many of which can be found from links in Nittany Lion Career Network.
4. The Business Library online at www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/business.html. You can link to Hoover's Online, Factiva, Standard and Poor's Net Advantage, and more.
5. Contacting the local chamber of commerce or the company's public relations or personnel department.
6. Talking with someone in the company or agency in the type of position of interest to you.
7. Search online news sites to review any recent articles regarding the company.

Use Career Services. Take advantage of the variety of free services:

1. Workshops on interview skills are presented throughout the semester. Check the Career Services home page for dates and times.
2. Mock Interview Program: Through this program you can participate in a videotaped, simulated interview which is replayed so you can receive feedback from a trained interviewer. To make an appointment, see the scheduling assistant in the Bank of America Career Services Center anytime between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays.
3. Meet with a Career Counselor to discuss your fears, experiences, and questions.

What Is the Best Approach to Answering Questions?

Recruiters are surprisingly accurate in sensing "canned" answers. These canned responses don't give interesting or reliable information about you. When you answer, remember these guidelines:

1. There is no single right answer. It's often how you answer that is more important than the exact content.
2. Be honest. Don't pretend, for example, that you were sure about your major from the very start if, in fact, you weren't. The details about how you chose your major may be much more interesting and communicate some very positive things about how you make decisions.
3. Don't look for ulterior motives. Some questions are asked purely out of curiosity or to help you relax. Recruiters are not going to conclude that you lack sufficient interest in the field if your favorite course was not related to your major. A genuine answer is almost always more interesting.
4. Give details and examples. General responses become boring and don't help the recruiter get to know you. You need to be specific. Details illustrate your points and make answers more vivid and memorable. Therefore, when discussing one of your strengths, give an example or two illustrating that strong point. When mentioning the course you liked most, give some details to illustrate what you liked and why. Remember to use the STAR method outlined on page 60.
5. Stay focused and don't ramble. Give details that are relevant but don't start telling long stories that include unnecessary details. Some candidates make the mistake of repeating themselves when they haven't thought of how to wrap up the answer. Respond directly and succinctly.
6. Keep the position in mind. What details can you give that are relevant to the type of job you are interested in? When you think of some, try to remember to include them. For example, if you worked at a summer camp and are now looking for a sales position, you can mention how you were successful at persuading the participants to enjoy your programs.

How Can I Best Respond to a Question About Salary?

Fortunately, it is seldom asked during the initial interview. When asked, you need to answer carefully. It is usually best to give a salary range and to have an idea what the range is for your field. Salary information is available online and through the Career Information Center.

What Types of Questions Should I Ask?

You make the best impression if you ask questions about what you are seriously interested in concerning the company and job. What do you want to know more about? Don't be afraid to be specific, because specific questions convey genuine interest.

If many of your questions have been answered by good company literature, tell the recruiter, mentioning some of the more important questions and perhaps even a brief summary of what you have learned.

Initially you should stay away from questions about benefits and salary. This is usually discussed during the second or site interview. Above all, do not ask for the same information that is in any company literature you have already received.

Questions to Ask Employers

- Can you describe a typical first year assignment?
- What are the most challenging aspects of the job?
- How would you describe your organization's culture?
- Why do you enjoy working for your organization?
- What initial training will I receive?
- What opportunities for professional growth does the organization offer?
- How will I be evaluated and promoted?
- What are the characteristics of a successful person at your company?
- What are the organization's plans for future growth?

- What is a typical career path at your organization?
- What are the biggest challenges facing the organization/department?
- What is the management style of the organization? Of the department?
- What are the goals of the department? Of the organization?
- How much decision-making authority is given to new employees?
- In what ways is a career with your company better than one with your competitors?

