CAREER DEVELOPMENT



Monica D Galvan
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Career Development

Career Development for College Students is a practical, student-friendly resource that guides learners through exploring majors, identifying strengths, researching career options, and building essential professional skills. Through real-world examples and hands-on activities, it helps students set goals, make informed decisions, and gain confidence as they plan their academic and career pathways. This book supports students in taking meaningful steps toward creating a purposeful and fulfilling future.



Monica D. Galvan

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This textbook was developed to support teaching, learning, identity development, empowerment, equity, and student success in higher education settings, particularly within community colleges and student development courses.

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Beginning Your Career Journey

Beginning Your Career Journey

The goal of this course is to help you make **informed choices about your education, career, and future**. A satisfying career is not simply about finding a job you enjoy. It is about understanding yourself, exploring what is possible, and finding ways to connect your **interests, values, strengths, skills, personality, and life goals** with opportunities in the world of work.

For some students, this course may confirm a career they are already considering. For others, it may introduce possibilities they have never thought about before. You may even discover that a career you once planned to pursue is no longer the best fit—and that is okay. **Career development is a process of exploration, learning, experience, and change.**

You do not need to have your entire future figured out today.

What you do need is a willingness to ask questions, investigate possibilities, and learn more about yourself.

🪞 Why Knowing Yourself Matters

Before asking **"What career should I choose?"**, it helps to begin with another question:

Who am I?

Career decisions are influenced by many things. Family expectations, culture, financial circumstances, education, role models, life experiences, and the opportunities we have been exposed to can all shape what we believe is possible.

Sometimes people choose a career because someone else recommended it. Others choose based primarily on salary, job security, family expectations, or what they already know. These factors can be important—but they are only part of the picture.

Strong career decisions also require **self-awareness**.

Consider questions such as:

- What interests me?
- What am I good at—or interested in becoming good at?
- What motivates me?
- What matters most to me?
- What type of environment helps me do my best work?
- How important are income, flexibility, stability, creativity, independence, or helping others?
- What kind of life do I want outside of work?
- What experiences have influenced the careers I am considering?

There is no single correct answer. Your answers may also change as you gain new experiences.

🧩 Learning About Yourself

Throughout this course, you will use different activities and assessments to develop a clearer picture of yourself. These tools are designed to give you **information to think about—not instructions about what career you must choose.**

You will explore several areas:

❤️ **Interests**
What subjects, activities, problems, or experiences naturally capture your attention? Career-interest activities, including Holland's RIASEC framework, can help you identify patterns in the kinds of work you may enjoy.

🧠 **Personality & Work Preferences**
How do you prefer to communicate, solve problems, make decisions, organize your work, or interact with others? Understanding these preferences can help you think about work environments where you may function well.

💎 **Values & Motivation**
What matters to you? Your priorities might include helping others, financial stability, creativity, independence, achievement, family time, leadership, security, learning, or work-life balance. Understanding your values can help you evaluate careers beyond simply asking, *"How much does this job pay?"*

💪 **Skills & Strengths**
What can you already do well? What strengths have you developed through school, employment, family responsibilities, volunteering, hobbies, or life experiences? You will also consider which skills you would like to develop for your future.

🌎 **Identity & Life Experiences**
Your culture, family, community, educational experiences, responsibilities, and other aspects of your identity can influence how you see yourself and the opportunities you consider. Understanding these influences is another important part of career development.

⚠️ Career Assessments Are Tools, Not Answers

A career assessment cannot tell you exactly what you should become.

If an assessment suggests that you might enjoy teaching, healthcare, engineering, business, counseling, or another field, that does **not** mean you must pursue that career.

Instead, ask:

> **Why did this career appear in my results? What does it have in common with my interests, values, personality, or strengths?**

That question turns an assessment result into an opportunity for critical thinking.

Career assessments can help you identify patterns, generate possibilities, and ask better questions. **You remain the person making the decision.**

🧭 Putting the Pieces Together

As you move through this course, you will begin connecting the different pieces of your career profile:

Who am I? → What is important to me? → What opportunities are available? → Which possibilities fit me? → What do I need to learn? → What should I do next?

You will research careers, investigate educational pathways, examine employment information, consider the influence of technology and AI, develop professional skills, and eventually create a career and life plan based on what you have learned.

Your goal is not to find a **"perfect career."**

Your goal is to become better at making **thoughtful, informed, and adaptable career decisions**.

💭 Think About It

Before you begin, consider these questions:

What career are you currently considering—and why?

Who or what has influenced that choice?

How much do you really know about the career?

What do you still need to learn about yourself before deciding whether it is a good fit?

You do not need to know all the answers yet.

That is exactly why you are here. Your career journey begins with learning more about you.

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2: GETTING STARTED- CREATING YOUR CAREER

Learning Objectives

- Apply the career exploration and planning process.
- Describe the stages of career development and identify the stage you are currently in.
- Identify and apply important factors related to mindset such as a positive mental outlook, self-confidence and the power of positive thinking.
- Differentiate between a job and a career.
- Brainstorm ideas for your personal and career vision.

Introduction

Did you know the U.S. Department of Labor recognizes **hundreds of different occupations**, and new ones are emerging all the time? Just think about some time ago, hardly anyone had heard of an influencer, an AI ethics specialist, or a TikTok creator or seller. The world of work is constantly evolving, which means your dream job might not even exist yet!

That's why it's perfectly okay if you don't know exactly what career you want right now. The goal of this course is to help you **discover your direction**, identify what you're passionate about, and start building a plan that connects your education to your future.

Career exploration is a process of discovery. It's exciting, creative, and sometimes surprising. Even students who think they already know what they want to do often find **new interests, backup options, or even entirely new dreams** through this process.

The Four Phases of Career Exploration

Career exploration can be planned in **four key phases**, each helping you answer an important question about your future.

Phase 1: Who Am I?

Before you can choose the right career, you need to understand yourself. This first phase is all about **self-discovery**—getting to know your interests, values, strengths, and skills.

In this unit, you'll complete several **career assessments** and reflection activities that will help you:

- Discover your **personality preferences** and how they relate to different career fields.
- Identify your **top values**, like creativity, independence, or helping others.
- Explore your **character strengths**—traits that make you unique, like leadership, curiosity, or perseverance.
- Recognize your **skills and talents** that can transfer across many jobs.

By understanding who you are, you'll gain the confidence to choose a career that fits—not one that just sounds good on paper.

Phase 2: What's Out There?

Once you know more about yourself, it's time to explore the world of work. This phase is about **research and discovery**.

You'll dive into:

- **Career databases and websites** to explore job titles, descriptions, and growth trends.
- **Networking activities** that connect you with professionals in fields that interest you.
- **Real-world experiences** like volunteering, job shadowing, or internships to test your interests.
- **Industry expectations**, including the education, skills, and experience employers look for.

The more you learn, the better prepared you'll be to make smart, informed decisions about your major, your college pathway, and your long-term career goals.

Phase 3: What Factors Might Affect My Choice?

Every career decision comes with practical considerations. This phase helps you think through real-world factors that can shape your path—and how to plan around them.

Here are some questions you'll explore:

- **Time:** How long will it take to reach your goal? Will you need more school, training, or certifications?
- **Finances:** How much will your education cost, and what is the earning potential in your field?
- **Location:** Where are most jobs in your field located? Would you need to move—or can you work remotely?
- **Lifestyle & Family:** How might your career choice impact your personal goals, relationships, or work-life balance?

By thinking critically and creatively, you'll learn how to overcome obstacles and design a path that works for *you*.

Phase 4: Where Do I Go From Here?

This phase turns your exploration into action! Now that you've identified your interests and priorities, it's time to create your **career and education plan**.

In this unit, you'll:

- Choose a **major** or academic focus that aligns with your career goals.
- Explore **degree and certificate options**, including transfer programs and technical pathways.
- Identify opportunities for **hands-on learning**—like internships, service learning, or campus leadership.
- Begin developing your **Student Educational Plan (SEP)** with your counselor or advisor.

Remember, you don't need to have everything figured out right now. The key is to stay curious and keep moving forward with purpose.



Career Exploration Is a Lifelong Journey

Career planning doesn't end when you pick a major—it's an **ongoing process**. As you grow and gain experience, your interests, values, and goals may evolve. That's normal!

The more you learn about yourself and your options, the more focused and confident you'll become. Be open to new ideas, take risks, and stay flexible as the world of work continues to change. Your career journey is not just about finding a job—it's about finding **fulfillment**, **growth**, and **purpose** in what you do.

Reflection Questions

1. What excites you most about exploring different careers?
2. What skills or personal strengths do you already have that could help you succeed in the workplace?
3. How can learning more about yourself help you make better academic or career choices?
4. What factors (like finances, location, or family) do you think might influence your career path?
5. How can you stay flexible and open to new opportunities throughout your career journey?

Key Terms

- **Career Exploration** – The process of learning about yourself and the world of work to make informed career decisions.
- **Values** – The principles or beliefs that guide what's most important to you.
- **Transferable Skills** – Skills that can be applied across different jobs and industries.
- **Networking** – Building connections with people who can provide information, support, or opportunities.
- **Student Educational Plan (SEP)** – A personalized academic roadmap that connects your coursework to your career goals.

2.1: Career Development & Life Planning

2.2: Career Development

2.3: Setting a Growth Mindset

2.4: Job vs. Career

2.5: Your Personal and Career Vision

2.6: A Journey Begins...

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2.1: Career Development & Life Planning

Your Career Is a Journey, Not a Single Decision

When you hear the word **career**, what comes to mind?

You might think about a job, a major, a salary, or a profession such as nursing, engineering, teaching, business, automotive technology, or social work.

But career development is much bigger than choosing a job.

Career development is the lifelong process of learning about yourself, exploring educational and occupational possibilities, making decisions, gaining experience, and adjusting your direction as your life changes.

Your career story may have started long before you enrolled in college. As a child, you probably began learning about work by observing the people around you. Family members, teachers, neighbors, television, social media, culture, and your community may have introduced you to certain occupations.

At the same time, there may be hundreds of careers you have never encountered.

This leads to an important idea:

> **It is difficult to imagine becoming something you do not yet know exists.**

What Is Career Development?

Career development combines two types of knowledge:

🪞 Knowledge About Yourself

This includes your:

- interests,
- values,
- personality,
- skills and abilities,
- strengths,
- identity and culture,
- experiences,
- responsibilities,
- priorities, and
- goals.

🌎 Knowledge About the World Around You

This includes:

- occupations,
- college majors,
- certificates and degrees,
- educational requirements,
- salaries,
- employment outlook,
- industries,

- working conditions,
- advancement opportunities,
- geographic differences,
- technology, and
- changes in the labor market.

Good career decisions happen when you begin connecting these two areas.

Know Yourself + Explore Your Options = Make More Informed Decisions

Notice the word **informed**.

Being certain about a career is not necessarily the same as being informed about it.

A student might say:

> "I have known since I was 12 that I want to be a nurse."

That student may be very certain. But has the student investigated nursing specialties, educational requirements, admission requirements, work schedules, physical demands, salaries, working conditions, licensing requirements, and alternative healthcare careers?

Another student might say:

> "I am considering nursing, respiratory therapy, radiologic technology, and public health. I am researching each one before deciding."

The second student may sound less certain, but may actually be further along in the **career decision-making process**.

💭 Think About It

Which is more important right now: being certain about your career or becoming better informed about your options?

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2.2: Career Development

See if you can remember a time in your childhood when you noticed somebody doing professional work. Maybe a nurse or doctor, dressed in a lab coat, was listening to your heartbeat. Maybe a worker at a construction site, decked in a hard hat, was operating noisy machinery. Maybe a cashier at the checkout line in a grocery store was busily scanning bar codes. Each day in your young life you could have seen a hundred people doing various jobs. Surely some of the experiences drew your interest and appealed to your imagination.

If you can recall any such times, those are moments from the beginning stage of your career development.

What exactly is career development? It's a lifelong process in which we become aware of, interested in, knowledgeable about, and skilled in a career. It's a key part of human development as our identity forms and our life unfolds.

Stages of Career Development

There are five main stages of career development. Each stage correlates with attitudes, behaviors, and relationships we all tend to have at that point and age. As we progress through each stage and reach the milestones identified, we prepare to move on to the next one.

Table 1.1 - ***Career Development Stages***

Stage	Description
Growing	This is a time in early years (4–13 years old) when you begin to have a sense about the future. You begin to realize that your participation in the world is related to being able to do certain tasks and accomplish certain goals.
Exploring	This period begins when you are a teenager, and it extends into your mid-twenties. In this stage you find that you have specific interests and aptitudes. You are aware of your inclinations to perform and learn about some subjects more than others. You may try out jobs in your community or at your school. You may begin to explore a specific career. At this stage, you have some detailed "data points" about careers, which will guide you in certain directions.
Establishing	This period covers your mid-twenties through mid-forties. By now you are selecting or entering a field you consider suitable, and you are exploring job opportunities that will be stable. You are also looking for upward growth, so you may be thinking about an advanced degree.
Maintaining	This stage is typical for people in their mid-forties to mid-sixties. You may be in an upward pattern of learning new skills and staying engaged. But you might also be merely "coasting and cruising" or even feeling stagnant. You may be taking stock of what you've accomplished and where you still want to go.
Reinventing	In your mid-sixties, you are likely transitioning into retirement. But retirement in our technologically advanced world can be just the beginning of a new career or pursuit—a time when you can reinvent yourself. There are many new interests to pursue, including teaching others what you've learned, volunteering, starting online businesses, consulting, etc.

Keep in mind that your career development path is personal to you, and you may not fit neatly into the categories described above.

Perhaps your socioeconomic background changes how you fit into the schema. Perhaps your physical and mental abilities affect how you define the idea of a “career.” And for everyone, too, there are factors of chance that can’t be predicted or anticipated. You are unique, and your career path can only be developed by you.

Review the 5 Stages of Career Development listed in the table above and answer the questions below.

1. Which stage of career development do you feel you are in currently?
2. Provide the 2 descriptions you identify with the most from your career development stage.
3. What challenges are you facing now in your career development?
4. Where are you headed next in your career development path?

Setting Yourself Up for Career Success

There are many factors that contribute to career success, such as: hard work, motivation, attitude, grit, resilience and talent. All these factors are related to mindset. Your thoughts and ideas in your mind influence your belief about yourself and your abilities. This influence directly impacts your attitudes, behaviors and ultimately your performance. Your mind is a powerful tool and you can use it to your advantage or disadvantage. You are in control!

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2.3: Setting a Growth Mindset

Your mindset can help support a healthy career journey or it can be used to sabotage your efforts for success. Dr. Carol Dweck, a world-renowned Stanford University psychologist, conducted a research study with junior high students and presented them with puzzles to solve, ranging from easy to hard. She observed different attitudes in the students. Some gave up more easily and did not believe in themselves. Others continued to work hard despite mistakes and did not give up. She discovered that some people view their intelligence and abilities as something that is fixed where others viewed intelligence and abilities as something that can be developed. In Dr. Carol Dweck's book, Mindset: The New Psychology of Success, she states:

not smart or talented. In the other world, failure is about not growing. Not reaching for things you value. It means you are not fulfilling your potential . . . In one world, effort is a bad thing. It's, like failure, means you are not smart or talented. If you were, you would not need effort. In the other world, effort is what makes you smart or talented." (Dweck 15-16)

The illustration on the following page demonstrates the two mindsets. The *fixed* mindset views intelligence as static. The *growth* minset views intelligence as something that can be developed. Review the illustration and ask yourself: "*Which mindset do I generally practice in my everday life?*"

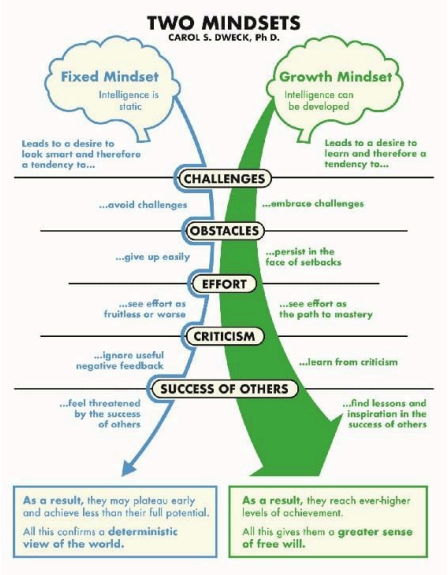
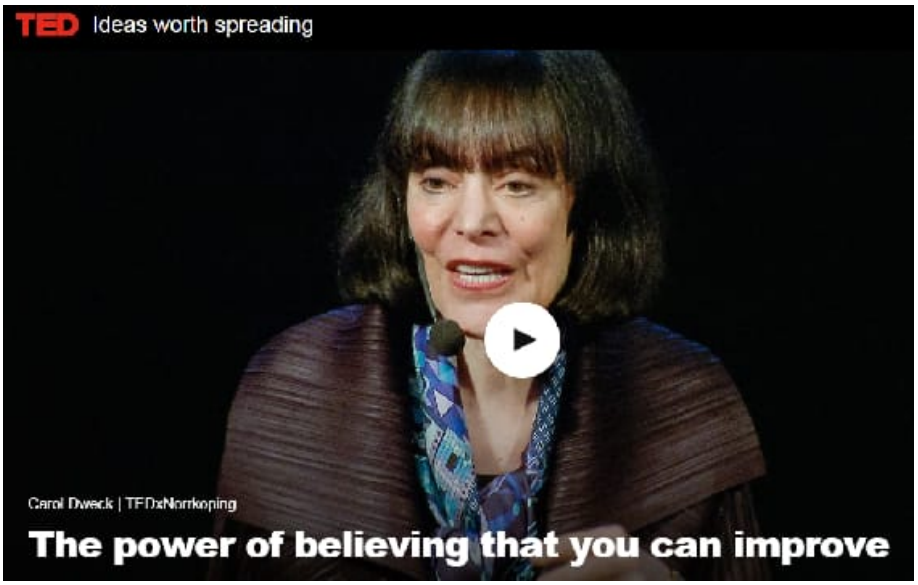


Figure 1.1 – Two Mindsets. (Image by Ian Joslin is licensed under CC BY 4.0)

The Power Of "Yet" By Carol Dweck[3]

Carol Dweck is a professor at Stanford and the author of Mindset, a classic work on motivation and "growth mindset." Her work is influential among educators and increasingly among business leaders as well. She researches "growth mindset" — the idea that we can grow our brain's capacity to learn and to solve problems. In this talk, she describes two ways to think about a problem that's slightly too hard for you to solve. Are you not smart enough to solve it … or have you just not solved it yet?



The Power of Believing That You Can Improve." (link: https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve).

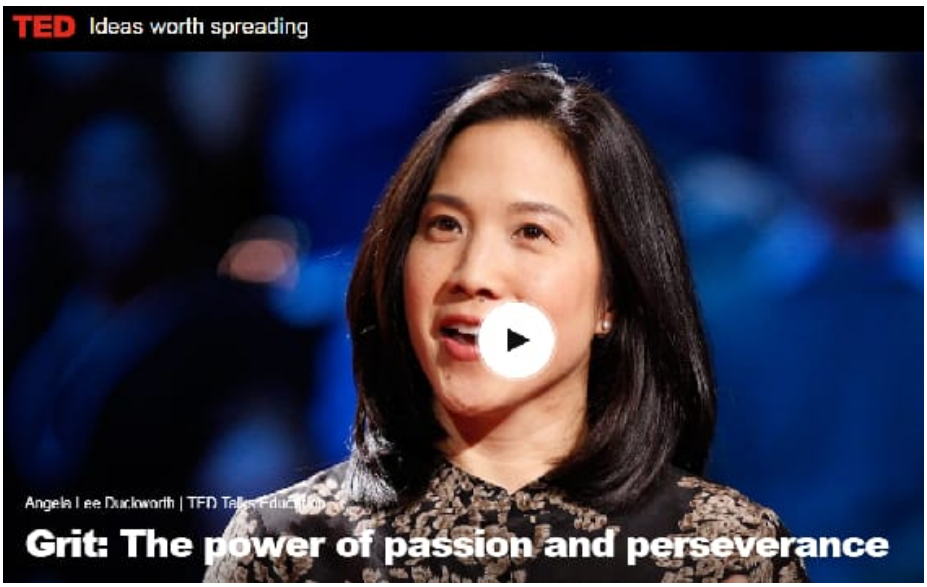
Your mindset can play an important role in your career and life planning process. As you prepare to answer the question, "Who Am I?" in Unit 2, we ask you to keep a *growth mindset* and practice the power of "yet" by Dr. Carol Dweck.

Grit[4]

, Grit is: firmness of mind or spirit; unyielding courage in the face of hardship or danger.

Passion and Perseverance or "Grit" by Angela Duckworth

Leaving a high-flying job in consulting, Angela Lee Duckworth took a job teaching math to seventh graders in a New York public school. She quickly realized that IQ wasn't the only thing separating the successful students from those who struggled. Here, she explains her theory of "grit" as a predictor of success.



Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance." (link: https://www.ted.com/talks/

angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance).

After watching the videos, reflect on how you can apply a "*growth mindset*" and "*grit*" to your career and life-planning journey!

Affirmations

Positive self-talk improves self-image and allows for empowerment toward deliberate change. Affirmations are positive statements that describe a desired outcome and are often repeated until you start to believe them. Affirmations are directly related to mindset. As discussed earlier, your thoughts and ideas in your mind influence your belief about yourself and your abilities. This influence directly impacts your attitudes, behaviors and ultimately your performance. Be good to yourself and use affirmations to help build your confidence and belief in yourself.

Affirmations can be used to help raise self-confidence, control negative feelings and acquire new desired behaviors. They are particularly useful to help overcome negative thinking and self-sabotaging behaviors. Affirmations are intended to create new possibilities.

For example, let's say I struggle with organization and often miss deadlines and this negatively impacts my performance at school and work.

My new desired behavior is to be organized and keep up with deadlines. To develop an affirmation for this desired new behavior there are a few things to keep in mind. When creating effective affirmations, it is necessary to:

- Phrase the affirmation in the present tense. For example:

I am organized and manage my time well.

vs.

I will be organized and manage my time well.

- Phrase the affirmation in the positive rather than the negative

I am productive and motivated.

vs.

I am not lazy and unmotivated.

Make sure the affirmation is believable and meaningful.

- Share your affirmations with others.
- Visualize success.
- Recite your affirmations daily.
- Repeat your affirmations when you start to engage in negative thought or behavior.

Here are some examples of positive affirmations:

- I practice a growth mindset.
- I am successful.
- I embrace challenges and view them as learning opportunities.
- I am strong and in control of my thoughts and behaviors.
- I am a valuable team player with a strong work ethic.
- I value hard work and put forth 100 % effort in all I do.
- I use my time wisely and complete assignments on time.
- I am mindful of how I spend my time and with whom.
- I practice a healthy lifestyle by eating well, exercising and forgiving myself when I make mistakes.

Using positive self-talk and repeating positive messages to yourself will help reinforce a positive self-image and will contribute to your career success! Take a moment and practice this.

Develop six affirmations related to being successful in your career and life planning. Be sure to state your affirmations in the present and use positive phrases. Make your affirmations personal and meaningful to you.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Read your affirmations daily and modify them as needed. Practice them especially when you feel overwhelmed or discouraged. When you repeat your affirmations over and over, you will start to **believe** them and this will change your expectations, attitudes, behaviors and ultimately your performance.

Building Self-Confidence

Self-confidence plays an important role in many aspects of our lives. It is a key factor that contributes to success in school, work, home and in personal relationships with family and friends.

Many factors influence self-confidence. Some factors include environment, childhood upbringing, culture and experiences and interactions with others. These factors can help build confidence and strengthen our belief in ourselves and our abilities. Or they can minimize confidence and cause us to question ourselves and our abilities.

Eleanor Roosevelt once said, “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.” This is a powerful statement because it emphasizes the control you have within yourself. Building self-confidence takes time and patience and is definitely worth the effort.

One way to help build self-confidence is to focus on a past success. Look at an achievement you are proud of. For example, earning an “A” on your English 101 research paper. Earning that “A” grade involved:

-
-
- Research Skills -using resources to collect the information needed to write the paper
-

Another important factor that can help build your self-confidence is to think about your strengths. Your strengths are generally things that come naturally to you and you do well. For example, some strengths may include:

- Communicating well with others
- Staying calm during a crisis
- Problem solving
- Seeing the silver lining in the midst of chaos

Recognize and reward yourself for the achievements you have accomplished thus far. Give yourself credit for overcoming setbacks and using those situations as opportunities to learn and grow. When things get difficult, it is common to question your abilities. It is times like these when it is necessary to look back at your accomplishments and recognize that you have been successful before and can do it again. Learn from past challenges and how you have conquered them. Focus on the skills you have and the strengths you have developed through previous challenges. Learn from your past successes to help build your future successes.

As you build your self-confidence you will start to feel more in control of your future.

College of the Canyons Student Resources

As you prepare for career success it is also important to take time to acquaint yourself with the services on campus to help you

be a successful student. There are many resources on campus to help you pursue your academic and career goals at College of the Canyons. Familiarize yourself with the student support services and identify those you can benefit from. Click here for a comprehensive list of College of the Canyons Campus Resources & Support Services. Don't be afraid to ask for help. COC offers many services to help support you on your journey. All you need to do is know what is available to you and how you can benefit from each service.

So far, we have addressed several important factors to get you started on your career journey. Practicing a growth mindset, affirmations and building self-confidence will help guide you through the process of creating your career and life planning vision. Before we begin your journey, let's take a minute and differentiate between a job and a career.

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2.4: Job vs. Career

Before we dive into the career exploration process, it is important to differentiate between a job and a career. These two terms are often used interchangeably however, they have different meanings.

A **job** is something you would like to have, especially if you want to pay your bills. A job lets you enjoy a minimal level of financial security. A job requires you to show up and do what is required of you; in exchange, you get paid. A job can lead to a career.

A **career** involves an occupation or profession requiring special skills or training; a progression of jobs followed as one's life pursuit. A career involves holding jobs, but it is more a means of achieving personal fulfillment. In a career, your jobs follow a sequence that leads to increasing mastery, professional development, and personal and financial satisfaction. A career requires planning, knowledge, and skills. If it is to be a fulfilling career, it requires that you utilize your full set of analytical, critical, and creative thinking skills to make informed decisions that will affect your life in both the short-term and the long-term.

A career allows you to express your self-concept. Self-Concept is how you see yourself, your own self-awareness of who you are. Donald Super, a psychologist who made great contributions to the field of career counseling, influenced the idea that developing a sense of self and realizing that you change over time is important when planning your career. Self-concept changes over time and develops as a result of experiences. Super's five stages of developmental Self Concept will be discussed in class in greater detail. Refer to the class handout titled "Donald Super's Theory of Developmental Self-concept."

Understanding Super's theory helps provide a framework for your career planning journey. Identify where you are in terms of Super's five life and career development stages and keep this in mind as we continue with self-exploration in unit 2 and answer the question "Who Am I?"

Activity 1.3 – My Job Experience
Think of your current and past work experience, and all the jobs you have held thus far. Consider both paid and unpaid experiences including part-time jobs, volunteer work, and internship experience. Include any leadership roles you may have held as a club officer or part of a sports team. In your job(s), describe your role(s). What tasks and responsibilities were you accountable for? What skills did you practice in this job? What did you enjoy about this job? What did you not enjoy about this job? In some cases, a job can help guide you towards your career. Understanding what you like and don't like is a very important part of career and life planning. You may come to find you love one aspect of your job such as helping people and may wish to incorporate that into your future career. Or you may come to learn you did not particularly like trying to persuade clients to purchase a particular item and may learn sales is not your passion. Your past work experience can help you learn a lot about yourself and your future career desires. Your response to these questions sets the stage for PHASE 1 of the Career Exploration Process and unraveling the question "WHO AM I?" Get ready to engage in self-exploration in the next unit!

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2.5: Your Personal and Career Vision

Envisioning Your Future: Crafting a Career Vision That Inspires You

Where do you imagine yourself 5, 10, 15, even 20 years from now? What kind of life are you working toward—academically, professionally, and personally? Every student in this class has a different picture of the future. Some of you may already see your path with absolute clarity. Others may feel unsure, or even overwhelmed. Most of you will fall somewhere in the middle—and that's completely normal.

No matter where you are on that spectrum, this is the perfect moment to pause and visualize the possibilities ahead. Picture your life in the next decade or two. What will your *ideal* career look like? What kind of person do you hope to become?

As you reflect, consider questions like:

- **What type of work will feel meaningful and give you a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day?**
- **What level of responsibility or leadership do you hope to have?**
- **What work environment will motivate you—collaborative, independent, fast-paced, creative, flexible?**
- **What values do you want reflected in the work you do?**
- **How do you want your career to support your lifestyle, goals, and overall well-being?**

As we begin Unit 2 on **Self-Exploration**, start sketching the mental blueprint of your future. By the end of the semester, this vision will evolve into a clear, thoughtfully crafted **Career Vision Statement**—a personal roadmap that connects who you are now with who you aspire to become.

Career Vision Statements can be incredibly powerful tools. They help you stay grounded during opportunities, challenges, and decisions by reminding you *why* you're working toward your goals. Writing one often takes time, reflection, and multiple revisions, and that's part of the process. As you learn more about your strengths, interests, and values this term, your vision will naturally become sharper and more meaningful.

To help you get started, here are a couple of example Career Vision Statements:

- *"My vision is to become a mental-health advocate and counselor who helps young adults navigate life transitions with confidence, empathy, and resilience."*
- *"I aspire to work in the technology industry as a UX designer, creating products that make life easier and more accessible for communities that are often overlooked."*

Throughout this course, you'll have multiple opportunities to refine and build your own statement, transforming a simple idea into a personalized, inspiring guide for your future.



Career Vision Statement Sample #1:

I will become a well-known and respected leader in the food industry revitalizing the ways food is produced and marketed, making healthier products to help people live better lives.

Career Vision Statement Sample #2:

I will provide the best technical support and customer service to our clients, helping improve their business and lives, striving to solve problems with a positive attitude that spreads to my co-workers.

For more information on creating your career vision visit:

https://www.livecareer.com/quintessential/vision-statement-samples

Activity 1.4 – Creating My Career & Life Planning Vision Statement

As you begin PHASE 1 of the career exploration process and answer the question “Who Am I?” start thinking about your personal professional life?

Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years....

Where do you see yourself in the next 10 years....

Where do you see yourself in the next 15 years....

Where do you see yourself in the next 20 years....

What will your ideal career look like?

What kind of work is meaningful to you?

What level of responsibility do you desire?

What type of work environment will energize you and give you a sense of purpose?

Reflect on your responses to the questions above and develop your career vision statement here_____

Each phase of the career exploration process will help you refine your career vision statement and solidify it by the end of this c

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2.6: A Journey Begins...

“If you don’t know where you’re going, you might end up somewhere else.”
Yogi Berra might not have been talking about career planning, but he nailed it. College is one of the first big steps toward a life you actually want—work that feels exciting, meaningful, and *you*.

How the job world is changing—and what it means for you

1. You won’t just have one job... you’ll have many.
Gone are the days when people worked for one company their whole career. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the average person holds nearly eleven jobs between ages 18 and 42. That means your best strategy is to develop *transferable skills*—things like communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and tech literacy that you can use anywhere.

2. Your future job might not even exist yet.
Technology evolves fast, and global priorities change just as quickly. Five years ago, hardly anyone had heard of “SEO specialists.” Now they’re everywhere. Fields like elder care, homeland security, biotech, and nanotech exploded because of new needs and innovations. Translation: to stay competitive, you’ll need to be a lifelong learner.

3. Work is no longer tied to one place.
Unless you’re working with specialized equipment or directly with customers, many jobs can now be done from anywhere with Wi-Fi. Employers want people who can work independently, stay organized, and deliver results without someone constantly checking in.

4. Online job applications = huge competition.
Posting jobs online makes it easy for companies to reach applicants—and easy for applicants (like you) to reach companies. But it also means your resume may be one of hundreds in a hiring manager’s inbox. Standing out with strong skills, a clear personal brand, and smart application strategies is essential.

Today’s career landscape is way more dynamic than it used to be—but that’s actually exciting. You have the chance to carve out a path that fits *you*, not some outdated idea of what a career should look like. Stay flexible, keep learning, use technology to your advantage, and focus on developing real, demonstrable skills.

Your career won’t be linear—but it can absolutely be amazing.

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3: EXPLORING OPTIONS

Learning Objectives

- Use valuable career assessments to help you gain a better understanding of yourself and visualize where you fit best in the world of work.
- Define and clarify your values and how they relate to your career choices.
- Identify your own personality type and how your preferences connect to choice of major and career.
- Distinguish your interests, confirm your skills, and character strengths and link them to potential major and career choices.

3.1: Getting Started With Careers Assessments

3.2: Values

3.3: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

3.4: John Holland's classifications of work environments

3.5: Skills

3.6: Putting It All Together

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3.1: Getting Started With Careers Assessments

Discovering Who You Are

Before you can decide what career path to take, you first have to understand **yourself**. How can you know what career will make you happy if you don't know what drives you, inspires you, and challenges you?

In this unit, you'll complete several **career assessments** designed to help you explore your **personality**, **values**, **interests**, and **motivations**. These tools aren't about putting you in a box — they're about giving you insight into who you are, what you're good at, and what kind of work environment will allow you to thrive. You'll begin to see patterns and connections between your natural strengths and potential career paths that fit your unique personality.

The first step in your career journey is asking yourself a powerful question:

> **"Who am I?"**

This question sets the foundation for your entire career exploration process. Take time to dig deep and think about:

- What motivates you to get up in the morning?
- What activities make you feel energized and fulfilled?
- What tasks do you dread or find draining?
- What environments help you perform your best — and which ones don't?
- What are your natural strengths, and what new skills can you develop to stay competitive?



Your honest answers to these questions will help guide you toward what we call **"Meaningful Work."**

Remember: **no assessment can ever know you better than you know yourself.** These tools are meant to guide you — not define you. Use them to make sense of your past experiences, highlight your strengths, and uncover new directions you may not have considered before.

Stay curious, keep an open mind, and don't be afraid to explore areas that feel uncertain or unfamiliar. The more effort you invest in self-discovery, the more confident you'll feel when making decisions about your future. This journey is not just about choosing a career — it's about learning who you are and what kind of life you want to build.

So dive in, stay engaged, and most importantly — **enjoy the process**. Your future starts with getting to know *you*.

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3.2: Values

Values are the characteristics that are most important to you. They make up your core belief system and serve as motivators that guide you in what you do and decisions you make. It is important to consider your values as you select a career. You will enjoy the work you do more if it aligns with your core values. If the work you choose conflicts with your values, you will most likely struggle with the position and this may create tension and discomfort in your life. It is important to consider your personal values along with your work related values.

For example, if you value good health and are assigned to market a product that may cause serious health concerns, you will likely find it difficult to market this item. If you are asked to do this on a continual basis, you will internally struggle with the role you play as this job forces you to go against your core values.

Let's Take a Look at Work Values

According to the Occupational Information Network (O*NET), the nation's primary source of occupational information, work values are defined as the "global aspects of work that are important to a person's satisfaction." Below is a screenshot of the six work values to take into consideration while researching career options. O*NET allows you to do a Work Values Search by entering your top three Work Values to see which occupations match your choices. https://www.onetonline.org/explore/workvalues/Achievement/

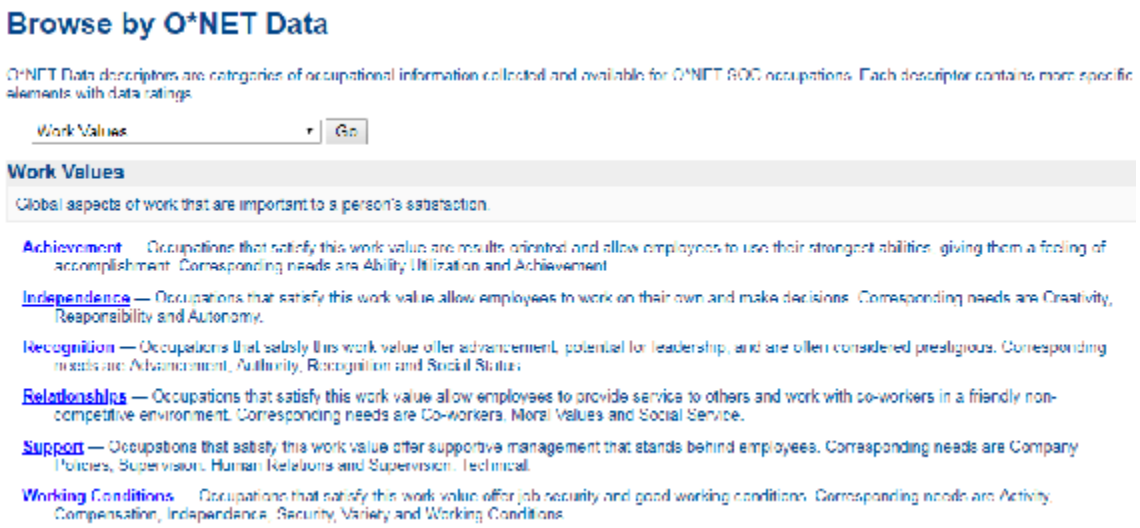


Figure 2.2 – Browse by O*Net Data (Screenshot from https://www.onetonline.org/find/descriptor/browse/Work_Values/)

You will have an opportunity to complete a values assessment activity in class using the values card sort along with other online resources such as:

- Work Values Search through O*NET: this assessment allows you to match your chosen work values with occupations that match. https://www.onetonline.org/explore/workvalues/Achievement/
- Kuder Journey: an online tool, which provides reliable inventories to assess your interests, skills confidence, and work values, and suggests occupations and majors that match your assessment results. Kuder Journey also includes resources like a resume builder and online portfolio, to prepare you for the job search and connect you to today's jobs! Your instructor will distribute login instructions with an activation code. You will have the opportunity to take the three assessments: interests, skills confidence, and work values.
- Work Importance Profiler: this assessment helps you determine what values are important to you and how they line up with different careers. To complete the Work Importance Profiler go to the California Career Zone site at: https://www.cacareerzone.org/wip/. Below is a screenshot.

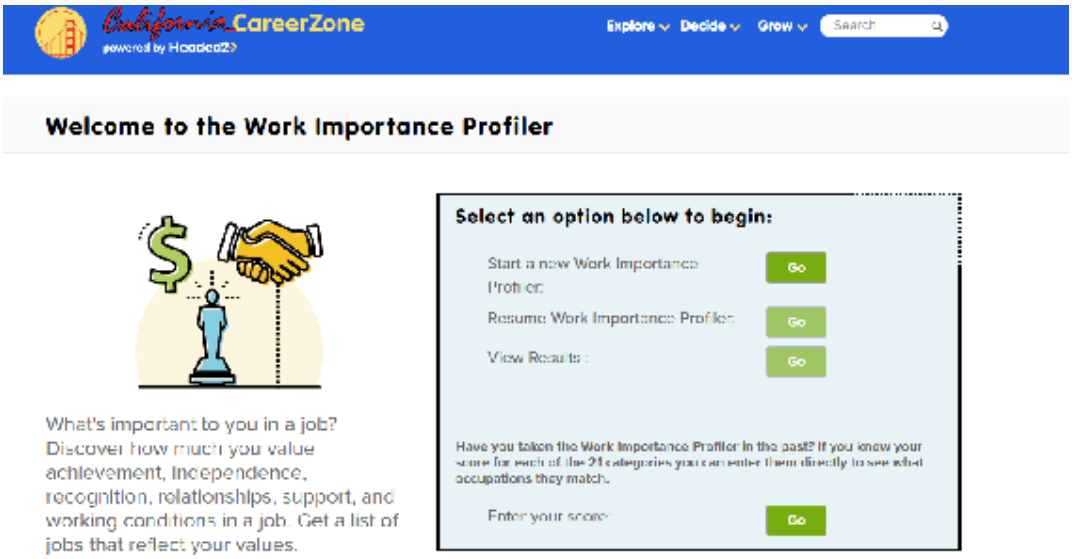


Figure 2.3 –California Career Zone (Screenshot from https://www.cacareerzone.org/wip/).

Your values will play an important role in each phase of the career and life planning process; therefore, it is important to take time to assess what is most important to you. When your values align with the work you do, you will feel more satisfied and invested in your career.

Activity 2.1 – Identify Your Work Values[5]

Complete the following three activities to review the work values that are most important to you.

1. Read about six core work values developed by the U.S. Department of Labor's O*NET program. Click on the ones that best describe you to see careers that highlight that value. Record your findings:
2. The Values Card Sort Activity:

Your instructor may have you participate in this activity in class if you are taking an on ground/face to face class. If you are completing this course online, you may do it yourself by downloading and printing O*NET's work values cards (pdf). Cut your own cards and sort them into three piles, identifying whether each is "essential," "important," or "not important" for your career needs. Make a note of the values that ranked high for you. Record your findings:

3. Take the California CareerZone Work Importance Profiler and get a list of jobs that reflect your values. Record your findings:

After you have identified your top values, explore careers that would allow you to express your values. Do you see a common theme amongst these careers? Explain:

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3.3: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a personality assessment that was developed by Katherine Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers based on the framework of personality theory by Carl C. Jung. The MBTI is a personality assessment that measures the psychological preferences that influence how people perceive the world and make decisions. This assessment is widely used across the world and has been translated into two dozen plus languages. Many companies use the MBTI with their staff to help employees learn more about themselves and how they can strengthen their department team efforts and increase overall productivity for the company. Many colleges and universities use the MBTI to help with career exploration.

The MBTI will help you gain a better understanding of your preferences and work environments that best fit you. The MBTI does *not* measure abilities, skills, values or interests. It assesses your personality preferences. The MBTI instrument indicates preferences on four pairs of opposites called dichotomies.[6]

Watch the following video to get an introduction of four facets that comprise the 16 possible personality types.



Figure 2.5 – Watch "Discover Your Personality Type | Myers Briggs" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=7&v=WQoOqQiVzwQ).

Personality Theory: The 4 Facets[7]

- Extroversion-Introversion (EI): how you get your energy and where you prefer to focus your attention
- Sensing-Intuition (SN): how you take in information about the world around you
- Thinking-Feeling (TF): how you like to make decisions
- Judging-Perceiving (JP): how you prefer to organize your life

These four preferences make up your type, which results in 16 rich, complex, highly differentiated whole types. You will have an opportunity in class to self-identify your preferences and this will be your "**Self-estimated" type**. Your instructor will give you more information on taking the MBTI personality assessment.

Once the assessment is completed, your instructor will generate a career report and distribute your results to you. The results of this assessment will be your **"Reported" type.** After learning more about the MBTI and reviewing your self-estimated type and your reported type, you will confirm your **"Best-fit" type.** This will be addressed in more detail in class.

Activity 2.3 – What's Your Type?[8]

Read descriptions for the four facets. Pick which is more like you.

- E (Extraversion) or I (Introversion)?
- S (Sensing) or N? (Intuition)?
- T (Thinking) or F? (Feeling)?
- J (Judging) or P? (Perceiving)?

Could be described as: • Talkative, outgoing • Like to be in a fast-paced environment • Tend to work out ideas with other, think aloud • Enjoy being the center of attention Then you prefer (E) Extraversion	Could be described as: • Reserved, private • Prefer a slower pace with time for contemplation • Tend to think things through inside your head • Would rather observe then be the center of attention Then you prefer (I) Introversion
Could be described as: • Focus on the reality of how things are • Pay attention to concrete facts and details • Prefer ideas that have practical applications • Like to describe things in a specific, literal way Then you prefer (S) Sensing	Could be described as: • Imagine the possibilities of how things could be • Notice the big picture, see how everything connects • Enjoy ideas and concepts for their own sake • Like to be describe in a way figurative, poetic Then you prefer (N) Intuition
Could be described as: • Make decision in an impersonal way, using logical reasoning • Value justice, fairness • Enjoy finding the flaws in an arguments • Could be described as reasonable, level-headed Then you prefer (T) Thinking	Could be described as: • Base you decision on personal values and how our actions affect others • Value harmony, forgiveness • Like to please others and point out the best in people • Could be described as warm empathetic Then you prefer (F) Feeling

Could be described as: • Prefer to have matters settled • Think rules and deadlines should be respected • Prefer to have a detailed step-by-step instructions • Make plans, want to know what you're getting into Then you prefer (J) Judging	Could be described as: • Prefer to leave your options open • See rules and deadlines as flexible • Like to improvise and make things up as you go • Are spontaneous, enjoy surprise and new situations Then you prefer (P)Perceiving
What is your 4-letter personality type? __ __ __ __	

The following are brief descriptions of the 16 personality types from Humanmetrics. Click on your personality type or a similar type to see which describes you best.

ESTJ	ISTJ	ENTJ	INTJ
ESTP	ISTP	ENTP	INTP
ESFJ	ISFJ	ENFJ	INFJ
ESFP	ISFP	ENFP	INFP

Each type is unique and presents its own strengths and challenges. No one type is better than the other. Any type can do anything if motivated!

Your instructor will generate your career report based on your responses to the online MBTI assessment. The career report will help you:

- Identify job families or broad occupational categories to help you get started in your career search.
- Choose a specific job or career.
- Select a college major or course of study.
- Identify strengths and potential weaknesses of your type for the career search process.
- Increase your job satisfaction.
- Make a career transition or shift.
- Plan your career development strategy and action steps.

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3.4: John Holland's classifications of work environments

Video Transcript: RIASEC at Work Matching Your Personality to Career[9]



Figure 2.6 – Watch "RIASEC at Work Matching Your Personality to Career" (Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3vjopNT4V8).

(Transcript) Work, it's a hard fact of life. Sometimes just finding work we enjoy and are good at is challenge enough. Some people spend their entire life searching for the right job. Many don't know where to even start looking.

In the United States alone, there are more than a hundred and fifty million people working thousands of different kinds of jobs. From accountants to athletes. From dancers to dentists. From teachers to top executives. Every job requires its own set of skills and comes with its own rigors and rewards. And just as not everybody is right for every job, not every job is right for everybody. In fact, your personality, those characteristics, traits and preferences that make you who you are, is a major factor in determining which occupations are right for you. People who follow career paths that match their personalities are more likely to be both satisfied and successful with those careers. This video will introduce you to one of the best ways to find work that fits with your personality. It's called the RIASEC personality theory and it is a time-tested tool for exploring and deciding on a career that's right for you. You'll learn how the tasks and work environments of jobs match with personality types and even learn which jobs tend to be a better fit for each type. Along the way, you may discover careers that match your own interests, perhaps leading to greater career satisfaction down the road. So, let's get started.

In the 1950s, renowned psychologist John L. Holland developed a theory and a process that helped individuals match their work interests, otherwise known as their vocational personalities, to their preferred work environments. Holland's theory says that most people can be described by one or more of six personality types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional. People who share the same personality type tend to group together and create work environments with shared values. What does this mean? In short, people who work in an environment that is a good fit for their personality type and with people who share their interests and personality traits are more likely to find satisfaction and success in their career. What Holland did was to give us a way to view the world of work from forty thousand feet, plus a quick way to take stock of our abilities and preferences so we can really understand where we fit in best. If you were to consider all the hundreds of possible career choices, you might be overwhelmed by the task of narrowing down your options. The Holland personality types simplify this process by helping you to make a quick first cut.

The terms that Holland invented for personality types may be a little puzzling when you first encounter them. What do you mean, I'm not realistic? But once you learn what they mean, you'll find they provide real insights into yourself and your career choices. But which personality type or types best describe you? Are you the kind of person who likes to help others? Are you a risk taker who is always looking for a new business opportunity? Do you prefer to work with your hands or with ideas? Indoors or out? In groups or by yourself? Knowing your answers to these and other questions about work preferences can help you to discover your

vocational interests and, thus, the kind of work that will fit your best. It's important to realize that most people have a variety of interests and most of us can't be pigeonholed into just one personality type. Usually it helps if we think in terms of a primary type that describes us best, plus one or two secondary types that reflect other interests we have. For example, you might have primarily realistic interests but also have investigative or conventional interests. Your work may not satisfy all of your interests, that's why we have hobbies, but once you have an understanding of your dominant personality type or types, you can identify work situations where you'll fit in best.

Keep in mind that just as people are varied, work situations are too. A particular career might combine aspects that are attractive to, for example, social and enterprising personality types. Also, remember that it's not a good thing for everybody in a certain career to be exactly alike. You may have heard of something called group think, which happens when there's no diversity in the workplace. In fact, in most workplaces you'll find a variety of people but they will share a core of certain interests and preferences that drew them to this kind of work. That's what the Holland types are designed to describe. The rest of this video will better introduce you to the six Holland personality types. You'll learn about the interests and values that characterize each personality type as well as specific jobs whose work situations cater to those interests and values. As you progress through this video, think about the kinds of work that you enjoy or might enjoy. Don't worry about fitting yourself into one personality type. Keep your options open. But if one or more of the six types interests you or seems to match your personal characteristics, pay close attention to the jobs that go with that type. Who knows, one of those may be the job of your dreams.[10]



(Holland Codes by QVhighschool01 is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0)

You will have an opportunity to complete the Strong Interest Inventory in class. Your instructor will give you more detailed information on completing this assessment. Once you complete the assessment, your instructor will generate a career report and distribute your results to you.

Read over the different RIASEC work environments below and consider your first, second and third choice interests.

- Realistic: These people describe themselves as honest, loyal, and practical. They are doers more than thinkers. They have strong mechanical, motor, and athletic abilities; like the outdoors; and prefer working with machines, tools, plants, and animals.[11] Realistic occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Many of the occupations require working outside, and do not involve a lot of paperwork or working closely with others.
- Investigative: These people love problem solving and analytical skills. They are intellectually stimulated and often mathematically or scientifically inclined; like to observe, learn, and evaluate; prefer working alone; and are reserved.[12] Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

- Artistic: These people are the "free spirits." They are creative, emotional, intuitive, and idealistic; have a flair for communicating ideas; dislike structure and prefer working independently; and like to sing, write, act, paint, and think

creatively. They are similar to the investigative type but are interested in the artistic and aesthetic aspects of things more than the scientific.[13] Artistic occupations frequently involve working with forms, designs and patterns. They often require self-expression and the work can be done without following a clear set of rules.

- Social: These are “people” people. They are friendly and outgoing; love to help others, make a difference, or both; have strong verbal and personal skills and teaching abilities; and are less likely to engage in intellectual or physical activity.[14] Social occupations frequently involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others.
- Enterprising: These people are confident, assertive risk takers. They are sociable; enjoy speaking and leadership; like to persuade rather than guide; like to use their influence; have strong interpersonal skills; and are status conscious.[15] Enterprising occupations frequently involve starting up and carrying out projects. These occupations can involve leading people and making many decisions. Sometimes they require risk taking and often deal with business.
- Conventional: These people are dependable, detail oriented, disciplined, precise, persistent, and practical; value order; and are good at clerical and numerical tasks. They work well with people and data, so they are good organizers, schedulers, and project managers.[16] Conventional occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow.

Activity 2.4 – What’s Your Occupational Type[17]

Using the descriptions above, choose the three types that most closely describe you and list them in order in the following table. Most people are combinations of two or sometimes three types. Then list the specific words or attributes that you feel describe you best. After determining your primary, secondary, and tertiary occupational types, take the first initial for each type, in order, to establish your occupational code.

Occupational Type	Word and Attributes That Closely Describe Me
Primary type (the one I identify with most closely)	
Secondary type	
Tertiary type	

Note: Your occupational code is made up of the initials of the three personality types you selected, in order.

My occupational code: ___ ___ ___

(For example: if Social, Enterprising, and Conventional are your top three occupational types, your occupational code would be: S E C)

Exploring Careers and Your Occupational Type

Now that you have determined your top three occupational types, you can begin to explore the types of careers that may be best suited for you. Holland studied people who were successful and happy in many occupations and matched their occupations to their occupational type, creating a description of the types of occupations that are best suited to each personality type. Just as

many individuals are more than one personality type, many jobs show a strong correlation to more than one occupational type.

This is a rough beginning to finding your occupational type, but you will soon be seeking out more detailed results from the Strong Interest Inventory assessment as a part of this course.

Use the top thee occupation types you defined in the exercise, “What’s Your Occupational Type?” to help identify careers you may want to consider from the table below.

Table 2.1 – Occupational Options by Type[18]

Type	Ideal Environments	Sample Occupations
Realistic	• Structured • Clear lines of authority • Work with things and tools • Casual dress • Focus on tangible results or well-thought-out goals	• Contractor • Emergency medical technician (EMT) • Mechanic • Military career • Packaging engineer
Investigative	• Nonstructured • Research oriented • Intellectual • Work with ideas and data	• Pharmacist • Lab technician • Nanotechnologist • Geologist • College professor
Artistic	• Nonstructured • Creative • Rewards unconventional and aesthetic approaches • Creation of products and ideas	• Collaborative • Collegial • Work with people and on people-related problems/issues • Work as a team or community
Social	• Collaborative • Collegial • Work with people and on people-related problems/issues • Work as a team or community	• Teacher • Geriatric counselor • Correctional officer • Coach • Nurse
Enterprising	• Typical business environment • Results oriented • Driven • Work with people and data • Entrepreneurial • Power focused	• Sales manager • Banker • Lawyer • Business owner • Restaurant manager

Conventional	• Orderly • Clear rules and policies • Consistent processes • Work with systems to manipulate and organize data • Control and handling of money	• Auditor • Insurance underwriter • Bank teller • Office manager • Database manager

You can use the Department of Labor's O*Net (http://online.onetcenter.org/find) to get a deeper understanding of your occupation. For each occupation, O*Net lists the type of work, the work environment, the skills and education required, and the job outlook for that occupation. This is a truly rich resource that you should get to know.

You will have the opportunity to complete an interest assessment using one of the following online resources:

- Careeronestop: http://www.careeronestop.org/ExploreCareers/assessments/self-assessments.aspx (go to "Interest Assessment")
-
- O*NET Interest Profiler: https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip
- . Your results will give you a great deal of information to help you make informed decisions about your future including:

- careers that reflect your interest
- possible education and training programs
- satisfying work environments
- enjoyable activities for your free time

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3.5: Skills

Skilled Labor

Employers seek skills. Many of the skills you will need are career specific: we call those specific skills **hard skills** or **technical skills**. These include knowing how to use equipment that is specific to your career and mastering processes that are used in your field. While some of these skills are learned and perfected on the job, you may be in a vocational track program (such as for homeland security officers, nurses, aides, or paralegals) where you are learning your technical skills.

These are not the only skills you will need to be successful. The second set of skills you must have are called soft skills or transferable skills, which contribute to success in any number of occupations because they can be used in almost all occupations. Some soft skills include thinking skills, communication skills, listening skills and leadership skills. This skill set is very broad, and your extent of mastery will vary from skill to skill; therefore, you should identify those skills that are most important to your career objective and develop and master them. Search on O*Net (http://online.onetcenter.org/find) to determine which skills you need to demonstrate to potential employers you have mastered based on your career interest.

Employers want individuals who have the necessary hard and soft skills to do the job well and adapt to changes in the workplace. Soft skills may be especially in demand today because employers are generally equipped to train new employees in a hard skill—by training them to use new computer software, for instance—but it's much more difficult to teach an employee a soft skill such as developing rapport with coworkers or knowing how to manage conflict. An employer might rather hire an inexperienced worker who can pay close attention to details than an experienced worker who might cause problems on a work team.

In this section, you will look at ways of identifying and building particular hard and soft skills that will be necessary for your career path.[19]

Table 2.2 - Transferable Skills Inventory

Active listening	Decision making	Negotiating	Researching
Active learning	Editing	Observing	Selling
Analyzing	Evaluating	Organizing	Speaking a 2nd language
Budgeting	Forecasting	Perceiving Feelings	Supervising
Coaching	Goal setting	Persuading	Teaching
Communicating	Handling a crisis	Planning	Teamwork
Consulting	Handling details	Problem solving	Time management
Creative thinking	Manipulating numbers	Public speaking	Training

Critical thinking	Mentoring	Reading	Visualizing
Customer service	Motivating	Reporting	Writing

These skills are transferable because they are positive attributes that are invaluable in practically any kind of work. They also do not require much training from an employer—you have them already and take them with you wherever you go. Transferable/Soft skills are a big part of your "total me" package.

So, identify the transferable/soft skills that show you off the best, and identify the ones that prospective employers are looking for. By comparing both sets, you can more directly gear your job search to your strongest professional qualities.

You will have the opportunity to complete skills assessments using different online resources such as:

- Kuder Journey: an online tool, which provides reliable inventories to assess your interests, skills confidence, and work values, and suggests occupations and majors that match your assessment results. Kuder Journey also includes resources like a resume builder and online portfolio, to prepare you for the job search and connect you to today's jobs! Your instructor will distribute login instructions and you will have the opportunity to take the three assessments: interests, skills confidence, and work values.
- Skills Matcher: an online "Skills Assessment" through Careeronestop. The Skills Matcher helps you identify your skills. Use the Skills Matcher to create a list of your skills and match them to careers that use those skills. Click here to complete the Skills Matcher: https://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/Skills/skills-matcher.aspx
- Skills Profiler listed under the "Assess Yourself" heading.

21st Century Skills

Due to the rapid changes in the global economy and the advancement of technology, the workplace has changed dramatically. As a student it is important for you to gain the knowledge and skills employers are seeking. To help train the new generation entering the workforce, a team of educators came together with employers, workforce development boards, and research organizations across the country to build college/career-ready, 21st Century Employability Skills Program called New World of Work (NWoW) 21st Century Skills Training.20



Figure 2.8 – Watch "Part 1 21st Century Skills" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RlT34HJjbXA)

New World of Work (NWoW) was developed under the Doing What MATTERS for Jobs and the Economy framework of the California Community Colleges system, which is the largest higher education system in the nation with 72 districts and 115 colleges serving

over 2.1 million students each year.

Starting in 2012, the New World of Work team began tracking futurist projections, economic reports, and national research related to the correlation between education and employment.

The group conducted a series of Skills Panels to gather feedback from employers, entrepreneurs, human resources specialists, educators, and students to determine the essential employability skills required in our emerging global economy.

From the research gathered, NWoW established their “Top 10” list of 21st Century Employability Skills. They worked closely with expert curriculum developers, including the NWoW Co-Creators, video crews, college faculty across disciplines, and digital badging teams then created lessons and badges to go along with each of the skills.

They identified the following "Top 10" list of 221st Century Employability Skills:



Figure 2.9 – Essential 21st Century Skills (Image by New World of Work is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 3.0)

For more information about NWoW, read the Executive Summary report titled "Community Colleges and 21st Century Skills: Skills Panels to Assist Student Career Success"21

What is a Digital Badge?

Preview the short video by the MacArthur Foundation to get an overview of what a Digital Badge is and how it can be used.

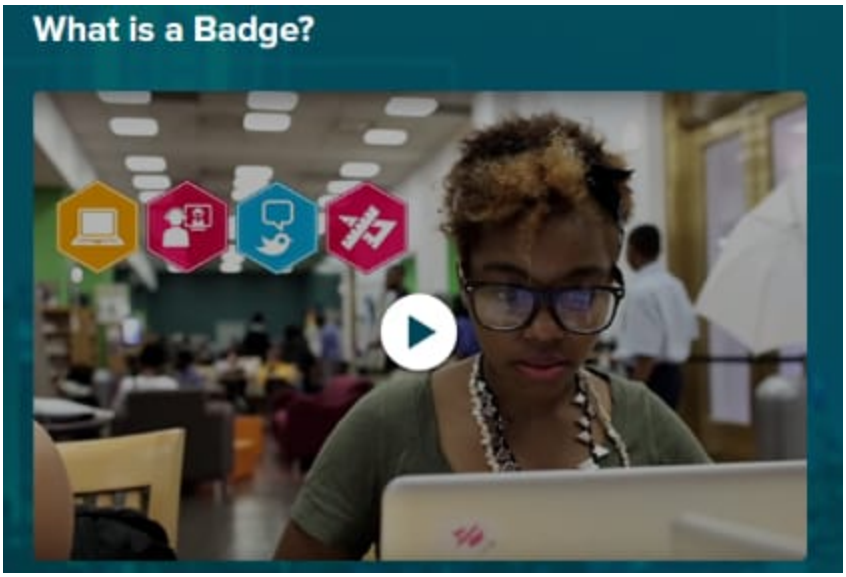


Figure 2.10 – Watch "What is a Badge" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDmfE0noOJ8).

The New World of Work awards "Learner Badges" for all 10 of the 21st Century Skills. This is available to you for FREE! The NWoW Learner Badges are based on the NWoW High School/opportunity youth video series paired with multiple-choice questions. These can be used with high school, post secondary, adult learners or the general public to provide an introduction to the 21st Century Skills and the process for earning badges. Assessment pages launch directly from NWoW website by clicking on the Learner Badge icons. Below is a screenshot of the Learner Badges series.

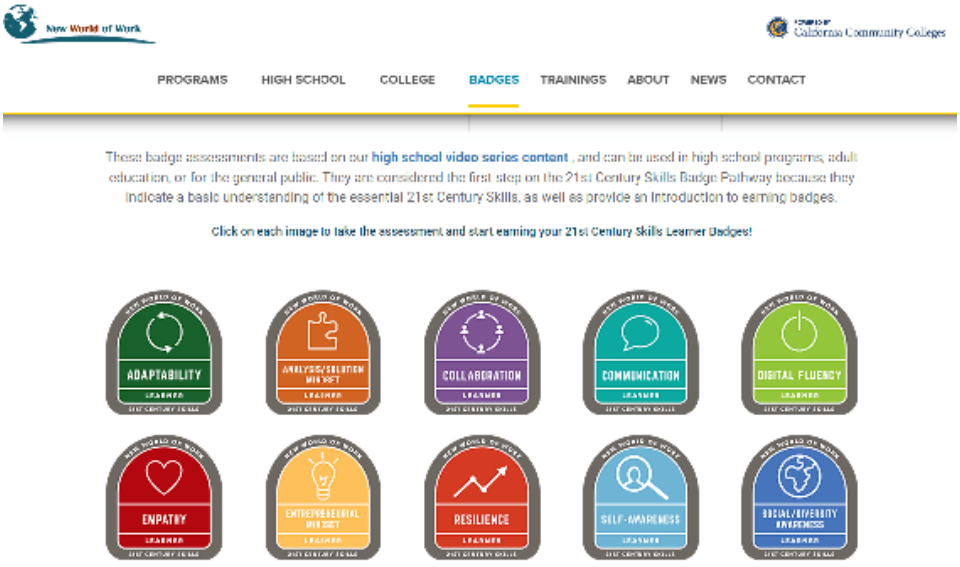


Figure 2.11 – 21st Century Skills Learner Badges (Image by New World of Work is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

. The Career Skills Courses offered through Continuing Education are FREE and available in an on ground and online format to meet the needs of diverse learners and all courses are open to the community! Completing the Career Skills training is a great way to show employers you are equipped with the skills necessary to be successful in today's workforce and allows you to earn digital badges you may post on your LinkedIn and social media profile.

One other benefit of the NWoW – 21st Century Skills Curriculum, is the **LinkedIn Crosswalk,** that provides the following:

- Partnership with LinkedIn to provide suggested next steps after each skill lesson
- Instructors and students can utilize the LinkedIn Learning/Lynda.com videos that have been crosswalked with NWoW skills to take a deeper dive into the traits of that skill

- Completion of these video courses generates certificates that can be hosted on LinkedIn profiles along with skills badges, school/alumni information.
- Also, Career Education students at COC who participate in the Continuing Education FREE Career Skills courses receive free Lynda.com access.

View the YouTube PBS News Hour video titled " Giving students a leg up with job skills a resume won't show" to learn more about digital badges and how they can help you be more marketable.



Figure 2.10 – Watch "Giving students a leg up with job skills a resume won't show" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGdHNtLlcrg)

Activity 2.5 – Identifying Your Skills[22]			
Self-identify your Top 5 transferable (soft) skills, skills you are good at, and those skills you wish to learn or develop further. Review the list of transferable skills list and additional checklist of transferable skills above to complete the chart below. Describe specific ways in which you have used each skill successfully. This will come in handy when we discuss interviewing strategies. Consider skills important to your career that you have not yet mastered and how you plan to master them. Give examples			
Number	Top 5 Skills I Enjoy Using	Top 5 Skills that Come Naturally	Top 5 Skills that I Want to Learn
1			
2			
3			
4			

5			

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3.6: Putting It All Together

you have completed in this unit. Record your findings in the chart below:

My Top 3 Work Values: 1. 2. 3. Name 2 career titles that you are most interest in that will allow you to express your values: 1. 2.	**My Occupational Code** based on Holland Codes (RIASEC Model – refer to your iStartStrong assessment results): ____ ____ ____ Name 2 career titles you are most interested in that will allow you to express your interests: 1. 2.
My top 5 Character Strengths: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. How will your character strengths contribute to your career success?	My Top 5 Transferable Skills 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. Name 2 career titles that you are most interested in that will allow you to utilize your skills**.** 1. 2.
My MBTI 4 Letter Personality Type: ____ ____ ____ ____ Name 2 career titles that you are most interested in that fit with your personality type. 1. 2.	My Additional Notes/Reflections: Common Themes.... Of all the career titles you have explored, which career would you be interested in researching more in-depth?

Take a moment and reflect on your findings:

- Did anything surprise you? Explain.
- Do you see any overlapping themes from your assessment results?
- How do your results confirm what you already know about yourself? Explain.
- How will this information guide you as you move into exploring Phase 2: “What’s Out There?” conducting career research, and researching industry expectations?

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4: FROM JOB SEARCH SUCCESS TO CAREER SUCCESS

4.1: How to Do Well in the Job You Have

4.2: How to Develop, Expand, and Maintain Professional Relationships

4.3: How to Steer Your Career Advancement

4.4: Employed in a Changing World

4.5: How to Get Your Next Job

4.6: Chapter Review and Exercises

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4.1: How to Do Well in the Job You Have

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how to maximize your first ninety days on the job.
2. Learn strategies for developing a good relationship with your boss.
3. Understand what success in your current job really means.

Table 12.1 gives an overview of some things you may want to address during your first few months of employment.

Table 4.1.1*: Your First Ninety Days On The Job*

Suggested Time	Items to Do
Before you start	• Return offer letter and work-related forms (e.g., I-9, W-2) • Confirm place and time to report on your first day
On your first day	• Meet your boss and immediate colleagues • Get security ID, computer passwords, phone and voice mail access • Find the bathroom, lunch spots, and other creature comforts • Understand your work deliverables for the short term
During your first week	• Complete employment paper work • Learn company policies and regulations • Meet colleagues in different departments • Debrief with your boss on your first week
During your first month	• Attend orientation sessions • Have lunch with different colleagues in your department and outside it • Debrief with your boss about your first month • Confirm your work deliverables for the first quarter
During your first ninety days	• Get feedback from your boss • Look into training opportunities or other support from your employer • Confirm your work deliverables for the next quarter, half year, and year • Continue to debrief with your boss, network with colleagues

Make the Most of Your Onboarding Support during Your First Ninety Days

When you are new, it is a good time to ask questions and meet people. Unless you are coming into a leadership situation where people will be looking to you for guidance immediately, take advantage of your newness to collect as much information as possible. Introduce yourself to **human resources (HR)** and get their advice on where you should focus to get acculturated

quickly to the new organization. Remember that HR has **onboarded** many people before you, so they should have some good advice about how to get started smoothly. Ask your boss to introduce you to the people you should know. It is ideal that people are aware you were recently hired and are starting that day, but sometimes it's a surprise, so be ready to introduce yourself and tell people about your background and what you will be doing.

You might be starting at the same time as several other people. Think of a school that has a well-defined academic calendar and therefore may have all the new teachers start on the same day. You might be offered specific onboarding training programs. One school sent its new hires the school newsletter for a few months before they started so they could feel they were a part of the school before they got there.

Learn How Your Employer Runs Its Business

In addition to meeting key people, you must coordinate practical logistics. paper work must be filled out, including tax forms (e.g., **W-2**) and work authorization forms (e.g., **I-9**). You may have to sign a form that confirms you've read the company policy manual. Don't forget to consult the organization's policy manual regardless of whether it's required reading. By doing so, you know any specific rules around start and end time (continuing our school example from earlier, not every school starts and ends at the same time), breaks, dress code, access to computers and other supplies, and so forth. You may need to get an identification card or keys to the office.

You also want to get accustomed to the physical environment. Confirm where to go on your first day; don't just assume that area will be where you normally work. Sometimes large companies have several offices, and an orientation for new hires might be located in a different area. Know where the bathroom is located. Know where the cafeteria is located or get lunch spot recommendations. Know where to find office supplies. Don't underestimate the value of being comfortable. Some companies set up a workspace for you with computer, telephone, and other equipment you will need. If this isn't the case, arrange for these resources as soon as possible so you can start contributing on the job. Know whom to call for IT or telephone support; perhaps the organization has put together a list of frequently used phone extensions.

Remember the school that onboarded its new teachers by including them in the newsletter distribution list even before they joined? This school used particular grading software and an intranet to share lesson plans. If you are a new teacher there, you would want to make sure you have access to the system and will get training on how to use it.

Learn What Success on the Job Means

From day one, you need to get down to work. Get clear about what you need to deliver from your work that day, that week, that month, that quarter. Will you shadow another teacher first? For how long will you train, if at all, before taking over the job (or in this case, the classroom)? Will you use existing lesson plans—that is, how much structure will you be given?

It is best to ask your questions before you start or when you are new. Ask your boss rather than a colleague so you know officially what to do. Get specific recommendations from your boss about how best to learn about the work—for example, who customers are, how specific forms get filled out, what software to use. Confirm to whom you should go for questions. It may be your boss, but he or she may select a colleague to train you. Find out about upcoming deadlines or special projects that insiders might be aware of but that they may forget to mention. Maybe the school where you teach collects data on the students after the first thirty days of school, and you need to be tracking specific things more closely or in a format different from what you anticipated.

Learn How Your Boss Likes to Work

Once you know what you should be doing day to day and for the next few weeks, you want to confirm with your boss how to keep him or her updated. People like to communicate in different ways. Live, telephone, or e-mail are all possible forms of communication. Find out what your boss prefers.

Find out how frequently you should update him or her. Only when you have a question? Once a day? Once a week? After a project or task is completed?

Confirm what type of update he or she would like. A quick summary? A more detailed report? Do you need to send a meeting request in Outlook for a specific time each week?

Find out how you will get feedback. The company policy manual may have information about formal performance reviews, but these are typically done once or twice each year. You will want more frequent feedback even informally so you know what you are doing well (and continue doing this) and what you need to develop (so you can work on this). Check in with your boss after your first week to let him or her know how you are feeling about your job (e.g., workload, what you've completed, outstanding questions), and ask for feedback then. You can also confirm how often he or she would like to discuss your performance going forward.

