

# THE JOB SEARCH for LIBERAL ARTS MAJORS:

General Studies, Psychology, Communication, English, Spanish,  
Sociology, History, Political Science, Family & Consumer Sciences, Visual Arts



## Office of Career Services

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*Division for Student Affairs*

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# CONTENTS

## **Liberal Arts Q's & A's**

For Exploring Career Options and Conducting a Job Search 3-4

## **Skills of Liberal Arts Majors**

5

## **Resume and Cover Letter Guidelines**

First Impressions Count	6
Resume Format Guidelines	6
Resume Content Frequently Asked Questions	7-8
The Cover Letter or Letter of Application	9
The References Page	9
Letters of Recommendation	9
Sample Resume: General Studies	10
Sample Resume: Psychology	11
Sample Resume: Communication	12
Sample Resume: FCS - Nutrition & Health Promotion	13
Sample Resume: Arts – Graphic Design	14
Sample Cover Letters	15-17
Sample References Page	18

## **The Job Search**

Career Exploration & Assessment in the Job Search	19
Career Exploration Online Resources	19
Career Assessments	19
Job Search Assistance	19
The Art of Networking	20
Using Social Media in the Job Search	20

## **Interviewing Guidelines**

Dress for Success for Women	21
Dress for Success for Men	21
Top Ten Interview Tips	22
After the Interview	22
Sample Thank You Note	22
Sample Interview Questions and Answers	23-25
Appropriate Questions for You to Ask	25
Inappropriate Questions to Ask	25
Behavioral Interviewing	25
Employer Expectations	26

# LIBERAL ARTS Q's AND A's for EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS AND CONDUCTING A JOB SEARCH

## What is a Liberal Arts Education?

A liberal arts education refers to college degree programs that provide general knowledge in a subject area and that facilitate the development of skills crucial to the success of today's college graduates in a variety of work environments.

## Are Employers Interested in Liberal Arts Majors?

Yes! For example, approximately two thirds of the average 130 employers who attend the annual career fair offered by the Office of Career Services indicate an interest in "All Majors." However, keep in mind that you will likely be competing with applicants who have a degree and possibly experience that is related to the job, so it is crucial that you put extensive thought, time, and effort into developing a **marketing plan** for yourself as a job seeker, and that your resume and interviewing skills reflect this.

And, don't worry about your educational background being broad – you have actually acquired many skills employers are seeking no matter what your degree - see the following **Skills of Liberal Arts Majors** for what you, as a Liberal Arts graduate, have to offer! Make a list of your **Top Five Skills** and be able to provide examples of how you applied each in an academic related or work setting (this is **Behavioral Interviewing**, a very important interviewing technique explained later in this guide).

## How Can a Liberal Arts Major Explore Career Options?

Access **Map Your Career** and click on **Career Exploration Resources** to access SIGI 3, OOH, O\*Net, and What Can I Do With This Major? for information on 100's of careers - and note the educational requirements to see if "any major" will be considered. Go to **Career Assessment** and take a variation on the MBTI inventory, to learn about types of work that will fit your personality.

Many college graduates often limit their options by looking only for careers directly related to their major, but, depending on the job market, those careers may or may not be realistic possibilities. Using the above resources to learn about yourself, types of work for which you are best suited, and actual careers that exist that match your strengths, can assist you in discovering careers you never considered!

Also, if you have part-time work experience in a business setting, have you considered business-type jobs? Many employers of business jobs want to hire a variety of majors. Think about the SPECIFIC TYPE of business skills acquired in your jobs – communications, marketing, administrative, technical, etc. – and look for jobs requiring those skills. Or, if you aren't interested in working in a business environment, still think of the knowledge and skills acquired in work experiences or extracurricular activities that are transferable to other types of work – and confidently communicate these on your resume and in the interview!

## How Should a Liberal Arts Major Prepare Their Resume?

After researching careers and creating a list of the types of work to target in your search - based on a good fit with your interests, abilities, personality, and academic background – access **Build a Resume or the resume section in this Guide** for proper resume writing guidelines, and tailor your resume to each type of work you plan to target. Make sure your resume is free of errors!

- Two to three resumes, each tailored to a certain type of work, should be enough. For example: Create a Business Resume and an Education/Social Services Resume – if you have coursework and/or experience in both of those areas.
- To tailor each, just change the **Objective** to mention the type of work targeted, and customize the **Skills Summary** to that type of work, mentioning related knowledge and skills, gained through education, work experience, and if applicable, through extracurricular and volunteer experiences, and internships.
- In the **Skills Summary**, you can include statements worded as follows: "Knowledge of..." to describe knowledge acquired in your coursework that is related to the type of work targeted, and/or "Experience in..." to mention experience you have that relates to the type of work targeted.
- Make sure to mention your personality strengths determined from **Career Assessment** and your MBTI type.
- Save each resume with a descriptive file name so you can easily identify the one you want to submit for a specific job.

## Is a Cover Letter Important for a Liberal Arts Major?

Absolutely! The **Cover Letter** is an excellent venue for explaining in more of a contextual format what you have to offer.

### Tips for Liberal Arts Majors for writing a cover letter that makes a statement about YOU:

- Mention the job title and how you learned of the vacancy (where you saw it advertised) in the first paragraph.
- If you are not applying to a specific, advertised position, say: “I’m writing to express a strong interest in working for (name of company organization).”
- In the second paragraph, discuss getting your degree and mention some things you have learned in your educational preparation that relate to the type of work you are seeking.
- In the third paragraph, mention transferable skills (and knowledge) acquired through work, extracurricular, internship, and volunteer experiences, that will allow you to contribute to the position and company/organization.
- In the fourth paragraph, mention knowledge of the company/organization gained from researching their web site, and/or from positive personal experience with the company, if possible - its products, services, etc. Summarize by saying that you are confident that you have a lot to offer to the position and the company/organization, and state why you want to work for them.
- See more information on cover letters below in this guide.

## How Should a Liberal Arts Major Prepare for the Job Interview?

Preparation is key to a successful interview. Graduates need to **research not only the company/organization, but also the job, AND the field/industry** - especially since some majors will be interviewing for jobs NOT directly related to what they've learned in their program of study. Career Services offers information on 100's of occupations under **Map Your Career**, then **Career Exploration Resources** - including SIGI 3, OOH, O\*Net, and What Can I Do With This Major?

Also, research **jobs you have held** in these online resources, so that you can gain a better understanding of the knowledge and skills you have acquired that are **transferable** to the jobs you are targeting, and be able discuss these in detail in the interview.

### NOTE: A powerful competitive advantage you can create is to research the field or industry of the job targeted.

For example, let's say you are applying for an Admissions Counselor position in the Office of Admissions at a university. First, look up this job title on Career Services' **Career Exploration Resources** and study the functions of this position. The SIGI 3 resource explains “special problems” or stressors of each job, which would be a good thing to know – plus you will likely be asked what you know about the position in the interview – possibly about both the positives and the challenges/stressors.

Then, go to the university's web site and find the Office of Admissions, and research that specific office/department, learning about services and programs offered, as well as their mission statement. Then, look at other university Office of Admissions web sites and compare what they offer to the one you are applying to. You can mention that you did this research in the interview, but stay positive! For example, you could say that you noted that other university admissions offices seem to offer a certain service or program, and ask the interviewer if that is something this office is considering implementing in the future. And! Use Google to research trends and issues for the field or industry.

Then, research the university itself and know something about its degree programs, its student services, its enrollment, its history, its future initiatives. So many graduates don't take the time to conduct thorough research on the above topics before writing a cover letter or being interviewed – and they don't realize how being prepared in this way can give them an edge over other applicants who fail to prepare.