Points to Remember

1. The recruiter saw something in your resume that was impressive. Go into your interview remembering that this person already likes what he/she saw.
2. The interview is a two-way conversation. Try to relax and enjoy the opportunity.
3. Be specific, not vague. You'll be much more interesting.
4. Think about your answers ahead of time. Don't memorize, but have a focus and don't ramble.
5. Be prepared to describe why you are interested in that employer and give specific characteristics about the kind of position that you want.
6. Sell yourself. If you don't state what your strengths, skills, and accomplishments are, the recruiter will be unable to see you as a good candidate.
7. Genuine self-confidence and confidence in your ability to perform well at the job are your best assets in any interview. This attitude of confidence is one of the best indicators to the employer that you are the person needed for the position.
8. Don't forget to assess the company to see if you would like to work for them.

Sample Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
 - Keep your answer to one or two minutes, don't ramble.
 - Give a short version of your resume — general goals, skills and background.
- Why are you interested in our organization? What interests you about this job?
 - Project an informed interest: know products, size, income, reputation, people, history, etc.
 - Talk about their needs, how you can make a contribution to the company goals.
- What areas of your study have excited you the most? How have you explored them beyond your course work?
- Describe your most rewarding academic experience.
- What is your GPA? How do you feel about it? Does it reflect your abilities?
- Since attending college, what is the toughest decision that you have had to make?
- What previous work experience has been the most valuable to you and why?
- What are your strengths? Your weaknesses?
- What accomplishments are you most proud of?
- How do you handle pressure?
- If I asked the people who know you well to describe you, what three words would they use?
- What are your long term career goals? How do you plan to achieve those goals?
- What things are most important to you in a job?
- What type of work environment appeals to you most?
- In what ways do you think you can contribute to our organization?
- Why are you the best candidate for this position?
- Tell me about a time when an unexpected event interrupted your work plans. How did you handle the situation? What was the outcome?
- How have you handled the challenge of developing your skills in a situation where feedback and/or coaching was delayed or limited?
- Give me an example of a time when you were asked to do something you had never done before.
- Give me an example of a situation in which you were especially skillful in making a decision quickly.
- Tell me about a time when your ability to reward and encourage others created positive motivation.
- Give me an example of a time when you actively defined and evaluated several alternative solutions to identify a way to resolve a problem you encountered.
- Tell me about the most important time in your work history when you successfully prioritized your goals and objectives.
- Tell me about how you used realistic schedules and timetables to generate a plan leading to a specific goal.
- Creativity often means stepping back from regimented ways of thinking. When have you been able to break out of a structured mind set and intuitively play with concepts and ideas?
- Tell me about a time when you felt it necessary to compromise your own immediate interests in order to be flexible and tolerant of another person's needs.
- Give me an example of a time when your timing, political awareness, and knowledge of how groups work enhanced your ability to generate a change.
- Tell me about a time when your understanding of issues associated with a problem provided you with a foundation for generating a good solution.
- Give me an example of a success you have had in the use of delegation.
- Describe a complex problem you faced at school or at work that required you to carefully analyze the situation, information, or other details.

Sample Behavioral Interview Questions

- Give me an example of a time at work when you had to deal with unreasonable expectations.
- How have you handled a situation in which the information presented to you was conflicting or there was no clear right or wrong answer?

Sample Case Interview Questions

- You are consulting for a major personal care products manufacturer that mainly produces and distributes products such as soaps, shampoos, conditioners, etc. Every year their profits are shrinking. What could be the cause of this?
- You are in marketing with one of the largest and fastest growing supermarket chains in the country. This chain is considering opening its own bank branches in its supermarket locations. What is your advice?
- Your client is a small regional bank in the U.S. They are considering closing branch locations, and diverting their resources to telephone and Internet banking facilities. Should they implement this strategy? What are some of the basic areas they need to research before this strategy is recommended?



Photo by Patrick Mansell

Think of a skill you would like to highlight during an interview. Outline a scenario below that demonstrates that skill.

Skill to highlight: _____

Situation: _____

Task: _____

Action: _____

Result: _____

The Site Interview: What to Expect

The site visit or interview is the make or break point for job offers. If you are offered an interview at the employer's facility, you can consider yourself in a strong position. But don't think that an offer is a "sure thing." Rather, think of this phase of the interview process as the way for both you and the employer to get a more in-depth assessment of each other.