Don't forget to bring paper and pen or an electronic tool for taking notes during meetings with the boss and others. A common newbie mistake is to try and retain all of the information from a meeting without taking notes. You will miss something. While it's fine to ask clarifying questions, it looks like you weren't paying attention if you ask about something that was already covered. You want to bring your own note-taking supplies because asking for a paper and pen, rather than bringing your own, makes you look unprepared.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Start strong by taking advantage of onboarding support new employees typically get, such as time with HR on new hire training programs.
- Take care of practical logistics, such as paper work and learning your physical environment.
- Get confirmation about exactly what you need to get done day one, week one, month one, and the first quarter.
- Develop a good relationship with your boss by being available for updates and asking for feedback.

Exercises

1. For the jobs that you are targeting, research if they provide new hire training or other onboarding support. Ask people who have worked at organizations in which you are interested. Try to get a feel for what you can expect.
2. If you have a friend who works in one of your target companies, look at the policy manual so you can get familiar with the workday, dress code, and so forth.
3. You know you will need to adjust your communication style to your boss, but you also want to be clear on what you need. How do you like to communicate? Think back to projects that you worked on—do you plan by the day, week, or longer? Are more or less frequent check-ins helpful?
4. Look at a job description for a job that you want. How would you translate this to specific actions you would want to do in day one, week one, month one, and the first quarter? If you are unable to outline specific actions (and for most job descriptions, you won't because they are written very generally), what do you need to know to confirm specific actions?

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4.2: How to Develop, Expand, and Maintain Professional Relationships

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the three types of mentors to develop.
2. Learn how to find a mentor and be a good mentee.
3. Learn other relationships to cultivate outside your immediate boss and mentors.
4. Get strategies for relationship building.



Get a Mentor Who Is Not Your Boss (Get Several)

Most of you have experienced the value of mentors because you already have had someone in your life—a family member or a teacher—who has guided and supported you. While your boss can guide and support you professionally, it is ideal to get mentorship beyond your boss for several reasons:

- You want to be able to ask questions freely and share doubts and concerns. Sometimes it's perfectly fine to ask questions of your immediate boss, but sometimes you will want to test an idea or probe an issue before bringing it up to the person who decides your next project, promotion, and raise.
- You benefit from multiple perspectives. Your boss's immediate concern is the performance of his or her team and area. You want to have someone who can be a more objective outsider and is not too close to the situation.
- You establish a relationship outside your immediate area and can therefore learn more about the organization and expand your reach. It's important to know what is going on in the organization as a whole, and a mentor can provide valuable information.

Don't try to develop a mentor relationship with your boss's boss. This can be awkward because your boss might think you are trying to leapfrog or exclude him or her. In addition, you lose the ability to talk more candidly. Regardless of how objectively you try to state things, if you are raising a concern or even a question about your boss, it denigrates him or her in the eyes of the person who assigns your boss the next project, promotion, or raise.

You do not need to have just one mentor. It is unrealistic to think that one person has the time or knowledge to provide all the coaching and support you need. Consider cultivating three types of mentors:

- **Guardian angel**
- **Shepherd**
- **Board of directors**

A guardian angel is what most people think of when they hear the word, “mentor.” A guardian angel is your supporter and protector. Typically, a guardian angel is two or more levels above you to have the credibility and experience to help you. Your guardian angel looks out for plum assignments that might be beneficial to your career. Your guardian angel is experienced in how to be successful at the organization and can advise you on pitfalls to avoid or opportunities to take advantage of. If you have questions about troubleshooting a sticky office situation, your guardian angel will be able to help. For our new teacher in the earlier example, his guardian angel might be a senior teacher or even administrator. This person might propose learning tools or conferences the new teacher could use or attend. This guardian angel also might suggest the new teacher for a committee or other special assignment to raise his profile at the school.

A shepherd is typically not much more senior and may even be more junior to you. A shepherd knows the ins and outs of the organization and can guide you. We all know someone who is the social epicenter of a particular group. For your professional workplace, that is a shepherd who can help shortcut your learning curve. The shepherd knows who is influential, who might be trouble, and who is the best person to talk to for a variety of requests. The shepherd would be a good person with whom to brainstorm about possible other mentors. For our new teacher in the earlier example, his shepherd might be another teacher at the school, who doesn’t need to be of a similar subject or grade, but someone more connected to the culture of the school and who can share the inside scoop.

A board of directors for a company (or **board of trustees** for a nonprofit) is typically composed of people with different backgrounds and expertise—finance, legal, human resources (HR), operations, marketing, and so forth. The board provides a resource for advice and counsel to the company or nonprofit in a variety of areas. Similarly, you will need advice and counsel on a variety of areas—career advancement, communication and presentation, work and life balance, career change, and so forth. No one person will be an expert in all issues. Instead of relying on one person, it would be helpful to cultivate a board of directors, each with a specific area of expertise important to you. It is ideal to have mentors both inside and outside your organization and even industry. This way, you have a diversity of perspectives. The new teacher might get mentorship from another teacher of a similar subject or grade to provide pedagogical advice. If he has an interest in using more multimedia or innovative teaching approaches, he might ask for guidance from a teacher outside his subject area who knows a lot about audiovisual technology. Even a school operations staff member might be a member of this teacher’s “board” to inform him how the school functions.

To Attract Good Mentors, Be a Good Mentee

Mentorships are close relationships, so it is ideal when they develop naturally. Sometimes, organizations have formal mentor programs, and these are great resources for meeting people and sometimes for establishing mentorships. But don’t rely on a formal mentor program because your employer might not have one or the match you get may not be ideal. Instead, be proactive and use the following tips to help you seek your own mentors:

- Think about what you need and want in your mentors.
- Meet with different people who may fit your ideal to see if a relationship develops.
- Try to expand the relationship to meet more frequently or discuss things more deeply.
- Be responsive and helpful to your mentors.

When you are just starting in an organization, find a shepherd to give you a lay of the land. You need to get acclimated to your new environment. Then think about your goals for next year, two years out, and so forth, and think about what you need to know or what skills you need to develop. This gives you an indication of where you may benefit from mentorship.

Identify people in whom you are genuinely interested who might be able to provide advice and counsel toward your goals. Meet with them for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. If you can work on a project with them, that is another way to start a relationship. You should not automatically assume someone will agree to mentor you or would even be a good mentor. Right now, you just want to see who you enjoy being with and who can also provide the mentorship you seek.

For those people who might be possible mentors to you, you do not need to ask them as formally as you would a marriage proposal—that is, no bended knee before saying, “Will you mentor me?” Instead, let them know that their advice and insights in past conversations have been helpful and ask if you can reach out to them on a more regular basis to continue the conversations. Sometimes people will say they don’t have the time to commit to something regularly, but sometimes people will be flattered and enthusiastic. You will need to meet with many people before finding the right mentors, so don’t be concerned if your first efforts

are not fruitful. At the very least, you are meeting people and practicing networking and relationship building.

When you do secure a mentor, you want to be a good mentee. Mentorship is a relationship, so you are equally responsible for its success. You are initiating the relationship, so be mindful of how the mentor likes to communicate and at what frequency. Is it better for him or her to meet at breakfast or after work, rather than during the day? Does your mentor want to have a sit-down meeting with an agenda or a quick conversation when you both have the time? Be proactive about scheduling the meetings so that the mentor isn't doing the work to maintain the relationship.

Get to know your mentor as a whole person. Find ways to be helpful to him or her. Many mentors enter these relationships because they want to give back. At the very least, let your mentor know about the impact he or she is making by providing results updates—what happened when you took the advice they gave? If you know your mentor has a specific hobby or interest, find a helpful article or recommendation to support that interest.

Remember that your needs and your mentor's availability change over time. Mentorships evolve, so if you find that you have less to discuss and the relationship has run its course, schedule less frequent meetings. Turn the mentorship into a friendship, and steer the discussions more personally or outside the question-advice format. Treat your mentorships like two-way relationships with give and take.

Develop Professional Relationships with Different Companies, Departments, and Levels

A strong professional network is not just about mentorships. You also have colleagues who provide emotional support and more direct support, perhaps, on joint projects. You may be in a role that has customers. You may be working with consultants or vendors. Your job may require you to partner with other organizations. For your own knowledge and expertise, it is helpful to know about organizations and people outside your own employer. Organizations evolve over time, so it is helpful to know people at all levels—your peer could become your manager, or you may be asked to lead a team composed of peers.

Knowing people in different departments, at all levels, both inside and outside your employer, ensures that you have a diversity in perspectives about your role, your organization, and your industry. You may have a very specific role right now, but as your responsibilities expand, you will likely have to work with more and more people. It is helpful to establish relationships before you are forced to work together.

Our new teacher would want to know people in his school but also in other schools. If he teaches in a public school, it would be helpful to know people in independent, charter, and other schools. People in the school's administrative department or other school governing body would also be helpful contacts. Academics and experts in education, donors and supporters of education organizations, and parent organizers are other potential contacts for a teacher.

Be Proactive in Your Outreach, Communication, and Follow-Up

You need to be thoughtful and proactive about relationship-building to have quality relationships with mentors, colleagues in different departments, colleagues at different levels, and people outside your employer:

- Set aside specific time to expand your professional network.
- Work on your communication skills and style.
- Follow up over time to ensure relationships develop naturally and are not rushed.

People are busy, and you are busy. If you wait for an opportune time to start building your network, you will not find one. There is no urgency to day-to-day networking, so it will be set aside for a later time that never comes. Instead, schedule a few hours each week with the goal of expanding your professional network. You might set aside one lunch hour per week to eat with a different colleague. You might join a professional association and attend their meetings and mixers. One new teacher volunteered to be her school's union representative. She wanted to learn about the union, and though she was new, she was the only one who volunteered, so it was great exposure in her very first year. You might play on your employer's softball league. You might volunteer to organize the office holiday party. Many opportunities exist to meet a diverse mix of professionals both inside and outside your employer, but you have to consciously set aside the time to do this.

Are you comfortable introducing yourself to people and telling them what you do? Networking is one of the six job search steps, so you probably have worked on your networking pitch to get a job, but in the daily work context, your pitch is about what you do

now. Plan and practice what you will say.

If the thought of joining a professional association and going to meetings makes you uncomfortable, consider joining with a more extroverted buddy. The softball league or a volunteer committee might provide a structured outlet for your networking. Find a colleague who isn't shy and ask them to introduce you to people. People are often very happy to help and may not realize you are shy. Let your boss know that you are trying to meet people, and ask him or her to introduce you to people.

Once you meet people, make time to maintain and expand relationships over time. It is impossible to schedule regular live contact with everyone in your professional network—colleagues, customers, vendors, management, former colleagues (as you progress in your career), and people in your related function or industry. However, you can keep in touch with phone calls and e-mails. The same spirit of generosity applies as you expand and deepen relationships—maintain contact without asking for anything in return.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Mentors are an important part of your professional network to provide advice and a sounding board for ideas and concerns.
- Do not use your boss or your boss's boss as your mentor, so you can candidly speak about your issues and get an objective, outside perspective.
- Several types of mentors are available: guardian angel, shepherd, and board of directors. Ideally, you have several mentors.
- You develop strong mentorships naturally by meeting with people and letting relationships grow. Be a good mentee by being proactive and flexible about scheduling, and by being responsive to your mentor's needs.
- In addition to mentors, you want to develop relationships with people at all levels, in different departments, and inside and outside your company.
- Build relationships proactively by setting aside time to meet people and practicing how you will introduce yourself.

Exercises

1. Do you currently have mentors in your life? Pick one area of your life that you wish to improve, and try to find a mentor for that area.
2. Think about your one-year, two-year, and longer-term goals. What areas do you already know would benefit from some mentoring? Think about who might be ideal mentors for those areas. Can you start meeting these people now? Remember that you want to have mentors both inside and outside your employer, so you can start even before you are hired.
3. Look at the suggestions for building your professional network and decide which ones appeal to you. If the idea of a membership group appeals to you, can you join something now? Professional associations often have student chapters or other groups for people new to the career.

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4.3: How to Steer Your Career Advancement

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn strategies to practice good career management while still focusing on your day-to-day job.
2. Understand the outline and learn how to maximize a performance review meeting.
3. Understand when and how to ask for a promotion.
4. Understand when and how to ask for a raise.



Career Management Goes Beyond Your Day-to-Day Job

When you think about "your job," you might picture the tasks you do every day—clocking in, completing assignments, following policies, and working in your physical environment. But your job is only *one part* of your overall work experience. You also navigate professional relationships, workplace culture, expectations, and—most importantly—your long-term career goals.

Your **day-to-day job** and your **overall career** are connected, but they are *not* the same thing.

🧩 Your Day-to-Day Job

Your day-to-day job is what you were hired to do **right now**. It includes:

- Completing your regular tasks
- Meeting performance expectations
- Building a good relationship with your current supervisor
- Understanding company policies and procedures

This is the foundation of your professional life. Being reliable and effective today is what creates opportunities for tomorrow.

🚀 Your Overall Career

Your career includes:

- Your current job
- Your future jobs
- The skills you build along the way
- The professional reputation you develop
- The goals you're working toward

Career management means staying **marketable**, adaptable, and prepared for roles that may look very different from the one you have today.

Maximizing Your Performance Review Meeting

(How to confidently showcase your work + get the feedback you need to grow)

Feedback is one of the strongest indicators that you're mastering your job. A performance review—whether formal or informal—helps you understand how well you're doing, where you shine, and what you can improve. Learning to navigate this process is a key part of managing your career, not just your job.

📝 Understanding the Performance Review Process

Many organizations use **formal evaluation systems**, where your supervisor (and sometimes colleagues or clients) complete a review form. These forms assess:

- **Technical skills**
- **Communication skills**
- **Professional relationships**
- **Work habits & reliability**

👉 **Pro tip:** When you start a new job, ask:

- *Does the company have a review process?*
- *How often are reviews given?*
- *Can I see the evaluation form?*

Knowing the criteria early helps you understand exactly how you will be evaluated.

🔔 When a Review Isn't Happening... Ask for One

Not all managers follow formal timelines. Some workplaces have no written system at all. If you aren't receiving structured feedback, **you must advocate for yourself**.

- Schedule a meeting with your supervisor
- Explain you would like to talk about your performance

- Share your goals for improvement and professional growth

Short check-ins are helpful, but they **do not replace** a full review. A dedicated meeting gives you space to reflect, clarify expectations, and plan ahead.

📚 What to Cover in a Performance Review

A strong performance conversation should include these **four key topics**:

1. Your current work + accomplishments

Share updates, completed tasks, and wins since your last review.

2. Priorities for the next few months

Confirm what your supervisor sees as the most important work moving forward.

3. Your strengths

Discuss what you're doing well so you know what to continue and build on.

4. Areas for improvement

Talk openly about skills or behaviors to develop—along with strategies to help you grow.

Don't Assume Your Boss Knows Everything You Do

Many jobs change quickly—projects shift, teams reorganize, or you may take on extra responsibilities. Supervisors often oversee many employees and tasks, so they may not realize how much you've contributed.

Example:
A junior accountant might officially be part of a project team, but if the manager stepped away temporarily, she may have stepped up and handled major tasks.
If she doesn't mention it, her boss may not know she went above and beyond.

👉 **Come prepared with:**

- A list of your responsibilities
- A record of your accomplishments
- Examples of challenges you handled
- Any additional duties you took on

🎧 Listen Carefully to Your Supervisor's Feedback

Your view of your work may not match your supervisor's. This is your chance to:

- Clarify misunderstandings
- Align expectations

- Ensure you're prioritizing the right tasks

Maybe you're spending lots of time on highly detailed reports, but your boss wants you to spend more time building relationships with clients—or vice versa.

The goal: leave with a clear, shared understanding of what success looks like.

Ask About Your Strengths

Performance reviews aren't only about correcting weaknesses. Knowing your strengths helps you:

- Build confidence
- Understand what to lean into
- Decide what work to pursue more often
- Develop your unique professional style

Example:
A new teacher might not realize he's especially effective at mixing lecture, group work, and independent learning—until an instructional coach highlights it. Now he knows to keep using that strategy.

Addressing Weaknesses the Right Way

When discussing areas of improvement:

- Stay open-minded
- Avoid getting defensive
- Ask for specific examples
- Request suggestions for improvement

Then ask:

- *Is there a project I can join to build this skill?*
- *Is there training available?*
- *Can we schedule check-ins to track progress?*

Example:
If an accountant struggled with a particular industry's regulations, her boss might recommend a training course or assign another project in the same specialty for practice.

🔄 When There Are Big Gaps in Understanding

If you and your supervisor have very different views about your performance, priorities, or strengths:

- Summarize what you heard
- Confirm expectations

- Ask for examples
- Schedule a follow-up meeting
- Increase your regular check-ins

Consistent alignment means you know exactly how success is measured.

🎯 Bottom Line

Maximizing your performance review is about **preparation**, **honest reflection**, and **open communication**. This process helps you:

- Strengthen your current job performance
- Build better relationships with supervisors
- Identify areas for skill development
- Position yourself for future opportunities

Your performance review isn't just about the past—it's a roadmap for your future career growth.

When and How to Ask for a Raise

Understanding timing, strategy, and how to advocate for your value

Asking for a raise can feel intimidating—but it's a normal part of career growth. Raises and promotions sometimes happen together, but they aren't the same. A **raise** increases your pay, while a **promotion** changes your role. Many workplaces offer scheduled raises, but there are times when it's appropriate to request one yourself.

📅 When Raises Typically Happen

Organizations generally follow one of these systems:

1. Annual Raises

- Given every year, often tied to your start date or at the same time for all employees
- Sometimes prorated in your first year

2. COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment)

- Raises based on inflation
- Designed to keep wages aligned with living costs

3. Performance-Based Raises

- Determined by your results, evaluations, or metrics
- Common in sales, project-based work, and roles with measurable targets

👉 **Your first step:** Learn your company's raise process so you know how decisions are made.

When It Makes Sense to Ask for a Raise

You don't always have to wait for the annual cycle. It may be appropriate to request a raise if:

Your job has significantly expanded

- You're handling more tasks than you were hired for
- You are taking on responsibilities typically done by higher-level roles

You have strong new results or impact

- Major projects completed
- Improved performance metrics
- Demonstrated leadership or unique contributions

💵 The market has shifted

If salary data shows your role is being paid much higher elsewhere, it may be time to discuss alignment.

> **Tip:** Market data should support your case—not be used as a threat.

Raise vs. Bonus

Raises increase your salary permanently.
Bonuses are **one-time** payments.

If the extra work you're doing is temporary, your employer may avoid adjusting your salary long-term. In those cases, a **spot bonus** could be a better fit.

Remember:
⭐ Going "above and beyond" is great—but it doesn't automatically justify more pay.
Raises and bonuses are usually reserved for **extraordinary, sustained** impact.

How to Prepare for a Raise Conversation

Just like a performance review, preparation is everything. Show up ready with:

✔️ A list of accomplishments

Include concrete examples, results, and contributions since your last review.

✔️ Evidence of increased responsibilities

Describe how your role has grown or changed.

✔️ Market salary research

Use trusted sources (government data, salary surveys, professional associations).

✔️ A positive tone

Your approach should be confident—but not confrontational.

🗣️ How to Talk About the Raise

When you meet with your supervisor, keep your tone positive and professional.

Use phrases like:

- "I really enjoy my role here and want to continue contributing."
- "I'd like to discuss how my responsibilities have expanded."
- "Based on my recent accomplishments, I'd like to talk about adjusting my salary."
- "I've gathered some market data that I'd love to share with you."

Avoid:

- Ultimatums
- Threatening to quit
- Comparing yourself to coworkers

You want your employer to see you as committed—not frustrated or demanding.

Bottom Line

Asking for a raise isn't about pressure—it's about **advocating for your worth**. With the right timing, strong evidence, and professional communication, you can confidently start the conversation and increase your chances of success.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Doing well on your job is but one part of overall career management. You also want to look at your future goals and make sure that you develop the training, experience, and relationships necessary to reach these goals.
- Some organizations have formal processes for giving performance reviews, assigning promotions, and granting raises. You want to know what is customary for your organization.
- If your organization does not have official processes for performance reviews, promotions, or raises, you will want to schedule time to discuss these with your boss.
- Regular performance feedback is critical to ensure you are doing a good job and are on track for your career goals. Promotions and raises are not a regular occurrence, but are for extraordinary contributions, such as if your responsibilities increase or you have exceptional results in your work.

Exercises

1. Aside from doing well in your first job, what are your career goals? Write your autobiography from the point of view of twenty

years from now. Yes, you will have to make assumptions and outright guess for some things, but let your imagination explore what you'd like to say you accomplished. Then work backward to explore how you might get that career. When did you get your first promotion? How is a promotion defined—a bigger role, managing people, better scores, higher sales, or some other measure? Do you go to graduate school—for what and when? Look at the profiles for people who have the career you want and see what their career trajectory looks like.
2. If you have a sense of your long-term career goals, plot out what you can do in your first year to move toward these goals. If you know graduate school may be in the future, set reminders for yourself to check on the status of recommendations—are you working closely enough with people who can provide recommendations down the line? What professional organization might you want to join?
3. For the jobs you are targeting, talk to professional associations and people who have those jobs about what is customary regarding performance reviews, promotions, and raises.

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4.4: Employed in a Changing World

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the signs of a potential layoff.
2. Get strategies for how to handle a layoff and move on to a new job.



The recent high unemployment numbers underscore that an important part of career success is staying employed even when the economy is difficult. The first three sections we covered in this chapter all contribute to securing your job:

- Doing well in your daily work increases your value for that job.
- Maintaining open communication and a good relationship with your boss ensures that you stay positively in mind if layoff decisions need to be made.
- Having a broad professional network means other people may support your case.
- Being mindful of career advancement helps because organizations like to keep strong performers.

However, sometimes even good workers get laid off. Companies buy or merge with other companies, and this often means there will be overlap—for example, two human resources (HR) departments, two accounting departments, and so forth. The new company may not need or have a place for everybody. Organizations may close their doors altogether. Enron, Bear Stearns, Lehman Brothers, and several nonprofits with money invested with Bernie Madoff closed quickly, without any warning in some cases. Therefore, knowing that layoffs can happen through no fault of your own, you want to be able to see the warning signs (so you have more time to react) and manage a layoff so you get the most support and momentum to move on to a new job

Watch for Warning Signs before a Layoff

It's hard to predict the exact timing of a layoff, but certain events indicate that you should start paying closer attention to the health of your organization and the security of your job:

- Changes in the economy
- Changes in industry
- Changes in an organization's financial standing
- Changes in management
- Changes in behavior of managers, coworkers, and subordinates
- Changes in job responsibilities

- Changes in performance feedback

If the overall economy is stagnant or depressed, repercussions are felt throughout many industries. Public schools are impacted by state budget cuts. Hospitals face shrinking federal funds. Nonprofit **endowments** decrease and, subsequently, so do their operating budgets. Consumers spend less, so retail stores have lower sales and lower revenues. Businesses have less money to spend on advertising, technology, consulting, and other business services. If the economy takes a hit, your employer likely takes a hit. If the economy suffers a deep blow, it might be enough to threaten your employer's ability to maintain its workforce.

Sometimes specific industries are hit especially hard. Housing has undergone a recent contraction, so mortgage services, builders, housing-related equipment and supplies, and other real estate-related companies are struggling. If you hear that your employer's competitors aren't doing well or that your broader industry isn't doing well, follow the news more closely. If an industry your employer serves isn't doing well, that impacts you just as directly. For example, when car companies were having financial trouble, the advertising agencies that relied heavily on automotive company business also were hard hit. The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics tracks hundreds of different jobs and gives estimates on future job prospects for that role.

You may be tempted to disregard your organization's internal memos, newsletters, or even annual report, but it is a good idea to stay current with your organization's health. Is it profitable? Does it have a **diversified** customer base—that is, a lot of different customers, so you are not relying on any one group? Is your employer growing? Is the growth related to your job, or is it in a different geography or different functional area?

If your organization's management changes, that is a sign to follow your work environment and prospects more closely. It is customary for a new executive team to want to bring in their own people. If you are new to your career and many levels below the executive team, this may not affect you now, but it's something to remember as you advance upward in your career. In addition, if your immediate boss changes, the new boss may want to bring in his or her own team, and that does affect you, regardless of how junior you are.

Earlier in this chapter, we talked about keeping open communication, developing relationships, and getting feedback. You want to do this on a regular basis because changes in the behavior of your boss or colleagues (or team when you start managing others), as well as changes in your responsibilities or your performance feedback should be watched closely. You want to have time to turn things around if you discover people are not happy with your work. If you can't ameliorate the situation where you are, you want to have time to look for your next opportunity and leave on your own terms.

Improve Your Situation If You Do Get Laid Off

A layoff doesn't have to mean you did a bad job. If you are let go for performance-based reasons, by all means learn from that. If you are fired because you didn't get along with your boss or coworkers, try to establish better relationships at your next job because professional relationships are important. If you were laid off due to a bad economy, restructuring, or other external reason, let the job go and focus on moving on to your next job.

To make the most out of a layoff situation, you can take action steps at different stages:

- During the termination process
- Before your final day with the organization
- After you leave the organization

Manage the Termination Process

Layoff scenarios will vary based on how much lead time the organization has to prepare and how many resources it has to support the layoff. A small business with few employees will handle layoffs differently than a large, global company with thousands of affected employees. The following is a roadmap for managing the termination process in a large organization that has resources to provide support for laid-off employees.

Once a layoff is announced, you will meet with HR to discuss the terms of your **severance** and your end date. Prepare for this meeting by reviewing your organization's manual and any information about the severance policy. Some questions to consider include the following:

- How is severance pay calculated (typically by years of service, but additional compensation is sometimes given after long tenure, if little warning is given, or if many employees are affected)?
- What happens to bonuses or other compensation that haven't been paid yet?
- What happens to retirement benefits that still need to **vest**?
- What health coverage and other benefits are available?

Ideally, you have a friend in HR who can explain the policies to you before the termination meeting so you know what to expect and what you want to negotiate if you need more than the policy dictates. Severance packages are negotiable.

During the termination meeting, listen closely and take notes. Fully understand the severance package being offered. Ask questions if anything is unclear. Agree to get terms of the severance package in writing. Schedule a follow-up meeting for after you have a chance to review these items. Do not negotiate yet because you want to take time to prepare.

Remember that the organization probably regrets having to lay you off and wants to help you. Once you have received your offer, check what is customary for organizations similar in size and in your industry. You might want to negotiate for some of the following items:

- More severance pay
- Longer health-care coverage
- Payout for bonuses accrued up to your end date
- Immediate vesting of your retirement benefits
- **Outplacement** or career coaching to help get your next job
- Payouts for unused vacation, sick, or personal days
- An end date further out (Your end date may determine things like bonus pay, retirement vesting, and even accrued vacation days, so the further out your end date, the more you might accrue.)

Secure Your Relationships before You Leave the Organization

Collect contact information for the people with whom you'd like to keep in touch. Don't forget to share your personal contact information because most of your colleagues are used to reaching you at your work e-mail. Arrange with the IT department to have an automatic reply to your work e-mail that enables people who are trying to reach you specifically to have access to your personal information. If you do not want to share your personal information with everyone who may contact you at work, create a temporary account on Gmail or Yahoo! specifically for this forwarding purpose. Have the temporary Gmail or Yahoo! account forward to your primary personal e-mail and then you can decide if you want to share your information at that time.

Thank your boss, management, colleagues, and direct reports. Even if you are not personal friends with all these people, you may need them for references or job leads. For people whom you know you want for references, ask them while you are still on staff so you can do so personally. Get their personal contact information, in case they get laid off, too, or otherwise leave the company. Collaborate with your boss on what details of your layoff will be distributed both inside and outside the organization. You want to make sure you have a consistent and positive story.

Check with HR to see if there are consulting opportunities within the organization or openings at **subsidiaries** or partners of the organization. Find out if a formal process is necessary to submit your résumé or arrange interviews.

Some organizations require that you leave your office the same day you are laid off. You may not have time to take all the preceding steps. If you know this is a possibility where you work (check what is customary for your industry and also how your organization handled layoffs in the past), make sure you have personal contact information well before any danger signs are visible. Make sure you can quickly pack your office and take what you need. Do not keep your personal contacts only on your office computer or office phone because you might not have enough time to pull these contacts off before you lose company access to this information.

Get Ready to Start Your Search Right after You Leave the Organization

It's fine to take time off to recharge, but don't mistake your severance period for a paid vacation. Use that time to start your job search while you still have a cash cushion. Don't wait until you are running out of money and then cram in an anxious and desperate job search.

Run your numbers on how much cash cushion you have (given severance, savings, and so forth) to give you a timetable for your job search. A proactive job search typically takes three to six months. If you need money coming in sooner, you might want to build in time for temporary or consulting work in addition to your job search.

Your job search is now your full-time job. Schedule time for specific job search activities. Prioritize your job search so you are not tempted to spend this new "free time" reorganizing your house or doing non-career-related projects.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Changes in the broad economy, your industry, your organization's financials or management, or the feedback you are getting may signal a potential layoff.
- If you do get laid off, manage your termination process to get the maximum support to which you are entitled.
- Before you leave an organization, collect contact information and say thank you. Relationships with your former employer are still important.
- Don't wait too long to start your job search, so you won't feel rushed or pressured to land a job right away.

Exercises

1. Start the habit of following the broad economy and your target industry. Add *The Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, *Fortune*, *BusinessWeek*, or other general business publications to your reading list.
2. Compose a checklist for yourself with what you need in a layoff situation so that when you start your new job, you have it as a reference tool. Remind yourself to keep personal contact information somewhere other than just on your professional equipment. Remind yourself to review your organization policies and build relationships with HR before you need them.

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4.5: How to Get Your Next Job

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the signs of when you might want to start looking.
2. Get strategies for how to look for a new job while you still have one.

Your Career Is a Succession of Jobs

In the beginning of this chapter, we introduced the notion that your career is a succession of jobs. So you should start your career fully expecting to hold multiple jobs. Even if you stay at the same organization, your job within the organization will change:

- You may take on increased responsibility. The schoolteacher becomes a grade or department chair, then an instructional coach, and then perhaps an administrator. The accountant becomes a project manager and then a client relationship manager.
- You may change focus on a different specialty or area of expertise. The schoolteacher moves from an elementary grade to middle school, or from one subject to another. The accountant who worked in the financial services practice moves to the technology practice and works with different clients.
- You may work for a different part of the organization. The schoolteacher at a public school may decide to work in the Department of Education (effectively school headquarters). In this way, he is still in education but working centrally across schools on operations, curriculum design, or another central role. The accountant may move from client-facing work to a central role helping the overall firm. She might focus on marketing, using her firsthand accounting knowledge to get published and speak at conferences as a representative of the firm. She might focus on human resources (HR), becoming a recruiter for the firm.

Your own organization is a possible source of future jobs, so you should know your organization much more broadly than your current job. Know the different departments. Know the different clients and constituents your organization serves. If your organization is part of a larger group or has partners or subsidiaries, get to know these as well. You want to know the structure, what types of jobs are available, and the protocol for moving from one part of the organization to another. Some organizations have very clear rules about applying for internal jobs—for example, you need to get your current boss's permission before applying; you need to apply through HR or use another special application.

Multiple Options Exist If You Want to Change Organizations

Staying in your current organization is not your only option. Keep in mind, however, that in the beginning of your career, it is valuable to establish a track record. Staying at a job for one year or longer has value in the duration itself because you show that you have staying power and can follow through. People change jobs more frequently now, so prospective employers are not as critical when they see various employers on a résumé. However, multiple short stints of two years or fewer raise a red flag for employers that you might leave them just as quickly, or are otherwise unable to last. Recruiting and onboarding is expensive and time consuming, so prospective employers shy away from candidates who might be a flight risk.

That said, several signs might show that you have outgrown your current organization:

- You are no longer challenged, and your organization is too small for you to make a **lateral move** into other areas.
- You want to focus on a different specialty or skill set than you can in your current organization.
- You want to relocate, and the organization is not present in your new geography.
- You have a business idea and decide to work for yourself.

Each of these options represents a different type of opportunity and therefore a different search.

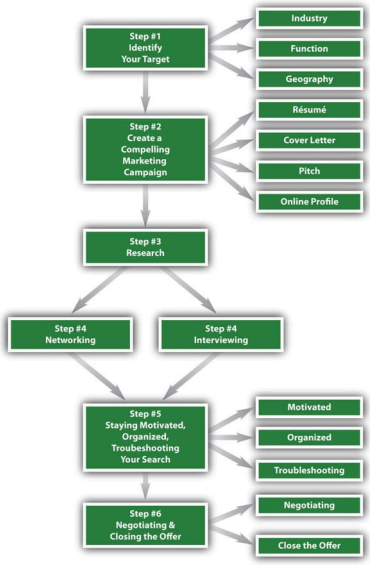
If you are leaving for a challenge, then your search needs to focus on jobs with broader responsibility or expertise requirements than you have now. Be clear on how you will measure the amount of challenge: Are you looking to manage a team? Are you looking to have responsibility for a budget or finances? Are you looking to learn a specific skill? Your ability to define specifically what

you want in your next job will enable you to search for those opportunities in a targeted way.

If you want to focus on a different specialty, skill, or geography, then you want a career change. You are not just taking the outline of your job and moving it into the context of another organization. Rather, you are changing a fundamental piece of it—industry, function, or geography.

If you are leaving to go into business for yourself, this is also a career change from traditional employment to entrepreneurship. You will have the day-to-day job as well as sales, marketing, operations, finance, and all functions of running a business. The schoolteacher who decides to open a tutoring service will still be teaching but also will need to market his services, sell to prospective parents, bill his hours, collect money, balance his books, and so forth. The accountant who opens a private practice similarly has to market, sell, and run operations of an accounting firm, in addition to accounting.

Revisiting the Six Steps Will Help You Launch a Thoughtful, Proactive Search



The job search always starts with targeting so that you can customize each subsequent step to your target. Once you have determined how your next job is defined, you can move through each of the same six steps you used to get this first job.

Remember to update your marketing materials to reflect everything you have accomplished in this new job. It is good practice to update your résumé on an ongoing basis even when you are not considering a new job. Whenever you complete a new project, take on additional responsibility, or learn a new skill, add it to your résumé. This way, you are not scrambling to remember everything you accomplished (you can always edit it). Another benefit to frequent updating is it is a built-in check and balance that you are accomplishing, progressing, and learning in your job. If six months have passed and you have nothing to update, look into opportunities for training or taking on additional projects to stretch your skills and experience.

Networking is another job search step that will have changed from your first search to this current job. Your network has grown since your first job search. It now includes people you have met in your current job, as well as any professional groups you might have joined. It also includes people you met as a result of your first search. Don't overlook helpful people from your first search.

Obligations in Your Current Job Must Continue to Be Met

The six-step job search is effective because it is thorough and enables you to retain control of your search. Because it is thorough, it takes time. You must be able to spend time on your job search without compromising your ability to do your current job. From an ethical standpoint, you have committed to this job, so you need to produce. From a practical standpoint, you need to have good references from your current job for your next job, so you must maintain good standing with your current organization.

You will be able to do a lot of your job search outside normal business hours. You can update your marketing materials, research new possibilities, and reconnect with your existing network on evenings and weekends. Once you start networking outside your immediate circle and interviewing for specific jobs, you will start to intrude on your normal workday. Save your lunch hours, vacation days, and **personal days** in anticipation of using them for your job search.

Another area for preplanning is your appearance! If your organization does not require formal business attire, then you will stand out in your interview suit. You might consider dressing more formally on regular days so that your interview clothes do not diverge so far from your daily wear. You also might consider not wearing a blazer at your current job, but then adding it once you are offsite.

Plan ahead for if and when you will let mentors and your boss know about your job search. You will want references from your current job, ideally from your direct supervisor. In some cases, you want to keep your job search confidential, so you can refer prospective employers to a customer who knows your work, a senior colleague who has worked with or directly supervised you, or a former colleague who could speak more freely. Check your organization's policy regarding references. Some strict organizations do not allow employees to give references. Find out what is available to you because the reference-checking process is critical to the job search process.

Finally, plan for how you will leave your current job gracefully. Two weeks' notice is a national standard, but this varies by industry, company, and job. If you have a specialized function, a senior role, or are currently on a long-term assignment, it might be expected that you will give more notice than two weeks. You might be expected to train your incumbent, or even help find this person. Unless you have an employment contract (rare and typically reserved for the most executive-level jobs), remember that most jobs are employment at will, so you can leave at any time with no notice. However, you want to exit gracefully so you maintain good relationships with your organization and colleagues. People move around in their careers, and in the future you may find yourself working with some of the same people.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A career requires a succession of jobs, which can be within the same organization.
- You may want to leave your organization if you are no longer challenged, need to change your industry, function, or geography to something your current employer cannot accommodate, or to start your own business.
- Use the same six-step job search process you used to get your current job, but update your marketing materials, network, and references to reflect your new experience.
- Make sure to meet your obligations in your current job while making time for your job search.
- Make sure that you leave your current job in good standing with your organization and colleagues by giving enough notice and helping with the transition, if needed.

EXERCISE

1. If you are reading this and haven't even started your first job, career planning may seem premature. Imagine your future and think about what you'd like to be doing in ten, twenty, and thirty years—even if you have to guess. What skills do you want to be using? What people do you want to be serving? Toward what objective or mission are you working? List the skills you want to learn and the experiences you want to have in your early jobs to prepare you for this career future. You now have an outline of what you want to accomplish in your first job and what signs to look for to see if you need to move on from that job.

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4.6: Chapter Review and Exercises

Getting any one job is only one step to building a career. Your career is made up of many jobs where you will add to your skills, experience, and relationships. At the same time, your career is built one job at a time. You need to do well in the job you have currently, not just look to more responsibility before you have mastered the current ones. Focus on doing your current job well. Cultivate mentors and professional relationships with people who are knowledgeable and supportive. Be proactive about steering your career forward by getting regular performance feedback and asking for promotions and raises when warranted.

Know how to continue to do well on the job, even in difficult economic times and through challenging work situations. Lean on your professional relationships, but also do your own research on company policy and talk with human resources (HR). Doing well in the work environment depends heavily on your ability to manage relationships, so focus on your communication skills and ability to set boundaries.

Remember to have a life outside your professional work. Do not neglect personal relationships. Take care of your health and personal finances. Pursue hobbies and interests that don't have to benefit your career.

Finally, building a career isn't just about getting a job, but you also must know when to leave your job. Be clear about your objectives for your next position. Don't forget to explore opportunities within your current organization, but don't be afraid to revisit the six steps of the job search and find another position. Remember to maintain your obligations in your current job while you are looking and to exit gracefully. Then start identifying your target, create a compelling marketing campaign, conduct in-depth research....

Chapter Takeaways

- Start strong by taking advantage of onboarding support new employees typically get, such as time with HR on new hire training programs.
- Take care of practical logistics, such as paper work and learning your physical environment.
- Get confirmation about exactly what you need to get done day one, week one, month one, and the first quarter.
- Develop a good relationship with your boss by being available for updates and asking for feedback.
- Mentors are an important part of your professional network to provide advice and a sounding board for ideas and concerns.
- Do not use your boss or your boss's boss as your mentor, so you can candidly speak about your issues and get an objective, outside perspective.
- You can choose from several types of mentors: guardian angel, shepherd, and board of directors. Ideally, you will have several mentors.
- You develop strong mentorships naturally by meeting with people and letting relationships grow. Be a good mentee by being proactive and flexible about scheduling, and by being responsive to your mentor's needs.
- In addition to mentors, you develop relationships with people at all levels, in different departments, and both inside and outside your company.
- Build relationships proactively by setting aside time to meet people and practicing how you will introduce yourself.
- Doing well on your job is but one part of overall career management. You also want to look at your future goals and make sure you develop the training, experience, and relationships necessary to reach these goals.
- Some organizations have formal processes for giving performance reviews, assigning promotions, and granting raises. You want to know what is customary for your organization.
- If your organization does not have official processes for performance reviews, promotions, or raises, you will want to schedule time to discuss these with your boss.
- Regular performance feedback is critical to ensure you are doing a good job and are on track for your career goals. Promotions and raises are not a regular occurrence, but are for extraordinary contributions, such as if your responsibilities increase or you have exceptional results in your work.
- Changes in the broad economy, your industry, your organization's financials or management, or the feedback you are getting may signal a potential layoff.
- If you are laid off, manage your termination process to get the maximum support to which you are entitled.
- Before you leave an organization, collect contact information and say thank you. Relationships with your former employer are still important.

- After you leave, don't wait too long before starting your job search, so you do not feel rushed or pressured to land a job right away.
- Many workplace conflicts can be minimized with good relationship management, open communication, and clear boundaries.
- Do not assume that you can do personal work on office equipment or take work home on your personal equipment. Check company policy on personal e-mail and social media policy, confidentiality, and any other issues about which you may have any questions.
- Use your mentors for advice and information.
- Use HR as a resource if a serious office situation arises, such as harassment or discrimination.
- Life success contributes to career success, such as the areas of personal finance, health and well-being, and relationships.
- Schedule time and specific activities for each of your nonwork areas so that they are not forgotten in the immediate pressures of work.
- A career requires a succession of jobs, which can be within the same organization.
- You may want to leave your organization if you are no longer challenged, need to change your industry, function, or geography to something your current employer cannot accommodate, or to start your own business.
- Use the same six-step job search process you used to get your current job, but update your marketing materials, network, and references to reflect your new experience.
- Make sure that you can meet your obligations in your current job while making time for your job search.
- Make sure that you leave your current job in good standing with your organization and colleagues by giving enough notice and helping with the transition, if needed.

Chapter Review

1. How is career success different from job search success?
2. What is the significance of the first ninety days on the job?
3. What different types of mentors and relationships do you want to cultivate?
4. What ways can you proactively focus on career advancement?
5. What key things should you do before, during, and after a layoff?
6. What are some work conflicts and possible solutions?
7. Why is your personal life important to career success?
8. What are some reasons you may want to look for another job?

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5: CONDUCTING CAREER RESEARCH

Learning Objectives

- Inventory online resources to research career information.
- Recognize current labor market trends and the changing workplace.
- Use informational interviews as a way to research careers.
- Explored professional associations as a means to collect career research and network with industry professionals.
- Examine diversity in the workplace.

Welcome to Phase 2 – "What's Out There?"

Now that you've explored who *you* are, it's time to discover what's waiting for you in the world of work. Phase 2 is all about **career research**—digging into real information, real opportunities, and real pathways so you can start connecting your strengths and interests to actual careers.

This part of the process takes curiosity, online research, and a little self-discipline. But the payoff is big: the more you learn about different careers, the easier it becomes to picture your future and make smart decisions about your next steps.

What You'll Be Doing

As you explore different careers, pay attention to things like:

- **Day-to-day tasks** – What does someone in this job actually do?
- **Work environment** – Office? Outdoors? Remote? Fast-paced? Collaborative?
- **Skills required** – Technical skills? People skills? Problem-solving?
- **Job outlook** – Is this field growing, stable, or shrinking?
- **Training & education** – Degrees? Certificates? On-the-job training?
- **Salary information** – What's the earning range, and how does it change with experience?

Compare everything you learn with the results from Unit 2—your **interests, skills, personality, values, and strengths**. This is where connections start to form. Ask yourself:

"Where do I see myself fitting in the world of work?"

Why Industry Expectations Matter

Career research isn't just about learning *what* jobs exist—it's also about understanding what employers are looking for **right now**.

As you explore careers, spend some time looking at:

- Real job postings
- Minimum qualifications
- Preferred skills and experience

- Industry trends and expectations

The more you understand what employers want, the easier it is to prepare for it. Knowing what skills, degrees, or experiences are in demand helps you make smarter choices today that will set you up for success tomorrow.

In short: Phase 2 helps you get clearer, more confident, and more informed about your future. The knowledge you build here will shape the next steps of your career journey—and bring you closer to finding where you truly belong.

5.1: Online Resources to Research Career Information

5.2: Current Labor Market Information and Trends

5.3: Informational Interviews

5.4: Connecting with Professional Associations

5.5: Changes in the Workplace

5.6: Diversity and Inclusion in the Workforce

5.7: Summary

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5.1: Online Resources to Research Career Information

Researching the internet for career information can be fascinating. You have so much information at the touch of your fingertips. This can be exciting, yet overwhelming at the same time. In this section, we will explore some common online tools used in career counseling. Keep a notepad nearby as you explore the different online career resources. Take notes of your findings and record information that stands out to you. At the end of this unit, you should be able to start putting the pieces together and getting closer to making some career decisions.

ibes what workers do on the job, working conditions, the training and education

needed, earnings, expected job prospects in a wide range of occupations, and links to professional associations. (link: https://www.bls.gov/ooh/)

This site contains both summary and detailed information on occupations in the US economy as well as the ability to search for information by various criteria such as job family, industry, skills, knowledge, interests, green jobs, bright outlook occupations and several others. It is produced by the federal government, is updated frequently, and contains state and national wage information, occupational projections, related occupations and opportunities for more information from professional and trade associations. (link: http://www.onetonline.org/)

http://www.careeronestop.org/)

This site also includes a professional association database organized by career pathways. Full of videos, information, and tips on how to be successful in your search for a career. (link: http://www.cacareercafe.com/)

A career exploration and planning site powered by Headed2, a secure career exploration and coaching platform which can be accessed from anywhere to connect learning with earning. Headed2 is an educational technology company focused on career and transition planning. Their mission is to help people explore, plan for and pursue careers that reflect their passions, skills and life goals. You may create a free account where you can save your information and come back at any point. The site allows you to discover possibilities, explore industry sectors and access personalized recommendations about opportunities for you through The Career Hub. (link: https://www.cacareerzone.org/index)

information, career fact sheets, 15 pathways to careers critical to California's economy, jobs of the future, and YouTube Career Videos and other resources. (link: http://fcmtest.com/path2careers/student_tools.asp)

his site provides career information and career planning help through video. The video interviews are filmed without narration or actors – just real people speaking form the heart about their career experiences. Candid Career currently features a video library of 6,000 + clips. You may search the video library by industry, career title, or major. (link: https://www.candidcareer.com/)

his site contains information regarding employment, job search and career education. It includes detailed information about over 1000 occupations, including wages, skills and links to corresponding college programs and career, job and educational resources for states, cities and counties in the USA as well as Canadian Provinces and international countries.

Chancellor's Office. Career Coach allows students to discover majors, and in-demand careers and education based on their interests. The site contains career assessments, career information and programs offered in the California Community College System.

(link: https://ccc.emsicc.com/)

https://www.mynextmove.org/)

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. It is designed to help students and their families make important decisions about investing time and money in a college education. Salary Surfer provides comparative information about the earnings of recent California community college graduates who received an award in a specific program of study. Salary Surfer uses the aggregated earnings of graduates from a five-year period to provide an estimate on the potential wages to be earned two and five years after receiving a certificate or degree in certain disciplines. This tool also provides information on which colleges offer programs in those specific disciplines. (link: https://salarysurfer.cccco.edu)

Take your time and explore each of the online resources introduced in section 3.1 to help you gather career information. What are your top two or three careers that seem to be the most interesting to you at this time?

Take notes as you conduct your research and consider researching the following questions:

- How do these careers match with your assessment results from unit 2?
- What part of these careers do you like?
- What part of these careers do you have concerns about?
- What kind of educational training/certification do you need for these careers?
- Where can you find the training for these careers?

Log your findings here:

Career Title # 1:_____

Career Title #2: _____

Career Title #3: _____

The more you learn about the world of work, the better equipped you are to make more informed decisions about the career path that best fits you and your needs!

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5.2: Current Labor Market Information and Trends

Take a minute and view the YouTube video titled “How the World of Work is Changing” to get an idea of some of the changes that have taken place within the last twenty years. Understanding these changes can help you learn more about preparing for your future career.



Figure 3.1 – Watch “How the World of Work is Changing” (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=HYPxrzHJhF8)

It is clear that the world of work is changing. As you conduct career research, it is important to be aware of the current labor market trends. Understanding information, such as jobs in demand, potential job growth and changes in the workplace will help you better prepare for your future career. To research current labor market information and trends, visit the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD) site.

is the official source for California Labor Market Information (LMI). LMID promotes California’s economic health by providing information to help people understand California’s economy and make informed labor market choices. This site provides statistical data and reports on California’s labor force, industries, occupations, employment projections, wages, and other important labor market and economic data. (link: https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/)

Familiarize yourself with the State of California Employment Development Site (link: https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/) and search current labor market trends. Go to the LMI by Customer – Job Seekers and Students tab.

- The EDD Labor Market Information Division provides data and links to resources that job seekers will find helpful to assist with searching for jobs.

Use the Occupational Guides or Occupation Profile to locate wages, benefits, training, and other information as you explore career opportunities. Use the Occupation Profiles for similar state information geared more towards job search.

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5.3: Informational Interviews

In addition to online career resources, informational interviews are another way to gather information about a career.

Informational interviews are meetings where you are the interviewer, and the person with whom you are meeting has information that you want—for example, about a specific job, organization, or industry. Informational interviews are a type of networking, but since the primary aim is to uncover information, we are including informational interviewing in the research unit.

Many job seekers treat informational interviews like an interrogation, with a long list of questions to extract information from the interviewee. We will take a more sophisticated approach to informational interviews. These interviews occur after some research is already completed, so the interview is not simply a series of questions to gain more information but rather a way to verify, refine, and test the information already researched. It is a two-way conversation, and you will be giving as well as receiving information.

YouTube Video

This interactive element is not available in this format. Visit the link or scan the QR code to access it online.

View this YouTube Video online

Figure 3.2 – View the brief YouTube video titled "Designing Your Career: The Informational Interview" for an introduction to informational interviewing. (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=21&v=m6Pa4ZB4mvQ)

Informational Interviews Are Two-Way Exchanges of Information

Many job seekers see informational interviews as a shortcut to research—but skipping your own homework first is a mistake. Without prior research:

- It's harder to get quality interviews, as people may not see value in speaking with someone unprepared.
- Interviewees only share their personal experience, which may not fully reflect the job, organization, or industry.
- You won't know enough to ask meaningful questions or verify information.
- You may appear uninformed, missing a chance to show interest and professionalism.

The best informational interviews are two-way conversations. By doing your research first, you bring insights, news, and trends to the discussion, turning it into a collaborative exchange rather than a one-sided Q&A. This shows respect for the interviewee's time and helps you learn more deeply.

Sample Informational Interview Questions

You want to get to know your interviewee by asking questions such as the following:

- How did you get involved in this job, organization, or industry?
- What do you like most about it? What has been most rewarding?
- What is most challenging? Was there anything that surprised you?
- What is a typical day, week, or month like?
- What skills are most critical to have, develop, and maintain to be successful?
- What personality types are most successful in this job, organization or industry?
- What do you know now that you wished you knew when you started?

Interest in their specific background establishes rapport because it shows you care about them specifically. It also gives you a foundation for questions to ask later because you know more about their experience. You want to get broader information about the industry, so you ask questions that reflect your research:

- According to my research, the top competitors are [name the competitors]. Am I missing anyone you think is significant? Is there a new player I should know about?
- According to my research, [name a trend, challenge, or innovation] is a major trend, challenge, or innovation. Is this affecting your job or organization? Is this overestimated in the media? Are there are other trends, challenges, or innovations I should be concerned about?

Why Research Before an Informational Interview Matters

Doing research before an informational interview is critical—it gives you a foundation for meaningful conversation instead of relying on the interviewee to provide all the information. Your research becomes a springboard: you bring ideas, ask deeper questions, and test what you've learned.

Focus your questions based on your interviewee's experience. Senior professionals can handle broad strategy questions, while someone in a specific role (like technology) is better for detailed, role-focused discussions.

You can also use research to explore career realities, such as salary, work environment, and your competitiveness for the job:

- "My research shows people in this job earn [salary range] and experience [work culture/lifestyle]. Is that accurate?"
- "The typical career path seems to be [job titles]. Does that match your experience?"
- "How would you describe your organization's culture? Is it similar across the industry?"
- "Based on my background [skills/experience], would I be competitive for this type of job?"

These questions allow you to get candid insights without asking directly for a job. Offering your research gives the interviewee something concrete to respond to, making the conversation a two-way exchange and showing that you're prepared and professional.

Remember: an informational interview is about learning, not asking for employment.

Be Polite: Common Rules of Etiquette Apply

Common rules of etiquette apply in the protocols of informational interviews. When asking for the interview, you can approach your interviewee by phone, mail, or email. There is no one right answer, but each has advantages and disadvantages:

Table 3.1 - Possible Ways to Ask for an Informational Interview and Advantages and Disadvantages

Approach By	Advantages	Disadvantages
Phone	• Potential for immediate response • For people who are difficult to reach, you cut through a lot of back and forth if you happen to reach them right away	• Disruptive to the interviewee • You have very little time to introduce yourself and make your request
Mail	• Potential to stand out. Few people take the time to send mail anymore	• Slow to arrive • Cannot confirm that the recipient receives or reads it
E-mail	• Fast but still gives you the opportunity to refine your draft • Recipient can respond right away or wait until later • Enables you to include hyperlinks for more information about you	• Cannot confirm that the recipient receives or reads it

E-mail has the most advantages and fewest disadvantages and should work for most job seekers. If you are more confident in your phone approach or mail campaign, then you may want to try that as well. You might also tailor your approach to the recipient. If you get referred to someone and they tell you to call them, then call them, even if you would prefer to e-mail. You want to

approach interviewee based on what their preference is.

The content of your approach, whether by phone, mail, or e-mail, should include who you are and why you are making contact. If someone refers you, mention that right away. Regarding who you are, make your introduction compelling but brief.

An elegant way to share your resume is to put your online profile hyperlink in your email signature. This way, the interviewee can easily get more information about you without having to search, but it is shared in one line rather than a paragraph or more of detail. This is a key advantage of an e-mail approach.

Sample Informational Interview E-mail Approach
Subject: Request for an Informational Interview Meeting Hello Ms. Barkley, My name is Joe Cougar and I am a first year college student at College of the Canyons. I am enrolled in a career exploration course and I am currently considering business marketing as my major. I have been researching this field and I am interested in learning more about the profession. I would like an opportunity to meet with you to learn more about what you do as VP of International Marketing at MPL Incorporated. I understand you have a busy schedule; however, I would appreciate any amount of time you can share with me. I am available M-F any time after 1 p.m. Please let me know your availability. I look forward to hearing back from you soon. Thank you for your time. Regards, Joe Cougar College of the Canyons Student http://www.linkedin.com/in/joesample

Common etiquette applies during and after the informational interview as well. Be on time, and do not take too much time. Ask for fifteen to thirty minutes, be mindful of the time, and offer to end the interview right after the agreed amount of time. Only stay longer if invited. Send a thank-you note—email is fastest, handwritten by mail is a classy addition, but definitely send at least an e-mail so you know it arrives promptly.

Sample Informational Interview Thank You Email

Subject: Thank you for your time!

Dear Ms. Barkley:

Thank you for taking time out of your busy day to speak with me about your work at MPL Incorporated. Your job sounds fascinating! You seem to enjoy your work very much, which, as we discussed, will be important in my own career choice.

I am very intrigued by the work that you do at MPL. The aspect of your work that I find most interesting is your ability to market one product to several different cultures. Your involvement in the different stages of marketing a product captivated me as well.

I appreciate your recommendations about interviews. I will be sure to know all about a company and its products before I interview with them. Your advice was well taken.

Once again, thank you for your time and expertise.

Sincerely,

Joe Cougar

College of the Canyons Student

http://www.linkedin.com/in/joesample

Now that you have been introduced to informational interviewing, think of what careers you'd like to learn more about and who you may want to interview to help you gather more information.

List at least two careers you'd be interested in learning more about and potentially conducting an informational interview for?

1.
2.

Now think of professionals in the field you can arrange an informational interview appointment with. You can find people to interview by asking your friends, relatives, instructors, counselors or contacts through Professional Associations. Think of all your resources.

When you call to set up an appointment, it is important to be prepared, because what you say on the phone and how you say it can influence your ability to land an informational interview appointment. Prepare your phone script below:

Hello. My name is _____and I'm a (year in school)_____student attending College of the Canyons. My counselor, (Name of person} _____ suggested I give you a call because I am interested in (add your interest) _____ and would like to find out as much as I can about the

field. Would it be possible to schedule 20 or 30 minutes with you at your convenience, to ask you a few questions and get your advice on how best to prepare to enter the field?

Once the appointment is scheduled. Prepare a list of questions you'd like to ask.

After the interview, reflect on your experience. What information did you find particularly helpful. Is this a career you can see yourself pursuing? Do you have any reservations? Is there any advice that was given that you need to follow up on? Be sure to send a thank you note or email within 24 hours to show your appreciation.

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5.4: Connecting with Professional Associations

View the YouTube Video titled “Career Cafe Students” to gain a student’s perspective of how professional associations can help with career research and networking.

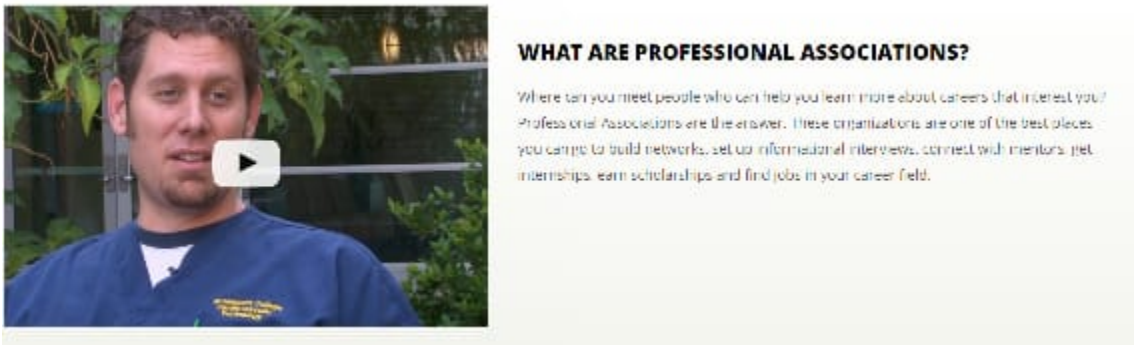


Figure 3.3 – Watch “Career Café Students” (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v97b_6PHLeo)

Professional Associations are a great way for you to connect with professionals working in the industry you may be considering. These associations are organizations where people in the same profession come together engage and connect with each other to discuss current trends in the industry. The professional associations are a great way for you to make connections and network with professionals in the field you are considering. Most professional associations have membership fees and oftentimes have reduced fees for student membership. They usually host conferences. Check to see if the association you are interested in is hosting a conference nearby. Professional associations often list a job bank with current job openings in the industry. This is a great way for you to see what industry is demanding and what skills, qualifications, and training they are requiring. The more you know now, the better prepared you will be when it is time for you to enter the industry.

Some great online resources to help you locate professional associations are:

- Orange County Career Café – this site lists professional associations by pathway (link: https://www.occareercafe.com/associations/). Find your pathway and explore professional associations.
- CareerOneStop – this site has a professional association finder. This is a great resource where you can search by industry, occupation or association name. (link: https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Training/find-professional-associations.aspx)

Consider your top occupational choice you are interested in at this time and search for professional associations linked to this industry.

1. What is your top occupational choice at this time?
2. Explore two Professional Associations linked to the industry.
3. Give a brief description of the associations and how you think they may be helpful in your career exploration and development.

- Find out what the fees are for signing up and if they provide any discounts for students.
- Are there any upcoming conferences being sponsored by the association? If so, when, where, and how much is registration. Are you considering attending?

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5.5: Changes in the Workplace

Since the global financial crisis in 2008, people have been looking at new ways of working that will not leave them so exposed to losing their income. Self-employment is not a new concept — tradespeople and creatives are old hands at obtaining work from various sources — but the emergence of centralized digital platforms selling services or products has led to the explosive growth of the gig economy. Workers are turning away from a 9 to 5 job in favor of independent work where there is no long-term relationship between buyer and seller.

Buyers can be instantly connected to an innovative solution. Uber, Lyft, and Deliveroo offer car-sharing and delivery services, Airbnb opens up homes for rental, and Etsy lets creatives sell their creations. For people looking for local services in the home or office, TaskRabbit and Airtasker make light work of everyday tasks.

For workers who can deliver via the internet, digital platforms have opened up global markets, creating a surge in home workers offering services to startups or businesses needing a more flexible workforce or specialized skills for one-off projects. On platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, and People Per Hour, freelancers provide creative services that include website design, content creation, coding, and consultancy. Even legal services are being transformed through platforms such as Lawyers on Demand and Lawpath, making the legal process of setting up a business easier and cheaper.

Why are more people choosing to join the gig economy?

Flexible working. Independent work offers flexibility to students funding tertiary education, to parents caring for young children, and to Millennials and Gen Y looking to swap a corporate career for a portfolio career. Freelancing also offers a top-up income for people already in part-time or full-time jobs.

Greater control

Freelancers control their work and pricing. They may also choose who they work with to match their skills, experience, interests, and values. This gives greater rewards, not limited to or even necessarily financially but in terms of job satisfaction.

Workplace freedom. Freelancers have greater choice over where they work. This flexibility helps provide an improved work-life balance, especially relevant in the U.S. where employees receive only two weeks annual leave and the corporate culture can involve long hours in the office to show commitment. This misguided culture breeds chronic stress with the potential for lower productivity, ill health, and sickness-related absence.

Protection from prejudice and politics. Home-based working environments give freelancers protection from office workplaces that can be toxic, especially in large corporations with a vertical hierarchy and one-way communication rather than an open, collaborative culture. Promotion can be influenced by favoritism in the form of the halo effect or by prejudice based on gender, sexuality, race, or disability.

Motivation from direct responsibility. In traditional workplaces, people can feel removed from the end user, which impacts job satisfaction. Freelancers deal directly with clients and on team projects, they collaborate with colleagues on an equal footing. Knowing that the outcome relates directly to their performance, independent workers can be more motivated to produce high-quality work.

McKinsey's survey found that workers who are choosing freelance work as their primary income reported higher levels of satisfaction than workers choosing traditional jobs. But while there are myriad benefits to be gained from the growing gig economy, the freelance marketplace is not without its problems.

What are the challenges of independent working and drawbacks of centralized platforms?

Gig workers face issues with income security, employment rights, and credit availability that can deter people from making the switch from permanent employment.

Financial insecurity

Self-employed workers have traditionally charged a higher rate to offset the lack of paid leave, paid sickness absence, pension contributions, and training provided by permanent employers, as well as to cover non-chargeable time. But some clients take a while to pay up or they do not pay up at all and legal proceedings are costly. Digital platforms provide a more secure option because the platform holds the buyer's payment in escrow until the seller completes the work satisfactorily, but it can take can take two weeks for a buyer's payment to be made available to the seller. If there is a dispute, sellers may not get paid.

With a low-cost, low-skill entry, the pool of workers competing for gigs on these platforms has swelled, causing a race to the bottom on pricing with workers often accepting below minimum wage rates. Fiverr now has a FiverrPro section that differentiates sellers who provide a professional service and charge a higher fee. Either way, earnings are unpredictable with gaps between gigs making it difficult to meet living costs. Self-employed workers may also be denied access to financial products, such as mortgages, personal loans, and personal pensions.

Data security

Centralized digital platforms are vulnerable to data breaches and cyber-attacks that could make order history, client communications, and outstanding work and payments unavailable.

Lack of transparency

Centralized digital platforms focus on maximizing short-term profit for the platform. While feedback from users is invited on some platforms, policy and process modifications are underpinned by corporate interests. For example, sellers are not given a clear indication of how to rank well in the search algorithm and seller status levels can be affected by order cancellation frequency (even if it is mutually agreed) and review ratings (fair or not).

High fees

Buyers and sellers contribute significantly to centralized freelancing platform success, yet some platforms charge sellers up to 20 percent in fees. While freelancers have a showroom for their business complete with user profile, gig, and administrative facilities, the lack of transparency and excessive control on these platforms is problematic.

Social isolation

Freelance working can be a lonely business with associated risks for mental health. Communication and relationships between buyers and sellers are often short-term and there is no workplace community.

Traditional employment platform

By contrast, economist and author Linda Nazareth says the shift away from regular work is underway and governments, businesses, and individuals are not ready. "The transformation to a gig economy is happening at an astonishing speed in Canada. According to staffing company Randstad Canada, if you add up all the contingent workers, freelancers, independent contractors and consultants, you are talking about 20 to 30 percent of the Canadian workforce being "non-traditional workers" already. That percentage is only going higher. Eighty-five percent of the companies surveyed by Randstad figure that they will increasingly move to an 'agile workforce' over the next few years."

Similarly, Forbes reports an estimated 34 percent of the U.S. workforce worked independently in 2017 rather than as traditional 9 to 5 workers. By 2020, this could reach 43 percent. The Intuit 2020 Report on trends affecting consumers and small businesses around the world says over 80 percent of large corporations are planning to substantially increase their flexible workforce.

Blockchain technology will likely transform the freelance marketplace

Blockchain technology is hailed as the solution to a number of the gig economy challenges. By providing a distributed, transparent, and permanent history of transactions, including user profiles, gigs, orders, and payments, blockchain technology

guarantees traceability, accountability, and security.

The Next Web explains how a faster, more transparent, and more secure buyer-seller interaction is facilitated on platforms using the blockchain, such as CanYa where experts and professionals can be hired locally and globally. Transaction data is held on the blockchain, a database that is distributed across individual platform user's computers, securing it from cyber-attacks or centralized data breaches. When buyers find a suitable service through direct communication with a seller, a smart contract logs the transaction details and performs a decentralized escrow. Funds are locked in the buyer's account until both buyer and seller agree the work has been completed satisfactorily.

Because there is no intermediary as there is with centralized platforms, CanYa's fee is much lower at only 1 percent and the seller receives the funds immediately. In CanYa's case, funds are exchanged in the form of cryptocurrency, tokens issued by startups to raise funds to get their application up and running, as well as to future investors. This shared ownership means that users are highly motivated to ensure the platform is successful.

This decentralized process with the emphasis on collaboration contrasts with the controlling nature of existing centralized platforms. Sellers do not have their services controlled or find their business harmed by unfair reviews or algorithm penalties that force them to behave for corporate advantage. Buyers are given more transparency too and not simply fed the services a centralized platform selects as a match. If data needs to be modified, another block is created without the need for third-party intervention. Freelancers have the freedom to work in a professional manner and grow their business on their own terms.

In addition, blockchain-based platforms offering direct communication and social interaction via social media allow real connections to be made. This helps to address the problem of isolation for freelance workers. On centralized platforms, sellers can receive an order and work on it without knowing the real name of the buyer or even communicating with them. Forbes makes the case that "Through blockchain platforms that allow direct peer-to-peer interaction, buyers and sellers can conduct business in a more social setting while still maintaining security and transparency." Social interaction also creates trust — people prefer to do business with people they feel connected to.

Highlighted by The News Web as a unique benefit, the mutual ownership of blockchain-based platforms creates a distributed organization that replaces the top-down hierarchy of centralized platforms. The fluctuating prices of cryptocurrencies is a drawback, but CanYa uses a hedge fund to fix token value at the point the contract starts.

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) envisions four workplace worlds that operate on a sliding scale from individualism to collectivism, and from fragmentation to integration. In their report Workforce of the future: The competing forces shaping 2030, PwC's 'Yellow World' is one where workers and companies look for greater meaning and relevance in their work. The working week is flexible and Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 is rare. In this world, "Like-minded workers gravitate towards each other, aided by technology platforms," and they collaborate on projects or ideas.

Much can change in the next decade, but the independent workforce is growing. Governments, businesses, and individuals would be wise to prepare for the possibility of a 'Yellow World' where "Technology creates and supports the open, honest, collaborative community". Unlike centralized platforms that create a culture of competitive individualism, blockchain-based platforms promote a culture of collaboration and co-operation for everyone's benefit.[23]

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5.6: Diversity and Inclusion in the Workforce

Diversity and inclusion in the workforce is important to understand as you prepare for your future career. Diversity is not simply a box to be checked; rather, it is an approach to business that unites ethical management and high performance. Business leaders in the global economy recognize the benefits of a diverse workforce and see it as an organizational strength, not as a mere slogan or a form of regulatory compliance with the law. They recognize that diversity can enhance performance and drive innovation; conversely, adhering to the traditional business practices of the past can cost them talented employees and loyal customers.

A study by global management consulting firm McKinsey & Company indicates that businesses with gender and ethnic diversity outperform others. According to Mike Dillon, chief diversity and inclusion officer for PwC in San Francisco, "attracting, retaining and developing a diverse group of professionals stirs innovation and drives growth."

Living this goal means not only recruiting, hiring, and training talent from a wide demographic spectrum but also including all employees in every aspect of the organization.

Workplace Diversity

The twenty-first century workplace features much greater diversity than was common even a couple of generations ago. Individuals who might once have faced employment challenges because of religious beliefs, ability differences, or sexual orientation now regularly join their peers in interview pools and on the job. Each may bring a new outlook and different information to the table; employees can no longer take for granted that their coworkers think the same way they do. This pushes them to question their own assumptions, expand their understanding, and appreciate alternate viewpoints. The result is more creative ideas, approaches, and solutions. Thus, diversity may also enhance corporate decision-making.

Communicating with those who differ from us may require us to make an extra effort and even change our viewpoint, but it leads to better collaboration and more favorable outcomes overall, according to David Rock, director of the Neuro-Leadership Institute in New York City, who says diverse coworkers "challenge their own and others' thinking."

According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), organizational diversity now includes more than just racial, gender, and religious differences. It also encompasses different thinking styles and personality types, as well as other factors such as physical and cognitive abilities and sexual orientation, all of which influence the way people perceive the world. "Finding the right mix of individuals to work on teams, and creating the conditions in which they can excel, are key business goals for today's leaders, given that collaboration has become a paradigm of the twenty-first century workplace," according to an SHRM article.

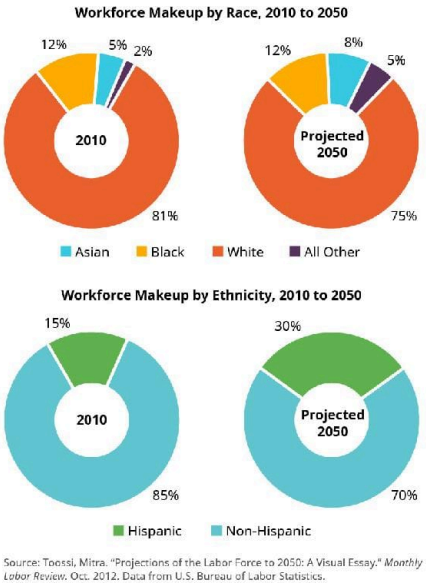
Attracting workers who are not all alike is an important first step in the process of achieving greater diversity. However, managers cannot stop there. Their goals must also encompass **inclusion**, or the engagement of all employees in the corporate culture. "The far bigger challenge is how people interact with each other once they're on the job," says Howard J. Ross, founder and chief learning officer at Cook Ross, a consulting firm specializing in diversity. "Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance. Diversity is about the ingredients, the mix of people and perspectives. Inclusion is about the container—the place that allows employees to feel they belong, to feel both accepted and different."