## How Should a Liberal Arts Major Conduct a Job Search?

**For full-time job, part-time job, and internship listings, and to participate in On-Campus Interviews, create an account in LIONHIRE**- Career Services' job search system. Instructions are provided for using the system and applying for job vacancy postings, as well as for signing up for On-Campus Interviews. Search local, regional, and national job listings.

Also, start following our **Job Board Links** job boards such as Indeed.com, to keep abreast of the types of jobs that are actually out there - the advertised positions – and the majors they seek - and start making a list of types of jobs that may be for you, including the companies and organizations advertising these jobs. Also use key words such as “Coordinator,” “Management,” “Marketing,” “Sales,” “Hospitality/Tourism,” – jobs in these fields are usually open to a variety of college majors. Or, if you have coursework in areas such as Education or Social Services, search using these terms. Organizing your search is of critical importance to the Liberal Arts Major, because you have a lot of options to consider and pursue!

# SKILLS OF LIBERAL ARTS MAJORS

## TOP SKILLS SOUGHT BY EMPLOYERS & BULLETED SKILL STATEMENTS TO INCLUDE ON YOUR RESUME:

**Communication Skills** - these include listening/attending behavior, verbal, and written communication skills; also the ability to relate well to others via positive, professional, and motivational communication.

- Strong communication skills developed through group presentations
- Communicate effectively with clients to understand and resolve concerns.
- Demonstrate active listening skills in attending to customers' needs and requests.

**Interpersonal/Teamwork Skills** - the ability to establish and maintain cooperative and productive working relationships with co-workers, management, and customers/clients; to resolve conflicts diplomatically; to show initiative in offering to assist co-workers/supervisors; and to set an example of appropriate professional behavior.

- Encourage team efforts in working with co-workers and supervisors to achieve results.
- Collaborate on team projects by example of motivation, commitment and follow-through.
- Contribute creativity, enthusiasm, and interpersonal skills in working as part of a team.

**Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving Skills** - the ability to assess a problem or situation, examine it from various perspectives, collect more info as needed for a thorough understanding of the facts and concepts involved, and to apply logical thinking, creativity, and perseverance in finding solutions to problems.

- Demonstrate analytical skills in researching information and formulating conclusions.
- Logically examine challenges and apply strategic thinking to achieve results.
- Develop innovative approaches and apply creativity in solving problems.

**Planning/Organizational Skills** - these include thinking in terms of short and long-range objectives and goals, the ability to establish goals and allot appropriate amount of time to achieve goals, and developing contingency plans.

- Focus on efficiency, quality, and bottom-line results in achieving organizational goals.
- Ability to plan, organize, and implement activities and projects, with attention to detail and timelines.
- Approach projects as opportunity to demonstrate exceptional planning and organizational skills.

**Multitasking/Adaptability Skills** - these include being able to manage multiple activities and assignments successfully, by managing your time effectively and learning how to prioritize your responsibilities. "Always expect the unexpected" – and know that flexibility and adaptability can take you far.

- Experienced in effectively managing multiple tasks in fast-paced work environments.
- Flexible, adaptable, and energized by new situations and challenges.
- Proven ability to meet unexpected challenges with confidence, energy and effectiveness.

**Leadership/Management Skills** - these include your ability to self-motivate and motivate others to accomplish goals; and your ability to effectively manage your area of work responsibility, even though you may not supervise others. It also includes the ability to manage quantitative and qualitative information through technology, records and reports.

- Results-oriented professional with commitment to excellence in work performance.
- Highly self-motivated and able to motivate others by example of perseverance and enthusiasm.
- Team leader with strong sense of pride in energetically leading a team to accomplish goals.

**Cultural Literacy and Foreign Language Proficiency** – the ability to understand the ways in which cultures are different and how those difference affect interactions and viewpoints; behavioral differences between generations and genders; appropriate business etiquette across cultures and countries.

- Demonstrated ability to thrive in diverse cultural environments through study abroad experience.
- Skilled in interacting with diverse populations and understanding nuances of cultural differences.
- English, native language; fluent in Spanish; intermediate proficiency in French.

# RESUME AND COVER LETTER GUIDELINES

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

Resumes and cover letters create the first impression a potential employer will have of you. Both of these documents are marketing tools designed to sell an impressive product—you! With that in mind, demonstrate self-motivation, critical thinking, attention to detail and creativity when preparing your resume and cover letter. When reviewing a resume, a prospective employer will evaluate your qualifications, but they will also assess how much time and effort you have devoted to your resume.

Typos and grammatical errors on a resume or cover letter suggest you do not care about the quality of your work. Both documents should be free of mistakes. An employer wants someone who produces exemplary work.

Show employers why you are the perfect candidate for the job. Describe, in the resume and cover letter, your skills and experience that relate to that job. A skills summary on a resume is an excellent category for highlighting your qualifications.

The cover letter is your chance to give employers a sense of who you are based on the experiences and attributes you will bring to the company. It should be tailored to the job and the company. A cover letter should leave an impression which inspires the potential employer to read your resume and then schedule an interview.



## RESUME FORMAT GUIDELINES

**AVOID ERRORS IN SPELLING, GRAMMAR, AND PUNCTUATION.** Errors are viewed by an employer as an indicator of your future work performance – i.e., that you will be careless or not attentive to detail.

**ONE- PAGE RESUME RECOMMENDED.** Adjust the margins to .7 or .6 inches, and the font size to 10 or 11 point. Major headings can be 12 point; your name, 14 - 20 point. Times Roman or Arial fonts are recommended.

**AVOID RESUME TEMPLATES.** Resume templates force the resume onto two pages, containing spacing that can't be adjusted to make the resume one page. Instead, type your resume as a regular document in Word. Also, the employer may not be able to open an attached emailed resume in other programs.

**CREATE A HEADER FOR YOUR RESUME, COVER LETTER AND REFERENCES PAGE.** The header should include your name, address, phone, and email address. Do not include the word "resume" as part of the header. Do not include personal information, such as age, marital status, ethnicity, etc. Make sure your email address is professional and isn't "cute."

**RESUMES THAT MUST BE TWO PAGES.** If you have a lot of work experience, and/or involvement in student organizations, or volunteer work, your resume may need to be two pages long. In this case, on the second page, put your name and phone number in the upper left corner, and "Page 2" in the upper right corner. Do not include your header from the first page on the second page. Paper-clip rather than staple the resume if handing to an employer at a career fair, or mailing it.

**MAKE SURE YOUR RESUME IS "SCANNABLE."** If the resume is handed to employers at a career fair, the employer may scan it to store it in a computer database. A "scannable resume" avoids: italics, underlining, shading, borders, and graphics. Acceptable formatting includes: Bold type, "all caps," bullets, and black ink.

**DO NOT FOLD RESUME, COVER LETTER, OR OTHER APPLICATION MATERIALS.** If mailing, use a Manila envelope. Use labels rather than typing, printing, or hand-writing addresses directly on the envelope.

## RESUME CONTENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### OBJECTIVE

#### Do I need an Objective? What should it say?

An **Objective** can demonstrate “focus” in terms of your career goal, and is an excellent opportunity for you to emphasize your top skills.

#### EXAMPLES OF OBJECTIVES:

A career in the field of marketing with opportunity to contribute creativity, strong planning and organizational skills, and the ability to communicate effectively.

To apply communication, team work, and organizational skills, gained from academic preparation and work experience, to a professionally rewarding business environment.

A career in management in which leadership, communication, and technical knowledge and skills will have a positive impact on an organization’s success.



