

# Career Visions

A CAREER PLANNING RESOURCE

**2013-2014**

*Edition*



**Explore Majors,  
Internships, and Careers**

**Use Networking to  
Uncover Job Leads**

**Develop Job  
Search Skills**

UNIVERSITY of  
**HOUSTON**

YOU ARE THE PRIDE

University Career Services

UNIVERSITY of  
**HOUSTON**  
YOU ARE THE PRIDE

---

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS  
University Career Services



UNIVERSITY of  
**HOUSTON**  
A CARNEGIE-DESIGNATED TIER ONE  
PUBLIC RESEARCH UNIVERSITY



## Welcome Coogs!

University Career Services (UCS) is located on the first floor of the Student Service Center 1 (Building #524 on the UH Campus Map), which is adjacent to the Health Center and the Ezekiel W. Cullen Administration Building. We are a comprehensive career center that can assist you in exploring career options, sharpening your job search skills, and arranging on-campus interviews. UCS offers a wide variety of resources to help you through some of the more important decisions you'll make as a student at the University of Houston.



Academic Year 2013-2014

Dear UH Students and Alumni:

The staff of University Career Services (UCS) extends a warm welcome from this department and encourages you to become familiar with and utilize the services described in this publication. These services reflect our firm commitment to meeting the needs of UH students and alumni at all stages of career development - from career decision-making and assessment to the implementation of a professional job search.

Many of you reading Career Visions are preparing for entry-level career positions. We urge you to check out our broad palate of services, including state-of-the-art computer-based resources for exploring career options, developing your resume, sharpening your interview skills, conducting corporate research, and accessing current job postings. These resources, combined with expert, individualized assistance provided by licensed career counselors, will enhance your efforts in obtaining the career position that best matches your qualifications and interests.

We encourage you to begin the job search early. Successful job candidates formulate realistic career goals, target potential employers, and thoroughly research possible career opportunities. Apply the principles of networking combined with the power of information technology and, importantly, consult with your career counselor at regular intervals during your job search.

The transition from college to the workplace will continue to be a competitive and challenging experience for most graduates this academic year. A successful transition has an important bearing on future career satisfaction and success. Therefore, we encourage you to take full advantage of the services described in this publication. Feel free to call on me or any UCS staff member whenever we may be of assistance.

Congratulations on the completion of your academic studies at the University of Houston and best wishes in realizing your career goals and objectives.

Sincerely,



David B. Small  
Director  
University Career Services

# Career Visions 2013-2014

UNIVERSITY of  
**HOUSTON**  
UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES

106 Student Service Center 1  
Houston, TX 77204-3040  
713.743.5100  
[www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu)  
[ucs@uh.edu](mailto:ucs@uh.edu)

## CONNECT WITH UCS!



### Walk-In Hours for Fall and Spring:

Monday - Tuesday

9:00am - 11:00am; 2:00pm - 6:30pm

Wednesday - Thursday

9:00am - 11:00am; 2:00pm - 4:00pm

### Walk-In Hours for Summer:

Monday - Thursday

9:00am - 11:00am; 2:00pm - 4:00pm

### Office Hours for Fall and Spring:

Monday - Tuesday

8:00am - 7:00pm

Wednesday - Friday

8:00am - 5:00pm

### Office Hours for Summer:

Monday - Friday

8:00am - 5:00pm

Published By:  
Academic Publication Services, Inc.  
3131 Clark Road, Ste. 101  
Sarasota, FL 34231  
All Rights Reserved 2013.  
No part of this publication may  
be reproduced without written  
permission of the publisher.

# Contents

UCS Staff . . . . .	6-7
Overview of Services . . . . .	8-16
Career Development Workshops and Seminars . . . . .	17
The Reality of On-Campus Employment . . . . .	18-19
<b>Campus Recruitment</b>	
Campus Recruitment . . . . .	20-23
List of 2012-2013 Campus Recruitment Employers . . . . .	24
Campus Recruitment Timetable Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 . . . . .	25
<b>Lost? How to Choose a Major</b>	
Career Planning for First Year College Students . . . . .	26
College to Career: An Action Plan for Career Success . . . . .	27-29
How to Use Assessments for Choosing a Major or Career . . . . .	30
The Value of a Liberal Arts Degree . . . . .	31
Who Has Time for an Internship? . . . . .	32-33
<b>Tools for Marketing Yourself/Steps to Getting the Job</b>	
Getting the Job You Want: Marketing Yourself . . . . .	34-35
Writing a Cover Letter: 5 Things You Need to Know . . . . .	36
The Resume . . . . .	37-41
Professional Image Counts! . . . . .	42-43
The Interview . . . . .	44-48
Phone and Skype Interviews . . . . .	49-50
<b>Network Like a Pro</b>	
Professional Communication Etiquette . . . . .	51-52
The Networking Connection . . . . .	53-56
Get Connected Using LinkedIn . . . . .	57-58
<b>Career Fairs</b>	
How to Market Yourself at a Career Fair . . . . .	59-62
Career Fairs . . . . .	63
<b>The Job Hunt</b>	
Company Research 101 . . . . .	64-66
Planning and Preparing a Successful Job Search . . . . .	67-69
Top 5 Apps to Help You with Your Job Search . . . . .	70
Five Reasons to Work for a Small Business . . . . .	71
International Students: Searching for a Job in the U.S. . . . .	72
LGBTQ Issues in the Workplace . . . . .	73-74
From Combat to Campus to Career . . . . .	75-76
How to Handle Rejection in a Job Search . . . . .	77-81
Evaluating and Negotiating Job Offers . . . . .	82-86
Destination: Relocation . . . . .	87
Off to a Good Start! What to Do in the First 90 Days at a New Job . . . . .	88
<b>Graduate School: Add Some Letters Behind Your Name</b>	
To Go or Not to Go: Is Graduate School Right for You? . . . . .	89-92
<b>Additional Career Services Centers and Other Campus Resources</b>	
Index of Advertisers . . . . .	96

"The elevator to success is out of order. You'll have to use the stairs... one step at a time." Rande Wilson

University Career Services acknowledges the support of Academic Publication Services, Inc., and advertisers for making this publication possible. Special thanks also to Phyllis Gillentine for the cover design.

# UCS Staff



**David B. Small**  
Director



**Helen Godfrey**  
Associate Director  
College of Business and Undecided Majors



**Priyanka Raut**  
Career Counselor  
Internships, Job Shadowing, Pre-Law



**Andrew Tessmer**  
Career Counselor  
Colleges of Education, Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, Pre-Law, and Social Work



**Rachel Barron**  
Business Administrator



**Jazel Borja**  
JOBank Coordinator



**Theresa Cyr**

Assistant Director  
Campus Recruitment



**James Mable**

Assistant Director  
Alumni Career Services



**Becky Reiter**

Senior Career Counselor  
Colleges of Architecture, Engineering,  
Hotel and Restaurant Management,  
and Technology



**Lauren Moore**

Employer Relations Coordinator



**Patricia Taméz**

Campus Recruitment Assistant



**Nora Bayly**

Administrative Assistant

# UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

---

## UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES

# Overview of Services

**Our services are available to all currently enrolled students, undergraduate and graduate, as well as alumni of the University of Houston.**



Services are free to currently enrolled students. Services for alumni are free the semester immediately following graduation and for a nominal fee thereafter.

## OVERVIEW OF CAREER COUNSELING

The professional career counselors at UCS provide individual and group counseling on topics to help you:

- Pinpoint your vocational interests, personality preferences, clarify your work values, and identify your ideal work environment
- Explore what you can do with your degree/major
- Research career fields, industries, and employers
- Establish satisfying and realistic career options
- Improve your resume
- Prepare for interviews
- Learn how to work a career fair
- Develop networking skills
- Plan and conduct an effective job search
- Evaluate salary and job offers

To schedule an appointment, log onto the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu) and click the *Contact UCS Staff* link. We ask that you choose one UCS career counselor and work with him/her for all of your career-related concerns. If you have any questions, call us at 713.743.5100.

Walk-ins are a good option for students with quick questions. Students have a maximum of 15 minutes with a UCS career counselor. It is first come, first served, no appointment needed. During the fall and spring semesters, walk-ins are: Mondays and Tuesdays from 9:00am – 11:00am and 2:00pm – 6:30pm; Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00am – 11:00am and 2:00pm – 4:00pm. During the summer semester, walk-ins are from 9:00am – 11:00am and 2:00pm – 4:00pm.

## VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

Vocational assessments are used to help pinpoint your vocational interests and personality preferences, clarify your work values, and identify your ideal work environment. Below are the assessments offered by UCS:

### Strong Interest Inventory

The Strong helps students discover their true interests and better identify, understand, and often expand their career options. The Strong generates an in-depth assessment of the student's interests among a broad range of occupations, work and leisure activities, and educational subjects.

### Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

The MBTI is an assessment that helps students to understand individual differences, personality preferences, and uncover new ways to work and interact with others.

### Career Leader

Career Leader is a self-assessment that is best for students who are fairly sure they want a career in the business field but aren't sure which niche to select. It assesses a student's interests, motivators, and skills.

## **StrengthsQuest**

StrengthsQuest is an online assessment that will help you gain insight into your areas of greatest potential: the things that you naturally do best. StrengthsQuest is not a career assessment and it won't tell you what job or career you should do; however, it does provide valuable information about who you are and gives you clues to the type of work environment in which you are most likely to thrive.

## **RESEARCHING COMPANIES AND INDUSTRIES**

### **University Career Services**

**U**CS has resources to assist you in researching companies and industries such as:

- "Company and Industry Research Guide" under the *Handouts* link on the UCS website.
- A list of websites regarding company research is available under the "Job Search" section under *Links* on the UCS website.
- The Houston Business Journal under *Featured Links* of the UCS website.
- Also, reference the "Company Research 101" article in this publication.

### **M.D. Anderson Library**

**T**he M.D. Anderson Library on campus has a wealth of information and a full range of database and publication resources with specific information on public and private companies, subsidiaries, foreign-owned companies, and industries.

Online resources include: BoardEx; Business & Industry; Business Source Complete; Hoover's; International Directory of Company Histories; LexisNexis Academic; Mergent Horizon; Mergent Online; NetAdvantage; New York Times; Plunkett Research Online; ProQuest Historical Annual Reports; ReferenceUSA; Small Business Resource Center; and The Wall Street Journal. Access these resources by going to: Research Guides - Loretta Wallace: <http://guides.lib.uh.edu/profile.php?uid=23149>.

### **Job Shadowing**

**J**ob Shadowing gives students the opportunity to explore their desired career field typically for a half day or one full day. Students apply and are selected by the Job Shadow Sponsor, who is a career professional in their intended career field (i.e., a student interested in going to law school is matched with a lawyer). Students will then spend a mutually agreed upon length of time with the Sponsor at the Sponsor's place of business. These opportunities are posted on the UCS website.



## **RESOURCES FOR FINDING A JOB/INTERNSHIP**

### **Campus Recruitment**

**C**ampus Recruitment (on-campus interviews) is a service that brings company recruiters to campus to interview UH students and alumni for full-time, part-time, and internship opportunities. The recruiters represent a broad spectrum of industries and fields, including business, engineering, technology, government, and others. Campus Recruitment is for all majors and all classifications, although the demand will generally reflect the supply and demand in the overall job market.

For more information on how to participate in on-campus interviews, see the "Campus Recruitment" section later in this publication.

### **ResumeBank**

**R**esumeBank is a comprehensive resume database developed by UCS for UH students and alumni. It is designed to assist UH job candidates who are seeking:

1. Career-level positions (both entry-level and positions requiring experience)
2. Internships
3. Non-degree positions (part- and full-time)

Inclusion of your resume in ResumeBank greatly increases the chances of your resume being seen by potential employers. UCS staff, authorized faculty, and employers conduct candidate searches via ResumeBank based on degree, major, date of graduation, industry preferences, keywords,

and other search criteria. Registration with ResumeBank is a prerequisite for participation in Campus Recruitment (view the section on "Campus Recruitment Overview" later in this publication); registration also enables you to receive automatic email notification of jobs related to your major that are posted in JOBank.

To register with ResumeBank, log onto the UCS website by clicking the *Sign In* link and then click the *ResumeBank* link. The first section of ResumeBank is the Data File. Click the *Data File* link and follow the prompts to complete this section of ResumeBank. Completion of the Data File is necessary in order to upload your resume. Also, employers base their resume searches on the information provided in your Data File, and automatic email notifications are sent based on this same information as well.

After completion of the Data File in ResumeBank, you should upload at least one resume. As part of ResumeBank, you may upload as many as four versions of your resume. You should have a general resume that can be used as your default resume. Additional resumes may be tailored for a specific purpose. For example, if you have a double major, you may wish to set up one resume for each discipline. UCS career counselors recommend you upload your resume(s) as a Word or PDF file.



## **Transpro**

The purpose of Transpro is to enable UH job candidates to produce an unofficial transcript that can be used for campus interviews through the Campus Recruitment service. Transpro offers a quick, no-cost means of providing transcript information to potential employers.

Employers generally do not require official transcripts early in the candidate selection process. In most cases, only when the offer of a job is pending will the official transcript be necessary. An official transcript is defined as one that is requested by the student, sealed, and either forwarded directly from the UH Office of Registration and Academic Records to the employer, or can be picked up by the student.

Another advantage of using Transpro is that it allows you to include courses in progress and courses that you plan to take in future semesters. This information is of interest to employers, and it is information that is not available in the official transcript.

To create your transcript information on Transpro, click on the *Transpro* link in ResumeBank. Follow the prompts to complete your transcript information. Then, review your Transpro draft to ensure the accuracy of the information you entered.

## **JOBank**

JOBank is an online database of job postings provided by companies seeking UH students and alumni for employment. Job listings include part-time, full-time, internship positions, career level (all experience levels), and on-campus positions. JOBank is updated every day with the most current job opportunities, and may be accessed 24/7. There is no limit to the number of jobs you can view.

JOBank may be used independently or in conjunction with ResumeBank. The advantages of utilizing ResumeBank with JOBank are:

- Receiving automatic email notifications of jobs posted to JOBank that match your major
- Applying online for posted jobs
- Tracking all resume submissions through JOBank on the "JOBank Applications" section of your ResumeBank Status page
- Utilizing the "Resume View Log" section on your ResumeBank Status page, you will be able to view a list of employers who have searched the ResumeBank database and viewed your Data File

When job searching, it is not required to enter information in all fields of the search criteria. In fact, a broader search will return a larger result of matching jobs. If searching for on-campus, part-time, or full-time jobs only, be sure to click that option under the "Job Type" section of the Job Search page. To view all available jobs that have been posted, scroll to the bottom of the page under Posting Date(s), click on the Jobs posted in the last 30 days radio button, then click on the *Submit* link to view your search results. You may always go back and add search criteria to refine your results.

Once you have found a job for which you would like to apply, follow the preferred method of contact instructions given in the job posting. Most postings will request you apply online through JOBank, which allows the applicant to choose a preferred resume in ResumeBank to submit for a job posting. Employers can also have applicants apply through their company website, email, fax their resume, or apply in person. Employers will then contact the applicants they choose to interview.

## **JOBank Archive Search**

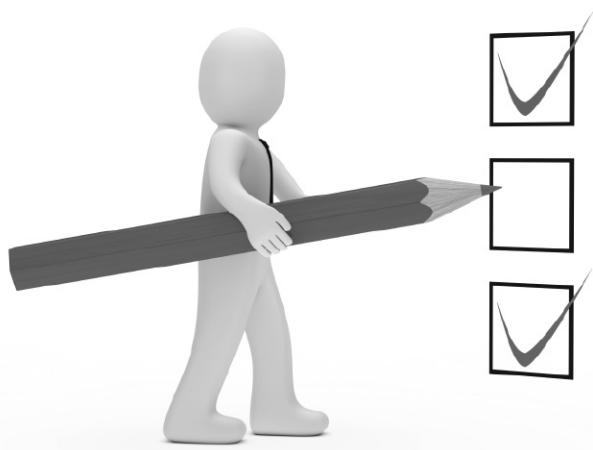
For many job seekers, knowledge of what majors employers have recruited in the recent past is valuable information for researching potential job opportunities. The Archive Search on JOBank is a collection of expired job postings from the previous two years. Postings are searchable by academic major(s), degree, job type, job title, and organization name. Employers' contact information will not be shown due to the job being closed. The archives are useful in targeting potential employers, but it is not a resource to use in applying for specific job openings.

To view the archives, go to the "JOBank" section of the UCS website, and then click on the Archive Search link.

## **JobScan**

Some employers prefer to fax, mail, or email their job announcements to UCS. These job postings are electronically scanned into the JobScan database and may be viewed from the UCS website. The JobScan database is fully searchable by job type, academic major, geographical location, keywords, and date of posting. If large collections of jobs are received (job vacancy booklets, etc.), JobScan will provide a description of the collection and include the scanned attachment sent by the employer.

Most of the jobs found in JobScan are different from those found in JOBank; therefore, job seekers are advised to check both sources regularly. You will not receive email notifications about job postings on JobScan. When searching JobScan, it is not required to enter information in all fields. In fact, a broader search will return a larger result of matching jobs. Click the *Submit* link to view your search results. Job postings will show a brief job description and contact information to apply for the position. Employers will contact the applicants they choose to interview.



## **Internship Services**

An internship is a supervised pre-professional learning experience where students apply their skills and knowledge in a professional setting. This experience is directly related to a student's major or career interests, and offers a preview of work in the chosen profession.

This service includes career counseling that focuses on internship goal-setting and internship job search strategies. The following are the steps that we recommend for students seeking internships:

- **Attend the To Intern or Not to Intern? Workshop**  
This workshop will give you an overview of internships and help you gain some clarity about various types of internships.
- **Schedule an Appointment with a UCS Career Counselor**  
The counselor will meet with you one-on-one to:
  - Discuss your internship goals and preferences
  - Review your resume
  - Discuss internship resources and strategies
- **Complete the Data File/Resume in ResumeBank in Order to:**  
Meet with a UCS career counselor or attend The Job Hunt Workshop to learn more about the best ways to promote you and to seek opportunities! Improve your job search skills by:
  - Have your contact information available for employers
  - Apply for JOBank positions
  - Submit your resume for Campus Recruitment interviews
- **Utilize Networking and Job Search Techniques**  
Meet with a UCS career counselor or attend The Job Hunt Workshop to learn more about the best ways to promote you and to seek opportunities! Improve your job search skills by:
  - Creating a marketing commercial
  - Developing a personal list of contacts
  - Learning about conducting informational interviews and the art of networking
- **Schedule a Mock Interview with a UCS Career Counselor**  
You may want to schedule a mock interview with a UCS career counselor before you have an interview lined up. This will give you plenty of time to prepare and fine tune your interview answers. Learn techniques for answering those difficult interview questions and improve your chance of being a top candidate!

- Follow-up with a UCS Career Counselor**  
Stuck in a rut? Not sure why you are not finding leads? Continue working with your UCS career counselor to help you find ways to improve your job search strategies.
- Complete the Student Evaluation**  
Help UCS improve upon our Internship Services by providing feedback.

For more information regarding internships and opportunities, log onto the UCS website. Then click on the *UCS Internship Services* link.

# Tip

View the Internship Newsletter for specific job listings and internship workshops.

This publication is available on the UCS website under the "UCS Internship Services" section.

## Career Fairs

UCS participates in several career fairs each semester, and is one of the sponsors for the annual Texas Job Fair during the spring semester. In addition, UCS hosts the annual Campus Jobs for Coogs Fair during the summer semester, the Internship Career Fair in the fall semester, as well as the Summer Jobs for Coogs Fair during the spring semester. UCS collaborates with the UH Alumni Association (UHAA) each year to coordinate the Alumni Job Fair and Mixer. Career fairs are a great place to start a job search and to meet employers from a variety of industries. See the "How to Market Yourself at a Career Fair" section of this publication for tips and checklists.

## Cooperative Education

Cooperative Education (or Co-op) is a program that enables college students to receive career training with pay as they work with professionals in their major fields of study. Work experience in government, business, industry, and human services enhances the students' academic training.

Students are required to submit a work report at the end of each Co-op semester to personally document receiving work experience in their major field of study, and to receive a letter grade on the official transcript. This work report is preformatted and will take about an hour to complete.

Most employers use the Co-op concept as a recruiting tool. They like to fill their new hire vacancies with graduates from their Co-op programs whenever possible. Most Co-op positions are offered on a full-time, alternating basis with two students filling each job. While one student works,

the other attends school. They trade places each spring, summer, and fall semester. There are a few positions that are on a part-time schedule throughout the year; these are known as parallel Co-op jobs.

## What are the advantages of being a Co-op student?

- Provides **meaningful experience**, making students more valuable to an employer upon graduation. Many companies tend to hire former Co-ops for full-time positions.
- Enables a student to **earn money** to help finance his/her college education.
- Makes academic work more meaningful through **practical application** of classroom principles.
- Creates the proper environment to **explore a career choice** before graduation.
- Offers the opportunity to **associate with professionals** who have many years of experience in the student's major.

For more information, contact the Co-op Office at 713.743.4230, or visit [www.egr.uh.edu/coop](http://www.egr.uh.edu/coop).

## University Career Advisory Network

### "Cougars Helping Cougars"

The University Career Advisory Network (UCAN) group on LinkedIn is a career development resource designed to link UH students and alumni with volunteer advisors representing a wide range of occupational fields and experience levels. Through UCAN, you may communicate and network with professionals whose skills, experience, and advice can be extremely useful if you are in a career decision-making or job search mode.

#### UCAN group members can help you:

- Learn more about particular careers and industries
- Understand the academic and experiential preparation best suited for a given career
- Discover how people find jobs in certain career fields
- Determine the best sources for informational interviews
- Learn about a certain geographic area
- Find out what it's like to work for a certain employer
- Obtain information about graduate school and other useful career and job search information

If you are interested in contacting a UCAN group member, please make sure you check with your UCS career counselor first for professional communication advice and strategies. Then, join our LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)) group called: University Career Advisory Network (UCAN) at University of Houston. Please email us at [ucs@uh.edu](mailto:ucs@uh.edu) if you have any questions.

UCS assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information provided or the opinions of the advisors comprising UCAN.

### Other Resources

- The Daily Cougar Classifieds
- Bulletin boards around campus – View bulletin boards in locations such as UH colleges and departments, University Center, University Center Satellite, dorms, etc.
- Student Organizations [www.uh.edu/getinvolved](http://www.uh.edu/getinvolved)
- Social media: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, etc.

## ADDITIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

### Workshops

UCS facilitates workshops on topics such as resume writing, internships, interviewing, and searching for a job. See the "Career Development Workshops and Seminars" section of this publication for a complete list of workshops.

### Career Success Series

Each semester, UCS sponsors a series of seminars, panel discussions, and events related to career development to give you a jump start on your job search and/or career success.

## WEB-BASED CAREER DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

The UCS website features hundreds of tools and sources of career development information such as:

### Career Insider by Vault

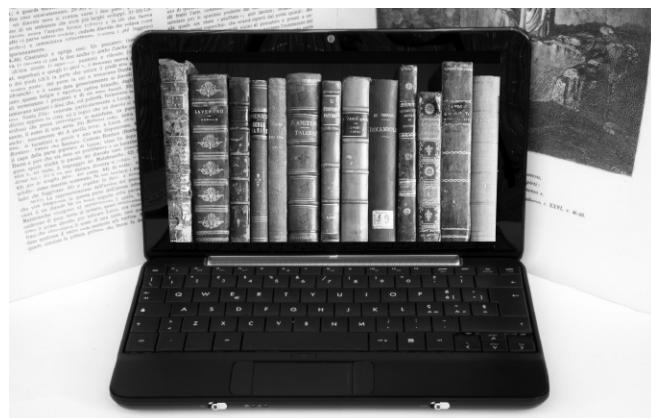
Vault's Career Insider is the world's leading source of career information. It will make your efforts at researching employers, industries, job/internship search, and career exploration easier and more efficient. Career Insider features:

- 4,000+ company profiles
- 50 GOLD company profiles
- 50+ Vault Insider videos

- Internship database
- Access to the Vault message boards
- 3,000 career advice articles
- Sample resumes and cover letters, and interview tips
- Industry and occupational research

### CareerTV

CareerTV is a broadband video library of over 500 career related segments aimed at assisting students in all phases of career development, from top employer overviews to diversity topics to social responsibility and much more. It is the world's most visited career video website.



### The UCS Career Resource Library

UCS maintains over 200 books and directories on everything from choosing a major to negotiating a job offer. Resources (excluding directories) may be checked out of the UCS Career Resource Library for up to one week.

The UCS collection of books and directories include occupation descriptions, geographic locations, necessary trainings, qualifications for these opportunities, and job market forecasts. Emphasis is on the organization's history and the type of information that will assist a job candidate make choices that fit his/her interests and career goals, as well as make a good first impression.

For a complete listing of the UCS Career Resource Library materials, log onto the UCS website and click on the Resources link.

### WinWay Resume Deluxe Software

Each of the six computers at UCS is equipped with the newest edition of this software to help students and alumni create a resume and cover letter. This software includes the New Job Title Matching System to cross reference 35,000+ job titles to include specific key words necessary in a resume.

## GRADUATE STUDENT SERVICES

University Career Services provides career counseling/exploration and job search help to graduate students and alumni for careers within and beyond academia. Check the *Handouts* link for graduate handouts. These services include:

### *Graduate Career Counseling:*

- Identify strengths and weaknesses, pinpoint interests, and clarify values
- Determine what you can do with a graduate degree in your field
- Find out how you can make yourself a more qualified job candidate

### *Portfolio Management:*

- Have your resume or curriculum vitae critiqued
- Establish a credential file for application to graduate programs and academic jobs

### *Job Search:*

- Learn how to research different career fields and employers
- Participate in a mock interview for academic and non-academic positions
- Understand the importance of networking and how to accomplish it
- Learn how best to use the internet in your job search
- Gather information about salaries and find out how to evaluate job offers

## PRE-HEALTH SERVICES

University Career Services provides Pre-Health Services to students or alumni interested in pursuing a career in the medical and/or healthcare fields including: medicine, optometry, dentistry, pharmacology, physical therapy, and research, just to name a few. UCS also maintains a two-way partnership with Undergraduate Scholars (UScholars) at UH. UScholars provides general advising, reference services, and file management specifically for students participating in the Health Professions Advisory Committee (HPAC), in addition to the resources and services made available to students through the University Career Services office.

UCS provides career counseling and facilitates career exploration for students interested in healthcare careers. Make an appointment with a UCS career counselor regarding:



### *Pre-Health Career Counseling:*

- Research healthcare careers
- Select a major
- Choose the healthcare career that is right for you
- Obtain graduate and professional school information

### *Pre-Health Experience:*

- Identify volunteer opportunities
- Get health related experience

### *Application Assistance:*

- Receive standardized test information and preparation resources
- Develop and review your personal statement
- Practice for professional and graduate school admission interviews
- Schedule a resume design and critique session

## PRE-LAW SERVICES

University Career Services provides Pre-Law Services to students and alumni in a three-way partnership between University Career Services, the Pre-Professional and Post-Baccalaureate Studies Office (PPB), and the Department of Political Science. PPB provides academic advising, review of course selection, discussion of academic concerns/weaknesses, and a description of the application process. UCS offers professional career counseling to assist you in your decision to pursue a career in law as well as one-on-one help with your resume and personal statement for law school. The Department of Political Science is the last stop in this process and can help you decide which law school might be best for you.

### **Pre-Law Career Counseling:**

- Participate in personality, interests, skills, and values assessments
- Decide if law school is right for you
- Review legal career and education preparation resources

### **Pre-Law Job Search:**

- Locate employment and internship opportunities
- Get help with writing a resume
- Practice networking skills

### **Application Assistance:**

- Identify LSAT preparation resources
- Get your personal statement and resume reviewed
- Manage letters of recommendation

## **CREDENTIAL FILES**

A credential or placement file is a collection of documents showing your academic and professional credentials. A traditional credential file includes transcripts, confidential letters of recommendation, and a resume or curriculum vitae. However, now employers and graduate schools often expect them to contain other supplemental materials such as writing samples, dissertation abstracts, test scores, supervising teacher evaluations, certifications, or teaching portfolios as well.

### **Who should have a credential file?**

Graduate/professional school applicants or academia job candidates who are required to send letters of recommendation, writing samples, dissertation abstracts, transcripts, and other portfolio materials as part of their applications to search committees or school districts should have a credential file. A credential file service makes it easier to apply for graduate and professional schools, all education and teaching jobs, most administrative or professional academic employment, and even some private sector jobs.

### **Why should I use a credential file service?**

It is best to acquire and store recommendations and credentials now. In a few years when you want to apply for a new job or to graduate school, you may have a difficult time obtaining references from your current peers and professors for they may have retired, forgotten you, or passed away.

