



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY
CAREER
SERVICES

Job Search Manual



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Know yourself +
Grow your network +
Target your resume +
Ace the interview =
Career success
(repeat as necessary)

Section I. What's in the Manual?

This manual provides information regarding all aspects of career and job search and is designed to supplement Career Services' extensive online resources.

Current job postings, upcoming events and access to OptimalResume are available to current students and alumni via [JobLink](http://www.ucalgary.ca/careers/studentsandalumni) at www.ucalgary.ca/careers/studentsandalumni.

Job Search

- Details self assessment, research, informational interviews and networking

Resumes/Cover Letters/CV's

- Guidelines on format and content for these documents

Interviews

- Provides information on interviews, particularly behavioural descriptive questions (BDI) and the STAR model of responses

Etiquette

- Discusses etiquette in and outside the office to help you transition from student to employee

Salary Information

- Information to help you deal with salary questions

Additional Career Resources

- Additional resources available including faculty and program specific services

For success in achieving your career goals, Career Services encourages you to use this guide, take advantage of our web resources, and participate in all our career programs such as attending career fairs and expert panel sessions.

Section 2

- 2.1 Overview
- 2.2 Self Assessment
- 2.3 Degree Profiles
- 2.4 Research
- 2.5 Hidden Job Market
- 2.6 Networking
- 2.7 Where to Network
- 2.8 Information Interviews
- 2.9 Social / Professional Networking



Section II. Job Search

2.1 Overview

Whether you are looking for summer, part-time or full-time work, an initial self-assessment of your needs, wants, strengths and skills will help you focus your search. The next steps involve understanding how to target your research and how to network effectively.

Our website www.ucalgary.ca/careers hosts JobLink, a restricted job posting database with an eID login requirement. These include full-time, part-time, summer and co-op and internship positions that are posted by employers specifically looking to hire U of C students and alumni. In addition to job postings, profiles on employers, who are currently or have previously recruited U of C students, are available to research.

OptimalResume, a resume, cover letter and interview application and Wetfeet, an online career information source, are also located in this restricted area of the website.

Take advantage of the many opportunities provided by Career Services to connect with employers. These include Career Fairs, Industry and Alumni Panels and Information Sessions, all of which are detailed in the events section of JobLink.

The Career Services website has additional career resources to help you achieve your goals. This includes tips, presentations and video clips on a variety of topics such as networking, job search and interviewing.

The Career Education Program or the CEP is designed to provide you with networking skills, research opportunities plus one-on-one help to create your own job search plan. Details in participating in this program and having your involvement recorded on your Co-Curricular Record (CCR) are outlined on our website.

“Success
is dependant on effort”
Sophocles

2.2 Self Assessment

Understanding your own employment needs and wants is a logical place to begin the job search process. Realizing your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes, and your values will help you target your career search. Knowing your preferred work style and environment is as essential in the work place as it is in the classroom.

Links to several free online assessment tools are available on our website. The Jackson Vocational Interest Survey which has a nominal fee is also available. The Counselling Centre, MSC 370, offers Career/Life Planning Workshops to help with both academic and career choices. Within JobLink you also have access to the Wet Feet Network, a resource for further information on careers, companies and industries.

Another great assessment resource is the *Advanced Techniques for Work Search* booklet which is available through our office (MSC 188) or online through ALIS, the Alberta Learning Information Services website - alis.alberta.ca/careershop.

Start your assessment by thinking about your hopes and dreams – what you enjoyed doing when you were 6 years old, what you thought you wanted to be when you grew up, how you spent your time when you were 15. Looking at your past dreams may help guide your future goals.

Identifying your values, interests and skills will help you to explore career options that best suit you. Taking time for this initial step of the job search process will help you narrow your research.

2.3 Degree Profiles

To appreciate the transferable skills you are gaining from your degree and how to highlight them on a resume, review these faculty specific pages on our website. The profiles also provide areas of employment to research and professional associations to consider joining. You will also find additional job search tips provided by our career advisors.

2.4 Research

Reviewing occupations, industry trends and specific companies will help you to further clarify and to focus your search strategies.

Online Resources

- Occupation information - Government of Canada Human Resource and Skills Development Canada www.hrsdc.gc.ca
- Alberta specific occupation and career information - Alberta Learning Information Service website www.alis.alberta.ca
- Both the federal and provincial sites also have information on industry trends
- The Vault Online Career Library, available to U of C students through the U of C Library portal
- Business and Industry directory accessed through the Calgary Public Library (membership required)
- Company websites often provide mission statements in addition to details about their history and corporate environment and are great place to further your research
- Some companies highlight 'New Grad or Student Opportunities' in their Careers or Job Opportunities section of their site, specifically to recruit students

“Be ready when opportunity comes...Luck is the time when preparation and opportunity meet.”

Pierre Elliott Trudeau

Online research can provide extensive data but first hand information gained through networking and contacts will help you discover unadvertised career opportunities.

Consider asking your professors for their insights into industry trends related to their field or current research topics. Developing professional relationships with your professors is great method to increase your network.