### EDUCATION

#### Is it important that my degree information is correct?

Yes - check for the correct title of your degree on your academic program’s departmental web site, your transcript, the Southeastern catalog, or with your faculty advisor. Also, list your concentration and/or any minors.

**Should I list my GPA?** List only if 3.0 or above. However, if your Overall GPA is less than 3.0, but the GPA in your major is above 3.0, you can list your Major GPA only, for example: **Major GPA: 3.2**. If both GPA’s are above 3.0, you can list both: **Overall GPA: 3.2 / Major GPA: 3.6**, or just the overall.

#### Should I list courses I completed?

Yes, listing courses facilitates an employer’s understanding of your knowledge base. List 6-10 courses that support your career goal. List course titles, not abbreviations and numbers.

#### Should I list every college/university attended, and the courses completed if I didn’t get a degree?

If you attended at least a year, or if you earned an Associate’s degree, then list the additional college or university (and degree, if earned). List course titles (not numbers), but only if they support your career goals.

#### In what order should I list my Education info, if I’ve attended more than one college?

List most recent educational experience first and other colleges attended in reverse chronological order.

#### Should I list high school information?

This isn’t necessary once you’re a college graduate, unless you have major accomplishments such as honors or officer positions in organizations. Put this info in ACTIVITIES & HONORS, and indicate they were in high school.

### SKILLS SUMMARY

#### What is the purpose of a SKILLS SUMMARY? Is it optional?

A SKILLS SUMMARY may also be called: PROFESSIONAL SKILLS, KEY QUALIFICATIONS, QUALIFICATIONS HIGHLIGHTS, or SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS. This category directs the employer’s attention to your **transferable skills** – i.e., abilities, personality characteristics, and knowledge and experience acquired through courses, team projects, intern and work experiences, organizations, and volunteer work, which can contribute to your success on the job.

#### What is the best format for a SKILLS SUMMARY?

Create bulleted statements which describe your transferable skills as described above. Don’t forget to include computer skills as your last statement. Begin each statement with an Action Verb – see **ACTION VERBS & ADVERBS** or phrases such as, “Experienced in...,” “Knowledge of ...,” “Responsible for...,” “Successfully...,” etc.

### EXPERIENCE

#### Should I list every job held on my resume? What about jobs in high school?

List only those jobs held in college. If you had seasonal employment or other short-term jobs that didn't allow you to develop or apply skills toward your career goal, you may omit these, also. Regarding high school jobs: No, unless you held a job in high school that relates to your career goal, or illustrates an achievement. **NOTE:** If you are a "non-traditional student" with experience from the 1990's or prior, you may omit these jobs as they may imply your age; age discrimination is illegal, but it can occur.

### How can I highlight my internship, volunteer, and other experiences directly related to my major?

Use two categories: RELATED EXPERIENCE (and list experience that is related to, and supports, your Objective) and ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE (list experience not directly related to your Objective but that shows consistent work history as well as illustrates your transferable skills).

### In what order should I list my jobs and what is the proper format?

Begin with the most recent job first; list others in reverse chronological order.

#### EXAMPLES OF PROPER FORMAT:

**Sales Associate**, May 2013 - present.  
JC Penney, Lakeside Mall, New Orleans, LA  
(Put job description here)

**Office of Career Services, Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA**  
**Student Assistant**, January 2012 - August 2014  
(Put job description here)

**What type of information should I include in my job descriptions? NOTE: Use present tense verbs for current jobs; past tense verbs for former positions.** Include statement describing type of business or organization - its services, purpose, etc., if the organization name is not descriptive of this. Describe tasks performed, but also skills/knowledge acquired, and if possible, results of your efforts, and accomplishments. Include numbers if possible (e.g., of staff for whom you worked). Avoid using "I" – rather, begin statements with an **ACTION VERB**. And remember - be prepared to expand on this experience in the interview.

### ACTIVITIES & HONORS

#### What type of information should go in this category?

List extracurricular activities in which you participated while in college and that allowed you to develop key skills related to your career goal, such as: teamwork, communication, organizational, and leadership skills. List student organizations, volunteer activities, and honors/awards received.

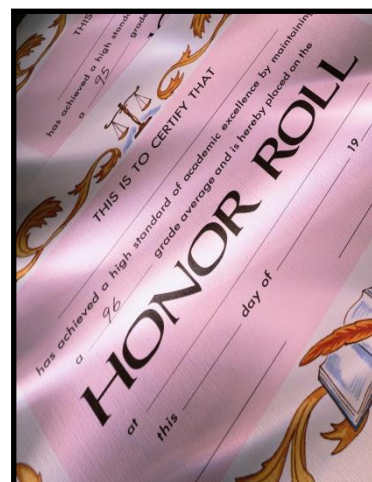
Listing dates is optional; if you choose to list dates, list years only. You can have one category for all called HONORS & ACTIVITIES, or ACCOMPLISHMENTS, or ACHIEVEMENTS, or just COMMUNITY SERVICE if you have no honors or awards to list.

#### REFERENCES UPON REQUEST

##### Should I include the statement: "References Available Upon Request"?

This statement is optional, as it is understood by employers that you should be able to produce either a **References Page**, or possibly letters of recommendation at some point during the interview process.

**Do not include your list of references on the actual resume.** The references page is a separate document from the resume, but with the same header as the resume, and the word "References" underneath.





# THE COVER LETTER

When initially contacting a specific employer, it is recommended that you accompany your resume with a cover letter (also known as a “letter of application”) tailored to the position and to the organization.

## COVER LETTER FORMAT

- Use the same header (contact information) for your resume, cover letter, and references page.
- Use business letter format of left margins with no indents, the date, company address, salutation.
- Limit to one page; font 10 point to 11 point looks best; three to five paragraphs.
- Use white or off-white resume paper; use same for resume, cover letter, and references page.

## COVER LETTER CONTENT

- Address letter to contact person listed in job ad if possible, or if not, to “Dear Human Resources Director,” “Dear Hiring Manager,” “Dear Recruiter,” or “Dear Search Committee Chair.”
- Do not start every sentence with “I” – instead, vary the sentence structure.
- Describe highlights of educational and work experiences; don’t repeat all information from resume.

- 1st paragraph:** State how you learned of position, position title, and name of organization.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph:** Describe your degree, possibly some courses, and what you learned.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph:** State knowledge/skills acquired in internships/work experiences, student organizations or volunteer activities, that relate to the position.
- 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph:** Indicate why you want to work for organization, knowledge of the organization gained through online research, personal or others’ experiences, and/or publicity.
- Final paragraph:** Suggest your desire for an interview, and where and how you can be reached.

## THE REFERENCES PAGE

A reference/recommendation is a verbal or written statement of support for your application for a job, by someone who has known you in a professional capacity and can comment on your work or academic performance. **Reference information should be on a page separate from your resume, and should contain the same header as your resume, with the word REFERENCES underneath.**

- Three to five references is an appropriate number to list. Always ask permission to list someone as a reference, and give them a copy of your resume to illustrate your qualifications.
- List each reference’s name, current job title, place of employment (include city, state, and zip code - mailing address not necessary), and work telephone number (not personal unless given permission).
- If a reference no longer works at the organization, you may still list them - with their current job title and employer. In parentheses, state, “former Manager of XYZ Co.” to illustrate former relationship.
- Do not include a separate references page when submitting your resume unless a job ad requests it. Instead, bring copies of references page in a portfolio to the interview.
- Character references (e.g., a friend, minister of your church, relative, etc.) should be avoided.