### **Using a credential file service will:**

- Ensure that your letters and other documents will not be lost

- Guarantee documents are sent at once
- Make future employment and admission application processes much easier

### **Why can't I just do this myself?**

Support and simplicity are the biggest reasons for using a credential file service rather than doing it yourself. Since you cannot see your confidential letters, you cannot duplicate or distribute them easily. If you do not use a service, the only way to duplicate and distribute letters is to ask each recommendation writer to create multiple copies and seal them in signed envelopes.

### **What credential file service does UCS offer?**

University Career Services partners with Interfolio for credential file services. Interfolio is an online credential file management service that stores and distributes copies of your credential file documents to schools, institutions, and employers of your choice.

### **How do I start?**

To create an Interfolio account, log onto [www.interfolio.com](http://www.interfolio.com), and click on the *Sign Up* link and follow the instructions to open an account. You will need a valid credit card to pay for account set up.

### **How much does it cost?**

Basic plan: \$3.00 per month  
Standard plan: \$7.00 per month  
Advanced plan: \$12.00 per month

### **What if I have questions?**

If you have problems accessing the site, please contact Interfolio toll-free at 877.773.6546 or call 202.223.3358 or email [help@interfolio.com](mailto:help@interfolio.com).



## ALUMNI CAREER SERVICES

Alumni Career Services provides career decision-making and professional job search assistance to all UH alumni. Various subscription plans and distance career services options are offered:

- **Plan I:** These services are free and include the use of books and directories in the UCS Career Resource Library, access to the UCAN (University Career Advisory Network) group on LinkedIn, career handouts, attendance at UCS Workshops and UCS Career Fairs, and a 15 minute consultation with a UCS career counselor.
- **Plan II:** These services are free the semester immediately following graduation and \$35 per year thereafter. Plan II includes all of the services described in Plan I with the addition of access to the following online job search services: JOBank, JobScan, ResumeBank, and Campus Recruitment.
- **Plan III:** These services are free the semester immediately following graduation and \$75 per year thereafter. Plan III includes all of the above with the addition of individual career counseling, including personalized job search assistance. Vocational assessment is also available for a nominal fee to cover the cost of assessment. The \$75 fee includes up to three (3) one-on-one counseling sessions. Each additional counseling session is \$25.
- **In-Person Mock Interview:** Prepare for an upcoming job interview or graduate school interview by participating in a mock interview (\$35 per one-hour session). Practice interviewing skills and receive valuable, direct feedback from a UCS career counselor.
- **Distance Career Services:** UH alumni can receive job search assistance, resume critiques, and interview preparation via the phone and/or internet (\$25-\$35 per service). These services are extremely convenient and cost-effective for alumni who: a) live/work outside of the Houston area, b) are unavailable to visit UCS during regular business hours, and/or c) want to take advantage of a menu of job search services at a reduced cost.



Plan II and Plan III are 12 month subscriptions that begin on the date of purchase. UH alumni may speak with a UCS career counselor to help determine which level of service will best meet their needs. Complete information is available on the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu/alumni](http://www.career.uh.edu/alumni).



## REGISTER WITH UCS!

University Career Services has two levels of registration: Express and Full Registration.

**Express Registration** enables you to receive UCS' basic services quickly and easily including automatic email notifications about new job postings related to your major(s), career fairs, employer information sessions, and other career-related events.

**Full Registration** includes all of the services listed for Express Registration. In addition, Full Registration enables you to have your resume available to employers who search on our website, as well as allows you to apply for JOBank postings online, and to request interviews through Campus Recruitment. Full Registration requires you to complete the Data File and upload at least one resume in ResumeBank.

Visit the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu). Once you are logged onto the UCS website, you will be prompted to enter your email address, major, expected date of graduation, and what types of information you would like to receive from UCS.

## BECOME A UCS AMBASSADOR!

The UCS Ambassadors student group is a new program that allows students to work at UCS to:

- Gain leadership experience
- Get involved on campus
- Help other Coogs
- Develop great communication skills
- Participate in professional development opportunities

Visit the UCS website for more information, program requirements, and application deadlines.

# Career Development Workshops and Seminars



## LOST? HOW TO CHOOSE A MAJOR WORKSHOP

Having trouble deciding on what major to choose? Feeling a little overwhelmed by all the choices UH offers? We can help! Learn ways to gain clarity about yourself and how to research career options in order to select a major that is a good fit for you.

## ROCK YOUR RESUME WORKSHOP

The purpose of the resume is to get you the job interview. The large majority of job candidates are screened out at the resume stage of the job search. This workshop will help you prepare a resume that will increase your chances of generating job interviews.

## TO INTERN OR NOT TO INTERN? WORKSHOP

An internship is an effective way to gain exposure to the professional world of work while gaining hands-on, career-related experience prior to graduation. This workshop will focus on types of internships, sources of internship opportunities, and getting the most from an internship experience.

## THE JOB HUNT WORKSHOP

Think your degree guarantees you a job? Think again. Finding a job IS a job! A multi-faceted job search strategy is the key. This workshop will give you step-by-step instructions on how to network and effectively use the internet in your job search, as well as an overview of the best strategies in looking for on-campus, part-time, temporary, internship, or career-level positions.

## IMPRESS! HOW TO WORK A CAREER FAIR WORKSHOP

Career fairs can be a great place for you to meet potential employers, but you need to do more than print 30 copies of your resume, practice your handshake, and press your interview suit to succeed! Learn how to make the most of your next career fair in this workshop.

## YOU'RE HIRED! INTERVIEW WORKSHOP

The structure of the interview, anticipating frequently asked questions, and dealing with difficult and illegal questions are some of the topics discussed in this workshop. Highly recommended for users of the Campus Recruitment service.

## CAMPUS RECRUITMENT WORKSHOP (CRW)

This workshop is required to participate in the Campus Recruitment service. The purpose of the Campus Recruitment Workshop is to learn how to identify which employers are recruiting for full-time, part-time, and internship positions, and to learn the procedures for scheduling interviews. This workshop may be completed in person at the UCS office (view the *Events Calendar* link on the UCS website for dates and times), or on the UCS website under the *Online CRW* link in the "Campus Recruitment" section.

## COLLEGE WORK-STUDY WORKSHOP

For students who have been awarded College Work-Study through the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, this workshop will explain how to find a College Work-Study job, including how to complete the application, search for jobs, and apply online. Tips on making a positive impression and preparing for the interview will also be covered.

## CAREER SUCCESS SERIES

Every spring and fall semester, University Career Services coordinates a series of seminars, career panels, and presentations on topics related to career success to give you a jump start on your job search and/or career. A few of the past events include: "Land a Job in a Tough Economy," "Leveraging LinkedIn to Land a Job," "Careers in Healthcare," and "Fastest Growing Careers."

Please visit the UCS website for a list of career workshop dates and times under the *Events Calendar* link. The workshop calendar is also available in the UCS lobby. It is not necessary to RSVP to attend the workshops, but it is recommended that you arrive 10 – 15 minutes early as seating is limited. Call 713.743.5100 for special accommodations.

# The Reality of On-Campus Employment

On-campus employment is a challenge to find on any university campus. Every August, University Career Services hosts "Campus Jobs for Coogs," a job fair for on-campus (non-College Work-Study and College Work-Study) student worker positions. On-campus employment allows students, both undergraduate and graduate, to conveniently work on-campus while they're attending school. Most on-campus departments/colleges hire their student workers for the entire school year during this event. Check the UCS website and social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter) to learn when this event will occur.

There are some extremely important things to remember when searching for an on-campus job:

1. **Demand for on-campus jobs is higher than the supply.** This means that it is competitive to land an on-campus job.
2. **Many students find their on-campus job through word of mouth.** When you meet people, let them know you are looking for a job on campus. Not all jobs are posted online; therefore, it is important to network and inquire within your friends and contacts.
3. **Have your friends that work on campus be on the lookout.** Ask them to tell you about opportunities within their offices. When there is an opening, ask your friend to recommend you.



4. **Follow-up with your contacts.** Don't just tell them once that you are looking for an on-campus job. Follow-up on a weekly basis, because you never know when an opening will become available.
5. **Start your search in your own department or college.** Academic departments may want to know your major, because they may prefer to provide positions to students enrolled in their own department/college.

## TOP FIVE OFFICE EXPECTATIONS

1. **Dependability**
  - If you are not able to work during your scheduled time, call your supervisor as soon as possible. Your office depends upon your attendance to operate smoothly and efficiently.
2. **Punctuality**
  - Make sure you get to work on time, every time.
3. **Confidentiality**
  - Information heard or seen in the office or department is confidential and cannot be discussed with your friends.
4. **Work Assignments**
  - Remember, your work is your signature. It's a reflection of you, the office, and the University. Sign it with pride!
5. **Use of Resources and Supplies**
  - Your scheduled time at your job is work time. School work should be done on your own time.
  - Office supplies and equipment are school property and are for office use ONLY.
  - Do not have personal visits from friends.

## COLLEGE WORK-STUDY

College Work-Study (CWS) is a federal and State of Texas grant program offered through the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid that allows students to work part-time to earn money toward their college expenses while also gaining valuable job skills. Students may be awarded grants for the fall and/or spring semesters. All students who wish to apply for this award will need to have filed a FAFSA each academic year and should select the "Work-Study" option. Eligibility criteria includes:

- U.S. citizenship
- Demonstrated financial need
- Enrolled at least part-time
- Good academic standing
- Filed a completed FAFSA



The College Work-Study award allows students to work part-time on/off-campus while attending classes. Students are able to find jobs with departments on campus and approved off-campus employers. Available CWS positions are posted on the UCS website under the College Work-Study link. Students may work up to 20 hours per week during the semester, if approved by the hiring department. College Work-Study positions are posted every year beginning August 1st. Students who are new or are being re-hired will have to accept the award through their PeopleSoft account in order to apply for a position. Students must apply for a position every year in order to use the award. Failure to obtain a job may result in loss of the financial award.

Students who are working in an approved CWS position are paid by the hours worked and are paid bi-weekly. Students can work and receive their work-study monies until the award has been met or until the end of the academic year. The award will not cover any student fees owed to the University. It is the responsibility of the student to pay his/her fees. Students can consult with their supervisor about being re-hired for the next academic year. Students may apply for up to 15 positions at a time, but can only be hired for one position at a time. Students are only allowed to work one on-campus job.

# Tip

## CWS Notes!

Keep these things in mind as you begin your on-campus job search:

- Search our job posting online databases (JOBank and JobScan) on the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu). Simply log onto the UCS website using your PeopleSoft ID and click on the JOBANK and JobScan links. You can set your account to receive email notifications when new job postings are added to the job bulletin board that match your major/minor, etc. (This feature is only used for JOBANK).
- Not all departments post their job openings on our website; therefore, be sure to search departments' websites, and/or inquire at their offices. Check if they have a job bulletin board where they post this information; for example, the Campus Recreation and Wellness Center, tutoring labs and centers, a specific college, etc.
- UCS has an "On-Campus Employment Guide" handout that provides more information on finding an on-campus job. It can be found on our website by clicking the Handouts link.
- If you have been awarded with College Work-Study, attend the CWS Workshop at UCS during the scheduled times and dates they're offered to learn more about finding a CWS job at UH.
- Attend UCS' annual on-campus job fair, "Campus Jobs for Coogs," to connect with UH departments seeking student workers for either College Work-Study or non-College Work-Study student positions. This event takes place every August.

# Campus Recruitment

Each year, during the fall and spring semesters, approximately 250 corporate recruitment visits are coordinated by UCS for the purpose of providing interview opportunities between employers and UH students and alumni.



Campus Recruitment is a convenient and effective way for UH job candidates to interview on campus with employers representing a broad spectrum of industries such as business, engineering, technology, government, and nonprofit. Interviews are conducted in our office for full-time, part-time, and internship opportunities. While employer needs reflect the demands of the overall job market, there are career opportunities for all academic majors through the Campus Recruitment service.

## CAMPUS RECRUITMENT TIMEFRAME

The fall and spring semesters are divided into one week recruitment periods. Each recruiting period has a corresponding deadline by which to submit your interview request through the UCS website. When you submit an interview request, you are applying for the position by submitting your resume. Please view these deadlines under the "Campus Recruitment Timetable" listed in this publication.

## REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE

1. Complete a Campus Recruitment Workshop (CRW), which may be done either through the *Online CRW* link under the "Campus Recruitment" section of the UCS website, or attend an in-person workshop during the scheduled dates and times that are listed under the *Events Calendar* link on the UCS website. The purpose of the CRW is to learn how to: participate in Campus Recruitment, search for companies that are interviewing and for what positions, and understand the procedures and policies of this service.
2. Complete the Data File and upload at least one resume in ResumeBank. UCS encourages all students to visit a UCS career counselor during walk-in hours for a resume critique before they upload any resume(s).

## APPLYING FOR ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS

After completing the Campus Recruitment requirements, students and alumni can begin to submit interview requests through the *Employer Search & Interview Request* link located in the "Campus Recruitment" section of the UCS website.

### IMPORTANT

Submit an interview request only if:

- You closely match the qualifications listed by the employer in the job description, as employers want to see the resumes of candidates who have the background and skills for the position being advertised.
- You are truly interested. After all, you may be selected for an interview!

All interview schedules are set up as pre-selection schedules. Pre-Selection provides the opportunity for students and alumni to have their resumes viewed by employers of their choice. The employer then informs UCS which candidates they would like to interview on campus. All students and alumni whom the employer pre-selects are notified and scheduled for the interview by UCS.

## INTERVIEW LOG AND CHECKING INTERVIEW STATUS

Your Interview Log is the official record of all your interview requests, along with the status of each request. There are four different interview request statuses:

- *Pending* - Means the employer has not provided their list(s) of interview candidates to UCS

- **Pre-select** - Means the employer is requesting an interview with you
- **Not-Preselect** - Means the employer has not selected to interview you
- **Alternate** - Means you do not have an interview at this time; if someone on the schedule cancels, UCS will contact you regarding any open timeslot(s)

**It is recommended that you review your Interview Log daily to see whether or not you were selected for an interview.**

# Tip

## Get a Head Start!

Get involved with the Campus Recruitment service early, approximately two semesters in advance of your anticipated graduation date. Many companies choose to recruit during the fall semester to fill their projected hiring needs for the year and may not recruit in the spring.

## RESCHEDULING OR CANCELING AN INTERVIEW

Rescheduling or canceling an interview can be done through the UCS website from your Interview Log. The deadline to reschedule or cancel an interview is **1:00pm one business day** before the interview date.

If you try to reschedule your interview time online and there isn't a convenient time available, contact the Campus Recruitment Staff. They will make every attempt to find a better interview time for you.

If an emergency comes up the day of the interview, contact UCS and we will relay a message to your interviewer.

Whether you need to reschedule or cancel an interview, please make the change through the UCS website, or contact UCS directly. To avoid scheduling conflicts, do NOT contact the interviewer/company!

## NO-SHOW POLICY

Cancelling an interview must be completed by **1:00pm one business day** before the interview date. Candidates who fail to cancel their interview in advance of this time, or who fail to show up for the interview, will receive a "No-Show."

This status will suspend candidates' interviewing privileges for the remainder of the academic year. A "No-Show" may be appealed by contacting the UCS Assistant Director of Campus Recruitment, Theresa Cyr, at [tcyr@uh.edu](mailto:tcyr@uh.edu).

Employers invest a significant amount of time and money in their recruiting efforts. When you miss an interview, it creates a bad impression of UH and yourself. Therefore, it is important to treat each interview as a commitment.

Complete details of the Campus Recruitment procedures and policies are covered in the Campus Recruitment Workshop.

## PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

On-campus interviewing is often the first step in the interviewing process for many employers. Therefore, it is important to remember that the campus interview is a real interview, and it is not just a practice run.

What should you bring to a campus interview?

- Copies of your resume targeted to the position you are interviewing for
- A copy of your unofficial transcript (or an academic degree audit)
- Company information you researched
- List of questions to ask the interviewer
- Business cards
- Career portfolio for any requested materials from the employer such as references, samples of work, awards, etc.

Many employers will request an unofficial copy of your transcript prior to or during the interview. There are three transcript options:

1. Complete the "Transpro" section of ResumeBank
2. Bring a copy of your unofficial transcript to the interview
3. Print your academic audit

Dress for success! See the "Professional Image Counts!" article in this publication for recommendations on what type of attire and accessories to wear to an interview.

## **EMPLOYER INFORMATION SESSIONS/RECEPTIONS**

Many employers conduct information sessions or receptions prior to their interview date.

The purpose of these information sessions/receptions is to provide information about the company and to give you the opportunity to ask questions. Check the reception information and invitation requirements listed online under the employer's "Interview Requirements" page.

The structure of these events typically include: presentation of the company, question and answer session, followed by informal discussion with company representatives.

These events are another avenue for employers to evaluate you; consequently, put yourself in the interview mindset.

## **TIPS TO PREPARE FOR THESE EMPLOYER EVENTS**

- Research the company prior to the event.
- Prepare questions to ask company representatives.
- Create a marketing commercial of yourself that includes your qualifications and interests.
- The interviewer will be looking for candidates who ask questions and handle themselves in a professional manner in a social setting.

## **BENEFITS OF ATTENDING THESE EMPLOYER EVENTS**

- These events are the first part of your interview. You can make a good impression with the interviewer in a casual setting.
- Learn more about the company, available positions, and different career paths.
- These events help to better prepare you for the interview.
- An opportunity to network and to talk with professionals working in the field.



## **THE INTERVIEW DAY**

- Be sure to turn off your cell phone before you enter the UCS lobby.
- Arrive early (10 to 15 minutes) as this will give you time to sign in, quickly review notes about the company, and to prepare your thoughts for the interview.
- Dress to impress! Wear professional business attire, unless business casual is stated in the "Additional Information" section of the employer's "Interview Requirements" page.
- Interviews take place in private interview rooms at University Career Services.
- Waiting Room Anticipation: The campus interview waiting area (Room #156) is where your first face-to-face connection with your interviewer takes place. While waiting for your interviewer to greet you, prepare to make the best first impression. There may be several companies conducting interviews that same day, as a result, treat each interviewer as the one who may be interviewing you.
- Some employers will bring someone like a UH alumnus to greet you and answer any initial questions prior to your interview. Know that greeters play a part in the decision-making process to invite candidates for second interviews. Therefore, treat them as another interviewer.

# Tip

After the interviewer's initial introduction, there may be a long, silent pause while walking to the interview room. Use this opportunity to start building rapport with the interviewer. State that you appreciate the opportunity to meet with them, and begin talking about a particular topic that interests you about their organization. This shows you have done your research.

## WHY YOU SHOULD PARTICIPATE

- Employers are looking for students like you! Employers feel frustrated when there aren't any qualified students applying for great opportunities.
- By participating in Campus Recruitment, you are not competing with the general population through websites such as [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com) or [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com) since only UH students are allowed to use Campus Recruitment.
- Throughout the semester, new companies and organizations will post their job opportunities in Campus Recruitment. It is important to continue checking the UCS website for new additions as you never know when you'll run into a great opportunity you've been waiting for!



## CAMPUS INTERVIEWS CHECKLIST

- Observe the deadlines for submitting interview requests for each recruitment period as well as any deadline extensions.
- Check the *Employer Search & Interview Request* link often as new employers' schedules will be added throughout the semester.
- Check your email and Interview Log often!
- Research the company and prepare questions to ask the interviewer.
- Do not be a "No-Show"!!! If you change your mind about the interview, cancel it online no later than 1:00pm one business day before the interview date.
- Use the online *Business Card File* link on the UCS website under the "Campus Recruitment" section to find your interviewer's contact information and send your interviewer(s) a thank you note.
- Update your Data File, Resume(s), and Transpro during the course of your job search when information such as your address, phone number, email address, GPA, employment/internships, and/or classification (ex. junior, senior) changes.

# Tip

## Thank You Notes

See the "Job Search Correspondence" handout on the UCS website or in the UCS lobby for more information on how to effectively write a thank you note and for samples.

# Campus Recruitment Employers

## Fall 2012 – Spring 2013

ADT/Safehouse Protection  
Aflac Regional Office of Michael Cutaia  
Air Liquide  
Albermarle Corp  
American Red Cross  
Anadarko Petroleum Corporation  
Audubon Engineering  
AutoNation, Inc.  
BAKER CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION  
Baker Hughes  
BASF  
Becker Professional Education  
Best Buy-Galleria  
Big Play Scoring  
Boardwalk Pipeline Partners  
BP  
Braskem America  
Briggs & Veselka  
Burns & McDonnell  
Cameron  
CAPSHER Technology  
Caterpillar  
CenterPoint Energy  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Chevron Corporation  
Chevron Phillips Chemical Company  
CIA - DNI Open Source Center  
Citi  
Coca-Cola Refreshments  
College Nannies and Tutors of Katy  
Compressor Engineering  
Consolidated Graphics  
Dashiell  
Dedric K. Myers & Associates, LLC  
DOW  
Dril-Quip  
Emerson Process Management  
Enterprise Products  
Enterprise Rent a Car  
ESPN  
Exelon/Constellation Energy  
Expeditors International  
ExxonMobil  
Flow-Cal, Inc.  
Fluor Corp.  
FMC Technology  
Follett Educational Services  
Ford Motor Credit Company  
Forum Energy Technologies  
Foster Wheeler  
Freeport LNG  
Galapagos Partners, LP  
General Electric  
General Motors  
Genesis Energy, LP  
Halliburton  
Healgen Scientific, LLC  
Heartland Dental Care  
Hewlett Packard  
HIS  
ImageNet  
INEOS Olefins & Polymers USA  
Information Capital  
Intel Corporation  
JPMorgan Chase  
KBR  
Kiewit  
Kinder Morgan, Inc.  
Kohl's  
Liberty Mutual  
LongTale Publishing  
Lubrizol Corporation  
LyondellBassell Industries  
Marathon Oil  
MarketSphere Consulting  
Meritage Homes Corporation  
Modern Woodmen Fraternal Financial  
Mustang Energy  
Mustang Engineering  
Mustang Technology Group  
NASA Johnson Space Center  
National Oilwell Varco  
Occidental Chemical Corp.  
Occidental Petroleum Corporation  
Oncor Electric Delivery  
OpenTech Controls  
OSCOMP-Systems, Inc.  
Oxy, Inc.  
Peace Corps  
Phillips 66  
PLS Logistics Services  
PolyOne Corporation  
Praxair  
Pressler Consultants  
Red Clay Consulting  
Regus  
ReventionPOS  
Ross Stores, Inc.  
Royal Sleep Products  
SABIC  
Schlumberger  
Schneider Electric  
ScoNet International, Inc.  
Seismic Exchange, Inc.  
Sercel, Inc.  
Shaw Industries  
Shell  
Siemens  
Smith & Associates  
Smith Seckman Reid  
SNC-Lavalin  
Solar Turbines  
Spectra Energy  
StatOil  
Sun Products Corporation  
SunGard Consulting  
Superior Energy Services  
Target  
Techtronic Industries of North America  
The Reynolds and Reynolds Company  
TMK-IPSCO  
Townsend Solutions  
TriFection Remodeling & Construction  
TSS Photography  
Twice Media Productions, LLC  
Universal Pegasus  
Valero Energy  
Ventyx  
Worley Parson

# Campus Recruitment Timetable

Campus Recruitment is divided into 10 to 12 one-week recruitment periods. Each recruitment period has a corresponding date when the final list of employers will be published and a deadline by when to submit interview requests. Please review the final list of employers before each recruitment period deadline to ensure you have submitted interview requests for ALL companies of interest to you.

## FALL 2013 CAMPUS RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

Sign-up for all of the recruitment periods beginning on the first day of classes Monday, August 26, 2013

Recruitment Period	Interview Dates	Sign-up Deadline
Week 1	09/16 – 09/20	Wednesday, August 28
Week 2	09/23 – 09/27	Wednesday, September 4
Week 3	09/30 – 10/04	Wednesday, September 11
Week 4	10/07 – 10/11	Wednesday, September 18
Week 5	10/14 – 10/18	Wednesday, September 25
Week 6	10/21 – 10/25	Wednesday, October 2
Week 7	10/28 – 11/01	Wednesday, October 9
Week 8	11/04 – 11/08	Wednesday, October 16
Week 9	11/11 – 11/15	Wednesday, October 23
Week 10	11/18 – 11/22	Wednesday, October 30
Week 11	11/25 – 11/26	Wednesday, November 6
Week 12	12/02 – 12/06	Wednesday, November 13

**First Day of Classes:** Monday, August 26

**Last Day of Classes:** Saturday, December 7

**Thanksgiving Break:** Wednesday, November 27 - Saturday, November 30

**Final Exams:** Wednesday, December 11 - Thursday, December 19

## SPRING 2014 CAMPUS RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

Sign-up for all of the recruitment periods beginning on the first day of classes Monday, January 13, 2014

Recruitment Period	Interview Dates	Sign-up Deadline
Week 1	02/10 – 02/14	Wednesday, January 22
Week 2	02/17 – 02/21	Wednesday, January 29
Week 3	02/24 – 02/28	Wednesday, February 5
Week 4	03/03 – 03/07	Wednesday, February 12
Spring Break	03/10 – 03/15	No sign-ups this week
Week 5	03/17 – 03/21	Wednesday, February 26
Week 6	03/24 – 03/28	Wednesday, March 5
Week 7	03/31 – 04/04	Wednesday, March 12
Week 8	04/07 – 04/11	Wednesday, March 19
Week 9	04/14 – 04/18	Wednesday, March 26
Week 10	04/21 – 04/25	Wednesday, April 2

**First Day of Classes:** Monday, January 13

**Last Day of Classes:** Monday, April 28

**Spring Break:** Monday, March 10 - Saturday, March 15

**Final Exams:** Wednesday, April 30 - Thursday, May 8

The above dates and deadlines can be viewed from the *Important CR Dates* link on the UCS website.

# Career Planning for First Year College Students

**Start now for success later!**

One of the biggest challenges facing first year college students is making a decision about their major and their career path. Research shows that more than 50 percent of students change their major or their career path at least three times in their lifetime. Whether you come into college clueless about what you want to do, or 100 percent sure of what you want to do, the chances are that you will change your decision at least once. University Career Services offers guidance for all first year students in every stage of their career decision-making.

Here are some practical steps you can take towards your career planning starting in your freshman year in college:

## Where do I begin?

University Career Services offers the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Strong Interest Inventory (the Strong) assessments and individual career counseling appointments to help you choose a major or career path that best suits your strengths, personality, and interests. Understanding these factors, especially as a first year student, can help you:

- Select a major and career path that is a good fit
- Increase your awareness of your learning style in order to make the most of your education
- Identify personal strengths and potential blind spots
- Learn about qualities that are important for you in a career based upon your personality

## How do I get work experience while in college?

Gaining experience in the form of an internship, Co-op, practicum, part-time job, or volunteer opportunities can help you find out if your intended career path is compatible with your interests. University Career Services staff can assist by helping you:

- Connect with alumni and employers for career-related advice
- Search for internship and practicum program opportunities through our online job database and other web-based resources



- Research potential employers using our "Company and Industry Research Guide" located under the *Handouts* link on the UCS website
- Improve your resume during walk-in hours or scheduled appointments

## How do I narrow down my options?

Building awareness of your interests, personality, and experience in your area of interest can assist you in narrowing down your career options. A UCS career counselor can also help you narrow down your career options by assisting you to:

- Research graduate or professional programs, learn about timelines for applications, and identify questions to explore when researching these programs
- Find tips for preparing for a career fair in the "How to Make the Most of a Career Fair" handout located under the *Handouts* link on the UCS website
- Learn about employer information sessions and on-campus interviewing posted under the "Campus Recruitment" section of the UCS website

## How do I reach my goal?

You have done all of the research and work. Now you are ready to implement your career plan! A UCS career counselor can work with you to:

- Review your personal statement and resume for graduate and professional school or the workforce
- Practice a mock interview for employment, graduate, or professional school
- Learn more about job opportunities through networking and online resources
- Learn about salary negotiation and how to evaluate job offers

# College to Career: An Action Plan for Career Success



Which comes first, the major or the career? Do you want to choose a major first and identify career options later, or do you want to choose a career path and then identify possible majors to help get you there?

That depends on you. There is no one right way to proceed!

Many students believe each specific career field has a corresponding academic major and they need to declare a particular major in order to obtain an entry-level position in a given career field.

However, majors don't inherently limit you to only one career field. The major that you choose is only one factor in determining your future job prospects and career path. Your grades and the skills that you acquire through special projects and research assignments often tell employers more about what you have to offer than your major. Other factors, such as your relevant experience (internships, volunteer work, community service, part-time jobs, and activities) and your knowledge of and demonstrated interest in a career field, play an even larger part in determining an employer's interest in you.