2.5 Hidden Job Market

This term refers to non-advertised jobs that statistics say represent between 70% - 80% of all vacancies. Understanding and uncovering this massive job market will increase your opportunities significantly. Taking advantage of this hidden job market requires that **you** take initiative, research and make contacts to develop your network. Let everyone know you are looking for work - talk to friends and family; speak to your professors, former employers and any professional connections you may have made at events such as career fairs.

2.6 Networking

Think of your network as your career net worth. Developing your professional network will help you acquire information and advice on career choices as well as staying informed on potential job opportunities. It's not only what you know, and who you know, but also who knows about you!

Networking is meeting and connecting with others to develop mutually beneficial relationships that lead to discovery and sharing of opportunities. Your network includes everyone who is part of your daily life, not only potential employers and mentors. Building a network involves two-sided conversations, keeping in touch and helping each other.

Whether you are meeting employers at a Career Fair, new people at the gym or classmates at the beginning of a semester, having your introduction or '30 second commercial' ready will help you initiate conversation.

Your introduction, sometimes referred to as an elevator speech, should include your name, your academic background and year of study. If your degree isn't commonly known providing a brief overview of the types of courses and or skills you are acquiring is a good idea. Finally, you should mention the type of work, (summer / full-time) you are looking for and the field (oil and gas/ non-profit/ education) you hope to enter. Adjust your introduction so it is appropriate for the occasion. The goal is to provide your new connection with a clear and concise snapshot of your background and current goals. This will help them identify how they might help you.

**“The future depends on what we do in the present.”
Mahatma Gandhi**

2.7 Where to Network

Informal networking happens whenever you meet new people and often lead to unexpected opportunities. Your daily activities are natural networking events. Talk to your neighbour at the theatre, your friends at the gym or your co-workers at your part-time job. These connections are all valuable and may provide leads to current or future career opportunities.

Ask your professors for their insights into industry trends, current research topics or for any information they may have regarding future prospects in your field of study. Developing professional relationships with your professors is a great method to increase your network and may lead to increased academic and work opportunities. Professors who know you, your interests and work habits are also potential references for future employer referrals.

There are numerous formal networking opportunities both off and on campus. Career Services delivers programs and events throughout the year to provide career information and great networking opportunities. Check the Events Calendar on the website for up to date information and then refer to JobLink for location and registration details.

Attending Career Fairs will give you a chance to explore your options and to interact directly with potential employers. Make the most of these meetings, use your 30 second commercial, ask appropriate questions and collect business cards. A functioning network involves maintaining relationships so, if appropriate, follow up your meeting with a relevant email.

Employers come on campus throughout the year to recruit future employees. While some companies target specific faculties or programs, many of these sessions are open to all students. Check the details in JobLink and register to attend. Low registration may result in event cancellation so don't leave your RSVP to the last minute.

Industry and alumni panels are also hosted through out the year to connect students with employers from specific fields such as law, government, media and others. These events are designed to provide you with first hand information and to give you a chance to practice your networking skills. Registration and details for these events are also available via JobLink

Where to Network Cont'd

Another way to network on campus is by joining student clubs in areas aligned with your career interests. This provides a great way to get to know your classmates who, in the future, may be your business colleagues. Planning and attending club events also provides networking opportunities with potential employers.

Volunteering is a great way to help others and is another networking channel. In addition to the Student's Union Volunteer Services programs, other departments on campus offer a variety of volunteer opportunities. NUTV, CJSW and The Gauntlet offer various positions that provide networking opportunities plus relevant work experience. CISSA, the Centre for International Students and Study Abroad, and the WRC, Women's Resource Centre, are other departments that offer exciting volunteer positions. Helping at any of the Career Services Career Fairs is another volunteering option that also lets you connect directly with potential employers.

The Student's Union led, Co-Curricular Record (CCR) program, provides students with an official transcript of campus volunteer opportunities. So in addition to networking opportunities, your official volunteer record is a great addition to your resume. The CCR works closely with the Peer Helper Program developed by the Office of the Student Experience and offers additional campus volunteer positions.

Networking and volunteer opportunities are also available off campus. Volunteer Calgary www.volunteercalgary.ab.ca has an extensive database of volunteer opportunities to match your interests and desired time commitment.

For professional off campus networking, consider joining an appropriate professional association. The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, CICIC compiles an extensive list of national and provincial professional associations. Many of these offer student membership prices to encourage new members. Not only will membership provide opportunities to meet potential employers you will also stay informed on trends in your field and be aware of events and conferences of interest. A professional membership is also a great item to highlight on your resume.

2.8 Information Interviews

Overview

The goal of an information interview is to learn about an industry, characteristics of a position, occupation or company. It is up to you to find the contact, ask for, and schedule the interview, but the results are well worth the effort. Not only will you gain valuable insights, you will expand your network which may lead to future employment opportunities.

Most people are happy to share information about their career, but remember the focus of this interview is information gathering, you are *not* applying for a job. Ask for a brief 20 minute meeting and be sure to have your questions prepared in advance. Your last question should be, “Can you suggest anyone else for me to contact?”

Your first impression is important in this situation, so make you sure you maintain a positive and professional attitude starting with your initial contact, during the interview and in your follow-up thank you note.