An employer is offering you the opportunity to convince all of the principal players that you are the right candidate. After a site interview you can make a more informed decision about the position, the people, the environment, long-term career opportunities, and the community.

- Learn as much as you can about the company by reading the company's literature, looking at their web page, and reviewing industry and business publications. You can also talk to employees who are Penn State alumni to learn more about the company through LionLink (see page 49)
- If you receive an offer for a site interview, respond promptly and professionally. If you are not interested in that company, decline politely. Never go on a site interview for "practice." Don't schedule back-to-back site interviews.
- If you accept the offer for a site interview, you should ask the person coordinating the trip who will be responsible for making the arrangements for the trip and if you should keep track of your expenses. Most medium- and large-sized companies (as well as many smaller ones) will pay your expenses, but some will not.
- Request a schedule and directions to the hotel and the facility before traveling. Maintain a phone number for your contact person.
- You should plan to bring several extra copies of your resume; copies of paperwork (e.g., applications) that you may have forwarded to the employer; names and contact information of your references; an up-to-date transcript; the names and addresses of past employers; and a notebook and black or blue pen.
- Travel lightly to avoid checking luggage, if you can. When you arrive, make a trial run to the office location. At the hotel inquire about any

messages or packages that may have been left for you. Note: You should verify prepayment, but be prepared for a credit card imprint.

- Many times you can expect a full day of interviews including a lunch meeting. During your site interview, you may meet potential co-workers, department managers, and potential supervisors, all the way up to the president of the company. The interviews may be one-on-one or panel and could range from 1/2 hour to 2 hours in length. You may also participate in a tour.
- If you attend a lunch or dinner meeting, remember to remain professional. Although the atmosphere may seem more relaxed, the employer is still evaluating you. Abide by the following: Do not order alcohol. Do not chew with your mouth open. Do not swear.
- You should be prepared to discuss salary, understanding what the going rates are for people in your field and how certain geographic areas affect salaries. For more information on salaries, talk to a Drop-In Counselor or review the resources in the Career Information Center. Remember: Your best bet is to let them bring up the discussion of salary.
- Often the final meeting of the day is with your contact person or employment manager. During this session they often offer answers to any final questions you may have, explain follow-up procedures, and discuss reimbursement of your expenses. Make sure all of your questions are answered.
- Most companies only offer site interviews to candidates they are seriously considering, so you may find yourself with an offer at the end of the day or very soon afterwards. Do not feel compelled to accept an offer on-site. You should take time to consider the offer in terms of your needs and in comparison to other offers you may have.
- After your interview, you should manage expenses according to the company's policies.
- Send out thank-you letter(s) to the person(s) who will be making the hiring decisions. You may also want to write thank-you letters to people with whom you want to continue to network.

- Feel free to contact the company if you have not received a response in the agreed upon timeframe. Also contact any of the interviewers for whom you have additional questions.

If you decide that the job and the employer are right for you, don't feel shy about telling the employer that you are eager to join their team. But, never be afraid to decline an offer if it is not right for you. Remember that long-term career satisfaction is the goal of the whole process.

Missing a Site Interview

When you accept an invitation for a site interview you are making a commitment to that company. Employers have reported students not showing up for site interviews, after extensive arrangements have been made. This is not acceptable behavior.

If you are no longer interested in an opportunity or cannot make an interview, it is professional courtesy to contact the employer and let them know of your situation. Employers generally understand about situations changing. But, simply not attending a scheduled interview will ensure that you will not be considered for a position with that company in the future. Your actions can also jeopardize Penn State's relationship with the company, making interviews difficult for future students.

Career Services expects that students using our Nittany Lion Career Network services maintain professional behavior. In fact, when you utilize the Nittany Lion Career Network system, you must agree to maintain professional conduct throughout the recruiting process. Because our expectations are such, we will abide by the no-show policy, outlined in policy number 6 on page 52.



Photo by Erika Stover

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