You must first have a plan of action to follow during the course of your studies to create a solid foundation for your future career success. As you begin your college education, it's okay not to know which path you want to take in life. College is all about self discovery and developing the essential knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to become a productive member of the workforce.

The following information will provide details on how to: choose a major, identify and explore potential career possibilities, and obtain the academic and professional experiences you need to launch the career you want!

## FRESHMAN (up to 30hrs): Self Discovery and Exploration

### Questions to ask yourself:

- What are my interests, skills, and talents?
- In which subjects do I do well?
- What career fields are the most interesting to me?
- How can I get involved on campus?
- What professional opportunities are available to me?

## ACTION PLAN

- Explore majors and career options at University Career Services:
  - Browse the UCS website ([www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu)) and become familiar with UCS services offered
  - Schedule an appointment with a UCS career counselor who can guide you in the major decision-making process
  - Take career assessments to help identify aspects of your interests, values, personality, and skills
- Start a career journal to record your thoughts on careers, majors, and future goals. Create a section to record college experiences and accomplishments including: classes taken, class projects (tasks, obstacles, and results), volunteer activities, honors and awards, internships, part-time jobs, etc. Continue to update your journal throughout your college career.
- Talk about your career interests with parents, friends, and professors. In addition, upperclassmen can give you beneficial insight about their majors, favorite classes, professors, and their career-related experiences.
  - Review the Choosing A Major/Career (H)\*
  - Attend a Lost? How to Choose a Major Workshop

- Explore and develop your interests and skills through student organizations and clubs that interest you.
- Identify three to five career field options of interest and research how the majors that interest you would complement them.
- Adjust to the responsibility of your new environment by establishing good time management skills. Assess your study habits and make any necessary improvements. Seek out academic assistance from professors, academic advisors, tutors, and study groups as needed.
- Acquire computer skills by familiarizing yourself with various types of software such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- Declare a major and talk to an academic advisor about course selections by 30 credits hours.
- Keep those grades up! GPA is strongly considered for many jobs and internships and may be a requirement to be accepted for various colleges and degree programs.

## **SOPHOMORE (up to 60hrs): Decision-Making**

### **Questions to ask yourself:**

- What do I have to offer an employer?
- What can I do with this major?
- What do I want to do?
- What experience and skills do I need to succeed in a particular career/job?

## **ACTION PLAN**

- Shadow alumni or professionals in your career interest areas. Keep track of contacts by using a file for business cards or a contact manager software package (or develop your own).
  - Job Shadowing Service
- Utilize the University Career Advisory Network (UCAN). See the "UCAN" section of this publication for more details.
  - Informational Interviewing and Networking (H)\*
- Meet with a UCS career counselor who can guide you in the career decision-making process.
- Update your career journal with experiences from part-time jobs or classes taken.

- Learn how to transfer information from your career journal to a professional resume!
  - Rock Your Resume Workshop
  - Developing a Resume (H)\*
- Take an active or leadership role in an organization on campus.
- Search for a job, internship, or a volunteer opportunity that will enable you to develop career-related skills in a work environment of interest to you.
  - Guide to Finding Internships (H)\*
  - To Intern or Not to Intern? Workshop
  - JOBank and JobScan job postings
  - Campus Recruitment Workshop (CRW)
  - Campus Recruitment
  - Attend UCS and other UH career fairs

## **JUNIOR (up to 100hrs): Gaining Experience**

### **Questions to ask yourself:**

- Am I prepared for an interview?
- What experience and skills have I acquired?
- What companies would I like to research?

## **ACTION PLAN**

- Seek out elective courses that enhance your concentrated area of study and will increase your knowledge and skills in other areas.
- Create or update your resume and have it reviewed by a UCS career counselor.
  - Rock Your Resume Workshop
  - Developing a Resume (H)\*
- Practice interviewing skills.
  - Mock Interviews with a UCS career counselor
  - You're Hired! Interview Workshop
  - Preparing for the Employment Interview (H)\*
  - Business Etiquette: What You Need to Know (H)\*
- Attend campus career fairs, information sessions and presentations, and practice networking with employers and alumni. Keep your journal updated with contact information, notes on conversations, and possible follow-up information.
  - Impress! How to Work a Career Fair Workshop
  - How to Make the Most of a Career Fair (H)\*

- Learn how to market yourself and join the student chapter of a professional association related to your major to network with current professionals in your prospective career field.
- Build a professional wardrobe for interviews.
- Prioritize your career field options by referring to your journal entries (goals, values, skills, etc.).
- Visit the UCS website regularly for internship postings and to participate in Campus Recruitment.
  - Campus Recruitment Workshop (CRW)
  - To Intern or Not to Intern? Workshop
  - Guide to Finding Internships (H)\*

## SUMMER AFTER JUNIOR YEAR

Use this time to further develop your resume. Volunteer, intern, or work a summer job related to your prospective career, or travel abroad and expand your knowledge and experience.

Review the checklist for your final year and look for ways to get a head start. You will be glad you took the extra time now to prepare in advance for the busy year ahead!

Confirm your degree requirements to avoid any surprises when the time comes for graduation.

### **SENIOR (over 100hrs): Application**

#### **Questions to ask yourself:**

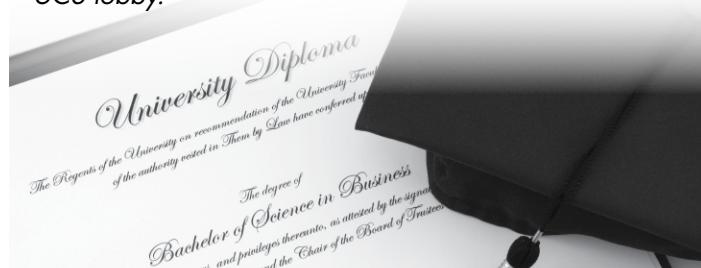
- Is my resume complete?
- Have I completed all requirements for graduation?
- Do I have the relevant knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to enter my intended career field or graduate/professional school program?
- Am I prepared for life after graduation?

- Develop an employer prospect list with contact names and websites of organizations you are interested in pursuing. Research these companies by browsing their websites and reading relevant periodicals and trade journals. This insight makes a difference during the interview!
  - The Successful Job Search (H)\*
  - Company and Industry Research Guide (H)\*
- Gather information on salary expectations for your career options at UCS or through other online resources.
- Utilize Campus Recruitment and JOBank services, attend career fairs, company information sessions, and any networking or career building workshops.
  - Informational Interviewing and Networking (H)\*
  - How to Make the Most of a Career Fair (H)\*
  - Campus Recruitment Workshop (CRW)
  - The Job Hunt Workshop
- Prepare for job interviews by reviewing various materials available at UCS and PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!
  - Mock Interviews with a UCS career counselor
  - You're Hired! Interview Workshop
  - Preparing for the Employment Interview (H)\*
- Create a recommendation file with letters from previous or current supervisors and/or professors. See the "Credential Files" section of this publication for more details.
- Obtain three references by requesting to use their names. Give each reference a copy of your resume to familiarize them with your skills and accomplishments.
- Follow-up on all interviews with thank you notes and keep a record of the status of each application submitted.
  - Job Search Correspondence (H)\*
- Analyze job offers based on the goals and values written in your journal. Speak with a UCS career counselor if you need assistance in evaluating job offers.
- Accept a job offer and remember the alumni who helped you. Be sure to make yourself accessible and return the favor by becoming a member of UCAN.

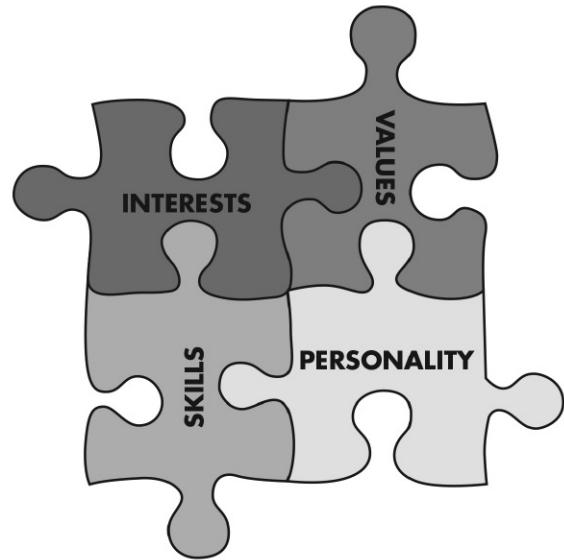
## ACTION PLAN

- Update your resume to ensure that it effectively conveys your skills to an employer. Meet with a UCS career counselor to help you review your resume and cover letter.
- If preparing for graduate or professional school, a UCS career counselor can also guide you in the application process.

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!**  
 (H)\* Handouts available on the UCS website or in the UCS lobby.



# How to Use Assessments for Choosing a Major or Career



**W**hat do you want to be when you grow up? Not sure? Well, you are not alone! Many students say they feel overwhelmed by the number of majors offered at UH and are unsure about which career to pursue with their degree. If you feel confused about how to make decisions, career assessments can make the decision-making process less daunting. UCS career counselors are trained to help you by not only offering career assessments, but also one-on-one counseling appointments to help you gain clarity about your interests, values, personality, and skills.

A good career assessment is like a tourist's guidebook. It can suggest countries to explore, but it can't tell you what it is like to actually live and work in that country. To test the options suggested by career assessments, UCS career counselors recommend that you take classes, do volunteer work, get involved with student and professional organizations, and meet people already working in the career fields that interest you.

Choosing high quality career assessments is important in order to not make career decisions based on inaccurate information. Here are some recommendations from the professional career counseling staff at University Career Services:

**Interests:** The gold standard of career interest assessments is the Strong Interest Inventory, (the Strong), the most widely used and well-respected career interest measure in the world. The Strong compares your responses to a large sample of professionals who are already satisfied with their careers. This assessment requires professional interpretation by a UCS career counselor. UH students and alumni may take this assessment for \$10 at University Career Services. Though not as comprehensive as the Strong, there is a free Interest Profiler self-assessment available online at [www.texascaresonline.com/ip/ipmenu.asp](http://www.texascaresonline.com/ip/ipmenu.asp).

**Values:** Research shows that a significant predictor of career happiness is the goodness of fit between an organization's values and your values. Examples of career values are independence, job tranquility, and status. You can explore your career values by using the free Values Card Sort at [www.stewartcoopercoon.com/jobsearch/career-values](http://www.stewartcoopercoon.com/jobsearch/career-values).

**Personality:** The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a well-known personality assessment. The MBTI requires professional interpretation by a UCS career counselor. UH students and alumni may take this assessment for \$10 at University Career Services. There is a free personality self-assessment available at [www.personalitytype.com](http://www.personalitytype.com). The free version will give you an approximation of what the more established MBTI would tell you. You don't need to buy any of the reports from the website because you can visit with a UCS career counselor to find out how your personality affects your preferred work environments.

**Skills:** UCS career counselors talk about "motivated skills," which are areas in which a person has both natural strengths and the desire to use those strengths. You can evaluate your motivated skills online using the Motivated Skills Card Sort Exercise activities and worksheets at [www.stewartcoopercoon.com/jobsearch/motivated-skills](http://www.stewartcoopercoon.com/jobsearch/motivated-skills).

Once you have reviewed your assessment results, you may find it easier to make career decisions or you may still feel uncertain. Professional UCS career counselors can help you narrow down your options and create a strategic action plan to help you create a career that fits well for you. To schedule an appointment, please email [ucs@uh.edu](mailto:ucs@uh.edu).

## StrengthsQuest

StrengthsQuest is an online assessment that will help you gain insight into your areas of greatest potential: the things that you naturally do best. StrengthsQuest is not a career assessment and it won't tell you what job or career you should do; however, it does provide valuable information about who you are and gives you clues to the type of work environment in which you are most likely to thrive.

# The Value of a Liberal Arts Degree



**H**ave you ever heard that liberal arts students can't get jobs? Do you worry about what your options are as a psychology major? Are you tired of your parents asking you what you can do with an English degree? Do you secretly (or not so secretly) wish you had chosen business as your major? Do you fear you are doomed to work in retail for the rest of your life? Well fret no more liberal arts students, and have hope. Your degrees DO have worth and can be valued by a variety of employers!

As a liberal arts student, you have developed strong critical thinking skills and possess the ability to research, write, analyze, and synthesize information. A liberal arts education teaches students to view problems from multiple perspectives and to think independently. Put simply, you have been learning to learn, which makes it easy for employers to train you. Even though you might not have the specific technical skills that an engineering degree has, you do have widely applicable skills that will transfer from the classroom to the workplace.

Think about it: How many group projects have you worked on during your academic career (teamwork and leadership abilities)? How many papers have you written (research and writing skills)? Furthermore, you've taken a wide variety of classes across multiple disciplines, including foreign languages, which have increased your language skills and multicultural sensitivity: two highly marketable skills in today's workplace. Employers want to hire you because they see you as creative, open-minded, well-rounded candidates with excellent communication skills and the ability to relate to people easily and effectively.

*"More than any other curriculum, the liberal arts train people to think critically about concepts and society, look at the big picture, and analyze cause and effect relationships, break an idea or situation into component parts and put it back together again," - Robert Goodward, Director of Publications for Liberty Mutual Insurance.*

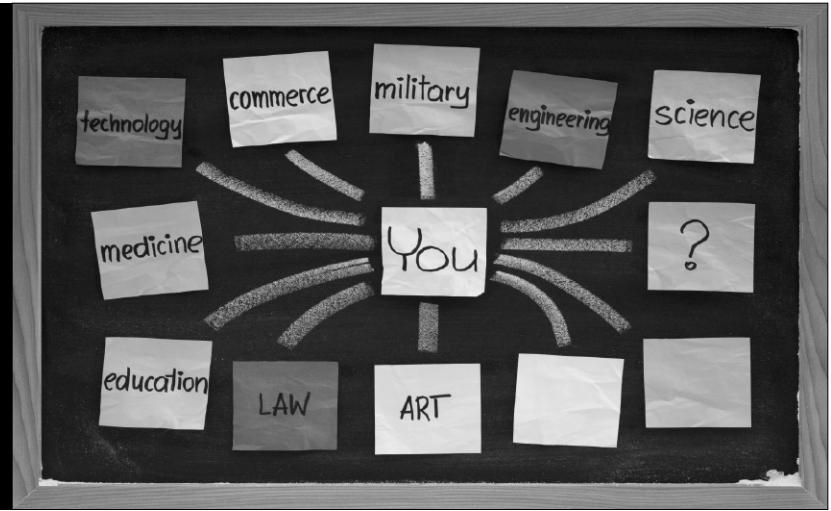
Due to its versatility and depth, your liberal arts degree affords you flexibility in career choice. You have a vast array of options and can work in almost any field. While this freedom can feel liberating, it can also seem overwhelming at times. If you don't know what you want to do or what you're looking for, it can be incredibly difficult to actually

find it! To ease this frustration, you should turn your focus and attention inward, on you. Once you identify and clarify your personality preferences, interests, skills, motivations, and values, you can more easily pinpoint a career that will be a good fit for you.

Meeting with a UCS career counselor can help you with the self-assessment and job search processes. As you begin looking for and applying for jobs, keep these tips and techniques in mind to best market yourself to employers:

- **Be proud of your liberal arts education** – do not apologize for it! Fully understanding the worth of your degree will help you convince someone else that your liberal arts degree is valuable!
- **Identify all your transferable skills** – be able to effectively explain how you can be an asset to that organization/company.
- **Know what you want to do (or at least communicate that you do)** – employers want to hire graduates with clearly defined goals.
- **Take advantage of the resume and cover letter** – these application materials give you the opportunity to strut your writing skills. Consider including a Professional Profile or a Qualifications Summary on your resume to provide a nice snapshot of all your transferrable skills. Demonstrate the significance and worth of your education and experience in your cover letter. As a bonus, it also serves as a writing sample, which might set you apart from other candidates, if you create a well-crafted, compelling letter.
- **Gain experience** – intern, volunteer, and take classes outside of the College of Liberal Arts, etc.
- **Have realistic expectations** – you have to work hard to find a satisfying job that aligns with your interests and values. Many companies don't actively recruit liberal arts majors. It's your responsibility to be proactive, take initiative, and be persistent in your job search. It's also up to you to persuade employers that you have a lot to offer!

# Who Has Time for an Internship?



Many students underestimate the importance of getting career-related, hands-on experience while they are still in college. This is certainly understandable. A large number of students at the University of Houston are trying to balance both work and school. Many students are in survival mode, trying to get through school, make it to work on time and, yes, actually pass their classes. Here is some food for thought that may convince you to pause and invest some time into finding and completing an internship.

The 2012 National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) survey reflects that the number of internships is expected to increase by 8.5 percent this year. It also states that the overall rate of turning interns into full-time hires has hit an all-time high of 58.6 percent. The retention rates of full-time hires who originated from an organization's own internship program are greater than the rates of hires without such experience.

It is important to determine prior to looking for an internship, what you would like to learn. This will help shorten your internship search process and make the internship experience worthwhile. Some of the goals for getting an internship could be: to gain professional work experience, to explore a possible career option or field of interest, and/or to learn about possible career opportunities related to your major.

## When would you like to do an internship?

It is possible to start an internship as early as your freshman year. Requirements vary for each company, therefore, it is advisable to conduct your research early on to determine your target company's criteria. You can also do a full-time or part-time internship throughout the year, in the fall, spring, or summer. The total process of finding, applying, and interviewing for an internship can take several months. Be sure to plan ahead to evenly balance out the time required to conduct a successful internship search with your other obligations and responsibilities.

## What type of work would you like to do?

Think about the field in which you would like to intern. Some examples may include: marketing, education, training, information technology, event planning, programming, broadcast or print media, writing, and designing. If you are unsure of what type of internship may be a good fit for you, try the Internship Predictor at [www.internships.com/predictor](http://www.internships.com/predictor).

## What type of industry/field/organization would you like to explore?

Nonprofit organizations, banking, retail, oil and gas, information technology, and publishing are some examples of industries to consider. These could be similar to the type of work you would like to do, such as marketing in the retail industry, or they could be different, such as event planning in the oil and gas industry. You may also want to consider other company variables such as size, location, ownership, and/or corporate culture of the organization.



## **How do you search for internships?**

There are many ways to search for internships. For example: Campus Recruitment, JOBank, JobScan, academic department bulletin boards, internship reference books, UCS Internship Career Fair, UH career fairs, company websites, company networking events, faculty, cooperative education, student organizations, professional associations, employer information sessions and seminars, and alumni connections or the University Career Advisory Network (UCAN) on LinkedIn. Volunteer opportunities could also be a stepping stone towards an internship position.

## **How do you write a resume and cover letter for an internship?**

A well written and organized resume will be your marketing tool and should help you obtain an interview. University Career Services offers Rock Your Resume Workshops as well as one-on-one personal resume and cover letter reviews. You can make an appointment with a UCS career counselor by clicking on the *Contact UCS Staff* link on our website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu).

## **How do you apply?**

Customize your resume and cover letter to showcase your experience and skills most relevant to the internship job description requirements. Carefully read the instructions and use the designated method of contact. You may be required to submit one or more of the following documents: resume (either upload, email, or mail), cover letter, and other required documents such as official transcripts, references, recommendation letters, letters of interest, portfolio, or in some cases, a video resume.

## **Remember the following:**

- Send follow-up emails if you haven't heard from the employer two weeks after applying.
- Prepare for a potential internship interview. At UCS, you can schedule an appointment with a UCS career counselor to conduct a mock interview. We also have some useful interviewing handouts on our website under the *Handouts* link.
- Interns who have proven themselves to a company throughout a successful on-the-job experience tend to be favored for full-time positions over candidates who have not completed an internship.

Whether your internship experience is paid or unpaid, for academic credit or not for credit, any professional work experience is valued by employers. UCS is here to help you with your career concerns.

## **UCS Internship Services To Do**

UCS Internship Services can help you focus on internship goal-setting and internship job search strategies. UCS recommends students seeking internships do the following:

- Attend the UCS Internship Workshop, To Intern or Not to Intern?
- Schedule an appointment with a UCS career counselor
- Complete the Data File and upload at least one resume in ResumeBank
- Utilize networking and job search techniques
- Schedule a mock interview with a UCS career counselor
- Follow-up with a UCS career counselor
- Complete student evaluation

*"Accept responsibility for your life.  
Know that it is you who will get you  
where you want to go, no one else."*

*Unknown*

# Getting the Job You Want: Marketing Yourself



The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines self-awareness as "an awareness of one's own personality or individuality." In other words, self-awareness means knowing yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, what you enjoy, and ultimately knowing what it is that makes you unique. In general, self-awareness is important for a variety of reasons, but in terms of employment, your level of self-awareness can be the most important factor in successfully landing a job or internship.

## ASSESS YOURSELF

Many people embark on their job or internship search with the primary focus being on what it is that they want. Some students seek an internship in mechanical engineering, some look for a full-time position in graphic design, while others may be more interested in a part-time research assistantship, etc. However, one could argue that it's much more beneficial to begin that process by first considering who we are, or in some of the more technical fields such as engineering or technology, what we do. Assessments such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Strong Interest Inventory can offer you some substantial insights into these aspects of yourself. Once you take the assessments, meet with a UCS career counselor to interpret your results, and to find out how those aspects of yourself can be applied and articulated in the context of a job search or a career decision.

## APPLY YOURSELF

Everyone that is interviewing for a position, regardless of their specific field of study or discipline, essentially wants the same thing, a job. With that in mind, employers tend to be more specifically interested in what you have to offer. Are you a leader? Are you a problem solver? Do you communicate well? Do you have any prior experience that would benefit you in this position? These are all questions that you should be able to answer, and in answering these questions, your job search becomes more focused.

Now, you're not just trying to apply for a job, you're trying to apply yourself *to* a job. By applying yourself *to* a job, your resume becomes a bit more relevant to the position that you're seeking. Your cover letter contains much more

specific and tangible examples of *how* you're qualified for a position and not just *why*, and overall, an employer gets the sense that you want the position that they're hiring for and not just any employer that will hire you. All of this happens as a direct result of your understanding of yourself as it relates to the job or internship that you're seeking. This is self-awareness in action.

Obviously, if you're interested in becoming a financial analyst, it would be essential for you to know that you are an analytical person, which is an important quality for this type of position. At the same time, it would be much more helpful to know and understand how you would *apply* that as a financial analyst, and how you have demonstrated that quality in past jobs, class projects or through your involvement with student organizations.

## MARKET YOURSELF

Employers don't just hire candidates because the candidates want a job. Employers hire candidates because of who they are and how they fit the position. With that being said, know yourself and know what makes you the ideal candidate, because if you don't, no one else will. According to Dr. Randall Hansen, Founder of Quintessential Careers, "In today's job hunting environment, the most successful job seekers are those who understand the value of marketing and apply to themselves those principles that companies have used for years to successfully sell their products." In other words, the people who get jobs view themselves as a "product." They don't make themselves simply "available for purchase;" rather, they convince employers that they're "worth the purchase." Learn to distinguish yourself as an individual who is *qualified* for the job, as opposed to someone who simply is *looking* for a job.

It's almost natural to want to apply for any and all opportunities when you really need a job; unfortunately, employers aren't looking for any and all applicants necessarily. One of the most significant aspects of the job search is professional self-awareness: knowing yourself and knowing what you're qualified to do. Some of the key elements involved with self-awareness are to understand your skills, interests, experiences, and how, collectively,

these relate to a job. When these areas align with the requirements and qualifications associated with a given job opportunity, employers take notice, but they also take notice when those areas are in no way, shape or form associated with the position. It's much more efficient to use your time and energy applying for jobs that are a good, realistic fit for you rather than spending inordinate amounts of time applying for jobs that you're not qualified for or not interested in to begin with. Employers know what "generic" looks like.

## CUSTOMIZE YOURSELF

Without ever meeting a job applicant, that person's cover letter and resume can let the hiring manager know how serious he/she is about a given position. When your cover letter says absolutely nothing at all about the job you're applying for, or when your resume does nothing to connect your work and educational experiences to the duties and responsibilities associated with the position, employers might think that you've sent those exact same cover letters and resumes to more than a handful of employers. Hiring managers tend to have a very good sense of that.

When viewing yourself as a "product," failing to tailor your cover letter and resume to the position you're applying for is similar to expecting people to purchase a product when they have no idea what it's used for. Nonetheless, "generic" application materials can sometimes warrant an interview. But, the interview will do much more damage than good if you don't have the right answers, or if you haven't been asking the right questions.

You don't know what you don't know; therefore, it's difficult to say with complete confidence that a job is or is not a good fit without thoroughly understanding the job itself and what it entails. This fact emphasizes the importance of networking and having solid contacts long before you start submitting resumes and cover letters. Networking allows you to meet people who are currently doing what you hope to be doing in the future - people who have a direct and unique perspective on your prospective career field.

Joining student organizations, attending information sessions, career fairs, and other professional networking events are all great ways to network. Sometimes it's best to simply seek out people who are currently working in the field(s) you are pursuing.

## CONNECT YOURSELF

With the rise of social media, sites like LinkedIn offer a great, low-risk platform for reaching out to professionals, while providing you with a way to brand yourself by joining groups and online discussions. Actively going out to meet people and taking advantage of the online resources at your disposal can help you build a solid knowledge base of your intended career, and ultimately, set you apart from other job seekers.

However, maintaining those relationships is key. Networking isn't just about meeting people, it's about knowing people. When you do establish these contacts, be sure to stay in touch with them and check in with them periodically to update them on your job search.

## KNOW YOURSELF

Knowing how to package your talents and skills, and knowing about your career field can have a major impact on whether or not an employer calls you in for an interview and ultimately offers you a job. Be sure to consider these things when applying for jobs and internships, and be thoughtful throughout your job search to ensure that the employers you're looking for are looking for someone like you.

## Tip

### Ten Job Search Mistakes to Avoid in Marketing Yourself

1. Not proactive enough and just sitting back waiting for opportunities to come to you.
2. Use the internet as your only resource in looking for jobs.
3. Neglect to realize the importance of creating a solid network of contacts that could point you to a potential job opportunity.
4. Not targeting your resume to the job description and highlighting what skills and experience you have to offer an employer.
5. Misuse the opportunity to create an online professional identity, and to expand your network through social media websites such as LinkedIn.
6. Fail to follow-up with a thank you note within 24-48 hours after an interview, and missed the opportunity to reiterate your interest in the position and distinguish yourself from other candidates.
7. Set high expectations with the hope of finding the "perfect" job, instead of looking for a job where you could gain valuable experience.
8. Assume employers won't see your social media profiles, because social media privacy settings are "private," and therefore, your unprofessional online presence works against you.
9. Unprepared for an interview by not researching the company, dressing unprofessionally, and not practicing how to effectively answer interview questions; this shows you are not serious about the interview.
10. Failure to use the many resources available at UCS that can assist you with your job search.

# Writing a Cover Letter: 5 Things You Need to Know



1. ***First impressions count.*** Most likely, your cover letter will be the first thing the employer reads. The purpose of the cover letter is to demonstrate your organizational and writing skills to future employers while distinguishing yourself from the other applicants. A strong cover letter should be written clearly and concisely, and should be proofread multiple times for spelling and grammatical mistakes. If the employer is not impressed by the cover letter, he or she may not even read your resume.

2. ***Do NOT mass produce.*** It is very important to tailor each cover letter to a specific position and organization. Incorporate information that reflects your knowledge of the company, its industry, and relevant issues. Do your research! Also, pay attention to the job description and spotlight accomplishments and skills that directly relate to the position.

3. ***Show, don't tell.*** Employers are impressed when you can demonstrate your skills using past experience. Do not just say you are 'detail-oriented;' instead, describe specific examples where you paid great attention to detail. Remember, you are trying to set yourself apart from the other applicants. Anyone can claim to be 'hard-working,' but only a truly hardworking person can prove it.

4. ***Emphasize how you will benefit the organization.*** If you write too much about how you will benefit from being hired (i.e. "I hope to learn a great deal about the industry"), you will be calling attention to the gaps in your experience and knowledge. Employers want to know what you can do for them. Do not simply say, "I am confident I would be a great asset to your team."

Explain how you plan to contribute once you are hired. What do you have to bring to the table?

5. ***Demonstrate that you are well-rounded.*** If every point you make about yourself is drawn from your educational background, the employer might think you are narrowly focused. If possible, draw on experiences from a variety of settings. If you do not have any work experience, you can expand on community service, leadership roles, and activities.

## Cover Letter Tips

All cover letters should...

- be concise and professional in tone.
- explain why you are sending a resume.
- tell how you learned about the position or organization.
- convince the reader to look at your resume.
- highlight your education and experience.
- reflect your positive attitude.
- indicate what you will do to follow-up.