Informational Interview Purpose

1. Gain Information

- About specific positions, general occupations, industries or companies

2. Learn Skill Requirements

- Discover if you have the necessary skills or how to acquire them

3. Build Your Network

- One contact leads to another and your network will expand with each interview

4. Advice and Feedback

- Gain insight for your own career path

5. Raise your Profile

- Become known to people in the industry as a potential employee

6. Future Employment

- The information you learn will allow you to target your career search more directly

Who to Interview

1. Your Network

- Start with your own network of friends, family, professors, co-workers, and past employers to draw a list of potential interviewees

2. Career Fairs

- Attend Career Fairs, use your networking skills and ask employers if they are willing to meet with you

3. Professional Associations

- Connect with specific associations and ask about meeting a volunteer mentor

4. Employer Information Sessions

- Employers come to campus to recruit and share information about their company
- Don't miss these opportunities to make connections

5. Companies of Interest

- Check out company websites, industry blogs, or company twitter(s)

6. Company Open Houses

- Attend any *open house* or *meet and greet* events, which invite potential employees to learn about the company and upcoming opportunities

Sample Informational Interview Questions

1. Describe a typical day.
2. What do you like most about your job?
3. What do you like least about your job?
4. What was your career path to date?
5. What is the most surprising aspect of this job/occupation?
6. Do you have any suggestions for me to help me achieve my goals in this industry?
7. Is there anyone else you can recommend I talk to?

2.9 Social / Professional Networking

While use of Facebook and other social networking sites will expand your network of contacts and may provide job search information, use caution and keep professional and personal profiles separate. Consider joining professional online networking groups such as LinkedIn to connect with others in your desired field or industry.



Section 3

- 3.1 Overview
- 3.2 Resume Format
- 3.3 Resume Content
- 3.4 Cover Letter Format
- 3.5 References
- 3.6 Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- 3.7 Portfolios

Section III. Resumes/Cover Letters/CV's

3.1 Overview

Resumes, CV's, cover letters, references and portfolios are marketing tools to highlight your skills and qualifications. Showcasing yourself will help you reach your goals in the workplace or in further education.

Your resume is the first impression you provide to potential employers. Make it count by targeting to the specific position, using a visually effective format, and marketing yourself with dynamic content. Targeting your resume and cover letter to demonstrate you have the right qualifications for the job will help ensure that an interview follows.

Review the company's website to gain an understanding of the company's values and culture to make sure your resume indicates why you are a good fit for both the position and the company. Analyze the job posting to determine the qualifications required for success in the job and determine the top five skills you need to showcase to match with the job qualifications.



3.2 Resume Format

Listed below are formatting guidelines for structuring an effective and targeted resume. In addition to these tips, as a University of Calgary student or alumni, you have access to OptimalResume, an online tool that will help you build, format and style numerous versions of your resume. OptimalResume is accessed through JobLink (login is required) on our website, www.ucalgary.ca/careers.



In addition to the faculty specific resume samples available under Resources on Optimal's front page, examples are provided within each section to assist you with format and content. Review samples across faculties for ideas on how to build a unique resume that highlights your qualifications and experience. OptimalResume also has an extensive list of action words to help you write a strong and effective document.

Another resource for help with your resume is the Resume/Cover Letter presentation available on our website. This slide and audio combination details how to produce effective documents.

Options to have your resume reviewed include:

- Resume Rescue, a drop in weekly program, held outside Career Services
- Book an appointment with one of our Peer Advisors – call 403-220-8020 or drop into the office MSC 188

Resume Format Guidelines and Tips

1. Personal Information

- Provide only your contact information: name, phone, postal code and email address (a professional email such as @ucalgary.ca)
- Additional information such as marital status, gender, religion or age should **not** be included

3. Professional and Consistent

- Use a professional and positive tone, no personal pronouns such as I or we
- Justify dates, right or left, month and year only
- Limit text effects to bolding, font size and italics

4. Perfect Grammar

- Present tense for all current activities
- Past tense for previous accomplishments, experiences
- Proof read - have someone else check the final draft for spelling and grammar

5. Length

- Maximum two pages with name and page number on second page
- Some industries prefer one page (e.g. corporate finance, investment banking) do your research to ensure you submit the desired format

6. Sections

- Prioritize Information
- As a student or recent graduate, “Education” should be the first section following your contact info
- Use section headings to your advantage – e.g. a Relevant Experience section allows you to highlight your information
- Reverse chronological order, most recent to least recent
- Use five bullets per section as a guideline
- Begin each bullet with strong action word and use up to two lines if necessary
- No periods are required at the end of the bullet as these are not sentences

7. Type and Font

- Arial or Times New Roman fonts are easiest to read
- Name and Section Titles – 14-16
- Body – 11-12

Resume Format Guidelines and Tips Cont'd

8. Avoid

- Vague statements such as 'excellent communication skills' or use of 'etc.' – neither provides employer with sufficient detail
- Information over ten years old, unless it is directly relevant to the position, or is an outstanding achievement
- Stating reasons for termination
- Noting "References on Request" not necessary as you will bring your Reference Sheet to the interview
- Rigid Templates (available as generic applications) -these do not allow you to customize your information to your advantage



Your resume should relate to the job posting and show the employer how and why you are a good fit for the position.