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Many employers are only interested in a references page rather than letters of reference or recommendation. However, if a job ad asks for letters of reference/recommendation:

- Letters of reference should be current - i.e., dated within the current year.
- If possible, without causing inconvenience to the person recommending you, letters should be addressed to the contact person listed in the job ad. If this is not possible, the letters may be addressed: “Dear Human Resources Director,” “Dear Hiring Manager,” etc.
- Giving your references a copy of your resume and mentioning key points you would like for them to emphasize in their letter is appropriate, and can be helpful to the reference in writing the letter. A copy of the job ad or description of the job can be helpful as well.

# SAMPLE RESUME – GENERAL STUDIES

## Wendy Bonaventure

1111 S. Dorchester St., Hammond, LA 70401 (985) 555-5555 wendy.bonaventure-2@selu.edu

### OBJECTIVE

To become associated with a company where skills in presentation, instruction, planning and organization, and leadership will make a significant contribution to the success of my employer.

### SUMMARY OF SKILLS

- Excellent interpersonal skills with ability to relate well to individuals of diverse backgrounds
- Ability to work effectively as member or leader of a team, encouraging others' contributions
- Precise and attentive to details in developing overall concepts of a task or project
- Plan, organize, and implement activities with focus on highest level of quality in results
- Microsoft applications, including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access; Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator

### EDUCATION

Southeastern Louisiana University Hammond, LA Graduation Date: Dec. 2011  
**Bachelor of General Studies** Grade Point Average: 3.291  
Focus in the studies of Geography, Biology, Earth Science, Chemistry, Physics, Education, and English Literature. These courses facilitated the ability to see the details within the greater picture of any task or project undertaken.

College of the Mainland Texas City, TX Graduation: Dec. 1999  
**Associate of Applied Science in Computer Graphics and Multimedia**  
Focus in Desktop Publishing, Web Design, Commercial Art, and Typography.

### WORK HISTORY

**Tangipahoa Parish School System** Amite, LA  
**Substitute Teacher** Feb. 2012 - Present  
Fill in for absent teachers and Para-educators when they are absent. Carefully follow substitute plans to ensure continuation of instructional objectives. Manage classroom with effective combination of discipline and support for students' learning experience.

**Southeastern Louisiana University, Sims Memorial Library** Hammond, LA  
**Student Assistant – Government Documents** Apr. 2010 – Dec. 2011  
Effectively interacted with faculty, staff, and students on a daily basis. Collected used materials, marked as used in system, and returned items to proper shelf location. Collected mail, answered phones, made copies, filed paperwork, counted materials, and shredded sensitive items. Read call numbers on paper, film, microfiche, and maps to make sure they were in the proper order on shelves and in drawers.

**Tangipahoa Parish School System** Amite, LA  
**Para-educator** Aug. 2005 - Dec. 2008  
Assisted classroom teacher and special education students with all aspects of their instructional needs. Learned how to interact with students with special needs and assist them in their learning experience.

**Tangipahoa Parish School System** Amite, LA  
**Substitute Teacher** Aug. 2004 - May 2005  
Filled in for absent teachers and para-educators when they were absent. Carefully followed substitute plans to ensure continuation of instructional objectives. Managed classroom with effective combination of discipline and support for students' learning experience.

### AWARDS AND HONORS

- President's List, Fall and Spring 2011, Fall and Spring 2009
- Dean's List, Fall 2010 and Summer 2008

# SAMPLE RESUME - PSYCHOLOGY

## Rachel Frank

3000 Brookaway Street ♦ Slidell, LA 70458 ♦ (985) 000-0000 ♦ Rachel.Frank@selu.edu

### Objective

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To pursue graduate studies in Counseling with the goal of a counseling career in which my academic preparation, work, and internship experiences will allow me to make a positive impact on the lives of my clients.

### Skills

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- Solid academic foundation in psychological theories, research, and current issues
- Experienced in interacting with children in a social and educational environment
- Desire to facilitate the personal and social growth and well-being of others
- Very effective communication skills in relating to diverse individuals and groups
- Excellent ability to work independently and handle pressure maturely and responsibly
- Demonstrated awareness of and ability to keep sensitive information confidential
- Computer skills: Proficient in MS Office - Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Excel
- Knowledge of IBM SPSS statistical software

### Education

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#### **Bachelor of Arts, Psychology**

Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA

Graduation Date: December 2011

Completed courses in: Developmental Psychology, Social Psychology, Psychology of Developmental Disabilities, Personality, Abnormal Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Research, and Statistics

### Work Experience

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#### **Kidz Karousel Child Center**

**Mandeville, LA**

**8/2012 - 11/2014**

#### **Child Care Provider**

Observed and monitored children's play activities, noting and addressing social and communication problems and challenges. Assisted in developing educational activities for children. Kept records on individual children, including daily observations and information about their functioning in various activities. Consulted with parents on childrens' well-being and progress in social and cognitive development activities.

#### **Noah's Arc Child Development Center**

**Mandeville, LA**

**1/2011 - 8/2012**

#### **Child Care Provider**

As a one year old teacher, identified signs of emotional or developmental problems in children and brought them to parents' or guardians' attention. Worked with parents to develop and implement plans of action to address issues and concerns. Maintained clean and organized environment; sanitized toys and play equipment. Read to children, and taught them simple painting, drawing, handicrafts, and songs.

#### **City of Slidell Parks and Recreation**

**Slidell, LA**

**6/2010 - 8/2010; 6/2011 – 8/2012**

#### **Summer Camp Counselor**

Organized and participated in recreational activities, such as games. Encouraged children to participate and supported them in learning to relate to others in a competitive situation. Assisted in preparing food for children, prepared and served meals and refreshments to children, and regulated rest periods.

# SAMPLE RESUME – COMMUNICATION

## Brittany B. Williams

2014 Riverbend Dr., Covington, LA 70433

555-555-5555

BritannyB25@gmail .com

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### OBJECTIVE

A career in the field of communications/public relations, with opportunity to apply a range of skills and competencies in a collaborative, results-oriented team environment.

### EDUCATION

**Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA**

**Master of Arts in Organizational Communications - Concentration in Public Relations**

December 2012 Cumulative GPA: 3.85

**Bachelor of Arts in Social Work, December 2010**

### EXPERIENCE

**Southeastern Louisiana University Office of Admissions, Hammond, LA**

**Graduate Assistant, January 2012 – December 2012**

Assisted with planning and executing university sponsored recruiting events such as Student and Parent Orientations. Actively recruited students to attend Southeastern at college fairs and private school visits. Acquired knowledge of university recruitment and marketing strategies, and administrative functions including the student enrollment process.

**Student Assistant, August 2007 – January 2009; Orientation Leader, January 2007 – January 2008**

**Jay Dardenne for Lt. Governor Re-Election Campaign, Baton Rouge, LA**

**Assistant Campaign Manager, August 2011 – October 2011**

Directly assisted Campaign Manager in statewide campaign activities. Coordinated all campaign volunteer affairs. Wrote press releases, managed campaign budget and campaign headquarters actions, and coordinating grassroots campaigns.

**Southeastern Louisiana University Student Government Association, Hammond, LA**

**Graduate Assistant, January 2011 – August 2011**

Responsible for student life event planning and membership recruitment and retention. Assisted in overseeing all office operations, attended student senate meetings, performed office administrative duties, and assisted coordinator with expense reports and budgets. **Student Assistant, January 2009 – December 2010**

**St. Tammany Parish Hospital Parenting Center, Covington, LA**

**Student Intern, August 2010 – December 2010**

Assisted with large fundraiser event planning and execution, new parent hospital visits for membership recruitment, PR writing, and parenting class preparation; community services representative and currently volunteer for annual fundraiser.