Workplace diversity is not a new policy idea; its origins date back to at least the passage of the **Civil Rights Act** of 1964 (CRA) or before. Census figures show that women made up less than 29 percent of the civilian workforce when Congress passed Title VII of the CRA prohibiting workplace discrimination. After passage of the law, gender diversity in the workplace expanded significantly. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the percentage of women in the labor force increased from 48 percent in 1977 to a peak of 60 percent in 1999. Over the last five years, the percentage has held relatively steady at 57 percent. Over the past forty years, the total number of women in the labor force has risen from 41 million in 1977 to 71 million in 2017.

The BLS projects that the number of women in the U.S. labor force will reach 92 million in 2050 (an increase that far outstrips population growth).

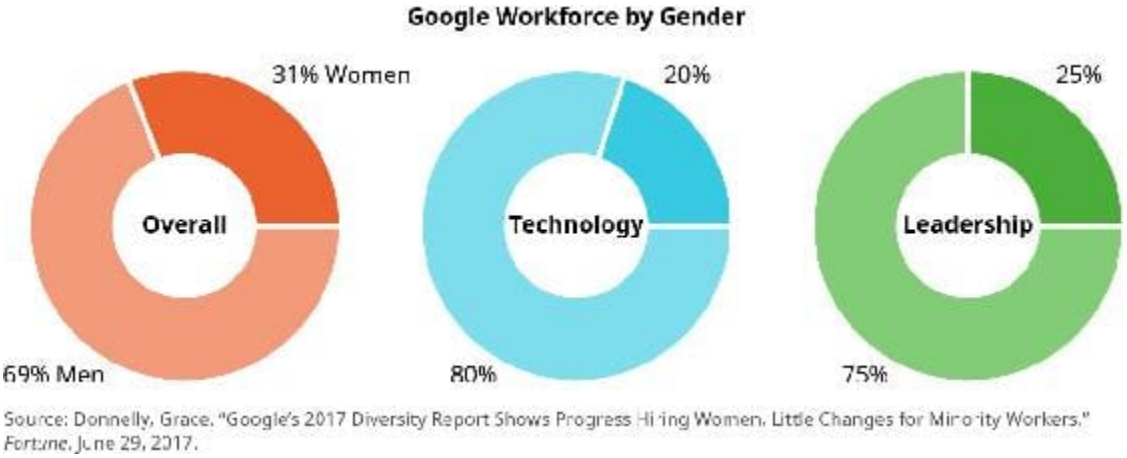
The statistical data show a similar trend for African American, Asian American, and Hispanic workers (Figure below). Just before passage of the CRA in 1964, the percentages of minorities in the official on-the-books workforce were relatively small compared with their representation in the total population. In 1966, Asians accounted for just 0.5 percent of private-sector employment, with Hispanics at 2.5 percent and African Americans at 8.2 percent.

However, Hispanic employment numbers have significantly increased since the CRA became law; they are expected to more than double from 15 percent in 2010 to 30 percent of the labor force in 2050. Similarly, Asian Americans are projected to increase their share from 5 to 8 percent between 2010 and 2050.



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Much more progress remains to be made, however. For example, many people think of the technology sector as the workplace of open-minded millennials. Yet Google, as one example of a large and successful company, revealed in its latest diversity statistics that its progress toward a more inclusive workforce may be steady but it is very slow. Men still account for the great majority of employees at the corporation; only about 30 percent are women, and women fill fewer than 20 percent of Google's technical roles (Figure below). The company has shown a similar lack of **gender diversity** in leadership roles, where women hold fewer than 25 percent of positions. Despite modest progress, an ocean-sized gap remains to be narrowed. When it comes to ethnicity, approximately 56 percent of Google employees are white. About 35 percent are Asian, 3.5 percent are Latino, and 2.4 percent are black, and of the company's management and leadership roles, 68 percent are held by whites.



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Google is not alone in coming up short on diversity. Recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce has been a challenge for most major technology companies, including Facebook, Apple, and Yahoo (now owned by Verizon); all have reported gender and ethnic shortfalls in their workforces.

The **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission** (EEOC) has made available 2014 data comparing the participation of women and minorities in the high-technology sector with their participation in U.S. private-sector employment overall, and the results

show the technology sector still lags.

Compared with all private-sector industries, the high-technology industry employs a larger share of whites (68.5%), Asian Americans (14%), and men (64%), and a smaller share of African Americans (7.4%), Latinos (8%), and women (36%). Whites also represent a much higher share of those in the executive category (83.3%), whereas other groups hold a significantly lower share, including African Americans (2%), Latinos (3.1%), and Asian Americans (10.6%). In addition, and perhaps not surprisingly, 80 percent of executives are men and only 20 percent are women. This compares negatively with all other private-sector industries, in which 70 percent of executives are men and 30 percent women.

Technology companies are generally not trying to hide the problem. Many have been publicly releasing diversity statistics since 2014, and they have been vocal about their intentions to close diversity gaps. More than thirty technology companies, including Intel, Spotify, Lyft, Airbnb, and Pinterest, each signed a written pledge to increase workforce diversity and inclusion, and Google pledged to spend more than $100 million to address diversity issues.

Diversity and inclusion are positive steps for business organizations, and despite their sometimes slow pace, the majority are moving in the right direction. Diversity strengthens the company's internal relationships with employees and improves employee morale, as well as its external relationships with customer groups. Communication, a core value of most successful businesses, becomes more effective with a diverse workforce. Performance improves for multiple reasons, not the least of which is that acknowledging diversity and respecting differences is the ethical thing to do.[24]

Generational Differences in the Workforce

Today we have four different generations in the workforce and each generation differs in terms of values, communication style, and life experiences. Each group brings valuable contributions to the workplace.

Each generation is a subculture with a sense of reality based on formative world and national events, technological innovations and socio-cultural values. To understand how that experience impacts communication, it's instructive to consider how the different generations view technology and communications media. The following examples are based on an analysis of generational differences:[25]

Table 3.2 – Examples of Generational Differences

	Traditionalists	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials	Generation Z
Technology is . . .	Hoover Dam	The microwave	Internet	Hand-held devices	Virtual
Communicate via . . .	Rotary phones	Touch-tone phones	Cell phones	Internet & Text	Social Media

Every generation develops expertise with communication formats and media that reflect their situational reality. For example, Traditionalists tend to have a more formal communication style, with a strict adherence to written grammatical rules and a strong cultural structure. Baby Boomers tend to prefer a more informal and collaborative approach. Gen X communications tend to be more blunt and direct: just the facts. Millennial and Gen Z communication is technology-dependent. As an Ad Council article notes, these generations are driving a truncation of the English language, shortening words (e.g., totally becomes totes) and abbreviating phrases into one or two-syllable "words," which may or may not be spoken aloud (e.g., FOMO for "fear of missing out" and TIL for "today I learned").

For additional perspective, see McCrindle Research "How to Speak Gen Z" infographic. These clippings have their roots in texting language: a shorthand that's optimized for the communications media and immediate gratification expectations of mobile communication.

Texting

Texting is a cross-generational trend—something that nearly all adults in America participate in. For perspective on texting, read onereach.com's "45 Texting Statistics that Prove Businesses Need To Start Taking Texting Seriously." A few excerpts, for perspective:

1. Over 80% of American adults text, making it the most common cell phone activity. (Pew Internet)
2. The average adult spends a total of 23 hours a week texting (USA Today)
3. The average Millennial exchanges an average of 67 text messages per day (Business Insider)
4. On average, Americans exchange twice as many texts as they do calls (Nielsen)
5. Only 43% of smartphone owners use their phone to make calls, but over 70% of smartphone users text (Connect Mogul)

Bridging the Generation Gap

Each generation brings not only a frame of reference but also a set of competencies—and expectations—based on how they view the world and their place in it. The challenge for both businesses and individuals is that we now have five generations in the workforce. Differences in generational communication style and media are, effectively, language barriers. To the extent that individuals can't translate, the communication gaps are a hindrance to effective collaboration and, by extension, achievement of critical goals and objectives. The communication disconnect can also affect employee morale and productivity.

The opportunity in this situation is to leverage specific generational strengths and decrease points of friction. The best case scenario is to create a culture and opportunities that encourage cross-generational sharing and mentoring. As Nora Zelevansky wrote in a piece for Coca-Cola: "In order to master intergenerational communication, it is necessary to understand some broad generalizations about the generations and then move beyond those to connect as individuals."[26]

In a related trend, the model of talent management is changing. As discussed in a Sodexo report on 2017 Workplace Trends, we're moving to a model of shared learning, where workers of all ages contribute to each other's growth and development.[27] Indeed, the researchers identified "intergenerational agility" as a critical aspect of the employee and employer value proposition. Business benefits of intergenerational learning include increased efficiency, productivity and competitive positioning. Two statistics that suggest the culture and communication gaps can be bridged:[28]

- 90 percent of Millennials believe that Boomers bring substantial experience and knowledge to the workplace
- 93 percent of Baby Boomers believe that Millennials bring new skills and ideas to the workplace.

The diversity of the intergenerational workplace isn't just a development—it's a creative opportunity.

Professor Mariano Sánchez of the University of Granada in Spain sees the opportunity in cultivating "generational intelligence;" specifically, "organizing activities that raise generational awareness, connect generations and help them work better together—exchanging knowledge, ideas, skills and more to enhance the broad skill sets everyone needs in today's jobs."[29]

According to Jason Dorsey, Millennial and Gen Z researcher and co-founder of The Center for Generational Kinetics, "The key is getting each person to recognize that everyone has different communication skills that can be harnessed to best support the organization."[30] Incorporating multiple communication media in meetings and to facilitate ongoing discussion/collaboration allows members of different generations to share expertise and demonstrate the value of a particular medium. Selecting technology that supports multiple ways of communicating and collaborating can also leverage collective strengths and create fertile ground. For example, using a videoconferencing platform allows for participants to connect visually and participate virtually, with audio, screen sharing and recording capabilities.

Activity 3.6: Generational Differences in the Workplace

After reading the section on generational differences in the workplace, reflect on your experiences at school, work and in your community and answer the following questions:

What generation do you identify with?

How closely do you resemble some of the descriptors used to describe this generation? Explain and give examples.

Why do you think it is important to understand the generational differences in the workplace? Explain and give examples.

Understanding the broad generational generalizations are important to help understand different work styles and preferences, however it is essential to move beyond generalizations and connect as individuals.

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5.7: Summary

Now that you have completed Unit 3 we will revisit the Unit objectives before moving on to Unit 4. In this unit you have:

- Inventoried online resources to research career information and labor market information.
- Used informational interviews as a way to research careers.
- Explored professional associations as a means to collect career research and network with industry professionals.
- Recognized changes in the workplace and examined the value of diversity in the workplace.

Each part of this unit was designed to help you complete Phase 2: “What’s Out There?” At this time, you should have a better understanding of the World of Work and should be able to start visualizing where you see yourself in regards to your future career.

You have successfully completed Phase 1: “Who Am I” and Phase 2: “What’s Out There?” It is now time to explore Phase 3: “What Factors Might Affect My Choice?” and Phase 4: “Where Do I Go From Here?” These phases will be explored in Unit 4.

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6: DECISION MAKING AND GOAL SETTING

Learning Objectives

- Recognize factors involved in the decision making process.
- Distinguish internal and external factors that affect making decisions.
- Demonstrate effective goal setting.
- Examine tools for managing stress.
- Choosing your major and educational planning.
- Analyze the value of gaining work experience outside the classroom.

What factors affect my choices?

You'll learn how personal values, interests, strengths, experiences, and external influences shape the decisions you make—both academically and professionally.

Phase 4: Where do I go from here?

You'll discover practical ways to map out your next steps, set clear goals, and create a realistic and personalized plan that supports your academic and career growth.

6.1: The Decision Making Process

6.2: Internal and External Factors that Affect Making Decisions

6.3: Effective Steps for Goal Setting

6.4: Stress Management

6.5: Choosing your Major and Educational Planning

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6.1: The Decision Making Process

Making Better Decisions: A 5-Step Rational Process

We make dozens of tiny choices every day—what to eat, what to wear. But the big decisions. Which major should I pick? Which school should I transfer to? When the stakes are higher, use a rational, step-by-step method to reduce stress and make decisions you can feel confident about.

> **Quick idea:** Treat big decisions like projects. Break them into small tasks, collect the facts, and give yourself a deadline.

The 5 Steps of Rational Decision Making

Each step gives structure and discipline to your thinking. Be curious, gather evidence, and stay intentional.

Step 1 — Formulate your goal(s) 🎯

Be specific. Instead of “pick a major,” try “choose a major that leads to a job in educational psychology and allows me to graduate within four years.” When goals are clear, choices become easier.

Tip: Write your goal in one sentence. Add a “why” sentence (why this goal matters to you).

Step 2 — Identify decision criteria

Decide what factors matter. Examples: cost, time to degree, salary potential, personal interest, location, work-life balance, internship opportunities.

How to use it: Rank these criteria (must-have vs. nice-to-have) or assign each a weight (e.g., interest = 40%, cost = 25%, job prospects = 35%).

Step 3 — Identify alternatives

List your options. For a major: different majors, double-major, or certificate programs. For school transfer: several colleges. For a car: brand/models, new vs. used, or keeping your current vehicle.

Tip: Don’t stop at the obvious two choices—brainstorm 6–8 alternatives before narrowing down.

Step 4 — Analyze your options

Compare each alternative against your criteria. Use a simple decision table or a pros/cons list. Where possible, gather data (salary ranges, course requirements, tuition, commute time, alumni outcomes).

Simple tool: Create a two-column table: Alternative | Score (based on your weighted criteria). Tally the scores.

Step 5 — Make and act on the decision

Choose the option with the best fit and set a concrete action plan: deadlines, next steps, people to contact, and milestones. Also build a fallback plan if things change.

Pro tip: Give yourself a small trial period for reversible decisions (e.g., take one required class in the major before committing).

Visual: Decision Flowchart (placeholder)

(You can replace these with icons/graphics in your layout)

- Define goal
- Set criteria & weights
- List alternatives
- Score & analyze
- Decide & act

Example: Choosing a Major

1. **Goal:** Graduate in 4 years with a degree that leads to entry-level counseling jobs.
2. **Criteria:** Interest (40%), time-to-graduate (20%), internship availability (20%), cost (10%), long-term job outlook (10%).
3. **Alternatives:** Psychology major, Human Development major, Social Work minor + Psych major, Applied Behavioral Science certificate.
4. **Analysis:** Score each alternative vs. criteria (use a simple spreadsheet).
5. **Decision & Plan:** Pick the major with the highest score, enroll in intro course, meet with an advisor, and apply for one related volunteer position within 6 weeks.

🧰 Quick Decision Checklist (one-line actions)

- Define goal & deadline
- List 5–8 alternatives
- Create 3–5 decision criteria and rank them
- Collect two objective data points for each option
- Score and compare, then pick the top fit
- Make a short action plan and set a follow-up date

Applying the Rational Decision-Making Process

Let's put the 5-step Rational Decision-Making Process into action using a practical example.

Imagine you've just completed career assessments and researched potential careers. You're passionate about helping professions, but you're not sure which path to pursue: **elementary school teaching, social work, nursing, or school counseling**.

Your **goal** is to determine which career path best fits you and how to get there.

Step 1: Formulate Your Goal

Assess your situation and define your goal clearly. Ask yourself:

- What do I want to accomplish?
- Is this a problem to solve or an opportunity to pursue?

Example: My goal is to choose the career path that best fits my values, interests, and skills, and to create a plan to pursue it.

Step 2: Identify Decision Criteria

Gather relevant information to help you compare your options. Ask:

- What do I already know?
- What information is missing?
- Who can help me learn more?

Example:

- Use online career research sites to compare duties, education, licensing, salary, and job outlook.
- Schedule informational interviews with professionals in each field.
- Meet with a counselor to review majors and create an educational plan.

Step 3: Identify Alternatives

List the different ways to reach your goal. Consider challenges and obstacles, and assess which options fit your current situation.

Example:
After research and speaking to professionals, you realize:

- **Elementary school teaching** aligns with your values, interests, personality, and skills.
- You confirm this choice with career assessments.
- You explore which majors at your college will lead to this career path.

Step 4: Perform Analysis

Dive deeper into your options. Evaluate outcomes, rank choices, and consider sacrifices or challenges. Compare each alternative against your values and likelihood of success.

Example:

- Compare course requirements for Liberal Studies vs. Early Childhood Education.
- Identify which courses you enjoy most and which major fits your long-term goals.
- Consider workload, personal interests, and skill development.

Step 5: Make a Final Decision

Now, commit to your plan of action. Set realistic timelines and identify the resources you'll need.

Example:

- Decide to pursue **Early Childhood Education** because it aligns with your interests in child growth and learning, and doesn't require as much science.
- Develop a plan of action: enroll in required courses, meet with an academic counselor, and start building relevant experience through volunteering or internships.

Final thought

Rational decision making doesn't remove uncertainty—but it makes your choices smarter and more defensible. Treat the process like a habit: the more you practice, the easier big choices become.

🔑 Key Takeaways

- Each step builds on the last—don't skip steps!
- Use charts, checklists, and research to make informed decisions.
- Balance your values, interests, and practical considerations.
- Commit to a plan and track your progress.



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6.2: Internal and External Factors that Affect Making Decisions

There are many factors that contribute to making decisions. Some factors are internal factors and some are external.

Internal factors are those that you control, they come from within you. Internal factors are influenced by your feelings and thoughts. These can be positive or negative. Positive thoughts will help you with decision making, while negative thoughts will most likely hinder you. Fear is a common internal factor that negatively affects decision-making.

- Fear of failure
- Fear of making the wrong decision
- Fear of rejection
- Fear of letting others down

Unfortunately, fear can lead to paralysis in the decision-making process with “worse case scenarios.” To avoid this from happening, remember FEAR is really an acronym for:

FALSE EXPECTATIONS APPEARING REAL

Remember, you are in control of these internal thoughts and feelings. You hold a lot of power. Use it wisely!

Another internal factor that affects decision-making is self-confidence. Lack of self-confidence can make decision-making challenging and negatively impact your goals. In Unit 1, we addressed the importance of self-confidence in setting yourself up for success. You can either be your best friend through the decision-making process or your worst enemy. The choice is up to you. If you lack self-confidence, the good thing is you can work on building it.

External factors are those that stem from your surroundings. External factors may include expectations from your family, friends, cultural or gender stereotypes and family responsibilities. These factors can influence decision-making in a positive or negative way. It is important to consider external factors when making decisions so you can absorb the positive support and create a plan to counteract the negative.

After making a decision about your career direction, it is important to be mindful of the internal and external factors that may affect your next steps. Once you have narrowed down your career choices, you will want to set a goal and develop a plan of action by setting effective goals.

Activity 4.2: Identifying Internal And External Factors Affecting My Decisions

As you get closer to making decisions about your future career and potential major and educational training you'll need, reflect on the internal and external factors that may hinder or support your progress. Be honest with yourself.

Factors that **Hinder** My Career Decisions:

Internal:

External:

Factors that **Support** My Career Decisions:

Internal:

External:

Focus on the factors that you have control over. What can you do about the factors that are currently hindering your ability to fully work towards your fullest potential?

Continue to capitalize on the factors that support your success!

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6.3: Effective Steps for Goal Setting

Setting goals serves as a vehicle to help you get from point A to point B. It is important to establish goals for yourself to ensure progress through the career exploration and planning process.

Success Begins With Goals[33]

A goal is a desired result that you envision and then plan and commit to achieve. Goals can relate to family, education, career, wellness, spirituality, and many other areas of your life. Generally, goals are associated with finite time expectations, even deadlines.

As a college student, many of your goals are defined for you. For example, you must take certain courses, you must comply with certain terms and schedules, and you must turn in assignments at specified times. These goals are mostly set for you by someone else.

But there are plenty of goals for you to define yourself. For example, you decide what you would like to major in. You decide how long you are going to be in college or what terms you want to enroll in. You largely plan how you would like your studies to relate to employment and your career.

Goals can also be sidetracked. Consider the following scenario in which a student makes a discovery that challenges her to reexamine her goals, priorities, and timetables:

Janine had thought she would be an accountant, even though she knew little about what an accounting job might entail. Her math and organizational skills were strong, and she enjoyed taking economics courses as well as other courses in her accounting program. But when one of her courses required her to spend time in an accounting office working with taxes, she decided that accounting was not the right fit for her, due to the higher-stress environment and the late hours.

At first she was concerned that she invested time and money in a career path that was not a good fit. She feared that changing her major would add to her graduation time. Nevertheless, she did decide to change her major and her career focus.

Janine is now a statistician with a regional healthcare system. She is very happy with her work. Changing her major from accounting to statistics was the right decision for her.

This scenario represents some of the many opportunities we have, on an ongoing basis, to assess our relationship to our goals, reevaluate priorities, and adjust. Opportunities exist every day—every moment, really!

Below is a set of questions we can ask ourselves at any point to help focus on personal goals:

1. What are my top-priority goals?
2. Which of my skills and interests make my goals realistic for me?
3. What makes my goals believable and possible?
4. Are my goals measurable? How long will it take me to reach them? How will I know if I have achieved them?
5. Are my goals flexible? What will I do if I experience a setback?
6. Are my goals controllable? Can I achieve them on my own?
7. Are my goals in sync with my values?

As you move through your college career, make a point to ask these questions regularly.

As you formulate your goals consider the following pointers to help you stay focused:

- Write your goals out and post them where you can see them daily so they are at your forefront and not forgotten.
- Share your goals with others. Stating your goals publicly holds you accountable.
- Identify any obstacles you may encounter along the way and consider solutions. Think of people who may help you overcome the obstacles or help you brainstorm potential solutions.
- Set a deadline for which you plan to accomplish your goal and monitor your progress. Be realistic and patient with yourself.

- Visualize the goal. See a clear mental picture of yourself accomplishing your goal.
- Be persistent and don't give up. Don't be afraid to ask for help when needed.

Watch the following YouTube video for an overview of SMART goals – a memory aid in setting and evaluating goals to ensure that they are Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant and Time bound. After watching the video, complete Activity 4.3.

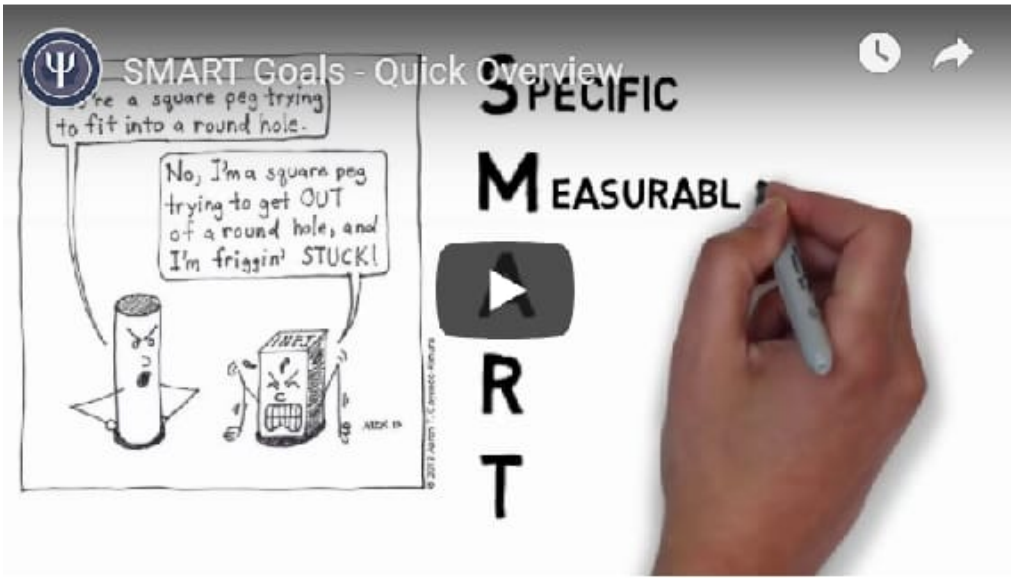


Figure 4.2 –Watch "S.M.A.R.T. Goals" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-SvuFIQjK8

In order to achieve long-term goals (from college on), you will need to first achieve a series of shorter goals. Medium-term goals (this year and while in college) and short-term goals (today, this week, and this month) may take several days, weeks, months, or even a few years to complete, depending on your ultimate long-term goals.

Take a moment and identify your short (today, this week, and this month) and medium-term goals (this year and while in college) that will help you achieve your long-term goal.

1. Identify 1 long-term academic or career goal.
2. Identify two related medium-term and two related short-term goals that will help you achieve your long-term goal.

3. Be SMART about it! Identify Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant , activities to achieve your identified goals by a certain Timeframe.

Review the guidelines below, and fill in the blank sections to the best of your ability.

Guidelines

- Phrase goals as positive statements: Affirm your excitement and enthusiasm about attaining a goal by using positive language and expectations.
- Be exact: Set a precise goal that includes dates, times, and amounts, so that you have a basis for measuring your progress.
- Prioritize: Select your top goals, and put them in order of importance. This helps you understand the degree to which you value each of them. It will also help you better manage related tasks and not feel overwhelmed.
- Take the lead: Identify goals that are linked to your own performance, not dependent on the actions of other people or situations beyond your control.
- Be realistic but optimistic and ambitious: The goals you set should be achievable, but sometimes it pays to reach a little higher than what you may think is possible. Certainly don't set your goals too low.
- Be hopeful, excited, and committed: Your enthusiasm and perseverance can open many doors!

Goal Priorities	My Precise Goals	What I Am Doing Now To Achieve These Goals
Example: Long-term goal	I plan to graduate with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. My major will be Radio-Television-Film, and my minor will be Spanish	I am attending the college of my choice and getting good grades in my major.
Example: Related medium-term goal	I would like to study abroad in Spain before I graduate.	I need to get busy with this! I will inquire this week about what I need to do next.
Example: Related short-term goal	I will need to get financial aid for at least a portion of my studies.	I have filled out the forms for financial aid. Last week I applied for a part-time job.
Identify your Long-term goal		
Identify a related medium-term goal #1		
Identify a related medium-term goal #2		
Identify a related short-term goal #1		

Identify a related short-term goal #2		

Social Aspects of Achieving Your Goals

Setting goals can be a challenge, but working toward them, once you've set them, can be an even greater challenge—often because it implies that you will be making changes in your life. You might be creating new directions of thought or establishing new patterns of behavior, discarding old habits or starting new ones. Change will always be the essence of achieving your goals.

You may find that as you navigate this path of change, one of your best resources is your social network. Your family, friends, roommates, coworkers, and others can help you maintain a steady focus on your goals. They can encourage and cheer you on, offer guidance when needed, share knowledge and wisdom they've gained, and possibly partner with you in working toward shared goals and ambitions. Your social network is a gold mine of support.

Here are some easy ways you can tap into goal-supporting "people power":

- Make new friends
- Study with friends
- Actively engage with the college community
- Volunteer to help others
- Join student organizations. Click here for a list of student clubs at COC: https://www.canyons.edu/studentservices/studentdevelopment/clubs/list.php
- Get an internship. Click here for information about the COC internships program: https://www.canyons.edu/studentservices/internships/index.php
- Work for a company related to your curriculum
- Stay connected via social media (but use it judiciously)*
- Keep a positive attitude
- Congratulate yourself on all you've done to get where you are

*A note about social media: More than 98 percent of college-age students use social media, says Experian Simmons. Twenty-seven percent of those students spent more than six hours a week on social media (UCLA, 2014). The University of Missouri, though, indicates in a 2015 study that this level of use may be problematic. It can lead to symptoms of envy, anxiety, and depression. Still, disconnecting from social media may have a negative impact, too, and further affect a student's anxiety level.

Is there a healthy balance? If you feel overly attached to social media, you may find immediate and tangible benefit in cutting back. By tapering your use, you can devote more time to achieving your goals. You can also gain a sense of freedom and more excitement about working toward your goals.

Dealing with Setbacks and Obstacles

At times, unexpected events and challenges can get in the way of best-laid plans. For example, you might get sick or injured or need to deal with a family issue or a financial crisis. Earlier in this section, we considered a scenario in which a student realized she needed to change her major and her career plans. Such upsets, whether minor or major, may trigger a need to take some time off from school—perhaps a term or a year. Your priorities may shift. You may need to reevaluate your goals.

Problem-Solving Strategies

Below is a simple list of four problem-solving strategies. They can be applied to any aspect of your life.

1. What is the problem? Define it in detail. How is it affecting me and other people?
2. How are other people dealing with this problem? Are they adjusting their time management skills? Can they still complete

responsibilities, and on time?
3. What is my range of possible solutions? Are solutions realistic? How might these solutions help me reach my goal/s?
4. What do I need to do to implement solutions?

You may wish to also review the earlier set of questions about focusing with intention on goals.

Be confident that you can return to your intended path in time. Acknowledge the ways in which you need to regroup. Read inspiring words from people who have faced adversity and gained. Line up your resources, be resolved, and proceed with certainty toward your goals.[34]

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6.4: Stress Management

Career and life planning, decision-making and goal setting are exciting topics that play an important role in our lives, yet at the same time they are very heavy topics and can induce high levels of stress. Making decisions that will impact your future can feel overwhelming and create negative thoughts, unproductive behaviors and uncontrollable emotions. In this section, we will address how stress can be managed and the important role you play in managing your own stress levels.

This section is focused on helping you identify and understand your stress responses. If stressful situations persist and there are no healthy coping mechanisms developed. The immune system is compromised and disease begins. There are many tools that are available to help us learn healthy ways of dealing with daily ups and downs. This unit will help you explore some very solid, research based tools for dealing with stress.

Two of the most powerful tools most frequently used for managing stress are both simple and free. Both are cultivated through practice. The first tool is re-framing. Re-framing is a matter of mindset. Even though something happens that I may not have planned for, I still have a choice in how I respond to it. I can let “it” ruin my day, or I can figure out how to best deal with the situation and move on. So in other words, I can choose to “catastrophize” the situation, and make myself and those around me have bad day, or I can find a solution to take myself out of the situation. I always have a choice.

Are you generally a positive or negative thinker? If you are a negative thinker, use this opportunity to start to become consciously aware of your thought/perception patterns. Once you become more aware, you can make changes that will help you manage your thought process, thus, changing your intentions, attitudes and outcomes to a more positive lifestyle which will help contribute to managing your level of stress.

Choosing to be mindful is about awareness. By this, I mean really aware of everything going on around you. Mindfulness can be thought of as a moment-to-moment, nonjudgmental awareness, cultivated by paying attention in a specific way that is, in the present moment, and as non-reactively, as non-judgmentally, and as open heartedly as possible, (Jon Kabat-Zinn) Rather than allowing ourselves to be distracted by technology, television, or a myriad of other things, we purposely slow down and take in everything being fully present. Many of those who practice mindfulness call the constant ricocheting of our attention “monkey mind”. I find it amusing that many people to call it multi-tasking. Let's stop fooling ourselves, we cannot multi task, only shift our attention from one thing to another and not give either task the focus and attention it deserves to get the task done well.

Consider these tools when facing stressful situations. Re-framing and mindfulness are powerful tools that can be practiced to help manage stress caused by everyday stressors.[35]

Stress management is key to overall health. Mindful management of stress improves quality of life and provides a clear mind for learning and making valuable decisions. Nutrition has a very important role in your physical and mental health. In addition, sleep is very crucial to keep balance and keeping brain neurotransmitters working efficiently. Lack of sleep and unhealthy nutrition can affect mood, eating habits, and maladaptive behaviors. Therefore, increasing levels of negative stress can lead to making rash decisions and acquire poor eating habits. Regular participation in health promoting behaviors such as exercise, healthy eating and social connections reduces stress and anxiety. Remember to pay attention to how you are “feeling”. Often times when we suffer an increased amount of stress our mental state is negatively affected. This may cause depression, anxiety, weight gain/loss and feeling lost. Analyze and identify possible resources to help you navigate back to a balanced lifestyle.

The COC Student Health and Wellness Center provides mental health counseling free of charge to students. If you are feeling overwhelmed balancing life challenges, work, school, and personal responsibilities, you may want to speak with a mental health professional. Services through the Student Health Center are confidential and available at both the Valencia and Canyon Country Campus. For more information, speak with your instructor, or visit the Student Health and Wellness site at: https://www.canyons.edu/studentservices/health/index.php

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6.5: Choosing your Major and Educational Planning

In Units 1 – 3, we spent a lot of time on self-discovery through engaging in different career assessments and researching career information that may be a good fit based on personal strengths, interests, values, skills, and personality. At this time, you should be getting closer to deciding on a career path that may be a good fit for you. Once you know what career path or industry you are interested in, you are a step closer to choosing your major. Having a general idea of what career path interests you will help you determine which major is the best fit for you.

In the United States and Canada, your academic major—simply called "your major"—is the academic discipline you commit to as an undergraduate student. It's an area you specialize in, such as accounting, chemistry, criminology, archeology, digital arts, or dance. In United States colleges and universities, roughly 2,000 majors are offered. And within each major is a host of core courses and electives. When you successfully complete the required courses in your major, you qualify for a degree.

Why is your major important? It's important because it's a defining and organizing feature of your undergraduate degree. Ultimately, your major should provide you with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or behaviors you need to fulfill your college goals and objectives.

In this section, we will look at how to select your major and how your college major may correlate with a career. Does your major matter to your career? What happens if you change your major? Does changing your major mean you must change your career? Read on to find out![36]

Take a minute to watch the YouTube Video titled "How to Pick a Major" which will provide you with 5 tips to consider as you get closer to making your decision to declare or confirm your major.



Figure 4.3 – Watch "How to Pick a Major" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8I_Qw2NfSq0)

Choosing a college major can have a big impact on your career choices, especially if you are following a technical or vocational program of study. After all, it is hard to become a pharmacist if you study computer networking. Students often get too anxious about choosing a major or program of study. Certainly, many two-year students have a very clear idea of what they are studying and the job they expect to land after completing their degree, and you probably feel confident enough in your choice of major to make the investment for tuition in that program. But there is no need to panic over your choice of major or program of study:

- Your choice of major or program will be important only for your first job after college; most people change careers (not just jobs, but careers) five times or more in their lifetime, so there is no possible major that will cover that level of flexibility.
- Many majors and programs share foundation courses with other majors, so you can usually change your major without having misused your time in courses that will be unrelated to your new major. Chances are, if you change your major, it will be to something similar, especially if you have completed an occupational interest survey as recommended earlier in this class.

- Most students change their major at least once, and many will change majors two or three times before they graduate.

While these thoughts might remove some of the stress of making the choice, there is no doubt that it is not always easy to make your choice. The following tips may make it a little easier...and perhaps fun!

- **Follow your dreams.** Your first instinct in choosing a field of study is probably based on your dreams and life experience. Make sure you base your choice on your own dreams and interests and not those of a parent, spouse, or friend.
- **Make it fun.** What do you like to do for fun? What kinds of magazines do you read? What websites are bookmarked on your computer? What kinds of volunteer work have you done? What do the answers to these questions tell you about the kind of career you would enjoy?
- **Build on your skills.** A good choice of a program of study is not based exclusively on your likes; it should also consider your skills. What courses did you "ace" in high school? Consider also courses that you found challenging in which you learned and enjoyed (it is hard to keep a level of determination to tackle a tough subject if you do not enjoy it). What do these courses tell you about what you are skilled at studying?
- **Ask around.** Find people who are following the courses of study you are considering. Ask them what they like and dislike about their majors. If you can find recent graduates with that major, ask them about the value of their major.
- **Two is better than one.** Talk to your counselor about potentially double majoring, as this can be an effective way of preparing yourself for the uncertainties and options of future employment. You may want to consider declaring a minor after you transfer to a four-year university. A minor is a sub-specialty are in a discipline outside your major
- **What makes you unique?** If you have a major that you would like to pursue that is not offered at your college, find out if you can plan your own major. This option is especially attractive if you want to combine two seemingly different disciplines into a major (Dance and athletics? Sociology and film? Women's studies and economics?). This may be an option when you transfer to the four-year university.
- Be open to change. Once you have selected a major, do not panic if it turns out to be the wrong choice; consider it a step toward finding the right program for you. Repeat the major selection process, but carefully consider what you learned from your original major choice. Why was it not the right major? (Did it not match your interests? Was the workload too heavy? Were the courses too tough?) What do you know now that you did not know when you made your first selection that you should consider in making a new choice?

What do you need to launch a good career? Employers will look at your education, skills, and experience. Making sure you have the "right stuff" in these three areas is what you should focus on in your college experience.

Resources to Help You Learn More about Choosing a Major

This quote really sets the stage for the journey you are on. Your journey may be a straight line that connects the dots between today and your future, or it may resemble a twisted road with curves, bumps, hurdles, and alternate routes.

To help you navigate your pathway to career success, take advantage of all the resources available to you. Your college, your community, and the wider body of higher-education institutions and organizations have many tools to help you with career development. Be sure to take advantage of the following resources:

- College course catalog: Course catalogs are typically rich with information that can spark ideas and inspiration for your major and your career. The COC Catalog may be accessed here: https://www.canyons.edu/administration/academicaffairs/catalog.php

The college catalog consists of college policies, procedures and programs. Detailed descriptions of each major, degree requirements and course descriptions are outlined. Take time to see what COC offers in regards to career certificates, associate degrees and transfer.

- Instructional and counseling faculty and academic advisers at your college: Many college professors are also practitioners in their fields, and can share insights with you about related professions. Counselors and academic advisers may also share information about different majors and how they connect to careers.
- Fellow students: Many of your classmates, especially those who share your major, may have had experiences that can inform and enlighten you—for instance, an internship with an employer or a job interview with someone who could be contacted for more information.
- Students who have graduated: Most colleges and universities have active alumni programs with networking resources that can help you make important decisions.

- Your family and social communities: Contact friends and family members who can weigh in with their thoughts and experience.
- The Counseling Department and the HUB: Counseling faculty in these departments have a wealth of information to share with you—they're also very good at listening and can act as a sounding board for you to try out your ideas.

There are many online resources with free materials that can provide guidance, such as the ones in the table, on the following page.[37]

Table 4.1 – Major Guidance

Website	Description
Majors at College of the Canyons	Lists current majors at COC with an AA/AS or AA-T/AST. A brief description of each major is highlighted along with required courses and number of units necessary for the degree.
List of College Majors (MyMajors)	A list of more than 1,800 college majors—major pages include description, courses, careers, salary, related majors and colleges offering major
Take the College Major Profile Quiz (About.com)	Quiz is designed to help students think about college majors, personality traits, and how they may fit within different areas of study
Choosing a College Major Worksheet(Quint Careers)	A six-step process to finding a college major
Common Mistakes Students Make in Choosing a Major	Lists common misperceptions about choosing a major and explains how these misperceptions can cloud future plans
What can I do with this major?	Lists majors and how they connect with careers, provides information about common career areas, typical employers and strategies designed to maximize career opportunities. Additional links are listed to connect to professional association and other resources related to the major.
Explore Careers (BigFuture/ The College Board)	Explore careers by selecting "Show me majors that match my interests," "Show me new career ideas," and "Show me how others made their choices"
The College Major: What It Is and How To Choose One (BigFuture/The College Board)	When to choose a major, how to choose a major, "you can change your mind," majors and graduate school, and majors and professions

As you narrow down your career choice and major choice, you can now make a decision in regards to what program you may want to pursue while at COC. The next section reviews the opportunities available to you at COC. As you read over the different programs, make note of which program or programs are of interest to you.

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7: DEVELOPING YOUR SELF-MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Learning Objectives

- Review the steps involved in creating a productive job search and the importance of networking while building your campaign.
- Create a strong resume and cover letter to make you stand apart from the crowd.
- Illustrate a professional presence through social media to support your campaign.
- Appraise your interviewing skills to help get you in shape for your next job or internship.

As you prepare for your selected career path it is important to make yourself stand out from the crowd. You will do this by designing your own personalized marketing campaign. It is important to understand the steps involved in creating a productive job search and the importance of networking as a framework to building your campaign.

7.1: The Job Search Process

7.2: The Power of Networking

7.3: Developing a Strong Resume

7.4: The Cover Letter

7.5: Your Online Profile

7.6: Interviewing for Success

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7.1: The Job Search Process

Searching for a job requires patience and perseverance. The process may seem overwhelming at first, however if you treat it like a job and commit the necessary time and effort towards each step, the process will seem more manageable. There are five essential steps to creating a successful job search.

- Step 1: Focus on what you want.
- Step 2: Determine where you want to do it.
- Step 3: Develop your self-marketing campaign.
- Step 4: Build your network.
- Step 5: Take action and commit 100%.

Step 1: Focus on what you want

This step entails evaluating the information you have learned about yourself through self-exploration in unit 2. Taking into consideration your needs, values, interests, personality, strengths, skills and abilities and how you wish to apply them in terms of a career.

At the same time, you probably don't want just any job. You want a job for specific reasons. These reasons might be the following:

- Starting on your dream career path.
- Supporting yourself in a comfortable way.
- Fulfilling a specific mission or personal legacy.
- Working with people you like and respect.

When you know what you want in your next job, you can search for these specific criteria. If your priority is to start on a specific career path, then you look for growth, advancement, learning, and mentorship in your next job. If you have specific financial obligations that you need to meet (e.g., student loans to repay, family to support, a relocation), then compensation is a main criterion. If you have a mission or legacy you wish to impart (e.g., to help a specific underserved community), then you will be looking at the mission of your next employer to see if it aligns with yours. If you value your relationships and day-to-day interactions with people, then you will be looking closely at who your boss and colleagues will be in your next job. These are just some examples, and people often have multiple considerations. You will want to look closely at your interests and values to determine overall what you want and how you might prioritize jobs that meet some but not all criteria.

Step 2: Determine where you want to do it

This step involves knowing what industry, what function and what geographic location you wish to pursue. The industry you target is the type of business in which you want to work.

Industries include the following examples:

- Arts
- Education
- Energy
- Food
- Fashion
- Health care, pharmaceuticals, and biotech
- Hospitality and leisure
- Financial services
- Government
- Legal
- Luxury goods
- Management consulting
- Manufacturing

- Media and entertainment
- Nonprofit causes
- Retail
- Sports
- Technology

- Telecommunications
- Transportation, aerospace, and automotive
-

These are just some examples, and they are of very broad industry categories. You can specify even further into subcategories. You will want to subcategorize because if you pick too broad an industry, you will have the same dilution-of-efforts problem as if you haven't specified an industry at all.

If you look at the arts, subcategories include the following examples:

- Type of art—visual or performing arts
- Type of organization—venues for exhibiting and performing, arts education, artist support, or art supplies
- Sector—nonprofit (e.g., Lincoln Center, a venue for performing arts), private sector (e.g., Warner Music Group, a record label), government (e.g., National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency supporting artists and arts organizations)

It is not enough to say, "I want a job in the arts." Do you mean visual arts, as in painting or sculpting? Do you mean you'd like to work in a venue, such as a museum or a theater? Do you want to work for educational programs that focus on the arts?

Do you want to work in support of artists—at a foundation that gives grants for creative projects, or at an artists' union? Do you want to be in and around artists, selling or manufacturing art supplies? Finally, you can be in the arts and work for a nonprofit, a private company, or a government agency. Each of these sectors is very different.

In a later section of this unit, we will give ideas for how to explore different industries and the different subcategories of your industry choices to see what might be right for you. We will also talk about how to research industries for specific organizations and company names and other information that will help you find the jobs you want. You can see already how useful it can be to focus on being specific. Being specific in describing the jobs you want is necessary to find where those jobs are.

Let's take another example from the list so you can get more ideas on how to break an industry down. If you look at energy, the following subcategories are included:

- Types of energy—oil, gas, coal, nuclear, or alternative
- Types of organizations—exploration companies, utilities, research firms, regulatory agencies, equipment and support, or capital raising
- Sector—nonprofit (the US Energy Association, a nonprofit professional association), private sector (e.g., Exxon Mobil, an oil and gas company), or government (e.g., the Environmental Protection Agency)

If you are interested in energy, you could work for a private company that is involved in many types of energy and at many stages, from exploration to delivery.

You could research energy-related issues for a nonprofit. You could be focused on regulations for a government agency. There are multiple, different possibilities for that single energy industry choice.

Finally, let's look at sports as a possible interest. Perhaps you have been a long time athlete or a diehard fan. Can you take a personal interest and make it into a career?

- Types of sports—a specific sport (e.g., football) or sports in general
- Types of organizations—sports team (e.g., New York Giants), sports league (e.g., NFL), sports venue (e.g., Madison Square Garden, Meadowlands), sports program (e.g., an after-school program dedicated to foster competitive skills among youth), sports product (e.g., Under Armour), sports retailer (e.g., Footlocker), or sports business (e.g., agencies who represent athletes, marketing and advertising firms who help companies with sports-related campaigns)
- Sector—nonprofit (e.g., Turn 2 Foundation, which supports sports programs and is funded by Derek Jeter, a professional baseball player), private sector (e.g., Under Armour, Footlocker), or government (local departments of parks and recreation)

If you are interested in sports, you might focus on a specific team or sport and look at different organizations involved with

that team. Or you might focus on sports in general—perhaps take on the mission of expanding the spectator base, increasing participation among youth, or determining the impact of sports on culture.

Here is a list of possible subcategories for common industries:

Table 5.1 – Subcategories in Common Industries

Overall Industry	Subcategories
Arts	• Visual or performing arts • Venues • Education • Artist support and marketing • Arts-related products • Education
Education	• Early, elementary, middle school, secondary school, higher education, adult, corporate, and executive • Independent, alternative and charter, public • Regulation and advocacy • Research • Pedagogy
Energy	• Oil, gas, coal, nuclear, alternative • Exploration • Utilities • Research • Regulation and safety • Equipment • Capital raising
Food	• Catering • Restaurants • Corporate services • Media and journalism • Nutrition science • Regulation and safety • Human rights and food access
Fashion	• Retail • Design • Manufacturing • Buying • Media and journalism
Health care, pharmaceuticals, biotech	• Hospitals, clinics • Pharmacies • Medical equipment • Research • Regulation and safety • Human rights, medical care access, patient • advocacy, privacy • Insurance
Hospitality and leisure	• Hotels, resorts, spas • Leisure versus commercial • Booking and sales • Event planning • Equipment and operations

Financial services	• Accounting and audit • Commercial banking • Private banking and asset management • Investment banking • Retail banking • Insurance • Regulation • Consumer advocacy and protection
Government	• Federal, state, municipal • Constituents represented (e.g., artists, children, elderly, small business) • Industries represented (e.g., arts, education, health care, banking)
Legal	• Professional services, in-house • Criminal, civil • Family, immigration, litigation • Research • Operations and document processing • Regulation • Public Defender Research
Luxury goods	• Retail • Design • Manufacturing • Media and journalism
Management consulting	• Functional specialists: HR, economics, sales, • general strategy, technology • Industry specialists: financial services, • pharmaceutical, nonprofits
Manufacturing	• Equipment • Regulation and safety • Union relations • Capital financing
Media and entertainment	• Film, TV, publishing, digital • Content production • Distribution • Marketing • Advertising • Research • Regulation and monitoring
Nonprofit causes	• Mission based (e.g., ending poverty, eradicating • polio) • Constituent based (e.g., advocating for the • homeless, protecting consumers) • Programs • Foundations
Retail	• Product based (e.g., clothing, office equipment) • Customer based (e.g., children's, women's)

Sports	• Specific sport or sports in general • Sports team • Sports league • Sports venue • Sports-related education • Sports products and equipment • Sports retailers • Sports agencies, marketing, or advertising
Technology	• Hardware • Software • Services • Regulation • Advocacy (e.g., privacy, net neutrality)
Telecommunications	• Engineering and design • Manufacturing • Utilities • Regulation • Advocacy
Transportation, aerospace, and automotive	• Motor, marine, rail, aerospace • Leisure versus commercial use • Engineering and design • Manufacturing • Logistics • Regulation and safety • Consumer protection and access

Function

The function of a job refers to your overall responsibility and what you are doing day to day. Examples of job functions follow:

- Management
- Sales
- Marketing and public relations
- Finance and accounting
- Human resources
- Operations
- Technology

In both of the industry examples for arts and energy, you could be doing many different things within any of the subcategories. If your industry choice leads you to an art museum as a possibility, you might do several things:

- Manage a program or exhibit (management).
- Handle membership or ticket sales (sales). Raise money (at a nonprofit, this is referred to as development).
- Create brochures and advertising (marketing).
- Analyze and report on the finances of the museum (finance and accounting).
- Act as the point person for employees on questions about pay, benefits,
- Day-to-day role and advancement, and other career-related issues (human resources).
- Organize the open and close, facilities, and maintenance or other daily operations (operations).
- Run the customer database (technology).

In a later section of this chapter, we will give ideas for how to explore different functional areas to see what might be right for you.

Geography

Finally, even if you know what you are doing (function) and who you are doing it for (industry), you need to know where you

will physically be. Geography is the third element of a well-defined target. How many potential art museums are located in your desired area? If your desired location has few or no art museums, then your search is unrealistic, and you have to expand your industry (to include other types of museums or other types of art-related organizations) or change your geography. If there are art museums in your desired location, but they are all small and do not need the fundraising skills you have, then you need to expand your function (do something else within the art museums) or change your geography. Geography gives you another critical point of focus for your job search.

Aside from physical location, some jobs have another type of geography consideration. You might be targeting a job whose customers, research subjects, or constituents are of a specific geography:

- Chicago-based (geography 1) curator (function) for an art museum (industry) specializing in East Asian Art (geography 2)
- New York City–based (geography 1) equity research analyst (function) specializing in transportation projects (industry) in sub-Saharan Africa (geography 2)
- Washington, DC–based (geography 1) lobbyist (function) specializing in raising awareness for energy alternatives (industry) in the Mississippi
- Delta (geography 2)
- Austin-based (geography 1) marketing manager (function) for a computer manufacturer (industry) is charged with opening up the
- China market (geography 2)

Your job interest may be related to a specific geography, and this definitely should factor in your search. You also must then factor in your physical location.

Step 3: Develop your self-marketing campaign

Your marketing campaign includes how you present yourself both in person and on paper to prospective employers. Developing a strong resume and cover letter is crucial to getting an interview. Resume and cover letter writing and interview techniques will be addressed in greater detail later in this unit.

The way you dress, carry yourself, and physically behave also communicate your job potential. Your nonverbal communication either supports the things you say and how you say them, or it undermines you. If you are an articulate, well-spoken person but dress in a sloppy manner, slouch, and fidget, then your actions belie your verbal communication. Therefore, poise goes hand in hand with communication as a fundamental prerequisite for your search.

Professional Dress Signals Your Professional Maturity

What you wear to different job search functions signals neatness, professionalism, and understanding of general business protocol. A business suit in a dark neutral color is the standard. Black, blue, brown, and gray are neutral colors. Some industries and specific companies within industries dress more casually, so it is important to consult an experienced person in the specific industries and companies that interest you for the most relevant guidelines. For example, in media and fashion, your dress is a signal of how much you know and can fit into that field.

A dark suit would be too bland and look out of place at a fashion-forward company. For general functions, such as career fairs or professional mixers, stick to proper business attire. Even if there are a range of dress options in attendance, it's best to be more formally dressed. In addition, most job seekers look more professional and put together with a business suit. You probably will carry yourself more professionally, have better posture, and be more alert in a business suit than in casual attire.

If you are attending an event or an interview where business casual is stipulated, this is still neater and more formal than casual attire. Khakis rather than jeans, dress slacks and a sport coat for men, and a sweater set for women are some examples of business casual.

Here is a checklist of things to remember about dressing professionally:

- Dark, neutral colors and a matching suit jacket and slacks or skirt are the standard.
- Shoes should be comfortable and polished. No open-toed styles or very high heels; even in dressy styles, shoes with open toes or very high heels look unprofessional.
- What you wear beneath the jacket will also be seen. For men, blue or white dress shirts are standard, though some other colors are acceptable. For women, stick to blouses with sleeves in case you take your jacket off (sleeveless is too casual).

Women should also stay away from frilly camisoles—they can be seen under your jacket and still look like lingerie.
- Cover yourself. No body hair for men or cleavage for women should be visible. Women should make sure skirt lengths are not too short.
- Avoid overly printed ties, lots of jewelry, accessories, or too much makeup, all of which detract from a professional appearance.
- Have a professional briefcase or bag. A backpack or other casual bag diminishes the professional image.
- Fragrance is not recommended because some people are allergic.
- Keep hair neat and off your face so interviewers can see you.
- Don't wait until you start your job search to make sure you have the appropriate clothes. It takes time to ensure the fit and length is right, and you may need tailoring or other services.

The Way You Carry Yourself Also Signals Professionalism

If you have a great suit but you slouch, that is an incomplete package. Good posture, steady eye contact, and a firm handshake are additional fundamentals to the job search process. Even if you think this is common sense, do not assume that you will be 100 percent put together once your search starts. If you are not used to dressing professionally and interacting with people in a formal business context, then you may have a weak handshake or poor eye contact and not realize it. Before you get busy with interviews, see if you can attend a business event just as a practice run.

Here is a checklist of things to remember about carrying yourself professionally:

- Maintain good posture. You don't want to be stiff, but you want to stand and sit straight, as it keeps you looking and feeling alert. Practice maintaining good posture over time (interviews can last thirty minutes or longer).
- Maintain steady eye contact, but not 100 percent of the time. It's preferable to look away from time to time, as glaring or staring at someone makes them uncomfortable.
- Have a firm handshake. Do not break the person's hand, but do not be hesitant or limp, either.
- Develop a habit of turning off and not checking your cell phone when you are talking to someone.
- Practice eating and speaking formally. There will be situations where you are networking or even interviewing over a meal. You do not want a real interview to be the first time you experience formal dining and conversation.

Body Language and Nonverbal Communication Support or Undermine Your Words

You might look great, carry yourself well, and speak eloquently, but you also communicate with physical gestures and other nonverbal cues. Pay attention to how you use your body during conversations and meetings. You might find that you can't sit still for long periods of time or that you use a lot of distracting hand gestures. You might be too still and miss opportunities to accentuate points with a nod of the head or finger movement. Some recruiter pet peeves include the following:

- Looking over the recruiter's shoulder. What are you staring at?
- Fidgeting constantly. How are you going to appear to clients if you can't sit still?
- Gesticulating in an overly dramatic way. Don't slam your hands down emphatically on the recruiter's desk. It looks threatening, not forceful.
- Lack of common courtesy, for example, not covering your mouth when you yawn, cough, or sneeze. How could an employer put you in front of a client with that unmannerly behavior?
- Checking cell phones during meetings or interviews. Is this job less important to you than your cell phone calls?

Start practicing good manners now so these habits are ingrained behaviors before your job search.

Step 4: Build your network

According to www.dictionary.com, networking is a supportive system of sharing information and services among individuals and groups having a common interest. Networking is an essential tool in your job search process and will be discussed in more detail later in this unit.

Step 5: Take Action & Commit 100%

Job searching should be treated like a full time job. It takes time and resources to research the job market and find positions

that are a good fit. It takes time to customize your cover letter and resume for each position and to practice interviewing for each individual opportunity.

Finding and managing your time will require trade-offs. A proactive job search takes ten to fifteen hours per week. You will need to take this time from other activities. Before your job search starts, take an inventory of everything that is taking up your time. Create a comprehensive calendar that includes the following:

- Major trips or vacations when you will physically be away
- Critical projects, papers due, or exam weeks when you will be busier than usual
- Regular daily, weekly, or monthly appointments, such as classes, club meetings, or gym workouts
- Job search events that you know about in advance (for many students, include specific deadlines set by your school, such as when you should submit your resume to the employers coming to campus)

Create a comprehensive activity list that includes necessary but non-time-specific activities:

- Homework
- Laundry and housework
- Exercise and self-care
- Volunteer work
- Hobbies
- Ten to fifteen hours of job search activity, some of which must be done during normal business hours

Look at the unscheduled times and your list of activities. Block out where things might go. Be realistic about when you do your best work. If you have more energy in the morning, reserve that time for your job search activity. If you know you can't concentrate by end of day, use that time for non-thinking activities, such as housework or exercise.

Well before you start your job search, start moving activities around and make arrangements for your replacement if you need to drop activities. You want to have a schedule in place that supports your job search, not crowds it out.

Ideas and Support Systems to Help You Set Up Your Work Space

Your job search is a project, so you need a comprehensive work space. Stocking up supplies in advance of your search enables you to stay focused and not get derailed by a surprise trip to the store. You also want to prepare in advance for services you may need, such as printing, copying, mailing, and faxing. Know the hours of the closest post office and office supply and service store. Know where you can send and receive faxes and where you can do special copying, binding, or printing. Here is a checklist of ideas for a comprehensive work space:

- Build a surplus of office essentials, such as paper, pens, mail supplies, staples, and so forth.
- Have a pen and paper by all phones if you share your workspace with others. This way, your cohabitants can easily take messages for you.
- Audit your computer, phone, and Internet access to ensure that your equipment and communication lines are in order. If you have a slow internet connection, research public access places, such as libraries, and list their availability.
- Create a professional voicemail message for all phones, including your cell phone.
- List post office, office supply, and service store addresses and hours.
- Figure out how to backup computer files, change printer ink, unblock paper jams, and any other minor but critical support services for your equipment. You do not want to be late for a meeting because you were printing a resume at the last minute and it got stuck in the printer.
- Check for privacy. If your work space is part of your bedroom and you will be making video calls, invest in a folding screen or figure out how to position the webcam to keep your environment looking professional.
- Check for quiet. Your job search will involve a lot of phone calls, including interviews. Plan now for a space where you can be heard, hear well, and concentrate.
- Make it a space that energizes and inspires you. Add pictures, fresh flowers, and so forth.

If you have a very organized friend, enlist his or her help in setting up and decorating your space.

Ideas and Support Systems to Help Manage Your Money

Know your budget for your job search essentials in advance. You can price out the work space items listed previously and the

professional dress requirements listed earlier. For job search events you already know about, budget for registration fees and transportation costs. If you want to work with a career coach, factor that into your budget.

Another financial consideration is the opportunity cost of the time spent on your search, as opposed to working. If you have to drop a part-time job to launch your search, there is the cost of lost wages. If you are a student and your job search extends past graduation, there is the cost of supporting yourself while you look. How will you pay for your living expenses? How long can you sustain yourself without a job?

Your financial situation affects the execution and timing of your job search, so you need to decide on these issues prior to your search. If you are relying on family or friends to help with your living expenses, have a candid conversation about both of your expectations before you start your search.

You Must Be Confident Your Job Search Will Be Successful

Having confidence in your job search means two things:

1. You believe you will get a job. You know with 100 percent certainty there is a job somewhere out there for you.
2. You believe you will get a job you want. You have a positive attitude about working. You are excited at the prospect of doing the job you are targeting, in the industry you are targeting, and for the companies you are targeting.

You have to know you will be successful, and you have to want that success. If you have just one of these two things, this is not sufficient to project enough confidence in your job search. If you believe you will get a job, but don't believe it will be something you want, you will appear anxious, frustrated, and full of dread. If you are excited about what you want to do, but don't believe you will get a job doing it, you will appear as if you are not good enough for your prospective employers.

A confident job seeker is someone who is energized at the prospect of finding his or her dream job. A confident job seeker may not be an expert on resume s, interviews, or other job search tactics, but he or she has an innate knowledge that he or she will be able to figure those things out. This is not arrogance. Prospective employers will shy away from arrogant job candidates who appear to be high-maintenance divas and poor team players. You don't want to come across as someone who thinks you are better than your future boss or colleagues. Confidence is a healthy, positive attitude.

You Can Proactively Build Confidence into Your Job Search Strategy

Ideally, you have confidence before you start your job search. If confidence has been a struggle your whole life or if you feel overly depressed or anxious about your job search specifically, you should seek help from a guidance counselor, therapist, or other professional resource. You want to rule out any medical conditions, such as depression, as the root cause of your anxiety. If you have some nervousness, but not in a crippling way that keeps you from your job search, you can plan to proactively build and maintain your confidence throughout your job search by surrounding yourself with positive influences:

- Pair up with a job search buddy. Pick someone with a can-do attitude, and agree to support each other during your search. Maybe you can meet once a week or call each other right before a big event (e.g., job interview or career fair).
- Start a job search group. A larger group will have more energy than just one person. A group also has a range of personalities and perspectives that can contribute alternative points of view. A group will also have people at different stages of the search, enabling you all to see different outcomes unfolding.
- Enlist the support of a coach or mentor. A more experienced person can be a great sounding board for ideas and a champion for when you need a pick-me-up.
- Read about successful people. When you see other people's achievements over adversity, you are able to see your own potential.
- Keep a journal that focuses on the positive. Write down things for which you are grateful. Write down past successes and wins. You will see that you have been successful in other areas, and this can give you the confidence that you can succeed in your job search as well.

Designate an allocated amount of time each day to your job search and don't get discouraged if landing the job you want is taking longer than you had anticipated. There is something out there for everyone and with patience and hard work, you'll find the right job!

Online Resources to Support your Job Search

The Career Center is a great resource on campus to help you with your job search. For a more comprehensive list of employment links visit the Job and Career Center Site at http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/CareerServices/Pages/Employment-Links.aspx

The Career Center has a job database filled with part time and full time job opportunities ranging from entry level to professional level positions through the MyJobs Database. We discussed this database earlier in Unit 4 when introducing internships. In addition to internship opportunities, MyJobs houses hundreds of jobs.

The Career Center also hosts job fairs on campus throughout the year. Employers come to campus and share information about current positions they are recruiting for. Check the Career Center website for the next job fair. For more information go to the Career Center website at: http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/CareerServices/Pages/College-of-the-Canyons-Job-Fair-Information.aspx

The Santa Clarita WorkSource Center also hosts events on campus throughout the year. They hold a series of workshops to help facilitate the job search process including job search strategies, resume writing, interviewing, and second chance workshops for students with a record. View their website for upcoming events. http://econdev.santa-clarita.com/santa-clarita-worksource-center/

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7.2: The Power of Networking

There is some wisdom in the saying that it's who you know that brings success in getting a job. Consider the following:

- It is estimated that only 20 percent of new jobs and vacancies are advertised or posted.
- A Web posting for a job typically yields over 150 applicants for a position.
- Sixty to eighty percent of jobs are found through personal contact and networking.

These statistics illustrate the importance of networking and cultivating relationships with professionals in the field your career field.

What exactly is networking?

The **process** of **engaging** others in helping reach an **objective**. In its simplest terms, it is the process of engaging others in helping you reach an objective. Three words in this definition deserve a closer look:

1.

2. **Engaging -** You are looking to have others do something for you—give you information, guidance, other contacts, or perhaps a recommendation.
3. **Objective -** You need to be clear about your purpose for networking—it is not merely to collect people's contact information but to further your career development.

The process of networking involves three basic phases: prospect identification and management, making contact, and follow-up.



Figure 5.1 – Social Networking (Image by Chris Potter is licensed under CC BY 2.0).

A common question/misconception about networking is:

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The answer is YES! Absolutely! Even though you aren't yet graduating from college, there are many benefits to starting now. As a student, you are likely to be applying for part-time jobs, internships, scholarships and even volunteer positions. Networking is a process of building relationships, and the strongest relationships are built over time. Having a good network will help identify interesting and relevant opportunities.

All Contacts Are Equal, but Some Are More So Than Others

The first phase involves identifying whom you should be speaking to and pinpointing the people who can introduce you to them. This is like the game Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon applied to your own life. Whom do you need to speak to? That really depends on your objectives. If you are trying to learn about an occupation, it can be just about anyone involved with that field. If you are in the process of trying to land an internship or a job, you want to reach the person who will make the hiring decision.

Your objective also defines how you get started with your networking. In the first case, you might want to start with people you met at an industry conference; in the job-specific case, you'll want to think about whom you know in that company or who might know someone in that company. If you don't have any contacts who fit that description, whom do you know who lives in the town in which the company is based or in a nearby town?

Your success in this phase of networking will be driven by the quality of the candidates (those who can directly influence your ability to reach your objectives) as well as the quantity (those who will lead you to the most contacts). This is why there is no such thing as a bad contact.

As important as having contacts is your ability to access those contacts when you need to. That is where contact management comes into play. Don't be caught wishing you could call someone you met three weeks ago...if you could only remember what you did with their business card! There are countless ways to keep track of contacts, from writing names in an address book, to keeping a Rolodex, to using a computer-based contact management system. Choose a system you feel comfortable with—comfortable enough to use regularly.

Let technology help you in this endeavor. Your computer, or smartphone has features for capturing contact information and retrieving it based on keywords, and most will even connect with your calendar for scheduling and reminders. Whatever your choices, invest the time to learn to use them well; you'll be very glad you did.

Building a network requires consistent work, and a strong network will take time to achieve. That is why we recommend you start building your professional network now—even early in your college career. Your network should include anyone who might have a connection that will help: family, friends, neighbors, past and present coworkers, bosses, people you met through associations and clubs (especially business associations), alumni from your college, and acquaintances you have met via online networking.

Personal Contact

Being in the right place at the right time has much less to do with luck than with the art of personal contact. Contacts are everywhere, and you don't know when you might turn one to your advantage. You may feel a little awkward following these tips at first, but with practice you will become quite adept at meeting new people and adding them to your network.

- Be prepared. If you are going to a conference, a party, or even a class, know ahead of time which people or kinds of people you want to meet. Be prepared with topics you can steer your contact toward so you don't spend two minutes awkwardly talking about the weather and then slink away.
- Be confident. Prepare and learn a short introduction for yourself. Be factual, don't brag, and give enough information about yourself to prompt your contact to ask questions.
- Be curious. The best way to get contacts to want to know you is to show you want to know them. Observe them before you step up to them. Is there something unique about them, the way they are dressed, or perhaps what you may have overheard that you can ask about? "I couldn't help but notice that lovely necklace; is that from a local designer?"
- Have a good supply of personal cards to give out to contacts; that will prompt them to give you their contact information, too. You don't have to be in business to have "business cards." Create a college student business card!
- Be courteous. If someone you know comes up to you while you are speaking with a contact, introduce them; if you see that the contact is getting antsy, tell them you enjoyed meeting them and then move on. Don't trap them!
- Set yourself up for networking success by discreetly writing a word or two on the back of their card to jog your memory in the future.

Make the Call

What you say in your networking calls or e-mails will depend largely on the objective of your networking effort. (Is it to learn about an occupation or industry? Seek a job-shadowing opportunity? Ask for a job?) But some networking basics and elements of etiquette apply to all contacts:

- Be mindful of your contact's time. Keep your calls and e-mails courteous but brief. If you are calling, ask if it is a good time to talk.
- If this is a first contact, tell the contact where you got his or her name. "I was referred to you by our friend. Janet Smith" or "My colleague, Richard Stewart, suggested I call you" or "I heard you speak at the International Genius Conference," (remember the contact source information in your contact database?). This turns an interrupting cold call into a warm call with an interested individual.
- Be specific about how the contact can help you. Know what you are asking for and do so directly. Don't be shy.
- Use your network for more than just asking for jobs. It is a great vehicle for learning about new trends in the industry, for launching "trial balloons" for ideas or concepts you are developing, and for seeking advice on practical aspects of your occupation.
- Help others in your network. Networking is not a one-way endeavor. Be willing to offer your assistance whenever you can; the fact that you are still in college doesn't mean you can't be of value. You may be able to get an introduction to an instructor for a person in the industry or help that person's daughter learn about your college.

Care and Feeding of Your Network

Much of the success of your networking efforts depends on what you do after you've hung up after a call or received an e-mail reply. The first step is to thank your contact for his or her help. Do this right away; any thank-you after twenty-four hours of your contact can be considered late. Find a reason (not just an excuse) to keep in touch with people in your network. If you read an article people in your network would be interested in, send them the link. If you run across a problem, one of your contacts might help you with, don't be shy—give him or her a call to ask for help. If you meet someone you think a contact would like, make introductions. Send a follow-up note of thanks to a person who gave you a particularly productive lead. Let him or her know what you were able to accomplish. People like to know they are on a successful team. Finally, if a person in your network asks you for help, do what you say you will do.

How to Build Your Network on a Regular Basis, Even If You Are Shy: Venues for Meeting People

Build Your Network Every Day

Great networkers build their networks every day, while keeping in touch with those they have already met. Networking is work, but the rewards far outweigh the effort you will expend.

The most effective way to build a network is to have a genuine interest in every person you meet. Most individuals know when someone wants to know them for what they offer versus wanting to know them for what they can gain from the relationship. Don't fall into that self-serving trap. Genuine interest in others is the impetus for building long-term, mutually beneficial relationships of give and take, with the emphasis on the give.

Build Your Network Even If You Are Shy

If you are shy and the thought of networking wreaks havoc with your nervous system, certain strategies you can employ immediately will allow you to benefit from networking venues of all kinds.

Step 1: Observe the Networking Masters

We all know people who are natural networkers and who know how to work a room better than most. For those of you who are shy watch people who network effectively. Observe how they meet and greet a variety of people. Notice their body language, especially their smile, posture, handshake, and eye contact. You will naturally pick up pointers from these individuals.

Step 2: Pair Up with Someone Who Is a Good Networker

If you can pair up with a networking master, by all means do. If you have a friend who is extroverted, ask them to attend an event with you and pair up to meet as many people as you can. This can be a very valuable adventure that results in meeting quite a lot of new people.

Step 3: Ask Questions That Get Other People to Talk Easily

You can ask seven questions that will naturally elicit a great response from a person you want to get to know:

1. How did you get your start in this business?
2. What do you enjoy most about what you do?
3. What separates you from your competition?
4. What do you see as the coming trends in this business?
5. What is the strangest (or funniest) incident you have ever experienced in this business?
6. What three or four critical skills are necessary to succeed in this business?
7. What advice would you give to me knowing I want to get my start in this business?

Step 4: Don't Take Things Personally

When you take the plunge and begin networking and meeting individuals, try to develop a thick skin and don't take things personally. Some individuals will not want to communicate with you, and that is fine. Move on to those who do. To a large degree, it's a numbers game, so the more individuals you meet and follow up with correctly, the more will join your network.

Meet People at Different Venues

Your college environment is rich with potential networking contacts. Below are a few opportunities on campus for you to consider networking:

- Join a club on campus: There are so many different clubs on campus ranging from academic clubs, community service clubs, cultural clubs and honor societies just to name a few. Consider contacting the club advisor to learn more about the club and check out their next meeting. Join at least two or three that spark your interest so you have variety in your friends and network. Club membership is a great way to get connected early on in your college career, meet people who have the same interests as you, and learn a tremendous amount. School clubs funnel information to their members about networking events, internships, and full-time opportunities. For a comprehensive list of clubs at COC go to the Student Development site: https://www.canyons.edu/studentservices/studentdevelopment/clubs/index.php
- Establish a relationship with the Career Center services: Get involved with this group early on. People in career services have relationships with all the companies that come on campus to recruit. Check in with them early in your college career and find out what opportunities exist. The Career Center hosts different workshops and career related activities throughout the year.
- Get to know your professors! They are not only your instructors, but they are connected to industry and have experience in the discipline they teach and have connections. Get to know your instructor more.... ask them about their backgrounds and how they ended up teaching at your school. Ask what they like about it. You will be surprised at what you find out. Some professors will have worked in the business world and will have some good connections for you. You never know until you ask.
- Be curious about people and ask open-ended questions: When meeting someone new, ask them questions like "How did you pick this school?" and listen. A good listener is so hard to find. Open-ended questions often yield a story (sometimes a compelling story), and you learn quite a bit about a person. Ask about their family relationships. Be genuine because it is wonderful to find out about people, and you never know who they know or who their extended family knows.
- Meet as many different types of folks at school as possible: Your school presents opportunities to meet people from all walks of life. Try to meet the president of the college, various administrators, deans (the dean of students is a great contact because that person manages the school clubs), professors, teaching assistants, fellow students, cafeteria workers, the hot dog vendor on the corner, the stationary store owner and clerks, the workers at your favorite coffee shop, security, library staff, and so on. Get to know these folks by (a) being polite and pleasant, (b) being responsible, and (c) recognizing them and knowing them by name. Even if your new acquaintances don't further your networking objectives, perhaps some will become friends and make your stay at school all the better!
- Keep in touch with your old high school friends: Your high school friends are likely at different schools, but it's important to maintain contact.
- Your network will only grow this way, and you will enjoy continuing your friendships.