3.3 Resume Content

1. Sections

- Standard sections include Contact Information, Education, Experience – Work and/or Volunteer, Skills and Interests
- Look at various samples and selections and customize your sections to work for you

2. Contact

- Name
- Address – can specify temporary and permanent
- Phone Numbers, Cell, Home, Work
- **Professional** email address

3. Education

- Write in full as is will appear on your diploma
Bachelor of Arts, Sociology **Year-Present**
University of Calgary
GPA 3.4/4.00
- Include GPA if over 3.00
- If not stated otherwise employers assume GPA is cumulative
- If using a partial GPA define clearly (*last ten course/ core subjects*) to avoid confusion

4. Education Subheadings

- Use any of the following if appropriate
- Relevant Courses
- Major Projects
- Research
- Professional Development
- Scholarships, Honours, Awards

5. Experience

- Sections should be prioritized to highlight information specific to the position
- Consider using Relevant, Additional, or International Work Experience
- If including Volunteer Experience with Work Experience, clearly identify or use separate section for volunteer work
- Format Order: Bold Position Title, Company Name
Receptionist
Stony Ridge Veterinary Clinic
- Start each bullet with an action word



Stand Out – Target Your Information

Resume Content Guidelines Cont'd

5. Experience Cont'd

- Focus on transferable skills – customer service, problem solving, rather than listing duties
 - Include accomplishments, increased responsibilities and any initiatives
 - Be specific and quantify examples if possible
- Program Coordinator** (Year–Present)
Glenwest Centre for Children hrs/wk
- Create and implement daily age appropriate activities for 30 children aged five to twelve

6. Skills

- Possible skill section headings – Highlight of Skills and Qualifications, Relevant, Technical, Analytical or Additional Skills – use titles to showcase your information
- Refer to job posting details and list top five relevant and necessary skills to succeed in the position
- Prioritize order and provide detailed examples
- For Computer and Language Skills specify level of expertise with terms such as ‘Proficient in’ or ‘Intermediate oral comprehension’

7. Interests

- Avoid a long list of one word interests e.g. swimming, reading, hiking, dancing, movies
- Specifics for two to three bullets will better describe your interests *and* engage the reader
- These details provide employers with some personal insight, show your work/life balance and are often used for small talk at the beginning of your interview

Sample Resume Sections and Content

Note: A complete resume should be two pages of targeted information

Jo Smart

2222-22 Street SE
Calgary, Alberta T2V 3N2
(403) 220-0250
jsmart@ucalgary.ca

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Communications Studies **Year-present**

University of Calgary

- GPA: 3.65/4.0

Relevant Courses

- Mass Communications
- Rhetoric
- Communication Process
- Technical Writing

HIGHLIGHT OF SKILLS

- **Writing:** Implement creative and technical skills by producing voices, scripts, interviews, backgrounders, commentaries, news stories and releases, public service announcements and news magazines
- **Technical:** Broadcasting equipment; reel to reel machines, editing and publishing applications

RELEVANT EMPLOYMENT

Admitting Clerk, Foothills Hospital **Year -Present**

- Demonstrate adaptable and flexible communication skills in a high stress environment at various units, including working in the Emergency department

Volunteer CJSW, University of Calgary **Mth/Yr –Mth-Yr**

- On-air radio host for program “Happy Medium”
- Arrange music using Excel database into specific genres
- Prepared music playlists and participated with on-air discussions with the hosts of “Honey I Punk The Kids”

INTERESTS

- University of Calgary EcoClub Member
- Independently traveled to Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii

3.4 Cover Letter Format

1. Length and Style

- Formal
- One page - left justified
- 11-12 font consistent with resume

2. Headings

- Your postal address in business letter style or replicate the contact information format from your resume
- Date
- Name of contact (if available)
- Company name and address

3. Salutation

- Dear Mr. or MS. (if known)
- If name not available - Re: Position Title/Number

4. Opening

- Mention position and where you learned of the opportunity
- If referred by someone and given their permission include their name
- Avoid starting with "I" (too informal)

5. Middle or Sell

- Use the middle paragraphs to sell yourself - consider discussing academic skills in one paragraph and work experience in other
- Format in either all sentence or sentence and bullet combination
- Elaborate on skills mentioned in resume to further accentuate your suitability
- Provide specific examples that highlight your accomplishments
- Keep tone positive and professional

Employers review both the cover letter and resume when considering applicants so time and effort are required for both.

Section 3

A well written cover letter summarizes how your expertise relates to the position, indicates your availability and interest and most importantly, illustrates your writing skills.