### SKILLS SUMMARY

#### Communication

- Event planning, public and political campaign planning, fundraising, orientations and recruiting.
- Public speaking, interviewing preparation, training and assessment, emotional intelligence coaching.
- Writing press releases, news releases, newsletters, brochures, and grant writing.
- Crisis communication training, diversity training, leadership training, knowledge of employment law.
- Conducted basic qualitative and quantitative research; knowledge of organizational structure and management.

#### Technology

PeopleSoft System, MS Office/Publisher, Windows and Mac OSX, IBM SPSS predictive analytics software, audio/visual equipment (projectors, speakers, video), light HTML coding, light Adobe Photoshop, various social media websites.

### ACTIVITIES/RECOGNITION

Outstanding Woman of the Year 2009; Student Government Association, Executive Board 2007- 2011; Theta Phi Alpha Fraternity, 2006-2010 (President 2009, Recruitment Chairman 2008); Order of Omega – Greek Honor Society; Southeastern Ambassadors, 2007-2009; Southeastern Leadership Conference 2007-2011 (presenter; planning committee).

# SAMPLE RESUME – FCS: NUTRITION & HEALTH PROMOTION

**Brianne Sibley**

**0000 Creek Market Rd., Walker, LA 70785**

**(225) 000-0000**

**brianne.sibley@selu.edu**

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## **Objective**

A career utilizing my knowledge and skills in nutrition and health studies to promote healthy lifestyles.

## **Education**

### **Bachelor of Science, Family and Consumer Sciences**

#### **Concentration in Nutrition; minor in Health Promotion**

Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA December 2011

**Coursework Includes:** Nutrition, Child Nutrition, Advanced Nutrition, Professional Development, Weight Management Principles, Personal Health, Health and Stress, Community Health, Health Promotion Program Planning, Health Information and the Media, Health Problems in the Aging, Health Assessment and Promotion, Diet Therapy, Health Behavior Change

## **Key Qualifications**

- Strong academic preparation in health, wellness, and nutrition.
- Desire to educate and support others in setting and achieving health and fitness goals.
- Demonstrated leadership and teamwork skills as trainer/instructor/coach.
- Exceptional planning and organizational skills developed through education and work experience.
- Effective communication skills in presenting information to individuals or groups.
- Computer skills include Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Internet.

## **Work Experience**

**Intern, August 2011-December 2011**

### **Pennington Biomedical Research Center, Baton Rouge, LA**

Assisted with research in the metabolic kitchen for various studies and food safety. Observed exercise interventions in the fitness center.

**Fitness Room Personal Trainer, Lifeguard, May 2011-July 2011; February 2010-July 2011**

### **Southeastern Louisiana University, Recreational Sports and Wellness Department**

Certified Personal Trainer for university Rec Sports and Wellness services and facilities. Promoted the health and well being of individuals by assisting them with exercise equipment and goals. Assisted with questions and concerns. Provided safe environment for children. Certified Lifeguard and certified in CPR.

**Server, February 2008-July 2008**

### **Smoothie King, Hammond, LA**

Provided quality customer service and product information to customers for business that is founded on principles of healthy nutritional choices. Maintained and managed store inventory. Performed cash management activities and efficiently processed sales transactions.

**Lifeguard/Swim Lesson Instructor, May 2006-July 2007**

### **C.B. Pennington Jr. YMCA, Baton Rouge, LA**

Certified Lifeguard and certified in CPR. Assisted members with questions and concerns. Provided safe environment for children.

**Student Assistant/Secretary, May 2005-August 2005**

### **Walker High School, Walker, LA**

Performed office administrative duties for professional staff. Demonstrated excellent telephone and business communication skills. Maintained an organized and efficient filing system for office.

## **Accomplishments**

President's List and Dean's List, multiple semesters.

# SAMPLE RESUME – ART: GRAPHIC ARTS

Amanda Roberson  
Graphic Designer



@ mander1230@yahoo.com  
225.241.9229

5805 Frederick Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70817

## EDUCATION

2009- 2014 Southeastern Louisiana University  
Bachelor of Arts in Art, Concentration in Graphic Design  
Graduation Date: May 2014

## RELATED EXPERIENCE

Summer 2013 **Internship, Gatorworks Baton Rouge, LA**  
Designed logos and website mockups for different clients

### Freelance Work

Designed logo and promotional media for the 2013 LACE/MACE Conference  
Designed stationary for a co-worker

## OTHER EMPLOYMENT

2011-2014 **Office of Career Services, Southeastern Louisiana University**  
Student Technology Liaison

Design mass emails in AI to link in DW and send as html emails, troubleshoot computer issues throughout the office, edit the Career Services webpage using OUCampus and some coding, create / edit promotional media for various Career Services events.

2013-Present **Alexander's Highland Market, LA**  
Cashier

Summer 2011 **Blue Bayou / Dixie Landin', LA**  
Retail  
Summer 2012 Supervisor of Games and Food in Dixie

2010-2011 **Walt Disney World, FL**  
Disney College Program, Retail in Downtown Disney

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Adobe Illustrator	●●●●●	Fast Learner
Adobe InDesign	●●●●●	Team Player
Photoshop	●●●○○	Meticulous
Dreamweaver	●●○○○	Critical Thinker
Microsoft Word	●●●●●	Creative
Microsoft Powerpoint	●●●●●	Active Listener
Microsoft Excel	●●●○○	Works well under pressure
Microsoft Publisher	●●●○○	Meets Deadlines

# SAMPLE COVER LETTER

**Jennifer M. Villanova**

0000 Old Covington Highway, Apartment Z  
Hammond, LA 70403  
(985) 555-0000 Jenvilla123@gmail.com

February 9, 2014

Logistics Coordinator Search Committee  
Columbia Theatre for the Performing Arts  
SLU 10797  
Hammond, Louisiana 70402

Dear Search Committee Chair:

I am writing in reference to the Logistics Coordinator position that is advertised on the Southeastern Louisiana University Human Resources Office web site. I believe that the combination of my education, experiences as a Southeastern Louisiana University undergraduate and graduate student, and my work experience, will greatly benefit the Columbia Theatre/Fanfare program.

Upon graduating from Southeastern in December 2012 with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, I decided to further my studies by enrolling in the Applied Sociology master's program at Southeastern, and will graduate this semester. I chose to pursue this program of study because I felt it would provide me with a strong foundation in organizational structures, systems theory, evaluation and assessment, and research methodology – areas of knowledge that would prepare me to contribute in a range of work environments.

I was able to work on many team projects at the bachelor's and master's level as a student at Southeastern, and was involved in student organizations - serving, for example, as a Senator for the Student Government Association. As member of the Southern Sociological Association, I had a research paper accepted by the Association for presentation at conference. My involvement in class team projects and in student organizations allowed me to develop strong leadership skills, including the ability to communicate effectively, to work productively as part of a team, to plan, organize, and implement activities and projects, and to both self-motivate as well as motivate others. Additionally, as a Graduate Assistant for both an academic department and a student programs office at Southeastern, I applied creativity in developing promotional materials, as well as polished my public speaking skills through numerous presentations to student groups.

In reading the job description for the Logistics Coordinator position, I see a strong correlation between the qualifications you are seeking and those that I possess, including administrative, communication, leadership, and team work skills. I would welcome the opportunity to become a part of the successful Columbia Theatre/Fanfare program. I am very impressed with the growth this program has exhibited over the years, and greatly appreciate the value added to the Southeastern and Hammond communities by the quality of your program.