Networking is critical to your success throughout life (Beiderwell, Bruce, Flatworld).

Your Networking Pitch

A networking pitch was originally termed an elevator pitch because in the time an elevator takes to go between floors (generally thirty to forty seconds), you should be able to articulate your value proposition (the skills you have and the position you are seeking). The elevator pitch is also known as the professional pitch, the networking pitch, or simply the pitch.



Figure 5.2 –Watch "How to Perfect the Elevator Pitch" (link: https://www.occareercafe.com/associations/pitch/)

In thirty seconds or less, be able to introduce yourself in a **confident** and convincing manner, making a strong impression. If your pitch is too long and drawn out, it lacks conviction. When meeting networking contacts, recruiters, and hiring managers, this is your one chance to make a great impression and present yourself with clarity. No one wants to listen to a long, drawn-out speech. Make your pitch clear and concise, enabling the person who is listening to know exactly what type of job search candidate you are.

Any information you can share that distinguishes you from others is very helpful.

Perhaps you have something unique in your background:

- You speak two or three languages.
- You lived abroad for a particular length of time.
- You achieved something significant athletically or musically.
- You volunteered in a meaningful way and perhaps raised extraordinary funds for various charities.

Distinguish yourself from others in whatever way you can to ensure you are remembered in a positive light.

You will deliver your pitch at different times and occasions, including the following:

- Career fairs present an opportunity to meet representatives from various firms. These individuals will meet many students or candidates, so it is important that you make sure your pitch is short and crisp. Also be certain to do your research on their company, as many candidates do not.

- Networking events enable you to first meet someone in a more relaxed setting.
- Interviews often begin with the interviewer asking for a summary of your background or asking that you take one or two minutes to let them know about you. Include high-level themes in your past (e.g., you've always been involved in health care at some point in your schooling and in your career). If themes are not apparent, talk about your achievements and the quality of your efforts.

Consider the following steps as you prepare your pitch.

Step 1: Write Your Pitch

Your pitch should answer the following five questions:

1. What is your educational background? Detail every college or university you attended, your major and minor, and your expected degree and graduation month and year (include your GPA if it is 3.3 or higher).
2. Do you have any pertinent experience in the field in which you are interested?
3. What are your critical skills and strengths? Highlight your top two or three skills.
4. What do you want to do? Be specific regarding industry, function, and geography (see

1. Unit 5 section 5.1 "Step 1: Identify Your Job Search Targets").

5. Why would you be good at the position? Focus on presenting your top two or three skills, and the skills you have that are necessary to succeed at the job you are targeting.

Step 2: Edit Your Pitch

Once your pitch is written, review and edit it accordingly. You should use words that come naturally to you because the more natural the delivery, the more impressive the pitch. Here are some steps you can consider while editing your pitch:

- After you edit the one-page answers to the pitch questions, ensuring that you've covered all the important items, cut it to half a page; this forces you to prioritize the essential elements.
- After you edit the half-page document, ensuring that you've covered all the important items, cut it in half again (it's now one-quarter of the page); this forces you to be even more ruthless in prioritizing.
- After you edit the quarter-page document, ensuring you've covered all the important items, cut it in half again, leaving only four or five key bullets; this forces you to be concise and select just the most important items.

Step 3: Practice Delivering Your Pitch

Once you have the final pitch in writing, you'll need to practice, then practice, then practice some more. Your pitch should be spoken in a confident and compelling manner. Deliver your speech out loud to ensure it flows smoothly and addresses your career highlights. Practice it until you have it memorized.

Below is a sample pitch:

> Hi. My name is Joe Cougar.
>
> I am currently attending College of the Canyons, majoring in business and communications.
>
> I've seen the power marketing has to sell products. I have worked in retail for the past three years and during this time, I have seen sales tripled in cases where items were marketed well. I find this fascinating and know this is the career for me. I thrive on being creative and client focused and enjoy using these skills to grow revenue.

> To help you prepare for networking opportunities, take time to develop your pitch. Be sure to follow the guidelines address in se
>
> _____

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7.3: Developing a Strong Resume

Marketing Focus

Your resume is a marketing document that sells your candidacy. It provides an outline of your educational background, your work experience, and the key skills you have acquired. Your resume should be marketed in a format that is pleasing to read, efficient in its use of the English language, and so concise that it fits on one page. Once you have approximately ten years of experience, it is more acceptable to have a two-page resume, but until then, you should adhere to a one-page document. Recruiters can frown on the audacity of a college student with a two-page resume. Whether you are not sure you can fill a one-page resume, or whether you think it's not possible to fit your information to only one page, this section will help you get to your goal: an exceptional, one-page resume.

The following video is an animated look at why résumés are so important. You can read a transcript of the video here.[38]

YouTube Video

This interactive element is not available in this format. Visit the link or scan the QR code to access it online.

View this YouTube Video online

Figure 5.3 – Watch "Why Do I Need a Resume?" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=Yc4pgOsUJfA)

Quality, Clarity, and Accuracy

Your resume is the most critical component, or cornerstone, of your marketing campaign and it must meet two important criteria:

1. Your resume must be written in a clear and concise manner so the reader can quickly grasp what you offer as a candidate. Most seasoned recruiters scan a resume in about seven to ten seconds, but do not let that short review time throw you. Recruiters have an eye for the key things to look for in a resume, so a lot of care should be put into its construction. That construction should highlight the following features:
   - Your strengths
   - Your responsibilities
   - Your accomplishments
2. Your resume must be completely error-free. A resume represents you when you are not there. Recruiters look for reasons to reduce the number of resumes to review, so one error can be all that is needed to discard your resume and your candidacy. This is true in both good and bad economies, so take great care to guarantee 100 percent accuracy. Proofread your resume several times, use spell check, and ask someone who is exceptional at proofreading to review it. Always assume that an error lurks somewhere in your resume and review it and review it and review it until you find that error! Resumes often have the following common errors:
   - Misspellings (Spell check does not catch every misspelled word; meat will not be corrected if you meant to write meet.)
   - Errors in verb tense (Past experiences should be written in the past tense and current experiences in the current tense.)
   - Grammatical errors of any kind
   - Inconsistent formatting
   - Inappropriate length

How to Craft the Perfect Resume

This is a trick title because there is no perfect resume. You could always choose to have a particular bullet point written in ways

that are grammatically correct, are results oriented, and use action verbs, but writing a resume is not a perfect science. You could show your resume to five different recruiters and you might get five different opinions. There is no need to worry. The important thing is that it is well-written and highlights your accomplishments (no matter how big or how not so big). It's important that the format be consistent and that you get an opinion from a professional, whether it is someone from career services, a professor, or a person who is currently working in the field in which you are most interested.

A well-written resume can do seven specific things for you and your job search:

It Represents You When You Are Not There

Your resume can be uploaded to global job boards like Monster, CareerBuilder, and others in a few minutes. It can be sent to a company's online database with a push of a button. It can then be shared with dozens of recruiters and hiring managers without you even knowing about it. In fact, it's a lot easier to get your resume in front of a recruiter than it is to have a physical presence in their office; therefore, make certain it's a well-written, well-positioned document that makes an exceptional first impression.

It Quantifies Your Accomplishments

The best resume quantifies results and accomplishments clearly and easily. Here are some examples:

1. If you reduced errors by 35 percent, if you increased profits by 55 percent, and if 75 percent of your customers are repeat customers, include this information clearly, succinctly, and proudly.
2. If you have been a student teacher with thirty-five students in a classroom and student grades improved by 25 percent, include that as well.
3. If you have worked as an administrative assistant in a dentist's office and you are part of a marketing team that has increased new patient accounts by 10 percent last quarter, include that!
4. If you worked in the school library and the number of lost books has declined by 50 percent, or if you provide guidance to approximately fifty students per day, that information should be in your resume.

Quantifying your accomplishments gives your resume readers the specific information they need to know about your abilities and to be intrigued by what you can do for them.

It Clearly States Your Abilities

Focus on the results of your actions. Being results oriented helps resume readers understand your abilities. What exactly do you do, or what have you done in the past? Your resume should answer this question very quickly. For example, if you have been responsible for opening and closing a retail store on a daily basis and for managing the register that took in approximately $5,000 worth of merchandise a day, state that clearly and concisely. If you have written three to four sports articles for your school paper every month for the past three years, include that as well.

The more you quantify your accomplishments, the more your abilities will be understood.

It Shows Your Command of the Written Word

You don't have to be an English major to make sure that your resume is well written. Visit the career services department and inquire about resume writing workshops. Be sure to participate in them and consider scheduling a 1:1 appointment with a career counselor for additional support with your resume. Ask an older sibling who is in the workplace to review your resume before it goes into cyberspace or to a future employer. Other options include asking a teacher, professor, or perhaps someone with whom you worked with or for in the past to review your resume. Whatever the case, it is your responsibility to have a well-written resume. Remember that if it has one misspelled word, your resume could easily be dismissed, along with your candidacy. It's critical that your resume be accurate and well written.

It Creates Talking Points for Your Future Interviews

Clearly listing your accomplishments and quantifying those accomplishments can create talking points for your future interviews. For example, perhaps your bullet point is the following:

- Responsible for the intake and outtake of approximately 1,000 books daily, ensuring that all library users are logged into the new electronic database, which has decreased the number of lost books by 80 percent in the past year.

Many individuals have to think about the results of their work. Including this detailed information in your resume actually allows you to easily talk about the value you've brought to previous employers. During an interview, with the preceding example in mind, you can easily talk about how you use technology to improve processes. You can discuss the team environment of the library staff and how you are all working toward decreasing the number of lost books. It shows that you have positively affected the bottom line by helping libraries hold onto books versus losing them, which results in unnecessary fees to library users.

It Proves Your Worth to Your Past Employers

Whenever including bullet points about past work, always tie your efforts to the bottom line. Earlier examples in this Unit included the following accomplishments:

- Reducing errors by 35 percent
- Increasing profits by 55 percent
- Boosting repeat sales to 75 percent

Information relating to a company's bottom line is exactly what employers want to read. Highlighting results like these increases your chances of having your resume noticed.

It Demonstrates What You Can Do for Your Future Employer

Unlike financial investments, past performance is an indicator of future success, so include and quantify your past performance, and future employers will be inclined to believe you can do the same for them. They will believe it, but you have to continue supporting that belief with your exceptional networking and interviewing skills. Interviewing skills will be addressed later in this Unit. Remember, however, that your resume is introductory in nature. You want to get their attention and initiate their interest so your foot can inch ever closer to getting in their door.

Resume Format

Perhaps the hardest part of writing a résumé is figuring out what format to use to organize and present your information in the most effective way. There is no correct format, per se, but most résumés follow one of the four formats below. Which format appeals to you the most?

1. Reverse chronological résumé: A reverse chronological résumé (sometimes also simply called a chronological résumé) lists your job experiences in reverse chronological order—that is, starting with the most recent job and working backward toward your first job. It includes starting and ending dates. Also included is a brief description of the work duties you performed for each job, and highlights of your formal education. The reverse chronological résumé may be the most common and perhaps the most conservative résumé format. It is most suitable for demonstrating a solid work history, and growth and development in your skills. It may not suit you if you are light on skills in the area you are applying to, or if you've changed employers frequently, or if you are looking for your first job.
2. Functional résumé: A functional résumé is organized around your talents, skills, and abilities (more so than work duties and job titles, as with the reverse chronological résumé). It emphasizes specific professional capabilities, like what you have done or what you can do. Specific dates may be included but are not as important. So if you are a new graduate entering your field with little or no actual work experience, the functional résumé may be a good format for you. It can also be useful when you are seeking work in a field that differs from what you have done in the past. It's also well suited for people in unconventional careers.
3. Hybrid résumé: The hybrid résumé is a format reflecting both the functional and chronological approaches. It's also called a combination résumé. It highlights relevant skills, but it still provides information about your work experience. With a hybrid résumé, you may list your job skills as most prominent and then follow with a chronological (or reverse chronological) list of employers. This résumé format is most effective when your specific skills and job experience need to be emphasized. Hybrid Résumé Examples
4. Video, infographic, and Web-site résumé: Other formats you may wish to consider are the video résumé, the infographic résumé, or even a Web-site résumé. These formats may be most suitable for people in multimedia and creative careers. Certainly with the expansive use of technology today, a job seeker might at least try to create a media-enhanced résumé. But the paper-based, traditional résumé is by far the most commonly used—in fact, some human resource departments may not

permit submission of any format other than paper based. Video Resume Examples; Infographic Résumé Examples; Web-Site Résumé Examples

An important note about formatting is that, initially, employers may spend only a few seconds reviewing each résumé—especially if there is a big stack of them or they seem tedious to read. That's why it's important to choose your format carefully so it will stand out and make the first cut.

Here are some example templates from College of the Canyons.

Résumé Contents and Structure

For many people, the process of writing a résumé is daunting. After all, you are taking a lot of information and condensing it into a very concise form that needs to be both eye-catching and easy to read. Don't be scared off, though! Developing a good résumé can be fun, rewarding, and easier than you think if you follow a few basic guidelines. In the following video, a résumé-writing expert describes some keys to success.

YouTube Video

This interactive element is not available in this format. Visit the link or scan the QR code to access it online.

View this YouTube Video online

Figure 5.4 – Watch "Resume Tutorial" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=12&v=O5eVMaPZWmM)

Contents and Components to Include

1. Your contact information: full name (avoid nicknames), address, phone number, professional email address
2. **Objective:** a brief statement sharing what you are looking for and what you have to contribute
3. A summary of your skills: 5–10 skills you have gained in your field; you can list hard skills as well as soft skills (refer to the Professional Skill Building topic in this course)
4. Work experience: depending on the résumé format you choose, you may list your most recent job first; include the title of the position, employer's name, location, employment dates (beginning, ending). Use brief bullet point statements to list your responsibilities and achievements. Use action words to start each bullet point. Refer Table1 below.
5. Volunteer experience:
6. Education and training: formal and informal experiences matter; include academic degrees, professional development, certificates, internships, study abroad, etc.
7. References statement (optional): "References available upon request" is a standard phrase used at the end of résumés or you may take a proactive approach and create a separate document that lists your references. See sample below
8. Other sections: may include, a branding statement, a summary statement, additional accomplishments, and any other related experiences such as: Computer Skills, Language Skills, Extracurricular Activities or Honors and Awards

Caution

Résumés resemble snowflakes in as much as no two are alike. Although you can benefit from giving yours a stamp of individuality, you will do well to steer clear of personal details that might elicit a negative response. It is advisable to omit any confidential information or details that could make you vulnerable to discrimination, for instance. Your résumé will likely be viewed by a number of employees in an organization, including human resource personnel, managers, administrative staff, etc. By aiming to please all reviewers, you gain maximum advantage.

- Do not mention your age, gender, height or weight.
- Do not include your social security number.
- Do not mention religious beliefs or political affiliations, unless they are relevant to the position.

- Do not include a photograph of yourself or a physical description.
- Do not mention health issues.
- Do not use first-person references. (I, me).
- Do not include wage/salary expectations.
- Do not use abbreviations.
- Proofread carefully—absolutely no spelling mistakes are acceptable.

Top Ten Tips for a Successful Résumé

1. Aim to make a résumé that's 1–2 pages long on letter-size paper.
2. Make it visually appealing.
3. Use action verbs and phrases. See Table 1 below for a list of action verbs.
4. Proofread carefully to eliminate any spelling, grammar, punctuation, and typographical errors.
5. Include highlights of your qualifications or skills to attract an employer's attention.
6. Craft your cover letter as a pitch to people in the profession you plan to work in (more on cover letters in the next section)
7. Stand out as different, courageous.
8. Be positive and reflect only the truth.
9. Be excited and optimistic about your job prospects!
10. Keep refining and reworking your résumé; it's an ongoing project.

Remember that your résumé is your professional profile. It will hold you in the most professional and positive light, and it's designed to be a quick and easy way for a prospective employer to evaluate what you might bring to a job. When written and formatted attractively, creatively, and legibly, your résumé is what will get your foot in the door. You can be proud of your accomplishments, even if they don't seem numerous. Let your résumé reflect your personal pride and professionalism.

In the following video, "Résumé Tips for College Students From Employers," several college graduate recruiters summarize the most important points about crafting your résumé.[39]

You can download a transcript of the video here.



Figure 5.5 – Watch "Resume Tips for College Students from Employers" (link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=fYavOr8Gnac)

Table 5.2 - Action Words

accelerated	expanded	launched	regulated
accomplished	expedited	maintained	related
achieved	extracted	managed	remodeled
acquired	fabricated	marketed	reorganized
administered	facilitated	mediate	repaired
advised	formulated	minimized	represented
analyzed	founded	monitored	researched
appointed	generated	motivated	resolved
approved	headed	negotiated	restored
arranged	helped	obtained	restructured
assisted	hired	operated	retrieved
assembled	identified	organized	reviewed
audited	illustrated	originated	revised
attained	implemented	overhauled	scheduled
delegated	improved	oversaw	shaped
demonstrated	increased	participated	solved
designed	headed	performed	sorted
determined	helped	persuaded	spoke
developed	hired	planned	streamlined
devised	identified	prepared	summarized
directed	illustrated	presented	supervised
distributed	implemented	prioritized	tabulated
drafted	improved	processed	taught
edited	increased	produced	trained
educated	initiated	programmed	translated
eliminated	innovated	promoted	trimmed
encouraged	inspected	proposed	upgraded
enhanced	installed	provided	utilized
enlarged	instructed	published	validated

established	integrated	recorded	worked
evaluated	interpreted	recruited	wrote
examined	interviewed		
exceeded	investigated		
executed			

On the next few pages are samples to reference to help you prepare your resume. The resume examples are from College of the Canyons' Job Search Information & Templates page.

Sample Reference Page

References for Joe Cougar

23450 Any Street Road

Valencia, CA 91355

(661) 555-5555

Joecougar@earthlink.net

Jane Jones

Supervisor, JCrew Retail Store, May 2012 – August 2012

Phone: (661) 555-5555

Email: Janejones@jcrew.org

Sarah Canyons

Professor, College of the Canyons, Spring 2016

Phone: (661) 755-5555

Email: Sarah.canyons@canyons.edu

Michael James

Phone: (661) 855-5555

Email: Michael.james@publisher.com

As you develop your resume, be sure to have several people review it with you. The Career Center is a great resource on campus to help you with your resume. They have experts available to assist you in creating, critiquing, and drafting your resume. You may meet 1:1 with a Job Developer to get individualized feedback on your resume. For more information visit the Career Center and schedule an appointment (link: https://www.canyons.edu/studentservices/career/).

Every semester the Career Center organizes a "Resume Rally" in preparation for the Targeted Job and Career Fair event. Connect with the Career Center for more information and to inquire about upcoming events and workshops.

College of the Canyons Career Services and Resume For America have partnered to bring you an excellent online resume builder! You must have a @canyons.edu or @my.canyons.edu email account to use this website. https://resumecompanion.com/resume-

Table 5.3 – Resume Writing Resources[40]

Website	Description
The Online Resume Builder (from My Perfect resume)	The online résumé builder is easy to use. Choose your résumé design from the library of professional designs, insert prewritten examples, then download and print your new résumé.
Résumé Builder (from Live Career)	This site offers examples and samples, templates, tips, videos, and services for résumés, cover letters, interviews, and jobs.
Résumé Samples for College Students and Graduates (from About Careers)	This site offers a plethora of sample résumés for college students and graduates. Listings are by type of student and by type of job. Résumé templates are also provided.
JobSearch Minute Videos (from College Grad)	This site offers multiple to-the-point one-minute videos on topics such as print résumés, video résumés, cover letters, interviewing, tough interview questions, references, job fairs, and Internet job searching.
42 Résumé Dos and Don'ts Every Job Seeker Should Know (from the muse)	A comprehensive list of résumé dos and don'ts, which includes traditional rules as well as new rules to polish your résumé.
COC Career Center	The Career Center provides assistance with career counseling, internship assistance and the job search process. Meet with an expert for professional feedback on your resume.

Activity 5.3: Creating My Resume[41]

Compile data reflecting your professional and educational skills and accomplishments. Assess the main résumé formats and select one that meets your needs, then create a first draft of your professional résumé.

1. Compile all needed information for your résumé, including your contact information, a summary of your skills, your work experience and volunteer experience, education and training (including your intended degree, professional development activities, certificates, internships, etc.). Optionally you may wish to include job objective, a brief profile, a branding statement, additional accomplishments, and any other related experiences.
2. Select one of the résumé builder tools listed above in the Résumé Writing Resources table.
3. Create your résumé, following instructions at your selected site.
4. Save your document as a PDF file.
5. Follow instructions from your instructor on how to submit your work.

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7.4: The Cover Letter

5.4 The Cover Letter

A cover letter is a professional business letter that accompanies your resume and introduces yourself to the employer. It states the position you are applying for and your interest in the job and the company. It is designed to hook the reader and spark their interest in reading your resume.

Your cover letter should be engaging, informative, and show your command of the written word. It should flow easily from a reader's perspective, making the connection between the opportunity and your ability to succeed if given the chance. The tone should be compelling. You should be excited about the opportunity and you should be confident of your ability to succeed (even if you truly lack the confidence).

The format of your cover letter should involve three basic parts:

- The Introduction: The introductory paragraph, states the position you are applying for, how you heard about it, and why you are interested in the position. If someone referred you for the position, mention their name. The goal is to hook the employer and motivate them to want to review your resume and invite you for an interview!
- The Closing: the final paragraph shows enthusiasm for working for the company. Request an interview to further discuss the position and state that you will call within a week to follow-up. Thank the employer for their time and consideration.

The body of the cover letter is the most important part. To help you craft a strong body, it is important to match your qualifications with those the employer is looking for. To help you do this, you will need to study the job description in great detail. Extract the main functions, tasks, and desired qualifications from the job description and give examples from your past work experience to illustrate how you are a good fit.

With each résumé you send out, always include a cover letter specifically addressing your purposes.

Characteristics of an Effective Cover Letter

Cover letters should accomplish the following:

- Get the attention of the prospective employer
- Set you apart from any possible competition
- Identify the position you are interested in
- Specify how you learned about the position or company
- Present highlights of your skills and accomplishments
- Reflect your genuine interest
- Please the eye and ear

The following video features Aimee Bateman, founder of Careercake.com, who explains how you can create an incredible cover letter. You can download a transcript of the video here.[42]

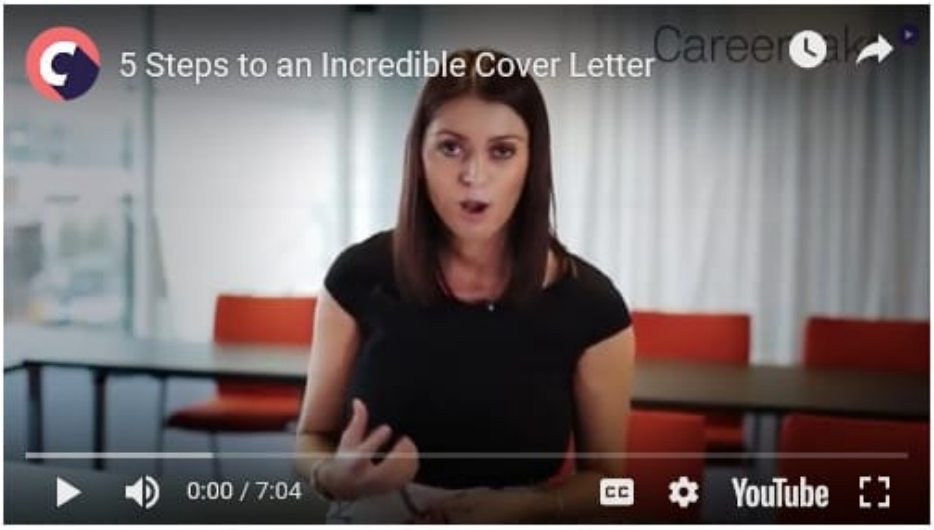
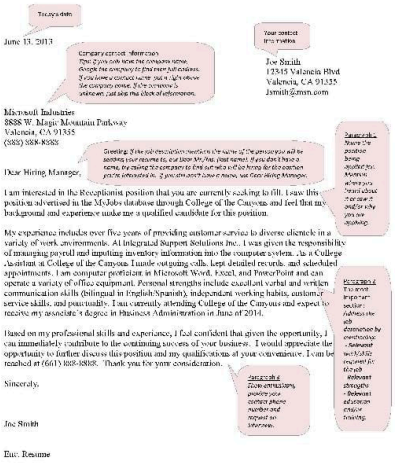


Figure 5.6 – Watch "5 Steps to an Incredible Cover Letter" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxOli8laZos)

Table 5.4 - Cover Letter Resources[43]

Website	Description
Student Cover Letter Samples (from About Careers)	This site contains sample student/recent graduate cover letters (especially for high school students and college students and graduates seeking employment) as well as cover letter templates, writing tips, formats and templates, email cover letter examples, and examples by type of applicant
How to Write Cover Letters (from CollegeGrad)	This site contains resources about the reality of cover letters, using a cover letter, the worst use of the cover letter, the testimonial cover letter technique, and a cover letter checklist
LinkedIn Cover Letter	This site contains articles, experts, jobs, and more: get all the professional insights you need on LinkedIn
Cover Letters (from the Yale Office of Career Strategy)	This site includes specifications for the cover letter framework (introductory paragraph, middle paragraph, concluding paragraph), as well as format and style
COC Career Center	The Career Center provides assistance with career counseling, internship assistance and the job search process. Meet with a an expert for professional feedback on your resume.

Sample Cover Letter Template



Activity 5.4: Creating My Cover Letter
Now that we have reviewed the importance of a cover letter, it is time for you to develop your cover letter. Find a job or internship announcement you would be interested in applying for and craft your cover letter for this particular job/internship opportunity. Make your cover letter personal and specific to the job/internship announcement and make sure it hooks the employer Use the cover letter tools listed in the Cover Letter Resources table above to help you create your cover letter. Save your document as a PDF file. Follow instructions from your instructor on how to submit your work.

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7.5: Your Online Profile

Your online profile is the third component of a compelling marketing campaign. An online profile serves two functions:

1. It's a marketing tool for the passive job search because the majority of recruiters use online profiles to find qualified candidates.
2. It's a great networking tool because you can connect with friends, family, former coworkers, and current schoolmates and stay in touch with them easily regardless of where you or they live or work.

Digital Dirt

Various social networking sites allow you to post anything you would like in cyberspace. Twitter, Facebook, and Second Life are a few examples. Four hundred million individuals have a Facebook presence, which enables them to connect and reconnect with current and past friends. Facebook allows you to post pictures of yourself, your friends, your animals, your vacation, and anything else you would like to include. You can post your birthday, your relationship status, your taste in music, and your interests and hobbies. Most employers look to LinkedIn for professional information because LinkedIn is often described as the professional version of Facebook, but employers still will look at your Facebook profile. When three candidates seem equally suited for a position, researching the candidates on Facebook may provide information that becomes the deciding factor. A word to the wise: Ensure that information on your Facebook page can only help your job search.

Foul language and inappropriate pictures of social parties and activities will hurt your ability to land the job you are seeking. Do not rely on privacy settings that you think filter individuals from viewing your information because those settings have often failed job search candidates. Facebook remains a wonderful tool for social networking, however, once something is in cyberspace, it is virtually impossible to delete, so proceed with caution and manage your reputation online professionally!

Reputation Management

Many companies pay hundreds, even thousands of dollars every month to monitor and clean up their online reputations. The process of monitoring your online reputation is called reputation management. Reputation.com, one of hundreds of firms that specializes in "fixing" online reputations, has become popular for companies looking to enhance their online image. Reputation management isn't just for companies—individuals are using these services to make unflattering things on the Internet about them disappear.

Anything posted on the Internet, from a picture on Facebook to a comment on a blog, will be in cyberspace indefinitely. Consider the case of a New York professor. Eight years earlier, he had been charged with receiving grant money wrongfully. If you googled his name, you would find a press release listing this charge as one of his name's top search results, even though he had paid the $2,000 fine. Not exactly something he would want a potential or current employer to see! This is exactly why it is important in career development to be aware of the kinds of things you post—whether you are looking for a job or already have a job. For example, thirteen Virgin Airlines employees were fired for a chat they had on Facebook about the plane's safety, along with negative comments about customers. In yet another example, a job seeker posted the following to Twitter: "Cisco just offered me a job! Now I have to weigh the utility of a fatty paycheck against the daily commute to San Jose and hating the work." And Cisco, who regularly monitors the Internet for mentions of their name (reputation management), replied, "Who is the hiring manager. I'm sure they would love to know that you will hate the work. We here at Cisco are versed in the web." Needless to say, the job offer to this future employee was rescinded.

Websites that allow for professional networking can be a great tool but can also be detrimental. For example, BG, a natural gas company, had an employee post his resume on LinkedIn and clicked the "job seeker" box. When his employer saw this, he was fired for expressing interest in other job opportunities, along with his posting of disparaging comments about his employer.

So how exactly can you monitor your online reputation? Here are some tips:

- Google yourself often and see what the search results return.
- Consider changing your privacy settings in Facebook, so people you are not friends with cannot view your profile.
- Change your Facebook setting so you must approve posts that "tag" you.

- Be aware of your company's policy on posting resumes on websites like LinkedIn.
- Do not talk about work on Twitter, Facebook, or any other social media site.
- Never mention your company name on social media sites.

Managing your online reputation can make sure that when an employer or potential employer sees your online persona, they are seeing the side you want them to see. It will show them that you represent the company in a positive light, which can enhance career success.[44]

Overview of LinkedIn



Figure 5.7 – Watch "Using LinkedIn to Find a Job" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFYlPDRZJDY)

More than 100 million people are on LinkedIn, the leading online network for professional profiles, and that number grows every day. LinkedIn is different from Facebook because it's intended only for professional use and to focus on your career. To get started with initial online marketing efforts, LinkedIn is a great first step.

Visit LinkedIn at http://www.linkedin.com and follow the tutorial to learn aspects about the site and create an account. Use a thumbnail sketch of your resume for your profile. Create a summary section, and bear in mind that this is a great place to include specific keywords on which recruiters and employers may search (e.g., specific technical skills, languages, brand-name companies, industry knowledge).

Who Can You Link To?

Think of ten to twenty people you'd like to connect to, such as peers from past jobs, friends and family, and peers at school. Go line by line through your resume and think of all the people you know from each stage in your career. You can use the LinkedIn search function to search by school, organization name, or another keyword.

As you populate your profile, LinkedIn makes recommendations for people you may know based on the names and keywords you enter. This gives you additional ideas for connections.

Send an invitation to the ten to twenty people you'd like to connect to. Write a personalized request to connect that reminds them how you know them, rather than using the generic templates that LinkedIn provides. With LinkedIn, all the people connected to a profile are visible to people who view that profile (you can shut off this feature, but it is helpful for networking, so most people do not). This means that for your connections, you can see their connections. This also means that the more people you are connected to, the more profiles you can view and the more your profile can be viewed. Increasing your connections improves your marketing reach.

On a regular basis, think of another ten to twenty individuals you can connect to and invite them. You can also upload some contact databases and e-mail accounts, such as Outlook, Yahoo!, and Gmail, into LinkedIn so that you can invite your entire

existing network in one effort. Some open networkers will link to anyone who requests a link, or they will reach out to a variety of individuals they don't know and ask to link to them. Either way is acceptable and whether you link only with people you know well or are willing to link with people you barely know or don't know depends on your comfort level.

Having your resume details in your LinkedIn profile and connecting to people is the bare minimum for an online profile. To have a profile that is a comprehensive marketing platform, you should consider the next sections, which detail additional options.

Include a Professional Picture or Head Shot

Professional photos are helpful as you start meeting more and more people because some people may remember your face more easily than your name or background.

Add a Summary to Your Thumbnail Sketch

Your LinkedIn profile is basically a thumbnail sketch of your resume. It's important for you to include a short, succinct summary of your background and where you are now in your career. You should also include each school you've attended, along with the years. Include each work experience you've been a part of, again, along with the years, in a professional and formal format. This will allow individuals to identify how they have known you in the past.

Include Recommendations

Include recommendations from two or three individuals who know your work. You must be connected to people to request they provide a recommendation.

Recommendations help your marketing because they add a dimension to your profile that is not included in your resume.

Join Groups

Join groups with which you share a common interest. Groups are formed from common associations, such as college alumni groups (be sure to join your school's alumni group, even if you've yet to graduate), industry groups, and mutual goal groups, such as people interested in finding employment. Groups enable you to connect to more people, translating into even more people who will see your profile. You can join approximately fifty groups, and you can also elect to have your group memberships displayed or not displayed on your profile. Tailor your groups to reflect specific professional interests as another way to market yourself as being involved with that area.

Use Applications

Use LinkedIn applications such as reading lists and presentation or blog sharing. With a paper resume, it is unwieldy to include a lot of attachments, such as a portfolio of your work. An online profile allows you to link to an online collection of your work and create a comprehensive view of everything you offer. You can share a list of what you are reading with the Amazon reading list application.

Listing books related to your career targets shows that you are staying current about your target industries and functions and are committed to training and development. You can use the SlideShare application to post PowerPoint presentations you have created. Perhaps as part of a class assignment, you have done a group project that is relevant to prospective employers. If you have a blog and your blog showcases examples of your work, your LinkedIn profile can be set to update with samples of your work whenever you post to your blog. While this level of detail seems onerous for a paper resume, when online it is easy to page through and access as much data as you'd like, so you can offer the reader (in this case, recruiters and employers) much more information.

Maintain Your Profile

Remember that it is important to maintain your online profile. Continually update your LinkedIn profile because as your career grows and changes, so should your LinkedIn profile. Link to new people you meet. Update your summary and experience. LinkedIn

also has a status section for more frequent updates that are broadcast to your connections. In this way, you can market your activity on an ongoing basis.

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7.6: Interviewing for Success

If your résumé and cover letter have served their purposes well, you will be invited to participate in an interview with the company or organization you're interested in. Congratulations! It's an exciting time, and your prospects for employment are very strong if you put in the time to be well prepared.

In this section we look at how to get ready for an interview, what types of interviews you might need to engage in, and what kinds of questions you might be asked.[45]

First, let's define the interview. What is an interview? An interview may be defined as a conversation between two or more people in which the interviewer asks questions to obtain information from the interviewee. A better definition might be an exchange of information between the interviewer and interviewee to assess if a match exists between a job's requirements and a person's skills and abilities.

The second definition is much more proactive in the case of the interviewee. As an interviewee, you should not passively answer questions, but should employ strategies so you are presented in the best possible light. As an interviewee, you also are responsible for highlighting your strengths in the interview and giving answers that are detailed and results oriented.

As you prepare for your interview, it is important to focus on three things:

1. Know yourself and be able to articulate how you are a good fit for the position.
2. Know your resume well enough to enthusiastically speak about every minute detail.
3. Know the company, the position, and the industry for which you are interviewing.

The interview is your time to shine in person and demonstrate how you are a good fit for the position. The interview process involves three phases: preparation, the actual interview, and the follow up. Preparing for each of these phases will help build your confidence for the big day!

<="" span="">detail through the different career assessments you completed. As you prepare for your interview, you will want to link the information you have gained from your career assessments and articulate them to the employer so you can illustrate how you are a good fit for the job!

The preparation phase includes research and practice. Preparation is key to succeeding in the interview process. The following strategies will help you get a second round of interviews:

Research the industry, the company, the competitors, and the interviewer (if possible):

Completing the research step ensures that you have fully researched the company, the industry, and the competition. Knowing how to interview well within the industry and company will help you get a second interview. You also might be able to research the interviewer using Google or http://www.linkedin.com. Having relevant background information might give you helpful hints on how to position yourself. As you research the company, pay particular attention to their mission, values and philosophy. Be able to make connections with how your personal mission, values and philosophy align with the company.

Practice Answering Interview Questions:

There are generally common questions that are consistently asked during interviews. Familiarizing yourself with these questions will help you gain confidence and feel more at ease during the actual interview. We will address these questions a little further in this section. However, for now, be sure you take advantage of the following resources to help you practice.

- Connect with the Career Center on campus and schedule an appointment with a Job Developer for a mock interview. This is a great way to practice and get 1:1 feedback. The Career Center also holds a series of workshops on job search and interview preparation. Check out the workshop schedule posted on their website at: https://www.canyons.edu/studentservices/career/index.php

- As part of this class, you will be participating in a mock interview so this will be great practice.

- Google additional interview questions and look in the mirror as you practice answering these questions. Get an interview buddy to ask you these questions, as well as probing questions, to dig deeper into your answers.
- Be confident when answering questions and stay positive. Do not undersell yourself or underestimate what you have to offer.
- Focus on the results of each of your projects, tasks, and courses. A results-oriented candidate has a better chance getting the second interview and potentially the offer.

Have a Full Dress Rehearsal Three Days before the Interview:

Being prepared reduces stress and improves performance. Here is a checklist of things to do and consider before your interview day.

- Make sure your interview suit is clean and fits perfectly. You should feel very comfortable in the clothes you wear for an interview. This helps build your confidence.
- Pay attention to colors and style. If you are interviewing at a company where the dress is casual, it is still best to dress in a professional, conservative manner. Men and women should consider conservative suit colors such as navy, beige, and black. White or beige shirts give a very professional appearance. If you are not sure, it might help to shop at a professional clothing store.
- Shine your shoes and be certain they are in excellent shape. Women should wear closed-toe shoes with moderate-height heels.
- Take care in all aspects of your appearance, including your hair and nails.
- Bring extra copies of your resume.
- Write down well-researched questions before the day of the interview.
- Carry a professional-looking briefcase that has an inside portfolio containing paper and a pen.
- Keep a small bottle of water in your briefcase in case your mouth gets dry.
- Carry a cloth handkerchief in case your face perspires (for any reason).

Some people sweat more than others and using a handkerchief is more professional (and sanitary) than using your hand. Avoid tissues because they can leave a residue that doesn't make a very good impression. On a somewhat related note, if you happen to sneeze during an interview, sneeze into your sleeve versus into your hands. The interviewer will not want to shake your hand otherwise!

You will have an opportunity for a full dress rehearsal for the mock interview assignment using The Perfect Interview. The Perfect Interview is a program purchased through the college that will allow you to practice interviewing skills. You will record a mock interview and will work in groups to critique each other. This is a great way to see and hear yourself during an interview. Practice makes perfect! Your instructor will go over this assignment in class.

Know Where You Are Going:

Getting lost on the way to an interview will only increase your stress, so know exactly where you are going, even if you must make a trial trip. Few things are worse than being late or arriving looking like you just did the one hundred-meter Dash.

Establish a Routine to Follow the Day of the Interview:

The most successful interviewees have a routine that includes the following:

- Set two alarm clocks to make sure you wake up early enough to have plenty of time to get ready for the day.
- Have your interview suit ready to go, your shoes polished, a portfolio with two to three copies of your resume and a working pen, and five to seven questions already written down.
- Arrive at least thirty minutes in advance to avoid the slightest possibility of being late. You may wait in your car or a coffee shop until fifteen minutes before the interview. You don't want to let the interviewer know you are there thirty to forty-five minutes early.
- Read or listen to something inspirational before your interview.
- Carry a small bottle of water in your briefcase in case your mouth gets dry.

The moment you have been waiting for has arrived—the actual interview. Keep the following factors in mind during the interview:

Body Language

It is important to be aware of nonverbal impressions such as your handshake, eye contact and eye movement, posture, and facial and hand expressions. A sizeable percentage of what we communicate comes via body language:

- Eye contact: Maintain good eye contact throughout the interview. It's OK to look away occasionally, but, for the most part, eye contact should be steady. It shows confidence and inspires trust in all that you say.
- Smile: When you are feeling stressed, a smile usually relaxes your face, which usually helps you to relax overall. An introductory or occasional smile shows that you are enjoying the conversation, and it adds to your confidence factor.
- Firm handshake: Practice your handshake. The Goldilocks approach is best: Don't crush the interviewer's hand, but don't give a soft, floppy handshake, either. Your handshake should be firm and businesslike. If you get nervous to the point of having a sweaty palm, wipe it against your pants leg or skirt just before you shake your interviewer's hand.
- Posture: Sit up straight with your shoulders back and your feet firmly planted on the ground. It's fine to cross your legs if you feel more comfortable doing so, but avoid looking too relaxed. You should be poised and fully focused on the interviewer, ensuring that you answer all questions to the best of your ability.

Networking Updates

If you've met others in the company, mention that up front. It's a great way to open an interview because you establish that you've already met others at the company, and the interviewer also can contact them for feedback.

Focus

The more focused you are during an interview, the more successful you will be. Focus on the question asked and answer it directly. If you think you have gone off course for any reason, it is OK to ask the interviewer if you are on the right track. Your answer should have a beginning, a middle, and an end that includes a real, tangible, and preferably positive result. Here is an example of a question asked and an effective answer with real, tangible and positive results:

Question: Jenna, what was your biggest contribution to the company you interned with last summer?

Answer: Throughout the summer, we had approximately five to six team meetings where the entire staff of ten engineers and their direct reports were present to discuss the major goal of the summer: the construction of a new courthouse.

I was tasked with drafting the agenda of these meetings and the agenda notes, which verified all that was discussed and agreed upon. The agendas directed complex meetings, and the agenda notes served as key documents that verified and clarified what was discussed and agreed upon during the meetings.

My first draft of the first agenda was much too broad, but with feedback from my manager, I ensured it included all the details necessary to hold a productive and effective meeting and created the structure for the agenda notes document. The agenda notes were typically three to five pages long, and by the second meeting, I was drafting the agenda and publishing the notes without any revisions from my manager.

I received exceptional feedback from several department heads because, in many instances, the notes saved countless hours of work. For example, during the third meeting, we reversed course on a previously agreed-upon strategy for the front columns of the courthouse. One of the key assistant engineers was not at the meeting, and when her peer brought her up to speed, he forgot to mention that the columns were changed from the Roman style columns to the Grecian columns, which needed a more intricate support system from the roof to the courthouse steps. Luckily, she read my agenda notes, which highlighted any course changes in red, and saved about two weeks' worth of work, which was easily several thousand dollars. It also kept everyone on track regarding the completion date, which is June 2014.

To improve this process overall, I loaded the agenda and the notes into the department's central files so instead of relying upon hard copies or e-mailed copies, everyone had one place to go for this important document that kept everyone on track. They are still using the improvements I implemented, so I'm very proud of that.

The answer's beginning set the stage:

- Throughout the summer, we had approximately five to six team meetings, where the entire staff of ten engineers and their direct reports were present to discuss the major goal of the summer: the construction of a new courthouse.
- I was tasked with drafting the agenda of these meetings and the agenda notes, which verified all that was discussed and agreed upon.
- Notice it had a middle that allowed you to understand how things were working:
- My first draft of the first agenda was much too broad, but with feedback from my manager, I edited it to include all the details necessary to hold a productive and effective meeting and create the structure for the agenda notes document.
- By the second meeting, I was drafting the agenda and publishing the notes without any revisions from my manager.

Positive momentum was built throughout the answer, and Jenna shared the positive results of her work:

- I received exceptional feedback from several department heads because in many instances, the notes saved countless hours of work.
- To improve this process overall, I loaded the agenda and the notes into the department's central files, so instead of relying upon hard copies or e-mailed copies, everyone had one place to go for this important document that kept everyone on track.
- They are still using the improvements I implemented, so I'm very proud of that.

Authenticity and Honesty

Never misrepresent anything about yourself during the interview:

- Don't indicate you are fluent in a language if you aren't.
- Don't mention you know a computer program that you clearly don't know.
- Don't mention you've been to a certain city if you haven't been there.

Interviewers have a way of discovering any misrepresentations, so save yourself misery and humiliation by being authentic and honest.

Questions to Ask toward the End of the Interview

At the end of the interview, the interviewer will usually ask if you have any questions. This important step in the interview process is relatively easy and can be done in advance of the actual interview. Use the research you've already conducted to formulate five to seven questions you'd like to ask at the end of the interview. The table below includes some topics and potential questions to help you brainstorm as you develop your questions.

Question Your Next Steps

Your final interview question should pertain to the next steps you should take so you will know how to follow up. Be certain your last question accomplishes the following:

- It demonstrates that you are forward thinking and that you tie up loose ends.
- It clarifies the follow-up process.

You can take definite steps after an interview to improve your chances of being called back for a second round or getting an offer for the position. For example:

- **E-mail a Thank-You Note before the Day Ends: E-mail, versus a handwritten note, is preferred for many reasons:**
- **Your note will be immediately received by the interviewer. It's common courtesy to thank people for their time right away, and manners count quite a bit during the job search.**
- **Your ability to write a concise business note is demonstrated.**
- **Your quick communication keeps you at the top of the interviewer's mind.**
- **Your e-mailed thank-you note can be shared easily and often by everyone who interviewed you. This positive momentum keeps you in a positive light with all parties.**
- **Your e-mail is an opportunity to quickly confirm that you have the critical skills necessary to do a fantastic job. In the e-mail, you can reiterate the skills you have or mention something specific that was discussed in the interview, thus making an even stronger case for why you'd be a great hire.**
- **Your e-mail can include an attached article about the company or about an interest you share with the interviewer.**
- **Your e-mailed thank-you note is more likely to receive a response from the interviewer.**

Some individuals believe a handwritten note distinguishes you from others; while that may be true, you never know if it arrived. You could send an e-mail and a handwritten note to cover all the bases, but don't use the exact wording for both notes. Using a high-quality, professional notepaper or stationery is recommended.

Update All Parties Relevant to Your Search

If you've met other people during your job search and they've been helpful in any way, send them an e-mail update as to how you've progressed. It will mostly likely be shared with others, so take great care when writing any note to a company Representative.

Map Your Follow-Up Strategy

Once you've interviewed for a position, note your expected follow-up on your calendar. If the company representative said you will be contacted in a week, mark that on your calendar. If you aren't contacted, add another three or four days onto your calendar and then follow up with the company. After that, maintain consistent communication to help produce positive results.

When Things Go Wrong

Sometimes no matter how well you prepare, something still goes wrong. The following strategies will help you manage when things go amiss:

- If you forget to turn your cell phone off and it rings, apologize and quickly turn off the phone. Don't look at the number of the person calling you.
- If you are late, call in advance to notify the interviewer and ask if the interview can proceed. Apologize when the interview takes place.
- If you have a wardrobe malfunction—a popped button, a run in your stockings, or you spilled coffee on your clothing—a little humor might help.
- If you went on a tangent and did not answer the question directly, check to make sure you are on track or ask that the question be repeated.

The more you practice interviewing, the more prepared you will be. Each interview serves as a learning experience and an opportunity for you to strengthen your interviewing skills. There are different types of interviews for you to become familiar with. The next section will address the different types.

Job Interview Types and Techniques[46]

Every interview you participate in will be unique: The people you meet with, the interview setting, and the questions you'll be

asked will all be different from interview to interview.

The various factors that characterize any given interview can contribute to the sense of adventure and excitement you feel. But it is also normal to feel a little nervous about what lies ahead. With so many unknowns, how can you plan to "nail the interview" no matter what comes up?

A good strategy for planning is to anticipate the type of interview you may find yourself in. There are common formats for job interviews, described in detail, below. By knowing a bit more about each type and being aware of techniques that work for each, you can plan to be on your game no matter what form your interview takes.

Screening Interviews

Screening interviews might best be characterized as "weeding-out" interviews. They ordinarily take place over the phone or in another low-stakes environment in which the interviewer has maximum control over the amount of time the interview takes. Screening interviews are generally short because they glean only basic information about you. If you are scheduled to participate in a screening interview, you might safely assume that you have some competition for the job and that the company is using this strategy to whittle down the applicant pool. With this kind of interview, your goal is to win a face-to-face interview. For this first shot, though, prepare well and challenge yourself to shine. Try to stand out from the competition and be sure to follow up with a thank-you note.

Phone or Web Conference Interviews

If you are geographically separated from your prospective employer, you may be invited to participate in a phone interview or online interview, instead of meeting face-to-face. Technology, of course, is a good way to bridge distances. The fact that you're not there in person doesn't make it any less important to be fully prepared, though. In fact, you may wish to be all the more "on your toes" to compensate for the distance barrier. Make sure your equipment (phone, computer, Internet connection, etc.) is fully charged and works. If you're at home for the interview, make sure the environment is quiet and distraction-free. If the meeting is online, make sure your video background is pleasing and neutral, like white wall or curtain.

One-on-One Interviews

The majority of job interviews are conducted in this format—just you and a single interviewer—likely with the manager you would report to and work with. The one-on-one format gives you both a chance to see how well you connect and how well your talents, skills, and personalities mesh. You can expect to be asked questions like "Why would you be good for this job?" and "Tell me about yourself." Many interviewees prefer the one-on-one format because it allows them to spend in-depth time with the interviewer. Rapport can be built. As always, be very courteous and professional. Have handy a portfolio of your best work.

Panel Interviews

An efficient format for meeting a candidate is a panel interview, in which perhaps four to five coworkers meet at the same time with a single interviewee. The coworkers comprise the "search committee" or "search panel," which may consist of different company representatives such as human resources, management, and staff. One advantage of this format for the committee is that meeting together gives them a common experience to reflect on afterward. In a panel interview, listen carefully to questions from each panelist, and try to connect fully with each questioner. Be sure to write down names and titles, so you can send individual thank-you notes after the interview.

Serial Interviews

Serial interviews are a combination of one-on-one meetings with a group of interviewers, typically conducted as a series of meetings staggered throughout the day. Ordinarily this type of interview is for higher-level jobs, when it's important to meet at length with major stakeholders. If your interview process is designed this way, you will need to be ultra prepared, as you will be answering many in-depth questions. Stay alert.

Lunch Interviews

In some higher-level positions, candidates are taken to lunch or dinner, especially if this is a second interview (a "call back" interview). If this is you, count yourself lucky and be on your best behavior, because even if the lunch meeting is unstructured and informal, it's still an official interview. Do not order an alcoholic beverage, and use your best table manners. You are not expected to pay or even to offer to pay. But, as always, you must send a thank-you note.

Group Interviews

Group interviews are comprised of several interviewees and perhaps only one or two interviewers who may make a presentation to the assembled group. This format allows an organization to quickly prescreen candidates. It also gives candidates a chance to quickly learn about the company. As with all interview formats, you are being observed. How do you behave with your group? Do you assume a leadership role? Are you quiet but attentive? What kind of personality is the company looking for? A group interview may reveal this.

For a summary of the interview formats we've just covered (and a few additional ones), take a look at the following video, Job Interview Guide—10 Different Types of Interviews in Today's Modern World.



Figure 5.8 – Watch "Job Interview Guide" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMLQ7nSAyDQ)

Interview Venues:

Knowing the four different types of interview venues will help ensure your success:

- The Career Center at on campus hosts job fairs and oftentimes they conduct interviews on campus. If your interview takes place on campus, you will probably receive instructions from your career services office regarding the date and time of the interview. Check with the office to ensure you know how you will be notified. Most career services offices have a general check-in area, a waiting area, and very small interview rooms. It's best to practice in these rooms ahead of time, so you know exactly what to expect. Some rooms are literally five feet by five feet.

- If your interview takes place off campus, the company with which you are interviewing will send instructions regarding where to report and when. Ensure you know exactly how to get there, and arrive early if at all possible because you probably will need to go through security. Bring the interview schedule with you; it should include the name(s) of the individuals with whom you will interview and their contact information.

If you need to travel via train or plane to an interview, dress professionally on the way there. Wearing yoga pants and flip-flops doesn't make a good impression, and there is always a chance you will bump into company representatives during your trip.

- Most often, candidates will be interviewed in the interviewer's office, but there are times when you will be interviewed in a conference room. Some conference rooms are glass-enclosed areas, and it can be distracting to interview as individuals look in and walk by. Regardless of the setting, maintain your focus on the questions asked and the interview at hand.

- Mealtime interviews can be tricky situations because food and drink are involved.

Strike a healthy balance of not being ravenous but not leaving your plate untouched either. Focus your full attention on the conversation and interview at hand. It is wise to stay away from messy marinara sauces and long strings of pasta because they can easily stain your clothing. Forgo alcohol at all costs and certainly if you are not of legal age to consume alcohol. If you are not comfortable with dining etiquette, familiarize yourself with it to increase your comfort level. Know which fork is correct to use for salad versus dinner. Research this so you are prepared in advance. Interviews that take place during a meal can heighten nerves and cause you to spill a glass of water, which doesn't bode well for your confidence level.

No matter what the venue, dress well and take extra copies of your resume, a portfolio with paper and a pen that works, a list of questions you will ask, and perhaps a bottle of water just in case you need it.

Interview Questions

For most job candidates, the burning question is "What will I be asked?" There's no way to anticipate every single question that may arise during an interview. It's possible that, no matter how well prepared you are, you may get a question you just didn't expect. But that's okay. Do as much preparation as you can—which will build your confidence—and trust that the answers will come.

To help you reach that point of sureness and confidence, take time to review common types of interview questions. Think about your answers. Make notes, if that helps. And then conduct a practice interview with a friend, a family member, or a colleague. Speak your answers aloud. You will get a chance to practice through your mock interview assignment in class. Your instructor will review detailed instructions with you.[47]

The more you understand about different types of interview questions, the better you can prepare. This next section reviews the four basic types of interview questions: open-ended questions, specific questions, motivation questions, and unconventional questions

Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions don't have specific answers. They include questions like the following:

- Tell me about yourself. Walk me through your career. Why did you make the choices you made?

Such questions present an opportunity to tell your story in an engaging, articulate, and compelling way. Explain why you selected the school(s) you selected, your major and your minor, and your GPA (if it's above 3.3). Describe the jobs you've had and how you got them. Did you apply directly or did you get them through networking? What were your most significant accomplishments at each job? Highlight significant accomplishments that may or may not be explicit in your resume. Often, a theme will emerge, but if that isn't the case, talk about your decisions in a positive light.

- With which skills and functions are you most comfortable? If I were to assign you a project based on your expertise, what would I give you?
- If you enjoy working with clients, talk about your specific achievements and how you helped your clients. Have you served them well enough for them to be repeat customers? Have they referred other clients to you? If you are very strong analytically, give an example of the most analytical project on which you've worked and the project's outcome.
- What are your weakest skills, and how are you addressing them? What areas would your supervisors say you need to develop?
- Everyone has strengths and everyone has weaknesses. You should do a substantive assessment of your weaknesses prior to an interview. A weakness should never be a critical component of the job for which you are applying. If there is a trick to answering this question effectively, it's to highlight what you are doing to strengthen each weakness. For example, if public speaking is something you consider a weakness, you can say that to improve this, you raise your hand as much as possible in class, and you volunteer to present whenever possible. The more prepared you are with the content of your presentation, the better you perform.
- What do you do for fun? What do you do in your free time? What do you like to read?

These questions present an opportunity to enthusiastically and specifically discuss what you enjoy doing in your spare time. If you enjoy tennis, talk about how long you have been playing and your favorite player. If you enjoy reading, mention the last great book you read.

Specific Questions

Specific questions have concrete answers and might include the following:

Tell me about this [the interviewer can point to anything on your resume, whether it be a project, an employer, a class, a skill, or a hobby.

- You must be able to quickly and completely discuss any topic from your resume and its relevance to your professional career. You should be able to recount every detail about each project, and enthusiastically relay those details to your interviewer. If you are not enthusiastic about your work, they will not be either. Also highlight the result of your work or any project about which they want to know more.

Tell me about your favorite project, your most significant project, or a project that demonstrates your leadership, project management, analytical, research, or communications skills.

- When answering this question, remember who sponsored the project, the project's objective and deliverable, steps you took to complete the project, and the results of your efforts. Note your role as well as the roles of other team members. Be specific and quantify the results.

Tell me about a project where something went wrong or tell me about a difficult client.

- Everyone has worked on projects where something went wrong. If we procrastinated, we learned to become more disciplined in our approach to projects. If someone didn't do their part of the project, which then caused us to do extra work, we learned to communicate more clearly and check the project's progress on a regular basis.
- We also have worked with difficult clients. The trick is to not say anything negative about a client. If a client was demanding, remember that all clients have a right to make demands. We need to raise our game to ensure they are pleased with the service and our level of professionalism. Never make negative comments about a client, a boss, a peer, or a company. Doing so sends an immediate red flag to the interviewer, so avoid such negativity at all costs. Position everything in a positive light, which can only help your candidacy.

What do you think about current events or significant events in the employer's industry?

- Interviewers want to know that you are knowledgeable about current events, especially those pertaining to their industry. The very best candidates are well versed in the current news, so be prepared to discuss one or two items. It's important that you cite the source of the news and what you learned from it. If you did subsequent research about the topic, discuss that as well. It's an opportunity to highlight your research and your passion for this industry.

Motivation Questions

Interviewers often want to know about a candidate's motivation by asking the following questions:

With which firms are you interviewing? What positions are you seeking? How will you choose?

- The savviest interviewers know that the best candidates interview with multiple companies. Many candidates are comfortable discussing specific companies with which they are interviewing, and, from a recruiting perspective, it's fine to mention the company names. If you would rather not discuss this, mention that you are currently interviewing with other companies, but this company is your number one choice and highlight why you want to work there. They should get the hint that you don't want to mention specific companies.
- No matter what company is interviewing you, ensure that you know why you want to work for that particular company. Know their strong points and know their competitors. Know clearly why you want to work for them versus their competitors.

What do you hope to accomplish in your career? Where do you see yourself in one, five, or more years?

- Your research will help you answer this question. If you've conducted some informational interviews, you will have a clear

idea of what a career can look like in one, five, and ten years. It is also important to network with peers who have interned at the companies in which you are interested because they can share specific information with you. For example, consulting, investment banking, and brand management have well-defined career paths. Advertising has a defined career path, but it may not be as defined as other businesses and industries.

What questions do you have for the interviewer?

- This can be a make-or-break question because some interviews consist of just this one question. Every interview candidate should enter an interview with five to seven questions written down in advance. These questions should come directly from your research.

Why do you want this position? Why do you want to work with this company?

- Answers to these questions will come from your research. Have a specific reason you want to work at the company doing the exact job for which you are interviewing. Is the brand name very strong, giving you an opportunity to work with the best? Is the brand name not yet a household name, giving you an opportunity to make it so?
- It's also important to know what skills you will gain in this specific position and which will enable you to be successful. Will the position strengthen your analytical skills? Will it enable you to become a subject-matter expert? Be specific in your answer.

Unconventional Questions

Some interviewers may think you are too rehearsed and may want to inject a bit of stress; perhaps they want to shake you up a bit by asking what may seem to be crazy or certainly bizarre interview questions:

- If you were a tree, what kind of tree would you be? Why?
- If you were a car, what color would you be? Why?
- If you were an item in the supermarket, what item would you be? Why?
- If you were an animal, what kind of animal would you be? Why?

Note that these questions are rare and you probably will not be asked them, but since preparation is key, it's worth examining why they are asked. These types of questions are asked to get a true glimpse into your personality. The "If you were a tree, what kind of tree would you be and why?" question could be answered the following way:

- If you were a corporate research analyst who relied purely on your research to describe a stock, and that research would be shared with hundreds of portfolio managers, you might say you were a redwood tree. A redwood is one of the strongest trees on the planet and has roots that grow hundreds of feet into the ground. Not even the strongest of winds can cause the redwood to sway.
- If you were applying to be a technology customer service representative who troubleshoots during their entire day, you may say that you were a palm tree. A palm tree bends and yields to gentle breezes and hurricanes alike, but it survives almost anything that comes its way and stands tall and straight the minute the wind stops.

Unconventional questions have no correct answer, but when asked them, four strategies can help you succeed:

1. Practice answering a few of these types of questions. If you need a few minutes to consider your answer during an interview, it's fine to ask for a bit of time.
2. Answer by showing something positive or beneficial about you and your personality.
3. Avoid humor and answer the question seriously and sincerely.
4. Work backward to the answer. Think about a characteristic that is important to the job, and then match it to a tree, a fruit, or an item in a supermarket.

As you prepare for interviews and practice your responses to common questions, it is also important to be aware of **illegal questions.** There are questions that are inappropriate for an employer to ask and knowing these types of questions can help you respond if faced with an illegal question during an interview.

Illegal Questions

Illegal or discriminatory questions include references to the following:

- Age
- Birthplace
- Childcare arrangements
- Ethnicity and race
- Disability
- Marital and family status
- National origin
- Religion
- Sexual orientation

If you are asked any question relating to the preceding topics, it could be for one of two reasons. Either the interviewer is asking an illegal question or the interviewer might not be well versed in interview techniques. Many hiring managers have not been formally trained in interview techniques, and the lack of training can result in asking an illegal question.

It is hoped that the question would be harmless enough so that you can answer it without feeling uncomfortable. If you feel uncomfortable answering something, tactfully say that the question doesn't relate to the job. Try to move onto another question or ask a question pertaining to the job to get the interview back on track.

If you feel that you were subjected to discrimination, speak to someone at your career services office. They can provide the guidance necessary at this stage of your job search. If that is not possible, consult a friend or professor and ask for guidance in your next steps. This is not a matter to be taken lightly, so it's important to get help from someone who is familiar with these issues.

Avoid Interviewer Pet Peeves

A number of things can annoy an interviewer and must be avoided at all costs. The following includes a list of things you should not do. Mock interviews are especially helpful at this stage because sometimes candidates are not aware they are doing things that are clear turnoffs to interviewers, so proceed with caution.

Not Being Prepared

Being unprepared is an insult to the interviewer who is investing their time and energy into meeting with you. You should be there on time, have several copies of your resume in your portfolio, focus on answering any question asked, and have a list of questions to ask at the end of the interview.

Negative Body Language

Positive body language such as looking the interviewer in the eye and shaking their hand firmly when saying hello inspires trust. Poor body language can eliminate you as a potential candidate. Practice answering questions with a friend and look them straight into the eye. Smile when you talk about big goals that you have achieved. You may look away now and then, but for the most part hold their gaze throughout the interview. Sit up straight in an attentive position to help ensure you make a good impression.

Appearing Tense

Stress is a vital component of an interview because you want the job and you need to impress. Using that stress to perform better is key, and, with practice, you can appear more relaxed than you actually are. For example, if your palm sweats a bit, discreetly wipe your hand on your pants leg or skirt before you shake the interviewer's hand. Preparing in advance usually lowers stress, but if you still need additional methods to calm yourself before an interview, try listening to soothing music before entering the building or read something inspirational before the interview. Taking deep breaths before you enter the building can lower stress a great deal.

Not Focusing on the Question and Not Answering It Directly

Waning Energy

The interview process is strenuous. If you interview with one person, it's easy to keep your energy up. However, some interviews might be set up where you will interview with multiple people or several individual people throughout the day, and, in some cases, on different floors and in different buildings. Your energy level must be as strong and consistent with your seventh interview as it was with your first. To avoid waning energy, bring a small bottle of water with you to help you feel refreshed. If your interview day will be several hours long, bring a small snack bar to help you stay alert.

Blaming Others for Your Poor Performance

Putting anyone or anything in a negative light is not a good strategy for an interview. Criticizing your past peers, boss, or company puts you in a negative light. Interviewers red flag any type of negative comment and might probe for more negative energy lurking in other interview responses.

Not Treating Everyone with Respect

Treat everyone you meet during the day with the utmost respect, whether it is the security guard, the administrative assistant, or the actual interviewer. Be respectful if you are trying to rush through security or if you are holding an elevator for someone. All of these individuals communicate with each other, and if you leave a bad impression with any of them, it could end your candidacy. Be courteous and kind to everyone you meet. Manners do count.

Master the Interview

Control what you can control, and your interview will be more successful. This includes doing the following, but this list is far from exhaustive:

- Assess your strengths and weaknesses before the interview.
- Research the company and its competitors in advance of your meeting.
- Prepare and practice interview questions.
- Create a routine for the day of the interview to ensure you don't rush or skip important steps.
- Write down five to seven questions to ask at the end of your interview to prove you are motivated to get this job offer.

Remember that interviews are subjective and that a second interview is never a guarantee. Budgets can shift and your targeted company may have to pull an open requisition. Perhaps the company wants to promote from within and they may hire an internal candidate. Many interviewers hire in their own image, regardless of any interviewer training course they may attend. No matter what happens at the end of your interview, it's important to stay positive and it's equally important to not take it personally.

Regardless of the interview's outcome, and especially if you don't get the job, thank the interviewer for the interaction. Continue to keep in touch because that person can become an important part of your network. Leaving a positive impression can only help your future prospects because jobs for which you would be a perfect fit might open in the near term. Remember also that recruiters and hiring managers tend to move from company to company, and there is a strong likelihood that your paths may cross again. Maintaining positive relationships can only help your career.

Lastly, if you interview for a position and you don't get it, at least appreciate the value and practice of your experience. Troubleshoot what could have gone better and improve on that one thing. If you are proactive enough at strengthening your interview ability and ensuring you have enough interviews lined up, you increase your chances of getting a job offer.

Below is a list of resources that contain common interview questions and good explanations/answers you might want to adopt.[48]

Table 5.5 – Resources for Interviews

Website	Description
100 top job interview questions—be prepared for the interview (from Monster.com)	This site provides a comprehensive set of interview questions you might expect to be asked, categorized as basic interview questions, behavioral questions, salary questions, career development questions, and other kinds. Some of the listed questions provide comprehensive answers, too.
Interview Questions and Answers (from BigInterview)	This site provides text and video answers to the following questions: Tell me about yourself, describe your current position, why are you looking for a new job, what are your strengths, what is your greatest weakness, why do you want to work here, where do you see yourself in five years, why should we hire you, and do you have any questions for me?
Ten Tough Interview Questions and Ten Great Answers (from CollegeGrad)	This site explores some of the most difficult questions you will face in job interviews. The more open-ended the question, the greater the variation among answers. Once you have become practiced in your interviewing skills, you will find that you can use almost any question as a launching pad for a particular topic or compelling story.

Why Should We Hire You

From the Ohio State University Fisher College of Business Career Management Office, here is a video featuring representatives from recruiting companies offering advice for answering the question "Why should we hire you?" As you watch, make mental notes about how you would answer the question in an interview for a job you really want.

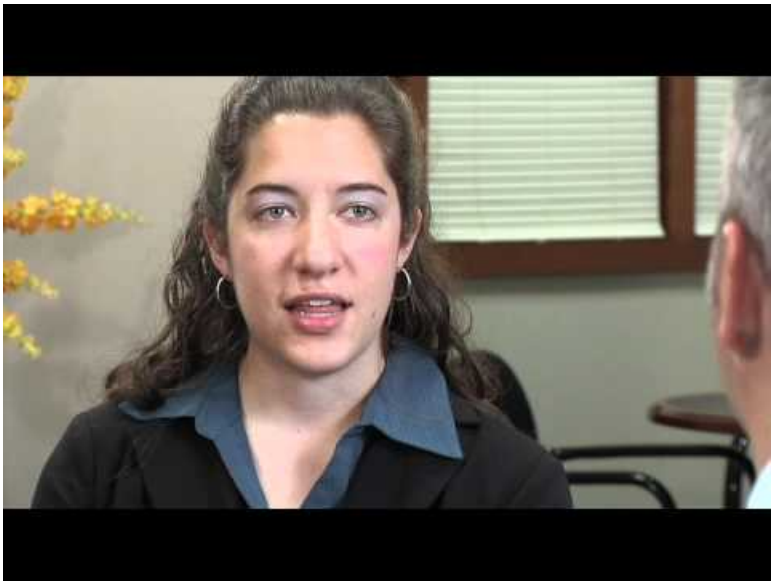


Figure 5.9 – Watch "'Why Should We Hire You?' How to Answer this Interview Question" (link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NVYg2HNAdA)

Activity 5.6: What Makes Me A Great Fit?

Now that we have discussed strategies to help you prepare for interviewing, it is time to apply what you have learned. Take a moment and think of your ideal job.

- Write a paragraph describing your ideal job. Imagine that you are already in this job. What is your job title and what are you responsible for executing? What is the name of the company or organization? What is its function?
- Now identify the top three reasons why you are a great fit for this ideal job. What sets you apart from the competition? List the qualities, skills and values you have that match the job requirements. Provide examples to support your answers. Connect your values to the company's values.
- Summarize your answer.

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8: TURNING YOUR CAREER AND LIFE PLANNING VISION INTO REALITY

Learning Objectives

- Construct your career vision statement.
- Assess your progress and create your plan of action.
- Prepare to move forward and stay motivated.

8.1: Let's Revisit Your Vision

8.2: Assess your progress and create your plan of action

8.3: Moving Forward and Staying Motivated

8.4: Summary

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8.1: Let’s Revisit Your Vision

- Where do you see yourself in the next 10, 15, 20 plus years?
- What career path do you want to pursue?
- What kind of work will be meaningful to you and allow you to feel a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day?
- What level of responsibility do you plan to hold?
- What type of work environment will energize you and give you a sense purpose?

At the start of this class, some came in with a clear vision while others may have been fuzzy. We hope this class has helped clarify your vision in some respect after completing the four phases of career exploration and life planning. Let's take a moment and review the different phases you have completed thus far.

Phase 1: Who am I?

Phase 1 involved getting to know who you are. You completed many different career assessments in unit 2 that allowed you to learn more about your values, character strengths, personality preferences, interests, skills and abilities. Each assessment helped you gain a better understanding of who you are and where you may fit best in the world of work.

Phase 2: What’s out there?

Phase 2 consisted of career research. In Unit 3, you took time to research the world of work through different online career sites such as: the Occupational Outlook Handbook, O*NET, Career OneStop, California Career Cafe, California Career Zone and the State of California Employment Development Department. This phase also involves talking to professionals in the field and gaining hands on exposure through volunteer work or internship experience. The more information you gather about yourself and the world of work, the easier it will be for you to make decisions about your future career path.

Phase 3: What factors affect my choices?

In Phase 3, you took time to explore factors that may affect your career choice and you were asked to make some decisions in regards to timing, finances, location and family and personal responsibilities.

Timing

How much time are you willing to invest in schooling and training towards your educational and career goals? Are you looking for short term training to provide you with the necessary skills for employment? Or is your time more flexible and you may pursue a career that requires 6 or more years of educational training?

Finances

Will the career path you choose allow you to financially support yourself and/or family and provide you with the financial security you desire?