Cover Letter Format Cont'd

4. Closing

- Thank employer for consideration
- Restate enthusiasm for position and mention company specifics - e.g. “ would be happy to work for an employer with a history of environmental commitment”
- Indicate your availability and how you can be reached
- Include phone number and email address in body of paragraph

5. Signature

- “Yours truly”, “Sincerely Yours”, “Regards”
- Leave four spaces for your signature
- Your name typed
- “Encl.” indicates enclosures such as resume, transcripts or other requested documents
- Don’t forget to *sign* your letter

6. On-Line Submissions

- If submitting by email, scan your signature or use a cursive font
- Attach only one document, titled with your name and the position, to email (cover letter first followed by resume)
- Keep body of email brief simply stating what is attached and how to be contacted if there are questions

Section 3

Cover Letter Sample

Your address

111 – 11th Ave. S.W.
Calgary, AB T1T 1T1

Date

May 12, 2007

Recipient Information

Ace Engineering Company
222 – 22nd St. N.E.
Calgary, AB T2T 2T2

Salutation/Reference

Re : New Graduate Engineer Position

Introduction

Please consider this as an expression of interest in an engineering position in the Ace Engineering Company. I have well-developed analytical thinking and problem solving skills, especially with respect to highly technological problems.

Sell

The Chemical Engineering degree that I just completed at the University of Calgary included the study of the most common chemical engineering processes; such as distillation, filtration, grinding, and extraction of liquids. I have focused my term papers and research projects on the distillation of hydrocarbons, which I understand you specialize in. My theoretical knowledge combined with my knowledge of other processes would quickly enable me to become familiar with the operation of your plant. I completed an analysis for North Oil, during a co-op work term, which involved calculating the savings and return to the company, from the installation of a new distillation process. North Oil continues to utilize the recommendations that I made from my study.

Sell

My employment experience has included working with all levels of employees: unskilled labour, technical specialists, and professional managers. I understand and appreciate the importance of interpersonal and communication skills in developing an effective working team. During my last summer job with BigOil, I was complimented on my teamwork abilities to compile project presentations and technical reports. This involved working with technicians and engineers to collect data, enter information and have drafts approved for the final products included in executive presentations and annual reports.

Close

It would be exciting to have my engineering career begin with Ace because of your reputation for training and innovation. I would happy to meet with you to discuss this further and can be reached at 403-220-2222 or pb@ucalgary.ca. I look forward to hearing from you.

Signature

Sincerely,

Peter Black

Peter Black
Encl.

3.5 References

Employers expect you to bring your references to the interview. Be sure to confirm your references' willingness and availability to speak positively on your behalf. Help them prepare by providing them with details of the position.

Reference Guidelines

1. Style

- Use same letterhead, contact info as your resume

2. Details

- Two to three references
- One character reference permitted
- State name, position
- Provide all current contact info, address, phone numbers, email
- Potential references include supervisors from work or volunteer positions, professors or coaches
- Include length and type of relationship between you and your reference
- Do not use family members

3. Reference Letters

- Less preferred as employers prefer to engage in discussion and often have specific questions to ask
- If used, attach a copy not the original to the reference sheet

Sample Reference Sheet

Jo Smart
2222-22 Street SE
Calgary, Alberta T2V 3N2
(403) 220-0250
jsmart@ucalgary.ca

REFERENCES

Mr. John Doe
Division Manager
Statistics Canada
Calgary, AB
(403) 220-2222
jdoe@statscan.com
Former supervisor, summer position

Ms. Jane Smith
Customer Service Manager
Royal Trust Mortgage Company
Calgary, AB
(403) 555-5555
janes@royal.ca
Character reference, former instructor

Mr. Jack Brown
Manager
Casey's Restaurant
Calgary, AB
(403) 333-3322
jack@hotmail.com
Committee member, ABC Organization

3.6 Curriculum Vitae (CV)

In general a CV is used when applying for grants, scholarships and academic positions and a resume is used when applying for employment in industry.

A Curriculum Vitae (CV) provides detailed and in depth descriptions of your academic background, research, publications and teaching experience and should be tailored to your audience.



CV Guidelines

Format

- Arial or Times New Roman, 11 or 12 font
- Double or triple spacing between categories, single spacing within
- Length, appropriate to information and audience, no restrictions
- Highlight with bolding, capitals, limited underlining
- Name, page number and date on every page after the first
- Reverse chronological order within sections
- Consistent style in content and format
- Confident, concise and authoritative with appropriate language for audience
- Grammatically correct, no spelling mistakes
- Use addenda for lengthy lists of publications, presentations or awards

Required Sections

- Contact information - work, home address, phone number and email address
- Education - specialty qualifications, thesis topic
- Academic awards and honours
- Research, detailed information
- Research awards and grants
- Publications
- Refereed and non-refereed including books, review papers, book reviews, letters to the editor, technical comments, popular articles
- Teaching experience
- Work experience
- Academic service/leadership

CV Guidelines Cont'd

Optional Sections

- Academic committee involvement
- Papers “under review” and “in preparation”
- Professional memberships, elected memberships and membership awards
- Academic appointments
- Conferences attended
- Board memberships
- Students supervised
- Professional development
- Professional talks/presentations
- Consulting experience
- Editor of proceedings
- Refereed conference proceedings
- Research awards and grants
- Travel that relates to your profession
- References

Avoid

- First person singular pronouns
- Lengthy descriptions of academic and work experiences
- Graphics, columns, boxes
- Personal information regarding gender, age, religion, race

3.7 Portfolios

Portfolios provide objective representations of your previous work and accomplishments. A well prepared portfolio will showcase your accomplishments through documents that illustrate the quality of your experience and training, and also demonstrate your skills and abilities.