# The Resume

A resume is a one or two page written summary of your education, skills, accomplishments, experiences, and activities; it is your personal professional brochure. As with any advertisement, effective marketing is the key!

For the employer, the resume is a critical tool used in evaluating a potential candidate's qualifications. In many cases, the resume may be your initial contact with a potential employer, and will give the employer an impression of whether or not you are a good fit for the organization. When done correctly, a resume can successfully market your skills and abilities, and assist you in obtaining an interview!

## RESUME PREP

When creating your resume, it is important to be concise and relevant. At best, you have 30 seconds to impress the employer enough to screen and offer you an interview. Therefore, doing company research and being familiar with your audience is crucial. Be sure to tailor your resume to fit the job description you are seeking. Use keywords from the job description that will attract the employer's attention.

Using a standard typestyle like Calibri or Times New Roman, wide margins, bold headings, and indentations or bullets will guide the eye quickly to the points that you are emphasizing. Use action verbs that make your experience jump from the page; for example: Analyze. Create. Execute. Manage. Organize.

When available, use titles, numbers, and names to describe past achievements. It conveys that someone else had enough faith in your abilities to put you in a position of responsibility. Using quantitative data shows the magnitude of the achievement and offers concrete evidence that is rarely questioned.

Example: "...headed engineering student organization," sounds much better when written as "...Served as President of Mechanical Engineer Student Chapter of 55 members..."

Names demand the same respect that numbers do: "...interned at a major accounting firm," does not capture as much attention as "...interned at Deloitte." If the company name is not as widely known, use a description like, "Fortune 100 Company."



## RESUME

### Career Objectives:

Looking for challenging role in any engineering ,information automation or r constantly upgrading my knowledge in Manufacturing and Project.....

### Professional Experience:

- Types of maintenance perform:
  - I. Preventive maintenance
  - ♦ Routine inspection (adjustment or repair as nece components, airframe assemblies and system... checklis

Once you have completed drafting your resume, proofread it and use spell check! Typos and grammatical errors account for the majority of the most common mistakes made by resume writers; too much or too little information runs a close second. Ask a UCS career counselor to review your resume. They can help make sure you are marketing yourself in the best way possible for the job. It pays off to take the time to make it the best it can be.

## RESUME CONTENT

The standard college graduate resume follows a basic chronological format: contact information, objective or career summary, education, professional experience, activities, honors and awards. Depending on your qualifications and the particular job, you may also include sections detailing your specific skills; for example, technical skills or laboratory skills.

## ONLINE APPLICATIONS AND RESUMES

In our present day and age of advanced technology, online applications are here to stay!

More than 80 percent of employers require candidates to apply for openings via the company website or online job boards, and prefer to communicate with potential new hires via email. This saves companies' time and money by maximizing the efficiency of the candidate selection process. Employers can advertise to a wider and more diverse pool of candidates utilizing the web, which unfortunately, means more competition for you! Employers value the ability of the online application to get resumes to the appropriate hiring manager faster than the traditional method via the HR departments' sorting and transporting resumes.

Applications submitted online go into the company's applicant database. A hiring manager who has an opening will enter keywords to search the database and find applications that are a match. Those that are a match become the hiring manager's candidate pool. Your focus is to make sure your resume does not sink to the bottom of the pool. Employers were polled for their advice on making an online application stand out. The following are a few of their suggestions:

- Follow directions and enter the data in the correct fields
- Tailor your application for the position; do not copy and paste from a generic resume
- Use keywords and industry jargon; use verbiage from the job posting
- Create a skills inventory section and put it in the comments field
- Complete all fields – do not write, "See resume"
- Use a plain text electronic version of your resume
- Spell check and grammar check
- Follow-up on your electronic application by calling or emailing the employer

In order to be competitive you must be prepared. Therefore, at the very least you need a formatted, print version of your resume and a plain text (ASCII) resume.

**Print Version:** This is your version designed and formatted with bullets, italics, and other highlights. Use this version of your resume to email as an attachment, mail, fax, or hand to potential contacts and interviewers.

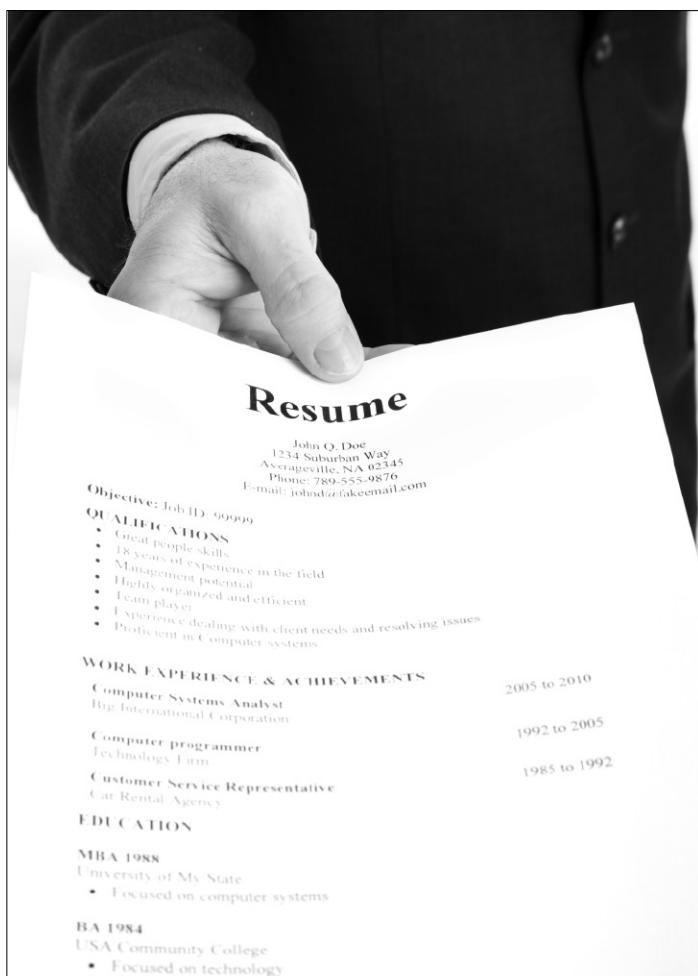
**Plain Text Version:** This version is also known as the ASCII resume. It is a plain text file, ready to copy and paste into online applications, load into resume databases, and send via email. Text based resumes are the opposite of the visually appealing formatted print resumes that job seekers hand to employers at career fairs and interviews. The fact is that most resumes aren't intended to be visually attractive because their main function is not to be seen but to be searched in keyword, searchable databases. Important tips for text based resumes include:

- Eliminate bold print, italics, underlining, lines, and borders
- Include keywords that define the qualifications of a particular job
- Use asterisks or dashes instead of bullets

## POSTING YOUR RESUME ONLINE

Although it is important to circulate your resume when job searching for employment, you should be aware of the criminals and identity thieves who are also interested in your information. Your name, home address, telephone number, and detailed work history can be very valuable to identity thieves and fraudsters.

UCS advises students and alumni to use caution when posting a resume online. Most job sites offer anonymous or quasi-anonymous posting options that let you mask your contact information and email address when you post a resume. This resume posting option allows you to decide who sees your real information, such as your home address, if you choose to include it. Masking this information is perhaps the single most important step job seekers who want to post a resume online can take to protect themselves.



Unfortunately, few job seekers take advantage of this option. Most job seekers are concerned that they are hurting their chances with legitimate employers by making them take an extra step to find their contact information. But at this point, it is simply not a good idea to post your resume openly – there are known risks. If you are going to post a resume online, private posting should be the only way you post it. The goal is to avoid having your full legal name, your home address, your phone number, your detailed work history, hobbies, and perhaps even references, floating around online and eventually getting into the wrong hands. This is information only a legitimate employer should receive, and you can help by taking advantage of private posting options job sites usually offer.

Educate yourself to know when and where to post your resume and be selective when applying for online job postings. A great resource for such education is [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org). This website goes into detail on privacy issues and staying cyber safe.

## WHAT ABOUT VIDEO RESUMES?

Although video resumes are gaining some popularity amongst job seekers as well as press in the media, legal experts warn that video resumes pose the potential for discrimination of protected populations. Be extremely careful and assess your risk of using this method. For more information, please visit the Vault's Career Insider resource on the UCS website under *Featured Links*.

## FIVE MOST COMMON RESUME MYTHS

### #1: Your resume must be one page.

**False.** For example, if you are a graduate student who has worked on research with multiple professors, worked for 10 years in the field before starting your master's program, or presented at multiple conferences for student chapters of professional organizations, you may be cutting out essential information if you try to limit your resume to one page. Even undergraduate students with a few years of relevant work experience and multiple positions in student organizations may have difficulty keeping to the one page limit.

### #2: Your resume should include your entire work history.

**False.** Your most relevant experience for the position you desire is what needs to be showcased on your resume. Remember, your resume is your marketing tool. Volunteer experience and internships can be just as beneficial as a

paid position. A part-time job that you only worked at for a month or two will not excite your potential employer and may even hurt your chances of being called for an interview.

### #3: A great resume will produce job offers.

**False.** A great resume may get you an interview. No matter how great your resume is employers still want to meet prospective employees to find out if they are a good fit with their team. You may look great on paper, but an employer will almost always want to meet a possible future employee in person. This is why it is important to work on your interviewing skills by scheduling a mock interview appointment with your UCS career counselor.

### #4: You should include "References available upon request" at the bottom of your resume.

**False.** This line is unnecessary and will take up space on your resume that you may need to use for more pertinent information. Employers know that you have references and they will request them when needed.

### #5: It is okay to fib or stretch the truth on your resume.

**False.** Never put information on your resume that is not the complete truth. Employers will find out, and you will lose credibility with that particular employer and most likely every other employer that person knows. Increasing your GPA, stretching your job duties, and making yourself an employee instead of an intern will be discovered and will harm your future opportunities.

**Tip**

Make sure to really know your resume; this way you will be prepared for specific questions the employer might ask you. Be prepared to back up your answers with measurable results by using numbers, data, percentages, dollar amounts, etc.

RESUME SECTION:	INFORMATION TO INCLUDE:	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:
<b>Heading–Contact Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The following information should be at the top of your resume</li> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Name</li> <li>2. Address (city, state and zip only for privacy reasons)</li> <li>3. Contact number (checked regularly)</li> <li>4. Email address (checked regularly)</li> <li>5. Personalized LinkedIn URL</li> </ol> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a professional greeting on your voicemail</li> <li>• Use a professional email address, like, yourinitiallastname@gmail.com</li> <li>• Use caution when including contact information if posting online to unauthorized websites or resume databases</li> </ul>
<b>Objective Statement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An objective tells potential employers the type of work you are seeking and something about what you have to offer</li> <li>• Avoid general statements that do not indicate what type of position you are seeking – for example: "Seeking a responsible, challenging position that will allow me to grow, realize my potential, and make a meaningful contribution to the achievement of the company's goals." (Too vague)</li> </ul> <p>This example displays goal clarity: "Objective: Position in Human Resources where proven abilities to select, train, motivate personnel, and manage information are desired."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be specific and tailor objective to specific company and/or position</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Profile or Summary of Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include number of years of paid and unpaid experience</li> <li>• Education or specific training</li> <li>• Achievements and specialized proficiencies related to targeted position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use three to four points to summarize competencies and best skills</li> <li>• Be specific and tailor summary to specific company and/or position</li> <li>• Typically used when you have many years of experience</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List the name of the university, city, state, degree, major, minor, and graduation date in the month/year format</li> <li>• The most recent educational information should be listed first</li> <li>• If you are still in school, add expected date of graduation</li> <li>• Do not abbreviate words such as the university's name, degree, and major</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List cumulative GPA if it is 3.0 or higher; also include major GPA if it is 3.0 or higher</li> <li>• Recent grads without much work experience should list educational information first</li> <li>• Alumni may list education after work experience</li> <li>• List specific relevant coursework, projects, research, and academic honors in this section</li> </ul>

RESUME SECTION:	INFORMATION TO INCLUDE:	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:
<b>Professional Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work experiences from internships, Co-ops, summer jobs, part-time and full-time jobs, volunteer work, or military experience</li> <li>• Include the job title, name of company, location (city, state), and dates of employment in the month/year format for each position</li> <li>• List accomplishments, responsibilities, and special projects in bullet format</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List work experience, no more than ten years old, in reverse chronological order with current or last job listed first</li> <li>• Use an action verb at the beginning of each statement</li> <li>• Statements should include measurable results to highlight job duties (ex. numbers, data, percentages, and dollar amounts)</li> </ul>
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List professional and/or student organizations in order of importance</li> <li>• List leadership positions and dates held and committee assignments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dates of membership in the month/year format (optional)</li> </ul>
<b>Honors/Awards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honor societies, scholarships, Dean's List</li> <li>• List names of organizations and names of awards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List in order of importance</li> <li>• Include dates received (semester and academic year)</li> </ul>
<b>Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer/technical skills</li> <li>• Foreign languages</li> <li>• Teaching or tutoring</li> <li>• Certifications</li> <li>• Professional licenses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer skills – include software applications, programming, and operating systems</li> <li>• Languages – include level of competency (speak, read, write, fluent or conversational)</li> </ul>
<b>Other Information/Sections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other sections that may be included: community service, travel abroad, volunteer work, publications and presentations, professional development, military experience, relevant projects, leadership experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the relevance and content of a section related to targeted position</li> </ul>
<b>References</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not include reference information on the resume</li> <li>• "References available upon request" is not necessary and uses valuable space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask permission of your references and provide them with a copy of your resume before giving their contact information to a potential employer</li> </ul>
<b>Information <u>NOT</u> to include on resume</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age, marital status, health, nationality or ethnicity, religion, salary requirements, pictures, and references</li> </ul>	

For more detailed information on resume content, please visit the *Handouts* link of the UCS website and then click the *Developing a Resume* link.

# Professional Image Counts!

**Impression management is more than just wearing a suit.**



Career experts say, "Dress for the job you want." But, what does that mean exactly?

## DRESS FOR SUCCESS

You have less than one minute to make a first impression. In her book, Don't Take the Last Donut: New Rules of Business Etiquette, Judith Bowman states, "They look at how you walk into the room, how you carry yourself, what you are wearing, and if you make eye contact or not." This is certainly true for employers. They were given a list of appearance related attributes and asked to rate the degree of influence that each attribute would have on their opinion of a candidate. The results indicated that a candidate's overall grooming exerted the most influence. While your abilities are what get you the interview, your professional image (dress, verbal and non-verbal communication) and level of confidence make a significant impact.

Traditional business attire is most reliable and effective when meeting with potential employers. Having a well tailored suit in your wardrobe is a key to maintaining a professional image.

Business casual dress is becoming more of the norm in major companies. In many cases, business casual dress may be appropriate once you start a job, but it is not appropriate for the interview process! It is better to be over-dressed as opposed to under-dressed. Employees like business casual for the comfort and flexibility it provides, and managers say that it boosts employee morale. Unfortunately, there is no set, explicit definition of business casual dress, and "casual" can be taken to the extreme. It is important to understand what business casual dress means within your workplace. If you are unsure about your company's dress code, be sure to ask your supervisor and/or the Human Resources Department for assistance. Remember, what you wear can say a lot about you. If you take your job seriously, then your wardrobe should reflect your level of professionalism.

## NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Your posture, facial expressions, level of eye contact, and handshake are important pieces of your professional image. They are valuable ways to communicate with others without ever saying a word. Having a weak handshake or poor posture might convey that you lack confidence. If your facial expressions contradict what you say, what do you think people will believe? Being aware of your non-verbal communication will help you develop a professional presence that says you are motivated, confident, and capable.

## BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Knowing how to conduct yourself in business situations is critical to your professional image. Business etiquette includes understanding how to behave in social situations (company gatherings, lunches, receptions) and now includes cell phone and email protocols as well. To learn more about proper business etiquette, visit University Career Services and speak with a UCS career counselor. You can also view the "Business Etiquette" handout on the UCS website or in the UCS lobby.

## PROFESSIONAL ONLINE IMAGE: SOCIAL MEDIA

With approximately 90 percent of U.S. businesses using social media to support their recruitment efforts, your online image is more important now than it's ever been. The rise of social media has given employers the opportunity to sometimes gather intimate details about you without ever having to meet you in person. Bearing this in mind, be very mindful of what you post and share on social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn because people are increasingly paying more and more attention.

## **PROFESSIONAL IMAGE FOR WOMEN:**

### **SUITS**

- A skirted or pants suit is appropriate.
- Professional business suits are typically lined, well-structured, and durable.
- Skirt/pants should hang well and not be too loose or too tight (should not hug the rear or thighs/legs).
- Suit should be pressed, and if wearing pants, they should not be too long.
- Skirts should end at or right below the knee. Skirts should cover the thighs when seated.
- Solid black, dark gray, and navy blue suits are appropriate. If wearing pinstripes, they should be muted/understated.
- Don't wear your suit coat in the car – hang it up or lay it on the car seat. Do wear the suit coat throughout the interview process.

### **SHIRTS**

- White, ivory, or pale blue blouses or button-down shirts are recommended.
- Be careful of gaps between buttons, especially if you have a full bustline. Have your buttoned shirt tailored or go one size up to avoid the "too tight" look.
- Avoid wearing camis or casual shirts with your suit.
- Always iron your shirt, even if it claims to be "wrinkle-free."
- Avoid low necklines.

### **SHOES**

- Heels should not exceed 3 inches. Classic, closed toe pumps are appropriate.
- Shoes should be solid color and complement your suit (black with black, etc.).
- Do not wear clunky, heavy, thick-soled shoes/boots.
- Do not wear sandals.

### **ACCESSORIES**

- Perfume should be light.
- Nail polish should be in light colors or clear.
- Nude pantyhose are a must and should match your natural skin tone.
- Makeup should be natural looking.
- No nose rings, tongue rings, etc.
- Jewelry should be simple and classic. No large earrings, long necklaces, or busy bracelets.
- Small earrings, a watch and/or ring are appropriate.
- Many employers say they view visible tattoos and piercings (except for one piercing per ear) as unprofessional.

## **PROFESSIONAL IMAGE FOR MEN:**

### **SUITS**

- Professional business suits are typically lined, well-structured, and durable.
- Suits should not be too tight or too loose.
- Solid navy blue and dark gray are most appropriate. If wearing pinstripes, they should be muted/understated.
- Suits should be tailored to body type.
- Don't wear your suit coat in the car – hang it up or lay it on the car seat. Do wear the suit coat throughout the interview process.

### **SHIRTS**

- Always wear collared, long-sleeved, button-down shirts with cuffs extending  $\frac{1}{4}$ " below suit sleeve.
- Solid white or pale blue is always appropriate. If wearing pinstripes, they should be very thin.
- Cotton shirts are ideal and hold up well under perspiration.
- Always iron your shirt, even if it claims to be "wrinkle-free."

### **TIES**

- Silk or silk blend ties are best.
- Width should be about the same as lapels, generally  $2\frac{3}{4}$ " to  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. Tie pattern should be classic, conservative and simple, not too ornate, loud or trendy. Colors should coordinate well with the suit/shirt.
- A simple stripe pattern would suffice.

### **SHOES**

- Black or brown leather is recommended.
- Formal dress shoes are the most appropriate.
- Wing tips can be worn to an interview if they are either solid black or brown.

### **SOCKS**

- Socks should be cotton or nylon.
- Color should complement the suit and shirt.
- They should be long enough that skin is not seen when legs are crossed.

### **ACCESSORIES**

- Belt buckles should be simple.
- Blue, black, or gray suits, wear black belt and shoes.
- A watch and/or ring are appropriate.
- Bracelets and chains are not appropriate for an interview.
- Many employers say they view visible tattoos and piercings as unprofessional.

If you need assistance in obtaining an interview wardrobe, view the "Need a Suit to Get a Job?" and the "Bargain Shopping For A Professional Wardrobe" flyers available in the UCS lobby.

# The Interview

**Successful interviews can be summed up in two words: achievements and attitude.**



The candidates that can fully express their abilities and desire to do their best for the company will have a better chance of getting a second interview or even the job.

## PREPARATION EQUALS SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING

### SELF-ASSESSMENT:

The first step is to assess your skills, interests, strengths, values, and career goals. Identify accomplishments from courses you have taken, group projects, experiences in internships/summer jobs, part/full-time jobs, and leadership roles you played in student/professional organizations and associations to which you belonged.

Evaluate how your experience and background relates to the description of the position and the company's needs. Then, be prepared to show how you are a good fit for the position and how you can make an immediate contribution.

In your final assessment, ask yourself whether this position and the company's mission, career paths, and industry complement your own career goals and values.

- **Research the company:** Tips on researching companies and industries can be found in the "Company Research 101" section of this publication.
- **Questions to ask the interviewer:** Prepare a list of questions for the interviewer that will show your interest in the company, and will help you decide if the position and company fit within your career goals.
- **Mock interview:** Participate in a mock interview with a career counselor at University Career Services and consider recording it. This will allow you to see how you look and act in an interview and to gain valuable feedback on how to improve your interview skills.

- **Practice, practice, practice:** Practice answering interview questions and role play with someone you trust who can be objective and provide valuable feedback. Be prepared and confident in order to gain a competitive edge.
- **Dress for success:** Please refer to the "Professional Image Counts!" article in this publication.

*"Just try. Nothing begets nothing, while something might beget something really good."*

*Unknown*

## INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS/INTRODUCTION:

The minute you walk through the employer's door, the interview process begins. You could be evaluated by people you meet, such as the receptionist and other people who may play a role in the decision-making process.

Typically, the interview starts with small talk, and during this time, the interviewer is evaluating your personality, physical appearance, non-verbal actions, and initial responses. He or she is making an immediate determination to questions such as: "Would you fit in with the company culture?" You have just a few minutes to make a positive first impression, which can set the tone for the interview. Therefore, it is important to take the lead and begin to build rapport with your interviewer.

Once you are seated and begin the rest of the interview, it is very important to use appropriate body language in order to make a positive impression.

- **Eye Contact** – maintain steady eye contact.
- **Facial Expression** – do not over-exaggerate expressions, and smile when appropriate.
- **Posture** – project confidence by sitting tall (find a comfortable position and lean forward slightly).
- **Gestures** – should be limited and done in a positive manner.
- **Space** – be aware of your personal space and that of the interviewer.

## **INTERVIEW Q AND A:**

During this phase of the interview, the interviewer will ask questions about your work experience, skills, education, activities, interests, and career goals.

### *Examples of typical interview questions:*

- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you know about our company?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What are your short and long-term goals?
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction?

To prepare for an interview, you may also want to Google: interview questions + <name of company> to find sample questions for a specific company.

All of your responses should be concise. You must help the interviewer see that your skills and background are a good match for the company and the position. You should also demonstrate what sets you apart from other candidates. When possible, use relevant examples to illustrate measurable individual and team accomplishments, leadership abilities, challenges that you overcame, etc. Use examples from courses you have taken, group projects, experiences in internships/summer jobs, and student organizations' leadership roles.

During the interview, maintain a conversational flow and be careful not to sound too rehearsed or use clichés. While the interviewer is asking questions, he or she will be measuring your responses against critical success factors for the position such as: attitude, work ethic, intelligence, and honesty.

The interviewer should leave a few minutes at the end of the interview for you to ask questions. These questions could relate to responsibilities of the position, the profile of people who have been successful in the position, or some recent development at the company or the industry that you discovered during your research.

### *Suggested questions to ask the interviewer:*

- What type of orientations do new employees receive?
- What would I be expected to accomplish in the first six months on the job? The first year?
- Whom would I work for and what level of management are they?
- How often are performance reviews given, and how will my performance be measured?
- Is there a training program, and if so, how long?
- How would you describe the growth potential for the company/industry?
- What are some of the department's ongoing and anticipated special projects?

## **CLOSING THE DEAL:**

Your interview has been going well, and it is coming to a close. You want to leave a good impression with the interviewer. Make sure you close the sale, that is, the sale of you. Here are some key points to keep in mind:

- Rehearse your closing ahead of time to appear more natural and confident. Make sure to highlight your key strengths and how you can make a contribution to the company or organization.
- Ask, "What is the next step in the interview process?"
- If the interviewer asks you to return for a second interview, make sure you get the necessary details such as date, time, location, interviewer's name, etc.



- If this is the final interview, ask for a timeline when a final decision might be made and how the interviewer would prefer you to follow-up (call or send an email) regarding your status.
- Ask for the interviewer's business card and express your interest in the position and the company. Be enthusiastic and confident.
- Shake the interviewer's hand and thank him/her for the opportunity to discuss the position.
- Lastly, remember the interview is not only a way for the employer to learn if you are right for the job; it is a way for you to learn if the job is right for you.

## **BEHAVIOR-BASED INTERVIEWING:**

This type of interview is the most widely used, and it focuses on measuring your leadership abilities, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. Behavioral interviews assume that past performance is a predictor of future behavior or performance.

During this type of interview, you will be asked to describe a situation where you exhibited a specific behavior. Typically, these questions begin with, "Tell me about a time when..." Derive examples from coursework, group projects, work experiences, internships/co-ops, and student organization activities.

Be prepared to use the STAR technique when answering these questions.

**S**ituation – Describe a specific situation or event.

**T**ask – What major tasks were you responsible for? Describe challenges you overcame, while showing skills and knowledge you used.

**A**ction – Describe actions you took; in a group project, focus on what you did and not the efforts of the team.

**R**esult – Describe the outcome of your actions; describe what you accomplished and learned.

### *How to prepare for the behavioral interview:*

- Evaluate your background and identify your skills that relate to the requirements of the position.
- Develop thorough descriptions of situations that demonstrate how these skills were used in specific tasks assigned to you.
- Use the STAR technique in creating these descriptions, and when possible, quantify or qualify the results.
- Prepare examples of situations where results were different than expected and how you handled and overcame the situation.

### *Examples of behavioral interview questions:*

- Tell me about a situation where you worked on a project as part of a team. What was your role, and what were the results?
- Give me an example of a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
- Give an example of a time when you sold a supervisor, professor, or people in a group project about an idea or concept. How did you proceed?
- Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge in your work or class.
- Describe a time when something you were involved in did not turn out as you planned.



## CASE INTERVIEWS:

In this type of interview, the interviewer will give you a complex business problem to solve. The interviewer will look at how you logically approach a problem. The interviewer will test you on your ability to listen, analyze, and solve the problem with a logical solution. Management consulting firms typically use this interview format.

## SECOND INTERVIEWS:

During second interviews, be prepared for a series of interviews with individuals and/or small groups who are peers, supervisors, or executives, and the interviews can range from a half day to a full day of interviewing and related activities. Second interviews are technical and more focused on leadership and problem-solving skills.

As you close your interviews, reiterate that you are confident you are a great fit for the position. Be sure you understand the next stage in the selection process and the timetable. Sometimes, but rarely, job offers are extended during the follow-up interview. Consider how you will reply if this happens. Most candidates ask for a certain length of time, such as one to two weeks, in which to make a decision. Make sure to obtain a business card from each person you interview with in order to send thank you notes.

## THE FINAL STEP - FOLLOW-UP:

The follow-up is the last step in the interview process. Send a brief thank you note via email within 24 hours. This is a good way to reiterate why you are seriously interested in the position and the organization. Also, this communication puts your name back in front of the interviewer who will be deciding whether you are invited back for a second interview. Be concise and to-the-point in your follow-up email, making sure that you get your point across quickly and efficiently.

For sample thank you notes and other professional email correspondence, see the "Job Search Correspondence" handout on the UCS website or in the UCS lobby.

## AFTER THE INTERVIEW:

After the interview, it is important to assess the experience while it is still fresh in your memory. Evaluate whether the position, people, and company fit with your interests and career goals. Make a journal of what you learned and include information such as:

- Write down the name, title, and contact information of the interviewer.
- Make a list of the questions you were asked, and review which ones you had difficulty in answering.
- Review what the position entails along with the duties and responsibilities.
- Note your reactions as to whether this position, along with the company and its culture, fit your interests and career goals.
- Assess what you learned from the interview process and what went well, along with how to improve your skills for future interviews.

## UCS RESOURCES

For additional information regarding the interview process, see the "Preparing for the Employment Interview" handout on the UCS website or in the UCS lobby, attend the You're Hired! Interview Workshop, and/or contact a UCS career counselor to schedule a mock interview.

*"If you're making mistakes it means you're out there doing something."*

*Neil Gaiman*

# Tip

## Tips for Interviewing

- Practice beforehand with a voice recorder, friend, or a UCS career counselor.
- Research the company in advance.
- Silence in an interview is OK...don't ramble to fill all the pauses.
- Eliminate annoyances – "um, like, uh, ah," etc.
- Always stay positive!