Location

Are you interested in staying local or are you open to moving if necessary to get your career started?

Family and personal responsibilities

How will your career choice affect your personal and family life? Will the career you pursue allow you to balance your family and personal responsibilities?

These are just a few of the many important questions you will need to ask yourself as you start focusing on your future career path.

Phase 4: Where do I go from here?

It is important to stay open minded and be flexible on your journey! Remember, it is ok to revisit the different phases as you see fit. The more time and effort you put into each phase, the more likely you are to make well-informed decisions that contribute to your academic and career goals.

Now that you have completed all four phases, it is time to solidify your career vision statement!

As discussed earlier, career vision statements are very powerful and meaningful when paired with career exploration. Creating a vision statement may take several attempts and rewrites until you identify with your career vision statement. Reflect on your experiences in class and all the knowledge you have gained through the career assessments you have completed and the career information you gathered. While refining your career vision statement be sure to include the following points:

- Address your core values and the impact you wish to make on society
- Address your purpose and goals you wish to achieve in your future career
- Craft your vision statement so that it inspires you, motivates you and energizes you
- Avoid vision killers such as fearful thinking, fixed mindset thinking and negativity

Below are a few examples to get you started:

Career Vision Statement Sample #1:

To make a positive impact in the lives of those I work with, empowering them to believe in themselves and achieve academic, personal and career happiness and success.

Career Vision Statement Sample #2:

To earn my doctorate degree and become the kind of teacher that changes the lives of students for the better, educating them not only about English but about the joys and meaning of life.

Career Vision Statement Sample #3:

I will become a leader in my organization helping transform it into an organization that respects all its stakeholders — while at the same time being the best husband and father I can be.

Visit LiveCareer and read more about “Creating a Career Vision for Your Life: Envisioning Your Ideal Career.”

Once you have crafted a career vision statement you identify with, write is on a 3x5 card and post it where you can see it every day. Recite it to yourself and visualize it. You have the power to make it your reality!

Activity 6.1: My Career Vision Statement

You have engaged in the Career Exploration process throughout this course. Back in unit 2, you engaged in different self-ex
the start of the semester. Now it is time to put everything together and craft your career vision statement. Consider...

- What's your vision for your future?
- Where do you see yourself in 10, 15, 20, plus years?
- What career path do you want to pursue?
- What kind of work will be meaningful to you?
- What work environments will energize you?
- What level of responsibility will you carry out?

My Career Vision Statement:

_____

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8.2: Assess your progress and create your plan of action

At the beginning of this course we highlighted career exploration and understanding of the difference between job and a career. We encouraged you to identify resources and factors related to your personal and career vision. It was the foundation for your evaluation and assessment of four phases we had you complete. The main goal was to have you gain a better understanding of yourself and best fit for the world of work. Thus, allowing you to learn and harness a strong sense of self and increase self-confidence. Imparting you to make informed choices in relation to personal goals and career pathways. Supportive resources were included to help assess your skills, abilities, character strengths and preferences. Making self-discovery intentional and personalized for your present time experience in this class.

As an extension, you used online tools to research and conduct adductive reasoning when exploring the “big picture” of correlating your abilities and skills with potential careers. Hopefully, finding and taking advantage of unknown opportunities in careers which you had not considered. Most importantly, to have a strategic marketing campaign as your personal platform to employers.

Everything you have completed in this course so far is a step closer toward your career search, short term and long-term goals to come. Moreover, we provided with resources on and off campus as well as online links to better guide you moving forward.

We hope you have mastered some strong decision making skills to help you in keeping the pace of pursuing your career. Please continue to network, explore and connect with others in your areas of interest. Stay up to date on market trends and shifts in “new technology” and how it will positively impact certain industries. Do not shy away from learning opportunities and be open to unexpected success.

Career exploration is not a linear process; it is more complex and changes with your growth and mastery of new skills. Retool your marketing campaign as needed and continue to build your self-confidence. Mentor others along the way and maintain a strong network of professionals. Allow yourself to feel uncomfortable and identify new possibilities. Use your career vision statement to remind you of the affirmation and passion you have for your career. Update it and revise your statement to serve as a reminder to continue to explore and achieve new levels in your career.

We have covered a lot of information throughout this course and now it is up to you to apply it to your life. The *“Career Exploration and Planning Timeline”* below nicely summarizes the career and life planning process while highlighting specific activities for you to consider taking part in. We hope you use this as a checklist to help guide you through your journey at College of the Canyons!

Review the two charts on the following pages. The first one addresses students planning to earn an associate’s degree and/or a career certificate and enter the workforce. The second chart addresses students planning to transfer to a four-year institution after COC. Consider which activities will help you through your career and life planning process as you create your plan of action.

	FOR STUDENTS EARNING AN ASSOCIATE OF ARTS DEGREE/CERTIFICATE & ENTERING THE JOB MARKET DIRECTLY AFTER COC

1st YEAR	FALL SEMESTER • Engage in self-exploration; gain a better understanding of your skills, abilities, values, personality style, and interests. • • Use web resources to learn more information about your major and career path options (see attached). • Enroll in a Career Exploration Course (Counseling 110). • Get involved in extracurricular activities on campus. Join a club or organization • • Research COC's programs/majors and related coursework in the college catalog. SPRING SEMESTER • Explore options related to your major by developing relationships with counselors, professors, work colleagues, friends and family. • Take an introductory course in the major you are considering. Meet with a Counselor for help choosing these classes and to discuss how they relate to your career goals. • Develop your resume in preparation for a summer job, internship or volunteer opportunity. Meet with an advisor in the Career Center to get your resume critiqued. • Conduct informational interviews and talk to family, friends, faculty, staff and other professionals in the area you are interested in pursuing. • Continue to network, participate in student clubs/organizations, attend conferences, and career fairs. • Begin to explore summer internship opportunities. SUMMER • Develop work experience through a summer job, volunteering or interning in the field you are interested in pursuing.
2nd YEAR	FALL SEMESTER • Participate in an internship (fall and/or spring). • Continue to network by attending career fairs in order to build relationships with employers. • Submit petition for Associate degree graduation (deadline is the first day of the graduating term). • Meet with a Counselor to verify all major requirements are met and you are ready for graduation. SPRING SEMESTER • Revise and update your resume. • See a Career Center advisor to complete a mock interview and develop job search strategies. • Submit resumes/cover letters to target companies. Interview and send follow up thank you letters.

	FOR STUDENTS PLANNING TO TRANFER TO A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAM DIRECTLY AFTER COC

1st YEAR	FALL SEMESTER • Engage in self-exploration; gain a better understanding of your skills, abilities, values, personality style, and interests. • • Enroll in a Career Exploration Course (Counseling 110). • Use web resources to learn more information about your major and career path options (see attached). • Get involved in extracurricular activities on campus. Join a club or organization • Develop your student educational plan with a counselor • Begin exploring transfer schools, admission requirements, and major preparation coursework. • Attend the College to Career Pathway Event & Transfer Day Events (usually held in early September). • Research COC's programs/majors and related coursework in the college catalog. SPRING SEMESTER • Continue to research individual transfer schools and gather as much information as you can on the admission process, transfer requirements and deadlines. • Research career paths your major can lead to (see attached websites). • Visit the Transfer Center for information on Transfer Admission Guarantee Programs. • Meet with a Counselor to review your academic and career goals and revisit your educational plan. • Develop your resume in preparation for a summer job, internship or volunteer opportunity. Meet with an advisor in the Career Center to get your resume critiqued. • Explore options related to your major by developing relationships with counselors, professors, work colleagues, friends and family. SUMMER • Develop work experience through a summer job, volunteering or interning in the field you are interested in pursuing. •
2nd YEAR	FALL SEMESTER • Enroll in Counseling 120 – University Transfer Planning course. • Attend the Transfer Day Event & meet different university representatives (usually held in September). • Attend Transfer Center workshops for assistance with the UC/CSU application and personal statements • Submit transfer admission applications for the upcoming fall term. Note applications are usually due by the end of November; however deadlines vary by school. • Meet with a Counselor to review your transfer goals and make sure you are ready to transfer • Continue to network through clubs/organizations, attend conferences and career fairs. SPRING SEMESTER • If earning associate degree, file petition for graduation (deadline is the 1st day of the graduating term) • https://fafsa.ed.gov/) for the following academic year. Be aware, the deadline is in early March; see the financial aid office for details. • You will be receiving correspondence regarding your admission status from transfer schools, reply in a timely manner. **NOTE:** This timeline is based on a two-year transfer model. Be aware that many factors play into the amount of time it takes each individual to transfer. Your specific timeline at COC may vary from this one. Meet with a counselor to discuss your plan.

Activity 6.2: My Plan Of Action

You have spent a lot of time engaging in the career and life planning process and now have a stronger understanding of your ac
your academic, career and personal goals? Write out what you need to do in the next month, 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 r

My next steps include:

_____

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8.3: Moving Forward and Staying Motivated

You now have the foundational skills and resources to turn your career and life planning vision into reality. It is now up to you to apply everything you have gained in this class to your own personal journey. Along the journey, remember to:

- Apply your growth mindset and embrace challenges as new learning opportunities.
- Recognize your achievements and reward your hard work.
- Be flexible, expect setbacks and revise your plan as needed.
- Practice affirmations to help build your self-confidence.
- Use your resources. Ask for support and guidance along the way.
- Continue to network and build relationships.
- Have fun along the journey. This is your story!

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8.4: Summary

In Unit 6 we summarized the major concepts reviewed throughout the course and focused on turning your career and life planning vision into reality. This involved:

• Constructing your career vision statement. • Assessing your progress and creating your plan of action. • Preparing to move forward and staying motivated.

You have officially completed all units of this course. At this time, you may have a confident idea in regards to what major and career to pursue and are ready to implement your plan and carry out your career vision statement. For others, you may not have a definite major and/or career set at this time; however, you now have the skills to continue exploring your options. Remember career and life planning is a lifetime process and takes time to develop. Be patient and enjoy the experience. Continue to ask questions, research ideas, speak to professionals and test out your ideas through volunteer work or internships.

We hope you have enjoyed the class and gained new tools as you continue your career journey!

We are so excited for what the future holds for you!

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9: IDENTIFYING YOUR CAREER PROFILE

9.1: Career Development Process
9.2: Goals and Motivations
9.3: Values and Decision Making
9.4: Personality, Skills, and Interests

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9.1: Career Development Process



Desire! That's the one secret of every man's career. —Johnny Carson, entertainer

Learning Objectives

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Describe the stages of career development, and identify the stage you are currently in
- Identify career development resources in your school, community, and beyond

Career Development

See if you can remember a time in your childhood when you noticed somebody doing professional work. Maybe a nurse or doctor, dressed in a lab coat, was listening to your heartbeat. Maybe a worker at a construction site, decked in a hard hat, was operating noisy machinery. Maybe a cashier at the checkout line in a grocery store was busily scanning bar codes. Each day in your young life you could have seen a hundred people doing various jobs. Surely some of the experiences drew your interest and appealed to your imagination.

If you can recall any such times, those are moments from the beginning stage of your career development.

What exactly is career development? It's a lifelong process in which we become aware of, interested in, knowledgeable about, and skilled in a career. It's a key part of human development as our identity forms and our life unfolds.

Stages of Career Development

There are five main stages of career development. Each stage correlates with attitudes, behaviors, and relationships we all tend to have at that point and age. As we progress through each stage and reach the milestones identified, we prepare to move on to the next one.

Table 1.1 CAREER DEVELOPMENT STAGES

#	STAGE	DESCRIPTION
1	GROWING	This is a time in early years (4–13 years old) when you begin to have a sense about the future. You begin to realize that your participation in the world is related to being able to do certain tasks and accomplish certain goals.

#	STAGE	DESCRIPTION
2	EXPLORING	This period begins when you are a teenager, and it extends into your mid-twenties. In this stage you find that you have specific interests and aptitudes. You are aware of your inclinations to perform and learn about some subjects more than others. You may try out jobs in your community or at your school. You may begin to explore a specific career. At this stage, you have some detailed "data points" about careers, which will guide you in certain directions.
3	ESTABLISHING	This period covers your mid-twenties through mid-forties. By now you are selecting or entering a field you consider suitable, and you are exploring job opportunities that will be stable. You are also looking for upward growth, so you may be thinking about an advanced degree.
4	MAINTAINING	This stage is typical for people in their mid-forties to mid-sixties. You may be in an upward pattern of learning new skills and staying engaged. But you might also be merely "coasting and cruising" or even feeling stagnant. You may be taking stock of what you've accomplished and where you still want to go.
5	REINVENTING	In your mid-sixties, you are likely transitioning into retirement. But retirement in our technologically advanced world can be just the beginning of a new career or pursuit—a time when you can reinvent yourself. There are many new interests to pursue, including teaching others what you've learned, volunteering, starting online businesses, consulting, etc.

Keep in mind that your career development path is personal to you, and you may not fit neatly into the categories described above. Perhaps your socioeconomic background changes how you fit into the schema. Perhaps your physical and mental abilities affect how you define the idea of a "career." And for everyone, too, there are factors of chance that can't be predicted or anticipated. You are unique, and your career path can only be developed by you.

Activity 1.1: IDENTIFYING Your career development STAGE

Objective:

- To identify current career development stage(s), current obstacles, and next stage of development

Instructions:

- Review the 5 Stages of Career Development listed in the table above and answer the questions below.

1. Which stage of career development do you feel you are in currently?

2. Provide the 2 descriptions you identify with the most from your career development stage.

3. What challenges are you facing now in your career development?

4. Where are you headed next in your career development path?

Career Development Resources in Your College, Community, and Beyond

Career experts say that people will change careers (not to mention jobs) five to seven times in a lifetime. So your career will likely not be a straight and narrow path. Be sure to set goals and assess your interests, skills and values often. Seek opportunities for career growth and enrichment. And take advantage of the rich set of resources available to you. Below are just a few.

Career Development Center on Campus

Whether you are a student, a graduate, or even an employer, you can obtain invaluable career development assistance at your college. Campus career centers can support, guide, and empower you in every step of the career development process, from initial planning to achieving lifelong career satisfaction. Visit the Career Development/Career Technical Education (CTE) Student Success Center at Santa Ana College in room L-222. There you can work with career staff to explore your personality type and career paths; you can also find online resources listed on their website: http://www.sac.edu/StudentServices/Counseling/CareerCenter/Pages/default.aspx. As part of your career exploration, the Career/CTE Center also provides the following services:

- Access to resources on careers and training programs
- Employment Preparation Workshops (Resume, Interview, and LinkedIn)
- Undecided Majors Counseling Appointments
- Employment Services include job listings and on-campus interviews

Books on Career Development

Going to college is one of the best steps you can take to prepare for a career. But soon-to-be or recently graduated students are not necessarily guaranteed jobs. Staying educated about strategies for developing your career and finding new jobs will help you manage ongoing transitions. The book *The Secret to Getting a Job After College: Marketing Tactics to Turn Degrees into Dollars*, by author Larry Chiagouris, was written specifically to help recent grads increase their chances of finding a job right after college. It speaks to students in all majors and provides tips and tactics to attract the attention of an employer and successfully compete with other candidates to get the job you want.

The following video provides an introduction to the book. You can download a transcript of the video here.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/career/?p=26

Career Roadmap

You can use the Career Roadmap, from DePaul University, to evaluate where you are and where you want to be in your career/careers. It can help you decide if you want to change career paths and can guide you in searching for a new job. The road map identifies the following four cyclical steps:

1. Know yourself
2. Explore and choose options
3. Gain knowledge and experience
4. Put it all together: the job search process

You will learn more about these four steps throughout this course.

Plan, Do, Check, Act

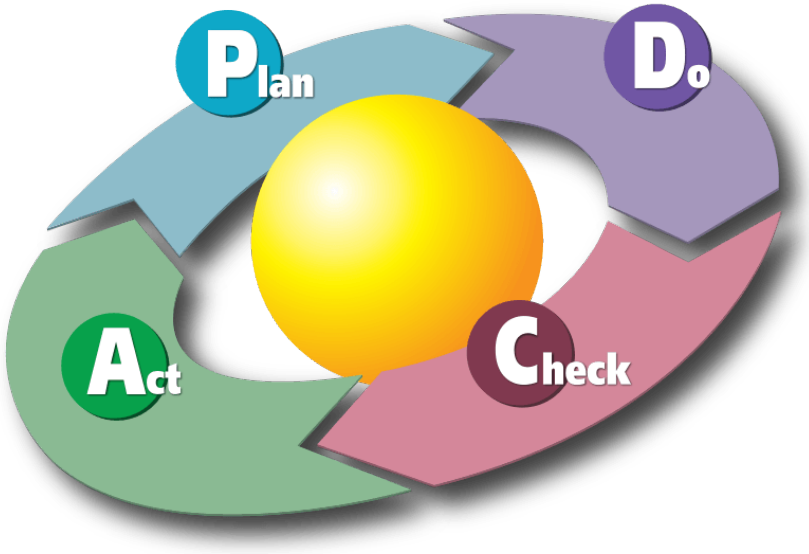


Figure 1. PDCA

PDCA (plan–do–check–act), shown in Figure 1, above, is a four-step strategy for carrying out change. You can use it to evaluate where you are in the career-development process and to identify your next steps. The strategy is typically used in the business arena as a framework for improving processes and services. But you can think of your career as a personal product you are offering or selling.

1. **PLAN**: What are your goals and objectives? What process will you use to get to your targets? You might want to plan smaller to begin with and test out possible effects. For instance, if you are thinking of getting into a certain career, you might plan to try it out first as an intern or volunteer or on a part-time basis. When you start on a small scale, you can test possible outcomes.
2. **DO**: Implement your plan. Sell your product—which is YOU and your skills, talents, energy, and enthusiasm. Collect data as you go along; you will need it for charting and analyzing in the Check and Act steps ahead.
3. **CHECK**: Look at your results so far. Are you happy with your job or wherever you are in the career-development process? How is your actual accomplishment measuring up next to your intentions and wishes? Look for where you may have deviated in your intended steps. For example, did you take a job in another city when your initial plans were for working closer to friends and family? What are the pros and cons? If you like, create a chart that shows you all the factors. With a chart, it will be easier to see trends over several PDCA cycles.
4. **ACT**: How should you act going forward? What changes in planning, doing, and checking do you want to take? The PDCA framework is an ongoing process. Keep planning, doing, checking, and acting. The goal is continuous improvement.

Internet Sites for Career Planning

Visit the Internet Sites for Career Planning Web site at the National Career Development Association's site. You will find extensive, definitive, and frequently updated information on the following topics: Online Employment; Self-Assessment; Career Development Process; Occupational Information; Employment Trends; Salary Information; Educational Information; Financial Aid Information; Apprenticeships and Other Alternative Training Opportunities; Job Search Instruction and Advice; Job Banks; Career Search Engines; Resources for Diverse Audiences; Resources and Services for Ex-Offenders; Resources and Services for Youth, Teen and Young Adults; Resources and Services the Older Client; Industry and Occupation Specific Information; Researching Employers; Social Networking Sites; Disabilities; Military.

Key Takeaways

- The five main stages of career development are unique for everyone and correlate with attitudes, behaviors, and relationships we all experience at certain points and ages in our lives.

- Since it's common for people to change careers five to seven times in a lifetime, it's important to set goals and examine your skills, interests, and values often.
- There are many career development resources available to you on campus, online, and beyond to assist you in identifying strategies and steps to creating a career path that works for you.

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9.2: Goals and Motivations



If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.

–Henry David Thoreau

Learning Objectives

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Explain how time management plays a factor in goal setting, leading to short-term, medium-term, and long-term objectives.
- Identify your specific short, medium, and long-term goals.
- Identify and apply motivational strategies to support goal achievement.
- Explore the social aspects of achieving goals (networking, social media, etc.).
- Brainstorm factors that might hinder goal achievement and possible ways to address these issues.

Time Management and Goal Setting

There is no doubt that doing well in college is a sizable challenge. Every semester you have to adjust to new class schedules, instructors, classmates as well as learning objectives and requirements for each course. Along with that, you may be juggling school with work, family responsibilities, and social events. Do you feel confident that you can attend to all of them in a balanced, committed way? What will be your secret of success?

Success Begins with Goals

A *goal* is a desired result that you envision and then plan and commit to achieve. Goals can relate to family, education, career, wellness, spirituality, and many other areas of your life. Generally, goals are associated with finite time expectations, even deadlines.

As a college student, many of your goals are defined for you. For example, you must take certain courses, you must comply with

certain terms and schedules, and you must turn in assignments at specified times. These goals are mostly set for you by someone else.

But there are plenty of goals for you to define yourself. For example, you decide what you would like to major in. You decide how long you are going to be in college or what terms you want to enroll in. You largely plan how you would like your studies to relate to employment and your career.

Goals can also be sidetracked. Consider the following scenario in which a student makes a discovery that challenges her to reexamine her goals, priorities, and timetables:

Janine had thought she would be an accountant, even though she knew little about what an accounting job might entail. Her math and organizational skills were strong, and she enjoyed taking economics courses as well as other courses in her accounting program. But when one of her courses required her to spend time in an accounting office working with taxes, she decided that accounting was not the right fit for her, due to the higher-stress environment and the late hours.

At first she was concerned that she invested time and money in a career path that was not a good fit. She feared that changing her major would add to her graduation time. Nevertheless, she did decide to change her major and her career focus.

Janine is now a statistician with a regional healthcare system. She is very happy with her work. Changing her major from accounting to statistics was the right decision for her.

This scenario represents some of the many opportunities we have, on an ongoing basis, to assess our relationship to our goals, reevaluate priorities, and adjust. Opportunities exist every day—every moment, really!

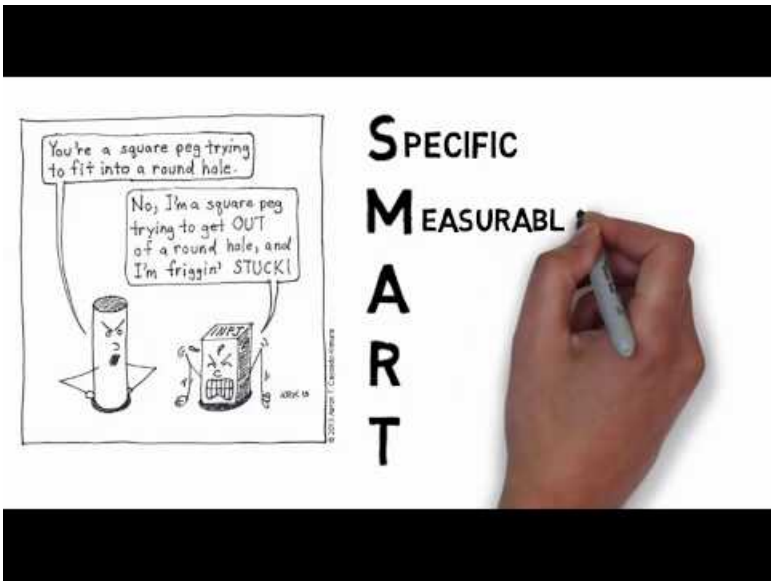
Below is a set of questions we can ask ourselves at any turn to help focus on personal goals:

1. What are my top-priority goals?
2. Which of my skills and interests make my goals realistic for me?
3. What makes my goals believable and possible?
4. Are my goals measurable? How long will it take me to reach them? How will I know if I have achieved them?
5. Are my goals flexible? What will I do if I experience a setback?
6. Are my goal controllable? Can I achieve them on my own?
7. Are my goals in sync with my values?

As you move through your college career, make a point to ask these questions regularly.

Aids to Successful Goal Setting

Watch the following overview of SMART goals – a memory aid in setting and evaluating goals to ensure that they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound. After watching the video, complete Activity 2.1.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/career/?p=28

Activity 2.1: Identifying Your Goals

In order to achieve **long-term goals** (from college on), you will need to first achieve a series of shorter goals. **Medium-term goals** (this year and while in college) and **short-term goals** (today, this week, and this month) may take several days, weeks, months, or even a few years to complete, depending on your ultimate long-term goals. Complete the following **Goals Activity** to identify short and medium-term goals that will help you achieve your long-term goal.

Objectives

1. Identify 1 long-term academic or career goal.
2. Identify two related medium-term and two related short-term goals that will help you achieve your long-term goal.
3. Identify specific, measurable, achievable, relevant activities to achieve your identified goals by a certain timeframe.

Instructions

- Review the worksheet below, and fill in the blank sections to the best of your ability.

Guidelines

- *Phrase goals as positive statements:* Affirm your excitement and enthusiasm about attaining a goal by using positive language and expectations.
- *Be exact:* Set a precise goal that includes dates, times, and amounts, so that you have a basis for measuring your progress.
- *Prioritize:* Select your top goals, and put them in order of importance. This helps you understand the degree to which you value each of them. It will also help you better manage related tasks and not feel overwhelmed.
- *Take the lead:* Identify goals that are linked to your own performance, not dependent on the actions of other people or situations beyond your control.
- *Be realistic but optimistic and ambitious:* The goals you set should be achievable, but sometimes it pays to reach a little higher than what you may think is possible. Certainly don't set your goals too low.
- *Be hopeful, excited, and committed:* Your enthusiasm and perseverance can open many doors!

GOAL PRIORITIES	MY PRECISE GOALS	WHAT
Example: Long-term goal	I plan to graduate with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. My major will be Radio-Television-Film, and my minor will be Spanish	I am grade
Example: Related medium-term goal	I would like to study abroad in Spain before I graduate.	I nee I nee
Example: Related short-term goal	I will need to get financial aid for at least a portion of my studies.	I have for a
Identify your **Long-term goal**		
Identify a related **medium-term goal #1**		
Identify a related **medium-term goal #2**		
Identify a related **short-term goal #1**		
Identify a related **short-term goal #2**		

Motivational Strategies to Support You

Every day we make choices. Some are as simple as what clothes we decide to wear, what to eat for lunch, or how long to study for a test. But what about life-altering choices—the ones that leave us at a crossroads? How much thought do you give to taking Path A versus Path B? Do you like to plan and schedule your choices, by making a list of pros and cons, for instance? Or do you prefer to make decisions spontaneously and just play the cards that life deals you as they come?

The videos that follow are about choices for success. The first video introduces you to “growth mindset” by Carol Dweck and the

second video discusses “grit” quality by Angela Duckworth. Watch them with a keen eye and ear. Take notes, too. You might pick up some good ideas for strategies that can help you reach your goals.

The power of “yet” by Carol Dweck

Carol Dweck is a professor at Stanford and the author of *Mindset*, a classic work on motivation and “growth mindset.” Her work is influential among educators and increasingly among business leaders as well. She researches “growth mindset” — the idea that we can grow our brain’s capacity to learn and to solve problems. In this talk, she describes two ways to think about a problem that’s slightly too hard for you to solve. Are you not smart enough to solve it … or have you just not solved it yet?

https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve

Passion and Perseverance or “Grit” by Angela Duckworth

Leaving a high-flying job in consulting, Angela Lee Duckworth took a job teaching math to seventh graders in a New York public school. She quickly realized that IQ wasn’t the only thing separating the successful students from those who struggled. Here, she explains her theory of “grit” as a predictor of success.

https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance

After watching the videos, reflect on how you can improve the ways you currently set goals to allow you the opportunity to apply “grit” and use your “growth mindset” in order to successfully accomplish your goals.

Social Aspects of Achieving Your Goals

Setting goals can be a challenge, but working toward them, once you’ve set them, can be an even greater challenge—often because it implies that you will be making changes in your life. You might be creating new directions of thought or establishing new patterns of behavior, discarding old habits or starting new ones. Change will always be the essence of achieving your goals.

You may find that as you navigate this path of change, one of your best resources is your social network. Your family, friends, roommates, coworkers, and others can help you maintain a steady focus on your goals. They can encourage and cheer you on, offer guidance when needed, share knowledge and wisdom they’ve gained, and possibly partner with you in working toward shared goals and ambitions. Your social network is a gold mine of support.

Here are some easy ways you can tap into goal-supporting “people power”:

- Make new friends
- Study with friends
- Actively engage with the college community
- Volunteer to help others
- Join student organizations
- Get an internship
- Work for a company related to your curriculum
- Stay connected via social media (but use it judiciously)*
- Keep a positive attitude
- Congratulate yourself on all you’ve done to get where you are

*A note about social media: More than 98 percent of college-age students use social media, says Experian Simmons. Twenty-seven percent of those students spent more than six hours a week on social media (UCLA, 2014). The University of Missouri, though, indicates in a 2015 study that this level of use may be problematic. It can lead to symptoms of envy, anxiety, and depression. Still, disconnecting from social media may have a negative impact, too, and further affect a student’s anxiety level.

Is there a healthy balance? If you feel overly attached to social media, you may find immediate and tangible benefit in cutting back. By tapering your use, your can devote more time to achieving your goals. You can also gain a sense of freedom and more excitement about working toward your goals.

Dealing with Setbacks and Obstacles

At times, unexpected events and challenges can get in the way of best-laid plans. For example, you might get sick or injured or need to deal with a family issue or a financial crisis. Earlier in this section we considered a scenario in which a student realized she needed to change her major and her career plans. Such upsets, whether minor or major, may trigger a need to take some time off from school—perhaps a term or a year. Your priorities may shift. You may need to reevaluate your goals.

Problem-Solving Strategies

Below is a simple list of four problem-solving strategies. They can be applied to any aspect of your life.

1. What is the problem? Define it in detail. How is it affecting me and other people?
2. How are other people dealing with this problem? Are they adjusting their time management skills? Can they still complete responsibilities, and on time?
3. What is my range of possible solutions? Are solutions realistic? How might these solutions help me reach my goal/s?
4. What do I need to do to implement solutions?

You may wish to also review the earlier set of questions about focusing with intention on goals.

Be confident that you can return to your intended path in time. Acknowledge the ways in which you need to regroup. Read inspiring words from people who have faced adversity and gained. Line up your resources, be resolved, and proceed with certainty toward your goals.

Key Takeaways

Success with goals (any goals—education, family, career, finances, etc.) is essentially a three-part process:

1. Identify your goals (specifically long-term, medium-term and short-term goals).
2. Set priorities to accomplish these goals.
3. Manage your time according to the priorities you have set.

By following these three straightforward steps, you can more readily achieve goals because you clearly organize the process and follow through with commitment. Focus your sights on what you want to acquire, attain, or achieve. Prioritize the steps you need to take to get there. And organize your tasks into manageable chunks and blocks of time. These are the roadways to accomplishment and fulfillment.

In the following passage from *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*, former political-science student Patricia Munsch—now a college counselor—reflects on how a structured, conscientious approach to decision-making and goal setting in college can lead to fulfillment and achievement.

What Do You Enjoy Studying?

There is a tremendous amount of stress placed on college students regarding their choice of major. Everyday, I meet with students regarding their concern about choosing right major; the path that will lead to a fantastic, high-paying position in a growth industry. There is a hope that one decision, your college major, will have a huge impact on the rest of your life.

Students shy away from subject areas they enjoy due to fear that such coursework will not lead to a job. I am disappointed in this approach. As a counselor I always ask—what do you enjoy studying? Based on this answer it is generally easy to choose a major or a family of majors. I recognize the incredible pressure to secure employment after graduation, but forcing yourself to choose a major that you may not have any actual interest in because a book or website mentioned the area of growth may not lead to the happiness you predict.

Working in a college setting I have the opportunity to work with students through all walks of life, and I do believe based on my experience, that choosing a major because it is listed as a growth area alone is not a good idea. Use your time in college to explore all areas of interest and utilize your campus resources to help you make connections between your joy in a subject matter and the potential career paths. Realize that for most people, in most careers, the undergraduate major does not lead to a linear

career path.

As an undergraduate student I majored in Political Science, an area that I had an interest in, but I added minors in Sociology and Women's Studies as my educational pursuits broadened. Today, as a counselor, I look back on my coursework with happy memories of exploring new ideas, critically analyzing my own assumptions, and developing an appreciation of social and behavioral sciences. So to impart my wisdom in regards to a student's college major, I will always ask, what do you enjoy studying?

Once you have determined what you enjoy studying, the real work begins. Students need to seek out academic advisement. Academic advisement means many different things; it can include course selection, course completion for graduation, mapping coursework to graduation, developing opportunities within your major and mentorship.

As a student I utilized a faculty member in my department for semester course selection, and I also went to the department chairperson to organize two different internships to explore different career paths. In addition, I sought mentorship from club advisors as I questioned my career path and future goals. In my mind I had a team of people providing me support and guidance, and as a result I had a great college experience and an easy transition from school to work.

I recommend to all students that I meet with to create their own team. As a counselor I can certainly be a part of their team, but I should not be the only resource. Connect with faculty in your department or in your favorite subject. Seek out internships as you think about the transition from college to workplace. Find mentors through faculty, club advisors, or college staff. We all want to see you succeed and are happy to be a part of your journey.

As a counselor I am always shocked when students do not understand what courses they need to take, what grade point average they need to maintain, and what requirements they must fulfill in order to reach their goal—graduation! Understand that as a college student it is your responsibility to read your college catalog and meet all of the requirements for graduation from your college. I always suggest that students, starting in their first semester, outline or map out all of the courses they need to take in order to graduate. Of course you may change your mind along the way, but by setting out your plan to graduation you are forcing yourself to learn what is required of you.

I do this exercise in my classes and it is by far the most frustrating for students. They want to live in the now and they don't want to worry about next semester or next year. However, for many students that I see, the consequence of this decision is a second semester senior year filled with courses that the student avoided during all the previous semesters. If you purposefully outline each semester and the coursework for each, you can balance your schedule, understand your curriculum and feel confident that you will reach your goal.

—Dr. Patricia Munsch, *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*

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9.3: Values and Decision Making



When your values are clear to you, making decisions becomes easier.

Roy Disney

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Define your work values.
- Learn steps to a rational decision-making model.
- Understand how making decisions based on values can lead to career satisfaction.

Values

An essential part in your self discovery journey of your career exploration process is identifying what is most important to you–your values–and learn how they influence and motivate your goals. Values drive our actions and they motivate your goals. Your goals help you establish your priorities in life, guide your decision-making, and affect your evaluation of your success and happiness in life. Take time to reflect what being successful means to you. It will be different for you than for other people. Think of your values as you are thinking about becoming successful.

Values

As defined at CareerOneStop, a source for employment information sponsored by the US Department of Labor:

- Values are your beliefs about what is important or desirable.
- When your values line up with how you live and work, you tend to feel more satisfied and confident.
  - Living or working in ways that contradict your values can lead to dissatisfaction, confusion, and discouragement. So there is good reason to clarify your values, and seek to match your work to them.

Identify Your Work Values

Watch the following video of the US First Lady Michelle Obama speaking to an audience of students and reminds each one to take their education seriously — and never take it for granted. Listen as she references the value of education throughout this video.



A TED element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/career/?p=30

The best career choices are ones that match your values. So do you know what are your values are? Complete the following activity to review the work values that are most important to you.

Activity 3.1:Identify Your work Values

Complete the following three activities offered by CareerOneStop to review your work values:

1. Read about six core work values developed by the U.S. Department of Labor's O*NET program. Click on the ones that best describe you to see careers that highlight that value.
2. Do it yourself: download and print O*NET's work values cards (pdf). Cut your own cards and sort them into three piles, identifying whether each is "essential," "important," or "not important" for your career needs.
3. Take this online assessment to learn more about your own work values and related careers. This interactive assessment was developed by Virginia's Community Colleges.

After you have identified your top values, explore careers that would allow you to express your values from the following two online resources: (I) O*NET Online and (II) California Career Zone:

I. U.S. Department of Labor's O*NET Online:

O*NET OnLine is an application that was created for the general public to provide broad access to the O*NET database of occupational information. O*NET OnLine offers a variety of search options and occupational data. Go to O*NET OnLine to review the six core work values or global aspects of work that are important to a person's satisfaction. The 6 work values are: achievement, independence, recognition, relationships, support, and working conditions as you have read from Activity 3.1. Click on the ones that best describe you to see careers that highlight that value.

II. California Career Zone

Complete the Work Interest Profiler on CA Career Zone. Based on your results, you will discover how much you value achievement, independence, recognition, relationships, support, and working conditions. These are the same 6 work values listed above because it provides career exploration and planning, especially for students, from the wealth of information on 900 occupations from the O*Net database.

Making Decisions Based on Values

Decision making refers to making choices among alternative courses of action—which may also include inaction. Not all decisions in life have major consequences or even require a lot of thought. For example, before you come to class, you make simple and habitual decisions such as what to wear, what to eat, and which route to take as you go to and from home and school. You probably do not spend much time on these mundane decisions. However, decisions that are unique and important require conscious thinking, information gathering, and careful consideration of alternatives. In this case, making a decision about your future career is an important one that requires a thoughtful review of what you consider most important in life, your values. Increasing effectiveness in decision making is an important part of maximizing your effectiveness at work.

How do you normally make important decisions? Toss a coin? Take advice from trusted role-models? Or let fate decide for you? It is important to be self-aware, especially when it comes to making difficult and important life decisions. We will examine here the **rational decision-making model** which includes a series of steps that decision makers should consider to make the best choice.

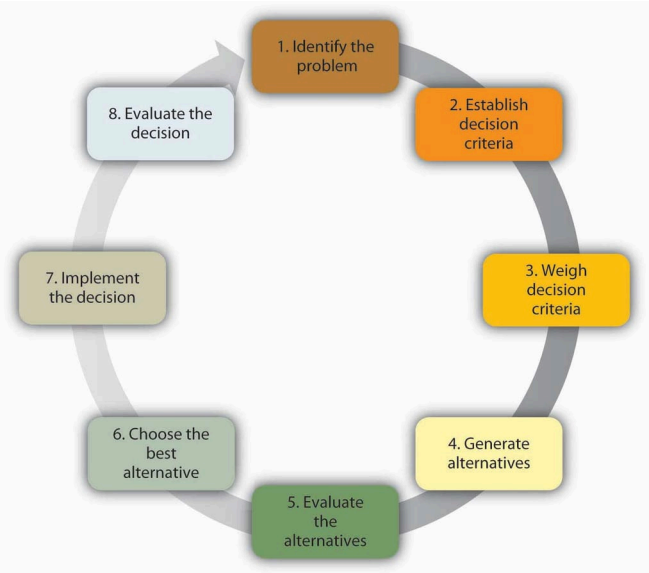
Let's imagine that your old, clunky car has broken down, and you have enough money saved for a substantial down payment on a new car. It will be the first major purchase of your life, and you want to make the right choice. The first step, therefore, has already been completed—we know that you want to buy a new car.

Next, in step 2, you'll need to decide which factors are important to you. How many passengers do you want to accommodate? How important is fuel economy to you? Is safety a major concern? You only have a certain amount of money saved, and you don't want to take on too much debt, so price range is an important factor as well. If you know you want to have room for at least five adults, get at least twenty miles per gallon, drive a car with a strong safety rating, not spend more than $22,000 on the purchase, and like how it looks, you have identified the **decision criteria** which is a set of parameters against which all of the potential options in decision making will be evaluated. All the potential options for purchasing your car will be evaluated against these criteria.

Before we can move too much further, you need to decide how important each factor is to your decision in step 3. If each is equally important, then there is no need to weigh them, but if you know that price and mpg are key factors, you might weigh them heavily and keep the other criteria with medium importance.

Step 4 requires you to generate all **alternatives** –all possible solutions to a problem in a decision-making process. Then, in step 5, you need to use this information to evaluate each alternative against the criteria you have established. You choose the best alternative (step 6), and then you would go out and buy your new car (step 7).

Of course, the outcome of this decision will influence the next decision made. That is where step 8 comes in. For example, if you purchase a car and have nothing but problems with it, you will be less likely to consider the same make and model when purchasing a car the next time.



The rational decision-making model has important lessons for decision makers.

- First, when making a decision, you may want to make sure that you establish your decision criteria before you search for alternatives. This would prevent you from liking one option too much and setting your criteria accordingly. For example, let's say you started browsing cars online before you generated your decision criteria. You may come across a car that you feel reflects your sense of style and you develop an emotional bond with the car. Then, because of your love for the particular car, you may say to yourself that the fuel economy of the car and the innovative braking system are the most important criteria. After purchasing it, you may realize that the car is too small for your friends to ride in the back seat, which was something you should have thought about. Setting criteria before you search for alternatives may prevent you from making such mistakes. Another advantage of the rational model is that it urges decision makers to generate all alternatives instead of only a few. By generating a large number of alternatives that cover a wide range of possibilities, you are unlikely to make a more effective decision that does not require sacrificing one criterion for the sake of another.
- Second, despite all its benefits, you may have noticed that this decision-making model involves a number of unrealistic assumptions as well. It assumes that people completely understand the decision to be made, that they know all their available choices, that they have no perceptual biases, and that they want to make optimal decisions.
- Additionally, while decision makers can get off track during any of these steps, research shows that searching for alternatives in the fourth step can be the most challenging. Think about how you make important decisions in your life. It is likely that you rarely sit down and complete all eight of the steps in the rational decision-making model. For example, this model proposed that we should search for all possible alternatives before making a decision, but that process is time consuming, and individuals are often under time pressure to make decisions. Moreover, even if we had access to all the information that was available, it could be challenging to compare the pros and cons of each alternative and rank them according to our preferences.

Learning from these important lessons, you can use the work values you identified from Acitivity 3.1 as your criteria in your career exploration. This will help you focus on what is most important to you so that you can choose a career that will help you feel fulfilled and satisfied. Once you decide on a career, your decision will help guide the goals you set for yourself from your college education to your future career. For help to stay on track in this journey, you can seek assistance from the information and resources you learn in this class as well as counselors and career staff at the college to guide your search. To get started in practicing your decision-making skill, you can try this next activity from California Career Café, a virtual career center for California community college students.

Activity 3.2: Thinking Caps

Try the following decision-making exercise from California Career Café:

image

Key Takeaways

Having a clear understanding of your life and career values will help make your decisions in school and work easier.

- First, identify your values, what you find most important and essential in life.
- Second, use your values to guide your decision making in your education and career options.
- Finally, practice a decision-making process that provides you the opportunity to discover all of your choices so that you can make the best decisions based on all the options you have.

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9.4: Personality, Skills, and Interests



Every artist was first an amateur. —Ralph Waldo Emerson, author

Learning Objectives

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Understand personality preferences based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI).
- Explore the qualities of personality types that you most identify with.
- Research job titles that matches your preferred work styles.
- List specific skills that will be necessary for your career path
- List transferable skills that will be valuable for any career path
- Identify your skills and interests according to Dr. John Holland's Occupational Themes
- Determine career paths that align with your occupational code
- Explain how to acquire necessary skills, both in and out of class, for your career goals

Now that you have reviewed the concepts of goal setting and identified values most important to you, the next part of the career development process will help you to reflect on personal preferences. By doing this, you will understand the work environment that you will naturally find a greater fit in. The career development process is all about *you*. You are a unique individual with a distinct combination of personality traits, skills, and interests, skills. Self knowledge can help you in your career decision-making process to discover careers that are the best match for you.

Personality Type

Taking the time to ensure that your personality is compatible with your career choice is extremely important. If you do not invest the time now to figure out what makes you happy and keeps you motivated everyday, you could be very unhappy in the future. But why is personality so important? Learning about your personality allows you to think about your emotions, behaviors, and ways of thinking on a day to day basis. For example, do you prefer to work alone or do you prefer to work with others? Would you be content in a career that requires that you are extremely organized and have a set schedule? Or are you the type of person that likes to have an open, flexible schedule that allows you to be spontaneous? This information will assist you in deciding which career(s) match with your personality preferences.

To review personality preferences, one of the most common tools used to understand personality preferences is based on the personality theory from Myers and Briggs. Businesses use the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI) to find out more about the personalities of their potential employees (very commonly used by police departments), some universities use the MBTI to learn more about the personalities of potential graduate students considering psychology, counseling, and social work fields, and it commonly used in couples therapy (to help both individuals in a relationship understand each other and their behaviors better).

Watch the following video to get an introduction of four facets that comprise the 16 possible personality types.



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Personality Theory: The 4 Facets

- Extroversion-Introversion (EI): *how you get your energy and where you prefer to focus your attention*
- Sensing-Intuition (SN): *how you take in information about the world around you*
- Thinking-Feeling (TF): *how you like to make decisions*
- Judging-Perceiving (JP): *how you prefer to organize your life*

Complete the following activity to identify your personality type based on your own self reflection. As part of the course requirement, you will also be taking the MBTI personality test through our career center. Please check the syllabus for instructions. You can complete the following quick activity to self identify your personality type. Then compare the results with the actual MBTI assessment to see how your results are similar and different.

Activity 4.1: What's Your Type?

Read descriptions for the four facets. Pick which is more like you.

- **E** (Extraversion) **or I** (Introversion)?
- **S** (Sensing) **or N?** (Intuition)?
- **T** (Thinking) **or F?** (Feeling)?
- **J** (Judging) **or P?** (Perceiving)?

Could be described as:	Could be described as:
• Talkative, outgoing • Like to be in a fast-paced environment • Tend to work out ideas with other, think aloud • Enjoy being the center of attention Then you prefer **(E) Extraversion**	• Reserved, private • Prefer a slower pace with time for contemplation • Tend to think things through inside your head • Would rather observe then be the center of attention Then you prefer **(I) Introversion**

Could be described as: • Focus on the reality of how things are • Pay attention to concrete facts and details • Prefer ideas that have practical applications • Like to describe things in a specific, literal way Then you prefer **(S) Sensing**	**Could be described as:** • Imagine the possibilities of how things could be • Notice the big picture, see how everything connects • Enjoy ideas and concepts for their own sake • Like to be describe in a way figurative, poetic Then you prefer **(N) Intuition**
Could be described as: • Make decision in an impersonal way, using logical reasoning • Value justice, fairness • Enjoy finding the flaws in an arguments • Could be described as reasonable, level-headed Then you prefer **(T) Thinking**	**Could be described as:** • Base you decision on personal values and how our acti others • Value harmony, forgiveness • Like to please others and point out the best in people • Could be described as warm empathetic Then you prefer **(F) Feeling**
Could be described as: • Prefer to have matters settled • Think rules and deadlines should be respected • Prefer to have a detailed step-by-step instructions • Make plans, want to know what you're getting into Then you prefer **(J) Judging**	**Could be described as:** • Prefer to leave your options open • See rules and deadlines as flexible • Like to improvise and make things up as you go • Are spontaneous, enjoy surprise and new situations Then you prefer **(P)Perceiving**

What is your 4-letter personality type? __ __ __ __

The following are brief descriptions of the 16 personality types from Humanmetrics. Click on your personality type or a similar type to see which describes you best.

The 16 personality types

ESTJ	ISTJ	ENTJ	INTJ
ESTP	ISTP	ENTP	INTP
ESFJ	ISFJ	ENFJ	INFJ
ESFP	ISFP	ENFP	INFP

Work Styles

O*NET OnLine provides an online tool that helps you to review your personal characteristics and how they can affect how well one performs a job. This tool is available via the Work Styles search function on O*NET OnLine. You can browse O*Net data by clicking on the quality that you think best represents you including achievement, innovation, and leadership to explore the different jobs that will require the specific characteristic.

Skills

In addition to personality, skills are also important to consider in the career development process. If you lived and worked in colonial times in the United States, what skills would you need to be gainfully employed? What kind of person would your employer want you to be? And how different would your skills and aptitudes be then, compared to today?

Many industries that developed during the 1600s–1700s, such as health care, publishing, manufacturing, construction, finance, and farming, are still with us today. And the professional abilities, aptitudes, and values required in those industries are many of the same ones employers seek today.

For example, in the health care field then, just like today, employers looked for professionals with scientific insight, active listening skills, a service orientation, oral comprehension abilities, and teamwork skills. And in the financial field then, just like today, employers looked for economics and accounting skills, mathematical reasoning skills, clerical and administrative skills, and deductive reasoning.

Why is it that with the passage of time and all the changes in the work world, some skills remain unchanged (or little changed)? The answer might lie in the fact there are are two main types of skills that employers look for: hard skills and soft skills.

Hard Skills & Soft Skills

- **Hard skills** are concrete or objective abilities that you learn and perhaps have mastered. They are skills you can easily quantify, like using a computer, speaking a foreign language, or operating a machine. You might earn a certificate, a college degree, or other credentials that attest to your hard-skill competencies. Obviously, because of changes in technology, the hard skills required by industries today are vastly different from those required centuries ago.
- **Soft skills**, on the other hand, are subjective skills that have changed very little over time. Such skills might pertain to the way you relate to people, or the way you think, or the ways in which you behave—for example, listening attentively, working well in groups, and speaking clearly. Soft skills are sometimes also called **"transferable skills"** because you can easily transfer them from job to job or profession to profession without much training.

What Employers Want in an Employee

Employers want individuals who have the necessary hard and soft skills to do the job well and adapt to changes in the workplace. Soft skills may be especially in demand today because employers are generally equipped to train new employees in a hard skill—by training them to use new computer software, for instance—but it's much more difficult to teach an employee a soft skill such as developing rapport with coworkers or knowing how to manage conflict. An employer might rather hire an inexperienced worker who can pay close attention to details than an experienced worker who might cause problems on a work team.

In this section, you will look at ways of identifying and building particular hard and soft skills that will be necessary for your career path. You will also learn how to use your time and resources wisely to acquire critical skills for your career goals.

Transferable Skills for Any Career Path

Transferable (soft) skills may be used in multiple professions. They include, but are by no means limited to, skills listed below:

- Dependable and punctual (showing up on time, ready to work, not being a liability)
- Self-motivated
- Enthusiastic
- Committed
- Willing to learn (lifelong learner)
- Able to accept constructive criticism
- A good problem solver
- Strong in customer service skills
- Adaptable (willing to change and take on new challenges)
- A team player
- Positive attitude

- Strong communication skills
- Good in essential work skills (following instructions, possessing critical thinking skills, knowing limits)
- Ethical
- Safety conscious
- Honest
- Strong in time management

For more extensive exploration, visit this checklist of transferable skills from Community Employment Services in Woodstock, Ontario.

These skills are transferable because they are positive attributes that are invaluable in practically any kind of work. They also do not require much training from an employer—you have them already and take them with you wherever you go. Soft skills are a big part of your "total me" package.

So, identify the soft skills that show you off the best, and identify the ones that prospective employers are looking for. By comparing both sets, you can more directly gear your job search to your strongest professional qualities.

ACTIVITY 4.2: IDENTIFYING YOUR SKILLS

Objective:

- To self identify your Top 5 transferable (soft) skills, skills you are good at, and those skills you wish to learn or develop further.

Instructions:

1. Review the list of transferable skills list and additional checklist of transferable skills above to complete the chart below.

	Top 5 Skills I Enjoy Using	Top 5 Skills That Come Naturally	Top 5 Skills I Want to Learn
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

10 Top Skills You Need to Get a Job When You Graduate

The following video summarizes the ten top skills that the Target corporation believes will get you a job when you graduate. You can read a transcript of the video here.



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Assessing Your Skills and Interests

In this section you will continue to assess your skills and your interests in more depth. Most career assessment tests created to measure skills and interests are based on the career theory developed by Dr. John Holland.

The following video provides you with an introduction to the world of work and Holland's Occupational Themes:



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As mentioned in the video, Holland defined six categories of people based on personality, interests, and skills:

1. **Realistic:** These people describe themselves as honest, loyal, and practical. They are doers more than thinkers. They have strong mechanical, motor, and athletic abilities; like the outdoors; and prefer working with machines, tools, plants, and animals.

2. **Investigative:** These people love problem solving and analytical skills. They are intellectually stimulated and often mathematically or scientifically inclined; like to observe, learn, and evaluate; prefer working alone; and are reserved.
3. **Artistic:** These people are the "free spirits." They are creative, emotional, intuitive, and idealistic; have a flair for communicating ideas; dislike structure and prefer working independently; and like to sing, write, act, paint, and think creatively. They are similar to the investigative type but are interested in the artistic and aesthetic aspects of things more than the scientific.
4. **Social:** These are "people" people. They are friendly and outgoing; love to help others, make a difference, or both; have strong verbal and personal skills and teaching abilities; and are less likely to engage in intellectual or physical activity.
5. **Enterprising:** These people are confident, assertive risk takers. They are sociable; enjoy speaking and leadership; like to persuade rather than guide; like to use their influence; have strong interpersonal skills; and are status conscious.
6. **Conventional:** These people are dependable, detail oriented, disciplined, precise, persistent, and practical; value order; and are good at clerical and numerical tasks. They work well with people and data, so they are good organizers, schedulers, and project managers.

ACTIVITY 4.3: What's Your Occupational Type?

Objective:

- To determine your occupational types and code

Instructions:

1. Using the descriptions above, choose the three types that most closely describe you and list them in order in the following table. Most people are combinations of two or sometimes three types.
2. Then list the specific words or attributes that you feel describe you best.
3. After determining your primary, secondary, and tertiary occupational types, take the first initial for each type, in order, to establish your occupational code.

Occupational Type	Words and Attributes That Closely Describe Me
Primary type (the one I identify with *most closely*)	
Secondary type	
Tertiary type	

Note: Your occupational code is made up of the initials of the three personality types you selected, in order.

My occupational code: ___ ___ ___

(For example: if Social, Enterprising, and Conventional are your top three occupational types, your occupational code would be: SEC)



Exploring Careers and Your Occupational Type

Now that you have determined your top three occupational types, you can begin to explore the types of careers that may be best suited for you. Holland studied people who were successful and happy in many occupations and matched their occupations to their occupational type, creating a description of the types of occupations that are best suited to each personality type. Just as many individuals are more than one personality type, many jobs show a strong correlation to more than one occupational type.

This is a rough beginning to finding your occupational type, but you will soon be seeking out more detailed results from the Strong Interest Inventory assessment as a part of this course.

Use the top thee occupation types you defined in Exercise 4.2 “What’s Your Occupational Type?” to help identify careers you may want to consider from the table below.

Table 4.1 Occupational Options by Type

Ideal Environments	Sample Occupations	
Realistic	• Structured • Clear lines of authority • Work with **things** and **tools** • Casual dress • Focus on tangible results or well-thought-out goals	• Contractor • Emergency medical technician (EMT) • Mechanic • Military career • Packaging engineer
Investigative	• Nonstructured • Research oriented • Intellectual • Work with **ideas** and **data**	• Pharmacist • Lab technician • Nanotechnologist • Geologist • College professor
Artistic	• Nonstructured • Creative • Rewards unconventional and aesthetic approaches • Creation of products and **ideas**	• Advertising career • Architect • Animator • Musician • Journalist

Ideal Environments	Sample Occupations	
Social	• Collaborative • Collegial • Work with **people** and on people-related problems/ issues • Work as a team or community	• Teacher • Geriatric counselor • Correctional officer • Coach • Nurse
Enterprising	• Typical business environment • Results oriented • Driven • Work with **people** and **data** • Entrepreneurial • Power focused	• Sales manager • Banker • Lawyer • Business owner • Restaurant manager
Conventional	• Orderly • Clear rules and policies • Consistent **processes** • Work with systems to manipulate and organize **data** • Control and handling of money	• Auditor • Insurance underwriter • Bank teller • Office manager • Database manager

You can also check out Gottfredson and Holland's *Dictionary of Holland Occupational Codes* in the reference section of your library or use the Department of Labor's O*Net (http://online.onetcenter.org/find) to get a deeper understanding of your occupation. For each occupation, O*Net lists the type of work, the work environment, the skills and education required, and the job outlook for that occupation. This is a truly rich resource that you should get to know.

Identify Which Factors Might Affect Your Choice

You may now have a list of careers you want to explore. But there are other factors you will need to take into consideration as well. It is important to use your creative thinking skills to come up with alternative "right" answers to factors that may present an obstacle to pursuing the right career.

- **Timing.** How much time must I invest before I actually start making money in this career? Will I need to spend additional time in school? Is there a certification process that requires a specific amount of experience? If so, can I afford to wait?
- **Finances.** Will this career provide me with the kind of income I need in the short term and the security I'll want in the longer term? What investment will I need to make to be successful in this field (education, tools, franchise fees, etc.)?
- **Location.** Does this career require me to relocate? Is the ideal location for this career somewhere I would like to live? Is it somewhere my family would like to live?
- **Family/personal.** How will this career affect my personal and family life? Do friends and family members who know me well feel strongly (for or against) about this career choice? How important is their input?

Your Next Steps

It may seem odd to be thinking about life after school, especially if you are just getting started. But you will soon be making decisions about your future, and regardless of the direction you may choose, there is a lot you can do while still in college.



You will need to focus your studies by choosing a major. You should find opportunities to explore the careers that interest you. You can ensure that you are building the right kind of experience on which to base a successful career. These steps will make your dreams come to life and make them achievable.

Start by developing a relationship with a counselor in the Counseling/Transfer Centers in the S Building, SAC Career/CTE Center staff, or an Undecided Majors Counselor in L-222. Another great resource is SAC's Undecided Majors website http://sac.edu/undecided. It provides several helpful career exploration links.

All too often students engage these counselors only near the end of their college days, when the pressure is just on getting a job—any job—after having completed a degree. But these counselors can be of great help in matching your interests to a career and in ensuring you are gathering the right kind of experience to put you at the top of the recruiting heap.

Keep in mind that deciding on and pursuing a career is an ongoing process. The more you learn about yourself and the career options that best suit you, the more you will need to fine-tune your career plan. Don't be afraid to consider new ideas, but don't make changes without careful consideration. Career planning is exciting: learning about yourself and about career opportunities, and considering the factors that can affect your decision, should be a core part of your thoughts while in college.

Learn Specific Skills Necessary for Your Career Path

The table below lists four resources to help you determine which concrete skills are needed for all kinds of professions. You can even discover where you might gain some of the skills and which courses you might take.

Spend some time reviewing each resource. You will find many interesting and exciting options. When you're finished, you may decide that there are so many interesting professions in the world that it's difficult to choose just one. This is a good problem to have!

Table 4.2 Online Skills Identification Resources

	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION
1	Career Aptitude Test (Rasmussen College)	This test helps you match your skills to a particular career that's right for you. Use a sliding scale to indicate your level of skill in the following skill areas: artistic, interpersonal, communication, managerial, mathematics, mechanical, and science. Press the Update Results button and receive a customized list customized of career suggestions tailored to you, based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. You can filter by salary, expected growth, and education.

	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION
2	Skills Profiler (Career OneStop from the U.S. Department of Labor)	Use the Skills Profiler to create a list of your skills, and match your skills to job types that use those skills. Plan to spend about 20 minutes completing your profile. You can start with a job type to find skills you need for a current or future job. Or if you are not sure what kind of job is right for you, start by rating your own skills to find a job type match. When your skills profile is complete, you can print it or save it.
3	O*Net OnLine	This U.S. government website helps job seekers answer two of their toughest questions: "What jobs can I get with my skills and training?" and "What skills and training do I need to get this job?" Browse groups of similar occupations to explore careers. Choose from industry, field of work, science area, and more. Focus on occupations that use a specific tool or software. Explore occupations that need your skills. Connect to a wealth of O*NET data. Enter a code or title from another classification to find the related O*NET-SOC occupation.
4	Suggested Courses to Develop Skills that Prospective Employers Want (Psych Web)	If you are trying to strengthen particular skills, certain courses may be helpful. The list at this site is based on courses offered on many campuses and some of the skills the courses emphasize.

Acquiring Necessary Skills (both in and out of class) for Your Career Goals

"Lifelong learning" is a buzz phrase in the twentieth-first century because we are inundated with new technology and information all the time, and those who know *how to learn*, continuously, are in the best position to keep up and take advantage of these changes. Think of all the information resources around you: colleges and universities, libraries, the Internet, videos, games, books, films—the list goes on.

With these resources at your disposal, how can you best position yourself for lifelong learning and a strong, viable career? Which hard and soft skills are most important? What are employers really looking for?

The following list was inspired by the remarks of Mark Atwood, director of open-source engagement at Hewlett-Packard Enterprise. It contains excellent practical advice.

- Learn how to write clearly. After you've written something, have people edit it. Then rewrite it, taking into account the feedback you received. Write all the time.
- Learn how to speak. Speak clearly on the phone and at a table. For public speaking, try Toastmasters. "Meet and speak. Speak and write."
- Be reachable. Publish your email so that people can contact you. Don't worry about spam.
- Learn about computers and computing, even if you aren't gearing for a career in information technology. Learn something entirely new every six to twelve months.
- Build relationships within your community. Use tools like Meetup.com and search for clubs at local schools, libraries, and centers. Then, seek out remote people around the country and world. Learn about them and their projects first by searching the Internet.
- Attend conferences and events. This is a great way to network with people and meet them face-to-face.
- Find a project and get involved. Start reading questions and answers, then start answering questions.
- Collaborate with people all over the world.
- Keep your LinkedIn profile and social media profiles up-to-date. Be findable.
- Keep learning. Skills will often beat smarts. Be sure to schedule time for learning and having fun!

Just Get Involved

After you've networked with enough people and built up your reputation, your peers can connect you with job openings that may

be a good fit for your skills. The video, below, from Monash University in Australia offers the following tips:

1. Get involved in part-time work
2. Get involved in extracurricular activities
3. Get involved with employment and career development

“Just Get involved. There are so many opportunities and open doors for you.”



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/career/?p=32

Key Takeaways

- The right career for you depends on your interests, your personality, and your skills.
- Learning about your personality helps you to think about your emotions, behaviors, and ways of thinking on a day to day basis. An awareness of these things will help you to find a career that compliments your personality.
- Employers look for both hard and soft (transferable) skills in future employees; however transferable skills may be in more demand because they help people adapt to a variety of different jobs and professions without much training.
- Defining your occupational type may confirm career choices you have already made and open entirely new options for you.
- Connect with a college counselor early in your career development process to help you match your skills, personality and interests with potential jobs and eventually a career that best suits you.
- Career planning is an ongoing process involving knowing yourself, knowing about career options, and understanding the context in which your decisions will be made.

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10: EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS

10.1: Your Career Profile

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10.1: Your Career Profile

Learning Objectives

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Identify your motivations for attending college as it relates to your future career goals
- Review your individual career profile
- Explore activities to gain knowledge and experience about your future career

College & Career: What It *Really* Means for You

College isn't just about checking off classes—it's your chance to figure out who you are, what you care about, and what kind of future you want to create. And being "college and career ready" is way more than choosing a major.

Today, success is about learning how to **think**, not just memorize. It's being able to break down problems, ask the right questions, share your ideas confidently, and work with people who see the world differently than you do. These are the skills that help you stand out—whether you want to transfer, jump into a career, or explore something totally new.

Across California—tech, healthcare, education, community organizations, agriculture, the trades, digital media, even AI—employers want students who can stay curious, adapt fast, and collaborate like pros.

When you build these skills now, you're not just getting through school—you're preparing yourself for internships, interviews, real-world experiences, and the kind of career that actually excites you. No matter what direction you're heading, you're already leveling up for a future you'll be proud of.



> Stay focused, go after your dreams, and keep moving toward your goals. —L L Cool J, musician

What Does It Mean to Be Ready for College *and* a Career?

Being "college and career ready" goes beyond finishing high school or choosing a major. It means you've built the knowledge, skills, and professional habits you need to take your next big step—whether that's completing a degree, going through career training, or jumping straight into the workforce.

If you're entering a college program—whether you're aiming for a skilled trade certificate or a bachelor's degree—being college-

ready means you can read, write, think, solve problems, and use math at the level your program expects. These are the tools that help you not only get in, but *thrive* once you're there.

Being career-ready is similar but focuses more on the technical and professional skills that prepare you for a real job in your field. For example, a community college student preparing to become a nurse has learned essential concepts, passed their required courses, and earned the proper license—making them ready for an entry-level role.

Finding Your Path Isn't Always a Straight Line

For many students, choosing a major or career path takes time—and that's completely normal. I used to think I would become a kindergarten teacher, but once I got to college, everything changed. I switched my major three different times, influenced by family, friends, and whatever career seemed secure at the moment. Eventually, I realized I was building my education around other people's expectations instead of my own interests.

My turning point came when a mentor encouraged me to take a career exploration class. I learned more about myself in that one course than in the previous three years of college. It helped me connect the dots between my strengths, values, and long-term goals. That experience opened my eyes to a field I had never seriously considered but had always been drawn to: Higher Education Administration. It was the moment everything finally made sense.

—Adapted from Jamie Edwards, *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*

The Marriage of College and Career

Harvard University, founded in 1636, is often called the oldest college in the United States. Its early purpose was to teach arts and sciences so students could qualify for jobs in both church and government. But is preparing students for "public employment" still the main goal of college today? It's part of the picture, but college is also about personal and intellectual growth.

A 2011 Pew Research Center survey showed how Americans see the purpose of college:

- 47% said college is mainly to teach work-related skills.
- 39% said it's to help students grow personally and intellectually.
- 12% said college should do both.

With more than 5,300 colleges and universities in the U.S., offering a wide variety of programs, it makes sense that people see college differently.

Employers also weigh in on what matters. A 2014 survey by Hart Research Associates found that employers value both field-specific knowledge and broader skills for career success. The skills they look for most include:

- Strong written and oral communication
- Teamwork
- Ethical decision-making
- Critical thinking
- Applying knowledge in real-world situations

In short, college isn't just about learning your major—it's about gaining skills that prepare you for both work and life.

Employment Rates and Salaries

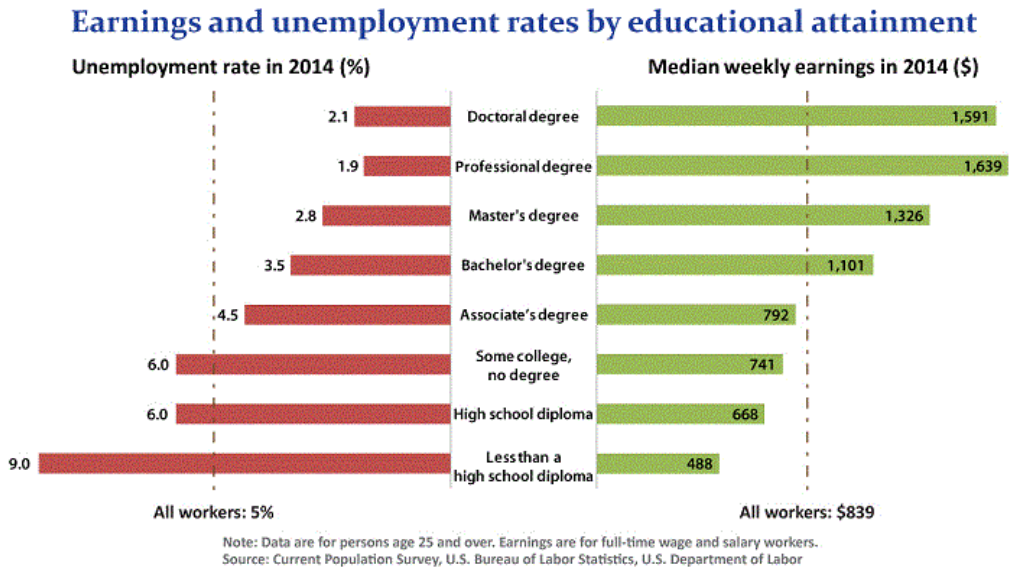
Consider, too, the following statistics on employment rates and salaries for college graduates. College does make a big difference!

- The average college graduate earns about 75 percent more than a non-college graduate over a typical, forty-year working

lifetime. (U.S. Census Bureau)[2]

- In 2014, young adults ages 20 to 24 with a bachelor's degree or higher had a higher employment rate (88.1 percent) than young adults with just some college (75.0 percent). (NCES)
- The employment rate for young adults with just some college (63.7 percent) was higher than the rate for those who had completed high school. (NCES)
- The employment rate for those who completed high school (46.6 percent) was higher than the employment rate for young adults who had not finished high school. (NCES)
- Employment rates were generally higher for males than females at each level of educational attainment in 2014. (NCES)[3]
- Over the course of a forty-year working life, the typical college graduate earns an estimated $550,000 more than the typical high school graduate. (PEW)
- The median gap in annual earnings between a high school and college graduate as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2010 is $19,550. (PEW)[4]

Perhaps most important, an overwhelming majority of college graduates—86 percent—say that college has been a good investment for them personally. (PEW)



Differences in Earnings between States

You may wish to use this Earnings and Educational Attainment (2011) interactive table to see how earnings for college graduates vs. high school–only graduates in your state compare with those in other states.

All in all, college imparts a wide and deep range of benefits. The short video *Why College*, below, shows that with a college degree you are more likely to

- Have a higher salary
- Have and keep a job
- Get a pension plan
- Be satisfied with your job
- Feel your job is important
- Have health insurance

YouTube Video

This interactive element is not available in this format. Visit the link or scan the QR code to access it online.

View this YouTube Video online

Vidro: There are many benefits to getting a college degree - here are just a few. https://youtu.be/-N6nru0nThg

Success in College

Success in college can be measured in many ways: through your own sense of what is important to you; through your family's sense of what is important to your collective group; through your institution's standards of excellence; through the standards established by your state and country; through your employer's perceptions about what is needed in the workplace; and in many respects through your own unfolding goals, dreams, and ambitions.

How are you striving to achieve your goals? And how will you measure your success along the way?

Career Profile

As you make a commitment to your college career, let's review your career profile, *a self-assessment of your goals, values, personality, skills and interests* in order to start researching specific careers and explore activities to give you more hands-on experience.

Activity 5.1: Your Career Profile

Goals

1. Reflecting on your career exploration, identify one long-term career goal.
2. Then, identify 2-3 short-term goals for this semester to achieve your long-term goal from #1.

Values

1. From Chapter 3, what are your top 3-5 work values?
2. Name 2 career titles that you are most interested in that will allow you to express your values.

Interests

1. From Chapter 4 and your SII inventory results, what are your top interests (Holland Code)?
2. Name 2 career titles that you are most interested in that will allow you to express your interests.

Personality

1. From Chapter 4 and your MBTI results, what is your 4-letter personality type?
2. Name 2 career titles that you are most interested in that will be best fit with your personality type.

Skills

1. From Chapter 4, what are your 5 skills?
2. Name 2 career titles that you are most interested in that will allow you to utilize your skills.

Research activity:

- Of all the career titles you have explored, which career would you be interested in researching more in-depth?

Below is the second part of Jamie Edwards's essay (former student at State University of New York). Her advice is to make connections between the "now" of college experience and future career possibilities. She thinks that the more informed you are about your career options through real-life conversations and experiences, the better prepared you will be for your future—and the more confident you will be in your career decisions.

From where I sit now—my former personal and professional struggles in tow—I offer up some pieces of advice that were crucial to getting me where I am today. Whether you're an undecided major who is looking for guidance or a student with a clearly defined career path, I suggest the following:

1. Find a mentor—For me, everything began there. Without my mentor, I wouldn't have done any of the other items I'm about to suggest. Finding the right mentor is crucial. Look for someone who can complement your personality (typically someone who's the opposite of you). My advice would be to look beyond your direct supervisor for mentorship. It's important to create an open forum with your mentor, because there may be a conflict of interest as you discuss work issues and other job opportunities. Potential mentors to consider are an instructor on campus, your academic advisor, a professional currently working in your prospective field, someone you admire in your community, or anyone in your network of friends or family that you feel comfortable discussing your future goals with.