Electronic portfolios referred to as e-portfolios, digital or webfolios are becoming increasingly popular. This type of portfolio can host electronic files, images, multi-media entries and hyperlinks to showcase a variety material.

Portfolio Guidelines

What to Include

1. Career Summary and Goals
 - Your philosophy and career goals for the next two to five years
2. Academic and Personal Information
 - Resume, official transcripts, testing results (ie. MCAT), references
3. Accomplishments
 - Class projects, research, teaching, performance, presentations, extra-curricular involvement
4. Skills and Technical Abilities
 - Specific examples of skills, documentation of technical skills, writing samples
5. Work Performance Information
 - Job descriptions, letters of reference/commendation, testimonials, employee evaluations, satisfaction surveys
6. Professional Information
 - Degrees, licenses and certificates, professional committees, professional organization involvement, conference presentations
7. Honours and Awards
 - Scholarships, certificates of awards, letters of nomination to honours and academic organizations

Portfolio Guidelines Cont'd

Organization

1. Evaluate
 - Determine most important information to display for position you are targeting and select appropriate items
2. Arrange
 - Tailor every portfolio to fit the job
3. Portfolio Notebook
 - Use a loose leaf folder, zippered binder or small artists' portfolio with plastic sleeves to protect materials
 - Label sections with tabs
4. Photocopies not Originals
 - Always use photocopies so you retain the originals

Collecting Material

1. Current Samples
 - Collect, organize and file regularly after completion of work, projects
2. Previous Samples
 - Reconnect with former employers and colleagues to obtain samples
3. Recreate
 - If necessary re-create samples
4. Be Innovative
 - Illustrate past achievements creatively

When to Use

1. Networking
 - Provide concrete examples on the spot or follow up with examples electronically
2. Applications
 - When examples such as writing, presentations or projects are requested
3. Interviews
 - Will support your answers with documentation when appropriate
4. Post Interview
 - If requested leave copies behind for further review

Section 4

4.1 Overview

4.2 Interview Preparation

4.3 Interview Stages

4.4 Behavioural Interview (BDI) Star Model Responses

4.5 Questions for the Employer and Follow-Up

Section IV. Interviews

4.1 Overview

Preparation will help you ace the interview. Start off right and make a great first impression: dress appropriately, shake hands confidently, make eye contact, and be sure to smile and maintain a positive and professional attitude before, during and after the formal interview process.

Show the employer you are a good fit by targeting your answers to highlight your skills and qualifications that relate to the position. Within [OptimalResume](#), accessible to students and alumni via JobLink, there is an interactive mock interview tool. This section of OptimalResume allows you to choose your interview questions and offers you a choice of interviewers. Once you have made your selection, you have the option of recording your answers through video, audio or text, depending on your own technical equipment. Your interview is then available to review by yourself or others.

An Interview Presentation is also available on our website and will provide you with the information and tips you need to succeed.

Behavioural Descriptive (BDI) questions are a common and popular type of interview question. The STAR model of response is a great way to answer these questions and is described in detail in [Section 4.3](#). Practice online by choosing the BDI question type in OptimalResume.



4.2 Interview Preparation

1. Review the job posting and your resume
 - Refresh your memory on the required skills and qualifications detailed in the posting
 - Be prepared to answer any questions regarding the information you provided on your resume
2. Complete List of (two to three) References
 - Notify them of your upcoming interview
 - Confirm your references' contact information and their ability to provide positive comments regarding your abilities
 - If possible provide your references with job details so they can speak to your appropriate strengths
3. Research company
 - Ensure you understand their focus, customers, operations and importantly their location
4. Consider where your qualifications match the required skills
 - Be prepared to describe the value that you will bring to the organization
5. Common Questions for all Interviews
 - Tell me about yourself?
 - What are your strengths/weaknesses?
6. Practice Answering Behavioural Descriptive Questions
 - Samples available within OptimalResume and also in the Interview Presentation
7. Answer BDI questions following the STAR formula
 - The Situation, Task, Action, Result model will help you formulate your answer and is detailed in [Section 4.4](#)
8. Be ready to discuss negative examples in a positive manner
 - Focus on what you learned from a negative experience
9. Prepare educated questions on position details and hiring process

Interview Preparation Cont'd

- 10. Be prepared to answer questions regarding salary**
 - The interview is not the time to discuss salary
 - If pressed your response could be that you expect “fair market compensation reflecting your education and experience”
 - Salary negotiations should follow the job offer
 - More salary information is detailed in the Salary Section of the guide

- 11. Bring your reference sheet, an extra resume copy, transcripts if requested**
 - Also bring any relevant projects or papers for referral or to illustrate specific abilities/accomplishments

- 12. Dress conservatively and professionally**
 - Men - suit or jacket, shirt and tie
 - Women – skirt or pants and jacket
 - Avoid cologne or perfume
 - Nothing too tight or revealing
 - Remove excessive body piercings and cover tattoos
 - Be remembered for what you say not what you wear

- 13. Answering Inappropriate/Illegal Questions**
 - If asked questions relating to race, age, marital status, political affiliations you may decline to answer
 - Another choice is to relate your response to the job
 - Q. “Do you have children and what are your childcare arrangements?”
 - A. I am willing and able to travel and work overtime during peak periods if necessary.”