## TOP 5 INTERVIEW MISTAKES

### 1. Not dressing appropriately.

Your physical appearance can speak volumes to someone who is meeting you for the first time. Even if you know that the firm allows employees to wear jeans, don't sabotage yourself by showing up to the interview in casual clothing. When in doubt, dress on the conservative side and show up in neat, professional clothing; a business suit is your best and safest bet. In an interview, stay away from flashy jewelry, plunging necklines, too-short hemlines, t-shirts, and shoes that are too casual or too difficult to walk in. You never want to wear something that can be distracting, therefore, if you have to think twice about it - skip it.

### 2. Failing to set yourself apart from other candidates.

What sets you apart from other candidates are: the skills you have gained through your work or volunteer experience, knowledge you have acquired through your academic experience, and how you incorporate these experiences in your answers. Be familiar with the job description of the position for which you're interviewing in order to illustrate how your experience, abilities, and strengths are congruent with the company's needs. Employers want to know why they should hire you specifically. Make it clear to them.

### 3. Inadequately researching the position or company.

When you walk into a job interview, knowledge of the company's history, goals, and current activity proves to the interviewer that you are not only prepared for the interview, but also that you want to be a part of the organization. You may use the University Career Services "Company and Industry Research Guide" handout, or use our latest resource, Vault's Career Insider to read company profiles and reviews from current employees. As a general rule, the more famous the brand, the more they will expect you to have done your homework. Researching the company shows you're serious about the job.

### 4. Not asking questions.

Three in five interviewers say that interviewees often show a lack of interest in the job by not asking questions about the company or position. If you don't ask smart questions, you'll appear indifferent or clueless. The University Career Services handout "Preparing for the Employment Interview" lists some sample questions for a job candidate to ask in an interview. Questions you should stay away from in an interview concern salary, benefits, and hours, which should be discussed once an initial offer is made.

### 5. Not sending a thank you note after the interview.

Make sure to send a handwritten thank you note or email to the interviewer expressing gratitude for their time and consideration. While you don't want to call the company every day, a phone call to check in a week after the interview is perfectly acceptable. You can also confirm with them when you can follow-up with them and their preferred method of contact.

# Phone and Skype® Interviews



## CAN I GET YOUR NUMBER?

While opportunity might not come knocking on your door, it very well could call you on the phone. Will you be ready? Many employers ask job candidates to participate in an interview over the phone or via Skype in order to screen candidates and narrow the pool of applicants, who then, will be invited for an in-person interview. These convenient interviewing methods save time and money and are very popular, especially in the early stages of the hiring process. For general, fundamental interviewing tips and techniques useful for any type of interview, please read "The Interview" article in this publication. In addition to these tips, phone and Skype interviews require that you make certain arrangements specifically for these modes of communication. As with in-person interviews, preparation is key!

Some recruiters schedule phone interviews for specific dates and times, while others might call you unexpectedly and ask if you "have a few minutes to talk." Therefore, it's important that you be ready for a phone interview on a moment's notice.

## BEFORE YOU GET THE CALL

- Charge your phone or consider using a landline, if possible.
- Find a quiet space: no TV or music, no other phones ringing, no friends, roommates, family or loud pets in the room, no background noise (traffic, construction, dishwasher, etc.).
- Let people know you need to be in a quiet space and that they should not interrupt you (put up a "Do Not Disturb" sign, if necessary).
- Turn off call-waiting in order to not experience any interruptions.

- Print out a copy of your resume and have it easily accessible during the phone interview.
- Compile a list of your greatest strengths and weaknesses to which you can refer to while you're on the phone.
- Keep a pen and paper handy for note taking.
- Have a glass of water nearby in case your mouth gets dry.

## DURING THE PHONE INTERVIEW

- Smile! Even though the interviewer can't see you, smiling will alter the tone of your voice and project a positive image to the interviewer.
- Stand up! This, too, will alter the tone of your voice in a positive way. You will sound more energetic and confident.
- Speak slowly and enunciate very clearly. If the interviewer can't hear or understand you, it won't matter how wonderful your responses are.
- Use the interviewer's title to address him/her. For example, Mr., Ms., or Dr.
- Do not interrupt the interviewer. Listen to each question very carefully.
- Give short answers. Be concise and succinct. Do not ramble.
- Thank the interviewer for his/her time and ask if it would be possible to meet in person. Remember, your goal is to set up a face-to-face interview!

## ARE YOU READY FOR YOUR CLOSE-UP?

Many companies utilize Skype as a convenient, cost-saving way to conduct video interviews with out-of-state or out-of-city candidates. If a company asks you to participate in an interview via Skype, you will need to prepare just as you would for an in-person interview and incorporate some of the phone interview tips as well!

Lights, camera, action! To get ready for your close-up video interview:

1. **Run a microphone check.** Conduct a technical check/rehearsal before your interview. Make sure your internet connection is stable and invest in a dedicated microphone. The built-in microphone isn't very reliable and can make you sound like you're in a bat cave.
2. **Use a good headshot and stage name.** Create a professional Skype account username and upload a professional profile picture. Present yourself as a responsible, mature professional, not as "hotgurrrl87."
3. **Set the stage.** Find a quiet place in which to conduct the interview and make sure the background is plain and neutral. Do not have any distracting posters, pictures, knick-knacks, etc. in the background of your shot. The focus should be on you and your qualifications, not on the poster of your favorite band behind you.
4. **Get in costume.** Dress professionally and be well groomed! You need to dress in professional business attire. Not only will this project a polished and professional image, it will help you "get into character" – you will feel more confident, which will positively influence your body language and communication style.
5. **Light yourself well.** Good lighting is crucial. Set up two lights on either side of your computer/webcam. Test the way the light hits you – it should be evenly lit and flattering.

6. **Look into the camera.** Avoid the mistake of looking at the interviewer or yourself on the computer screen. That will make it look as if you're looking down. Instead, look directly at the camera. That way, it will appear as if you are making good eye contact.
7. **Have your "script" ready.** Print your resume in case you need to reference it during the interview. Plus, interviewers sometimes ask to view it over Skype.

## AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Regardless of the type of interview you participate in, you should take notes about what you were asked and how you answered the questions. Furthermore, be sure to send the interviewer a thank you note reiterating your interest in the position. Your thank you note should be sent within 24 hours after the interview. For more tips on writing thank you notes, please see the "Professional Communication Etiquette" article in this publication.

### Tip You Can Do It!

- Dress to impress whether it's a phone interview or a Skype interview! You'll feel more confident; therefore, your responses to interview questions will make a better impression.
- Don't forget to smile! Smiling will project a positive tone.

# Professional Communication Etiquette



## COMMUNICATION ETIQUETTE: WORDS THAT WORK

**B**usiness etiquette matters now more than ever before as technology allows us to tweet, post, and comment to hundreds of people at a time. Here are some guidelines to communicate effectively and professionally:

### Using the Phone

When you call someone, the first thing you should do is identify yourself and state why you are calling. Never launch into questions or requests for assistance until you have first stated who you are. If the call goes to voicemail, listen to the message. Some messages will indicate whether or not the person is in the office, who to contact if you need immediate assistance, or provide an email address asking the caller to use email as the preferred method of contact. The preferred method of contact usually gets your request answered sooner! Lastly, by all means, leave a message. State your name and number first and speak slowly and clearly. Briefly state what you're calling about and then close by repeating your number again slowly! Don't speed up just because you know your own phone number. Wait 48 hours before you call back.

### Email Communications

You may use your iPhone, Android, Windows Phone, or BlackBerry to send email messages, but this doesn't mean that you can format your email like it is a text message. When you are communicating with professional people rather than friends, take care to avoid grammatical and spelling errors. Whether you are communicating with a prospective employer or UH staff/faculty, pay attention to how and what you write. Keep in mind these simple steps before you click "Send":

#### Step One:

Be sure that you're addressing your email to the right person. We have all heard horror stories about emails that were sent to the wrong person and the negative ramifications that followed. Making sure the recipient's email address is correct will save you some unwanted stress.

#### Step Two:

Include a subject line that is direct and to the point. Business professionals often check their inbox and scan the subject lines of emails to see what needs immediate attention. A vague subject line could get your email passed over.

#### Step Three:

Treat your email like a letter. Use a greeting like "Dear" or "Good afternoon," and end with a closing like "Sincerely" to help personalize your communications. If you've never emailed the person before, take time out to do some research to learn more about him/her. This will help you select the most appropriate greeting. Using "Dear Sir" for a female is not appropriate. Neither is "Dear Howard" when you are addressing faculty members with Ph.D.'s. In addition, keep your email brief. Any lengthy communication should be sent either in an attachment or through other means like snail mail or fax. When writing your email, maintain a courteous and professional tone. Email is impersonal and the tone of messages can be misinterpreted. Do a final check for spelling, grammar, and missing words. Once you click "Send," your message is in cyberspace and can't be taken back.

### The Art of Conversation

There are a few general rules to being a good communicator:

- Listen, which can be really difficult to do. Concentrate on what the other person is saying and let them know you understand them by nodding and making eye contact.

- Think before you speak. Don't jump into a conversation or finish the other person's sentence because you think you know what the other person is going to say.
- Use proper titles when addressing professionals. For example, when communicating with a faculty member on campus, be sure to address them as "Professor" or "Doctor."
- Remember to say, "Please," and "Thank you," because these basic principles of good manners can be somewhat lacking in our fast paced world. They certainly are words that work.

Just a reminder: the smallest effort in brushing up your communication can make a big impact. It can make a positive impression! Using professional communication etiquette everyday will help you stand out from the crowd in school, in your job search, in the workplace, and in life.

### **Remember to Always Say, "Thank you!"**

We often leave an interview feeling somewhat relieved because the interview is over. However, the interview process doesn't end there. Although we thank the hiring manager(s) for their time at the end of an interview, we must also remember to thank them in writing after the interview!

#### **Why is it important?**

Thank you notes and emails are extremely important in the professional world. Writing an effective thank you note or email is a good practice to build, especially when interviewing for internships and other employment opportunities, requesting references and recommendation letters, or any other instances where it may benefit you to display some form of professional courtesy. The purpose of sending a thank you note or email is to establish goodwill, express your appreciation, and strengthen your candidacy.

#### **When should you send a thank you note/email?**

- After an informational interview or professional interview.
- When a professional writes a reference or recommendation letter.
- When you want to extend gratitude for someone who helped you in the pursuit of your goals.

#### **What should you include?**

There are a few key elements to address when writing thank you notes and emails:

1. Reiterate your interest in the position and the company or organization.
2. Highlight something positive from the interview or restate something you learned.
3. Provide any information not previously given in the interview.
4. Match your qualifications, skills, and strengths with the job requirements.
5. Express your sincere appreciation.

#### **Who should you send it to?**

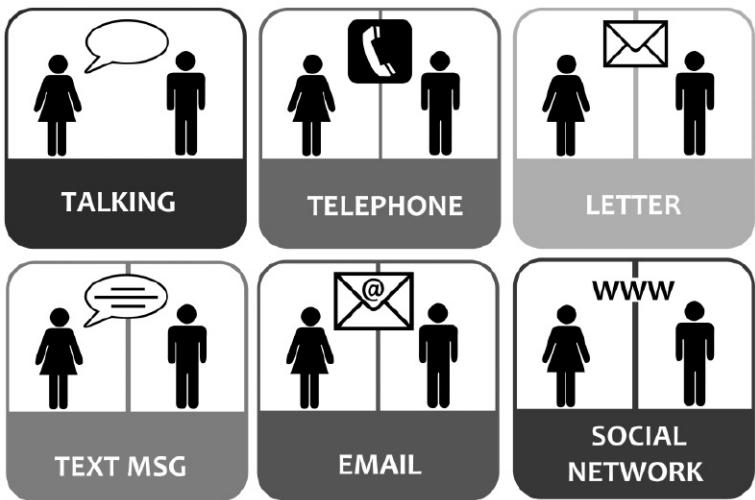
Thank you notes and emails should be addressed to the hiring manager or interviewer and any other professionals involved in your interview. You can also request that the interviewer shares your note or email with the team.

#### **Email vs. Snail Mail?**

Nowadays, email thank you notes are professionally acceptable, but you are also allowed to send both if you prefer. Physically mailed thank you notes can be handwritten or typed. It is generally believed that in any format, thank you notes or emails should be sent within 24 hours of the interview.

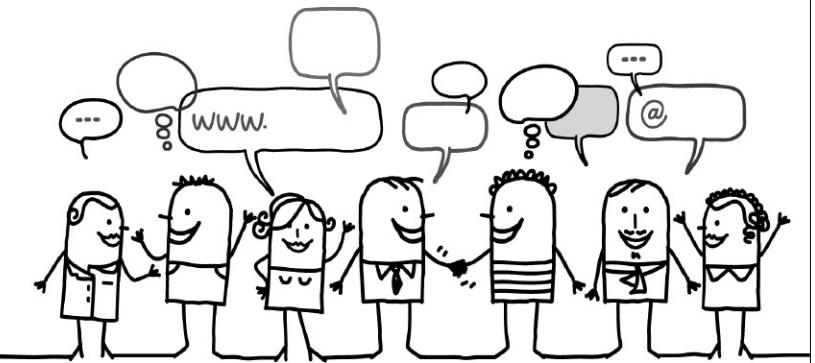
#### **Need more help?**

For more information about writing effective thank you notes or emails, please view the "Job Search Correspondence" handout under the *Handouts* link on the UCS website.



# The Networking Connection

An estimated 70 – 80 percent of jobs are advertised through non-traditional job search channels.

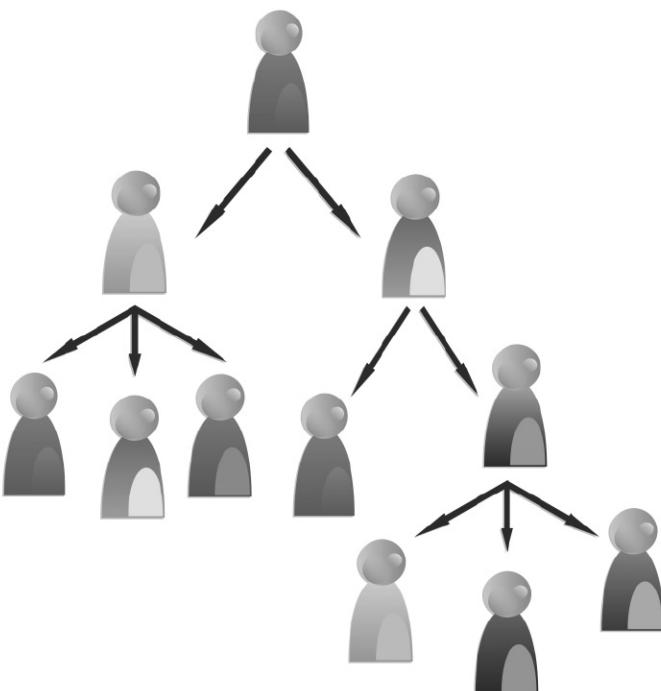


Non-publicized jobs encompass the hidden job market and generally can be found only through networking and informational interviewing. Even when jobs are advertised, the person who utilizes networking gains a competitive edge.

## WHAT IS NETWORKING?

"Networking" refers to the process of discovering and utilizing connections between people to exchange information and ideas regarding job search strategies and exploring career opportunities. It is the most effective career exploration and job search tool!

The following diagram shows how quickly networks can grow.



## BENEFITS OF NETWORKING

- Uncover information regarding a specific employer, job, or career of interest to you.
- Focus and validate your career choice.
- Talk firsthand with people in the field or industry of interest.
- Obtain advice on conducting a successful job search.
- Refine your interview skills.
- Acquire mentors.
- Stand out among hundreds of other candidates by connecting with contacts within a company.

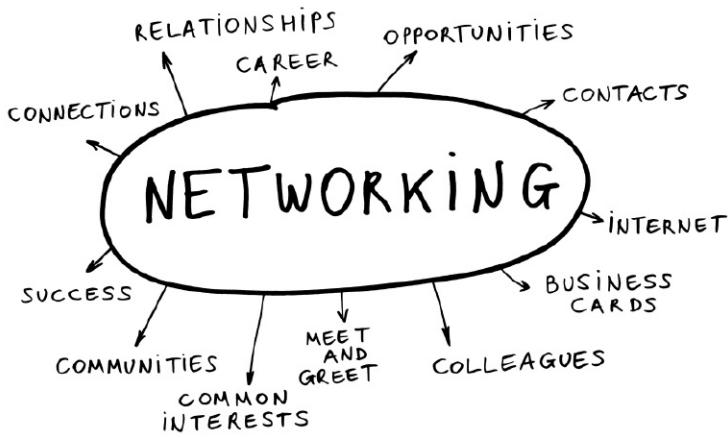
## BEFORE YOU START NETWORKING – DETERMINE WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER

First, prepare a sound bite, which is an abbreviated introduction of yourself. It includes your name and university, your major, and the purpose of your networking.

Example: "Hi, my name is John Smith, and I am an accounting major at the University of Houston. I'm interested in the field of accounting; particularly in the oil and gas industry."

Next, create a marketing commercial (refer to the "Create Your Own Marketing Commercial" section) that talks about what you have to offer, and includes information such as:

- What are your greatest accomplishments?
- What enabled you to achieve these accomplishments?
- How have your interests, skills, accomplishments, and experiences developed?



- What are your common areas of interest and career goals? Knowing your goals will help you to determine what type of contacts to seek out.
- What are your relevant skills, courses, internships, and other work experiences?
- How do your skills and background fit with the position and company's needs?
- Why are you interested in the field/job and industry?

Preparing this information before you meet a contact will help you to say what you want in a few quick sentences. You can also use this information as a lead-in for telephone conversations you have with a contact.

## IDENTIFYING NETWORKING CONTACTS

Everyone knows other people and thus has a network. It is recommended to begin networking with people you already know. You may receive useful information and advice, and it will help you in building your confidence. But "networking" involves moving beyond one's immediate network and tapping into other people's networks, perhaps far removed from your own. Being able to uncover these opportunities by networking is a critical job search skill, as jobs that are advertised tend to be extremely competitive.

Here are sample networking sources:

- **Family:** Parents, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, cousins, other family members
- **Employment:** Present and former employers (supervisors and coworkers), subordinates, customers, clients, suppliers, competitors

- **Friends:** Close friends and acquaintances, current and former neighbors, parents of classmates, everyone in your address book
- **Professionals:** Accountants, lawyers, doctors, dentists, clergy, insurance agents, professional societies, bankers, librarians, hair dressers
- **School:** Classmates, professors, advisors, administrators, student organizations, conference speakers and members, guest speakers, career fair representatives, company representatives at information sessions, UH alumni (especially recent grads)
- **Community:** Store owners, chambers of commerce, clubs, professional organizations and associations, service organizations, religious groups, public officials, public service and volunteer work
- **Athletics/Gym:** Coaches, sports team members, fellow athletes, intramural activities, soccer parents, personal trainers
- **Internet:** Online discussion groups/blogs, web based social networks such as LinkedIn and Facebook
- **UCS Resources:** UCS career counselors, UCAN (University Career Advisory Network), internet resources, "Informational Interviewing and Networking" handout, books in the Career Resource Library

## WHERE TO MEET THESE CONTACTS:

- UCS Career Success Series events
- Student/professional organization and associations
- University of Houston and College Alumni Associations
- Career Fairs
- Local and national organizations
- Volunteer/community service
- Company receptions and information sessions
- Chamber of commerce meetings and events

## MAKING INITIAL CONTACT

Decide whom to contact first. During initial contacts, do not ask for a job, but simply ask for information about where positions may exist. Ask questions that get people talking about jobs and careers; listen and take notes. Wait until your contact asks about you, and then explain your situation in positive terms. Ask for suggestions or referrals. Sample questions include the following:

- What are the top employers for this position/field?
- Are there professional organizations and associations that I should join?
- Are there any publications I should read?
- What are the main professional conferences for this career field or industry?

## INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Informational interviewing is an extremely effective method of networking. It is the process of gathering career information from people who are currently working in a job, career field, organization, or geographic area of interest to you. The information, as well as the process of gathering it, will help you to refine your goals and possibly discover new ones. Information can be obtained through one-on-one discussions, social interactions and informal conversations, over the phone, or through email.

Below is an example of how to request an informational interview:

"Hello Mr. Brown, my name is Susan Smith, and I was given your name by John Andrews. I am a student at the University of Houston, and I am very interested in learning more about the public relations field. I have been doing a lot of research on the industry, but I don't feel as though I have enough current information on the field to make informed career decisions. I thought that if I could talk to someone knowledgeable in PR like you, I would have a clearer picture of the profession.

I've read about some of the creative things your department is doing with your radio and TV campaign. I would very much like to get your personal opinion about public relations and would love the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss your views."

## PREPARING FOR THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

- Evaluate and know what your career interests are.
- Create a set of questions that will help you determine if the requirements of a field or organization are a match with your talents, skills, and workplace environment expectations.
- Start scheduling an appointment with people you know.
- Prepare responses to questions you may be asked.

## Sample Informational Interview Questions:

- How did you decide to go into this field/industry? What is your educational background and work experience?
- What is a typical work day like – routines and duties performed on a regular basis?
- How would you describe your work environment?
- What type of skills, training, certifications, advanced degrees, and experiences are required to perform your job?
- What do you like most about your job, your company, and your industry? What do you dislike or consider as challenges?
- What is the ideal education and background for this career?
- What are typical career paths in the company/industry?
- What is the future of this field and industry?

## Questions About Your Job Search:

- What would you suggest I do to make my resume more effective?
- Do you have any career advice or ideas for me?
- Can you recommend any groups or professional organizations in which I could become involved?
- Are there any specific publications that I should read or websites I should visit?
- How would you approach this job search?
- Who else (in your field) would you recommend I talk to?

## DURING THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

- Be on time, prepared, and dressed professionally.
- Ask for information and suggestions.
- Be respectful of the contact's time.
- Bring updated copies of your resume and business cards in case the contact asks for one.
- Thank the person for his/her time and information, and ask if he/she could recommend anyone else to contact.

## FOLLOWING-UP AND MAINTAINING YOUR NETWORK

- Write or email a thank you note to everyone you speak with within 24 hours.
- Record the information you obtained.
- Follow-up on leads you've been given.
- Keep contacts informed of your progress throughout the process and how you are taking action on their suggestions.
- Maintain your network even after you start a new job as they can assist you with career development throughout your life.
- Incorporate networking into your everyday life as you will reap benefits both personally and professionally.

## KEEPING IT TOGETHER – STAYING ORGANIZED

Keep a file of business cards you receive. Maintain a log of your activities in a notebook or on your computer – possibly use an Excel spreadsheet and create headings such as these:

### Items to Include:

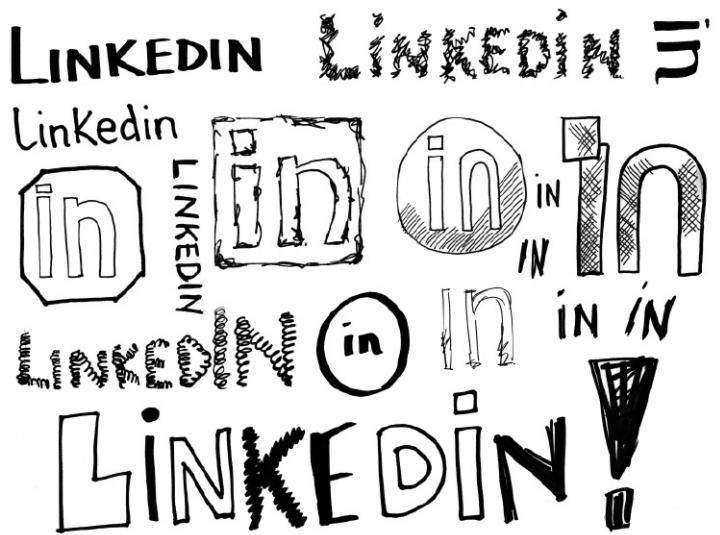
- Contact Name and Title
- Contact Email and Phone Numbers
- Company or Organization Name
- Address
- Referral Source
- Date/Place of Meeting(s)
- Key Points Learned
- Future Follow-up Plan/Date
- Networking Contact Suggestions
- Actions You Have Taken
- Thank You Notes Sent
- Next Steps
- Additional Notes

## READY, SET, GO!

Professional networking sounds less terrifying if you think of it as connecting. A connector is someone who is interested in learning about others. Do you have friends - or maybe it's you - who will talk to anyone? According to the article, "Are You a Connector?" in *Entrepreneur Magazine*, "Perhaps one of the most important attributes of a connector is a willingness to help and to reach out even if there is no obvious or immediate payback. We all know people like them, people who seem to know everyone. They're always able to help - or if they can't, they know someone who can." Connecting, or networking, is a two-way street: you must give to receive. Below is a list of six ways to become a "connector":

1. Join LinkedIn and connect with fellow students, faculty, staff, and follow companies that you would like to work for when you graduate. Keep your profile updated and utilize the status feature to keep your network updated on your internship or job search.
2. Join the University Career Advisory Network (UCAN) on LinkedIn. This group is specifically designed to help students ask for career advice and connect with professionals in their field of interest.
3. Attend company information sessions or receptions on campus. Companies hold information sessions with the specific purpose of meeting potential interns or full-time candidates.
4. Join student organizations and get involved! Many student organizations bring employers to campus and are a great place to make new friends, as well as discover leads for potential internships or job opportunities.
5. Utilize the social networks that you've already created. Ideally, the people you've friended on Facebook are close friends and family who have your best interest at heart and want to help you become successful.
6. Make an appointment with a UCS career counselor. If the idea of talking to a complete stranger makes you nervous, practice! The more you practice the more comfortable you'll feel when connecting with a potential employer.

# Get Connected Using LinkedIn



If you don't have a LinkedIn profile yet, you may be missing out on finding jobs as well as professional networking opportunities. LinkedIn is a professional social networking site designed to help people manage their professional relationships. LinkedIn currently has over 225 million professionals in over 200 countries and territories worldwide. Using LinkedIn as a networking and promotional tool is strongly recommended for the professional job search. Here are a few strategies to get you started:

1. Create a complete LinkedIn profile. Include all relevant experience, education, skills, and accomplishments as well as a professional photo. Obtain recommendations from supervisors, coworkers, and customers. Update your profile regularly.
2. Request connections with everyone you know to begin growing your network. Use LinkedIn to connect to people with whom you went to school, worked, or have other connections.
3. Ask your first degree contacts for introductions to new people with whom you would like to connect.
4. Join LinkedIn groups that are relevant to your field and/or industry, as well as company, education, and alumni groups. Actively participate in group discussions by making intelligent comments and posting news articles.
5. Search people, jobs and/or companies for positions of interest.

When communicating with other LinkedIn members, your messages should be as professional and concise as possible. The following steps are recommended:

- 1. DO NOT USE THE DEFAULT MESSAGE.** This message does not state who you are or the reason you would like to connect. Although using the default is convenient, it is the least likely way of making a good impression and getting a desired response.
- 2. PERSONALIZE YOUR MESSAGE.** Even if you think the member knows you well, it's a good practice to personalize your message. First impressions always count, even via email. With this in mind, take time to make sure your message is professional and authentic. The extra time and effort you invest in your message will make it more effective.
- 3. INTRODUCE YOURSELF.** State who you are and how you know the person. For example, "I am a computer engineering junior at the University of Houston, and we are both members of the IEEE LinkedIn group."



**4. MENTION REFERRALS.** If you and the member have a third party in common, tell them. For example, "My Aunt Mae, Director of Marketing at XYZ Company, recommended I contact you."

**5. EXPLAIN WHY YOU WANT TO CONNECT.**

If you admire their work, follow their blog, ask questions about what they do, or want to re-establish a connection, let them know!

**6. BE POLITE AND PATIENT.** Don't forget to say, "May I," "Please," and "Thank you." Also, remember that professionals are busy people. Be patient if they don't respond immediately. Some professionals rarely check their LinkedIn accounts; therefore, be prepared to wait for a response.

Need help getting started on LinkedIn? UCS career counselors can help! They are available to meet with you and review your LinkedIn profile and networking strategy. Students and alumni are also welcome to join the UCS UCAN LinkedIn group. Connect to UCS staff, UH students and alumni; also receive UCS announcements regarding events, career-related articles, and other information. Visit [www.linkedin.com/groupRegistration?gid=2471829](http://www.linkedin.com/groupRegistration?gid=2471829) or [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu) (click on the LinkedIn icon) to join. For additional information on how to effectively network using social media, please review our "Using Social Media in the Job Search" handout under the *Handouts* link on the UCS website or in the UCS lobby.