Enclosed are my resume, list of references, and college transcript, as requested in your job advertisement. I appreciate your consideration of my application and look forward to the opportunity to interview with you. If additional information is needed, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Jennifer M. Villanova

# SAMPLE COVER LETTER

## Christi Robicheaux

1718 Josephine St., New Orleans, LA 70113

(504) 555-5555

ChrisRobi22@gmail.com

May 15, 2014

Macy's Department Store  
1401 West Esplanade Ave.  
Kenner, LA 70065

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am contacting you regarding the Macy's Store Management Executive Development Program. I am seeking a position in which I may utilize knowledge and skills in management, psychology, communication and leadership that I have developed through my bachelor's degree program as well as through real-world experience in retail. I believe my qualifications will allow me to excel in your training program and eventually be an asset to your company.

As a recent graduate of Southeastern Louisiana University with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a minor in Management, I have obtained the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in a career in retail management through my coursework at Southeastern, and through my work experiences during college. My work experience in retail includes not only extensive customer service experience but also assistant manager experience, with recognition from my supervisors for my ability to relate to customers and to lead and motivate the store team to achieve sales goals.

I am looking forward to applying the knowledge I acquired in the classroom, as well as the skills developed in business/fashion environments, to a professional position. Through my participation in class team-based projects and my work experience, I was able to apply and enhance my excellent communication and interpersonal skills. I have been recognized as a quick learner, highly self-motivated, attentive to detail, and organized. I have also demonstrated creativity and analytical skills in making decisions and in carrying out my responsibilities. Although I work well independently, I enjoy being part of a team and work well with co-workers and all levels of management.

In researching the Macy's Store Management Executive Development Program, I was excited to learn about the many and varied opportunities the program provides to prepare participants for future careers as leaders with Macy's. Exposure through mentorship during the program to critical areas of store management including all areas of store operations and store business trend analysis, as well as having the opportunity to develop relationships with colleagues in all business units, with customers, and with the sales team, will provide the foundation needed for success as a Sales Manager, the next level of leadership development that you offer. I was also impressed with the company's "culture of growth and innovation," with initiatives such as the "My Macy's" localization strategy, which customizes store merchandise to the tastes and needs of the local geographic area, and your omni-channel method of in-store, online, and mobile customer services – initiatives which have proven highly successful for Macy's.

I look forward to an interview with you in which I may elaborate on how I will contribute to Macy's continued success. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration in reviewing my resume. Please let me know if further information is needed.

Sincerely,

Christi Robicheaux



# SAMPLE COVER LETTER

**Amanda Roberson**

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0000 Antioch Road  
Baton Rouge, LA 70817  
(123) 456-7890 amander0000@yahoo.com

March 26, 2013

Francelle Theriot  
2121 Design  
13687 Perkins Road  
Baton Rouge, LA 70810

Dear Ms. Theriot,

I am writing in reference to a Graphic Design internship opportunity with your company. I learned of this opportunity through online research of Graphic Design companies, as part of my job search as a graduating senior of Southeastern Louisiana University. I believe my education and work experience will make a valuable impact on 2121 Design, and this internship would also be a great opportunity for me to learn much more.

I will be graduating from Southeastern in May 2014 with a Bachelor of Arts in Art, Concentration in Graphic Design. In my studies, I have learned how different design elements can create different feelings. We have also had several projects that allowed me to work with a client; I had to understand what they wanted in the design and then present different design options to them so they could choose what they liked best. One of the client projects done in my graphic design class was to create an art catalogue for the Art Gallery at Southeastern; the client critiqued the different works and chose the one they felt worked best.

Along with educational experience, I also have related work experience. This experience includes Blue Bayou theme park and Walt Disney World, from both of which I acquired multitasking skills and customer service skills. I feel the customer service experience would help me to interact with a client and understand what they want and need out of a design, and to be able to multitask in a fast-paced design environment would also be a plus. My graphic design experience comes from working as a Student Technology Liaison in the Career Services Office at Southeastern. My involvement in the Career Services Office has been to update the website, create promotional media, send mass html emails to students and employers for the various events the office holds, and I designed stationary for a co-worker. I have also created a logo, promotional flyers and emails, and water bottle labels for the LACE/MACE professional career services association's conference this past summer in New Orleans. The skills I have obtained from these experiences will greatly benefit me as I work with clients, co-workers, and deadlines.

A Graphic Design Internship at 2121 Design would allow me to use and improve the skills I currently have while also developing new ones. This opportunity will give me the chance to work alongside creative professionals. I am intrigued by your web, logo, and advertisement designs. The designs are very eye catching, they reflect who the client is makes them recognizable to viewers. I would love to be a part of your successful team.

My resume and portfolio are also enclosed in the email. I appreciate your consideration of me and look forward to the opportunity to interview with you. If additional information is needed, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Amanda Roberson

# SAMPLE REFERENCES PAGE

## **Jennifer M. Villanova**

0000 Old Covington Highway, Apartment Z  
Hammond, LA 70403

(985) 555-0000 Jenvilla123@gmail.com

### **References**

Dr. Bob Smith, Professor  
Dept. Of Sociology and Criminal Justice  
Southeastern Louisiana University  
Hammond, LA 70401  
985-555-5555

Dr. Jane Jones, Assistant Professor  
Dept. Of Sociology and Criminal Justice  
Southeastern Louisiana University  
Hammond, LA 70401  
985-555-5555

Mr. Phil Phillips, Manager  
Target  
Hammond, LA 70403  
986-555-5555

# THE JOB SEARCH

## Career Exploration & Assessment in the Job Search

Conducting a successful job search requires an exploration of all of your career options. Knowing what options are available to you is preparing you to change career directions if you aren't finding your ideal job. You may also discover an exciting career you did not know existed. There are thousands of types of jobs – don't limit yourself to just the few that you may be aware of. Career Services offers online resources, and career assessments, to increase your awareness of the many types of work you may find to be a great fit for your interests, personality, knowledge and skills.

## Career Exploration Online Resources

The resources below can assist you in:

- **Exploring options** - Make informed choices about careers to target in your job search.
- **Developing a resume** - Research current/past jobs for writing accurate, detailed descriptions.
- **Developing a cover letter** - Research job you're targeting and tailor cover letter.
- **Preparing for an interview** - Learn job requirements and prepare to discuss how your knowledge and skills fit the employer's needs.

### SIGI 3

Information on 300+ careers by alphabetized job titles, or by college major. See job descriptions, education/skills required, salaries, job outlook, etc.

### O\*NET

Click on *Find Occupations*, enter a job title, and see a job description and transferable skills on this US Dept. of Labor site. A Skills Search matches your skills with careers. See salary information by state.

### OOH

The US Dept. of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook provides job descriptions, required education and training, salary, and job outlook information for 100's of careers.

### What Can I Do With This Major?

For each major/field of interest, an Information link takes you to common career areas, types of organizations that employ that major, and strategies for gaining employment.



## Career Assessments

**Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** - Learn how your personality type contributes to the work organization, your communication, leadership, and team work styles, and careers that best fit your type.

**COPS Interest Inventory** - Expand awareness of types of careers that will match your interests.

## Job Search Assistance

Upload your resume into Career Services' **LIONHIRE** online job search system and FREQUENTLY CHECK for:

<b>ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS:</b>	Sign up in <b>LIONHIRE</b> - held each Fall & Spring semester
<b>JOB VACANCY POSTINGS:</b>	Year-round, for full-time and part-time jobs and internships

Access **JOB BOARD LINKS** on CS web site to view job vacancy postings (full-time, part-time and internships) or to post your resume (these links are not part of **LIONHIRE**, but are a valuable resource of dozens of online job boards).