4.3 Interview Stages

Treat everyone you meet with a professional and respectful manner. Any and all of your interactions, including your conversation with the receptionist may be relayed and discussed with the hiring staff.

1. Introduction

- Smile, offer a firm handshake, make eye contact
- A confident and positive attitude will relax you and the interviewer
- Watch your posture, standing and seated
- Fidgeting with your hair, pens, or your chair will distract from your answers
- Be yourself

2. Discussion

- Actively listen to questions so you can answer what is asked
- Speak in a strong confident voice
- Be honest with all answers
- If you don't understand the question ask for clarification or for the question to be repeated
- Collect your thoughts and feel free to pause before answering
- Offer to elaborate or provide another example

3. Conclusion

- Ask intelligent questions regarding position, training and the company that have not been clarified in the interview
- Make sure you know the timeline of the next steps in the hiring process
- Ask for business cards for future reference and communication
- Provide reference information
- Shake hands and thank interviewer(s)

4. After the Interview

- Send a thank you card or email to interviewer
- Reiterate your interest in the position

4.4 Behavioural Interview (BDI) Star Model Responses

BDI questions are extremely popular and often make up the majority of interview questions. This format is based on the theory that past behaviours are the best predictor of future actions. To prepare, review a sampling of these and think of suitable anecdotal situations you can draw on to respond effectively.

These questions typically start with, “Tell me about a time when you ...”, so prepare in advance to ensure you are able to recall suitable situations.

STAR Model

Situation: Briefly describe the situation to put your answer in context. Your answers can be drawn from various areas - school, work, volunteer or sports situations if applicable.

Task: Explain the task and expectations of what you had to accomplish.

Action: The focus of your answer should be on the Action and Result portion of the model. Describe your actions (avoid team references as in ‘we did’) and showcase your own skills.

Result: Indicate the outcome. If positive be sure to elaborate. If negative finish the answer positively by explaining what you learned from the situation.

Q. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with multiple deadlines?

A. Just before final exams last term I had two papers to hand in, a group project to present and at the same time I was putting in extra shifts at my retail job to help with the Christmas rush.**(Situation and Task)**

In order to meet my school deadlines I made a schedule to prioritize my work and organize my time. I made sure that I had time to meet my group members and that everything was completed on time. I asked to schedule my shifts at work for later in the day as I find I am able to write more productively in the morning. Everything went well, our group received a B+, and I got an A, and an A- on my papers. And I was able to save extra money for tuition. I find that if I plan ahead I am less stressed and able to get everything I need done effectively.

(Action and Result)

4.5 Questions for the Employer and Follow-Up

It is important to have your questions ready at the end of the interview. Use your research of the company to draft questions that are not answered on their website or in their promotional material. In addition to specific questions about the position, be sure to ask about the next steps in the hiring process.

Send the interviewer a quick email or note thanking them for the interview. Make your thank you less generic by mentioning something specific about *your* interview.

Review your performance to analyze your interview strengths and weaknesses to help you prepare for future interviews.

Sample Questions for the Employer

1. What projects would I be working on?
2. What type of training would I receive?
3. What is the management style of this department?

Don't forget to say thank you for the interview.

Section 5

5.1 Office Etiquette

5.2 Be a Valued Employee

5.3 Etiquette Outside of the Office

Section V. Etiquette

Professional manners, knowledge, skills and work ethic are all necessary for success in the workplace. Displaying polite and respectful manners to all of your colleagues will help you transition smoothly from student to employee. Ask questions if you are unsure of procedures. As a new member of the team it is up to you to listen, learn and adapt to your new work culture.

5.1 Office Etiquette

Presenting Yourself

1. First Impressions

- Your dress, voice and body language have the most impact in any first meeting
- Use professional manners and a respectful attitude when interacting with all fellow staff members and clients
- Greet people with a strong handshake, smile and make eye contact
- Introduce yourself and make an effort to remember names and titles
- Keep small talk pleasant and positive

2. Grooming

- Clean nails, fresh breath, neat hair and pressed clean clothes are grooming basics that should always be followed
- Consider removing multiple piercings and covering tattoos
- Avoid wearing perfume or cologne

3.. Dress

- Be conservative and follow office standards
- Your clothes effect your impression on clients, and your supervisor
- Avoid making personal statements with loud, or edgy clothes unless your employer clearly values individuality (e.g. creative marketing or theatrical companies)
- Tight or revealing clothes are never appropriate

4. Business Dress for Men

- Solid or pinstripe suit coordinated with conservative shirt and tie
- Pants with sport jacket

Office Etiquette - Presenting Yourself Cont'd

5. Business Dress for Women

- Skirt or pants suit in solid or subtle print
- Separate skirts/pants with jacket or blazer

6. Business Casual for Men

- Pressed cotton pants such as khakis and buttoned shirts or if suitable, collared sport shirts
- No athletic shoes, flip flops or graphic t-shirts

7. Business Casual for Women

- Cotton pants or skirts, shirt and sweater combinations
- No tank tops, jeans or shorts

5.2 Be a Valued Employee

Mastering new skills and fulfilling duties is only a portion of what is necessary to succeed in the workplace. You also need to show your co-workers and supervisor(s) your willingness to learn and your adaptability to your work environment.