## NEW TO LINKEDIN AND NOT SURE WHAT TO DO?

Here are additional tips to get you started:

### Establish a Professional Profile

- Treat your profile like you would treat your resume.
- Since you might upload your resume to LinkedIn, we encourage students to visit a UCS career counselor during walk-in hours for a resume critique.
- When you've completed your profile, thoroughly check it for misspelled words and grammatical errors. Once you create your account, everyone can see it.
- For more tips, see the "How to Build a Professional Student LinkedIn Profile" handout.

### Join LinkedIn Groups

- Joining groups will give you the opportunity to connect with individuals who have similar interests and career goals.
- When you join a group, you will gain inside access to information such as job postings.
- For more information, see the "How to Network Professionally Online" handout.

### Explore Opportunities

- Before you attend a career fair or you are called in for an interview, research the companies that interest you. Be prepared to speak knowledgeably about the company; to show how your experiences and qualifications are a match for the position; and to ask questions to help you evaluate if the company and position are a fit with your career interests and goals.
- See the "How to Conduct Essential Employer Research on LinkedIn" handout.

For additional information on how to effectively use social media as a networking tool, please review our "Using Social Media in the Job Search" handout, along with the other handouts mentioned here on the UCS website or in the UCS lobby.

# How to Market Yourself at a Career Fair

## Career Fair Tips

What is a career fair? It's an event hosted by UCS or UH colleges where employers from all industries participate in meeting and recruiting UH students and alumni for entry-level positions and internships. Career fairs are a great place to start your job search, and participating will benefit you in numerous ways such as:

- Learning more about companies and organizations and what positions they offer.
- Establishing a network of contacts through employers and recruiters as well as other job seekers.
- Exploring the different job opportunities available to you regardless of your major.
- Improving your communication skills when meeting and speaking with employers and recruiters.
- Increasing your chances of receiving an interview by meeting and talking to hiring companies.
- Getting pre-selected for Campus Recruitment interviews. Please refer to the "Campus Recruitment" section of this publication to learn more about this service.

## PREPARING FOR A CAREER FAIR:

- **When possible, obtain the list of companies** scheduled to attend the career fair. Typically this information can be found on the colleges' websites. For UCS events, check the *Events Calendar* link or the homepage of the UCS website. Map out which companies you are interested in and create a list of your top six to twelve companies.
- **Do your homework.** Research your target companies in order to be better prepared if they ask you specific questions.



- **Determine three companies** that you are most interested in, and spend most of your research time identifying their vision, products/services, where they are located, etc. See the "Company Research 101" article in this publication for research tips. After you have completed research on your top three companies, choose three or four additional companies from your list. Research and get to know a little about these companies.

Some information to look for:

- Products/services they provide
- Location(s) of the organization
- Company mission
- Benefits
- Opportunities for advancement
- Training programs
- The interview process

- **Participate in Campus Recruitment.** There are two requirements to participate in this service. First, create your Data File and upload your resume on ResumeBank to be able to submit your interview requests through Campus Recruitment. Second, complete the Campus Recruitment Workshop (CRW) online or in person in our office during the scheduled dates and times. Please see the "Campus Recruitment" article of this publication for more information.
- **Ask questions.** Create a list of questions specifically designed for the companies with whom you plan to speak. This will help you appear well informed and interested in their organization.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR RECRUITERS

- What majors does your organization typically hire? What kinds of positions do you offer in my major?
- Do you have Co-op, internship, or summer job opportunities for someone in my major?
- What skills do you find most marketable in your industry today?
- Is your company involved with any student organizations on campus?

- **Practice your introduction.** Employers have a window of 60 seconds to meet with job seekers. Therefore, first impressions are important. Do not say to employers, "What do y'all do?" Create your marketing commercial to "sell" yourself to potential employers. Please see the "Create Your Marketing Commercial" checklist later in this article.
- **Update your resume.** Have your resume reviewed by a UCS career counselor. Your resume is your most important marketing tool! Employers see over a hundred resumes in one day and attend many career fairs throughout the year. Make sure you have no grammatical and spelling errors and your resume is well organized. Take advantage of the services UCS has to offer such as the Rock Your Resume Workshop and Impress! How to Work a Career Fair Workshop. Please see the "Career Development Workshops and Seminars" article in this publication. UCS also offers a variety of career-related handouts that can be found under the *Handouts* link on the UCS website or in the UCS lobby.
- **Prepare to answer questions.** Employers are trying to get to know you, therefore, be prepared to think fast on your feet. Avoid using "um, like, uh, ah," etc.
- **Make sure your professional attire is clean and pressed.** You are already being evaluated as a potential candidate; therefore, first impressions are important. Even though this is not an interview setting, it is necessary to look professional. Some career fairs require men to wear a tie in order to be admitted. UCS recommends carrying a portfolio rather than a backpack. See the "Professional Image Counts!" article in this publication.

*"Dress like you've made something of yourself in the world, even if you haven't."*

*Unknown*

## CREATE YOUR OWN MARKETING COMMERCIAL

A marketing commercial (also known as an elevator speech, 30 - 60 second introduction, or sales pitch) is your personal advertisement to introduce yourself briefly to an employer or a potential networking contact. It is an effective marketing tool that, when used correctly, will help you open up doors to many opportunities. Below is a checklist of information you should include in your (30 – 60 seconds) marketing commercial.

- **Education:** College, degree, major, and any other relevant academic information
- **Experience:** Internships, Co-ops, part-time and full-time employment
- **Volunteer activities:** School and community
- **Leadership roles:** College, church, local and national organizations
- Most important values, skills, strengths, accomplishments, and goals
- Must be engaging and captivating
- **SELL YOURSELF!**

*Other uses for a marketing commercial:*

- Company receptions and information sessions
- Interview introductions
- Conferences, symposiums, seminars, etc.
- Networking events

*Practice your marketing commercial to make it sound natural and not rehearsed!*

## CAREER FAIR ETIQUETTE:

- Be respectful and turn off your cell phone!
- Be courteous and aware of the employer's time. If there is a line of people waiting to talk to the company, make your conversation short but impressionable.
- Enjoy the career fair, be enthusiastic and let your positive attitude show!
- Bring mints to maintain a fresh breath. You want to make sure employers remember you for the right reasons.

## DAY OF THE CAREER FAIR:

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Stock your portfolio with several copies of your resume. Always give a resume to each employer with whom you speak (even if it's more than one recruiter for the same company).
- Obtain a layout map of company booths. Create a quick game plan; this way you can quickly map out your target companies.
- Prioritize your target companies. More than likely, you'll find it easier to meet with the employers in which you are the least interested in first. This will allow you to practice your marketing commercial, answer questions, and gain more confidence when you approach your target employers. Be aware that you might have little time to spend with your top employers due to long lines since more students may be interested in the same companies.

### DURING THE CAREER FAIR

- Arrive early. There may be a long wait time to visit with your preferred employers, therefore, be prepared to wait.
- Make the most of your wait time. Read the company's brochure and any other company literature on the table, banner, and displays. This will help you come up with more questions, and you will learn something new about the company.
- Introduce yourself. Smile and speak clearly at all times. Greet the recruiter, state your name, and welcome them to the University of Houston. Have good eye contact!

- Ask questions about the company. Have your list of questions ready and space to jot down notes.
- Take notes on information needed as to how, when, and who to follow-up with, steps in their interview process, etc. Also, ask about employer information sessions and campus interviews, and make a note of these events and dates.
- If you see a company that you're interested in and you didn't have a chance to research it, grab the information they give out and go somewhere to read it. Then, come back and discuss what you have learned about the company.
- Look beyond the obvious. Even though hospitals hire nurses and doctors, they also need professionals in various fields: accounting, human resources, psychology, etc.
- Ask for a business card. Obtaining a business card provides direct contact with the organization. Some recruiters will decline to provide their card. If this happens, be gracious about it. Remember to ask each recruiter you meet what is their preferred method of contact to send them a thank you note.
- Be flexible. If the recruiter does not know about a specific job or internship you are interested in, ask them for a contact person that would be able to help you.
- If the huge crowds are overwhelming, give yourself a break and come back to the fair when you feel re-energized.
- Network with other students and alumni while you are waiting to speak with a recruiter. Where have they worked before? Where have they interned? What companies have they spoken to? You never know when making these connections can lead you to the right contacts and company.
- Look your best and be confident. When you sell yourself as a great candidate, it will be hard to forget you.
- On the spot interviews are rare, but employers and recruiters do have this option. If this is the case, be prepared to answer questions as if you are in an interview setting. For tips on interviewing, please check "The Interview" article in this publication.
- You get what you give. Only YOU can control what you will gain from any event.

## AFTER THE CAREER FAIR

- **Look over your notes and review** what each company has to offer. Decide which ones you would like to follow-up with.
- **Review your goals** with the information you learned about the companies you visited.
- **Write or email a thank you note** to the employers you spoke with no later than one to two days after the career fair. Be sure to list key points that you spoke about during your conversation. This will help the employer to remember who you are. For information on how to write a thank you note, see the "Thank You Notes: Tips and Guidelines" box in this article.
- **Follow-up with the employer**, if you have not heard from them in weeks. You may contact them by calling or sending an email to re-establish your interest in the company.
- **Create a method for managing** all the information about employers you spoke with at the fair; for example, use an Excel spreadsheet.
- **Continue extended research** on those companies you wish to pursue.

### THANK YOU NOTES: TIPS AND GUIDELINES

It is considered good professional etiquette to send a thank you note to employers and recruiters you met and spoke with at career fairs. Therefore, be sure to stand out from the rest of the student body and follow these tips and guidelines when writing or emailing your thank you notes.

Thank you notes should address:

- Company's hiring needs
- Your qualifications and skills
- Your desire to be considered for an interview

## CAREER FAIR DON'TS:

- **Do not show up in everyday clothes.** Employers see this as sloppy and unorganized. Wear your professional best and they will see you at your best. Remember to leave your backpack in the car!
- **Do not come on too strong.** While it is great to show you have personality, acting pushy or altogether rude turns people off fast. Remember to practice your introduction, and listen to what the employer is saying in order to respond accordingly.
- **Do not appear insincere.** Compliments are good, but there is a fine line and usually employers can spot this. Talk about how well the company is doing and not necessarily the employer themselves.
- **Do not interrupt someone else's conversation.** Sure the line is long and you have five more companies you need to see, but be considerate of those around you.
- **Do not be a sample hog.** You really don't need 50 pens, do you? Always ask employers before taking giveaways and handouts.

### WANT TO STAND OUT LIKE A SHINING STAR?

- Print your resume on classic colors of paper like white, off-white, or beige.
- Create personal business cards with your name, contact number, email, college, degree, and major.
- Prepare and practice your marketing commercial.
- Send thank you notes to all recruiters and employers with whom you spoke.
- Let your motivation shine through!

# Career Fairs

The most current career fair information is available on the UCS website under the **Events Calendar** link.



## NEED HELP?

- Read the career fair tips found in the "How to Market Yourself at a Career Fair" article in this publication.
- Review the "How to Make the Most of a Career Fair" handout found on the *Handouts* link on the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu) or in the UCS lobby.
- Attend the Impress! How to Work a Career Fair Workshop during the scheduled times, which are shown on the UCS *Events Calendar* link at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu).
- Get your resume critiqued by a UCS career counselor during walk-in hours; walk-ins are on a first come, first served basis for up to 15 minutes. Walk-in hours are:

Weekday (Fall and Spring)	Morning	Afternoon
Monday and Tuesday	9:00am - 11:00am	2:00pm - 6:30pm
Wednesday and Thursday	9:00am - 11:00am	2:00pm - 4:00pm
Monday - Thursday (Summer)	9:00am - 11:00am	2:00pm - 4:00pm

## Campus Jobs for Coogs



Are you looking for a job on campus? Join us and connect with UH departments seeking student workers. This event is open to all majors and classifications.

Wednesday, August 7, 2013  
1:00pm - 4:00pm  
UC Houston Room

## Summer Jobs for Coogs Fair



Connect with employers with job, internship and volunteer opportunities (focused on, but not limited to summer employment). Open to students and alumni of all majors and classifications.

This event takes place every April.

## Internship Career Fair



Connect with employers from a variety of industries and fields recruiting all majors and classifications.

Wednesday, October 2, 2013  
1:00pm - 4:00pm  
UC Houston Room

## TEXAS JOB FAIR

Connect with employers from a variety of industries at the Texas Job Fair. Open to students and alumni of all majors and classifications.

Thursday, February 6, 2014  
10:00am - 3:00pm  
Rice University

Hosted by HACCC: [www.hacc.org](http://www.hacc.org)

# Company Research 101

**Learn how to make more informed career decisions and how to better equip yourself for the interview.**

**R**esearching companies and industries may be the single, biggest secret to a successful job search.

## **Two main reasons for conducting company research are:**

- To make an informed career decision.** It's important to evaluate potential companies and the career opportunities and work environment they offer. Determine if the company and the job are a fit with your career interests, skills, values, and goals.
- Equip yourself for the interview.** If you want to distinguish yourself from other candidates, learn about the company you plan to interview with. You will gain a competitive edge if you are able to speak knowledgeably about the company and ask relevant questions during the interview.

## **BENEFITS OF RESEARCHING COMPANIES**

Before you apply for any job, spend time researching companies and industries. Here are some of the benefits of researching:

- Target companies:** Create a targeted list of companies and industries that interest you, and maximize your research efforts by focusing on this list.



- Cover letters and resumes:** Tailor your cover letter and resume to the position; show how your experience and skills match the company's needs.
- Industries:** Learn about industries and be able to identify possible companies; identify a company's competitors; learn about current trends in the industry and potential careers.
- Make a connection:** Identify contact information for a company; learn about the company's application process.
- Market yourself effectively:** Identify the needs of the company and market your skills and experience to show how you are a viable candidate for the job.
- Effectively prepare for the interview:** Prepare to confidently answer the question, "What do you know about our company?" Formulate questions to ask during the interview, and demonstrate your interest in the job and the company.
- Is it a fit?**: The interview should be a two-way process. While you are being interviewed, you should assess whether or not the company culture and position are a good fit for YOU.
- Job offers:** Evaluate job offers that are a match with your career goals, interests, strengths, and values.

# Tip

## Distinguish Yourself

Employers view research as a critical factor in the evaluation of potential candidates. Candidates stand out and are more likely to receive a job offer if they:

- Research the company and be able to speak knowledgeably about the company and its products/services during the interview process.
- Discuss how their experiences and qualifications are a match for the job and the company's needs.
- Exhibit how they can make an immediate contribution to the company.

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A COMPANY?

- The company's major products/services
- The type of company: public, private, nonprofit, government, small business, etc.
- Whether the company is a subsidiary or division of a larger organization, or the parent company
- Locations – local, regional, state, national, or international
- The company's customers, competitors, and market share
- The size of the company; number of employees
- The industries the company operates under; current and future industry trends
- The corporate culture and work environment
- Available job opportunities and potential career paths
- Financial health and future growth
- The company's values and goals and whether they are similar to yours

## CAN'T FIND COMPANY INFORMATION?

If you are having trouble finding information about a particular company, conduct research on the industry and look for information such as:

- Common products/services
- Most typical customers and competitors
- Advantages and challenges working in the industry
- Entry-level opportunities; education and skills required; how people advance
- Current and future industry trends; growth opportunities and potential threats
- The fastest growing and most admired industries
- The leading professional or trade organizations

## NAVIGATING YOUR COMPANY AND INDUSTRY RESEARCH

The internet has a wealth of information, and conducting research on the web can become overwhelming to sift through all of the infinite resources.

An effective tool for finding information on the web is through the use of search engines. Here are a few search engines to consider:

[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)  
[www.ask.com](http://www.ask.com)

[www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)  
[www.bing.com](http://www.bing.com)

Here are suggested websites that provide tips for navigating through the vast amount of information and maximize your research:

**Learn the Net – Your Online Guide:**  
[www.learnthenet.com/learn-to-search](http://www.learnthenet.com/learn-to-search)

Resources on this website include: 1) Searching the Web, 2) Advanced Web Searching, 3) Online Information: Fact or Fiction?, 4) Mining the Deep, 5) Doing Research on the Internet, and 6) Searching Databases.

**Using Search Engines Effectively:**  
[www.ehow.com/how-does\\_4882380\\_using-search-engines-effectively.html](http://www.ehow.com/how-does_4882380_using-search-engines-effectively.html)

**The Search Engine List – A Comprehensive List of Search Engines You Can Use:**  
[www.websearch.about.com/od/enginesanddirectories/tp/search-engine-list.htm](http://www.websearch.about.com/od/enginesanddirectories/tp/search-engine-list.htm)

The following websites provide tools and resources for conducting effective company and industry research, and include resources to directories, news articles, information on career fields, industries, and more:

- **Guide to Researching Companies, Industries, and Countries from Quintessential Careers:**  
[www.quintcareers.com/researching\\_companies.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/researching_companies.html)
- **Employer Research Strategies by CollegeGrad.com:**  
[www.collegegrad.com/jobsearch/Employer-Research-Strategies](http://www.collegegrad.com/jobsearch/Employer-Research-Strategies)
- **How to Research Employers and Industries from The Riley Guide:**  
[www.rileyguide.com/employer.html](http://www.rileyguide.com/employer.html)

## WHERE TO FIND COMPANY AND INDUSTRY INFORMATION

Resources for researching companies and industries include:

- UCS handout "Company and Industry Research Guide"
- Internet, company and industry websites
- University Career Services: *Featured Links* and *Resources* links, and the UCS Career Resource Library
- UH's M.D. Anderson Library online Research Guides, which includes databases, directories, books, and more:  
<http://guides.lib.uh.edu/profile.php?uid=23149>
- Financial data and company annual reports
- Government resources, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)
- Social networking: LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest, and other social media sites
- Print resources such as directories, newspapers (local and national), business magazines, press releases, and business and trade journals
- Trade and professional associations and organizations
- Chambers of commerce
- Better Business Bureau
- Connections: People working for a company, UH alumni

Reviews of companies from the perspective of current employees, ex-employees, and other insiders:

**Glassdoor:**

[www.glassdoor.com/Reviews/index.htm](http://www.glassdoor.com/Reviews/index.htm)

**CareerBliss:**

[www.careerbliss.com/company-reviews](http://www.careerbliss.com/company-reviews)

**About.com:**

[www.jobsearch.about.com/od/companyreviews/Company\\_Reviews.htm](http://www.jobsearch.about.com/od/companyreviews/Company_Reviews.htm)



### Things to Know Before You Begin Researching

- Generally, it is easier to find information about public companies rather than private companies.
- Information on parent companies will be easier to find than a company's subsidiaries or divisions.
- Company websites generally have more current information than printed materials.
- Company and industry research is more effective when you use multiple resources.
- If you are unable to locate information on a particular company, research the overall industry's trends, issues, and news events. *Standard & Poor's Industry Surveys* are available online from the NetAdvantage database that is accessible through the M.D. Anderson Library.
- [Where the Jobs Are Now – Get the Inside Track on the Top Industries](#) is an eBook available on the M.D. Anderson Library website and is a good resource to begin your industry research.
- Use your network system as another research tool.
- Contact the company's public relations or human resources department and ask for information regarding their organization.

# Planning and Preparing a Successful Job Search

**First, identify your skills, interests, strengths, and values. Next, determine your short and long-term career and life goals.**



Planning a successful job search is like taking a road trip. The first step is figuring out your "destination"- your choice of career and work environment. Once you have figured out your destination, "pack your bags" with the appropriate cover letter, resume, and list of references. The next step is to "map" your trip, meaning, being aware of what resources are available and how to access those resources as you approach your destination: a satisfying and rewarding career!

Therefore, it is absolutely important that you have identified and clarified your goals in order to have a solid idea of what employment opportunities to look for as well as where and how to search for them. Using a multi-faceted job search strategy will be much more effective in identifying and utilizing numerous job search avenues for obtaining interviews and job offers. Since there are many avenues, you will need to choose and prioritize from among these options. Below are a few tips to help you get started.

## 1. Tell Me About Yourself

Here's your chance to effectively articulate and convey your skills, interests, strengths, values, and goals to potential employers. Prepare your marketing commercial that includes this information, as well as professional experience, education, and activities such as involvement in student/professional organizations and associations, etc. Practice it to make it sound natural and not rehearsed.

## 2. Action Plan

Create a list of companies you're interested in exploring with jobs that match your skills. Do your research for each one and attend career fairs, information sessions, and other networking events, and utilize the Campus Recruitment service at UCS. Please refer to the "Campus Recruitment" article in this publication for more information.

## 3. Build Your Network

Learn how to network effectively. Join student/professional organizations and associations that will help you build connections with employers in various industries and fields. Learn about these companies by participating in job shadowing opportunities, attending company office visits, and other networking events. Connect with companies and industry professionals on LinkedIn to learn more than what is just on their website. Attend The Job Hunt Workshop to learn more about networking effectively, and refer to the "Get Connected with LinkedIn" article of this publication for more information and tips.

## 4. Create an Impressive Resume

"Show" versus "tell" an employer about your experiences and education. Instead of listing your responsibilities, explain your accomplishments, contributions, and quantify everything that is measurable. Tailor each resume to the specific job description. Attend the Rock Your Resume Workshop at UCS, and visit a UCS career counselor during walk-in hours for a resume critique.

## 5. Interview

Prepare for your interview by researching the company and creating a list of questions to ask the interviewers. Anticipate questions and prepare potential answers by using the STAR technique! Create a job tracking form to help you keep track of all your resume submissions and interviews. See the Tip box on the next page for an example. Schedule an appointment with a UCS career counselor for a mock interview.

## 6. Follow-Up

Always thank the recruiter(s) and/or employer(s) for the interview, whether it's by writing or emailing a thank you note. Be sure to update your job tracking form and your list of networking contacts.

# Tip

**Keep records by creating  
a “Job Tracking Form.”**

JOB TRACKING FORM							
Company	Position	Contact	Date Sent/Contacted	Resume	Cover Letter	Notes	My Action/Follow-Up
BP	Marketing Intern	Tracy Donahue	9/3/2013	Yes	Yes		Called 9/10/13 to check status
American Red Cross	Communications Intern	Jason Miller	9/8/2013	Yes	Yes		Interview 9/15/13 at 1:00pm
The Hobby Center	Sales Assistant	Peter Jones	9/9/2013	Yes	No		Submitted resume 9/9/13

## Job Search Toolkit

Below is a list of items to consider using during your job search to keep you organized and appear more professional:

**Organized Work Space** – uncluttered and accessible desktop space

**Portfolio** – important to hold resumes and business cards while attending interviews and career fairs

**Organizer** – whether a paper organizer, electronic tablet, smart phone, or PC, set up a system to help you keep track of notes, contact information, interviews, and activities

**Voice-mail** – have a standard/professional message for those important employer calls



*“Everything is theoretically impossible,  
until it is done. One could write a history  
of science in reverse by assembling  
the solemn pronouncements of highest  
authority about what could not be  
done and could never happen.”*

Robert Anson Heinlein

## TAKING ACTION

The following are some of the methods typically used by employers in recruiting entry-level and/or experienced applicants, followed by ways you can tap into these methods:

<u>WHAT EMPLOYERS DO</u>	<u>UCS RECOMMENDATIONS</u>
Recruit on college campuses.	Participate in Campus Recruitment at UCS!
Review resumes from career services offices.	Post your resume in ResumeBank on the UCS website.
Post jobs with University Career Services.	Search the UCS website for jobs posted under JOBank, JobScan, and Campus Recruitment.
Ask for referrals from faculty and staff in university departments.	Get to know your professors, advisors, and counselors.
Post jobs with colleges and departments on campus.	Check with the office administrator in your college and/or department to learn how employment listings are handled.
Attend career fairs.	Find out about upcoming career fairs and dates for the Impress! How to Work a Career Fair Workshop hosted at UCS under the <i>Events Calendar</i> link on the UCS website.
Ask for referrals from employees.	Learn how to network by attending The Job Hunt Workshop at UCS.
Hire from their interns, Co-ops, and part-time employees.	Obtain an internship or Co-op, or volunteer!
Design websites with company information and job openings.	Research company websites and post your resume.
Post jobs to various internet job sites.	Spend a limited percentage of your time searching online listings. Click <i>Links</i> on the UCS website for a list of best websites.
List positions with professional associations, student organizations, student clubs, and societies.	Join student/professional organizations and associations and attend networking meetings. Check the Center for Student Involvement website at <a href="http://uh.collegiatelink.net">http://uh.collegiatelink.net</a> .
Network (talk with other professionals in their field to see if they know of potential applicants).	Build your network of contacts, become active with the University of Houston Alumni Association (UHAA), and industry specific organizations.
Contact temporary agencies for possible 'temp to hire' applicants.	Get your foot in the door, network, and gain experience.
Post positions in newspapers - these job postings account for about 15 percent of new hires.	Target your resume and cover letter to the position, and cover all points in the job description.
Contact employment agencies or search firms.	Contact employment agencies or search firms for possible job leads.

# Top 5 Apps to Help You with Your Job Search



## 1. LunchMeet

Having trouble building your network? Worry no longer! With LunchMeet, a free app from LinkedIn, you can set up meeting times with other professionals in your area based upon your availability, location, and current profession or profession you are trying to break into.

## 2. GOOD JOB

This app costs \$4.99 but it helps to keep all of your job search information in one place. You can view contacts, companies you've filled out an application for, who you need to follow-up with and when, and upcoming interview dates.

## 3. JOBMO

Do you utilize sites like [www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com), [www.simplyhired.com](http://www.simplyhired.com), and [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com) during your job search? Now you can find all of their postings in one place! JOBMO cuts down on time by pulling up jobs from each site using one simple application instead of bouncing from website to website.

## 4. Interview Questions Pro

Are you nervous about your upcoming interview? This \$0.99 app has over 80 different questions for you to practice, and it includes helpful tips about how to answer these questions.

## 5. Gigwalk

Need some extra money? Have a smart phone? Gigwalk has multiple gigs all over your chosen area that range from \$5 to \$30 per gig. Companies interested in how their location is being marketed or managed advertise these gigs and then reimburse you once the information is uploaded through their app. Opportunities include Mystery Shopper, taking pictures or video of a store location, verify pricing for particular products, or speaking to customer service agents in the store to assess their knowledge about certain products.

### ADDITIONAL APPS TO KEEP YOU ORGANIZED:

1. **Pocket** - Great for saving articles and blog posts you want to read later.
2. **Flipboard** - One place for all of your social media, blogs you follow, and news pages. Best of all, if you find something you want to read later, you can save it to Pocket!
3. **Evernote** - Not just for notes! You can capture everything in one app: notes, pictures, video, lists, and voice memos. It's accessible anywhere and you can sync it across all of your devices.

# Five Reasons to Work for a Small Business



## smallWORLD Business

**1. That's where the jobs are.** According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, small businesses accounted for 64 percent of the net new jobs created between 1993 and 2011 (or 11.8 million of the 18.5 million net new jobs). Since the latest recession, (mid-2009 to 2011), small firms (20-499 employees), accounted for 67 percent of the net new jobs.

**2. Make immediate contributions.** Small businesses are often fast-paced and offer the opportunity to hit the ground running and make a big impact in a short amount of time. If you want to see the results of your efforts at work quickly, join a small or medium-sized company.

**3. Wear lots of hats.** Rather than assign you a narrow niche as larger companies are apt to do, small businesses value well-rounded employees who can contribute in diverse ways. Jay Whitchurch, CEO of campus2careers, says, "I believe small businesses and nonprofits are the best career path for all grads. This is particularly true for liberal arts majors, who may have the opportunity to use their broad-based education across all functions of the organization rather than be stuck in a cube with a single task." Small and medium-sized businesses are more than twice as likely to recruit liberal arts majors.

**4. More casual and flexible environment.** According to Texas Monthly, The Starr Conspiracy, a full-service marketing agency for companies in specialized market segments, announced that it will appear for the second consecutive time on Texas Monthly's 2012 list of the 100 Best Companies to Work for in Texas. The awards program was created in 2006 and is a project of Texas Monthly magazine, the Texas Association of Business, the Society for Human Resource Management—Texas State Council and Best Companies Group. "We're thrilled to be on this list again. As our company grows, having our unique culture grow with us as our headcount increases is

important," said Dan McCarron, a partner in The Starr Conspiracy. "We want to continue to be the kind of place where it is OK to shoot someone in the face with a Nerf gun during a conference call. It keeps things loose."

**5. Opportunities for growth.** Because of the access to higher-ups and the small work environment, it is easy for people to notice and recognize your accomplishments, which leads to opportunities to advance. Nathan Green, President of campus2careers says, "One of my friends recently left a large computer company for an entry-level, lower paid position at a start-up. He was employee number seventeen at the new company and within a year was promoted three times. He is now making twice his salary from the large company and managing the team he initially joined."