2. Enroll in a Career Exploration/Planning course, or something similar—Even if you do not see the effects of this course immediately (such as dramatically changing your major), you will notice the impact down the road. Making educated career choices and learning job readiness skills will always pay off in the end. Through my career exploration class, I learned how to relate my personality and values to potential career fields. These self-assessments changed my entire thought process, and I see that influence daily. Beyond changing the way you think, the knowledge you gain about effective job search strategies is invaluable. Learning how to write purposeful résumés and cover letters, finding the right approach to the interview process, and recognizing your strengths and weaknesses are just a few of the benefits you can gain from these type of courses.

3. Complete a Job Shadow and/or Informational Interview—No amount of online research is going to give you the same experience as seeing a job at the front line. In a job shadow or an informational interview, you're able to explore options with no commitment and see how your in-class experience can carry over to a real world setting. Additionally, you're expanding your professional network by having that personal involvement. You never know how the connections you make might benefit you in the future. My only regret about job shadowing in college is that I didn't do it sooner.

4. Do an Internship—A main source of frustration for recent grads is the inability to secure an entry-level position without experience. "How do I get a job to gain experience when I can't get a job without experience?" This is how: do an internship or two! Most colleges even have a course where you can obtain credit for doing it! Not only will you earn credits towards graduation, but you'll gain the necessary experience to put on your résumé and discuss in future interviews. Having completed four internships throughout my college career, I can't say they were all great. However, I don't regret a single one. The first one showed me the type of field I didn't want to work in. The second confirmed that I was heading in the right direction with my career. My third and fourth internships introduced me to completely different areas of higher education which broadened my knowledge and narrowed my search simultaneously.

My takeaway is that sometimes you have to learn what you don't want in order to find out what you do want. The more informed you are about career options through real-life conversations and experiences, the better prepared you will be for your future and the more confident you will be in your career decisions. Always explore your options because even if you learn you hate it, at least you're one step close to finding what you love.

—Jamie Edwards, *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*

Activity 5.2: Informational Interview

As recommended in Part 2, #3 above, try the following activity from a virtual career center for CA community college students:



Activity 5.3: resources for career research

After you have identified career titles you are most interested and have conducted informational interviews, check out the following resources to help research careers more in-depth:

- California Labor Market Information
  - The Labor Market Information Division (LMID) is the official source for California Labor Market Information. The LMID promotes California's economic health by providing information to help people understand California's economy and make informed labor market choices. We collect, analyze, and publish statistical data and reports on California's labor force, industries, occupations, employment projections, wages and other important labor market and economic data.
- Occupational Outlook Handbook from US Department of Labor
  - The OOH can help you find career information on duties, education and training, pay, and outlook for hundreds of occupations.
- Additionally, for in-person help, go to the college's career center to get more help with your search

Key Takeaways

Labor research indicates that as educational attainment increases in individuals the unemployment rate decreases.

A college degree affects other personal factors you may have not considered such as retirement plan, health care insurance, and higher lifetime salary.

Selecting the right career involves thorough research such as, informational interviews, online research, and utilizing the Career Center located in your college.

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11: CREATING YOUR CAREER GAME PLAN

11.1: College Majors

11.2: Networking

11.3: Résumés and Cover Letters

11.4: Interviewing

11.5: What's Next?

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11.1: College Majors



11.1: Choosing Your College Major

> *"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose."*
> —Dr. Seuss

Learning Objectives

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Identify helpful strategies for choosing a major
- Understand how majors connect to (and sometimes don't connect to) career paths
- Explore resources that help you learn more about majors and related careers

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What Is a Major—and Why Does It Matter?

In the U.S. and Canada, your **major** is simply the main area you choose to study in college. Think of it as the *focus* of your degree. Examples include psychology, agriculture, business, digital arts, nursing, cybersecurity, AI & machine learning, automotive tech, or ethnic studies.

Most colleges offer **hundreds of majors**, each with required courses and electives. When you complete the major requirements, you earn your degree.

But here's the part many students don't hear:

👉 **Your major does *not* have to determine the rest of your life.**
👉 **And most students change their major at least once.**

Choosing a major is not about locking yourself in—it's about choosing a direction to grow from.

How to Choose Your Major

Selecting your major can feel exciting *and* overwhelming—especially if you're the first in your family to go to college. The good news? You do **not** need to have everything figured out.

Here are **student-friendly, realistic steps** to help you decide:

1. Notice What You're Actually Good At

Pay attention to classes, hobbies, or topics you naturally enjoy.
• Are you the friend everyone goes to for advice? → Psychology, counseling, social work

• Are you great with tech, apps, or AI tools? → Computer science, data analytics, cybersecurity
• Do you love hands-on work? → Agriculture mechanics, welding, automotive tech, construction management

2. Explore Everything

Use your general education courses to discover interests.
You might fall in love with a class you never expected.

3. Try Career Assessments

Most California community colleges offer free assessments that look at:


Personality

- Interests
- Values
- Strengths

These can help you see which majors match your natural preferences.

4. Talk to Real People

Ask instructors, counselors, or professionals working in fields you're curious about:

- "What do you enjoy about your job?"
- "What skills should students learn now?"
- "What major would you recommend?"

5. Use Campus Resources

- Career Center
- Major exploration workshops
- Academic counselors
- Transfer Center
- Student clubs
- Internships or volunteer experiences

6. Remember: Most Students Change Majors

About **60–70% of students** will switch majors at least once during college.
You're not behind—you're exploring.

Does Your Major Really Matter for Your Career?

Short answer: **Yes... and also no.**

When your major *does* matter:

- Nursing
- Engineering
- Teaching credentials
- Computer science / cybersecurity
- Accounting
- Allied health programs

These fields require specific training or certifications.

When your major matters *less*:

Most fields outside of the ones above—including:

- Business
- Communications
- Psychology
- Liberal arts
- Sociology
- Digital media
- AI support roles
- Marketing, social media, content creation

Many employers care more about **skills, experience, internships, and your ability to learn quickly** than the exact major on your diploma.

The reality for many graduates:

- Half of graduates take jobs *not related* to their major.
- Within 10 years, many work in completely different fields.
- Most careers today reward **transferable skills** like communication, writing, teamwork, tech literacy, and problem-solving.

Financial Realities

- On average, college graduates earn **$1 million more** over their lifetime than high school graduates.
- STEM majors often lead to higher immediate salaries.
- But humanities/social science majors often catch up by mid-career—especially if they go on for advanced degrees.

Bottom line:
Choose a major you enjoy and a career path that fits your strengths, values, and goals.

A Real Student Story: “What I Thought I Wanted... Changed.”

Many students begin college sure of their major—and change once they discover new interests.

A former student, shares:

- She started as an International Business major but realized she didn’t enjoy the required classes.
- She switched to Communication after talking to people in jobs she admired.
- Her advice: *Don’t panic if you’re unsure. Explore, ask questions, try things out.*
- Internships, talking with professionals, and visiting the Career Center helped her find her path.

You don’t need to get it perfect on the first try.

Resources to Help You Decide

Your success isn’t about luck—it’s about using the tools around you.
Here are some great resources (on campus and online):

On Campus

- Career Center
- Academic Counselors
- Undeclared-Major Workshops
- Faculty mentors
- Learning communities & student clubs
- Transfer Center

Off Campus & Online Tools

Website/Resource	What It Helps With
MyMajors.com	Explore 1,800+ majors and related careers
O*NET Online	Learn about careers, salaries, and skills needed
BigFuture (College Board)	Explore majors, careers, and your interests
California Career Zone	Personality assessments + career exploration
LinkedIn Career Explorer	See real job paths from real people

Key Takeaways

- Your **major** is your main area of study in college.
- Choosing a major takes **exploration**, not perfection.
- Your **personality, interests, values, and skills** matter more than pressure from others.
- Your major does **not** lock you into one career for life.
- Use campus resources—they exist for YOU.
- The best major is one that **fits who you are** and helps you build skills for the future you want.

Every student who pursues a college degree and a subsequent career may tell a different story about the impact of their major on their professional directions. In the following excerpt from *Foundations of College Success: Words of Wisdom*, writer and former SUNY student Kristen Mruk reflects on the choices she made and how they turned out.

The Student Experience

What I Would Like To Do

I thought I knew exactly what I wanted to do when I started college, but that changed three times by the time I graduated. Initially I started as an International Business major but ended up receiving a degree in Communication and continued on to graduate school. My greatest advice to you is to embrace feelings of uncertainty (if you have them) with regard to your academic, career, or life goals. Stop into the Career Services office on your campus to identify what it is that you really want to do when you graduate or to confirm your affinity to a career path. Make an appointment to see a counselor if you need to vent or get a new perspective. Do an internship in your field; this can give you a first-hand impression of what your life might look like in that role.

When I chose International Business, I did not do so as an informed student. I enjoyed and excelled in my business courses in high school and I had hopes of traveling the world, so International Business seemed to fit the bill. Little did I know, the major required a lot of accounting and economics which, as it turned out, were not my forte. Thinking this is what I wanted, I wasted time pursuing a major I didn't enjoy and academic courses I struggled through.

So I took a different approach. I began speaking to the professionals around me that had jobs that appealed to me: Student Unions/Activities, Leadership, Orientation, Alumni, etc. I found out I could have a similar career, and I would enjoy the required studies along the way. Making that discovery provided direction and purpose in my major and extracurricular activities. I felt like everything was falling into place.

What I Actually Do

I would like to . . . ask you to consider why you are in college. Why did you choose your institution? Have you declared a major yet? Why or why not? What are your plans post-graduation? By frequently reflecting in this way, you can assess whether or not your behaviors, affiliations, and activities align with your goals.

What you actually do with your student experience is completely up to you. You are the only person who can dictate your collegiate fate. Remind yourself of the reasons why you are in college and make sure your time is spent on achieving your goals. There are resources and people on your campus available to help you. You have the control—use it wisely.

—Kristen Mruk, *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*

Resources

Success doesn't come to you . . . you go to it. —Dr. Marva Collins, civil rights activist and educator

This quote really sets the stage for the journey you're on. Your journey may be a straight line that connects the dots between today and your future, or it may resemble a twisted road with curves, bumps, hurdles, and alternate routes.

To help you navigate your pathway to career success, take advantage of all the resources available to you. Your college, your community, and the wider body of higher-education institutions and organizations have many tools to help you with career development. Be sure to take advantage of the following resources:

- **College course catalog**: Course catalogs are typically rich with information that can spark ideas and inspiration for your major and your career.
- **Faculty and academic advisers at your college**: Many college professors are also practitioners in their fields, and can share insights with you about related professions.
- **Fellow students and graduating seniors**: Many of your classmates, especially those who share your major, may have had experiences that can inform and enlighten you—for instance, an internship with an employer or a job interview with someone who could be contacted for more information.
- **Students who have graduated**: Most colleges and universities have active alumni programs with networking resources that can help you make important decisions.
- **Your family and social communities**: Contact friends and family members who can weigh in with their thoughts and experience.
- **A career center**: Professionals in career centers have a wealth of information to share with you—they're also very good at listening and can act as a sounding board for you to try out your ideas.

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11.2: Networking



Communication—the human connection—is the key to personal and career success. —Paul J. Meyer, motivational speaker

Learning Objectives

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Define network and identify strategies for networking
- Identify sources for developing professional networks

In the context of career development, networking is the process by which people build relationships with one another for the purpose of helping one another achieve professional goals.

When you “network,” you exchange information.

- You may share business cards, résumés, cover letters, job-seeking strategies, leads about open jobs, information about companies and organizations, and information about a specific field.
- You might also share information about meet-up groups, conferences, special events, technology tools, and social media.
- You might also solicit job “headhunters,” career counselors, career centers, career coaches, an alumni association, family members, friends, acquaintances, and vendors.

Networking can occur anywhere and at any time. In fact, your network expands with each new relationship you establish. And the networking strategies you can employ are nearly limitless. With imagination and ingenuity, your networking can be highly successful.



Strategies for Networking

We live in a social world. Almost everywhere you go and anything you do professionally involves connecting with people. It stands to reason that finding a new job and advancing your career entails building relationships with these people. Truly, the most effective way to find a new job is to network, network, and network some more.

Once you acknowledge the value of networking, the challenge is figuring out how to do it. What is your first step? Whom do you contact? What do you say? How long will it take? Where do you concentrate efforts? How do you know if your investments will pay off?

For every question you may ask, a range of strategies can be used. Begin exploring your possibilities by viewing the following energizing video, *Networking Tips for College Students and Young People*, by Hank Blank. He recommends the following modern and no-nonsense strategies:

1. Hope is not a plan. You need a plan of action to achieve your networking goals.
2. Keenly focus your activities on getting a job. Use all tools available to you.
3. Register your own domain name. Find your favorite geek to build you a landing page. Keep building your site for the rest of your life.
4. Attend networking events. Most of them offer student rates.
5. Master Linkedin because that is what human resource departments use. Post updates.
6. Think of your parents' friends as databases. Leverage their knowledge and their willingness to help you.
7. Create the world you want to live in in the future by creating it today through your networking activity. These are the times to live in a world of "this is how I can help."

See the LinkedIn for Students Web site.

. . . And More Strategies

Strategies at College

- **Get to know your professors**: Communicating with instructors is a valuable way to learn about a career and also get letters of reference if and when needed for a job. Professors can also give you leads on job openings, internships, and research possibilities. Most instructors will readily share information and insights with you. Get to know your instructors. They are a valuable part of your network.
- **Check with your college's alumni office**: You may find that some alumni are affiliated with your field of interest and can give you the "inside scoop."

- **Check with classmates**: Classmates may or may not share your major, but any of them may have leads that could help you. You could be just one conversation away from a good lead.

Strategies at Work

- **Join professional organizations**: You can meet many influential people at local and national meetings and events of professional and volunteer organizations. Learn about these organizations. See if they have membership discounts for students, or student chapters. Once you are a member, you may have access to membership lists, which can give you prospective access to many new people to network with.
- **Volunteer**: Volunteering is an excellent way to meet new people who can help you develop your career, even if the organization you are volunteering with is not in your field. Just by working alongside others and working toward common goals, you build relationships that may later serve you in unforeseen and helpful ways.
- **Get an internship**: Many organizations offer internship positions to college students. Some of these positions are paid, but often they are not. Paid or not, you gain experience relevant to your career, and you potentially make many new contacts. Check CollegeRecruiter.com for key resources.
- **Get a part-time job**: Working full-time may be your ultimate goal, but you may want to fill in some cracks or crevices by working in a part-time job. Invariably you will meet people who can feasibly help with your networking goals. And you can gain good experience along the way, which can also be noted on your résumé.
- **Join a job club**: Your career interests may be shared by many others who have organized a club, which can be online or in person. If you don't find an existing club, consider starting one.
- **Conduct informational interviews**: You may initiate contact with people in your chosen field who can tell you about their experiences of entering the field and thriving in it. Many Web sites have guidance on how to plan and conduct these interviews.

Strategies at Home and Beyond

- **Participate in online social media**: An explosion of career opportunity awaits you with social media, including LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and many more. You will find an extensive list of suggested sites at CareerOneStop. Keep your communication ultra-professional at these sites. Peruse magazine articles, and if you find one that's relevant to your field and it contains names of professionals, you can reach out to them to learn more and get job leads.
- **Ask family members and friends, coworkers, and acquaintances for referrals**: Do they know others who might help you?
- **Use business cards or networking cards**: A printed business card can be an essential tool to help your contacts remember you. Creativity can help in this regard, too. Students often design cards themselves and either hand print them or print them on a home printer.

Activity: Networking for Career Development

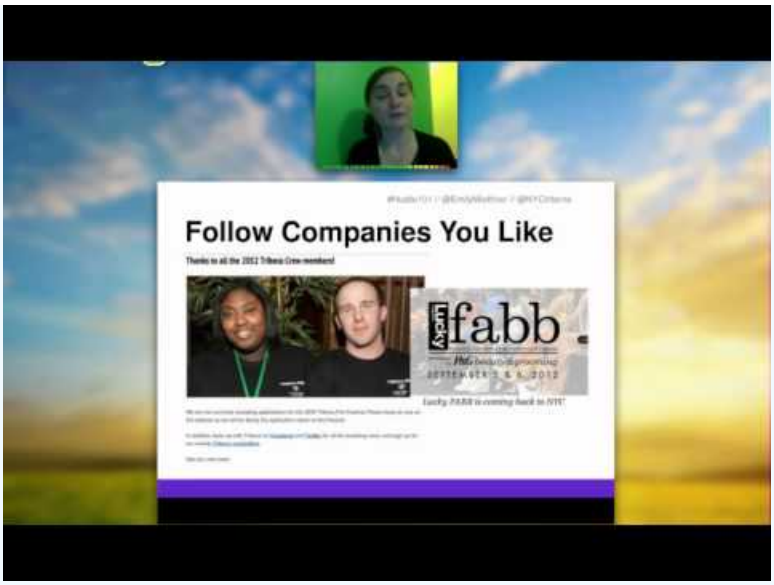
Objectives

- Examine five strategies for obtaining and engaging with networking contacts
- Develop relationships with new contacts to enhance your career

Instructions

- Find information about five companies or people in your field of interest, and follow them on Twitter.
- Get an account at four social media sites that you've not yet been active with that may enhance your career.
- Find names of three people who interest you (peruse magazine articles, online sites, or other resources), and write an email to them explaining your interests and any requests you may have for information.
- Sign up for newsletters from two professional organizations in a field you want to know more about.
- Find and attend one in-person or online event within a month.
- Now write about this experience at one of your social media sites.

For additional ideas and inspiration about networking for career development, watch the following video, *Hustle 101: Networking For College Students and Recent Grads*. The speaker, Emily Miethner, is a recent college graduate and the founder and president of NYCreative Interns, "dedicated to helping young creatives discover and then follow their dream careers."



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Sources for Developing Professional Networks

The bottom line with developing professional networks is to cull information from as many sources as possible and use that information in creative ways to advance your career opportunities. The strategies listed in the section above provide you with a comprehensive set of suggestions. Below is a summary of sources you can use to network your way to career success:

- Conferences
- Special events
- Technology tools
- Social media
- Career centers
- Alumni association
- Professional organizations
- Volunteer organizations
- Internships
- Part-time job
- Job club
- Networking events
- Web sites
- Career coaches
- Headhunters
- Career counselors
- Family members
- Friends
- College professors
- Advisers
- Classmates
- Administrators
- Coaches
- Guest speakers

Key Takeaways

Networking is the process by which people form professional relationships to create, act upon opportunities, share information and help one another achieve professional goals.

- When you "network" with a person, you may:
  - Share business cards, resumes, cover letters, job-seeking strategies, leads about open jobs, information about companies and organizations, and information about specific fields.
  - Share information about networking groups, conferences, events, technology tools, and social media
  - Research career counselors, career centers, career coaches and alumni, relatives, and acquaintances
- Networking can occur anywhere and anytime, and expands as you form and nurture new relationships
- According to Hank Blank, producer of the video *Networking Tops for College Students and Young People,* as a college student, you should have specific modern and no-nonsense strategies when developing your network.
- If you are an international student you may want to focus on keeping an open mind when it comes to networking
- When networking at college:
  - Get to know your professors
  - Check with your college alumni office
  - Check with classmates
- Some strategies that you can develop at work include:
  - Joining professional organizations
  - Volunteering
  - Internships
  - Clubs
  - Attend networking events
  - Conduct informational interviews
- Some strategies that you can develop at home include:
  - Be active on social media
  - Ask family members and friends, coworkers, and relatives for referrals
  - Utilize business cards for networking

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11.3: Résumés and Cover Letters



The most important tool you have on a résumé is language. —Jay Samit, digital media innovator

Learning Objectives

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Define the purpose and contents of a résumé
- Identify characteristics of an effective cover letter and résumé

A résumé is a "selfie" for business purposes. It is a written picture of who you are—it's a marketing tool, a selling tool, and a promotion of you as an ideal candidate for any job you may be interested in.

The word *résumé* comes from the French word *résumé*, which means "a summary." Leonardo da Vinci is credited with writing one of the first known résumés, although it was more of a letter that outlined his credentials for a potential employer, Ludovico Sforza. The résumé got da Vinci the job, though, and Sforza became a longtime patron of da Vinci and later commissioned him to paint *The Last Supper*. You can see the letter and read the translation at Ladders Career Advice.

Résumés and cover letters work together to represent you in the brightest light to prospective employers. With a well-composed résumé and cover letter, you stand out—which may get you an interview and then a good shot at landing a job.

In this section we discuss résumés and cover letters as key components of your career development tool kit. We explore some of the many ways you can design and develop them for the greatest impact in your job search.

Your Résumé: Purpose and Contents

Your résumé is an inventory of your education, work experience, job-related skills, accomplishments, volunteer history, internships, residencies, and/or more. It's a professional autobiography in outline form to give the person who reads it a quick, general idea of who you are. With a better idea of who your are, prospective employers can see how well you might contribute to their workplace.

As a college student or recent graduate, though, you may be unsure about what to put in your résumé, especially if you don't have much employment history. Still, employers don't expect recent grads to have significant work experience. And even with little work experience, you may still have a host of worthy accomplishments to include. It's all in how you present yourself.

The following video is an animated look at why résumés are so important. You can read a transcript of the video here.



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Elements of Your Successful Résumé

Perhaps the hardest part of writing a résumé is figuring out what format to use to organize and present your information in the most effective way. There is no correct format, per se, but most résumés follow one of the four formats below. Which format appeals to you the most?

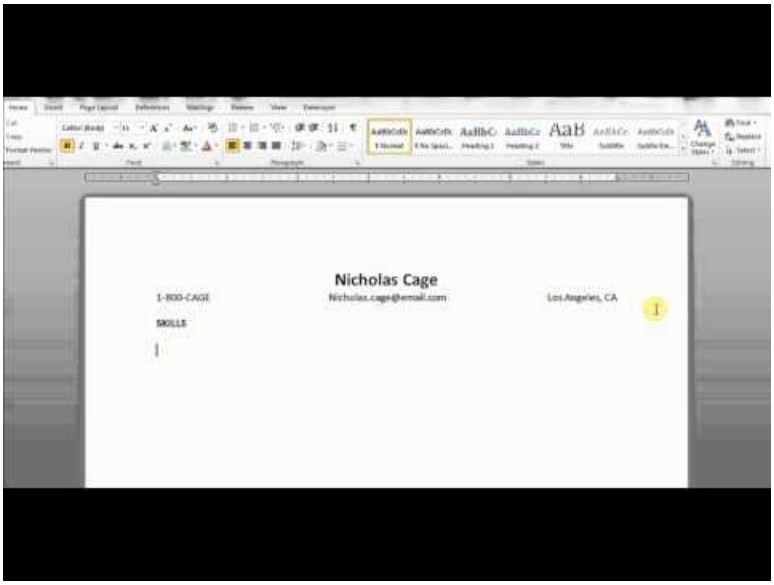
1. **Reverse chronological résumé**: A reverse chronological résumé (sometimes also simply called a chronological résumé) lists your job experiences in reverse chronological order—that is, starting with the most recent job and working backward toward your first job. It includes starting and ending dates. Also included is a brief description of the work duties you performed for each job, and highlights of your formal education. The reverse chronological résumé may be the most common and perhaps the most conservative résumé format. It is most suitable for demonstrating a solid work history, and growth and development in your skills. It may not suit you if you are light on skills in the area you are applying to, or if you've changed employers frequently, or if you are looking for your first job. Reverse Chronological Résumé Examples
2. **Functional résumé**: A functional résumé is organized around your talents, skills, and abilities (more so than work duties and job titles, as with the reverse chronological résumé). It emphasizes specific professional capabilities, like what you have done or what you can do. Specific dates may be included but are not as important. So if you are a new graduate entering your field with little or no actual work experience, the functional résumé may be a good format for you. It can also be useful when you are seeking work in a field that differs from what you have done in the past. It's also well suited for people in unconventional careers. Functional Résumé Examples
3. **Hybrid résumé**: The hybrid résumé is a format reflecting both the functional and chronological approaches. It's also called a combination résumé. It highlights relevant skills, but it still provides information about your work experience. With a hybrid résumé, you may list your job skills as most prominent and then follow with a chronological (or reverse chronological) list of employers. This résumé format is most effective when your specific skills and job experience need to be emphasized. Hybrid Résumé Examples
4. **Video, infographic, and Web-site résumé**: Other formats you may wish to consider are the video résumé, the infographic résumé, or even a Web-site résumé. These formats may be most suitable for people in multimedia and creative careers. Certainly with the expansive use of technology today, a job seeker might at least try to create a media-enhanced résumé. But the paper-based, traditional résumé is by far the most commonly used—in fact, some human resource departments may not permit submission of any format other than paper based. Video Resume Examples; Infographic Résumé Examples; Web-Site Résumé Examples

An important note about formatting is that, initially, employers may spend only a few seconds reviewing each résumé—especially if there is a big stack of them or they seem tedious to read. That's why it's important to choose your format carefully so it will

stand out and make the first cut.

Résumé Contents and Structure

For many people, the process of writing a résumé is daunting. After all, you are taking a lot of information and condensing it into a very concise form that needs to be both eye-catching and easy to read. Don't be scared off, though! Developing a good résumé can be fun, rewarding, and easier than you think if you follow a few basic guidelines. In the following video, a résumé-writing expert describes some keys to success.



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Contents and Components To Include

1. **Your contact information**: name, address, phone number, professional email address
2. **A summary of your skills**: 5–10 skills you have gained in your field; you can list hard skills as well as soft skills (refer to the Professional Skill Building topic in this course)
3. **Work experience**: depending on the résumé format you choose, you may list your most recent job first; include the title of the position, employer's name, location, employment dates (beginning, ending)
4. **Volunteer experience**
5. **Education and training**: formal and informal experiences matter; include academic degrees, professional development, certificates, internships, etc.
6. **References statement** (optional): "References available upon request" is a standard phrase used on résumés, although it is often implied
7. **Other sections**: may include a job objective, a brief profile, a branding statement, a summary statement, additional accomplishments, and any other related experiences

Caution

Résumés resemble snowflakes in as much as no two are alike. Although you can benefit from giving yours a stamp of individuality, you will do well to steer clear of personal details that might elicit a negative response. It is advisable to omit any confidential information or details that could make you vulnerable to discrimination, for instance. Your résumé will likely be viewed by a number of employees in an organization, including human resource personnel, managers, administrative staff, etc. By aiming to please all reviewers, you gain maximum advantage.

- Do not mention your age, gender, height or weight.

- Do not include your social security number.
- Do not mention religious beliefs or political affiliations, unless they are relevant to the position.
- Do not include a photograph of yourself or a physical description.
- Do not mention health issues.
- Do not use first-person references. (I, me).
- Do not include wage/salary expectations.
- Do not use abbreviations.
- Proofread carefully—absolutely no spelling mistakes are acceptable.

Top Ten Tips for a Successful Résumé

1. Aim to make a résumé that's 1–2 pages long on letter-size paper.
2. Make it visually appealing.
3. Use action verbs and phrases. See Action Words and Phrases for Résumé Development.
4. Proofread carefully to eliminate any spelling, grammar, punctuation, and typographical errors.
5. Include highlights of your qualifications or skills to attract an employer's attention.
6. Craft your letter as a pitch to people in the profession you plan to work in.
7. Stand out as different, courageous.
8. Be positive and reflect only the truth.
9. Be excited and optimistic about your job prospects!
10. Keep refining and reworking your résumé; it's an ongoing project.

Remember that your résumé is your professional profile. It will hold you in the most professional and positive light, and it's designed to be a quick and easy way for a prospective employer to evaluate what you might bring to a job. When written and formatted attractively, creatively, and legibly, your résumé is what will get your foot in the door. You can be proud of your accomplishments, even if they don't seem numerous. Let your résumé reflect your personal pride and professionalism.

In the following video, *Résumé Tips for College Students From Employers*, several college graduate recruiters summarize the most important points about crafting your résumé. You can download a transcript of the video here.



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Click here for a text-only version of the activity.

Résumé Writing Resources

	WEBSITE	DESCRIPTION
1	Résumé Builder (from LinkedIn)	Turn your LinkedIn Profile into a great résumé in seconds. Pick a résumé template, customize the content, print and share the result.
2	The Online Resume Builder (from My Perfect resume)	The online résumé builder is easy to use. Choose your résumé design from the library of professional designs, insert prewritten examples, then download and print your new résumé.
3	Résumé Builder (from Live Career)	This site offers examples and samples, templates, tips, videos, and services for résumés, cover letters, interviews, and jobs.
4	Résumé Samples for College Students and Graduates (from About Careers)	This site offers a plethora of sample résumés for college students and graduates. Listings are by type of student and by type of job. Résumé templates are also provided.
5	JobSearch Minute Videos (from College Grad)	This site offers multiple to-the-point one-minute videos on topics such as print résumés, video résumés, cover letters, interviewing, tough interview questions, references, job fairs, and Internet job searching.
6	Student [Career] Services (from Employment Ontario—Community Employment Services)	—Buzzwords and Skills to Include in your résumé —Action Words and Phrases for résumé Development —Checklist of Personal Skills
7	42 Résumé Dos and Don'ts Every Job Seeker Should Know (from the muse)	A comprehensive list of résumé dos and don'ts, which includes traditional rules as well as new rules to polish your résumé.

Your Résumé: It's Like Online Dating

The following essay by Jackie Vetrano is excerpted from *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*. It's a true-to-life story comparing job hunting to online dating. The writer's "lessons learned" are meant to enlarge your awareness of your career goals as you attend college.

It's Like Online Dating

Searching for a job, especially your first job, is a lot like online dating. It begins as a time commitment, gets nerve-wracking towards the middle, but ends in success and happiness if you follow the right process.

Like many single people with access to current technology, I ventured into the world of online dating. I went for coffee with potential mates who were instant no ways, some who left me scratching my head, and a few who I found a connection with.

But hang on. We are here to talk about professional development, not my love life.

Being on the job hunt is not easy. Many spend hours preparing résumés, looking at open positions, and thinking about what career path to travel. Occasionally, it is overwhelming and intimidating, but when taken one step at a time, it can be a manageable and an exciting process.

The first step of online dating is the most important: create your dating profile. Your profile is where you put your best foot forward and show off all of your attractive qualities through visuals and text. Online daters find their most flattering photos and then season the "about me" section of their profile with captivating and descriptive words to better display who they are and why other online daters should give them a shot.

Résumés follow this same logic. Your résumé should be clean, polished, and present you in your best light for future employers. Like dating profiles, they are detailed and should paint a picture for other prospective dates (or future employers) supporting why

you deserve a chance at their love—an interview.

The unspoken rules of online dating profiles are very similar to the rules for writing a résumé. Whether you like it or not, your online dating profile and résumé both serve as a first impression. Profiles and résumés that are short, filled with spelling errors, or vague are usually passed over. Unless you are a supermodel and all you need is an enticing photo, your written description is very important to display who you are.

Your résumé should capture who you are, your skill set, education, past experiences, and anything else that is relevant to the job you hope to obtain. Knowing your audience is a key factor in crafting the perfect resume. Logically, if my online dating profile presented studious and quiet personality traits, I would likely start receiving messages from potential mates who are looking for someone who is seeking those traits. By taking a similar approach while writing a résumé, you can easily determine the tone, language, and highlighted skills and experiences you should feature. The tone of your résumé is dictated by the nature of the position you hope to obtain in the future. For example, hospitality jobs or positions that require you to interact with many people on a daily basis should be warm and welcoming while analytical jobs, such as accounting or research positions, should reflect an astute attention to detail. Your choice in language follows similar logic—use appropriate terms for the position you are seeking.

Unlike online dating profiles, your résumé should include your important contact information, including email address, telephone number, and mailing address. Some advise refraining from listing a mailing address, as this could create a bias due to some organizations that are looking for a new employee who is already in the area.

Unfortunately, this bias cannot be foreseen, which means you should use your best judgment when listing your contact information. If you include this contact information on your dating profile, you may have some very interesting text messages in the morning.

—Jackie Ventrano, *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*

Vetrano's essay is continued ahead in the "Cover Letters" section of this page.

Activity: Create Your Résumé

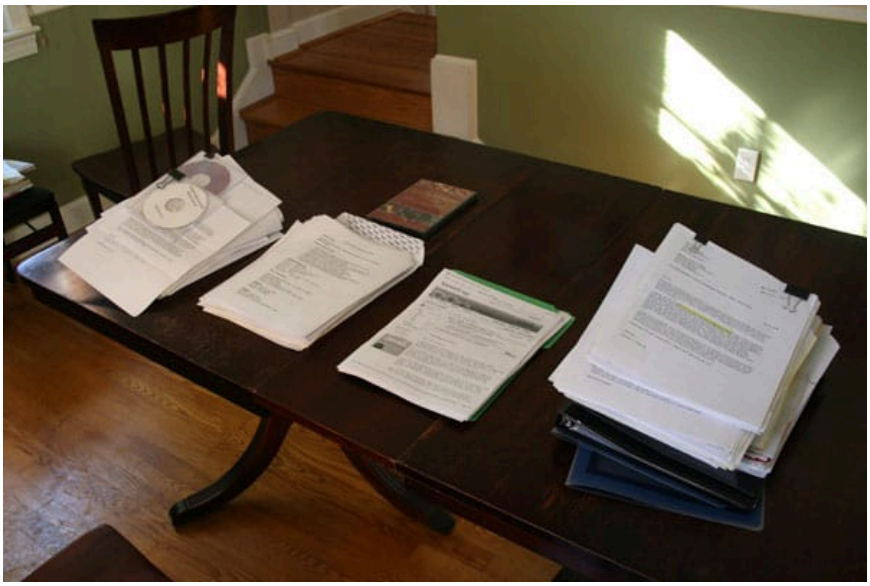
Objectives:

- Compile data reflecting your professional and educational skills and accomplishments.
- Assess the main résumé formats and select one that meets your needs.
- Create a first draft of your professional résumé.

Directions:

1. Compile all needed information for your résumé, including your contact information, a summary of your skills, your work experience and volunteer experience, education and training (including your intended degree, professional development activities, certificates, internships, etc.). Optionally you may wish to include job objective, a brief profile, a branding statement, additional accomplishments, and any other related experiences.
2. Select one of the résumé builder tools listed above in the Résumé Writing Resources table.
3. Create your résumé, following instructions at your selected site.
4. Save your document as a PDF file.
5. Follow instructions from your instructor on how to submit your work.

Your Cover Letter



Cover letters matter. When you have to go through a pile of them, they are probably more important than the résumé itself. —woodleywonderworks

What Is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is a letter of introduction, usually 3–4 paragraphs in length, that you attach to your résumé. It's a way of introducing yourself to a potential employer and explaining why you are suited for a position. Employers may look for individualized and thoughtfully written cover letters as an initial method of screening out applicants who may who lack necessary basic skills, or who may not be sufficiently interested in the position.

Cover Letter Examples

Often an employer will request or require that a cover letter be included in the materials an applicant submits. There are also occasions when you might submit a cover letter uninvited: for example, if you are initiating an inquiry about possible work or asking someone to send you information or provide other assistance.

With each résumé you send out, always include a cover letter specifically addressing your purposes.

Characteristics of an Effective Cover Letter

Cover letters should accomplish the following:

- Get the attention of the prospective employer
- Set you apart from any possible competition
- Identify the position you are interested in
- Specify how you learned about the position or company
- Present highlights of your skills and accomplishments
- Reflect your genuine interest
- Please the eye and ear

The following video features Aimee Bateman, founder of Careercake.com, who explains how you can create an incredible cover letter. You can download a transcript of the video here.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/career/?p=44

Cover Letter Resources

	WEBSITE	DESCRIPTION
1	Student Cover Letter Samples (from About Careers)	This site contains sample student/recent graduate cover letters (especially for high school students and college students and graduates seeking employment) as well as cover letter templates, writing tips, formats and templates, email cover letter examples, and examples by type of applicant
2	How to Write Cover Letters (from CollegeGrad)	This site contains resources about the reality of cover letters, using a cover letter, the worst use of the cover letter, the testimonial cover letter technique, and a cover letter checklist
3	LinkedIn Cover Letter	This site contains articles, experts, jobs, and more: get all the professional insights you need on LinkedIn
4	Cover Letters (from the Yale Office of Career Strategy)	This site includes specifications for the cover letter framework (introductory paragraph, middle paragraph, concluding paragraph), as well as format and style

Your Cover Letter: It's Like Online Dating

The following is another excerpt from the "It's Like Online Dating" essay by Jackie Vetrano. Writing a cover letter may feel like a chore, but the payoff will be well worth it if you land the job you want!

It's Like Online Dating

Sending a Message—The Cover Letter

After searching through dozens of profiles, online daters generally find a handful of people they can picture themselves with. There's only one way to find out more about the person, and that's by sending the first message.

The challenging part of the first message I send through online dating sites is determining what to say. I've never met these

people before, but I do have access to their dating profiles filled with their hobbies, hometowns, and more. This is a perfect starting point for my message, especially if we both root for the same football team or if the other person likes to run as much as I do.

Your cover letter serves as an introduction to your future employer and should complement your résumé to create a shining first impression. It is incredibly challenging to sit in front of a blank screen trying to find a good starting point, which means you should look at the job posting and organization's Web site for ideas about what to include.

Generally, these job postings provide a set of hard skills (such as proficiency with certain technology) and soft skills (such as public speaking, teamwork, or working in a flexible environment) required and desired for the posted position. This information provides you a list of what should be explained in your cover letter. Demonstrating your hard skills is a simple enough task by using examples or stating certifications, but describing your soft skills may require a little more thought. These soft skills can be exhibited by discussing specific examples of past experiences in previous jobs you've held, volunteer work, or work you've done in college classes.

After you have crafted your cover letter, you should send it to a few people you trust for their opinion and overall proofreading along with the job posting for their reference. It's obvious that your cover letter should be free of spelling and grammar errors, but these trustworthy individuals will also be able to provide helpful insight about the examples you've used to display your soft skills.

—Jackie Vetrano, *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*

Key Takeaways

The purpose of the resume is to get your foot in the door and be offered an interview. The resume is your one chance to catch your employer's attention and stand out from the other applicants.

A cover letter is a letter of introduction that you submit with your resume and it explains why you are suited for the position.

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11.4: Interviewing



One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation. —Arthur Ashe, champion tennis player

Learning Objectives

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Describe effective strategies to prepare for an interview
- Differentiate between different types of interview situations and identify appropriate interview techniques for each
- Analyze different question types common in interviews

If your résumé and cover letter have served their purposes well, you will be invited to participate in an interview with the company or organization you're interested in. Congratulations! It's an exciting time, and your prospects for employment are very strong if you put in the time to be well prepared.

In this section we look at how to get ready for an interview, what types of interviews you might need to engage in, and what kinds of questions you might be asked.

Preparing Effectively for a Job Interview

Review the Job Description

When you prepare for an interview, your first step will be to carefully read and reread the job posting or job description. This will help you develop a clearer idea of how you meet the skills and attributes the company seeks.

Research the Company or Organization

Researching the company will give you a wider view of what the company is looking for and how well you might fit in. Your prospective employer may ask you what you know about the company. Being prepared to answer this question shows that you took time and effort to prepare for the interview and that you have a genuine interest in the organization. It shows good care and

good planning—soft skills you will surely need on the job.

Practice Answering Common Questions

Most interviewees find that practicing the interview in advance with a family member, a friend, or a colleague eases possible nerves during the actual interview. It also creates greater confidence when you walk through the interview door. In the "Interview Questions" section below, you'll learn more about specific questions you will likely be asked and corresponding strategies for answering them.

Plan to Dress Appropriately

Interviewees are generally most properly dressed for an interview in business attire, with the goal of looking highly professional in the eyes of the interviewer. At the DePaul University Career Center and CareerSpots.com Web site, click on Interview Dress to see three videos on dressing for success in your job interview. Learn exactly what is meant by "business casual," and see the specific types of attire appropriate for men and women.

Come Prepared

Plan to bring your résumé, cover letter, and a list of references to the interview. You may also want to bring a portfolio of representative work. Leave behind coffee, chewing gum, and any other items that could be distractions.

Be Confident

Above all, interviewees should be confident and "courageous." By doing so you make a strong first impression. As the saying goes, "There is never a second chance to make a first impression."

Job Interview Types and Techniques

Every interview you participate in will be unique: The people you meet with, the interview setting, and the questions you'll be asked will all be different from interview to interview.

The various factors that characterize any given interview can contribute to the sense of adventure and excitement you feel. But it's also can normal to feel a little nervous about what lies ahead. With so many unknowns, how can you plan to "nail the interview" no matter what comes up?

A good strategy for planning is to anticipate the type of interview you may find yourself in. There are common formats for job interviews, described in detail, below. By knowing a bit more about each type and being aware of techniques that work for each, you can plan to be on your game no matter what form your interview takes.

Screening Interviews

Screening interviews might best be characterized as "weeding-out" interviews. They ordinarily take place over the phone or in another low-stakes environment in which the interviewer has maximum control over the amount of time the interview takes. Screening interviews are generally short because they glean only basic information about you. If you are scheduled to participate in a screening interview, you might safely assume that you have some competition for the job and that the company is using this strategy to whittle down the applicant pool. With this kind of interview, your goal is to win a face-to-face interview. For this first shot, though, prepare well and challenge yourself to shine. Try to stand out from the competition and be sure to follow up with a thank-you note.

Phone or Web Conference Interviews

If you are geographically separated from your prospective employer, you may be invited to participate in a phone interview or online interview, instead of meeting face-to-face. Technology, of course, is a good way to bridge distances. The fact that you're not there in person doesn't make it any less important to be fully prepared, though. In fact, you may wish to be all the more "on

your toes" to compensate for the distance barrier. Make sure your equipment (phone, computer, Internet connection, etc.) is fully charged and works. If you're at home for the interview, make sure the environment is quiet and distraction-free. If the meeting is online, make sure your video background is pleasing and neutral, like a wall hanging or even a white wall.

One-on-One Interviews

The majority of job interviews are conducted in this format—just you and a single interviewer—likely with the manager you would report to and work with. The one-on-one format gives you both a chance to see how well you connect and how well your talents, skills, and personalities mesh. You can expect to be asked questions like "Why would you be good for this job?" and "Tell me about yourself." Many interviewees prefer the one-on-one format because it allows them to spend in-depth time with the interviewer. Rapport can be built. As always, be very courteous and professional. Have handy a portfolio of your best work.

Panel Interviews

An efficient format for meeting a candidate is a panel interview, in which perhaps four to five coworkers meet at the same time with a single interviewee. The coworkers comprise the "search committee" or "search panel," which may consist of different company representatives such as human resources, management, and staff. One advantage of this format for the committee is that meeting together gives them a common experience to reflect on afterward. In a panel interview, listen carefully to questions from each panelist, and try to connect fully with each questioner. Be sure to write down names and titles, so you can send individual thank-you notes after the interview.

Serial Interviews

Serial interviews are a combination of one-on-one meetings with a group of interviewers, typically conducted as a series of meetings staggered throughout the day. Ordinarily this type of interview is for higher-level jobs, when it's important to meet at length with major stakeholders. If your interview process is designed this way, you will need to be ultraprepared, as you will be answering many in-depth questions. Stay alert.

Lunch Interviews

In some higher-level positions, candidates are taken to lunch or dinner, especially if this is a second interview (a "call back" interview). If this is you, count yourself lucky and be on your best behavior, because even if the lunch meeting is unstructured and informal, it's still an official interview. Do not order an alcoholic beverage, and use your best table manners. You are not expected to pay or even to offer to pay. But, as always, you must send a thank-you note.

Group Interviews

Group interviews are comprised of several interviewees and perhaps only one or two interviewers who may make a presentation to the assembled group. This format allows an organization to quickly prescreen candidates. It also gives candidates a chance to quickly learn about the company. As with all interview formats, you are being observed. How do you behave with your group? Do you assume a leadership role? Are you quiet but attentive? What kind of personality is the company looking for? A group interview may reveal this.

For a summary of the interview formats we've just covered (and a few additional ones), take a look at the following video, *Job Interview Guide—10 Different Types of Interviews in Today's Modern World*.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/career/?p=46

Activity: What Makes You a Great Fit?

Objectives:

- Define your ideal job.
- Identify the top three reasons why you are a great fit for this ideal job.

Directions:

- Write a paragraph describing your ideal job. Imagine that you are already in this job. What is your job title and what are you responsible for executing? What is the name of the company or organization? What is its function?
- Now identify the top three reasons why you are a great fit for this ideal job. What sets you apart from the competition? List the qualities, skills and values you have that match the job requirements. Provide examples to support your answers. Connect your values to the company's values.
- Summarize your answer.
- Submit this assignment according to directions provided by your instructor.

Interview Questions

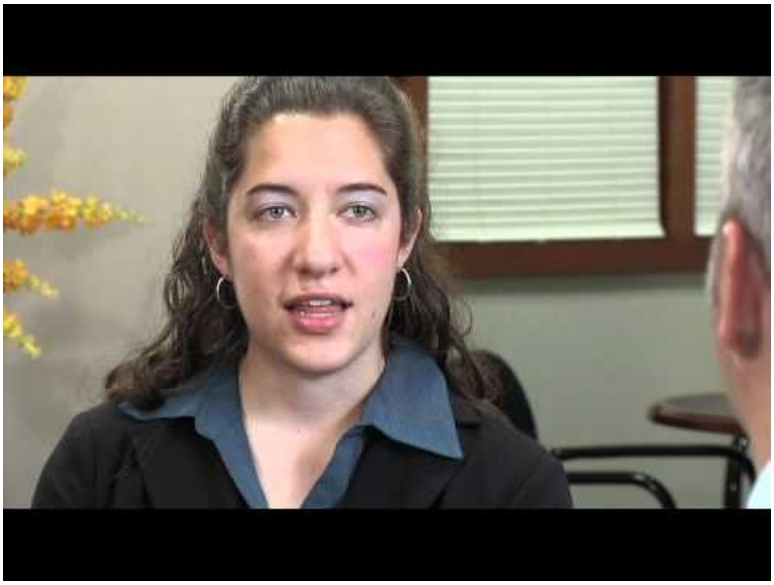
For most job candidates, the burning question is "What will I be asked?" There's no way to anticipate every single question that may arise during an interview. It's possible that, no matter how well prepared you are, you may get a question you just didn't expect. But that's okay. Do as much preparation as you can—which will build your confidence—and trust that the answers will come.

To help you reach that point of sureness and confidence, take time to review common interview questions. Think about your answers. Make notes, if that helps. And then conduct a practice interview with a friend, a family member, or a colleague. Speak your answers out loud. Below is a list of resources that contain common interview questions and good explanations/answers you might want to adopt.

	WEBSITE	DESCRIPTION
1	100 top job interview questions—be prepared for the interview (from Monster.com)	This site provides a comprehensive set of interview questions you might expect to be asked, categorized as basic interview questions, behavioral questions, salary questions, career development questions, and other kinds. Some of the listed questions provide comprehensive answers, too.
2	Interview Questions and Answers (from BigInterview)	This site provides text and video answers to the following questions: Tell me about yourself, describe your current position, why are you looking for a new job, what are your strengths, what is your greatest weakness, why do you want to work here, where do you see yourself in five years, why should we hire you, and do you have any questions for me?
3	Ten Tough Interview Questions and Ten Great Answers (from CollegeGrad)	This site explores some of the most difficult questions you will face in job interviews. The more open-ended the question, the greater the variation among answers. Once you have become practiced in your interviewing skills, you will find that you can use almost any question as a launching pad for a particular topic or compelling story.

Why Should We Hire You

From the Ohio State University Fisher College of Business Career Management Office, here is a video featuring representatives from recruiting companies offering advice for answering the question “Why should we hire you?” As you watch, make mental notes about how you would answer the question in an interview for a job you really want.



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In closing, below is the final excerpt from the essay “It’s Like Online Dating,” by Jackie Vetrano. You’ll recall that the writer compares job hunting—including résumé creation and cover-letter writing—to online dating. In this last section, she concludes with a look at the job interview and compares it to a first date.

It’s Like Online Dating

The First Date—The Job Interview

After what may feel like forever, you hear back from the love of your life. Congratulations! In the online dating world, you may chat about common interests (because you wrote a stunning first message), but in the world of work, you’ll be asked to visit the organization for an interview.

I have been on many first dates, and whether it's in a coffee shop or over dinner, the first face-to-face meeting is tremendously important. If someone I am meeting for the first time looks like they just came from the gym or rolled out of bed, my impression instantly changes. This same theory can be directly applied to your first date with your future employer. You have worked hard on your cover letter and résumé, and you should not taint the sparkling first impression you have created with the wrong choice in dress.

What you wear to a job interview may change based on the position you have applied for, but there are a set of basic rules that everyone should follow. Similar to meeting someone on a first date for coffee, you want to be comfortable. Some interviews may take place with multiple people in an organization, meaning you will be walking to different locations, sitting down, and potentially sweating from a broken air conditioning unit. Consider these factors when choosing your outfit for your interview, and if you're concerned about being underdressed, remember to always dress a bit nicer than how you'd dress for the job itself.

There is nothing worse than sitting alone at a coffee shop waiting for a mystery date to show up. It's uncomfortable and affects my overall first impression of whom I'm about to meet. Avoid making your mystery employer annoyed and waiting for you by leaving at least ten minutes earlier than you need to, just in case you get stuck in traffic. Arrive at least ten minutes early. The interview will start out much better if you are early rather than nervous and running late. Arriving early also gives you the time to have some coffee and review materials you may need for the interview. Coming on time to an interview or a first date shows you respect the time of the person you plan to meet.

On a first date, it is all about communication. Sometimes, there may be silences that cannot be filled or the person I have just met discloses their entire life story to me in less than an hour. If we cannot achieve a proper balance, there will not be a second date. Communicating effectively in a job interview is equally as important, especially if you want a job offer!

All of the rules of dating apply to how you should behave in a job interview. The interviewer will ask you questions, which means that you should look at them and focus on what is being asked. Your phone should be on silent (not even on vibrate), and hidden, to show that you are fully attentive and engaged in the conversation you are having. Much like having a conversation on a date, the answers to your questions should be clear and concise and stay on topic. The stories I tell on my first dates are more personal than what would be disclosed in a job interview, but the mindset is the same. You are building the impression that the organization has of you, so put your best foot forward through the comments you make.

To make that great impression, it is really important to heavily prepare and practice, even before you have an interview scheduled. By brainstorming answers to typical interview questions in a typed document or out loud, later during the interview you will easily remember the examples of your past experiences that demonstrate why you are best for the job. You can continue to update this list as you move through different jobs, finding better examples to each question to accurately describe your hard and soft skills.

This interview is as much a date for your future employer as it is for you. Come prepared with questions that you have about the company, the position, and anything else you are curious about. This is an opportunity for you to show off the research you've done on the organization and establish a better understanding of company culture, values, and work ethic. Without knowing these basics of the company or organization, what you thought was a match might only end in a tense breakup.

After your interview is over, you continue to have an opportunity to build on the positive impression that you've worked hard to form. Sending a follow up thank you note to each person you interviewed with will show your respect for the time the organization spent with you. These notes can be written and sent by mail or emailed, but either way should have a personal touch, commenting on a topic that was discussed in the interview. While sending a thank you note after a first date may sound a little strange, you might not get asked to a second interview without one!

It's Official—The Job Offer

In the online dating world, it takes a few dates to determine if two people are a match. In the corporate world, you may have a one or two interviews to build a relationship. If your impression was positive and the organization believes you're a match for the open position, you'll be offered a job.

With a job offer also comes the salary for the position. It is important to know what a reasonable salary is for the position and location, which can be answered with a bit of research. One good place to look is the Bureau of Labor Statistics Web site. At this point, it is not uncommon to discuss your salary with your future employer, but be sure to do so in a polite way.

Online dating sites provide the means for millions of people to meet future partners, and the number of people who use online dating is so large that there are sure to be disappointments along the way. I have met people who I thought were compatible with

me, but they did not feel the same, and vice versa. This happens frequently while searching for a job, which can be discouraging, but should not hinder you from continuing to search! There are a great number of opportunities, and sometimes all it takes is adjusting your filters or revising your résumé and cover letter. The cliché "there's plenty of fish in the sea" may be true, but there is definitely a way for each person to start their career off.

—Jackie Vetrano, *Foundations of Academic Success: Words of Wisdom*

Key Takeaways

- Prepare for the interview by carefully reviewing the job description and researching the company in advance. This will help you tailor your interview responses to illustrate how your skills and abilities match the needs of the organization.
- Practice common interview questions with a family member or friend to help you respond to questions more naturally, make a good impression, and build confidence in your interviewing skills.
- Come prepared for the interview by dressing professionally for the position and bringing copies of your résumé, cover letter, letters of reference, and samples of your work if relevant to the position.
- Become familiar with common formats for job interviews, such as screening interviews, one-on-one interviews, phone or web conference interviews, and panel interviews. Each will require different interview techniques from you, and by learning about each type, you will be prepared to demonstrate how you are the best person for the job.
- Always send a personalized thank you note to each person who interviewed you immediately following the interview.

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11.5: What's Next?



Your Success Track

You've completed an important first step toward college success completing this course this course, by finishing the College Success module! May the new skills and strategies you've gained serve you well not only in college but at work and in any other settings in which college skills become life skills.

Application of Ideas

Consider the presentation, below, by Freeman Hrabowski, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). At the young age of twelve, he marched with Martin Luther King, and now, at UMBC, he works to create an environment that helps underrepresented students—specifically African American, Latino, and low-income learners—get degrees in math and science. In the video he shares the four pillars of UMBC's approach. It's an inspiring talk for any college student, no matter what your major may be. You can download a copy of the transcript here.



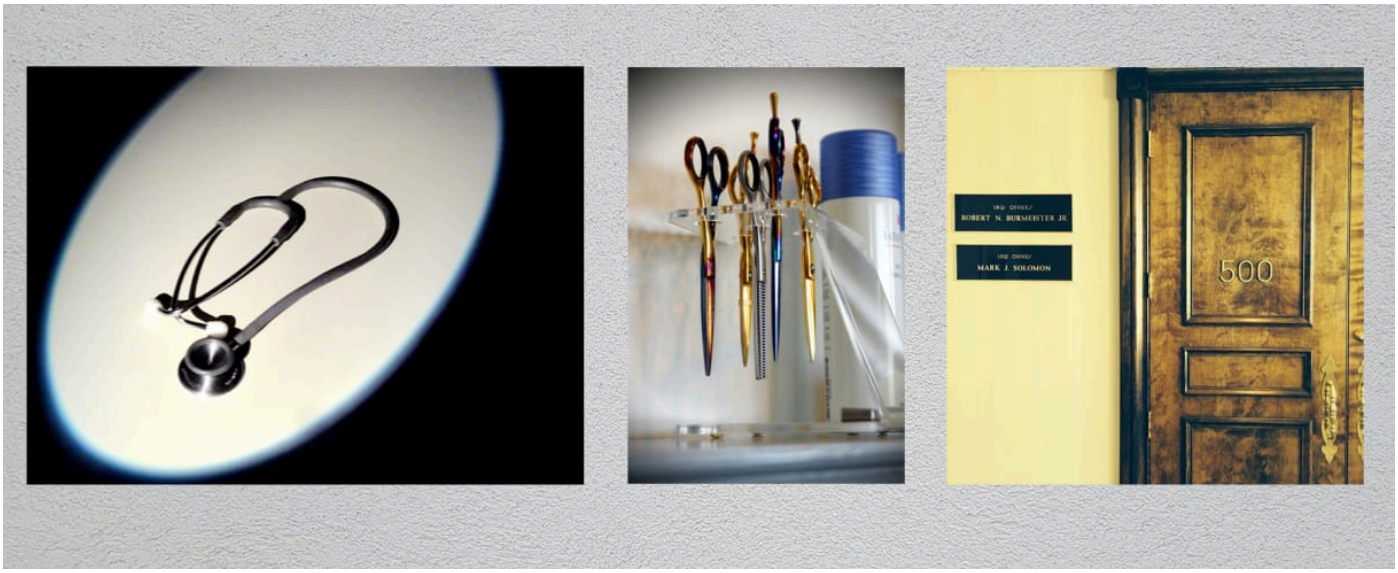
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Symbols of Success

As you move more deeply into student life, consider selecting a symbol of your commitment to success. Consider your own personal definition of "success." What would a physical representation of that success look like? Many people consider graduation caps or diplomas to be symbols of college success. If those are meaningful to you, consider choosing one. Alternatively, yours can become more personal—an item that speaks to you as a sign of what you're working toward and how you'll know you've "made it."

Some ideas from previous students include:

- a stethoscope, for an aspiring medical student
- a set of professional salon scissors, for an aspiring beautician
- an office door nameplate, for an aspiring law student



Once you find a meaningful symbol—perhaps an object or an image or even an idea—keep it in a place where you can easily access it. In moments when you need a boost, you can remind yourself that college success begins and ends with your

commitment to learning well.

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12: OVERVIEW OF THE SIX-STEP JOB SEARCH PROCESS

12.1: Why You Need a Process
12.2: Prerequisite 1- Confidence
12.3: Prerequisite 2- Communication Skills
12.4: Prerequisite 3- Poise
12.5: Prerequisite 4- Resources
12.6: State of the Market- Launching Your Job Search at This Time

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12.1: Why You Need a Process

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Better understand how you can use the six steps.
2. Recognize the importance of flexibility in the process so you can adapt to job market conditions.
3. Lay the foundation for getting started on your job search.

The Six Steps Are Meant to Be Followed Sequentially

The six steps of the job search process are laid out in sequential order so you can follow them one at a time:

- You need to know what you want (step 1) in order to act on your job search.
- You want to have your marketing material in place (step 2) before you meet with any prospective employers.
- You want to research jobs, companies, and industries (step 3) to prepare for meeting prospective employers. This is detailed research into trends, challenges, culture, and other nuanced information. Some of this research will entail speaking to people in the areas you are targeting for your search, so you want to have your marketing ready to be shared.
- You network and interview (step 4) with prospective employers you discover from your research.
- You have to stay motivated and organized (step 5) as you juggle these meetings and absorb all the information you are learning. At this point, you may also see some problems with your search that need troubleshooting (also step 5).
- All these networking meetings and interviews culminate in a job offer that you negotiate (step 6) with your future employer.

Many job seekers are overwhelmed at the beginning of their job search. There seems to be so much to do—résumés, interviews, and **social media**. It is not surprising that many job seekers are afraid of networking!

A sequential job search process means that you don't have to worry about what comes next. Focus on where you are for your search, and give yourself time on that step. Before you worry about résumés (or other items in step 2), let yourself explore possibilities, ideals, and desires (step 1). Before you get too anxious about interviewing (step 4), know that you will have the preparation of knowing yourself (step 1), positioning yourself effectively (step 2), and learning about the people and companies you will meet through in-depth research (step 3). There will be time for the job search to progress.

The Six Steps Also Overlap and Should Be Done Concurrently

However, as you move through your job search sequentially, this doesn't mean that you never revisit what you've already done. For example, if you are at the stage where you are meeting people (step 4), you are collecting information from these meetings. You might learn that a particular skill or experience is even more important than you initially thought. You may decide to go back to your marketing (step 2) to highlight these items even more in your résumé or structure future cover letters in a different way to emphasize this new information. These marketing changes will happen while you are still interviewing. In the thick of your job search, you will be juggling the six steps *concurrently*.

You might be juggling different job search targets, each of which is at a different stage. For example, you are interested in sales positions in both the technology industry and the pharmaceutical industry. You start your search focusing on technology companies and you are now at the interview stage with several of them. You have traction in this target, so you add pharmaceutical companies to the mix. You want to research these more before approaching them for interviews, so you are at step 3 for pharmaceuticals, but at step 4 for technology.

While you want to follow the steps sequentially, recognize that there will be instances in your search that the steps are revisited and therefore taken out of sequence. This is a natural part of the search process as you interact with people and situations evolve. Be flexible. Know that you will be learning things along the way—information about jobs, companies, and industries that aren't advertised—and gaining feedback about your skills and experience. You want to adapt your job search process to these new pieces of information.

Starting on the Six Steps Requires a Solid Foundation

The six-step job search process gives you tactics for how to get from where you are to your next job. It is based on the mechanics of how the job market plays out between employers and job candidates. This is important because job seekers often don't know what to do to secure a job. They may know how to do the job—that is, they have the selling and communication skills and experience for the sales job itself—but *getting* the job, convincing someone to hire you, is different from doing the actual job. It is the difference between being a good driver and being able to pass the road test. You want to prepare for the road test (in this case, the job search process) in order to get a chance to drive.



But these tactics of the six-step job search process assume you have some fundamentals in place. Getting your driver's license also assumes you have certain fundamentals—for example, knowledge of traffic laws and proper eyesight. Here are some key fundamentals you will need to launch your job search:

- Confidence (100 percent belief you will get a job and a positive attitude)
- Communication skills (written, verbal, presentation, and listening)
- **Poise** (dress, manners, and body language)
- Resources (time, space, office supplies, budget for clothes, transportation, etc.)

With these fundamentals in place, you can use the process to take you through the mechanics of your search.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The six steps of the job search are sequential because one step leads into the next.
- It is helpful to follow the sequence so you are not overwhelmed by doing everything at once and so you can build a progression.
- The six steps of the job search are concurrent because each step influences the others.
- It is helpful to allow the six steps to overlap so you can use the information and feedback from each step to strengthen and refine the others.
- The six-step process assumes you have some fundamental skills and resources in place, including confidence, communication skills, poise, and physical resources.

Exercises

1. Looking at the six-step job search approach, what step(s) do you feel most comfortable with? Least comfortable with? Each step will be detailed in subsequent chapters, but you may want to budget your time to focus on the ones where you are most uncertain.

2. Do you have some job targets in mind? An entire chapter describes how to specify your target even further (or to elicit targets if you can't think of any). Make a list of your interests right now. Think about how the six-step job search process would apply if you were looking for a job in your areas of interest.

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12.2: Prerequisite 1- Confidence

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Define confidence in the context of the job search.
2. Learn different strategies to build confidence.

You Must Be Confident Your Job Search Will Be Successful

If you are waiting until you get a job as proof that you can get one, this *prove it* attitude will kill your search. You will appear negative and unattractive to employers. You will get derailed by the inevitable obstacles and drop out along your search. You may not even get started if you believe that your efforts will be futile.

Having confidence in your job search means two things:

1. You believe you will get a job. You know with 100 percent certainty there is a job somewhere out there for you.
2. You believe you will get a job you want. You have a positive attitude about working. You are excited at the prospect of doing the job you are targeting, in the industry you are targeting, and for the companies you are targeting.

You have to know you will be successful, and you have to want that success. If you have just one of these two things, this is not sufficient to project enough confidence in your job search. If you believe you will get a job, but don't believe it will be something you want, you will appear anxious, frustrated, and full of dread. If you are excited about what you want to do, but don't believe you will get a job doing it, you will appear as if you are not good enough for your prospective employers.

A confident job seeker is someone who is energized at the prospect of finding his or her dream job. A confident job seeker may not be an expert on résumés, interviews, or other job search tactics, but he or she has an innate knowledge that he or she will be able to figure those things out.

This is not arrogance. Prospective employers will shy away from arrogant job candidates who appear to be high-maintenance divas and poor team players. You don't want to come across as someone who thinks you are better than your future boss or colleagues. Confidence is a healthy, positive attitude.

You Can Proactively Build Confidence into Your Job Search Strategy

Ideally, you have confidence before you start your job search. If confidence has been a struggle your whole life or if you feel overly depressed or anxious about your job search specifically, you should seek help from a guidance counselor, therapist, or other professional resource. You want to rule out any medical conditions, such as depression, as the root cause of your anxiety. If you have some nervousness, but not in a crippling way that keeps you from your job search, you can plan to proactively build and maintain your confidence throughout your job search by surrounding yourself with positive influences:

- Pair up with a job search buddy. Pick someone with a can-do attitude, and agree to support each other during your search. Maybe you can meet once a week or call each other right before a big event (e.g., job interview or career fair).
- Start a job search group. A larger group will have more energy than just one person. A group also has a range of personalities and perspectives that can contribute alternative points of view. A group will also have people at different stages of the search, enabling you all to see different outcomes unfolding.
- Enlist the support of a coach or **mentor**. A more experienced person can be a great sounding board for ideas and a champion for when you need a pick-me-up.
- Read about successful people. When you see other people's achievements over adversity, you are able to see your own potential.
- Keep a journal that focuses on the positive. Write down things for which you are grateful. Write down past successes and wins. You will see that you have been successful in other areas, and this can give you the confidence that you can succeed in your job search as well.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Confident job seekers know they will get a job.
- Confident job seekers are excited at the prospect of working and getting jobs they want.
- You can build and maintain confidence by surrounding yourself with positive influences.

Exercises

1. Are you confident your job search will succeed? If not, why not? Which of the suggestions for building confidence will you try?
2. Make a list of people you know who have a positive attitude. Highlight people who might be a possible job search buddy, member of a job search group, coach, or mentor.
3. Make a list of past successes and wins. It might be helpful to organize by blocks of time in your life, such as elementary school, middle school, high school, college, and so forth. These don't have to be specific awards. You should include all instances where you felt proud of your accomplishment.
4. Read a biography of a person you admire or a successful person in an industry in which you are interested. You might read a biography of Wendy Kopp, founder of Teach For America, if you are interested in education. You might read a biography of Warren Buffett if you are interested in investments.

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12.3: Prerequisite 2- Communication Skills

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Define the different types of communication skills needed for a successful job search.
2. Learn ways to enhance overall communication skills.

A Successful Job Search Is All About Successful Communication

A successful job search is a match between what an employer wants and what a candidate wants. That match is made based on what is communicated. While an interview is structured a specific way, at its core it is a communication between job seeker and employer. While networking has its standards and rules of etiquette, at its core it is about communicating via listening, speaking, writing, and so forth.

The six-step process will give you the tactics that are particular to interviewing, networking, and other job search–specific communications, but the successful job seeker needs to have solid overall communication skills in place in the following areas:

- Written
- Verbal
- Presentation
- Listening

Communication occurs at every stage of the job search.

Table 12.3.1: Communication Skills Needed for Each Step of the Job Search

Job Search Step	Written	Verbal	Presentation	Listening
1. Identify Your Target	In the introspective work	In articulating your interests		To advice you are getting
2. Create A Powerful Marketing Campaign	In the creation of your material	In your networking pitch	In the design of your material and sample portfolio	To responses to your pitch and other marketing
3. Conduct In-Depth Research	To keep track of your information	To gather information		To information shared
4. Network and Interview	For scheduling, note-taking during meetings, and thank-yous	Before, during, and after meetings and interviews	During specialized interviews	During meetings and interviews
5. Stay Motivated and Organized and Troubleshoot Your Search	To keep track of your data	During support group and mentor meetings		To support and feedback
6. Negotiate and Close the Offer	For offer letter revisions	To advocate for what you want	To close the deal with senior management	To employers' needs, wants, and constraints

Communication Skills Are a Proxy for Job Skills

You need communications skills for more than understanding and developing **rapport** with prospective employers. You will also need communication skills on the job, so the way you communicate in your search is a sign of the way you might communicate on the job.

Many employers also look at communication skills in general as a proxy for attention to detail. If you are sloppy with your job search communication—leaving rambling voice mails, sending e-mails with typos or grammatical mistakes—then you likely do this on the job. Why should employers assume you will be more careful after you get the job? If you don't double-check your communication now, you probably won't start once you are hired.

Finally, your communication skills underscore your logic and reasoning. If your interview responses are scattered or unrelated, that could be a sign your thought process isn't logical or structured. If you can't get to the point in regular conversation, maybe you bring this disorganized reasoning to your work.

Your Job Search Can Be Tailored to Showcase Your Communication Strengths and Support Your Weaknesses

Look at your history to see your current communication strengths and weaknesses, so you know where you need to focus as you prepare for a job search. If you know that you are better at written over verbal communication, you might choose e-mail over phone calls in situations that call for either approach (e.g., when you try to get a networking meeting). But you can't avoid a method of communication entirely, so the verbally challenged should allot extra time to practice interviewing and perhaps take the time away from drafting cover letters, which play to their writing strength. For someone with more verbal than written strengths, they will structure their search differently—practicing different areas and budgeting more time in weak areas that may take longer to strengthen.

If you have already selected job targets, incorporate the communication requirements for your target as you plan your job search process. Some fields, such as education, law, sales, consulting, and public relations, heavily emphasize communication, so each and every correspondence has extra weight. Your job search communication becomes a proxy for your potential communication on the job.

The communication requirements may influence the structure of the process. For communication-focused fields, a presentation as part of the interview process may be required. For other fields that are not communication heavy, such as accounting or IT, you likely will not do a presentation (you may for senior roles, but not generally). Start brushing up on presentation skills now if your job search may specifically require this.

Improve Communication Skills with Deliberate Focus and Practice

Now you know the general ways communication skills enter the job search equation, as well as specific ways that different fields may use communication skills to evaluate potential job candidates. With the importance of communication skills in mind, you can deliberately focus and practice to improve your communication skills:

- Start the habit of editing all of your written communication, including e-mails, for correct spelling and grammar. Learn to use the spell check, dictionary, and other helpful functions in your word-processing and e-mail programs.
- Review proper business letter formats. We will review cover letters and thank-you letters later in this book, but general e-mails back and forth also need to be handled with proper care.
- Do an audit of your verbal communication style. Do you talk too fast? Do you enunciate? Are you able to get to the point concisely, or do you ramble? Do you stutter or sound nervous? Tape yourself or have a friend give you an objective critique of your verbal skills now, so you know what needs work.
- Practice delivering presentations. If you can take a class that has a presentation opportunity, that is a good option. You might also join a club or professional group where you have a chance to present.
- Practice **active listening**. In your daily conversations, become aware of how well you listen. Are you jumping to what you want to say? Could you paraphrase what the other person is saying?
- Practice listening in different scenarios. Do you listen well over the phone? Can you focus in a group and one on one? The job search involves many different situations, so your listening skills will be tested in many different ways.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Communication skills, including written, verbal, presentation, and listening skills, are required throughout the job search.
- All employers consider communication skills when they evaluate candidates.
- Some fields are communication focused, so the general communication during the job search serves as a proxy for your job skills.
- Some fields build different communication hurdles, such as presentations, directly into the job search process.

- You can improve your communication skills by focusing on them now and practicing good communication habits.

Exercises

1. What are your communication strengths and weaknesses? Force yourself to rank your verbal, written, presentation, and listening skills from one to four, in order of proficiency.
2. How will you modify your search to take advantage of your individual communication strengths? Do you have any job interests where communication skills play a particularly important role? Start saving writing samples and looking for opportunities to make presentations.
3. Go back to the list of activities to try in the previous section on improving your communication skills. Schedule in your calendar at least three, if not all, activities suggested.
4. What resources do you need to improve your problem communication areas?

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12.4: Prerequisite 3- Poise

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the importance of physical appearance and nonverbal communication in the job search.
2. Learn ways to enhance your poise.