1. Responsibilities

- Meet your deadlines - note times and dates in a calendar and set reminders
- Initiate any necessary follow-up
- Clarify roles and responsibilities if needed
- Ask for help and take notes so you don't need to repeat your questions
- Understand your performance review procedure and schedule
- Record your accomplishments for future reference

2. Be Punctual and Reliable

- Familiarize yourself with sick/absentee protocol
- Discuss time off for medical appointments prior to scheduling

Be a Valued Employee Cont'd

3. Meetings

- Don't interrupt, listen as much as you speak
- Offer comments or suggestions when asked for input
- Make notes for future reference

4. Email

- Keep messages short and professional
- Always use subject line
- Treat like a postcard that may be read by anyone

5. Telephone

- Answer with your name and department
- Return messages within 24-48 hours
- Identify yourself when leaving messages and provide your telephone number at the beginning and end of message
- Set up your voice mail, clearly stating your name and availability

6. Conversations

- Avoid controversial topics such as politics or religion
- Don't participate in gossip or water cooler complaint sessions

6. Internet Usage

- Avoid spending time on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter during office hours – some companies monitor this activity

7. Cell phones and music

- Restrict cell phone use, including texting, to lunch or breaks
- Headphones are not appropriate
- Confirm policy before playing music through computer

5.3 Etiquette Outside of the Office

Dining

Beginning

- Wait for your host to sit
- Watch your posture
- Place napkin across your lap
- Follow hosts lead on food selections and if possible order simple items
- Avoid alcohol



Middle

- **BMW** – starting from the left – Bread, Meal, Wine/Water
- Your bread and butter plate are on your left
- Your beverages are on your right
- Wait until everyone is served before eating
- Break bread into small pieces do not cut with knife
- Pass to the right
- Don't speak with your mouth full
- Use your napkin
- If in doubt follow example of host

Utensils

- Farthest fork from plate – appetizer
- Middle fork - salad
- Fork closest to plate – main course
- There may be a desert fork at the top of the plate

End

- Place your napkin on left side of plate
- Leave your utensils parallel to each other with handles at 4 o'clock and tops at 10 o'clock
- Avoid negative comments about meal
- Thank your host

Etiquette Outside the Office Cont'

Office Events

Social and Team Building Events

- Remember you are attending these events with your professional colleagues not friends from school
- Participate and enjoy the event but avoid excessive eating or drinking

In the Community

- If involved with volunteer or community events be sure to be a positive and professional representative of your company
- In any public situations consider how your actions reflect on your employer
- Being tagged on Facebook in a compromising photo will not further your career
- Set your Facebook privacy filters appropriately

Section VI. Salary Information

Salary discussions should occur after you are offered a position, not during the interview. If pressed your reply should indicate that you expect fair market value for your education and experience.

If requested to supply salary expectations with your application you may ignore the request or indicate the negotiable nature of your expectations (within fair market value) and supply a range e.g. \$30,000.00 to \$35,000.00 to start.

Salary statistics are provided on various websites but do not always reflect current economic situations. The U of C homepage has a link to Accountability at the U of C and under the Students tab there is historical information on graduating salaries. The Alberta Learning Information Service, ALIS site has extensive career, occupation, and labour trend information including Wage Info which provides Alberta salary information.

When considering a job offer take into account benefits in addition to salary. These could include health benefits, flexible hours, paid parking, company discounts or compensation for professional memberships or development.

If you decide to counter an offer it is unrealistic to ask for more than 10% of the initial salary quoted. You could ask the employer for information on timing of performance reviews, probation periods and potential salary increases.

Be realistic about both your salary needs and amount the company is likely to pay. The size of the company, the location and their economic outlook are all factors to consider.

Section VII. Additional Career Resources

Different faculties and programs offer students' specific career related assistance.

If you are a Haskayne student, in addition to all of the Career Services resources you have access to the Haskayne Career Centre, Room 302 Scurfield Hall. Their website www.haskayne.ucalgary.ca/haskaynecareers hosts CareerLink a job posting and event board dedicated to business students. Information on Haskayne Co-op programs, mentorship, workshops and additional career advising services is also available on this site.

Schulich School of Engineering students will find additional help regarding Internship at the Engineering Internship Program Office located at ENC 118.

The Social Science Co-op office, located in ST068, administers the Co-operative education programs for the Social Science faculties.

Check your faculty website for information on extra programs and events offering networking and career research opportunities.

In addition to the current resources and programs provided by Career Services new initiatives are on-going to meet student career needs. Bookmark Career Services www.ucalgary.ca/careers to keep up to date on all the events and programs available.

Career Services
MSC 188
403-220-8020