If you're interested in working for a small business, be sure to search job postings and campus interview schedules at University Career Services at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu). Get involved with an area chamber of commerce and utilize your LinkedIn account since many small businesses look immediately to their personal and professional networks when they have an opening. Also, you can register with campus2careers at [www.campus2careers.com](http://www.campus2careers.com).



# International Students: Searching for a Job in the U.S.



The job search can be especially difficult for international students here in the U.S. It's a challenge because there are many elements that make the job search unique including language skills, visa issues, employer policies, cultural differences, and more.

For these reasons, University Career Services has several resources available especially with international students in mind to answer questions about conducting an effective job search.

## HANDOUT: THE JOB SEARCH FOR F-1 AND J-1 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The handout is available in the UCS lobby or under *Handouts* of the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu). It covers information such as: employment options, resume and interview tips for international students, cultural barriers to the job search, online resources, and more!

## UCS SUBSCRIPTION TO [WWW.H1VISAJOBS.COM](http://WWW.H1VISAJOBS.COM)

This website has a series of online databases listing over 20,000 U.S. companies that have recently filed the appropriate paperwork to sponsor H - 1B visas. Use this site to develop a list of companies to target as leads in your job search. Log on instructions are available under *Featured Links* of the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu).

## UCS WEBSITE AND ISSSO

UCS has a section specifically for international students. This information can be accessed by clicking the *Job Search* link under *Links* of the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu).

Although finding employment as an international student can be complex, it is manageable if you seek assistance and support. International students should work closely with the International Student and Scholar Services Office (ISSSO) for all work authorization, policies and immigration regulations. IASSO is conveniently located in the same building as UCS, on the third floor (room 302) of the Student Service Center 1 (Building #524 on the UH Campus Map); 713.743.5065; [www.issso.uh.edu](http://www.issso.uh.edu).

## Tip

### Advice for International Students

- Start the job search process early (minimum of one year in advance)
- Attend UCS Workshops on: resume writing, interviewing skills, internships, and more
- Meet with a UCS career counselor to discuss career goals, resume writing, interviewing skills, and the job search process
- Attend employer information sessions, career fairs, and other networking events
- Learn American business etiquette, job search strategies, and networking skills
- Demonstrate excellent English skills (written and spoken)
- Participate in student/professional organizations and associations, and community/volunteer activities
- Maintain a commitment to the job search process (stay motivated and positive)

# LGBTQ Issues in the Workplace



We all have questions and concerns when it comes to choosing a career. There are many factors to consider. Does my career fit with my interests? What is the work environment like? Does the industry or job fit with my long-term career goals? These are just some of the questions you can ask yourself.

If you are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ), there are additional issues to consider when it comes to your career. Are you in or "out"? Is the work environment safe and supportive? Can you be open and honest and still advance your career? If you are LGBTQ and beginning your job search, it is important to understand that the workplace can vary dramatically in terms of support and openness for LGBTQ employees. For UH students, the transition from college to a work environment may be a surprise as UH has active LGBTQ student groups, non-discrimination and harassment policies, and a supportive environment. Not every workplace will offer these same things.

## **Guideline #1: Do What is Comfortable**

Career experts advise that you do what is comfortable for you in your career decision-making and job search. In order to determine your comfort level, you may want to assess what is important for you in managing your career. Is being out part of who you are? If this is the case, then you may want to target LGBTQ friendly companies in order to ensure equal treatment and support. Do you consider sexual orientation to be one aspect of what defines you? Are you careful and selective about the people to whom you disclose? Then you may lean toward LGBTQ friendly

companies but remain flexible and open to all options. If you are not comfortable sharing information about yourself, and have disclosed your sexual orientation to only a few people, if anyone at all, then you may consider companies that provide a high degree of privacy. Once you have determined the comfort level that is right for you, begin to organize your job search.

## **Guideline #2: Research, Research, Research**

Researching an industry and employer is essential in your job search. Does the company offer domestic partner benefits? Does the company have a firmly enforced non-discrimination policy? Look at the policy language to see if it includes sexual preference and orientation.

There is no federal law that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation in the workplace; therefore, it might be important for you to find out which states prohibit employment discrimination based on sexual orientation. Visit the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) website at [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org). It is the number one resource for information with regard to industry and employers as well as current legislation advocating for the equal rights and benefits for LGBTQ Americans in the workplace. The HRC Corporate Equality Index (CEI) is an excellent resource for identifying LGBTQ friendly companies. The CEI rates companies on a number of different criteria, including non-discrimination policy, diversity training and benefits, gender identity or expression, domestic partner benefits, and formal or informal LGBTQ employee resource groups. You can research potential employers to determine the companies that might be a good fit for you.

UCS is also Silver Level Certified through OUT for Work and has access to OUT for Work's employer research library through *Featured Links* on the UCS website.

### **Guideline #3: Job Search Strategies**

A successful job search begins with a solid resume. Your resume is your first impression on paper. It is designed for you to obtain an invitation for an interview. For LGBTQ students who have participated in a number of gay-related activities, reflecting their experiences on their resume may present some difficulty. The skills that they have developed as a result of their activities will be of interest to an employer. As a LGBTQ job seeker, you must determine if you are comfortable being out in your resume. Consider your audience and weigh the pros and cons of including such information.

If you're not sure how to include this information in your resume, schedule an appointment with a UCS career counselor. A UCS career counselor can assist you by suggesting ways of highlighting your skills, and helping you to decide whether to downplay the nature of the organization(s) in which they were developed. You may decide that you wish to screen out unsupportive employers. If this is the case, you could highlight your membership and contributions in organizations whose mission centers around the needs and concerns of gay members.

### **Guideline #4: Coming Out on the Job**

Considering whether or not to come out on the job is a personal choice. Once on the job, assess your workplace culture for supportiveness. Consider the timing of when to come out. You may want to have a "trial run" with one or two coworkers that you trust. Perform at your best and build support. Coming out on the job can be challenging, but it can be done successfully.

Remember, do what is comfortable for you. Utilize all of your resources, including University Career Services. Research the industry and company to determine the right fit, and clarify your goals. Visit the Human Rights Campaign website to assist you. Putting all the pieces together will help you make choices that are good for you and your career.



### **Helpful Websites for LGBTQ Individuals:**

- UH LGBT Resource Center - [www.uh.edu/lgbt/index.php](http://www.uh.edu/lgbt/index.php)
- OUT for Work - [www.outforwork.org](http://www.outforwork.org)
- LGBT Switchboard: 24-hour Helpline - [www.gayswitchboardhouston.org/dir](http://www.gayswitchboardhouston.org/dir)
- GLAAD - [www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org)
- PFLAG - [www.community.pflag.org/Page.aspx?pid=194&srcid=-2](http://www.community.pflag.org/Page.aspx?pid=194&srcid=-2)
- The Pipeline Project - [www.lgbtpipeline.org](http://www.lgbtpipeline.org)
- It Gets Better - [www.itgetsbetter.org](http://www.itgetsbetter.org)
- National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals, Inc. - [www.noglstp.org](http://www.noglstp.org)
- Campus Pride - [www.campuspride.org](http://www.campuspride.org)

# From Combat to Campus to Career



For military members returning to Texas, many from a deployment overseas, the choice to transition back into civilian life may be the logical next step in their career. A big part of this transition often involves going back to college and seeking a degree.

There are approximately 1,200 student veterans currently enrolled at the University of Houston and enrollment continues to grow. Through military service, these individuals have earned a variety of education benefits. If you are a veteran returning to college, it is important to consider all of the educational benefits and resources available to you.

As a student veteran on campus, the transition from military life to student life may be quick but difficult as you navigate through the admission, registration, and career decision-making process. Knowing what to expect before you start can help make the process go more smoothly.

## What is a Veteran?

Title 38 U.S. Code 101 (2): The term "veteran" means a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

## What is a Disabled Veteran?

(A) A veteran who is entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs for a disability (i) rated at 30 percent or more, or (ii) rated at 10 percent or 20 percent in the case of a veteran who has been determined under Section 3016 of Title 38 U.S. Code to have a serious employment handicap; or (B) A person who was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.

## UH VETERANS SERVICES

The University of Houston's Veterans Services Office (UH VSO) is one of eleven university programs in the United States that provides essential resources to student veterans and their families to help make their college experience a successful one. UH's program is the only one of its kind in the region.

Prospective veteran students can review the important steps needed to prepare for the admission process from the Office of Admissions website. In addition to admission assistance, this office provides other services including:

- Assistance with course registration
- Information about compensation through the G.I. Bill
- Loan programs
- Scholarship research
- College Work-Study employment
- Various workshops and seminars

The UH VSO also connects students to valuable campus services such as Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS), University Career Services (UCS), Center for Students with DisABILITIES (CSD), Learning Support Services (LSS), and more. Visit the UH VSO website at [www.uh.edu/veterans](http://www.uh.edu/veterans) for more information.

## MILITARY LIFE TO COLLEGE LIFE

Student veterans often face a unique set of issues as they adjust to life on campus. For those student veterans with many years of military service, it may take longer to relearn academic habits and study skills. In addition, veterans may become more easily frustrated with the less structured academic environment as the disciplined routine of military life no longer exists.

Some veterans may feel their responsibilities as a student are less important, which may lead to a lack of effort or involvement. Decisions about keeping up with class assignments and exams may seem insignificant to the decisions they may have made while in the military. Student veterans may feel alienated when people may not understand the difficulties military members faced or the challenges involved.



Student veterans can begin to tackle these issues by starting slowly.

- Take just a few courses your first semester.
- Consider taking a variety of courses that tap into different interests and skills.
- Utilize the organizational and time management skills learned in the military to structure study time and complete assignments.
- Participate in student activities or join student groups such as the Veterans Collegiate Society at UH as a way to connect with other students and the larger campus community.
- Recognize that others may not agree with or understand the challenges of military service.

## FROM CAMPUS TO CAREER

As a student veteran you may not know how to translate your military experience into civilian experience. If you are not sure how to adapt your military background into civilian terms, visit [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org) and click on the *Attn: Veterans* link. This tool will translate your military assignment into a civilian occupation that helps identify transferable skills.

University Career Services offers a wide range of programs and services to help you reach your career goals. Schedule an appointment with a UCS career counselor to help you develop a civilian friendly resume that will help market your military skills. Search, submit applications, and participate in internships to apply your academic skills and gain valuable experience in a civilian role. For more information, visit the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu).

Many organizations want to hire veterans! Some job search resources specific to veterans include:

- U.S. Office of Personnel Management's Government-wide Veterans Employment: [www.fedshirevets.gov](http://www.fedshirevets.gov)
- G.I. Jobs: [www.gijobs.com](http://www.gijobs.com)
- U.S. Department of Labor Veteran's Employment and Training Service: [www.dol.gov/vets](http://www.dol.gov/vets)
- Hire Veterans: [www.HireVeterans.com](http://www.HireVeterans.com)
- Hire a Hero: [www.hireahero.org](http://www.hireahero.org)
- Hire Heroes USA: [www.hireheroesusa.org](http://www.hireheroesusa.org)
- Military Connection: [www.militaryconnection.com/hire-vets.asp](http://www.militaryconnection.com/hire-vets.asp)
- Troops to Teachers: [www.proudtoserveagain.com](http://www.proudtoserveagain.com)
- Helmets to Hardhats: [www.helmetstohardhats.org](http://www.helmetstohardhats.org)
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: [www.houston.va.gov](http://www.houston.va.gov)
- USA Jobs: [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)
- The Riley Guide: [www.rileyguide.com/vets.html](http://www.rileyguide.com/vets.html)
- Military.com: [www.military.com](http://www.military.com)

# How to Handle Rejection in a Job Search

Even if you are told, "No, thanks" by many employers in a row, you can land a great job if you are persistent, focused, and resilient!



For many students, a job search is the first time in their lives when they encounter repeated rejection while pursuing something important. While it can be disheartening to get a 'thanks but no thanks' letter – or no response at all – how you handle the rejection will have a big impact on your future job search success.

Finding the right job is a journey and a process. Learning to deal with job search rejection is an important developmental task that most people must master to have a successful career. Here are some tips to help you gracefully handle rejection when seeking the right job for you.

## DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY - IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU

This sounds obvious but can be challenging to remember when you are the one being rejected. The decision not to hire you may be due to factors such as: the company decided to hire an internal candidate, maybe your qualifications, though impressive, didn't match the company's specific criteria, or your style wasn't a match for the company's culture. For these and a number of other reasons beyond your control, the decision has nothing to do with you. Just because you may not have been the perfect match doesn't mean that you're not an outstanding professional with excellent attributes and skills.

## STOP AND TAKE TIME TO EVALUATE YOUR JOB SEARCH

If you are having difficulty in determining why you aren't getting an interview or a job offer, take some time to evaluate all aspects of your job search and interview process.

If you applied for a position, but weren't selected for an interview, reflect on what you did during the job search process.

- Did you fill out the company's application completely and correctly, or did you make any mistakes?
- Did you target your resume to show how your skills and accomplishments are a fit for the job?
- Did you target your cover letter to clearly show that you possess the desired skills, experience, and knowledge to do the job?
- Did your qualifications match with the requirements in the job description?

If you thought the interview went well, but you received a rejection letter or didn't hear back from the employer, what could you do differently in the next interview?

- Did you have the qualifications and experience the employer is looking for?
- Did you dress appropriately and make a good first impression?
- Did you show up for the interview early or were you late?
- Did you prepare for the interview by researching the company, practicing answers to interview questions, and formulating questions to ask the interviewer?

- Did you provide specific examples of how your skills and experience are a fit for the job, or did you fail to elaborate?
- Did you clearly express your interest in the job if you were truly interested?
- Did you follow-up with a thank you letter?
- Are you really sure you wanted the job?

By asking questions like these, you can learn from each application and each interview experience. In cases where you don't have any information about why a company hired a different candidate instead of you, let it go and move on to the next opportunity.

## KEEP YOUR JOB SEARCH MOVING AHEAD

Do not use rejection as an excuse to stop working on your job search. Instead, use rejection as a chance to apply for different jobs, interview, and go through the entire job search process as a way to improve your skills every step of the way.

If you stop looking, and wait to hear about a potential job offer, you can lose valuable momentum in your job search. You should not stop your search until you have received and accepted the right job offer. Always keep exploring possible jobs that are a fit with your interests and career goals.

Stay in touch with your network, and keep them up-to-date on your job search progress. Ask them for advice on what you could do differently, or if they have any recommendations on who you could contact for a potential job lead.

If you feel stuck and need help to evaluate what steps to take next, make an appointment with a UCS career counselor. We can provide you with job search techniques, mock interviews to improve your interview skills, critique your resume to highlight your strengths, etc.

## TRUST THAT THE RIGHT JOB IS OUT THERE FOR YOU

Another way to look at job search rejection is that it could be a good thing in the long run. If the company didn't think you were the right candidate for the job, it may have not been the best fit for you. As the saying goes, when one door closes, another one opens. Often, that second door leads to a better job and company than the first one might have been. Things happen for a reason, and maybe the job rejection you just received wasn't your dream job after all.

Have faith in yourself and in your abilities. Think about the rejection as a possible opportunity to do something entirely different, for example, pursue a lifelong passion to start your own business.

Visualize the day you accept your new job. Imagine yourself happy, confident, and peaceful about your job choice. Think about making a contribution to your new employer and taking the next steps to achieve success in your new career. Imagination and visualization are powerful parts of the human mind; use them to your advantage!

## BE THE CEO OF YOUR LIFE

Consider your job search as if it were a business.

Imagine that your life is a privately-owned business, and that you are the CEO (Chief Executive Officer). As the CEO, you have ultimate control of how your mission, vision, and strategic plans are created and carried out. You make all of the decisions, and everything starts and stops with you. You are solely responsible for the success or lack of success of your business.

As the CEO, do you have a vision of what your company should look like now and in the future? What are your short- and long-term goals? Are you actively seeking investors who can provide guidance in developing your company?

Effective CEOs take the time to clarify what they truly want for their company. If you don't have a vision, sit down and create one right now.

Also, fight against a negative mindset of fear, self-doubt, and what could or couldn't be possible. Instead, focus on what could be. Stay motivated, positive, optimistic, and keep moving forward all the while believing in yourself. Today could be the beginning of an incredible turn-around for your company.

"Nobody owes you a career. Your career is literally your business. You own it as a sole proprietor. You have one employee: yourself. You need to accept ownership of your career, your skills, and the timing of your moves." – Andrew Grove, Co-founder, Intel Corp.

## TIPS FOR STAYING MOTIVATED DURING YOUR SEARCH

### Focus On Your Goals

- Stay focused on what you really want – a job that matches your career interests, skills, and values.

### Visualize Your Goals

- Designate a place in your home where you can post reminders: a dream job list that includes everything you'd like in a job and in the company; a picture that represents the job you'd like to have and you can see yourself doing; and a motivational quote that inspires you.

### Establish a Plan of Action Each Day

- Finding a job can be a job in itself. Therefore, treat your job search as your job, and establish "office hours" where you go to work on finding the right job for you.
- Break large tasks down into smaller, more manageable tasks. For example, create a list of calls to make, research a specific company, set up an informational interview, etc.
- Make progress, no matter how small, to feel a sense of accomplishment and to fuel your motivation.
- Avoid the procrastination trap! Do what you should be doing every day.

- Work hard to get positive results, which will lead to greater motivation.
- If you feel worried or stuck, take some kind of action. Research a new company, make direct contact with another employer, tell another person about your job search goals, read something about your career field, make an appointment with a UCS career counselor for guidance.
- Take advantage of the other job search resources available at UCS: workshops, handouts, online resources such as Vault's Career Insider and the Houston Business Journal, career fairs, etc.

### Your Best Defense: A Positive Attitude

- Keep a positive attitude as employers seek candidates who can make a positive impact in their organization.
- Create a list of impressive skills and experience you have to offer an employer, and review this list every day.
- Like a car needs gas to run, fuel your mind with positive thoughts and actions every day.
- Be persistent, practice patience, and remain positive.
- Turn off the news as 80 percent of the news is negative, and could potentially rob you of your positive attitude.

### Reinvent Yourself

- Learn a new skill, or improve a skill that you already have in order to increase your marketability. For example, learn how to effectively use PowerPoint to create professional presentations.
- Take a part-time job or internship that could potentially lead to a full-time position, and that will help with your financial needs in the interim.
- Take time for personal development and determine an area that needs improvement, such as improving your writing skills.

## Seek Out Sources of Inspiration

- Read biographies of successful people who overcame great challenges against tough odds. These people can be athletes, entertainers, company CEOs or presidents, politicians, scientists, religious leaders, etc.
- Follow blogs that will provide positive ideas or maybe even start your own.
- Read motivational books and listen to podcasts that are encouraging and inspiring, and that will boost your confidence and motivation.
- Create a list of your favorite motivational quotes that inspire you and read them often.
- Listen to uplifting music that you enjoy.

## Surround Yourself with a Social Support System

- Line up all the emotional bolstering you can because a job search can be tough on the ego.
- Spend time with supportive family and friends who will support you and hold you accountable for your progress. Surround yourself with positive and motivational people.
- Stay away from negative people who could hinder your job search – people who are critical and anxious about your job search, and may ask questions regarding your job search in ways that just make you feel worse.
- Find mentors and advisors (in or out of your career field) who can encourage and guide you. Professional associations may be a good place to start.
- Sometimes the best sources of support are people who already navigated their own tough job search and landed a great job at the end of it. Let these people share with you how they did it and learn from them.

## Expand Your Network

- Conduct informational interviews to learn about specific careers and to gain insight into unadvertised employment opportunities.

- Join LinkedIn Groups to build your professional network and to connect with individuals with similar interests. You can also use LinkedIn to research companies and industries, and to find potential job leads.
- Network with UH Alumni by joining the UH Alumni Association.

## Maintain Good Health

- Get seven to eight hours of sleep a night to increase your focus.
- Eat healthy snacks and meals to increase your energy.
- Exercise is a great way to channel stress and to generate energy to keep you going. Find ways to exercise that best fit your lifestyle, for example, playing sports, cycling, weight lifting, walking, and yoga; also keep fit through simple tasks such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator.

## Creativity and Hobbies

- Join a professional organization in your field and/or your interests.
- Use your creativity to boost your energy through avenues such as photography, scrapbooking, drawing, painting, poetry, writing, and blogging.
- Volunteer your skills in your community at your local church, a nonprofit organization, and/or events in your neighborhood.
- Don't neglect hobbies that you already enjoy (video games, watching old movies, etc.). Taking time for relaxation will renew your energy.

## Reward Yourself

- Create a list of mini-rewards and progressively better rewards to match the accomplishments you achieve.
- Take short breaks periodically to refuel your mind and body.

*"When something bad happens you have three choices; you can let it define you, let it destroy you, or you can let it strengthen you."*

*Unknown*

## REJECTION AND SUCCESS

We can all learn from others who have struggled, encountered setbacks again and again, yet never gave up. Here is a story of Christine Ha, a fellow Coog, and the obstacles she overcame to be crowned a MasterChef.

Christine lived in Lakewood and Long Beach, California as a child before her family moved to Houston, Texas. She received a Master of Fine Arts degree for creative fiction/nonfiction at the University of Houston's Creative Writing Program in 2012, and a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Finance/MIS from the University of Texas at Austin in 2001.

She received the editor's poetry prize from The ScissorTale Review, and she was a finalist in the 2010 Creative Nonfiction MFA Program-Off contest. She also serves as the Fiction Editor for "Gulf Coast: A Journal of Literature and Fine Arts," a literary and visual arts magazine (Houston, Texas). In addition, her work has appeared in "Fire Point" and "PANK Magazine" among others.

Christine suffers from a medical condition called neuromyelitis optica (NMO), an autoimmune disorder that affects the optic nerves and spinal cord. She was diagnosed in 2003, and was almost completely blind by 2007. She describes her vision "as looking at a very foggy mirror after a hot shower."

Christine did not grow up with a passion for cooking, and had to learn how to cook when she went to college. As she experimented with different recipes, she started inviting friends over to eat and soon realized she enjoyed cooking for other people. From that point on, cooking became a big part of her life.

Although Christine doesn't have professional culinary training, she didn't want to let her blindness keep her from following her dreams. She started her own blog, [www.theblindcook.com](http://www.theblindcook.com), which is how she was discovered.

During Season 3 of the cooking show "MasterChef," Christine competed with about 100 other chefs. On the

show, contestants were judged by three tough judges of food and culinary talent, which included Chef Gordon Ramsey, food critic Joe Bastianich, and Chef Graham Elliot. Christine's favorite part of cooking is the presentation of food. Because she wasn't born blind, she remembers colors and visualizes what is on the plate and what garnishes to include that will create a good presentation. Throughout each show, Christine felt, "I couldn't see what anyone else was doing, I was solely focused on myself, and I think that helped me. It gave me an advantage," she said. "When I came out of it, it was most stressful intense experience of my life, it was amazing."

During the season finale of "MasterChef," Christine was awarded the title of MasterChef, and she won the \$250,000 grand prize and a cookbook deal. Christine's dream of publishing a cookbook is now a reality, and the title of her new cookbook is [Christine Ha Recipes from My Home Kitchen: Asian and American Comfort Food](#).

As Christine looks to her next dream of opening her own ice cream store and a pub, she gives the following advice, "I just want people to realize that they have it in themselves if they really want to," she said. "If they have that passion, that fire, that drive, that desire... you can overcome any obstacle and any challenges to really achieve what you want and prove yourself to the world. Everyone is very capable. Much more capable than they think they are."



Photo Credit: Greg Gayne / FOX

# Evaluating and Negotiating Job Offers

**Congratulations!  
You've received a job offer –  
or offers. Now what?**



## EVALUATING WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT

**S**alary should **not** be the sole factor in accepting a job offer.

The first step in evaluating a job offer is to identify and create a list of your life and work values. Once you have created this list, prioritize each value and use this ranking in your job evaluation. Some factors to consider:

### THE COMPANY

- Organization's business
- History
- Reputation and image
- Organization's competitors
- Corporate culture and values
- Organization's viewpoint of its customers
- Financial standing and security of organization
- Current and future growth potential
- Current and future products/services
- Number of offices and locations (global)
- International exposure
- Priorities (company and employees)
- Technological innovation
- Quality of products/services
- Community involvement
- Staff turnover rate

### THE POSITION

- Scope of work, tasks, and responsibilities
- Task or project oriented
- Level of job challenge
- Teamwork or independent work

- New or established position
- Level of pressure and pace of work
- Level of independence
- Supervision/leadership role
- Advancement opportunities
- Transferability of skills in 2 – 3 years
- Working conditions
- Travel/relocation requirements
- Social significance of job
- Work hours stated and expected
- Overtime requirements (how often)
- Operating budget and/or expense account
- Work schedule options (flexible schedule)

### WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Quality of facilities and surrounding area
- Your office space
- Working conditions
- Dress code/attire
- Employee morale

### SUPERVISOR AND COWORKERS

- Personality of potential supervisor and coworkers
- Management style of the organization and supervisor
- Mentor program
- Evaluation process (how often, impact on raises)

### SALARY

- Beginning rate and range
- Your personal bottom line/budget
- First payday (how often)
- Salary growth potential
- Sign-on and other bonuses

## BENEFITS TO CONSIDER

- Paid vacation/holidays
- Sick and personal leave
- Retirement/401K plan (transferable if you leave)
- Stock options
- Incentive savings
- Medical insurance
- Life insurance
- Dental and vision insurance
- Disability insurance (short and long-term)
- Tuition reimbursement
- Workplace flexibility policies
- Commuting and parking expenses
- Moving and relocation costs
- Child care expenses/daycare
- Maternity/paternity leave
- Recreation facilities

## THE LOCATION AND LIFESTYLE

- Geographic location
- Cost of living
- Climate
- Metropolitan vs. rural community
- Appeal of city or town
- Major sources of employment for area
- Proximity to graduate schools
- Proximity to family and friends
- Commuting distance and costs
- Recreational/cultural opportunities
- Employment opportunities for spouse
- Housing accommodations
- School districts

## ADDITIONAL FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- How will the size of the company affect you?
- Does it make a difference if the company is public or private?
- Is there a preference between a small business or a large corporation?
- Will the nature of the position fit with your short and long-term career goals?
- Does the work match your interests and does it make good use of your talents and skills?
- What is the importance of this position in this organization?
- Are professional goals encouraged?

## WEIGHING THE FACTS

Weigh each offer against the other by listing the most important job factors from the list above in a chart like the one on the following page. Then, in the "Your Needs" column, rate the factors on a scale of one to ten (one = least important to ten = most important). Next, on the same one to ten scale, rate how each company matches with your priority factors. Finally, total all of the scores from "Your Needs" column for each company. The company with the highest score is the one that matches your job needs the closest.



<b>Priority Factors</b>	<b>Your Needs</b>	<b>Company A</b>	<b>Company B</b>	<b>Company C</b>

After weighing all the factors and two jobs are equal, ask yourself what truly matters the most to you. Decide which offer best fits your interests and career goals in the long run. Talk with someone who can help you evaluate which offer is best for you: a UCS career counselor, a faculty member or professor, parent, friend, etc. But, remember the final decision is up to you!

## **NEGOTIATING JOB OFFERS STEP 1: ANALYZE**

### **BEFORE BEGINNING THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS**

- Determine the factor(s) you feel are necessary to negotiate.
- If the issue(s) can be settled, be prepared to accept the offer.
- Research salary ranges for the position and industry.
- If the position and benefits offered match your own requirements, don't negotiate if you don't have to.

### **KNOW YOUR VALUE**

- Evaluate salary information
- Research the job market and its future job outlook
- Research industry trends and its future growth areas
- Know your value and consider your skills and experience
- If relocation is required, who will cover these costs?

### **SALARY FACTORS TO CONSIDER**

- Establish a budget and assess what salary range is acceptable in meeting your financial obligations
- The cost of living difference, if moving to another city

- Benefits
- Beginning salary rate and range
- Start date
- First payday and how often you will be paid
- Sign-on or other bonuses
- Incentive pay or profit sharing options
- Salary growth potential
- Evaluation and promotion process

When evaluating salary requirements, be sure to also examine the company's benefits as part of the overall compensation package.

## **NEGOTIATING JOB OFFERS STEP 2: STRATEGIZE**

### **WHEN TO NEGOTIATE**

- Do not bring up salary requirements during the initial interview.
- Let the employer bring up salary first; try to avoid this discussion until the employer feels you are the right candidate.
- Don't discuss salary until you receive the offer, but before you accept the position.
- Don't accept an offer on the spot; instead, negotiate a date you will give the employer your decision. Then carefully evaluate all aspects of the offer, and seek the opinion of professors, advisors, family, friends, UCS career counselors, etc.