**For participating in a mock interview, or for career assessment, schedule an appointment by calling Career Services at 985-549-2121 or emailing [careerservices@selu.edu](mailto:careerservices@selu.edu).**

# THE ART OF NETWORKING

## Are You Networking?

To be successful in your job search, you will need to master the “art of networking.” Many job openings are discovered by interacting or networking with others to let them know you are looking for a job.

Networking can range from a casual, unexpected encounter to a planned, organized meeting – so always be prepared. Remember that you are always “on” when job searching, so always conduct yourself in a mature, polished manner.

Think creatively when developing your network of contacts, and organize your list. If your contacts are not aware of any job opportunities within their employing organization, ask them if they can refer you to contacts they have – either within their organization, or employed in others. It’s not only who *you* know, but who *they* know!

Provide networking contacts and references with a copy of your resume. They can refer to it when they discuss your hiring potential with an employer, and it enables them to speak more informatively about you.

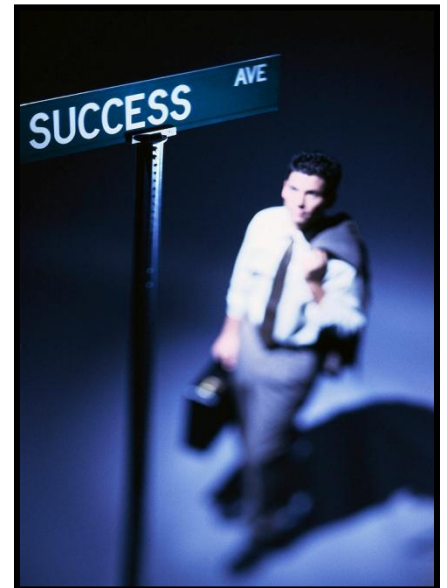


## Have you spoken to these contacts about your job search?

- Professors and advisors to student organizations.
- Fellow members of student or other organizations - college, volunteer, etc.
- “Personal professional contacts” - bankers, accountants, lawyers, ministers.
- Friends, acquaintances, neighbors; family and extended relatives.
- Former employers, current employers and customers. Most college seniors have part-time jobs, and their employers expect them to search for a degree-required position at some point, so it is appropriate to ask for their assistance with your networking/job search - and if you may list them as a reference.

## Have you explored these resources for job opportunities?

- **LIONHIRE** system, & Job Board Links page, of Career Services’ web site: [www.selu.edu/career](http://www.selu.edu/career).
- Company web sites.
- Career fairs – company representatives and /recruiters.
- Newspaper classifieds (“Want Ads”).
- Temporary employment agencies.
- Professional associations: Their web site job boards.
- Professional associations: Their conferences - local, regional, national - may have job fairs or job networking events.
- Send a thank you note to all in your network who have assisted you!
- Keep networking even after you land a job. You never know when you may need your contacts again.



## Using Social Media in the Job Search: Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, etc.

### Do’s

Do update your profile regularly  
Do join groups...selectively  
Do get rid of digital dirt - indecent language, photographs, etc.

### Don’ts

Don’t badmouth your current or previous employer  
Don’t mention your job search if you’re still employed  
Don’t forget others can see your friends

# INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

**NOTE: Surveys indicate that a majority of employers prefer NOT to see body art – tattoos, piercings.** So cover up! Once hired, you can ask about the company dress policy regarding clothing, body art, hair length, etc.

## DRESS FOR SUCCESS - FOR WOMEN

### The Suit

- A business suit – a matching jacket and skirt - is most appropriate and preferable to a dress.
- Pant suits may be acceptable; however, if you are not sure, wear a skirt and jacket suit.
- Should be conservative color - black, gray, brown, navy, taupe – solid or with a small pattern.
- Should fit – not too tight or too loose; avoid fabrics that wrinkle easily, such as linen.
- Blouse of conservative to medium color – not bright color.
- No short skirts – hem should be longer than mid-thigh.

**The Jewelry:** Five pieces of jewelry, maximum. One earring per ear – small size. Watch – dress, not sports.

### The Purse:

- Carry either a purse or briefcase – but not both – neutral color.
- A nice portfolio containing a note pad and extra copies of your resume may be carried with a purse.

### The Make-up/Hair - “Less is More”:

- If hair is longer than shoulder length, wear pulled back.
- Go easy on blush, eye shadow and lips – little, or preferably no, perfume.

### The Shoes and Hosiery:

- Closed toe shoes only. No sandals – even those with heels. No “spiked” heels. Should be comfortable for walking.
- Neutral colored hosiery: taupe, beige, off black – avoid textures.



## DRESS FOR SUCCESS - FOR MEN

### The Suit

- In business environments, a suit is more appropriate. However, research company/organization to determine most appropriate dress.
- Expensive is not necessarily better – should be proper fit, however.
- Medium to dark colors, solids or conservative stripes.
- Jacket length: should pass “finger curl test.”
- Tip of jacket sleeve should fall 5 inches above tip of thumb when thumb is extended down.
- Shirt: pastels, solids, and conservative stripes are acceptable.
- Shirt sleeve: should extend one half inch below jacket sleeve edge.

### The Shoes & Socks & Jewelry

Dressy lace-up or slip-on – no boots! Socks - dark, with solid or small pattern. Wedding band; dress watch, not sports – “less is more” with men’s jewelry.

**The Tie** - Small, repetitive pattern or solid – no “theme” ties (e.g., “Tabasco”). End of tie should touch top of belt.



**The Other** - Carry nice portfolio with note pad and extra copies of your resume, and nice pen. Use aftershave sparingly – and no cologne.

## TOP TEN INTERVIEW TIPS

**Do your homework.** Research the organization beforehand so that you can showcase that knowledge during the interview. This will boost your credibility with the interviewer and help you formulate intelligent questions to ask.

**Know where you're going.** Make sure to find out where the office is and how to get there. Do you know how long the trip will take? Do you have the name and phone number of the person you'll be meeting with? Do you know how easy it is to park? Save yourself time and unnecessary stress by preparing.

**Look the part.** Clothing should be neat, pressed, and professional. As it can be difficult to know the culture of the work environment beforehand, err on the side of conservative. Even if everyone's wearing jeans when you arrive, you're still better off wearing a suit. Still, inject some personality into your look, and don't neglect the details.

**Bring necessary documentation.** Make a list of documents you will need for the interview, and make sure you have them in your portfolio before leaving home. These include extra copies of your resume, a references page, and a portfolio of samples of relevant professional work. Recent college graduates should bring their transcripts.

**Rehearse beforehand.** Prior to your interview, prepare answers to common questions the interviewer is likely to ask, such as, *What are your strengths and weaknesses?* *Why do you want to work here?* and the ever popular *Tell me about yourself.* Conduct a mock interview with a Career Services career counselor to help you prepare.

**Secure your references.** Find three to five key people — current or former supervisors or professors — who are willing to serve as your professional references. Ask their permission to list them as a reference, and be certain they will speak highly of you if contacted by a potential employer.

**Arrive early.** Arrive at least 15 minutes before the interview. Visit the restroom and check your appearance in the mirror. Announce yourself to the receptionist to let them know you have arrived and that you have an appointment. *Turn your cell phone off so it doesn't ring during your meeting.*

**Sell yourself.** Develop a 30-second sales pitch that sings your praises. In business this is called an "elevator speech," a compelling overview of *why you?* that can be recited in the time it takes to ride the elevator. It should include your strengths and abilities, and what sets you apart from other applicants.

**Don't neglect to ask questions.** Based on your earlier research, ask how the responsibilities of the position relate to the company's goals and plans for the future. Ask what qualifications they are seeking in candidates.

## AFTER THE INTERVIEW

**Thank You Note:** Don't forget to send a handwritten note or email within two days thanking the interviewer for his or her time and consideration, as well as restating your interest in the position.