Your Poise Communicates Volumes without You Saying a Word

The way you dress, carry yourself, and physically behave also communicate your job potential. Your nonverbal communication either supports the things you say and how you say them, or it undermines you. If you are an articulate, well-spoken person but dress in a sloppy manner, slouch, and fidget, then your actions belie your verbal communication. Therefore, poise goes hand in hand with communication as a fundamental prerequisite for your search.



Professional Dress Signals Your Professional Maturity

What you wear to different job search functions signals neatness, professionalism, and understanding of general business protocol. A business suit in a dark neutral color is the standard. Black, blue, brown, and gray are neutral colors. Some industries and specific companies within industries dress more casually, so it's important to consult an experienced person in the specific industries and companies that interest you for the most relevant guidelines. For example, in media and fashion, your dress is a signal of how much you know and can fit into that field. A dark suit would be too bland and look out of place at a fashion-forward company.

For general functions, such as career fairs or professional mixers, stick to proper business attire. Even if there are a range of dress options in attendance, it's best to be more formally dressed. In addition, most job seekers look more professional and put together with a business suit. You probably will carry yourself more professionally, have better posture, and be more alert in a business suit than in casual attire.

If you are attending an event or an interview where business casual is stipulated, this is still neater and more formal than casual attire. Khakis rather than jeans, dress slacks and a sport coat for men, and a sweater set for women are some examples of business casual.

Here is a checklist of things to remember about dressing professionally:

- Dark, neutral colors and a matching suit jacket and slacks or skirt are the standard.
- Shoes should be comfortable and polished. No open-toed styles or very high heels; even in dressy styles, shoes with open toes or very high heels look unprofessional.
- What you wear beneath the jacket will also be seen. For men, blue or white dress shirts are standard, though some other colors are acceptable. For women, stick to blouses with sleeves in case you take your jacket off (sleeveless is too casual). Women should also stay away from frilly camisoles—they can be seen under your jacket and still look like lingerie.
- Cover yourself. No body hair for men or cleavage for women should be visible. Women should make sure skirt lengths are not too short.
- Avoid overly printed ties, lots of jewelry, accessories, or too much makeup, all of which detract from a professional appearance.
- Have a professional briefcase or bag. A backpack or other casual bag diminishes the professional image.
- Fragrance is not recommended because some people are allergic.
- Keep hair neat and off your face so interviewers can see you.
- Don't wait until you start your job search to make sure you have the appropriate clothes. It takes time to ensure the fit and length is right, and you may need tailoring or other services.

The Way You Carry Yourself Also Signals Professionalism

If you have a great suit but you slouch, that is an incomplete package. Good posture, steady eye contact, and a firm handshake are additional fundamentals to the job search process. Even if you think this is common sense, don't assume that you will be 100 percent put together once your search starts. If you are not used to dressing professionally and interacting with people in a formal business context, then you may have a weak handshake or poor eye contact and not realize it. Before you get busy with interviews, see if you can attend a business event just as a practice run.

Here is a checklist of things to remember about carrying yourself professionally:

- Maintain good posture. You don't want to be stiff, but you want to stand and sit straight, as it keeps you looking and feeling alert. Practice maintaining good posture over time (interviews can last thirty minutes or longer).
- Maintain steady eye contact, but not 100 percent of the time. It's preferable to look away from time to time, as glaring or staring at someone makes them uncomfortable.
- Have a firm handshake. Don't break the person's hand, but don't be hesitant or limp, either.
- Develop a habit of turning off and not checking your cell phone when you are talking to someone.
- Practice eating and speaking formally. There will be situations where you are networking or even interviewing over a meal. You don't want a real interview to be the first time you experience formal dining and conversation.

Body Language and Nonverbal Communication Support or Undermine Your Words

You might look great, carry yourself well, and speak eloquently, but you also communicate with physical gestures and other nonverbal cues. Pay attention to how you use your body during conversations and meetings. You might find that you can't sit still for long periods of time or that you use a lot of distracting hand gestures. You might be too still and miss opportunities to accentuate points with a nod of the head or finger movement.

Some recruiter pet peeves include the following:

- Looking over the recruiter's shoulder. What are you staring at?
- Fidgeting constantly. How are you going to appear to clients if you can't sit still?
- Gesticulating in an overly dramatic way. Don't slam your hands down emphatically on the recruiter's desk. It looks threatening, not forceful.
- Lack of common courtesy, for example, not covering your mouth when you yawn, cough, or sneeze. How could an employer put you in front of a client with that unmannerly behavior?
- Checking cell phones during meetings or interviews. Is this job less important to you than your cell phone calls?

Start practicing good manners now so these habits are ingrained behaviors before your job search.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Poise refers to professional dress, carriage, appropriate body language, and nonverbal communication skills. Poise is critical to the job search.
- Good poise complements and supports the other good job search fundamentals, while lack of poise detracts from them.
- Prepare and practice now to incorporate poise into your regular behavior.

Exercises

1. Review your interview clothes. Practice meeting with a friendly contact to check your handshake, eye contact, and posture. Practice interviewing with a friendly contact and ask him or her to watch for your nonverbal communication. What area of poise is your strongest and weakest in the job search?
2. What will you do now to work on problem areas? If your interview clothes need tailoring or additions, where can you shop or find a tailor? If your carriage or body language is lacking, do you have additional friendly contacts, even family, with whom you can practice getting through a conversation with upright posture, good eye contact, and appropriate gestures?
3. Check for resources in your school or community library, such as opportunities to practice or books specifically dedicated to professional image or style.

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12.5: Prerequisite 4- Resources

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand what things you need and can put in place now to support your job search.
2. Identify support systems for your job search.

Physical Resources and Supplies to Launch a Productive Job Search

In a way, the resources you need for your job search can be broken down into three categories:

1. Time
2. Space
3. Money

Time includes not just the time for the six steps of the process (and to work on the fundamentals discussed in this chapter) but also the time away from your current activities. As you add the job search to your calendar, what will you take away?

Space includes the place where you will be doing the work of your job search—computer, phone, desk, a quiet area to focus. Your space must be outfitted with the right equipment but also include fast Internet access, paper, pens, postage and mailing supplies, and other office essentials.

Money is required to outfit your space and for your supplies. In the discussion on professional dress, there may be items listed that you need to purchase. Your job search will require travel to interviews. Networking might entail paying a membership fee to a group or an event fee for a professional mixer. Part of your research strategy might involve taking people to lunch in exchange for information. Many areas of the job search will require a financial investment.

Ideas and Support Systems to Help You Find and Manage Your Time

Finding and managing your time will require trade-offs. A proactive job search takes ten to fifteen hours per week. You will need to take this time from other activities. Before your job search starts, take an inventory of everything that is taking up your time. Create a comprehensive calendar that includes the following:

- Major trips or vacations when you will physically be away
- Critical projects, papers due, or exam weeks when you will be busier than usual
- Regular daily, weekly, or monthly appointments, such as classes, club meetings, or gym workouts
- Job search events that you know about in advance (for many students, include specific deadlines set by your school, such as when you should submit your résumé to the employers coming to campus)

Create a comprehensive activity list that includes necessary but non-time-specific activities:

- Homework
- Laundry and housework
- Exercise and self-care
- Volunteer work
- Hobbies
- Ten to fifteen hours of job search activity, some of which must be done during normal business hours

Look at the unscheduled times and your list of activities. Block out where things might go. Be realistic about when you do your best work. If you have more energy in the morning, reserve that time for your job search activity. If you know you can't concentrate by end of day, use that time for nonthinking activities, such as housework or exercise.

Well before you start your job search, start moving activities around and make arrangements for your replacement if you need to

drop activities. You want to have a schedule in place that supports your job search, not crowds it out.

Ideas and Support Systems to Help You Set Up Your Work Space

Your job search is a project, so you need a comprehensive work space. Stocking up supplies in advance of your search enables you to stay focused and not get derailed by a surprise trip to the store. You also want to prepare in advance for services you may need, such as printing, copying, mailing, and faxing. Know the hours of the closest post office and office supply and service store. Know where you can send and receive faxes and where you can do special copying, binding, or printing.

Here is a checklist of ideas for a comprehensive work space:

- Build a surplus of office essentials, such as paper, pens, mail supplies, staples, and so forth.
- Have a pen and paper by all phones if you share your workspace with others. This way, your cohabitants can easily take messages for you.
- Audit your computer, phone, and Internet access to ensure that your equipment and communication lines are in order. If you have a slow Internet connection, research public access places, such as libraries, and list their availability.
- Create a professional voice mail message for all phones, including your cell phone.
- List post office, office supply, and service store addresses and hours.
- Figure out how to back up computer files, change printer ink, unblock paper jams, and any other minor but critical support services for your equipment. You do not want to be late for a meeting because you were printing a résumé at the last minute and it got stuck in the printer.
- Check for privacy. If your work space is part of your bedroom and you will be making video calls, invest in a folding screen or figure out how to position the webcam to keep your environment looking professional.
- Check for quiet. Your job search will involve a lot of phone calls, including interviews. Plan now for a space where you can be heard, hear well, and concentrate.
- Make it a space that energizes and inspires you. Add pictures, fresh flowers, and so forth.

If you have a very organized friend, enlist his or her help in setting up and decorating your space.

Ideas and Support Systems to Help Manage Your Money

Know your budget for your job search essentials in advance. You can price out the work space items listed previously and the professional dress requirements listed earlier. For job search events you already know about, budget for registration fees and transportation costs. If you want to work with a career coach, factor that into your budget.

Another financial consideration is the opportunity cost of the time spent on your search, as opposed to working. If you have to drop a part-time job to launch your search, there is the cost of lost wages. If you are a student and your job search extends past graduation, there is the cost of supporting yourself while you look. How will you pay for your living expenses? How long can you sustain yourself without a job?

Your financial situation affects the execution and timing of your job search, so you need to decide on these issues prior to your search. If you are relying on family or friends to help with your living expenses, have a candid conversation about both of your expectations before you start your search.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Your job search requires time, space, and money resources.
- You need to allocate these resources to your search and decide on the trade-offs necessary to spend your time, space, and money on your search, as opposed to other objectives.
- Line up your resources before your job search so that you create an environment that supports your job search.

EXERCISES

1. Do you have time, space, and money set aside for your job search? Review the sections with suggested activities and actually set up your schedule, audit your workspace, and create a budget.
2. In what areas are you underresourced or lacking? Do you need to talk to family members about financial support? Do you need to find the closest office supply and services store? Do you have an unrealistic amount of activities in your current

schedule and need to make cuts?

3. What specific next steps will you take to line up your resources prior to your job search? Schedule a specific date and time for the conversation with family. Schedule a specific date and time to visit office supply stores. Pick activities to drop and make arrangements to delegate these or get out of any commitments.

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12.6: State of the Market- Launching Your Job Search at This Time

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the current job market and how it impacts your overall job search.
2. Learn strategies to tailor your job search to this market.

Three Trends in the Twenty-First-Century Job Search

Today's job search can be characterized by three emerging trends:

1. 24/7 activity
2. An entrepreneurial approach
3. A multigenerational workforce

24/7 Job Search

With mobile devices and broadband Internet access, it is very easy to connect to people at all times of the day and on weekends. While formal job search activity still centers on normal business hours, it is easier and therefore more acceptable for job search activity to take place at all hours. It can be the middle of the night, and therefore you can still do the following:

- Draft cover letters and other marketing material using your word-processing software.
- Research companies over the Internet.
- Connect with people via social media.

Other job candidates will be working hard on their search, so you might feel obligated to compete with this extra time, hence the 24/7 job search. Even if you want to set time boundaries, jobs are increasingly global, so there is a significant chance that you might have to network and interview with people in time zones across the world. Finally, with job insecurity high after the recent recession, it is less likely that you will quit your job outright to devote time to your search. Students don't have the option to opt out of classes during their job search, so the job search activity is on top of everything else, extending your typical day.

Entrepreneurial Approach

With the tight labor market (more available job candidates than employers ready to hire), the competition is intense. The rise of social media gives job seekers the ability to brand themselves in a way formerly associated only with companies. Job seekers are marketing their job potential the way companies market goods and services. This requires job seekers to develop branding, marketing, and sales skills normally associated with entrepreneurs.

Many job seekers are turning to consulting and freelancing during a protracted job search, thus becoming entrepreneurs by default. Even recent graduates are starting businesses, piecing together several smaller projects rather than a single internship, and consulting or interning after graduating in lieu of full-time employment. Your ability to adopt an entrepreneurial approach to your job search will be necessary as your competition increasingly does the same.

Multigenerational Workforce

There are four generations currently in the workforce:

1. Generation Y, born between 1980 and 1995
2. Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980

3. Baby boomers, born between 1945 and 1964
4. Traditionalists, born before 1945

Each generation grew up with different work expectations, technology, and communication styles. There is a culture clash as four generations work closely together. Much has been made in the media of the generational clash. As a job seeker, you will likely interview with someone from a different generation who has specific preconceptions of you. You may not change your job search tactics in anticipation of a clash that may not arise, but you want to be sensitive to some of the anxiety in the market.

What the Emerging Trends Mean for Your Job Search

You can use the 24/7 job search trend to your advantage by using the connectivity as extra time and resources for your job search. If you are comfortable with online research and online social networks, these are helpful tools to add to your job search.

You can incorporate the entrepreneurial techniques of branding, marketing, and sales into the way you brand, market, and sell yourself, thus enhancing your job search skills. If you can get consulting or freelance work while you search, that is a bonus for your finances and your experience base.

The multigenerational workforce is ripe for conflict, but there are also additional opportunities to add value as a collaborative team player. Be aware that communication styles, work styles, and expectations are different among the generations. Make a concerted effort to build rapport when you are dealing with everyone, but especially people in different generations from yourself. Do not assume that they share your same preferences.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The current job market is characterized by 24/7 activity, increased entrepreneurship, and a multigenerational workforce.
- Savvy job seekers can incorporate these trends into their job search to increase their value over the competition.

Exercises

1. Do you hear about these trends for the areas that you are targeting for your job search?
2. How are you going to set boundaries for yourself so you don't fall into the trap of looking for a job 24/7?
3. If the notion of acting entrepreneurially appeals to you, add books about branding, marketing, and sales to your job search reading list.
4. Write down assumptions you have about the different generations, including your generation. Actually seek out people in those generations and ask them to share their assumptions. Compare your results to increase your awareness and open the lines of communication.

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13: STEP 4 - NETWORK EFFECTIVELY

13.1: The Four Stages of Networking
13.2: Your Networking Pitch
13.3: How to Build Your Network
13.4: Networking with Executives and Recruiters
13.5: Social Networking
14.6: Chapter Review and Exercises

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13.1: The Four Stages of Networking

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the four stages of networking and why you need to follow the steps sequentially.
2. Learn why follow-up could be the most important component of all four stages of networking.

Networking consists of four stages, and the sequential order of the four stages is extremely important:

1. Research
2. The approach
3. The follow-up
4. The request

We all know individuals who call us only when they need something. They use only two of the four steps: they go from the approach right to the request. We know how we feel when this happens. When these people contact us, we no doubt say to ourselves, "I wonder what they want now." To avoid this annoying behavior, you must follow the four steps sequentially. Let's review each one in the order they should be used.

Research

Research enables you to identify key things and key people with whom you should be networking. In a job search, you should aim your research to answer the following questions:

- What details are available about the company of interest?
- What specific departments exist within the company?
- Who are the individuals who run those departments (the decision makers)?
- Does this company recruit on campus?
- Does HR lead the company's recruiting efforts, or do the hiring managers find their own talent (for the most part)?
- What is the profitability of each department?
- What companies compete against the main company and against the specific departments (they might be different)?
- What are the top products and services produced?
- What are the goals of the company or the department?
- What recent challenges and trends are they are experiencing?

Once you identify these items, research everything about them through company websites, Google, LinkedIn, and the people in your network. The more information you gather, the more knowledgeable you will be about your job search, and the more likely you will impress those with whom you meet and network.

The Approach

Once you have identified the individuals with whom you would like to network or contact, think about how you would like to contact them. Great care should be taken with this step because first impressions matter. Things to consider include the following:

- Do you know anyone who can make a *warm* introduction? Cold contacts are clearly not as effective as an introduction from someone who knows both parties. If you are fortunate enough to have such a contact, approach them to make the connection. Never ask for a job. Instead, ask that they make an introduction. People you already know can make introductions:
  - Friends and family
  - Current or past employees of the company (this includes classmates who have interned at companies of interest)
  - Peers at school
  - Career services
  - Other school contacts, including professors, administrators, and so on
- If you must make a *cold* contact, your research can be used to impress. In a cover letter, you may write intelligently and compellingly about how you can be instrumental in the company because you can do x, y, or z. Be specific about your

knowledge of the company, the departments, and the company's competitors. Know why another company is challenging them, or why they are clearly the industry leader with no close second. Refer to Chapter 5, part II of this textbook, for complete information on how to write a compelling cover letter.

Reconnect with Old Contacts

If you have great contacts, but you haven't kept in touch with them, you can use different ways to reconnect, but take care to not offend. The first time you reconnect, it cannot be about your job search. You cannot ask for anything that first time, except how the other person is doing. The point of reconnecting is to reestablish the relationship. The other person is the focus and by listening to them and being interested, you actually help yourself because you will learn about what's going on in the market and what people care about, and you can act on this *later*.

This is why maintaining your network is so critical when you don't need anything. It takes the time pressure off you to accomplish anything. If, however, you have waited until you are in need to work on your network, then you must discipline yourself to make those early contacts about your network and not about yourself. One good exercise is to take three to five contacts per day and just say hello. This gets you in the habit of regularly reaching out to your network, so that when you actually have a question to ask or even a favor, the request isn't the only time you have reached out.

When using LinkedIn, remind people how you know each other. Don't use those template connection invitations. Compose a personal message about where you met, when you last spoke, or something else that shows genuine interest. Add an updated and professional-looking picture of yourself so that old connections who may have forgotten your name can recognize you visually.

The Follow-Up

A networking **paradox** is that you cannot get a job without networking, but the biggest networking pet peeve is when someone asks for a job. Remember that no one wants to be contacted only in times of need. That's what gives networking a bad reputation.

Once you have made the contact, the very next step is to follow up and maintain the networking contact. Immediately after meeting someone, following either a marketing event of some kind, a networking meeting, or an interview, you should send that person an e-mail that mentions that you were happy to see or meet them, references something you discussed (to at the very least remind them of your conversation), and asks for nothing in return.

Recruiters and hiring managers appreciate e-mails that reiterate interest or share an item that may be of interest to them, but what isn't appreciated is requiring that they get back regarding a date or detail of some kind. Avoid if it at all possible. The best way to build a solid network is to contact people when you don't need anything. Even if you are a job seeker and are networking to jump-start your search, you don't want your first contact (or even your second) to be a request for help. Instead, maintain (or restart) your network by reaching out to people regularly—without asking for anything.

If you plan to add someone to your network for the long term, you should follow up with that person several times a year. Asking for help or just talking about yourself doesn't count. Follow up in a way that focuses on them and what you can do for them, not the other way around. Focus on giving away—not selling. Here are some creative ways to reach out:

- *Say thank you*: Thank them for their time in meeting with you, and for the information they shared. Add something you discussed to the thank-you note to support the fact that you were listening and comprehending. Set the stage for future networking contact.
- *Give a results update*: If someone gave you advice, let them know what you did with it. Perhaps someone made a connection that resulted in another connection. Keep them updated and thank them again for the connection.
- *Spread holiday cheer*: Send holiday cards, and include some information about yourself to keep people updated. Remember to note information you receive in return (e.g., changes of address, changes of employment). Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year's Day, Easter, the Fourth of July, Passover, Memorial Day, and Thanksgiving are great times to keep in touch, but you might even use the arrival of spring as a reason to reach out.
- *Announce a life change*: You might announce the end of the school year, entrance to an internship, entry to a graduate degree program, a promotion, or just an e-mail change. When you send out announcements, include news about other areas of your life. Always be upbeat. Job seekers can let their network know they are looking in specific industries, but shouldn't immediately ask for help. For job seekers who have already announced they are looking, consider a follow-up contact letting people know where you are in your search.
- *Offer an interesting article*: Pick something about their industry and company, and it shows you are on top of news that matters to them. This works well for professional contacts, with whom you may not be on a familiar enough basis for a holiday

card or personal announcement. An insightful article lets the contact know you are thinking of them and you understand what's important in their industry.

- *Introduce a new contact*: When you introduce people to your network, not only do you expand the contacts of the person you introduce, but you also get an opportunity to catch up with your network. Like sending an interesting article, an interesting referral lets the contact know you are knowledgeable about their needs and willing to help.
- *Simply say hello*: Sometimes a person just pops into your head. Maybe they resemble someone on TV. Maybe you heard a joke they would enjoy. Follow your instinct and call or e-mail to say hello. It is always nice to know people are thinking of you.
- *Offer congratulations*: Did they make one of those business magazine top lists (e.g., Most Innovative, Most Admired, Best Places to Work)? If you hear good news about someone or their company, point it out.
- *Make a recommendation*: If you read a good book, try a good restaurant, and so forth, pass that on. (Make sure to keep it professional because your referrals are always a reflection on you.)

Use these nine methods, timed six to seven weeks apart, and you have almost a year of follow up. Now you have no excuse not to maintain your network.

Figure 7.2 and Figure 7.3 are examples of a follow-up note after a networking meeting.



Dan,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me yesterday. Our conversation was very informative and reinforced my commitment to pursuing an internship in brand management at Nestlé.

After speaking with you I am even more confident that Nestlé would be the best possible place for my career to begin. Your goals for next year of 20 percent brand expansion and creative client focus fit my background very closely.

During my last internship, my team brainstormed on how to focus on our niche market of 35 to 40 year olds, and some of our recommendations are being considered for implementation this year. In addition, my strengths include an exceptional work ethic, strong marketing and teamwork skills, and very clear communication skills. I am confident that I would be a strong contributor to the Nestlé organization from day one.

Additionally, as per our discussion last night, I've attached the article that ran in my school paper which covered the marketing competition held at my school. My team came in second place amongst 17 teams and the competition was fierce.

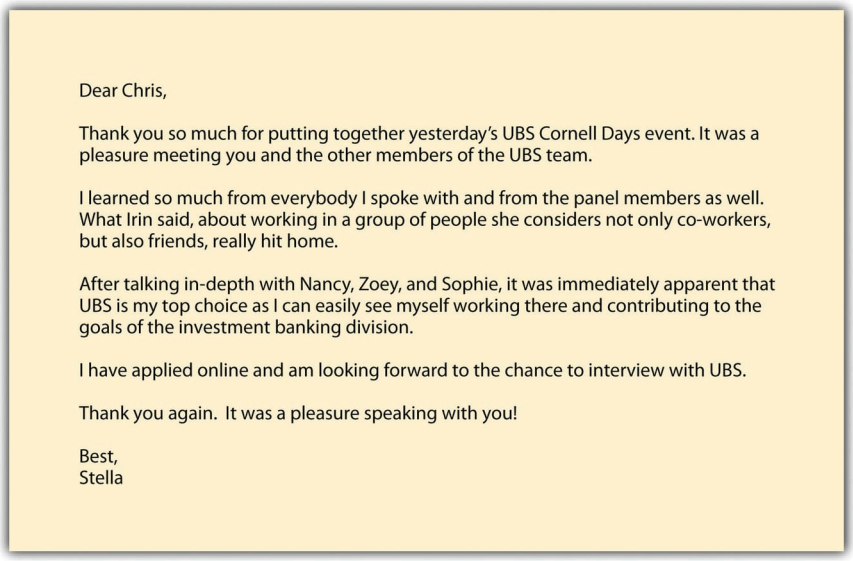
I appreciate all the advice that you gave me and plan to use it to the utmost. Your enthusiasm for working at Nestlé left a very strong impression on me.

I hope to be selected to interview in October, and once again, I thank you for all of your guidance and your time.

Thank you again.

Regards,
Christina

Figure 13.1.1:Example Follow-Up Note



Dear Chris,

Thank you so much for putting together yesterday's UBS Cornell Days event. It was a pleasure meeting you and the other members of the UBS team.

I learned so much from everybody I spoke with and from the panel members as well. What Irin said, about working in a group of people she considers not only co-workers, but also friends, really hit home.

After talking in-depth with Nancy, Zoey, and Sophie, it was immediately apparent that UBS is my top choice as I can easily see myself working there and contributing to the goals of the investment banking division.

I have applied online and am looking forward to the chance to interview with UBS.

Thank you again. It was a pleasure speaking with you!

Best,
Stella

Figure 13.1.2: Example Follow-Up Note 2

The Request

Only when you have completed the first three steps should you make a request. The quality of your network depends on following this checklist. It is tempting to jump from step 2 (the approach) to step 4 (the request), but you do so at the risk of not building a quality network on which you can rely for your professional success.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Networking has four distinct stages. Effective networkers shouldn't take shortcuts.
- Research, the first stage of networking, enables you to identify the key things and key people with whom you should be networking.
- Warm introductions are almost always more effective than cold calls.
- Reconnecting with old contacts is important, but take care when doing so.
- Follow-up is perhaps the most important part of networking because it helps the relationship to grow.

Exercises

1. Select a company of interest and begin to research key players at that company using the company website, http://www.linkedin.com, and your networking contacts.
2. Think about how to contact key decision makers at the companies in which you are most interested.
3. Follow up quickly and effectively after meeting new people. Think about how to continue the relationship, and focus on the giving aspect of the relationship.

Chapter 14.1 – The Four Stages of Networking

For Community College Students Building Their Future

Why Networking Matters More Than Ever

You've probably heard people say, *"It's not what you know, it's who you know."*
But in today's world—where careers in AI, tech, social media, health sciences, and creative industries are exploding—networking isn't about collecting business cards or shaking hands in a suit.

Networking is about **building real relationships**, online and offline, with people who can help you grow.

Whether you dream of becoming a nurse, programmer, teacher, designer, psychologist, mechanic, or AI prompt engineer… the same four stages of networking apply.



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1. Research: Become a Career Detective 🕵️‍♂️

Before reaching out to anyone, you need to know who you're trying to connect with—and why.

This is where you gather information about:

- The company
- The role or industry
- The people doing the hiring
- What's new or changing in the field
- What problems they're trying to solve

Modern research tools:

- **LinkedIn** (top choice)
- **Company websites**
- **TikTok & Instagram insights** (yes—many companies post "day in the life" videos)
- **Glassdoor** (culture + salaries)
- **Google News**
- **AI tools** like ChatGPT for summaries
- **Industry-specific sites**, like:
  - *Tech & AI:* GitHub, HuggingFace, Kaggle
  - *Creative fields:* Behance, Dribbble
  - *Healthcare:* Hospital career pages
  - *Education:* EdJoin

Questions to research:

- What does the company do?
- What problems are they trying to solve?
- Who is in charge of the department you want to join?
- What skills or certifications are most valued?
- How is AI changing the field?
- Which competitors are challenging them?

Good research makes you sound confident, prepared, and curious—qualities employers love.

---

2. The Approach: Making a Connection (Without Being Weird) 🎤

Now that you know who your potential connections are, you're ready to reach out.

Warm introductions (best)

Someone who knows both of you connects you:

- A friend or family member
- Classmates or former coworkers
- Professors or counselors
- Career center staff
- Student clubs or organizations

You simply ask:

> "Hi, I'm interested in learning more about what you do at [company]. Would you be open to introducing me?"

Cold outreach (still great if done well)

When you don't know them yet:

- Send a short, personalized LinkedIn message
- Mention something specific from your research
- Keep your tone friendly, not formal or robotic

Example:

> "Hi Alex! I saw your TikTok about working as a UX designer at Netflix. I'm a community college student exploring career paths, and your journey really inspired me. If you're open to it, I'd love to ask you two quick questions about your experience."

Important:
⚠️ **DO NOT ask for a job.**
⚠️ **Keep your first message short.**
⚠️ **Be real. Be human. Be kind.**

---

3. The Follow-Up: The Secret Superpower 🔄

Follow-up is **THE key** to long-lasting connections.

People remember you when you:

- Say thank you
- Update them on how their advice helped
- Share something useful to them
- Reach out without needing anything

Here are modern, non-cringey ways to follow up:

✔ Offer value

Send an article or TikTok relevant to their field:

> "Thought of you when I saw this update about AI tools being used in education!"

✔ Congratulate them

New job? New project? LinkedIn post?
A simple "Congrats!" goes a long way.

✔ Update them

> "Your advice helped me build my first portfolio—thank you again!"

✔ Seasonal check-ins

A quick holiday or "Hope your semester is going well!" message keeps the connection alive.

Pro tip:
Follow up every **6–8 weeks** to stay on people's radar—without overwhelming them.

---

4. The Request: AFTER You've Built the Relationship 🙌

Only after you've done all three earlier steps should you make a request, such as:

- "Do you know anyone I could talk to about internships?"
- "Would you be open to giving feedback on my resume?"
- "Are there upcoming openings I should watch for?"

Remember:
You've earned this moment by building a relationship—not by showing up out of nowhere.

Key Takeaways

- Networking is about relationships, not favors.
- Follow the four steps in order: **Research** → **Approach** → **Follow-Up** → **Request**.
- Warm introductions are gold.
- LinkedIn, AI tools, and social platforms are your modern networking toolbox.
- Consistent follow-up builds genuine career momentum.

Exercises

1. Choose a company you're interested in and research 5 key facts about it.
2. Identify one person in that company you could approach on LinkedIn.
3. Draft a short, friendly follow-up message you could send after speaking with someone.



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13.2: Your Networking Pitch

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand why a networking pitch must be worded in a precise way that will both introduce you and create a very strong impression of your value proposition.
2. Learn how to craft a highly effective networking pitch.

A networking pitch was originally termed an **elevator pitch** because in the time an elevator takes to go between floors (generally thirty to forty seconds), you should be able to articulate your value proposition (the skills you have and the position you are seeking). The elevator pitch is now also called the professional pitch, the networking pitch, or simply, the pitch.

An pitch is crucial to your job search: it's a thirty second introduction and overview of what you are about, including your education, your work experience, and your unique value proposition. Typically, it's also your first chance to impress. You can also use it in a variety of ways:

- Whenever you meet someone new in person or by phone
- At the very beginning of an interview, to give an overview of your background
- As an introduction during networking events (mostly business, but some personal as well)

This thirty- to forty-second summary should be spoken, or delivered, in a confident, convincing manner, making a strong impression. If your pitch is too long and drawn out, it lacks **conviction**. When meeting networking contacts, recruiters, and hiring managers, this is your one chance to make a great impression and present yourself with clarity. No one wants to listen to a long, drawn-out speech. A pitch should be clear and concise, enabling the person who is listening to know exactly what type of job search candidate you are.

How do you craft an effective pitch? Three steps will ensure your success:

1. Write your pitch.
2. Edit your pitch until it sounds just right.
3. Practice delivering your pitch verbally, and edit it further as needed because we don't write the same way that we speak. Continue rehearsing and repeating your pitch to ensure that your delivery is natural, convincing, and authentic.

Write Your Pitch

Your pitch should answer the following five questions:

1. *What is your educational background*? Detail every college or university you attended, your major and minor, and your expected degree and graduation month and year (include your GPA if it's 3.3 or higher).
2. *Do you have any pertinent experience in the field in which you are interested*?
3. *What are your critical skills and strengths*? Highlight your top two or three skills.
4. *What do you want to do*? Be specific regarding industry, function, and geography (see Chapter 3).
5. *Why would you be good at the position*? Focus on presenting your top two or three skills, and the skills you have that are necessary to succeed at the job you are targeting.

Edit Your Pitch

Once your pitch is in writing, review it and edit it accordingly. You should use words that come naturally to you because the more natural the delivery, the more impressive the pitch. Here are some steps you can consider while editing your pitch:

- After you edit the one-page answers to the pitch questions, ensuring that you have covered all the important items, cut it to half a page; this forces you to prioritize the essential elements.
- After you edit the half-page document, ensuring that you have covered all the important items, cut it in half again (it's now

one-quarter of the page); this forces you to be even more ruthless in prioritizing.
- After you edit the quarter-page document, ensuring you have covered all the important items, cut it in half again, leaving only four or five key bullets; this forces you to be concise and select just the most important items.



Practice Delivering Your Pitch

Once you have the final pitch in writing, you'll need to practice, then practice, then practice some more. Your pitch should be spoken in a confident and compelling manner.

- Review your pitch to ensure it flows smoothly and addresses your career highlights, and then practice it until it's memorized. Practice until you can repeat it when someone shakes you from your sleep at 3:30 in the morning and you can maintain your passion when saying it.
- Using an accurate stopwatch or timer and a tape recorder (or answering machine) to record yourself, repeat the preceding exercise. Start with two minutes, then cut it to one minute, then cut to it thirty seconds, and, finally, cut it to fifteen seconds.

The trick to a successful pitch is to practice it ten, twenty, thirty, even forty times. Practice until it rolls off the tip of your tongue. Practice until it has your exact tone and style. Practice until it's such a natural thing to say that you don't even have to think about it before and while you are saying it.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A pitch was originally called an elevator pitch because you should have a quick, succinct way to introduce yourself should you meet someone in an elevator.
- A networking pitch is a helpful way to introduce yourself while emphasizing the quality of what you bring as a candidate.

Exercises

1. Create your pitch, using the exercise provided in this chapter.
2. Fine-tune your pitch by typing it and practicing it aloud, ensuring it has the proper tone.
3. Pair up with a buddy to practice your pitch. Critique your buddy's pitch and listen to the critique of your pitch.
4. Once you have finalized your pitch, practice saying it ten, twenty, and even thirty times until it flows smoothly.

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13.3: How to Build Your Network

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand why it's critical to build your network every day, whenever possible.
2. Learn how to focus your energies on building a network that will be effective throughout your college career and beyond.
3. Learn strategies for initiating great conversations at networking events, even if you are shy.

Building Your Network: The Real Secret to Career Success

Great networkers don't wait for opportunities—they create them. They stay connected, nurture relationships, and consistently build new ones. Yes, networking takes effort, but the payoff is huge: internships, mentors, job leads, insider insights, and a community of supporters.

The most important principle? **Be genuine.** People can sense when someone is only interested in what they can get. Authentic curiosity leads to long-lasting, mutually beneficial relationships.

A simple way to understand your networking relationships is to think about them in four quadrants:, consider the following exercise:

Quadrant I *High Willingness to Help* *Low Relevance to Job Search*	**Quadrant II** *High Willingness to Help* *High Relevance to Job Search*
Quadrant III *Low Willingness to Help* *Low Relevance to Job Search*	**Quadrant IV** *Low Willingness to Help* *High Relevance to Job Search*

Notice that the horizontal axis is relevance to job search. As you go from left to right, the relevance to your job search becomes stronger. Willingness to help is on the vertical axis; as you go higher, the willingness to help is greater.

Logically, you will want to expand your network with the people who represent the characteristics in quadrant II: high willingness to help and high relevance to your job search. These individuals include the following:

- Career services directors, career counselors, administrators
- Peers with whom you have good relationships and who could perhaps share information about their prior internships
- Professors who are impressed with your abilities and performance and who have ties to corporations of interest to you
- Alumni who want an increasing number of qualified candidates from their school to enter their company or industry
- Past employers who were very satisfied with your level of work, who have contacts at firms in which you are interested in, and so forth
- Your relative who works in a corporation, but not in your industry, who may be friends with those who do work in your industry

Logically, you will want to spend the least amount of time with people in quadrant III because they have no relevance to your job search and are not willing to help.

Quadrants I and IV remain, and very helpful networking contacts could be lurking in both of these populations.

Quadrant I: This is an excellent resource for networking contacts because these individuals are very willing to help, but perhaps their relevance to your job search isn't obvious or apparent. You never know who people know, so it's very much worth your while to get to know as many people as you can, no matter what the venue.

People in quadrant I include the following:

- A neighbor might be best friends with an administrative assistant at the company in which you are interested and that assistant could easily share your résumé with hiring managers.
- Someone with whom you are affiliated by attending a church, synagogue, or any other place of worship may have contacts in the industry in which you are interested, and can arrange for an informational interview.
- Your landscaper might have a brother who is a senior or top-level executive at the exact company in which you are interested.
- A diner owner could have a close friend who is a hospital administrator and can arrange an introduction into the health-care field.
- A teacher's husband might be a vendor to the company in which you are interested.
- Your dog groomer might have a neighbor who is a junior-level manager at a firm of interest.

The endless possibilities in this quadrant shouldn't be overlooked!

Quadrant IV's population could also represent fruitful opportunities, but you will need to ask yourself, "at what cost?" If someone highly relevant to your job search has a low willingness to help, could you turn that person around? What would it take? Often, it's best to funnel your energy and effort into the quadrants that will yield the best results: quadrants I and II.

Build Your Network

If you are shy and the thought of networking wreaks havoc with your nervous system, certain strategies you can employ immediately will allow you to benefit from networking venues of all kinds.


alt

Step 1: Observe the Networking Masters

We all know people who are natural networkers and who know how to work a room better than most. For those of you who are shy watch people who network effectively. Observe how they meet and greet a variety of people. Notice their body language, especially their smile, posture, handshake, and eye contact. You will naturally pick up pointers from these individuals.

Step 2: Pair Up with Someone Who Is a Good Networker

If you can pair up with a networking master, by all means do. If you have a friend who is extroverted, ask them to attend an event with you and pair up to meet as many people as you can. This can be a very valuable adventure that results in meeting quite a lot

of new people.

Use questions like:

1. How did you get started in your field?
2. What do you enjoy most about your work?
3. What skills are most important for success?
4. What advice would you give someone entering this field?

Step 4: Don’t Take Things Personally

When you take the plunge and begin networking and meeting individuals, try to develop a thick skin and don’t take things personally. Some individuals will not want to communicate with you, and that is fine. Move on to those who do.

Some people may not engage—and that’s okay. Move on to the next person.

Meet People at Different Venues



Where to Network in College

Your campus is full of opportunities:

Join Clubs and Organizations

Clubs connect you with motivated students and provide access to opportunities and events.

Use Career Services Early

Career services staff know employers, internship programs, and industry trends.

Talk to Your Professors

Many professors have industry experience or professional connections.

Meet People From All Areas of Campus

Connections can come from:

- Administrators
- Staff
- Classmates
- Teaching assistants
- Student workers
- Campus vendors

Stay Connected With High School Friends

They are growing their own networks too, often at different colleges.

Final Thought

Networking is not about being the most outgoing person—it's about building real, meaningful relationships that help everyone grow. Start now, stay curious, and keep in touch. Your network will take you further than you think.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Effective networkers build their network every chance they get. This includes networking with individuals they meet daily, at business events, and at social events of all kinds.
- Proactively build your network during your job search. Rather than go to lunch alone, see such outings as networking possibilities. Participate in as many events as you can and meet as many individuals as you can.
- The most helpful individuals to meet are those who are highly relevant to your job search and very willing to help.
- Many strategies exist for meeting people, even if you are shy. Observe people who network well and learn from their behavior. Pair up with someone who is a natural networker and learn from their interactions. Do not take things personally.
- You can ask many simple networking questions that will elicit substantial information from networking contacts.
- On-campus contacts can be found in every corner of your college or university. Take advantage of school clubs, meet as many administrators as possible, and remember that professors are people, too, and often have had careers in business.

Exercises

1. Create your network of one hundred people, using the 2 × 2 matrix in this section. Type the names of the individuals and how you know them. Also include the last time you contacted each person to say hello.
2. Ensure you attend at least two to three networking events in the next month.
3. Follow up with all of the individuals you have met.

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13.4: Networking with Executives and Recruiters

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand what networking strategies work best with senior people and recruiters.
2. Understand that networking works best when people are genuinely interested in people, versus getting to know others purely for personal gain.

Network with Executives

Your network should include people at all levels: your family and friends, past peers, and past managers. Follow these three suggestions to include senior people at all different levels into your network:

1. Participate in cross-functional task forces in any kind of work or educational situation. You will meet people at varying management levels and also get the chance to impress them and include them in your network.
2. Contact senior managers and thank them or compliment them on their presentation or speech at any other formal meeting. Mention something specific about what they said, especially if it helped you in some way (it increased your knowledge, made you think differently about something, gave you an idea to solve a problem, and so forth), so they know you listened and they know your comment is genuine. Continue to follow up with them in other ways (holidays, congratulate them should they get promoted, and so forth).
3. A **mentor** can give you perspective that is very objective and, in some cases, powerful. They can also make great introductions, so don't hesitate to explore this with them.

Network with Recruiters

Many job seekers feel uneasy about keeping in touch with recruiters and feel like they are being a pest. However, recruiters appreciate candidates who stay in touch, as long as it's in an unassuming way. For example, candidates should let recruiters know the latest news about them and their market, but shouldn't include a request or a need with that news.

Industry professionals offer the following networking advice regarding how job seekers can stay in touch:

- *Build the relationship before you need anything*. Xavier Roux, a partner at Redseeds Consulting, an executive search firm for management consulting, advises, "Strong candidates cultivate good relationships with recruiters when they are *not* looking for a job so that they can get help when they are."
- *Don't be afraid to follow up about a specific position that interests you*. AndrewHendricksen , a managing partner with OP/HR Group, an executive search firm focusing on technology and new media advises, "If you are very qualified you should feel comfortable making one to two cold or follow-up calls no matter what stage you are in the process, but keep in mind too many will result in your being disqualified....[Send] a follow-up action plan once you understand a hiring manager's expectations. This works especially well for people in sales and marketing or any job that requires results. If you are considered a top prospect, sending a high-level yet well-thought-out 90-day action plan can put you above your competition."
- *Contact people via social media after you have done the research and are fully prepared*. Jennifer Sobel, a recruitment manager at Disney ABC Television Group advises, "Many job seekers are desperately trying to use social networking tools to search for jobs, which is a great idea. However, they are using the tools all wrong. I must get ten to fifteen 'LinkedIn' requests per day from people searching for a job at my company. Their requests usually sound something like this: 'Hi, I don't know you but would love to work at your company. Are there any openings for me?' I would urge each job seeker to only reach out when they have identified an open position that they meet the minimum qualifications for....Not having your research done beforehand comes off as lazy and it doesn't give a recruiter any reason to help you."
- *Remember that being helpful is a two-way exchange*. Sarah Grayson, a founding partner of On-Ramps, an executive search for the social sector, advises, "It's always impressive to me when candidates refer us other strong candidates and go out of their way to stay in touch....It shows me that they know how to network and value relationships."

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Many opportunities exist to meet senior people and include them in your network. When they speak to a large group, you can send them an e-mail thanking them if you learned something from what they said.
- Mentors are a key part of your network. You should have constant interaction with them throughout your college and work career.

Exercises

1. The next time you participate in a senior-level presentation of any kind, write the presenter an e-mail or a note thanking them for their speech or presentation. Mention something specific that you learned.
2. If you have a mentor, create a schedule (every five to seven weeks) to touch base with them, inform them of your job search, or see what is happening with their career. If you don't have a mentor, think about who you would like to have as a mentor. Approach that person and simply ask if they could mentor you, and set up a time to talk with them. Remember that it's the mentee's responsibility to maintain the relationship. Such a relationship is one of give and take, and emphasizing the give makes the relationship stronger and more fruitful.

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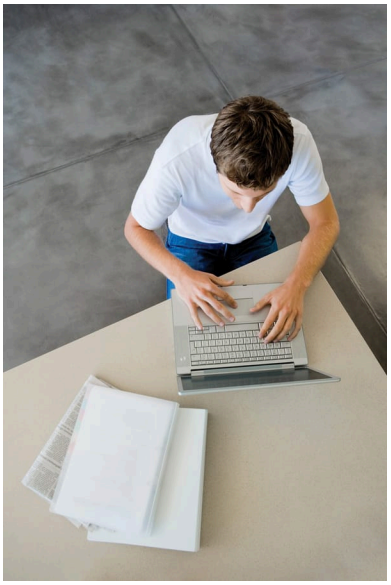
13.5: Social Networking

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn about the best social networking sites to use in your job search.
2. Understand what radical transparency means and how it can enhance or hurt your career prospects.
3. Learn about the multiple benefits of social networking sites, beyond the networking aspect.

Two main social networking sites should concern you during your job search:

1. LinkedIn
2. Facebook



Be Aware of Radical Transparency

Radical transparency was the phrase corporate firms used decades ago when they finally opened their books up to public scrutiny. Now, this phrase pertains to the radical transparency you experience by using social networking sites.

Facebook was started as a tool for college students, but companies started to enter this space in the 1990s. Companies, namely recruiters, started looking at Facebook pages and MySpace accounts when considering candidates for open positions. In fact, 40 percent or more of college admissions counselors reviewed Facebook pages before admitting candidates to their colleges and 40 percent of those who looked were not impressed by what they saw. Employers now review Facebook accounts before making hiring decisions.

A word of caution to all: Ensure your **digital dirt** is cleaned up. Your Facebook page should be professional and seek to impress anyone who reviews it, especially future employers.

Recruiters Use Social Networks

A high majority of recruiters use online social networks, such as LinkedIn, to find candidates, so job seekers absolutely need to take advantage of these tools. However, so many options are available and they are all so time consuming that job seekers risk being overwhelmed.

Make a Choice and Go Deep

Rather than spending a little time here and there on LinkedIn, Facebook, **Twitter**, **Doostang**, blogging, or building a personal website, decide what you want to accomplish and research your options to see what best suits your objectives. Devote the bulk of your time to the area that will most help you accomplish your objectives.

Place an Overall Time Limit on Online Search Activities

A thorough job search encompasses many different activities, including research, expanding your network, following up with your existing network, updating your contact database, troubleshooting your search, and more. Online networking is helpful for research, networking, and maintaining contact information, so it's worth a substantive time commitment, but not all of your time.

Offline Networking Etiquette Still Applies

The most successful online networkers share much in common with successful offline networkers. You can do several things to match their success. Be respectful of people's time. Write engaging (and grammatically correct) business communications. Ask intelligent questions. Focus on giving and helping others. Remember that online social media is one tool in the broad umbrella of networking, and common sense networking etiquette still applies.

Social Networking Isn't Just about Networking

LinkedIn and Facebook are referred to as social networking, so most job seekers use them primarily or even exclusively as networking tools. However, social networks are valuable at every stage of the job search, not just networking.

Social Networks Help with Target Identification

Use the detailed profiles in LinkedIn to get a better understanding of different job functions and career paths. If you think you want to work in **corporate philanthropy**, find people who have these jobs and review their experience, skills, and projects. Use what you learn as a guide to what you might need in your career, or at least as good issues to research.

Research Companies and Industries

Again using the profile data, pay attention to how people talk about their work. Projects on which people are working hold invaluable clues to deciphering exactly what a company does, especially when it's a small, privately held company with little published information about clients or projects. **Group discussions** are another way to get a sense for a company or industry. Find a company alumni group or industry niche and follow the discussions or ask questions.

Gather Salary Data

Use the Q&A function or specific group discussions on LinkedIn to collect data on salary, lifestyle, growth prospects, and other useful information for your own offer negotiation. Many geographies and industries are represented on online social networks, so you can specify exactly what you are looking for and likely find a close proxy.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Social networking sites like Facebook and LinkedIn are valuable networking tools.
- Radical transparency means that people can see anything you place in cyberspace. Transparency can present challenges if you have information or material that is unprofessional.
- Cleaning up your digital dirt is important when you are conducting a job search and building your career.

- Social networking sites are great networking tools, but they have many other uses as well. You can research different positions when trying to decide which would be best for you, you can get a sense for what companies are truly like directly from their employees, and you can find out salary information via the various online groups.

Exercises

1. If you don't have an account on LinkedIn, create one. Use the instructions in Chapter 5, Section 5.2 of this textbook.
2. If you have an account on LinkedIn, but it's not 100 percent complete, ensure that it is by adding a professional photo, getting recommendations from a variety of individuals, and joining groups.
3. Google yourself to clean up any digital dirt that exists in cyberspace.
4. Use LinkedIn to conduct research on a company or an industry.
5. Join various groups, such as alumni associations at your school, or industry groups of interest. Find out salary information about positions of interest.

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14.6: Chapter Review and Exercises

We know the importance of networking. For job searches and career advancement, networking enables you to hear about unadvertised jobs or plum projects that could propel your career forward. A strong network is also beneficial for day-to-day personal needs—finding a good doctor, checking on a contractor, discovering a good place for Mexican food.

How do you know your network is strong enough to support you professionally and personally? Every few months, you should test the strength of your network:

For example, if there is a position open at Pfizer and you think you would be a very strong fit for that position, is there someone in your network that you can contact that may lead you to someone within that company? It could be someone at Pfizer or at a company that recently merged with Pfizer. It could even be a competitor to Pfizer, as competitors often know and network with each other. Testing your network is a wise thing to do because you can then strengthen it proactively.

If you have fewer than twenty-five strong professional contacts you could reach out to now, your network is too small. If you have deep, quality connections with a small number, this is a good start, but you also need quantity in your network. Make it a priority to meet new professional contacts. If you have the quality and the quantity, but you don't feel like you could reach out today, then you have an issue with maintaining your network. Make it a priority to follow up with people you already know. As a bonus test, ask yourself how many people you could contact for personal needs. Look at the quantity but also the variety in your personal network.

When was the last time you had lunch or a cup of coffee with a contact other than your day-to-day colleagues or closest friends? If it is has been more than a month or you cannot remember, this is a danger sign that your networking is too **insular**. You are not exposing yourself to diverse perspectives. Remember the preceding point about how important it is to maintain your network. Earmarking some lunch hours for your networking contacts is a great way to follow up with your network.

Mentors can be a tremendous help when you need to network. When you need some off-the-record advice or candid feedback, do you have people you can query who understand your role, your company, and your industry? If not, then you are not taking advantage of mentorship in your career. Mentors are more than senior people who can move you to the next level by sheer influence, although such a powerful type of mentor can have a place in your career. Mentors can also be your peers and often are colleagues who have an insight you don't have and are willing to share it with you. Maybe they have been at the company longer and have a great sense of the politics; maybe they are superstrong presenters and can be your practice audience before you have a big meeting.

Networking isn't something you can cram into last-minute efforts. A strong network is built over time and with deliberate attention to the quantity and quality of the contacts. Audit your network on a regular basis (set Outlook to remind your quarterly) so that you consciously tend to your network before you face a crisis situation.

No one likes a person who reaches out only when they need something. No one wants to be the person who needs something, but feels all alone. Build a strong network so that you can make requests without imposing. Build a strong network so you don't have to go it alone.

Chapter Takeaways

- Networking is defined as establishing a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship of give and take, with an emphasis on the give.
- Networking is about quality and quantity.
- The power of networking is infinite because people who know, like, and trust you will open their networks to you.
- Networking has four stages: research, approach, follow-up, and request.
- Proactively reconnect with contacts, but your first reconnection should not include a request.
- Your networking pitch is crucial to your job search and should be written, edited, and practiced until it's delivered in a confident and proactive manner.
- Networks must be built consistently, on a daily basis.
- Even if you are shy, you can use simple strategies to build a network.
- Many on-campus venues exist for meeting people and building your network, including student clubs, career services, professors, and so on.

- Definite strategies can be used to include senior people and recruiters in your network.
- Social networking sites like Facebook and LinkedIn can be used in a variety of ways to increase your networking ability.
- Digital dirt can hurt your candidacy with recruiters and hiring managers alike. Present yourself professionally in person and online.
- Case studies can help to ensure business etiquette on your part and on the part of others.

Chapter Review

1. How do you define networking?
2. Why would a person open up their network to you?
3. What are the four stages of networking and why must they occur sequentially?
4. How do you reconnect with old contacts without seeming disingenuous?
5. How do you follow up with new and old networking contacts? Name three to four ways of doing so.
6. What are the key components of a networking pitch?
7. How do you construct a networking pitch?
8. How do you build your network on an ongoing basis?
9. How can you use a 2 × 2 matrix to build your network?
10. What questions can you ask during networking events to help get the conversation started?
11. What strategies exist for building a network, even if you are shy?
12. How can you build a network on campus and with whom?
13. How can you include senior people in your network? What about recruiters?
14. What social networking sites can help you network more effectively?
15. What is digital dirt and how can it hurt your job search strategies?
16. What are the differences among LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Doostang?
17. How can you create your own networking case studies to continue your learning? Reviewing case studies in effective networking behavior can be helpful in the overall process.

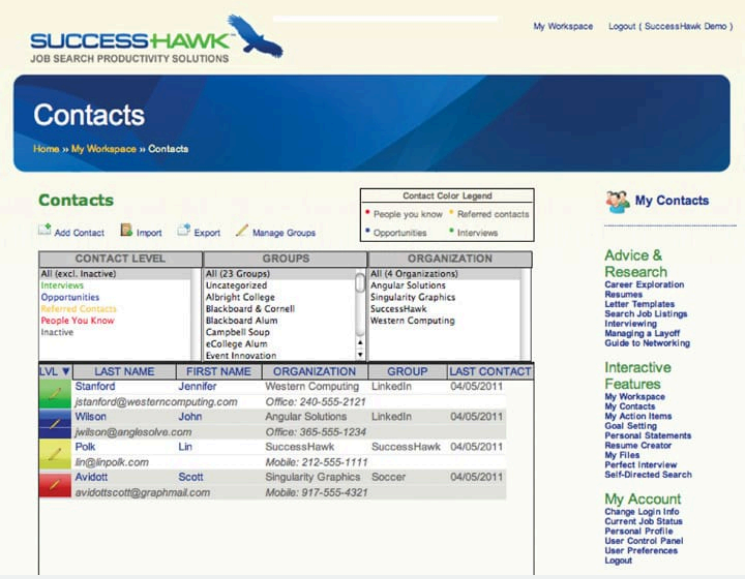
SuccessHawk: Network

Contact Manager

Contact Manager is the place to store information about your contacts, how you know them, their personal information, information about their organization, and a record of your interactions. Everything you need to know about each contact is conveniently located in one place.

Spend some time reviewing the kind of information you can save for each of your contacts. Note that SuccessHawk provides you sample icebreakers to get a conversation started and questions to ask to keep conversations going. You will find that these features adjust as your relationship with the contact develops.

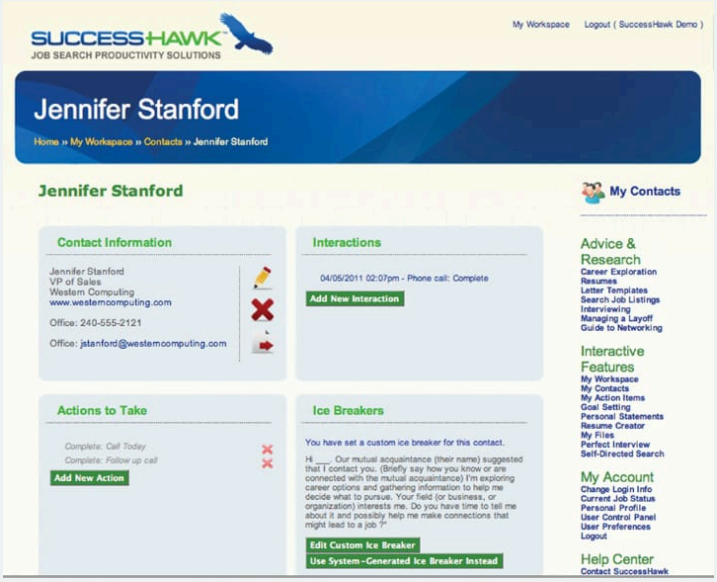
To populate Contact Manager manually, click on Add New Contact in the Contacts section of My Workspace and fill out as much information as you can in the forms provided. Or you can upload basic contact information from Microsoft Outlook, Apple Address Book, Gmail, Hotmail, and others by clicking on Import Contacts in the Contacts section of My Workspace and following the appropriate directions.



You can view a complete list of your contacts by clicking on View Contacts. Note that you can organize your contacts by the company for which they work, organizations to which they belong, your last interaction with them, or by the status of your relationship:

- People you know
- Referred contacts
- Opportunities
- Interviews

To open an individual's contact information page, simply click on the person's name.



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14: MASTER THE INTERVIEW

14.1: What to Do Before, During, and After an Interview
14.2: Different Types of Interviews
14.3: Different Types of Questions
15.3: Different Methods of Interviewing and Different Interview Venues
15.5: Chapter Review and Exercises

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14.1: What to Do Before, During, and After an Interview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn success strategies to employ before, during, and after an interview.
2. Understand that creating routines can improve your chances of success.
3. Learn effective follow-up skills that are critical to the interview process.

An interview is framed by what happens before, during and after.



Before

What happens *before* an interview will help you succeed. This includes taking the following steps:

- **Assess** your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes, and your goals
- Prepare and practice: know where you are going and get your interview suit ready in advance
- Have a routine that you will follow the day of the interview

Assess

Before you even walk into the interview room, you need to **assess** a few things:

- Your strengths and weaknesses
- Your likes and dislikes
- Your goals

Know Your Strengths and Weaknesses

It's vital that you know your strengths and weaknesses because you should compare them to the job description. Is there a match between what they are looking for and your skills and abilities? If some of a job's most important skills and abilities appear in your weakness column, there is no match. If your top three or four strengths appear in the job description, there is an obvious match.

Know Your Likes and Dislikes

A huge difference exists between spending your entire workday interacting with people versus sitting in front of a computer screen analyzing data all day. Creating a spreadsheet (or a **dashboard**) that highlights sales figures and presenting that to your boss weekly is vastly different from standing in front of a group of twenty to thirty peers and managers and presenting that data.

You must know your likes and dislikes because a workday can be long, and you should at least like most of what you will be doing. Some people are motivated by the amount of money they will make in a job, however, and if that works for them, it's sufficient. It's also important, however, to like the type of work you will be doing. It makes for a miserable day, week, month, and year if you do not.

College internships are key because they expose you to work you might like, as well as work you definitely would not like. Having as many internships as possible is a goal every college student should have. It may be helpful to know that the vast majority of companies hire mostly juniors because they will graduate in one year and some companies would like to extend full-time offers to their summer class. But don't let that dissuade you from seeking an internship if you are a freshman or sophomore. It may be more difficult to obtain an internship, but it's definitely worth the effort if it gets you closer to what you do or do not want to do on a full-time basis.

Know Your Goals

While in college, it's beneficial if your internships help you understand exactly what you want to do, and exactly what you need to do to get there. For example, if you are interested in marketing, you might have a sophomore internship at an advertising firm. You might end up doing mostly administrative work, but you get some exposure to the creative team. One of the team members allows you into a couple of meetings (with your manager's permission), and you experience what their job is like. This is it for you! This is what you want to do.

Your next logical step is to discuss with your manager if the next summer is a possibility, especially if you could work with the creative team. You hope your manager is so impressed with your work, your attention to detail, and your passion that you receive the open slot next summer in the creative department. If you aren't guaranteed a job the following summer, make it your goal to target more advertising agencies and garner a job in a creative group. The more directed you are, the more likely it is you will get the job you want.

Prepare

Preparation is key to succeeding in the interview process. The following steps will help you get a second round of interviews:

- Research the industry, the company, the competitors, and the interviewer (if possible).
- Practice answering interview questions.
- Have a full dress rehearsal three days before the interview.
- Know where you are going in advance, and get there thirty to forty-five minutes early.
- Have a routine the day of the interview.

Know the Industry, the Company, the Competitors, and the Interviewer

Completing the research step ensures that you have fully researched the company, the industry, and the competition. Knowing how to interview well within the industry and company will help you get a second interview. You also might be able to research the interviewer using Google or http://www.linkedin.com. Having relevant background information might give you helpful hints on how to position yourself.

Practice Answering Interview Questions

The section of this chapter titled "Different Types of Questions" has a detailed list of the top questions asked during an interview and strategies to succeed with each question. Pay close attention to that section to help you prepare for an actual interview. For now, before you practice actual questions, you can do four things:

1. Check with your career services department. Do they have an interview guide? Do they hold interview workshops? Will they conduct a mock interview with you? If so, take advantage of what is offered.
2. Google additional interview questions and look in the mirror as you practice answering these questions. Get an interview buddy to ask you these questions, as well as probing questions, to dig deeper into your answers.
3. Be confident when answering (even if you don't feel confident), be positive, and don't undersell yourself.
4. Focus on the results of each of your projects, tasks, and courses. A results-oriented candidate has a better chance getting the second interview and potentially the offer.

Have a Full Dress Rehearsal Three Days before the Interview

Being prepared reduces stress and improves performance. Here is a checklist of things to do and consider before your interview day.

- Make sure your interview suit is clean and fits perfectly. You should feel very comfortable in the clothes you wear for an interview. This helps build your confidence.
- Pay attention to colors and style. If you are interviewing at a company where the dress is casual, it is still best to dress in a professional, conservative manner. Men and women should consider conservative suit colors such as navy, beige, and black. White or beige shirts give a very professional appearance. If you are not sure, it might help to shop at a professional clothing store.
- Shine your shoes and be certain they are in excellent shape. Women should wear closed-toe shoes with moderate-height heels.
- Take care in all aspects of your appearance, including your hair and nails.
- Bring extra copies of your résumé.
- Write down well-researched questions before the day of the interview.
- Carry a professional-looking briefcase that has an inside portfolio containing paper and a pen.
- Keep a small bottle of water in your briefcase in case your mouth gets dry.
- Carry a cloth handkerchief in case your face perspires (for any reason). Some people sweat more than others and using a handkerchief is more professional (and sanitary) than using your hand. Avoid tissues because they can leave a residue that doesn't make a very good impression. On a somewhat related note, if you happen to sneeze during an interview, sneeze into your sleeve versus into your hands. The interviewer will not want to shake your hand otherwise!

Know Where You Are Going

Getting lost on the way to an interview will only increase your stress, so know exactly where you are going, even if you must make a trial trip. Few things are worse than being late or arriving looking like you just did the one hundred-meter dash.

Routine

Establish a Routine to Follow the Day of the Interview

The most successful interviewees have a routine that includes the following:

1. Set two alarm clocks to make sure you wake up early enough to have plenty of time to get ready for the day.
2. Have your interview suit ready to go, your shoes polished, a portfolio with two to three copies of your résumé and a working pen, and five to seven questions already written down.
3. Arrive at least thirty minutes in advance to avoid the slightest possibility of being late. You may wait in your car or a coffee shop until fifteen minutes before the interview. You don't want to let the interviewer know you are there thirty to forty-five minutes early.
4. Read or listen to something inspirational before your interview.
5. Carry a small bottle of water in your briefcase in case your mouth gets dry.

During

The moment you have been waiting for has arrived—the actual interview. Keep six things in mind:

1. Body language
2. Networking updates
3. Focus
4. **Authenticity**
5. Questions to ask toward the end of the interview
6. Questions about the next step

Body Language

It is important to be aware of nonverbal impressions such as your handshake, eye contact and eye movement, posture, and facial and hand expressions. A sizeable percentage of what we communicate comes via **body language**:

- Eye contact
- Smile
- Handshake
- Posture

Eye Contact

Maintain good eye contact throughout the interview. It's OK to look away occasionally, but, for the most part, eye contact should be steady. It shows confidence and inspires trust in all that you say.

Smile

When you are feeling stressed, a smile usually relaxes your face, which usually helps you to relax overall. An introductory or occasional smile shows that you are enjoying the conversation, and it adds to your confidence factor.

Handshake

Practice your handshake. The Goldilocks approach is best: Don't crush the interviewer's hand, but don't give a soft, floppy handshake, either. Your handshake should be firm and businesslike. If you get nervous to the point of having a sweaty palm, wipe it against your pants leg or skirt just before you shake your interviewer's hand.

Posture

Sit up straight with your shoulders back and your feet firmly planted on the ground. It's fine to cross your legs if you feel more comfortable doing so, but avoid looking too relaxed. You should be poised and fully focused on the interviewer, ensuring that you answer all questions to the best of your ability.

Networking

If you've met others in the company, mention that up front. It's a great way to open an interview because you establish that you've already met others at the company, and the interviewer also can contact them for feedback.

Focus

The more focused you are during an interview, the more successful you will be. Focus on the question asked and answer it directly. If you think you've gone off course for any reason, it's OK to ask the interviewer if you are on the right track. Your answer should have a beginning, a middle, and an end that includes a real, **tangible**, and preferably positive result. Here is an example of a question asked and an effective answer:

Question: Jenna, what was your biggest contribution to the company you interned with last summer?

Answer: Throughout the summer, we had approximately five to six team meetings where the entire staff of ten engineers and their direct reports were present to discuss the major goal of the summer: the construction of a new courthouse.

I was tasked with drafting the agenda of these meetings and the agenda notes, which verified all that was discussed and agreed upon. The agendas directed complex meetings, and the agenda notes served as key documents that verified and clarified what was discussed and agreed upon during the meetings.

My first draft of the first agenda was much too broad, but with feedback from my manager, I ensured it included all the details necessary to hold a productive and effective meeting and created the structure for the agenda notes document. The agenda notes were typically three to five pages long, and by the second meeting, I was drafting the agenda and publishing the notes without any revisions from my manager.

I received exceptional feedback from several department heads because, in many instances, the notes saved countless hours of work. For example, during the third meeting, we reversed course on a previously agreed-upon strategy for the front columns of the courthouse. One of the key assistant engineers was not at the meeting, and when her peer brought her up to speed, he forgot to mention that the columns were changed from the Roman style columns to the Grecian columns, which needed a more intricate support system from the roof to the courthouse steps. Luckily, she read my agenda notes, which highlighted any course changes in red, and saved about two weeks' worth of work, which was easily several thousand dollars. It also kept everyone on track regarding the completion date, which is June 2014.

To improve this process overall, I loaded the agenda and the notes into the department's central files so instead of relying upon hard copies or e-mailed copies, everyone had one place to go for this important document that kept everyone on track. They are still using the improvements I implemented, so I'm very proud of that.

The answer's beginning set the stage:

- Throughout the summer, we had approximately five to six team meetings, where the entire staff of ten engineers and their direct reports were present to discuss the major goal of the summer: the construction of a new courthouse.
- I was tasked with drafting the agenda of these meetings and the agenda notes, which verified all that was discussed and agreed upon.

Notice it had a middle that allowed you to understand how things were working:

- My first draft of the first agenda was much too broad, but with feedback from my manager, I edited it to include all the details necessary to hold a productive and effective meeting and create the structure for the agenda notes document.
- By the second meeting, I was drafting the agenda and publishing the notes without any revisions from my manager.

Positive momentum was built throughout the answer, and Jenna shared the positive results of her work:

- I received exceptional feedback from several department heads because in many instances, the notes saved countless hours of work.
- To improve this process overall, I loaded the agenda and the notes into the department's central files, so instead of relying upon hard copies or e-mailed copies, everyone had one place to go for this important document that kept everyone on track.
- They are still using the improvements I implemented, so I'm very proud of that.

Authenticity and Honesty

Never misrepresent anything about yourself during the interview:

- Don't indicate you are fluent in a language if you aren't.
- Don't mention you know a computer program that you clearly don't know.
- Don't mention you've been to a certain city if you haven't been there.

Interviewers have a way of discovering any misrepresentations, so save yourself misery and humiliation by being authentic and honest.

Questions to Ask toward the End of the Interview

Table 8.1 includes some topics and potential questions.

Table 14.1.1*: Topics and Potential Questions*

Topic	Question
Goals of the company, division, department	I understand that your main goal is to complete X.
	Are you pleased with your progress so far?
Goals for the position	I understand that should everything work out and I receive the offer, I would be responsible for Y.
	Would you expect that I will be able to do that in one month, three months, or six months?
Training program	Is there any training I would receive prior to my first day?
	Would I receive ongoing training, or is it basically on-the-job training?
Critical skills needed	What two or three skills do you think are absolutely necessary to succeed in this role?
Culture of the company	I've researched your website and learned that the culture is x, y, and z.
	Would you agree? Can you add anything to this?
Questions about the interviewer	How did you get your start in this business?
	What are you most proud of in your time at this company?
	What is the one thing about this company that you are most focused on improving?
	To what do you attribute your success at this company?
Additional questions	I read the speech the chairman gave at the X conference last month. In that speech, she mentioned the importance of leadership and that this company is building a strong bench strength of leaders. How is that being done?
	I recently read a few articles about this company in *The Wall Street Journal* and on *BusinessWeek*'s website. The articles seemed to say X. Do you agree?
	I see that the stock has held steady lately. Can you tell me what you think caused this increase (or decrease)?

Remember to do two things when preparing your questions for the interview:

1. Match the proper questions to the proper interviewer:
   - If you are interviewing with a managing director, ask about the goals of the company, the division, or the department. Ask about the stock of the company and ask what keeps them up at night.
   - If you are interviewing with someone in human resources, ask about what is covered during the training program. You can also ask what skills are necessary for success, about past alums from your school, and so forth.
2. Research everything you can before the interview:
   - Research the company's, the division's, and the department's goals. Study the website, speak to alumni (if possible), and attend marketing events prior to the interview.
   - Research your interviewer using Google and LinkedIn.
   - Gather information from your network. Are your interviewers alumni from your school? If you knew someone else at the company, before the interview takes place, it's fine to mention who you know and where you met.

Question Your Next Steps

Your final interview question should pertain to the next steps you should take so you will know how to follow up. Be certain your last question accomplishes the following:

- It demonstrates that you are forward thinking and that you tie up loose ends.
- It clarifies the follow-up process.

After

You can take definite steps after an interview to improve your chances of being called back for a second round or getting an offer for the position. Four steps increase your odds:

1. Send a thank-you note.
2. Update all parties relevant to your search.
3. Create your follow-up strategy.
4. Set up additional targets.

E-mail a Thank-You Note before the Day Ends

E-mail, versus a handwritten note, is preferred for many reasons:

- Your note will be immediately received by the interviewer. It's common courtesy to thank people for their time right away, and manners count quite a bit during the job search.
- Your ability to write a concise business note is demonstrated.
- Your quick communication keeps you at the top of the interviewer's mind.
- Your e-mailed thank-you note can be shared easily and often by everyone who interviewed you. This positive momentum keeps you in a positive light with all parties.
- Your e-mail is an opportunity to quickly confirm that you have the critical skills necessary to do a fantastic job. In the e-mail, you can reiterate the skills you have or mention something specific that was discussed in the interview, thus making an even stronger case for why you'd be a great hire.
- Your e-mail can include an attached article about the company or about an interest you share with the interviewer.
- Your e-mailed thank-you note is more likely to receive a response from the interviewer.

Some individuals believe a handwritten note distinguishes you from others; while that may be true, you never know if it arrived. You could send an e-mail and a handwritten note to cover all the bases, but don't use the exact wording for both notes. Using a high-quality, professional notepaper or stationery is recommended.

Figure 14.1.2: "Sample Thank-You Note 1" is a sample thank-you note an employer received after a first-round interview.



Dear Ms. Smith,

Thank you for interviewing me today for a permanent position at XYZ Company. I enjoyed meeting you and learning about your experience as it was of great interest to me. XYZ's core values of teamwork, integrity, and commitment are exactly what I look for in a company. I am confident that my analytical, teamwork, and leadership skills will enable me to contribute significantly from day one.

I continue to be very impressed with XYZ's accomplishments and all the individuals I have met who are very enthusiastic about being a part of the team, including Doris Vitiellos, Susan Pulifion, and Don Wright. I am intrigued by your company's culture and the volunteer work that XYZ is a part of.