### **PLAN AHEAD ON WHAT TO SAY AND PRACTICE**

- Never state a single salary figure in the beginning.
- Be prepared and have a salary range in mind as this will give you more room to negotiate but be realistic.
- Be prepared to back up this salary range with specific information on the labor market and job type.



## NEED ADDITIONAL TIME TO MAKE A DECISION?

- Take the time you were given to carefully evaluate the offer. Does the position meet your career interests and goals?
- If you are unable to make a decision, or are waiting to hear about other pending offers, contact the employer for an extension as soon as possible. Be prepared to give a concrete reason for requesting an extension. If you need help with how to phrase this request, visit with a UCS career counselor.
- Ensure the employer this is an important decision, and that you want to find the right fit.
- Be sure to follow-up on the agreed extension date to give the employer your final decision, and also be prepared to make and stand by that decision.
- If given an offer from a company that is not your first choice, and you haven't heard back from your first choice, don't be afraid to reach out to gain an idea of when they will make their final decisions. This way you can ask for a sufficient amount of time to deliberate your next steps.

## NEGOTIATING JOB OFFERS THE FINAL STEPS

### GET THE OFFER IN WRITING

This letter should include all of the terms and conditions of the position: salary, start date and time, location, benefits, a thorough job description, etc.

### ACCEPTING AN OFFER

- It is important to verbally accept the offer over the phone; contact the employer by the agreed upon date.
- When you accept an offer, follow-up with a written acceptance letter.
- Call any employers you have pending offers with, tactfully decline the offer, and follow-up with a withdrawal letter.
- Cancel any scheduled interviews (on and off-campus) along with on-site visits.
- Once you've accepted a job offer, you have made a commitment to your future company. At this point, your job search should cease. It is unprofessional to keep looking for that "better" offer!

## NEGOTIATING JOB OFFERS STEP 3: NEGOTIATE

### FACTORS THAT MAY BE NEGOTIATED

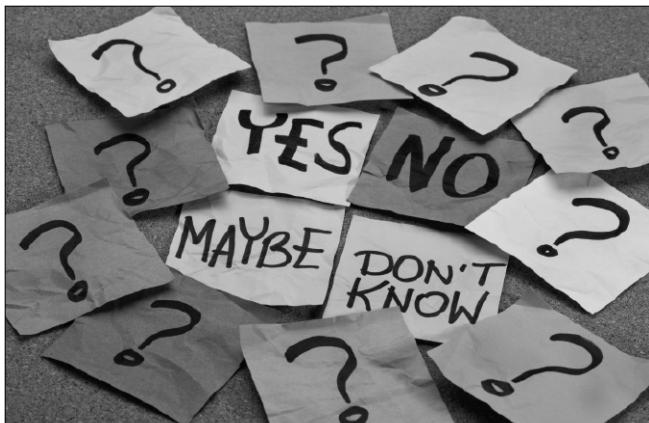
Here are a few factors that may be negotiated: salary to a certain limit, location of position along with the division or department, reporting date, appraisal reviews, relocation expenses, and sign-on bonuses.

### NEGOTIATING THE OFFER

- Define your conditions and the minimum you will accept from an offer.
- Bring salary data collected during your research; quantify and be able to justify your value.
- Negotiate with one organization at a time; spend your time and energy on your first choice.
- Maintain professionalism during the process.
- Listen to the employer's issues and find a common ground.
- When the final offer is made, be prepared to make a decision.

### MAKING THE RIGHT DECISION

- Consider your individual needs and goals: does the position match your interests, values, skills, etc.?
- Discuss family goals: will your family needs and lifestyle preferences be met?
- Career goals: does the position fit in with your short and long-term goals?
- Finally, evaluate each offer with the same set of factors to determine which position is the best fit for you.



## DO NOT REVOKE AN ACCEPTED OFFER!

You will burn bridges, and take the risk of not being considered for future positions in that organization. Also, employers have contacts within their field and are willing to share this information.

## DECLINING AN OFFER

- Verbally inform the employer of your decision; express your appreciation for the offer and for their time during the interview process.
- Follow-up by writing a withdrawal letter declining the offer, and keep things positive to avoid closing the door on the possibility of working with the company in the future.

# Tip

## Evaluating the Total Compensation Package

- When evaluating a salary offer, consider the relative terms of the total compensation package, which includes pay, benefits, and intangibles.
- Tangible pay and benefit factors should include the cost of living.
- Intangible pay and benefit factors could include type of work, organizational culture, and promotion/pay increase opportunities.
- Negotiating salary and benefits requires up-front planning, preparation, and establishing your goals. What is your bottom line?

## SOURCES OF SALARY INFORMATION

- Review the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Salary Survey available at UCS
- Trade and professional association surveys
- Full-time job listings
- Business and trade journals
- Professionals in related career fields

## SALARY WEB RESOURCES

- CareerOneStop:  
[www.careeronestop.com](http://www.careeronestop.com)  
Wages and trends by occupation, industry, state
- CollegeGrad.com:  
[www.collegegrad.com/salaries](http://www.collegegrad.com/salaries)  
Salary calculator, negotiation tips, cost of living
- Sperling's Best Place:  
[www.bestplaces.net/col/default.aspx](http://www.bestplaces.net/col/default.aspx)  
Compare two cities side by side
- HomeFair:  
[www.homefair.com](http://www.homefair.com)  
Salary calculator, city and school reports, cost of living
- JobStar:  
[www.jobstar.org](http://www.jobstar.org)  
Collection of salary surveys
- PayScale:  
[www.payscale.com](http://www.payscale.com)  
Salary reports based on job title, experience, and location
- The Riley Guide:  
[www.rileyguide.com/salguides.html](http://www.rileyguide.com/salguides.html)  
Salary guides, evaluating salary data
- U.S. Department of Labor – Bureau of Labor Statistics:  
[www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm](http://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm)  
Geographical, occupation, industry data
- Salary.com:  
[www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com)  
US Salary Wizard, benefits calculator

# Destination Relocation



For many students, once college graduation is over and the dust settles, there's the unanswered question, "what next?"

There are countless directions a college grad can take; whether it's going on to grad school, getting that first professional job, moving home, volunteering, or traveling. For some, relocating is the best option. It can be across town, across the U.S., or even across the globe. In some areas of the country, the job market has been slow to recover, especially for eager college grads wanting to get started in the real world. Fortunately, there are other regions of the U.S. where hiring is on the upswing and there are plenty of opportunities just waiting for hungry new college grads.

What's next? You have the ambition to dive into the unknown, uproot your life and relocate to another area; say another state. What do you need to know? What should you do first?

## WHERE DO YOU BEGIN?

First, research your destination. Learn what it's like to live there. What is the cost of living? Do you need a car to get around? What areas are best to live in? What is the economy and the job market like? What is the weather like? Could you easily adapt to this new environment and way of living?

Secondly, take a very close look at your finances; do you have enough money to move and live on your own? Do you have a connection in this new place? Do you have family or friends who will let you stay with them until you get established? Estimate a monthly budget. How much will it cost you to live and eat, pay taxes, commute, and entertainment? Once you have an estimate, you'll know how much money you'll need to make each month to live on, splurge on a hobby, take a vacation, or to build up your savings.

## FINDING A JOB

Thirdly, network. Ideally, you want to line up a job before you move to a new location. Your next step is to reach out to companies and employers in the area where you plan to move. Start by applying and completing their online applications for jobs that interest you.

Securing a job in a new city is very challenging. It can be overwhelming, intimidating, and slow-moving. Ask yourself: What are your career goals? Do you have a passion that could lead you to a job opportunity? Do you have a connection with people or companies at your new destination? How qualified are you? What are your skills and experiences? Essentially, evaluate how you can market yourself to potential employers. Finding a job you really want depends on the job market in the area. One reason why relocating for a job is attractive to recent college grads is the plentiful opportunities in other cities. Keep in mind, some employers may be more interested in hiring local candidates to avoid paying for relocation costs. Sometimes, it may be better to move first, and then contact local employers. If this is not an option, this process might take more time. All in all, stay optimistic, and keep applying and establishing relationships.

## MAKING THE MOVE

Finally, it's time to do that hardest thing of all: relocate. Pack up your car, hire a moving service, or recruit friends and family to help you move. If you decided to rent an apartment, many apartment complexes will secure your lease and accept payment over the phone; therefore, you can move in when you arrive. Once you arrive at your new destination, start getting acquainted with the area and your new life. This is a big step!

Take time to think about relocation. If you can accept the change that comes with living in a new area, put yourself out there and see how many new opportunities come your way! This is an exciting time filled with new opportunities, new connections, and new experiences. You never know, your dream job just may be located in a whole new destination.

# Off to a Good Start!

## What to Do in the First 90 Days at a New Job



Many college graduates are busy focusing on landing their first job and neglect to plan for success once they land it. Here are some strategies to help you lay a solid foundation for an effective and rewarding career:

- **Realize that many of your accomplishments will involve other people.** Therefore, spend the first month devoting a significant amount of time building professional relationships. Take the time to really listen to what your supervisor and colleagues are saying about your new work environment and processes. Be especially alert as they tell you what they are hoping you will achieve in your new role.
- **Honor individual differences.** Some people like to use the phone or email, and others favor face-to-face communication. If you are observant, you can figure out these personality quirks and use them to help others feel more comfortable.
- **Resist the urge to critique everything about how the organization is currently functioning.** You were likely hired for your fresh perspective and eagerness to make a difference, but don't be the annoying new hire who enjoys telling everyone how inadequate their current efforts are. When current team members complain about flaws in the organization, resist the urge to join in. As the new kid on the block, you are at risk for seeming negative if you complain too much, even when others are participating in these conversations.
- **Try to find at least one early win.** You want to have a reputation as someone who gets things done. Consequently, look for an opportunity to get quantifiable or measureable results in an area where you are clearly the main person responsible for the project. Try to find something to do that is highly valued by your supervisor and your immediate team. However, remember to proceed cautiously when choosing what to tackle because you don't want to aim too high and set yourself up for failure.

- Never assume that you know what the priorities for your position are until you have arrived at a mutually agreed upon consensus with your supervisor. Ideally, you will have written performance objectives with a timeline, ranked according to importance. If your supervisor doesn't seem to know this information or doesn't have it, help him or her to create it. Do it cheerfully and without any hint of blame that your supervisor currently lacks clarity about what he or she wants you to do.
- Halfway through your first 90 days, check in with your supervisor to see how he or she thinks you are doing. If the feedback is vague (as in, "You're doing OK"), ask some more specific questions. For example, "On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being best, what number would you give my performance thus far?", "What am I doing currently that you want me to keep doing?", or "If you had to name one thing I could be doing better, what would it be?"
- Keep networking and stay current in your field. You'll be a more valuable employee if you are connected and your skills are up-to-date.

And finally, have fun! You earned this place in the organization, enjoy it!



# To Go or Not to Go: Is Graduate School Right For You?

## WHY ATTEND GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL?

Graduate study requires a significant commitment of time and money. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the average student debt, including undergraduate loans, tops \$40,000 for master's degree students, \$55,000 for doctoral degree students, and \$90,000 for professional degree students.

Before spending this kind of money and the time it takes to complete a graduate program, you should first contemplate and clarify your career goals. You will want to know about the working conditions, employment outlook, earning potential, and specific requirements of the field you plan to pursue. You also want to know about the demands of the programs for which you are interested in applying. Knowing this information will help you find a good match based on your skills, interests, goals, values, and needs.

Graduate degrees are usually either academic or professional in nature. Academic degrees focus on original research, while professional degrees focus on practical application of particular knowledge and skills. Masters degrees take anywhere from one to three years to complete, and a Ph.D. will usually take an additional four to seven years to complete. For many fields, a master's degree is sufficient for employment; examples include the Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) and the Master of Social Work (M.S.W.). For other fields such as medicine (M.D.), law (J.D.), or teaching at the college level (Ph.D.), a doctorate is necessary. Once you have determined that you want to pursue graduate study, you will want to start researching your options.

As you research choices for graduate school, consider the following questions:

- What are my short-term and long-term career goals? UCS career counselors can help you identify these goals if they are unclear.
- Is graduate school necessary for me to achieve these goals?



- In my field, is it easier to attend graduate school directly after receiving my undergraduate degree, or would I benefit from a couple of years of work experience?
- What is the cost of graduate school; direct (tuition) and indirect (loss of possible earnings)?
- At present, do I have other needs that conflict with pursuing a graduate degree?
- Will my job and salary prospects be enhanced by graduate studies?
- Are there employers who would assist in paying for graduate school?

## WHY SHOULD YOU NOT ATTEND GRADUATE SCHOOL?

There are many reasons to attend a graduate school; however, here are some reasons why graduate school might not be a good option for you:

- Uncertain about your career goals or career direction
- Fear that you will not be able to find a job
- Desire to get rich quick
- Burned out with school and studying
- Other obligations or priorities in your life that will keep you from being able to invest in your graduate studies

Still confused about whether or not you should attend graduate school? You may want to meet with a UCS career counselor to clarify your goals and find out what your options are. They have a wealth of tools and information that can help you make a decision that is right for you.

# **WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING A GRADUATE SCHOOL**

If you decide to make the commitment to go to graduate school, here are a few factors to consider when selecting a program that fits your interests and career goals:

## **Ranking and Reputation:**

- Reputation of the program and the school
- Check U.S. News and World Report and Gourman Report
- Accreditations and rankings

## **The Cost (in addition to tuition and books):**

- Financial aid resources
- Cost of living
- Available fellowships, research assistantships, and teaching assistantships

## **Faculty:**

- Student to faculty ratio
- Published faculty
- Diversity of faculty
- Teaching or research focus
- Advisors – personality and professional interests

## **Location and Size:**

- Large vs. small
- Urban or suburban
- Resources and facilities nearby

## **Campus Life:**

- Organizations and associations – student and professional chapters
- Housing facilities – dorms vs. apartments
- Campus activities

## **Quality of Resources and Facilities:**

- Libraries and other resources
- Computer labs
- Classrooms, labs, and equipment

## **Student Services:**

- Career services assistance
- Career opportunities for graduates

# **THE APPLICATION PROCESS: HOW UCS CAN HELP**

Now that you have made the decision to apply for graduate school, you will need to work on creating a strong application package. Your goal is to present yourself as a well prepared and well qualified candidate. It is important that you put the necessary time and energy into your application materials.

In addition to application forms, transcripts, and letters of recommendation, you might be required to submit a personal statement and/or participate in an interview.

## **Personal Statements:**

This essay is an extremely important part of your application! You might be wondering, "What is a personal statement exactly? Why do I have to write one? What should I include?" A purposeful, concise, and focused essay, the personal statement allows the reader to get to know you better, aside from your transcript, admission test scores, and letters of recommendation. The personal statement is just that, personal, and serves to demonstrate that you possess qualities that are strong predictors of success.

A compelling statement should convince the reader that you will thrive in that program and will make positive contributions to the academic community. By providing insight into your interests in the program, your motivations, and your academic/career ambitions, the admissions committee can determine if the graduate program aligns with your interests and goals, and whether or not you will be a good fit for that specific program.

<b>Your personal statement IS a(n)...</b>	<b>Your personal statement is NOT a(n)...</b>
Picture of who you are as a person	Academic paper about your life
Invitation to get to know you	Narrative of your accomplishments
Story of your self-reflection	Journal entry
Indication of your priorities/choices	Plea or justification for admission

### **Before you begin:**

- Ask yourself: What is your overall personal or professional aspiration?
- Why do you want to attend graduate school and this program in particular?
- What makes you an asset to the program? What are your unique strengths and characteristics?
- What is the application process? (Read application instructions carefully.)

### **Writing tips:**

- Follow instructions!
- Incorporate an organizing theme
- Write concisely with purpose and focus
- Highlight your uniqueness
- Use details and concrete examples wherever relevant – show, don't tell!
- Vary your sentence structure and use transitions
- Use active voice verbs for clarity
- Get feedback from people you trust (especially your recommenders)
- Proofread and revise, revise, revise!

Would you like to make an appointment for a personal statement review? A UCS career counselor can give you helpful feedback about your essay. To schedule an appointment, visit the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu).

### **Interviews:**

Some programs will require an interview as part of the admissions process. This can be especially helpful for candidates whose GPA, application, or personal statement may not best represent their capabilities. An interview is a great opportunity for you not only to find out more about the school, but also for you to highlight your unique attributes and your knowledge of the school/program. Admissions committees will want you to present yourself as a motivated, committed, and confident applicant. The key to success is preparing by knowing yourself and your motivations. Before the interview:

- Assess yourself: why do you want to enter this program/career field?
- Know your motivations, opinions, strengths, weaknesses, values, and goals.
- Reflect on your past work and volunteer experiences: what did you learn?
- Research the school and the program: make yourself aware of the faculty's research, and about the program's philosophy and training objectives.
- Become familiar with any special facilities or research opportunities it has to offer.
- Learn the size of the department, the types of research and teaching interests of the faculty, and publications and affiliations of faculty members.

Schedule a mock interview with a UCS career counselor to learn how to market yourself and improve on your interviewing skills. To schedule an appointment, visit the UCS website at [www.career.uh.edu](http://www.career.uh.edu).

## **Portfolio management and credential files:**

UCS subscribes to Interfolio, a service provider that specializes in online storage and management of important application materials and work samples. A credential file is a collection of documents showing a job candidate's or graduate/professional school applicant's academic and professional credentials.

The Interfolio online service is an economical and convenient way for people to present and market themselves professionally. For example, a Ph.D. candidate can easily send academic credentials to a search committee, an undergraduate can send application materials to graduate and professional schools, or a teaching candidate can apply for a teaching position. Typically, a credential file will not be needed for a candidate applying to a position in business or industry. In these fields, letters of recommendation, if requested, are handled directly between the job candidates and the employer.

Interfolio allows you to build an online portfolio and/or a dossier. Complete files of all credentials include:

- Confidential letters of recommendation
- Resume and/or Curriculum Vitae
- Writing samples
- Dissertation abstract
- Supervising teacher evaluations
- Student and peer evaluations
- Transcripts - from all of your degrees



- Research presentations
- Work samples

## **What you get with an Interfolio subscription:**

- **Security:** Interfolio allows you to store all of your important files securely and make documents viewable, but not downloadable or available to be copied. Request or upload your most important documents and never lose an important file again.
- **Total Access Control:** Create a central place where your professional identity is represented online, and have control over how you look when a search committee or potential employer browses search engine results for your name.
- **Multimedia Portfolios:** Create a professional web presence that's richer and more dynamic than just a Curriculum Vitae or a resume. Build a portfolio that not only describes your work, but shows it with documents, videos, pictures, links, and text.
- **Targeted, Customized Deliveries:** You can specify a unique set of documents for each delivery, and you can specify the order in which your materials are packaged to make your presentation powerful and persuasive. You don't have to rely on others to make intelligent decisions about what documents are delivered on your behalf.
- **Trusted, Reliable Delivery:** Interfolio handles your documents securely and confidentially with the assurance of complete privacy. Plus, you can track each document's shipment online.
- **Low Cost:** Since you need only send one delivery to each position, you save money and headaches. It's cheaper to send a 30 page delivery through Interfolio than to make copies and mail them.

UCS career counselors serve UH students and alumni in the preparation and use of credential files. Visit the UCS website for more information. If you have any questions about your file, feel free to contact a UCS career counselor.

# Additional Career Services Centers

**Additional career assistance may be available within your particular college. Visit your college career center and speak with one of the following contacts for more assistance.**

## C.T. Bauer College of Business Rockwell Career Center

-  Cemo Hall, 2nd Floor
-  Jamie Belinne, Assistant Dean
-  832.842.6121
-  [jbelinne@uh.edu](mailto:jbelinne@uh.edu)
-  [www.bauer.uh.edu/career](http://www.bauer.uh.edu/career)

The mission of the Rockwell Career Center is to complement C.T. Bauer College undergraduate and graduate business students' experiences with professional development to help them attain successful and fulfilling business careers and increase the value of Bauer to the business community. It is our goal to offer 1:1 career counseling sessions with major-specific counselors, as well as workshops and other resources to facilitate the job search process. Also, we provide Bauer students the opportunities to network with alumni and potential employers through various events.

The Rockwell Career Center is located in Cemo Hall on the second floor. Hours of operation are 8:00am - 6:00pm Monday – Thursday, and Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm. Walk-in hours are available as well.

## College of Technology Career Services

-  108 Technology 1 Building
-  Cynthia Olmedo, Career Counselor
-  713.743.3545
-  [cemedo@uh.edu](mailto:cemedo@uh.edu)
-  [www.tech.uh.edu/College/Career Services](http://www.tech.uh.edu/College/Career%20Services)



The College of Technology Career Services is dedicated to providing services focusing on assisting with the preparation of our students for the world of work. It is our goal to offer career coaching sessions, seminars, and resources to facilitate the job search process. Also, we provide our students opportunities to network with alumni and potential employers through our bi-annual career fair, as well as other college events held.

## Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management Career Placement Services

-  Conrad N. Hilton College, S108
-  Lori Osborn, Director
-  Placement Services
-  713.743.2423
-  [lgosborn@uh.edu](mailto:lgosborn@uh.edu)
-  [www.hrm.uh.edu/CAREER-CONNECTIONS/Career-Placement-Services/](http://www.hrm.uh.edu/CAREER-CONNECTIONS/Career-Placement-Services/)

The Conrad N. Hilton College Career Placement Services Office provides assistance to all Hotel and Restaurant Management students.

Each spring and fall semester, the Hilton College hosts an on campus career fair. The fair is designed to introduce Hotel and Restaurant Management students to opportunities within the hospitality industry including restaurants, hotels, sales, catering, event planning, club management, and other related industries. Networking with these industry professionals throughout a student's college career is critical to their success in the job placement process.

The Hilton College invites and hosts hospitality companies to interview students for full-time, part-time, supervisory, management, and internship opportunities. In preparation for these on-campus recruitment activities, a career awareness and interview workshop is offered to assist students in the areas of dress for success, interviewing skills, writing a professional resume, etc.

Career Development Workshops are also available to all HRM students. Students will enhance their overall skills and begin their journey in becoming excellent future hospitality leaders by attending the Career Development Workshops.

For more information, please visit the Conrad N. Hilton College website and Career Placement Facebook page.

## **Cullen College of Engineering Engineering Career Center**

-  302 Engineering Building I  
Vita Como, Senior Director  
Development & Career Services  
713.743.4230  
 [vcomo@uh.edu](mailto:vcomo@uh.edu)  
 [www.egr.uh.edu/career](http://www.egr.uh.edu/career)

The Engineering Career Center (ECC) offers comprehensive services to all students in the College of Engineering including internships and permanent positions. It is a resource for information on industry trends, job market, and professional development.

The ECC provides Cooperative Education opportunities to all undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Houston. The ECC is the location of the Cooperative Education Program Office.

## **Graduate College of Social Work Alumni and Career Development Services**

-  110HA Social Work Building  
Ann Liberman, Director  
Alumni and Career Services  
713.743.8071  
 [alberman@uh.edu](mailto:alberman@uh.edu)  
 [www.uh.edu/socialwork/alumni/career-services/index.php](http://www.uh.edu/socialwork/alumni/career-services/index.php)

The mission of the GCSW Office of Career Services is to assist students and alumni of the GCSW in identifying and securing professional social work employment. Services are available to current GCSW students, alumni, and to employing agencies. Efforts are directed toward preparing students for job searches, making social work career choices, providing ongoing support, and assisting in job placement.

Services include: individual career consultations, resume development and critiques, job opportunity listings, mock interviews, career resource materials, workshops, and ongoing job search support. Career Services links to the GCSW website's online Job Board, which posts current social work positions for the social work community. Positions are posted at no charge and can be easily accessed by those looking specifically for social work positions.



A variety of career oriented workshops are held each semester including: Resume Development and Critique, Job Search Techniques, Interviewing Skills, Social Worker Salary Information, and Social Work Licensing Information Sessions.

## **University of Houston Law Center Career Development Office**

-  100 Law Center  
Allison Regan, Assistant Dean  
Career Development  
713.743.2276  
 [ahegan@central.uh.edu](mailto:ahegan@central.uh.edu) or [lawcareer@uh.edu](mailto:lawcareer@uh.edu)  
 [www.law.uh.edu/Career/homepage.asp](http://www.law.uh.edu/Career/homepage.asp)

The mission of the Law Center Career Development Office (CDO) is to facilitate maximum employment of each graduating class through providing highest quality career counseling, education, and contacts.

In support of this mission, the CDO guides students and alumni in the use of tools and strategies for successful job searches. The cornerstone of our service is our one-on-one career advising.

The CDO hosts numerous programs and events designed to help students explore career options and develop vital job search skills. We also present career panels, networking events, workshops, mock interviews, job fairs, recruitment programs, and maintain an electronic job bank.

## OTHER CAMPUS RESOURCES

Other resources are available at various locations on campus. Visit the websites and locations of any of the following to find out how you can utilize their services.

### OTHER COLLEGE RESOURCES:

#### College of Education

 Farish Hall, Room 214  
Dr. Melissa E. Pierson, Associate Professor  
713.743.4961  
[mpierson@uh.edu](mailto:mpierson@uh.edu)  
[www.coe.uh.edu](http://www.coe.uh.edu)

#### College of Optometry

 J. Davis Armistead Building  
Dr. Lanny Shulman, Associate Dean  
Student Affairs and Admissions  
713.743.2045  
[lshulman@uh.edu](mailto:lshulman@uh.edu)  
[www.opt.uh.edu](http://www.opt.uh.edu)

#### College of Pharmacy

 141 Science and Research Bldg. 2  
Nekesa Berkley, Director  
Student Affairs  
713.743.1239  
[nberkley@uh.edu](mailto:nberkley@uh.edu)  
[www.uh.edu/pharmacy](http://www.uh.edu/pharmacy)

#### Cooperative Education (Co-op Office)

 302 Engineering Building 1  
Yolanda Brooks Brown, Director  
713.743.4230  
[ybrooks@central.uh.edu](mailto:ybrooks@central.uh.edu)  
[www.egr.uh.edu/coop](http://www.egr.uh.edu/coop)

#### Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture

 122 Architecture Building  
Trang Phan, Assistant Dean  
713.743.3463  
[trangphan@uh.edu](mailto:trangphan@uh.edu)  
[www.arch.uh.edu](http://www.arch.uh.edu)

#### Industrial Scholar Interns Program

 302 Engineering Building 1  
Yolanda Brooks Brown, Director  
713.743.4230  
[ybrooks@central.uh.edu](mailto:ybrooks@central.uh.edu)  
[www.egr.uh.edu/isip](http://www.egr.uh.edu/isip)

### OTHER CAMPUS RESOURCES:

#### A. D. Bruce Religion Center

 ADB—Building 562  
713.743.5051  
[adbrc@uh.edu](mailto:adbrc@uh.edu)  
[www.uh.edu/adbruce](http://www.uh.edu/adbruce)

## Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

 Student Service Center 1, Room 226  
713.743.5454  
[www.caps.uh.edu](http://www.caps.uh.edu)

## International Student and Scholar Services Office (ISSSO)

 302 Student Service Center 1  
Anita Gaines, Director  
713.743.5065  
[againes@uh.edu](mailto:againes@uh.edu)  
[www.issso.uh.edu](http://www.issso.uh.edu)

## The Justin Dart, Jr., Center for Students with DisABILITIES (CSD)

 CSD Building 568, Room 100  
713.743.5400  
[uhcsd@central.uh.edu](mailto:uhcsd@central.uh.edu)  
[www.uh.edu/csd](http://www.uh.edu/csd)

## Learning and Assessment Services

 Student Service Center 1, Room 210  
Patrick Daniel, Executive Director  
713.743.5498  
[pdaniel@uh.edu](mailto:pdaniel@uh.edu)  
[www.las.uh.edu](http://www.las.uh.edu)

## LGBT Resource Center

 University Center, Room 279A  
Lorraine Schroeder, Director  
713.743.5463  
[lschroeder@uh.edu](mailto:lschroeder@uh.edu)  
[www.uh.edu/lgbt](http://www.uh.edu/lgbt)

## University of Houston Alumni Association

 3100 Cullen Boulevard, Room 201  
713.743.9550  
[alumni@uh.edu](mailto:alumni@uh.edu)  
[www.houstonalumni.com](http://www.houstonalumni.com)

## Veterans Services

 University Center, Room 268  
Scott Sawyer, Interim Program Director  
832.842.5490  
[vets@uh.edu](mailto:vets@uh.edu)  
[www.uh.edu/veterans](http://www.uh.edu/veterans)

## Women's Resource Center

 University Center, Room 279A  
Beverly A. McPhail, Director  
832.842.6191  
[bmcphail@uh.edu](mailto:bmcphail@uh.edu)  
[www.uh.edu/wrc](http://www.uh.edu/wrc)