I also enjoyed visiting the Jones construction site today. I was fortunate enough to visit the site two summers ago during my previous internship, and I was impressed by the progress that has been made.

I would like to reiterate that I am extremely interested in your opportunity. I look forward to hearing from you and hope for a positive outcome.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jenna

Figure 14.1.1: Sample Thank-You Note 1



Dear Scott,

It was a pleasure meeting you at the BlackRock Cornell Days event on Thursday. Thank you for taking time out of your busy day to speak with us. You added a lot of value to the event, and you enabled me to get a better feel for the company culture.

After meeting many different people from BlackRock, I clearly see it as the place where I would be the best fit. I believe my analytical, teamwork, and problem-solving skills would allow me to contribute quickly, and in a meaningful way.

I was especially impressed with what Barbara West said about the importance of integrity, curiosity, and critical thinking, as it resonated quite a bit with me.

Once more, I really enjoyed the event this Thursday and hope to be selected to interview with Blackrock. It was a great pleasure to meet you.

All the best,

Jerry Solomon

Figure 14.1.2: Sample Thank-You Note 2

Figure 8.3 and Figure 8.4 are additional examples of a thank-you note.



Dear Scott,

It was a pleasure meeting you at the BlackRock Cornell Days event on Thursday. Thank you for taking time out of your busy day to speak with us. You added a lot of value to the event, and you enabled me to get a better feel for the company culture.

After meeting many different people from BlackRock, I clearly see it as the place where I would be the best fit. I believe my analytical, teamwork, and problem-solving skills would allow me to contribute quickly, and in a meaningful way.

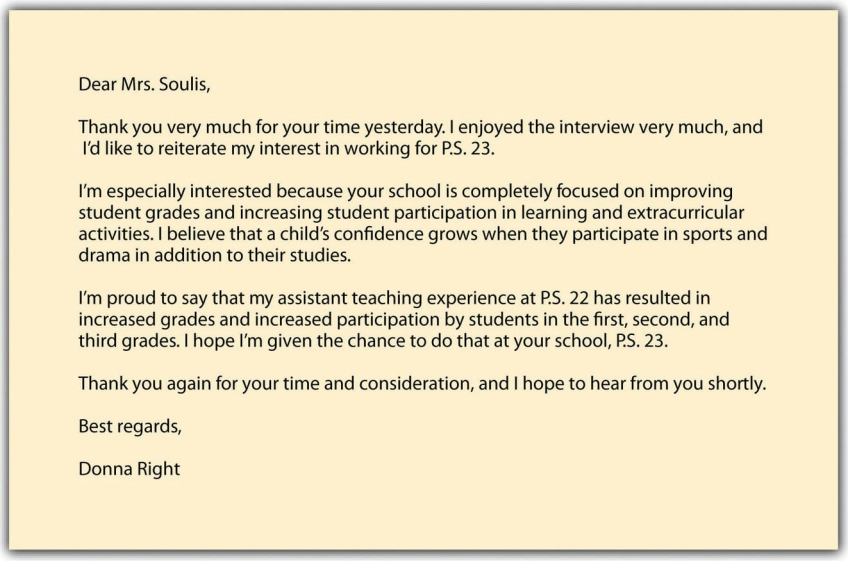
I was especially impressed with what Barbara West said about the importance of integrity, curiosity, and critical thinking, as it resonated quite a bit with me.

Once more, I really enjoyed the event this Thursday and hope to be selected to interview with Blackrock. It was a great pleasure to meet you.

All the best,

Jerry Solomon

Figure 14.1.3: Sample Thank-You Note 3



Dear Mrs. Soulis,

Thank you very much for your time yesterday. I enjoyed the interview very much, and I'd like to reiterate my interest in working for P.S. 23.

I'm especially interested because your school is completely focused on improving student grades and increasing student participation in learning and extracurricular activities. I believe that a child's confidence grows when they participate in sports and drama in addition to their studies.

I'm proud to say that my assistant teaching experience at P.S. 22 has resulted in increased grades and increased participation by students in the first, second, and third grades. I hope I'm given the chance to do that at your school, P.S. 23.

Thank you again for your time and consideration, and I hope to hear from you shortly.

Best regards,

Donna Right

Figure 14.1.4: Sample Thank-You Note 4

Update All Parties Relevant to Your Search

If you've met other people during your job search and they've been helpful in any way, send them an e-mail update as to how you've progressed. It will mostly likely be shared with others, so take great care when writing *any* note to a company representative.

Map Your Follow-Up Strategy

Once you've interviewed for a position, note your expected follow-up on your calendar. If the company representative said you will be contacted in a week, mark that on your calendar. If you aren't contacted, add another three or four days onto your calendar and then follow up with the company. After that, maintain consistent communication to help produce positive results.

Different ways to keep in touch include the following:

- Thank the company's representative for either the interview or the update.
- Give a results update.

- Send holiday greetings (throughout the year).
- Share an article about the company or about a common interest.
- Express congratulations on positive news about the representative's career or the company.
- Make a referral.

Set Up Additional Targets

You should be working on no fewer than ten targets to ensure you have activity because some targets will get *cold*, while others get *hot*. The recruiting process is, to a large extent, a numbers game. Having more companies in play increases your chances of success.

When Things Go Wrong

Sometimes no matter how well you prepare, something still goes wrong. The following strategies will help you manage when things go amiss:

- If you forget to turn your cell phone off and it rings, apologize and quickly turn off the phone. Don't look at the number of the person calling you.
- If you are late, call in advance to notify the interviewer and ask if the interview can proceed. Apologize when the interview takes place.
- If you have a wardrobe malfunction—a popped button, a run in your stockings, or you spilled coffee on your clothing—a little humor might help.
- If you went on a tangent and did not answer the question directly, check to make sure you are on track or ask that the question be repeated.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Assess your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes, and your goals before you begin the interview process.
- Knowing what to do before, during, and after an interview is critical to your overall success.
- Having a routine that you follow during the days before and the day of the interview will lower stress and increase your chances to succeed.
- The more prepared you are for an interview, the more likely you are to succeed. Control what you can through preparation and practice and when the unexpected happens, you will be in a better position to manage it.
- If things go wrong during an interview, you can take specific steps to regain your composure.
- Sending a thank-you note is a perfect way to thank the interviewer for their time and keep the lines of communication open. Identify something in the interview that you want to highlight in your note, yet keep it short and concise.

Exercises

1. Compare your list of strengths and weaknesses with those of a friend or fellow student. Seek reinforcement that your strengths are indeed your strengths and vice versa.
2. Select your interview outfit, including your suit, shoes, and briefcase or portfolio. When selecting something to wear, make sure your suit is professional and fits well. Preferred colors are navy, beige, and black. In the spring or summer, beige is an acceptable color for women. If you are not sure, ask a salesperson at a professional clothing store.
3. Draft a list of everything that you must do one, two, or three days before an interview and leave nothing to chance.
4. Practice answering a few interview questions, emphasizing the results you have achieved in various situations. Act confident even though you may not feel confident.
5. Draft a thank-you note and ask a friend or someone from career services to review it. Ensure it is grammatically correct in every way: spelling, tenses, and so forth.

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14.2: Different Types of Interviews

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the three types of interviews you will experience and learn strategies for succeeding at each of them.
2. Learn the difference between behavioral and case interviews.
3. Learn how informational interviews can lead to real interviews, and, at the very least, strong networking contacts.

You can experience three main types of interviews. Become familiar with each type and you will be more prepared and more successful:

1. Behavioral
2. Case
3. Informational



Behavioral Interview

The vast majority of interview candidates will participate in a **behavioral interview**. Behavioral questions focus on past performances versus hypothetical situations, following the **premise** that past behavior is a clear indicator of future behavior.

Later in this chapter, a comprehensive list is presented of the most-asked behavioral questions, along with strategies to answer them. Just about any other question asked is a derivative of these questions, so carefully review that section and practice your answers. Questions will relate to aspects of your past work and educational experiences. Here are four typical behavioral interview questions:

1. What was the toughest project you ever completed? Tell me about it.
2. Who was the most difficult customer you ever helped? Tell me about that situation.
3. What was your most challenging class? Tell me why it was challenging.
4. Were you ever a member of a team? What was your role, what was the goal of the team project, and did it go smoothly or was there an issue? What was the end result of the project?

The following strategies will help you answer behavioral questions successfully:

- Never mention anything negative about your past managers, past professors, or past clients. Even if a particular individual

was difficult, speak instead about the challenge and the subsequent approval you received when you succeeding in satisfying that person.
- Focus on presenting an image of an **enthusiastic** and **optimistic** problem solver. Interviewers aren't interested in someone who was downtrodden or didn't get along with the team in general.
- Answer questions directly, and include a beginning, a middle, and an end in your answer.
- Quantify your answers whenever possible. For example, if you worked in your school's library and you are asked about this work, include the number of books you managed per day, whether it was ten, one hundred, or one thousand. It's fine to estimate.
- Ensure your answer is tied to the bottom line. Using the library example once more, your answer could include that using the electronic checkout system decreased lost books by 75 percent.
- Focus on the question asked to help you avoid going off on tangents.
- Ask the interviewer to repeat the question if you think you have gone off on a **tangent** or if you didn't quite understand the question.

Case Interviews

Case interviews are predominately used in management consulting, though they are sometimes used in a variety of fields, including financial services, healthcare, consumer products, and education. A case interview is a hypothetical business problem, or *case*, that the interviewee is expected to solve during the interview. The case tests a variety of the interviewee's skills and expertise, including analysis, logic, structuring of a problem, math, accounting or economics knowledge, specific industry knowledge, communication, creativity, and ability to deliver under pressure.

Case interviews might include short questions to estimate the size of a market:

- How many teenage Americans bought hiking boots last year?
- How many Christmas trees are sold in December in California?
- How many disposable cameras are purchased in London on a single day?

The interviewer does not expect you to know the specific answer, but that you estimate a final answer based on different facts (e.g., the population of the United States). The interviewer wants you to break down this broad request into smaller steps that can be calculated to see how you structure a problem. The interviewer is also testing your basic math skills and ability to work under pressure. The following information applies to the question on hiking boots:

- The population of the United States is about 300 million people.
- It is less obvious how many of those are teenagers, so you have to estimate. If life expectancy is approximately eighty years and equal numbers in each decade (ages zero to ten, eleven to twenty, and so forth) are estimated, then there are eight buckets of ages, including a teenage bucket, so the number of people in the teenage years represents 12 to 15 percent of the total population.
- Fifteen percent of 300 million is 45 million, but not every teenager wears hiking boots and not every teenager buys boots every year.
- If you estimate that 25 percent of teenagers wear hiking boots, then teenagers who purchase hiking books number about eleven million.
- If you estimate that a typical hiker buys a new pair every other year, then about five and a half million teenagers buy hiking boots each year.

Remember that the interviewer does not expect a specific answer, but rather wants to see the process you follow to estimate the answer.

Case interviews might also be as long as thirty to forty-five minutes of broad strategy or operations questions about a detailed problem. You may be asked how to manage a hypothetical teaching situation. You may be given a hospital scenario and asked how to streamline processes. You may be given data about the company or industry involved in the question presented. You may be asked to review charts, accounting statements, or other background material, such as in the following question: The CEO of a leading national toy company is considering acquiring a popular neighborhood toy shop in Austin, Texas. How would you advise the CEO whether or not to purchase the shop?

You might then be given more information about the national toy company, or you might be expected to ask for what you need. The questions you ask are part of what the interviewer is testing because your questions reveal the types of data you think are important to assess to make the purchase decision. You are trying to assess if the neighborhood shop fits into the national

company's strategy, and, if so, whether the cost of buying and integrating the neighborhood shop will be offset by potential future revenues.

Many large consulting firms, such as McKinsey and Bain, put sample cases and solutions on their websites. Books also offer sample cases and solutions. Many schools offer case-preparation workshops via either career services or extracurricular consulting clubs. Case interviews are very different from general job interviews but are rarely used except for management consulting jobs. Therefore, don't spend any time preparing for case interviews unless you want a management consulting job. If you do want a job in management consulting, case interview practice is absolutely necessary. You will not get hired by a consulting firm without successfully completing several case interviews.

If you are interviewing outside the consulting industry, meet with a friend who is in your chosen profession. Ask them to tell you about when they were interviewed, and ask them to interview you. This can be a tremendous learning experience and can prepare you for success, so your time will be well spent in arranging a mock interview ahead of time.

Informational Interviews

Informational interviews, by their very name, give you the opportunity to gather information about the career you think you want to pursue. The more prepared you are, the better your session will be because the best informational interviews are two-way exchanges, more like a conversation than an interrogation. Your research will allow you to share vital information with your interviewer, and you both will benefit from the time spent.

Some informational interview questions focus on the interviewer:

- How did you get involved in this job, organization, or industry?
- What do you like most about it? What has been most rewarding?
- What is most challenging? Was there anything that surprised you?
- What is a typical day, week, or month?
- What skills are most critical to have, develop, and maintain to be successful?
- What personality types are most successful?
- What do you know now that you wished you knew when you started? (This is a great question to ask because it forces people to reflect on the arc of their career. It is unexpected and people appreciate this question.)

These types of questions establish rapport and will help you dig deeper and learn more about the job, the industry, and the career.

Some informational interview questions focus on the job and career:

- According to my research, the top competitors are [name the competition]. Am I missing anyone you think is significant? Is there a new player I should know about?
- I've read that [name a trend, challenge, or innovation] is a major trend, challenge, or innovation. Does this affect your job or organization? Is this overestimated in the media? Are there are other trends, challenges, or innovations I should be concerned about?
- Compensation isn't the biggest factor in accepting a job, but I'd like to have a better sense of this. I've read that it is customary for people in this job to make [name salary range] and experience [name lifestyle, travel, work culture]. Is that accurate? Are there any nuances to this that are not publicized in the general media?
- According to my research, it is customary for people in this job to have [name skills and experiences]. Is my background of [summarize your skills and experience] competitive? If you had an opening in your group, would you consider me? What do I need to do to improve my chances?
- What department are you in (i.e., the specific name if it's not revealed in their introduction or on their business card)?
- Who oversees this department?
- How does it fit in with the rest of the organization?
- Is this the typical structure or are your competitors organized differently?
- I am doing research on [name another organization] and trying to find who runs the [name department you want]. Do you know anyone there whom I could ask?

Perhaps the most important question to ask during an informational interview is this one:

- I'm currently planning to speak to [name the people]. Should anyone else be on my list? May I use your name when I contact them?

Typical informational interviews lasting about thirty to forty-five minutes can be a vital part of the research you conduct to ensure you are targeting the right types of jobs.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Knowing the different types of interviews is important to succeeding at each.
- A behavioral interview is the most expected interview form for the vast majority of positions. Behavioral interviews rely on past performance as an indication of future performance.
- Case interviews are most widely used for consulting positions. The goal of a case interview is to test your logic and ability to problem solve quickly and effectively.
- Informational interviews, reviewed in Chapter 6, the section titled Informational Interviews, are a useful way to learn about an industry and a specific job through someone who has built their career in that area. You ask most of the questions, so you must prepare well in advance to get the most amount of information possible and impress the person with whom you are meeting.
- Some interviewers may merge aspects of behavioral and case interviewing into one interview session. Knowing how to succeed at each type of interview is a wise strategy.

Exercises

1. Participate in mock interview workshops given by career services.
2. Practice answering behavioral and case interview questions.
3. Prepare for an informational interview by deciding who you would like to interview and preparing the questions you will ask.
4. Pair up with an interview buddy to practice each type of interview. Critique each other's performance.

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14.3: Different Types of Questions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the three distinct types of interview questions.
2. Understand how to answer each type of question confidently and stress a results-oriented approach.

Interviewers are most likely to ask one of four types of questions:

1. Open-ended questions
2. Specific questions
3. Motivation questions
4. Unconventional questions



Lastly, we'll review **illegal questions** that hopefully will not be a part of your interviews.

Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions don't have specific answers. They include questions like the following:

- Tell me about yourself. Walk me through your career. Why did you make the choices you made?

Such questions present an opportunity to tell your story in an engaging, articulate, and compelling way. Explain why you selected the school(s) you selected, your major and your minor, and your GPA (if it's above 3.3). Describe the jobs you've had and how you got them. Did you apply directly or did you get them through networking? What were your most significant accomplishments at each job? Highlight significant accomplishments that may or may not be explicit in your résumé. Often, a theme will emerge, but if that isn't the case, talk about your decisions in a positive light.

- With which skills and functions are you most comfortable? If I were to assign you a project based on your expertise, what would I give you?

If you enjoy working with clients, talk about your specific achievements and how you helped your clients. Have you served them well enough for them to be repeat customers? Have they referred other clients to you? If you are very strong analytically, give an example of the most analytical project on which you've worked and the project's outcome.

- What are your weakest skills, and how are you addressing them? What areas would your supervisors say you need to develop?

Everyone has strengths and everyone has weaknesses. You should do a substantive assessment of your weaknesses prior to an interview. A weakness should never be a critical component of the job for which you are applying. If there is a trick to answering this question effectively, it's to highlight what you are doing to strengthen each weakness. For example, if public speaking is something you consider a weakness, you can say that to improve this, you raise your hand as much as possible in class, and you volunteer to present whenever possible. The more prepared you are with the content of your presentation, the better you perform.

- What do you do for fun? What do you do in your free time? What do you like to read?

These questions present an opportunity to enthusiastically and specifically discuss what you enjoy doing in your spare time. If you enjoy tennis, talk about how long you have been playing and your favorite player. If you enjoy reading, mention the last great book you read.

Specific Questions

Specific questions have concrete answers and might include the following:

- Tell me about this [the interviewer can point to anything on your résumé, whether it be a project, an employer, a class, a skill, or a hobby].

You must be able to quickly and completely discuss any topic from your résumé and its relevance to your professional career. You should be able to recount every detail about each project, and enthusiastically relay those details to your interviewer. If you are not enthusiastic about your work, they will not be either. Also highlight the result of your work or any project about which they want to know more.

- Tell me about your favorite project, your most significant project, or a project that demonstrates your leadership, project management, analytical, research, or communications skills.

When answering this question, remember who sponsored the project, the project's objective and deliverable, steps you took to complete the project, and the results of your efforts. Note your role as well as the roles of other team members. Be specific and quantify the results.

- Tell me about a project where something went wrong or tell me about a difficult client.

Everyone has worked on projects where something went wrong. If we procrastinated, we learned to become more disciplined in our approach to projects. If someone didn't do their part of the project, which then caused us to do extra work, we learned to communicate more clearly and check the project's progress on a regular basis.

We also have worked with difficult clients. The trick is to not say anything negative about a client. If a client was demanding, remember that all clients have a right to make demands. We need to raise our game to ensure they are pleased with the service and our level of professionalism. Never make negative comments about a client, a boss, a peer, or a company. Doing so sends an immediate red flag to the interviewer, so avoid such negativity at all costs. Position everything in a positive light, which can only help your candidacy.

- What do you think about current events or significant events in the employer's industry?

Interviewers want to know that you are knowledgeable about current events, especially those pertaining to their industry. The very best candidates are well versed in the current news, so be prepared to discuss one or two items. It's important that you cite the source of the news and what you learned from it. If you did subsequent research about the topic, discuss that as well. It's an opportunity to highlight your research and your passion for this industry.

Motivation Questions

Interviewers often want to know about a candidate's motivation by asking the following questions:

- With which firms are you interviewing? What positions are you seeking? How will you choose?

The most savvy interviewers know that the best candidates interview with multiple companies. Many candidates are comfortable discussing specific companies with which they are interviewing, and, from a recruiting perspective, it's fine to mention the company names. If you would rather not discuss this, mention that you are currently interviewing with other companies, but this company is your number one choice and highlight why you want to work there. They should get the hint that you don't want to mention specific companies.

No matter what company is interviewing you, ensure that you know why you want to work for that particular company. Know their strong points and know their competitors. Know clearly why you want to work for them versus their competitors.

- What do you hope to accomplish in your career? Where do you see yourself in one, five, or more years?

Your research will help you answer this question. If you've conducted some informational interviews, you will have a clear idea of what a career can look like in one, five, and ten years. It is also important to network with peers who have interned at the companies in which you are interested because they can share specific information with you. For example, consulting, investment banking, and brand management have well-defined career paths. Advertising has a defined career path, but it may not be as defined as other businesses and industries.

Additional sources of information on this topic can be gathered on various job-seeker sites such as http://www.vault.com and www.wetfeet.com. Career services can be a huge resource, as can alumni who are in the industries in which you are most interested.

- What questions do you have for the interviewer?

This can be a make-or-break question because some interviews consist of just this one question. Every interview candidate should enter an interview with five to seven questions written down in advance. These questions should come directly from your research.

- Why do you want this position? Why do you want to work with this company?

Answers to these questions will come from your research. Have a specific reason you want to work at the company doing the exact job for which you are interviewing. Is the brand name very strong, giving you an opportunity to work with the best? Is the brand name not yet a household name, giving you an opportunity to make it so?

It's also important to know what skills you will gain in this specific position and which will enable you to be successful. Will the position strengthen your analytical skills? Will it enable you to become a subject-matter expert? Be specific in your answer.

Unconventional Questions

Some interviewers may think you are too rehearsed and may want to inject a bit of stress; perhaps they want to shake you up a bit by asking what may seem to be crazy or certainly bizarre interview questions:

- If you were a tree, what kind of tree would you be? Why?
- If you were a car, what color would you be? Why?
- If you were an item in the supermarket, what item would you be? Why?
- If you were an animal, what kind of animal would you be? Why?

Note that these questions are rare and you probably will not be asked them, but since preparation is key, it's worth examining why they are asked. These types of questions are asked to get a true glimpse into your personality. The "If you were a tree, what kind of tree would you be and why?" question could be answered the following way:

- If you were a corporate research analyst who relied purely on your research to describe a stock, and that research would be shared with hundreds of portfolio managers, you might say you were a redwood tree. A redwood is one of the strongest trees on the planet and has roots that grow hundreds of feet into the ground. Not even the strongest of winds can cause the redwood to sway.
- If you were applying to be a technology customer service representative who troubleshoots during their entire day, you may say that you were a palm tree. A palm tree bends and yields to gentle breezes and hurricanes alike, but it survives almost anything that comes its way and stands tall and straight the minute the wind stops.



The two types of trees have very different characteristics, yet they both survive and thrive.

Unconventional questions have no correct answer, but when asked them, four strategies can help you succeed:

1. Practice answering a few of these types of questions. If you need a few minutes to consider your answer during an interview, it's fine to ask for a bit of time.
2. Answer by showing something positive or beneficial about you and your personality.
3. Avoid humor and answer the question seriously and sincerely.
4. Work backward to the answer. Think about a characteristic that is important to the job, and then match it to a tree, a fruit, or an item in a supermarket.

Illegal Questions

Illegal or discriminatory questions include references to the following:

- Age
- Birthplace
- Childcare arrangements
- Ethnicity and race
- Disability
- Marital and family status
- National origin
- Religion
- Sexual orientation

If you are asked any question relating to the preceding topics, it could be for one of two reasons. Either the interviewer is asking an illegal question or the interviewer might not be well versed in interview techniques. Many hiring managers have not been formally trained in interview techniques, and that lack of training can result in asking an illegal question.

It is hoped that the question would be harmless enough so that you can answer it without feeling uncomfortable. If you feel uncomfortable answering something, tactfully say that the question doesn't relate to the job. Try to move onto another question or ask a question pertaining to the job to get the interview back on track.

If you feel that you were subjected to discrimination, speak to someone at your career services office. They could provide the guidance necessary at this stage of your job search. If that is not possible, consult a friend or professor and ask for guidance in your next steps. This is not a matter to be taken lightly, so it's important to get help from someone who is familiar with these issues.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Interviewers are most likely to ask one of three types of questions: (1) open ended, (2) specific, and (3) motivation questions.
- Unconventional interview questions might be asked, and you must be able to spontaneously answer them.
- It's wise to know what questions are illegal in case they are asked.

Exercises

1. Practice answering each of the open-ended, specific, and motivation questions, ensuring that you use specific examples for each.
2. Practice the unconventional interview questions as well. Ensure that you tie the positive traits of the object (such as a tree) to key components of the skills needed for the job.
3. Review questions that are illegal. If you are asked one of these questions during an interview, follow up with your career services office.

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15.3: Different Methods of Interviewing and Different Interview Venues

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the pros and cons of live versus phone interviews.
2. Understand strategies that will allow you to maximize your impact during any type of interview.

Methods of Interviewing

One of four methods might be used to interview you:

1. Live interviews (one-on-one and a panel type)
2. Phone interviews (one-on-one and a panel type)
3. Video or Skype interviews
4. Taped interviews

Live (One-on-One and a Panel Type)

Live, or face-to-face, interviews, are the most common interview interaction. An increasing trend of recruiters is to pair up with another colleague and have two or more interviewers per interview candidate. Many candidates will end up interviewing before a panel of interviewers, so be prepared for that to happen as well.

You will need to employ all of the strategies outlined earlier in this chapter, in the section titled “Different Types of Interviews.” In addition, here are some specific strategies to employ when you are interviewing with one or more interviewers.

When you are interviewing with only one person, the focus is clear—it’s on one person. Ensure your nonverbal and verbal communication is focused, positive, and results oriented. The more you practice, troubleshoot, and improve, the more you will succeed.

If you are interviewing with two or more interviewers at the same time, focus and practice are just as important, but you can employ a few additional strategies:

- Focus on the person asking the question to ensure you fully understand the question. When you answer, however, look at all interviewers in the room (even if they are not speaking). Use the lighthouse approach, and just as a lighthouse’s light scans from side to side, do the same with your eye contact and connect with everyone in the room.
- Practice and helpful critiques for improvement cannot be emphasized enough. Conduct as many **mock interviews** as possible because your skills will improve with each attempt. Practice also will help you strengthen your performance significantly, thus helping you succeed in either gaining a second-round interview or getting an offer.

Phone (One-on-One and a Panel Type)

Phone interviews are just as important, if not more so, than face-to-face interviews. In down economies, more companies choose to conduct interviews via the phone versus face-to-face to save time, money (if they have to pay your expense to come to their office), and effort. So preparation and practice are key to succeeding on the phone.

Prepare for a phone interview (similar to a regular interview) by taking seven important steps:

1. Research the industry, the company, the competitors, and the interviewer (if possible).
2. Match your strengths to the job description.
3. Practice interview questions, focusing on the results of your projects and tasks.

4. Ask a friend to interview you over the phone so you are used to the medium.
5. Be proactive about discussing your strengths and have concrete examples of how you have used them.
6. Prepare questions for the interviewer.
7. Ask what the next steps will be.

Phone interviews have several advantages:

- You can focus more on the actual questions because you have fewer distractions:
  - The surroundings
  - The interviewer
- You can treat the interview like an open-book test and have several items at hand to help you:
  - A copy of your résumé
  - A list of your strengths and examples of each one
  - A list of your weaknesses and your plan to strengthen each

Since many companies save time and money by conducting phone interviews, spend the time now to master success strategies as it will benefit you in the long run!

Phone interviews have some disadvantages:

- You lose your ability to make a first great impression visually.
- You lose the ability to impress with body language such as eye contact, a good handshake, and so forth.
- You cannot read the interviewer's body language.
- You might become confused if more than one person is asking questions, especially if a speakerphone is used.
- You might be left in the awkward position of not knowing what to do next if the recruiter doesn't value phone interviews as much as face-to-face interviews. They might reschedule or not call when they said they would.

Strategies for a successful phone interview include the following:

- Ensure your office or interview space will be quiet and uninterrupted.
  - Put a note over your doorbell—"Do not ring from 2–3:00 p.m."
  - Put a note on your door—"Do not disturb—interview in progress from 2–3:00 p.m."
  - Ask someone to walk your dog for the hour you are on the phone, or put it in a fenced backyard. If you have a cat with a loud meow, put it in another room where it cannot be heard.
  - Stop call waiting—check with your carrier as to how to do this.
  - Shut off cell phones.
- Dress up even though you don't have to:
  - You will feel more professional.
  - You will take the interview more seriously.
- Stand up during the interview:
  - Your voice sounds better.
  - Your focus will be keener.
- Have a glass of water handy.
- Have your important documents and whatever else you might need in front of you because the interviewer can hear you gather things during the interview.
- Remember that body language is important:
  - Smile when you would normally smile in a live interview. Interviewers can hear a smile and smiles enhance the interview experience.
  - Use inflection in your voice because a monotone makes for a dull interview.

Videoconference or Skype Interview

When you are at a more senior level, interviews might take place with someone in a different city, state, or even overseas. In such a case, a videoconference or **Skype** interview may be used. You will be seated in front of a computer with a camera and your interview will be live via that camera.

Strategies to succeed during a videoconference interview include the following:

- When answering questions, look into the camera instead of looking at the person on the screen. If you look at the camera, your eyes will meet the eyes of the person on the other end of the computer, making for a better connection. If you look at the person on the computer monitor when answering the question, you will appear to be looking down. It's tempting to look at the person's face versus the camera because you want to read their impression, but try to avoid this.
- Practice this technique by speaking to a friend via Skype. It's the exact same medium as a teleconferenced interview, and will give you the much-needed practice.
- Posture is very important, as it is with all interviews, but especially in a videoconference because the interviewer will see you from the shoulders up.

Taped Interviews

Taped interviews are so rarely used that you probably will not encounter them. They are primarily used to hire a large number of people for the same exact position, for example, sales positions. If a company has a goal to hire one hundred or five hundred salespeople, a taped interview saves them time in reviewing candidate answers, since all the questions might be the same. Taped interviews are also helpful when hiring salespeople in different parts of the country because taped interviews save the enormous expense of flying interviewers from city to city to find the best possible candidates.

Companies that use taped interviews may direct you to a **satellite office** where the taping takes place. You would be seated opposite a computer or computer kiosk, and you would be given an overview of the process. Taped interviews could involve timed responses, so the pressure could be high. Remember these types of interviews are rare, but it is good to know they exist and how they are formatted.

Strategies to succeed in taped interviews include the following:

- Practice taping yourself before a taped interview using a **Flip Video** or ask a friend to tape you. This can give you much-needed practice that other candidates might not have.
- Review the instructions carefully before proceeding because taped interviews are often timed.
- Focus intently on the question because you will not be able to clarify it.

Interview Venues

Knowing the four different types of interview venues will help ensure your success:

1. On campus
2. Off campus
3. In a corporate office or conference room
4. During a meal (breakfast, lunch, or dinner)

On Campus

If your interview takes place on campus, you will probably receive instructions from your career services office regarding the date and time of the interview. Check with the office to ensure you know how you will be notified. Most career services offices have a general check-in area, a waiting area, and very small interview rooms. It's best to practice in these rooms ahead of time, so you know exactly what to expect. Some rooms are literally five feet by five feet.

Off Campus

If your interview takes place off campus, the company with which you are interviewing will send instructions regarding where to report and when. Ensure you know exactly how to get there, and arrive early if at all possible because you probably will need to go through security. Bring the interview schedule with you; it should include the name(s) of the individuals with whom you will interview and their contact information.

If you need to travel via train or plane to an interview, dress professionally on the way there. Wearing yoga pants and flip-flops doesn't make a good impression, and there is always a chance you will bump into company representatives during your trip.

In a Corporate Office or Conference Room

Most often, candidates will be interviewed in the interviewer's office, but there are times when you will be interviewed in a conference room. Some conference rooms are glass-enclosed areas, and it can be distracting to interview as individuals look in and walk by. Regardless of the setting, maintain your focus on the questions asked and the interview at hand.

During a Meal

Mealtime interviews can be tricky situations because food and drink are involved. Strike a healthy balance of not being ravenous but not leaving your plate untouched either. Focus your full attention on the conversation and interview at hand. It is wise to stay away from messy marinara sauces and long strings of pasta because they can easily stain your clothing. Forgo alcohol at all costs and certainly if you are not of legal age to consume alcohol. If you are not comfortable with dining etiquette, familiarize yourself with it to increase your comfort level. Know which fork is correct to use for salad versus dinner. Research this so you are prepared in advance. Interviews that take place during a meal can heighten nerves and cause you to spill a glass of water, which doesn't bode well for your confidence level. Practice can only help, so try to attend a dining etiquette class or study proper techniques to ensure a good impression.

No matter what the venue, dress well and take extra copies of your résumé, a portfolio with paper and a pen that works, a list of questions you will ask, and perhaps a bottle of water just in case you need it.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Knowing the different types of interviews is important to succeeding at each. Knowing the pros and cons to live and phone interviews can ensure you get a second interview or perhaps the job offer.
- Having a one-on-one interview is very different from having to interview before a panel of people. Researching the individuals who will interview you can decrease your stress and help you perform optimally.
- Some interviewers may merge aspects of behavioral and case interviewing into one interview session. Knowing how to succeed at each is a wise strategy.
- Your interview venue affects the interview dynamics, so preparing in advance can only help.

Exercises

1. Participate in any mock interview sessions held by your school's career services office.
2. Find a peer at your school with whom to practice, if workshops aren't available in career services. Interview your classmate and then critique their responses. Also have your peer interview you and critique your responses.
3. Practice a phone interview with a friend and vice versa. It's great practice before a live phone interview.
4. Practice interviewing on campus in the career services office so you can be comfortable with the venue.
5. Ask someone in career services to interview you in their office so you can be comfortable with that particular setting.
6. Practice a mealtime interview with your interview buddy during breakfast or lunch.

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15.5: Chapter Review and Exercises

Control what you can control, and your interview will be more successful. This includes doing the following, but this list is far from exhaustive:

- Assess your strengths and weaknesses before the interview.
- Research the company and its competitors in advance of your meeting.
- Prepare and practice interview questions.
- Create a routine for the day of the interview to ensure you don't rush or skip important steps.
- Write down five to seven questions to ask at the end of your interview to prove you are motivated to get this job offer.

Remember that interviews are **subjective** and that a second interview is never a guarantee. Budgets can shift and your targeted company may have to pull an open requisition. Perhaps the company wants to promote from within and they may hire an internal candidate. Many interviewers hire in their own image, regardless of any interviewer training course they may attend. No matter what happens at the end of your interview, it's important to stay positive and it's equally important to not take it personally.

Regardless of the interview's outcome, and especially if you don't get the job, thank the interviewer for the interaction. Continue to keep in touch because that person can become an important part of your network. Leaving a positive impression can only help your future prospects because jobs for which you would be a perfect fit might open in the near term. Remember also that recruiters and hiring managers tend to move from company to company, and there is a strong likelihood that your paths may cross again. Maintaining positive relationships can only help your career.

Lastly, if you interview for a position and you don't get it, at least appreciate the value and practice of your experience. Troubleshoot what could have gone better and improve on that one thing. If you are proactive enough at strengthening your interview ability and ensuring you have enough interviews lined up, you increase your chances of getting a job offer. Once that happens, you will probably be in the interviewer's seat before long.

Chapter Takeaways

- Before you even think of interviewing, you must know three things:
  1. Know yourself.
  2. Know your résumé well enough to enthusiastically speak about every minute detail.
  3. Know the company, the position, and the industry for which you are interviewing.
- Knowing what to do before an interview is key to your success:
  - Research the industry, the company, the competitors, and the interviewer (if possible).
  - Practice the interview questions.
  - Have a full dress rehearsal three days before the interview.
  - Know where you are going in advance and ensure you show up early.
  - Have a routine for the day of the interview.
- Knowing what to do during an interview is critical:
  - Maintain positive body language.
  - Update your networking.
  - Maintain your focus.
  - Be authentic.
  - Prepare questions to ask toward the end of the interview.
  - Ask what the next step will be.
- Knowing what to do after an interview can strengthen your chances of getting the job:
  - Send a thank-you note.
  - Update all parties relevant to your search.
  - Map out your follow-up strategy.
- Things can go wrong during an interview. Knowing how to get back on track is vital to your interview success.
- Interviews can be very structured or very unstructured, depending on the interviewer and the industry.
- The best way to succeed in any interview is to prepare for every type of interview and every type of interviewer.
- Interviews can be one of three types:

1. Behavioral interviews
2. Case interviews
3. Informational interviews

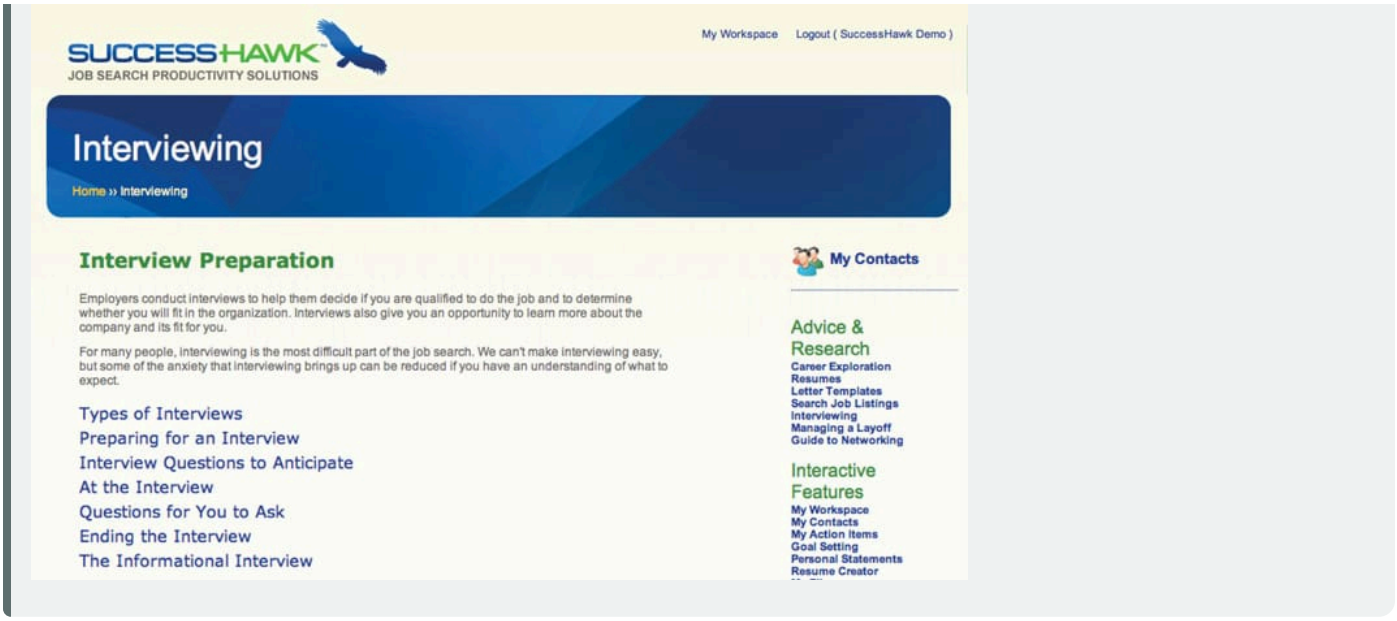
- Interviews can be conducted using different methods:
  - Live interviews
  - Phone interviews
  - Videoconference or Skype interviews
  - Taped interviews
- The venue will be either on campus or off campus and in either an office or a conference room.
- Some interviewers are more skilled at the interview process than others, so having a planned approach helps ensure your strengths are highlighted in the interview.
- You need to be prepared to answer various types of interview questions in advance of the interview:
  - Open-ended questions
  - Specific questions
  - Motivation questions
  - Unusual questions
- Familiarize yourself with questions that are considered illegal.
- Avoid interviewer pet peeves to ensure maximum success during the interview process. Some of these include not being prepared, not having positive body language, and not being enthusiastic, among others.

Chapter Review

1. How do you define an interview?
2. What should you know about yourself before you actually interview for a position?
3. What is the structure of a typical interview and what are some reasons an interview might be unstructured?
4. Why is it important to prepare and practice?
5. What are the most important things to do before an interview?
6. How important is having a routine to follow on the day of the interview?
7. What is body language and how can you use it to your advantage?
8. When answering interview questions, why it is more effective to have a beginning, a middle, and an end to your response?
9. What types of things can go wrong during an interview, and what can you do to get them back on track?
10. What three things should you do after an interview?
11. Why are thank-you notes important and how do you write an effective thank-you note?
12. Why are the three main types of interviews?
13. How do you prepare for an informational interview, and what are the main benefits to conducting them?
14. What are the four different methods of interviewing?
15. Why are more and more interviewers choosing to conduct phone interviews versus face-to-face interviews?
16. What are the pros and cons of phone interviews?
17. What is the difference between on-campus and off-campus interviewing? Why should you participate in both?
18. How can you practice the most-asked interview questions?
19. What strategies would you use to answer open-ended questions versus specific questions versus motivation questions?
20. Why would an interviewer use unconventional interview questions, and what is the best way to practice answering them?
21. What constitutes an illegal question, and what should you do if you are asked an illegal question during an interview?
22. What interviewer pet peeves can you avoid?

SuccessHawk: Interview

For tips and ideas about preparing for interviews, click on Interviews in the Advice and Research Section of the menu bar on the right. You may also want to review the demo using Perfect Interview, an interactive online interview practice feature under Interactive Features. (*Note*: There is a charge of $19.95 for unlimited use of Perfect Interview for sixty days.)



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15: SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE JOB SEARCH

15.1: Social Media Sites for the Job Search
15.2: Social Media and the Six-Step Job Search Process

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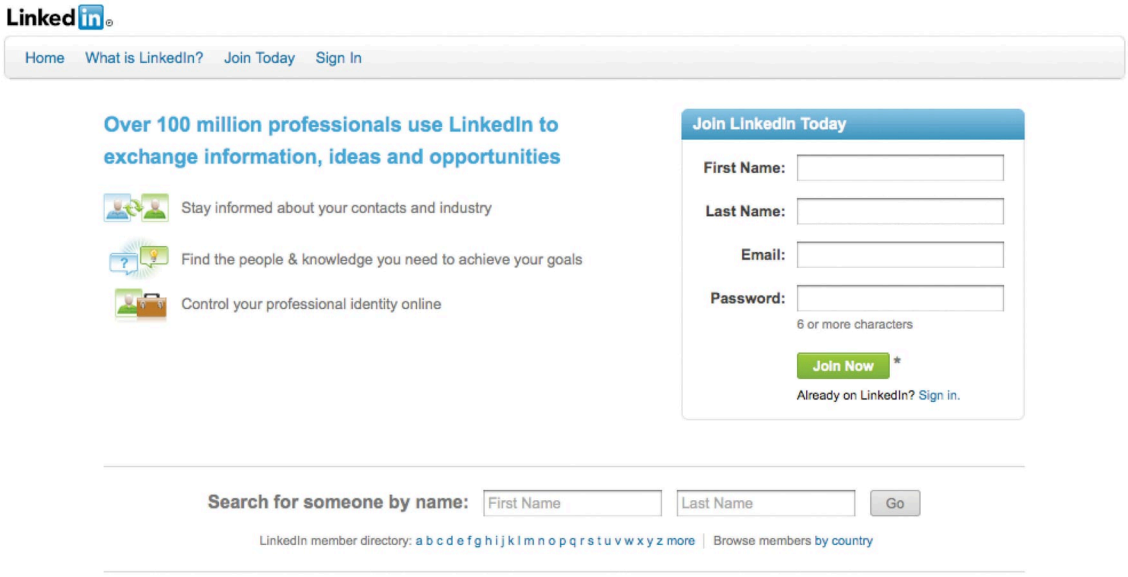
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15.1: Social Media Sites for the Job Search

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Get an overview of different social media sites.
2. Understand how social media sites assist your job search.

LinkedIn



As of December 2010, LinkedIn had ninety million members and is adding new members every day. **LinkedIn** is a social media site designed to share your professional information. Much like a traditional résumé, the standard profile includes sections for a summary, education, experience, and additional information. You can also upload a picture, as well as attach presentations and your blogs and websites to your profile.

The social, interactive component of LinkedIn is your ability to connect to people and to see their **connections** (or people who have connected to them). You can reach out to these secondary connections by asking for an introduction from someone with whom you are already connected. In fact, you can reach out to connections of connections through the introduction process, so you have access to not just your circle but two circles removed from you. This greatly expands your network.

Another interactive component is the Groups function. LinkedIn has Groups based on a mutual interest or other commonality, such as university affiliation, professional goal, or geography. Anyone with a LinkedIn profile can create and run a Group, so you could use LinkedIn to create an online community for your specific interest or goal.

The following is a cursory overview of LinkedIn's basic features, but you can see that having a LinkedIn profile can add tremendous advantages to your job search:

- You can upload your résumé details online and be able to point people to your LinkedIn hyperlink rather than an attached document. This is very useful when requesting informational interviews where you want the person to have your extended background, but you don't want to be presumptuous and attach a résumé.
- You can share additional information that would be cumbersome on a traditional résumé.
- You can network with ninety million members regardless of where you are physically based.
- You can use the connections feature to keep track of your network and to meet new people, thereby facilitating your job search through networking.
- You can use the Groups function to meet people with similar interests and goals, such as people in your target industry,

function, or geography.

Facebook



As of December 2010, **Facebook** reported over five hundred million users. Facebook originated as a personal social platform, so its profile includes basic information, such as education and interests, but is more geared toward sharing ideas, comments, and photos. Like LinkedIn, you can attach your blog to your Facebook profile so your posts will appear on your profile.

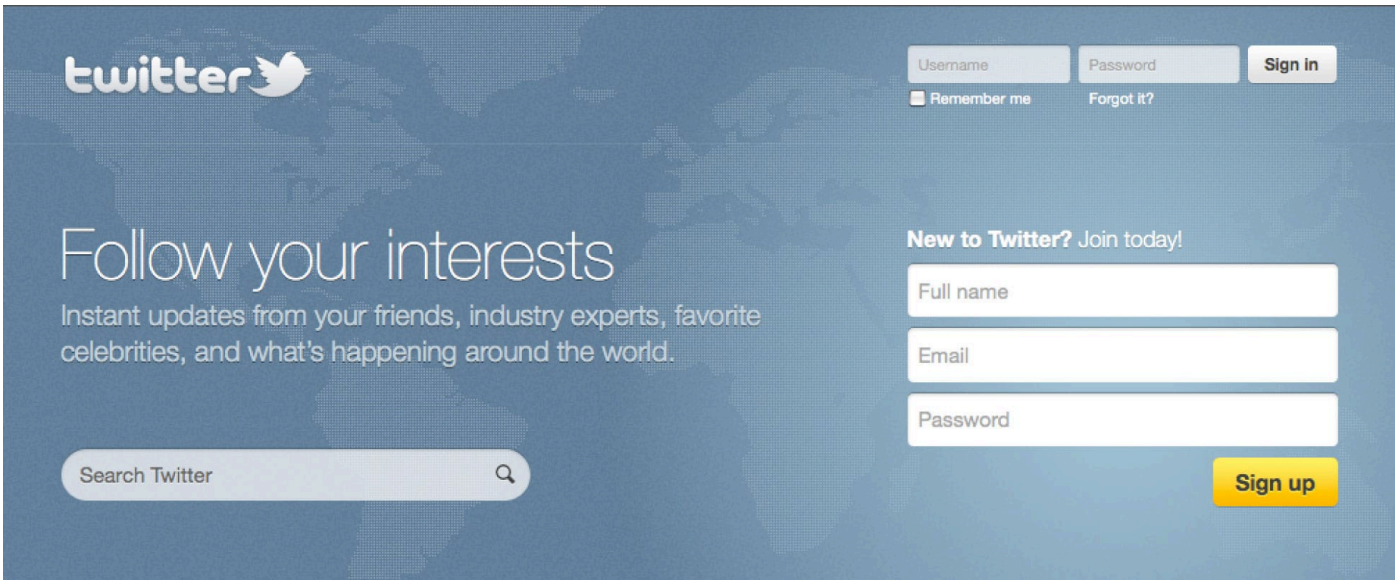
Like LinkedIn, the social, interactive component of Facebook enables you to connect to people as “Friends” and to see their Friends. You can send messages to your Friends and sometimes to their connections, so you have the ability to organize, maintain, and grow your network via Facebook.

Facebook has a Pages function, which works like the Groups function in LinkedIn. The range of Page subjects is much wider on Facebook, because it is predominately a personal site. You will see opinions, cultural themes, and other non-career-related Pages. At the same time, some Pages are dedicated to organizations where you may be able to see job posts and breaking news. Other Pages are dedicated to professional and career-related subjects, and you may see advice or resources on them.

Facebook is predominately a personal site, but there are advantages to your job search from having a Facebook profile:

- The reach is much wider, so you may be able to connect with more people. If you can’t find someone on LinkedIn, Facebook provides another option.
- The best networking starts with developing rapport, so the predominately personal environment of Facebook may be less intimidating for both job seeker and prospective networking targets.
- Organizations and people interact differently on different social media, so Facebook provides another data point for reaching organizations and people of interest.

Twitter

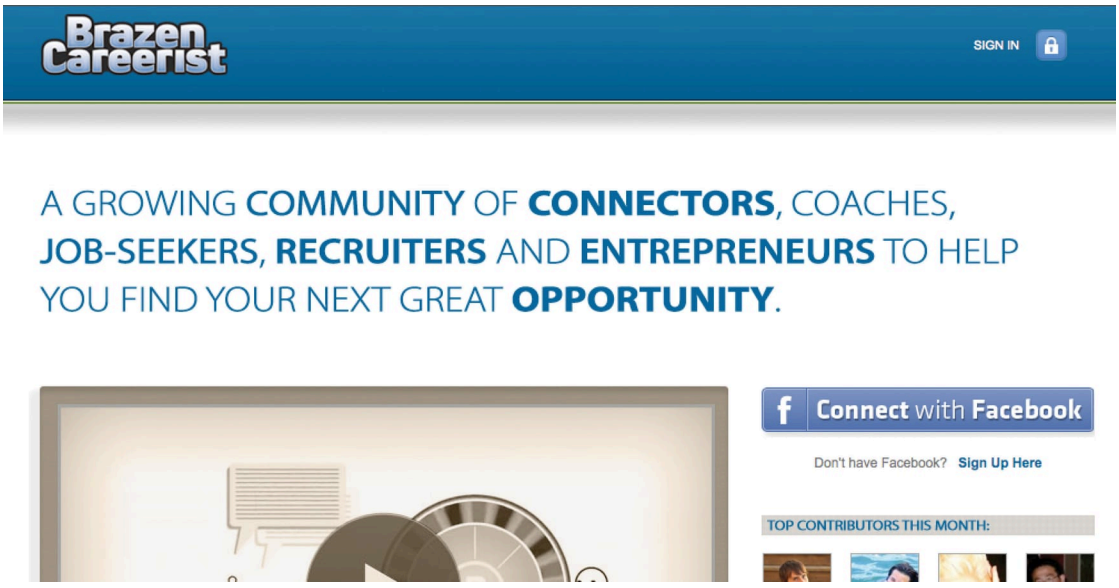


Once you sign up for a profile, which is just your **Twitter** handle (i.e., name), Twitter enables you to post Tweets (i.e., ideas, comments, and thoughts) of 140 characters or fewer in length. You connect to other Twitter users by "following" their Tweets. People can also follow your Tweets, and if someone is following you, you can send them a message.

As of December 2010, Twitter is one of the top ten most visited websites, as reported by **Alexa.com**. Alexa.com is a widely used tracking site to measure visitors and page views to websites. Most Tweets are not specifically job or career related. However, there are advantages to using Twitter for your job search:

- Organizations post job openings via Twitter.
- Individuals who may be instrumental to your job search might be on Twitter, and following them is another way to show your interest and possibly connect with them.
- Your posts reveal your ideas and expertise, so you could Tweet about items that showcase your industry or functional knowledge.

Other Niche Online Communities



The value of social media sites is putting your information out there and being able to connect with people, so it makes sense that communities have been established around very tight niches. The value of being active in a niche community is that the participants have a natural rapport already established from sharing a common affinity. This facilitates networking.

One example of a niche online community is Brazen Careerist, a site targeted at career issues for **Generation Y** (the generation of people born between 1980 and 1995, also known as Millennials and Trophy Kids). Similar to other social media sites, Brazen Careerist allows you to create a profile, post ideas, and connect with other members. The Groups function is where communities specific to industry, function, geography, interest, or goal connect. Organizations post jobs or sponsor events via the site. Because you know that Brazen Careerist is specifically targeted at Generation Y, you can become active on the site if you are trying to reach Generation Y contacts, including organizations that target Generation Y.

Another example of an online community, though not a social media site in its strict definition, is Meetup.com. Meetup.com posts live meetings around specific topics. You can set up an account so you can search for events and groups near you. The networking happens live, so it is not social media per se, but clearly the online component is greatly facilitating the targeted networking.

The value of niche online communities to your job search is in the targeted networking:

- If you want to reach a targeted group, by identifying a social media site for that group, you focus your networking efforts.
- Your ability to interact and build connections with this tight community is a way to gauge if you are indeed interested in this group and if they are interested in you. This can help you position your overall marketing.
- Organizations are also active on niche online communities, so you can find organizations that are predisposed to your profile.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Examples of social media sites include LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and niche online communities.
- The value of social media sites to your job search is in the ability to push out your information and to connect with people in a targeted way.

Exercises

1. Which social media sites will you select for your job search? If you are not familiar with these sites, visit the ones mentioned in this section to get a feel for each site.
2. What specific steps do you need to take to increase your activity in the social media space? Do you need to establish a profile? Do you have a profile but need to update it or post ideas? Pick one social media site (again, LinkedIn is recommended for its focus on professional careers) and create or update your profile.
3. How will you incorporate social media activity into your job search going forward? Set calendar reminders each month to update your social media profiles.

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15.2: Social Media and the Six-Step Job Search Process

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how social media can be used at all stages of the job search, not just networking.
2. Get specific action steps for incorporating social media into your current job search.

Table 11.1 presents each of the six job search steps and details how social media can help.

Table 15.2.1*: The Six Steps and Social Media*

Job Search Step	How Social Media Can Help
Step 1: Identify Your Target	• Other people's profiles show career paths and job descriptions
Step 2: Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign	• Your profile and activity represent your experience, skills, and interests
Step 3: Conduct In-Depth Research	• Looking at profiles across organizations and industries reveals hiring patterns and other organizational information • Ability to search profiles by keyword enables you to find people who fit the exact criteria for you to interview for informational purposes
Step 4: Network and Interview	• Ability to reach out and interact with other site members expands your network
Step 5: Stay Motivated and Organized and Troubleshoot Your Search	• Stay motivated by the community • Self-edited status and information updates enable site members to have organized and current information about each other • Find more contacts and organizations if your search stalls
Step 6: Negotiate and Close the Offer	• Ability to look at different profiles enables you to compare titles with scope of responsibilities • Interactive questions and Group functions enable surveying for salary data

Step 1: Identify Your Target by Using Site Profiles as Prototypes

In step 1, we describe a well-defined job target as one with a specific industry, function, and geography. You can then map this to your decision criteria, or your personal values and interests. You look internally for your values and interests, but to understand how these might translate to different industries and functional areas, it is necessary to look externally at what is happening in

the market. Social media enables you to look at other people's careers and find **prototypes** (i.e., models or examples) that your own job search might follow. LinkedIn is most conducive to this type of search because the profiles are laid out like résumés.

If one of your potential job function targets is public relations, look at people in PR:

- What is their career path? Do you want these jobs?
- How are they describing their jobs? Do you want to work on these things?
- Look at the organization profiles for where they work. Do these types of organizations appeal to you?
- Join Groups related to PR and follow discussions. Are you interested in what is being discussed?
- Ask questions using the Groups function or Q&A function to get specifics on what it is like to do this job. Do you like what you find out?

If one of your potential industry targets is nonprofits dedicated to children and the arts, pick a specific nonprofit in that space (or several) and look at people who work there:

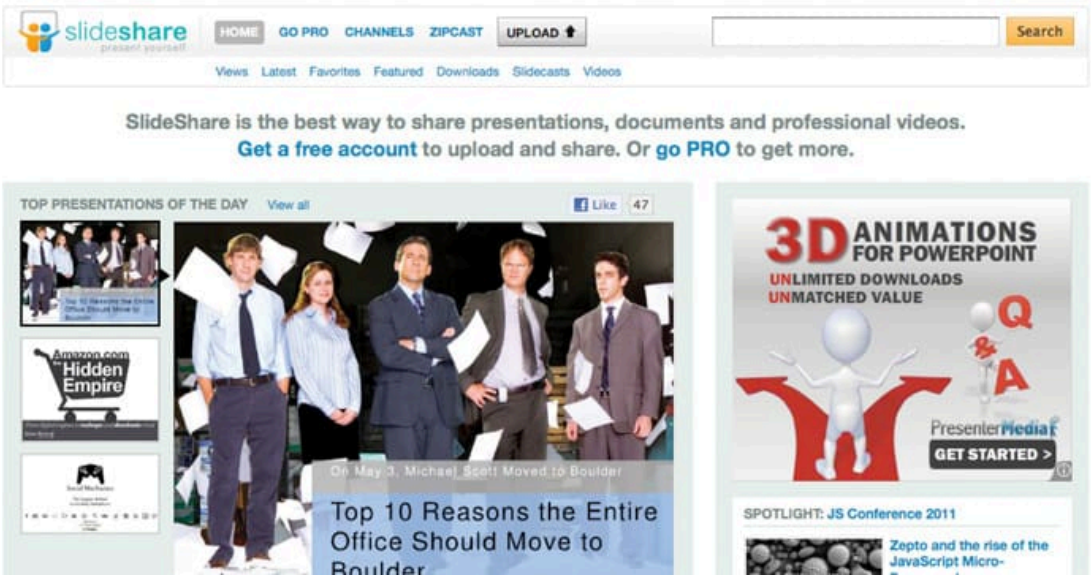
- What different roles do people have? Do you want these jobs?
- How do people describe what they do? Do you want to work on these things?
- Look at the different profiles in relation to each other. Are a lot of people in programming or development, or do they cover several functions? Does this structure appeal to you?
- Join Groups related to children's education and follow discussions. Is most of the talk about fundraising, programming, and operations? Are you interested in what is being discussed?
- Ask questions using the Groups function or Q&A function to get specifics on what it is like to work in this industry. Do you like what you find out?

Step 2: Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign That Is Current and Comprehensive

An online profile is one of the four key components of your marketing campaign because it represents you online where recruiters and employers do look for candidates. Compare your profile to other profiles at your level and target, and make sure that you are competitive in your experience and skills. Continuing the PR example from earlier, if certain **keywords** (or, specific words or phrases) are often found in PR profiles, make sure you have these in your profile. (If you don't have a legitimate reason to weave those keywords into your profile, this could be a sign that you lack something considered a prerequisite to getting those jobs!) Check also for specific computer or other technical skills to ensure you are competitive with your peers.

Social media enables you to update in real time, so make sure you update your **status**. In social media, status refers to what you are currently doing and may include professional or personal activities. LinkedIn has a status area on the profile. Facebook has a Wall to post what you are doing. Updating your status notifies site members connected to you. Frequent updating also ensures that people who view your profile always see the latest version. Each update is another nudge to view your background. It reminds people what you are doing. Don't just think of status as your employment status—that is, whether or not you have a job. Use your status to communicate projects you are working on, informational meetings you have attended, and other professional activities that may not be directly job search related, but clearly demonstrate that you are keeping busy. Your status is not static, but should reflect your ever-changing skills and experience.

With a paper résumé, it is unwieldy to include a lot of attachments, such as a **portfolio** of your work. A work portfolio might include published articles if are a writer, or illustrations and designs if you are a designer. Using your online profile, you can link to an online collection of your work (for example, using the SlideShare application to showcase a slide presentation) and create a comprehensive view of everything you offer. LinkedIn and Facebook have applications that enable you to link your blog to your profile. If you have a blog and your blog showcases examples of your work, your profile updates with samples of your work whenever you post to your blog. LinkedIn also has applications that allow you to share what you are reading, where you are traveling, and even slide presentations you have created. While this level of detail would be onerous for a paper résumé, online it is easy to page through and access as much data as you'd like, so you can offer the reader (in this case, recruiters and employers) much more information.



If you are positioning yourself for a job in PR, ask the following questions about your profile:

- Do you share the same important keywords as other profiles active in PR?
- Do you describe your projects in a similar way?
- Should you join certain Groups so that you are active in the same circles?
- Can you update your status periodically to showcase PR work you are doing for a school club or professional association? Have you attended a conference or read an article that you'd like to share in your status?
- Can you share samples from a recent campaign?
- Have you read books or articles on the industry that you can add to your status?

If you are positioning yourself for a job in the nonprofit intersection of children and the arts, ask the following questions about your profile:

- Do you have examples of work with children and the arts in your profile?
- Have you isolated a functional area, such as fund-raising or programming, where you can focus your keywords?
- Are your Groups, status updates, and applications consistent with an interest in children and the arts?
- Can you post a status update or sample of a recent project or volunteer experience involving children, the arts, or both?
- What books or articles have you read in this area that you can add to your status?

Step 3: Conduct In-Depth Research by Viewing Profiles

In-depth research gives you insight into the functions, industries, and organizations of interest to you. Social media sites with their collection of people and organization profiles contain a lot of useful information. The career paths, project descriptions, and titles of people in your target function, industry, or organization reveal what is typical in that field. LinkedIn has a feature where, when you view a profile, suggestions are made for other matching profiles. A box on the lower right of the profile is titled, "Viewers of this profile also viewed..." and contains a list of other profiles. Even if you have only one name of someone to view, you can easily find more by using those suggestions. People in these other profiles often work at other organizations, and this can lead to discovering new organizations to target.

The ability to search by a wide combination of keywords enables you to identify very specific people for informational interviews and networking overall. You can look for specific alma maters, organizations, skill keywords, geographic locations, or a combination of keywords. Without social media and its reach and searchability, it's difficult, if not impossible, to efficiently find someone from a specific school who has done a specific project or job, has a certain skill, has worked at a specific company, and lives within your target geography.

When you research, especially in preparation for networking meetings and interviews, you want to be current on the trends of your target industries, functions, and organizations. The continually updated statuses and dialogue of social media sites enable you to get breaking news. Follow discussions and see what subjects, ideas, and concerns are trending.

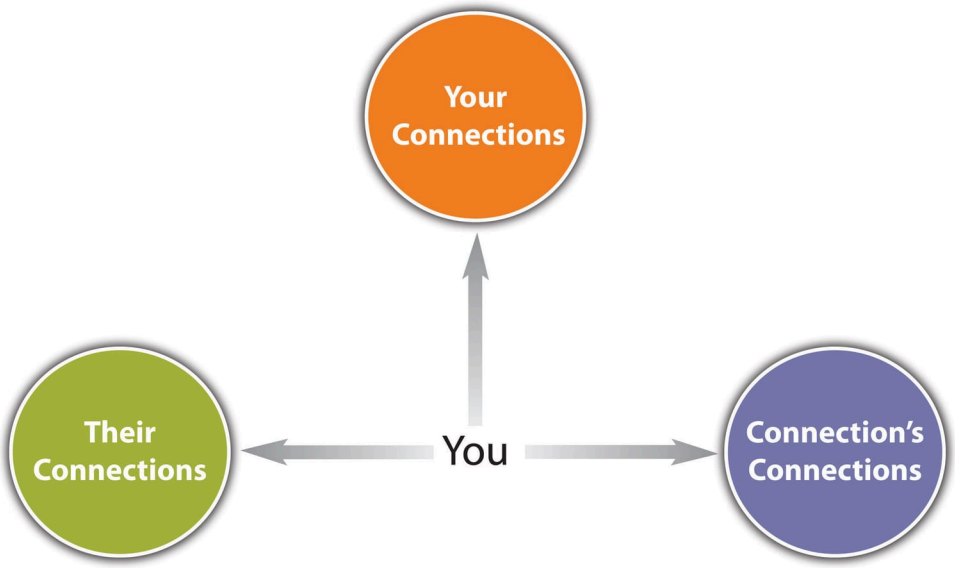
Finally, the organization profiles in LinkedIn or Pages in Facebook contain a summary of the organization and often include job postings. When you follow specific organizations in LinkedIn, you get a daily or weekly update on promotions, arrivals and departures, as well as job openings. This information is invaluable to finding possible relevant people profiles to view, having the latest organization news, and getting a jump on job openings.

If you are positioning yourself for a job in PR, the following information might help you:

- Look at specific companies for whom you'd like to do PR, but also look at PR agencies.
- PR might be called media relations or be handled within a broader department such as marketing. Use different keywords when you search.
- When you see late-breaking news for companies you are following, think about how this would impact your job in PR. Get into the habit of questioning and really analyzing your research.

If you are positioning yourself for a job in the nonprofit intersection of children and the arts, use some of the following techniques:

- Find nonprofits, foundations, and ancillary programs of bigger nonprofits that might be children and art related.
- Look at people's backgrounds—do they have teaching experience or performing experience? What common threads are present among the people active in this space?
- Don't just look at the professional part of someone's background, but also look at volunteer work, special interests, and groups to which people belong. Are any organizations cited new to you, and can you add them to your target list?



Step 4: Network and Interview with a Larger, More Diverse Group

Social media sites are also referred to as social networking sites. With their interactivity and wide reach to many users, the networking potential is clear. Here are some tips to get the most out of networking via social media:

- **Include a professional-looking picture so that people recognize you**. If you try to connect with someone with whom you haven't corresponded in years, they may not remember your name or background, so a picture is another clue. A big benefit of social media sites is your ability to connect with a wider range of people than you might if you network only in person or by telephone. The likelihood increases that you will reach out to less familiar contacts, so a picture bridges the familiarity.
- **Put your LinkedIn profile hyperlink in your e-mail signature**. LinkedIn (as opposed to Facebook or other social media sites) is specifically recommended for this tip because the LinkedIn profile is structured like a résumé. Therefore, the hyperlink effectively attaches your résumé without the presumptuousness or the potential virus implications of actually attaching a résumé. Keep the LinkedIn profile hyperlink for all e-mails, even personal ones. This makes it easy for any e-mail recipients to view your background, and Friends who think they know you can learn more about you and help in your job search. You never know 100 percent who other people know or what they know.
- **When adding connections in LinkedIn, Friends in Facebook, or connections in another social media site, don't use default invitation messages**. Personalize the message with how you know the person and why you are reaching out. This

makes it easier for the recipient to accept the invitation because they will have all the information they need to determine whether you are someone they want to connect to.

- **Use Groups and discussions functions to expand your network**. As you build your online connections, reaching out to people you know is a logical first step. You can also reach out to people from your school and any prior work environments. After that, finding people with like interests is another potential affiliation. The Groups and discussion and Q&A boards of social media sites are a great way to identify these like-minded people. Your comments to the Group and discussion boards are also a great way of showcasing your expertise. In an interview, you proclaim your expertise and experience to show why you'd be a great hire. As you display your expertise and experience in online Groups and discussion boards, you essentially publish your interview responses, which can reach prospective employers who have not formally called you for an interview.

Step 5: Use Social Media to Motivate, Organize, and Troubleshoot

Many online communities are focused on searching for a job. LinkedIn has multiple job search groups, and other social media sites have multiple options. The interactivity of social media helps people stay on track, maintain accountability, and keep momentum. The job search process involves several solitary activities (e.g., research, marketing). Remember to use social media to stay connected during the times when you are busy with solo projects.

Social media sites are a contact database that continually updates as people self-edit their status and information. You have to update your Outlook, cell phone directory, or other contact database, but the contacts themselves update social media sites. If you need to reach someone and your e-mail bounces back, reach out via social media because their contact information may have been updated since you last edited your own database. Don't forget to interact when you do see an updated status—acknowledging someone's new status is a good way to build in networking naturally.

Profiles on social media sites provide examples of how people in your target field are positioning themselves. Compare other profiles with yours to help you troubleshoot if you are missing critical words, descriptions, skills, or experiences. Another reason your search may be in trouble is that you are too passive in contacting prospective employers. The ability to search profiles of people and organizations enables you to find specific (and additional) leads for your search.

Step 6: Negotiate and Close the Offer with Online Data

Part of good negotiation technique is knowing what your negotiation counterpart wants and needs. Social media sites provide an opportunity to find this necessary information. Using social media grants you access to many people, making it easier for you to find those whose backgrounds match yours; you can survey these people for information. When you find someone whose profile indicates they have done the job you are seeking, you could try the following sample query: *I noticed in your profile that you worked as a PR assistant in health care. I have seen data that estimates PR assistant salaries from the low $30s up to the mid-$50s. (Note to reader: You want to give a range so the person knows you at least tried to get some information on your own. This range was provided by http://www.salary.com by searching on public relations + New York, NY.) As an experienced PR person, is that what you have seen as well? What most impacts where you fall on the range? Any insights you have would be greatly appreciated.*

Many recruiters use social media, so you can also reach out to them and learn from their expertise in hiring people for jobs you are targeting. The following sample query is addressed to a recruiter who specializes in nonprofits, ideally children and arts related: *I noticed in your profile that you specialize in nonprofit children's organizations (or arts organizations, as applicable). I am doing salary research on entry-level development (or programming, specify a functional area). (Note to reader: You need to note a specific level and function so that the recruiter knows what salary information to provide.) Because you are active in this market, what have you seen as typical starting salaries? Does this vary widely? Has this changed much over time? Any insights you have would be greatly appreciated.*

Post a question about compensation via the Groups or discussion boards. Don't forget to ask, not just about salary but also lifestyle, growth prospects, and all the components of your decision criteria. The following is a sample query to a Group or discussion relating to your target prospective industry and function: *I am doing salary research on (specify functional area and level so that people know how to respond).What are the salary estimates for this area? Can anyone recommend resources or people to consult for my salary research? Thanks so much!*

The preceding sample queries are a template to show the bare minimum of information you want to share to elicit the data you want. Remember the social component of social media, so your queries and interactions should reflect your voice and engender rapport. Much like your cover letter, networking pitch, and other marketing correspondence, your social media correspondence

should be customized to your personality, background, skills, experience, and your job search targets.

Another aspect of closing your offer is the **reference check** process. A reference check is when a prospective employer contacts someone who has worked with you or managed you, so that the person who is contacted can "reference," or describe, your work and work characteristics. Social media posts will never be a substitute for a reference check, but LinkedIn does provide a Testimonials feature where people who have worked with you can provide comments on your work. Having a few of these testimonials in your profile can nudge a recruiter or employer who is looking at your background closer to your favor.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Social media sites are useful at all stages of the job search, not just for networking.
- People and organizational profiles provide information for your target selection, marketing, research, troubleshooting, and negotiation.
- Interactivity and continual updating of social media sites enable you to ask questions and get breaking news of trends, people's statuses, and even job openings.

Exercises

1. For each social media site you are using for your search, set aside some time and use the site for all steps of the job search, from finding new organization names to finding salary data.
2. Make an activity list of how you will use social media for your search. If you are struggling to find organization names, make an effort to join Groups in the industry so you can see more profiles and possibly get names, or ask questions in the group to identify names. If you are struggling with marketing, review profiles and focus on what you like and don't like about profiles of people doing your target job.
3. If you are not comfortable using social media or not very active, can you find a tech-savvy friend who can be your job search buddy in this specific area?

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