**Self Evaluation:** Conduct a self-evaluation, noting both positives and difficult questions encountered.

**Follow-up Calls:** You may call if you haven't heard from the employer within the time frame you were given to expect a response. Always return calls/answer emails from prospective employers. Even if you're not interested in the position, such a professional courtesy leaves a positive impression for future opportunities with the company. Make sure your voicemail message is professional, and answer the phone in an enthusiastic, positive voice.

## SAMPLE THANK YOU NOTE

July 9, XXXX

Dear Mr. Stark:

Thank you for the interview for the Management position at The Gap. Your organization offers opportunities which strongly match my interests and career goals. The interview confirmed my initial positive impressions of The Gap, and I want to reiterate my strong interest in working for you and in making a positive contribution to your continued retail success.

Sincerely,  
Chris Simons

## SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### **Tell me about yourself.**

Keep your response brief and focus on highlights of your educational and work experiences. Start with your most recent accomplishment, such as getting your college degree, why you chose your major, and what you learned in your course work that pertains to the job. Then, discuss related work and/or internship experiences, and involvement in student organizations (if applicable). State specific knowledge and skills you've acquired in these experiences, and how they will contribute to your success in the position. Finally, develop a "closing statement" - state how excited you were to learn of this career opportunity and that you believe your qualifications are an excellent fit. Don't "trail off" as you finish – take charge of closing your response. Also, do not disclose personal information such as age, marital status, number of children, or health, as these factors are not related to your ability to perform the job.



### **Which college course or courses have you enjoyed the most, and why? The least? Why? OR: Which college courses have you taken that relate to, and will allow you to contribute to, this position?**

For the courses you liked the most, discuss those that allowed you to develop specific knowledge/skills the employer is seeking for the position. Or, choose courses that allowed you to grow intellectually and/or interpersonally – such as a course that allowed you to develop analytical thinking skills, the ability to view things from different perspectives, or the opportunity to collaborate in working as part of a team on a special project.

For courses you liked the least, choose a course that **does not** relate to the position - such as algebra if you are interviewing for a social work position. Explain why you disliked it – even if just to say it was a subject in which you have little interest - and end on a positive note: "Although I didn't have an interest in algebra, the course allowed me to improve my critical thinking skills." Or, "While I didn't have an interest in the course, I chose to view it as a challenge; I applied myself, and made a good grade."

### **Name your three greatest strengths.**

Remember to answer this question based on how it is asked. If the interviewer asks for three strengths, name them – for example: "Communication skills, the ability to plan and organize, and problem-solving skills." Go ahead and elaborate by providing general descriptions of how you use these strengths in your college or work life. The interviewer may ask another form of this question: "Name **three words** your co-workers would use to describe you." In this case, your response should consist of three words, such as: "Organized, detailed, and motivated." Also, be able to **provide examples** of how you've successfully applied these strengths to resolve a problem situation (see "Behavioral Interviewing" below).

### **What is your greatest weakness?**

Design your response so that your weakness is really a "positive" in disguise. For example, you may refer to your tendency to take great pride in the quality of your work, so you tend to want to do it all yourself, but then you find you are not managing your time effectively or learning to delegate to others. Then, describe what you have done/do to be aware of this tendency, and to correct it. If possible, provide an example, and the positive results of your "new" approach.

Or, address this question from a personal or professional growth perspective. You may tell the interviewer that "public speaking" is an area in which you did not have a lot of confidence, but that you decided to meet this

challenge and each time you were able to do a class presentation, you worked to improve your skills. Describe techniques you used to improve, and the successful outcome.

However, NEVER choose a characteristic or skill that is required for the job; for example, do not use the “public speaking” example if interviewing for a marketing, sales, education/teaching, etc., position.

### **What have you learned from extracurricular activities?**

Tailor your response to the knowledge and skills required for the job. If you were not an officer, but served on committees as part of memberships in student organizations, discuss these experiences and what they taught you (team work, leadership, communication skills, ability to plan, organize, and implement activities, etc.). Provide real-life examples, and describe the context or purpose of the committee: “I learned to work effectively as part of a team, and learned marketing techniques, in planning a fundraising event for our organization....”

### **Which of your work experiences has been most rewarding? Why? Least rewarding? Why?**

Again, relate work experiences to the requirements of the job. You may want to say that your **internship** was the most rewarding, because it provided you with knowledge and skills directly related to this job. Describe the knowledge/skills acquired in the job or internship and how they will allow you to be effective in this position. As for the “least rewarding” experience, NEVER say anything negative about a former employer, professor, etc. Indicate that you learned something from each job held, such as the opportunity to grow professionally.

**In what ways do you best contribute to a team?** Research the definition of team work so you can begin to answer this question by describing the elements required for a successful team effort. For example, mentioning that you believe all team members have something to contribute could be part of your “philosophy of successful teamwork.” You could state that you try to make sure each team member’s ideas are heard. Then, discuss what your particular strengths are. Give an example of a team project in which your contribution made a positive impact. If you’ve taken the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), there is online information on Type and teamwork abilities.

### **Describe your leadership style.**

This statement may be offered primarily for management or administrative positions; however, be prepared: Think about situations in which you have exercised leadership abilities, specific steps/actions you took to serve as a leader, and the positive results of those efforts – e.g., leading a class team project or student organization activity, training new employees at work, setting an example of professionalism, etc. Think in terms of guiding and motivating **people** AND managing **tasks** – both crucial elements of leadership. Even if the job does NOT require you to supervise others, you should still view your role as a leader of your area of responsibility.

**Do you work well under pressure?** Answer in the positive, e.g.: “Yes, I work very well under pressure. In fact, pressure can generate a certain energy that can be a driving force for getting things done.” However, this question is also used to learn about your ability to manage your time effectively, to multitask, to organize and prioritize. Explain that you plan, organize, and complete your tasks so that if the unexpected occurs, you will not have a lot of unfinished business to prevent you from meeting the deadline.

### **Describe the ideal relationship between a supervisor and a subordinate.**

Answer this question from both a supervisory perspective - with yourself in the role of supervisor, even if you have not had such an experience - and from that of a subordinate. Describe the approach you would take if placed in a supervisory position, and elaborate on your leadership and team work styles. DO NOT compare “good supervisors” you’ve had to “bad supervisors” or criticize the management or operations of an organization.

**Why do you have a gap in employment from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_?** College students can explain a gap in employment as a decision to spend time focusing on their studies.

### **Describe an accomplishment, and how you achieved it. What does “success” mean to you?**

Choose something that illustrates setting a goal, and commitment to achieving that goal. Provide an example from college, work, or extracurricular activities. Describe the process and what you learned “along the way.” Or, describe an obstacle that you overcame, a challenge you addressed and met successfully. Regarding “your definition of success,” this question has more of a philosophical intent; let your response reflect your attitudes, beliefs, and values about life and work.



**Where do you see yourself five years from now? What are your career goals?**

DO NOT describe career goals which will take time and energy from your new job with this company, such as pursuing an advanced degree right away. And do not leave the employer with the impression that they are a “stepping stone” to your ultimate career goal with another organization or another type of work. Instead, emphasize your strong desire for a career path with this company. If you are **not** certain you want to work for them, keep your response general, tailored to your “overall” professional growth: “I’m looking for the opportunity to continue to develop professionally and to advance based on my contribution to an organization’s goals.”

**What do you know about our company/organization? Why do you want to work here?**

DO YOUR HOMEWORK in researching the company/organization THOROUGHLY before interviewing. Know something about their mission, products, services, clients/customers, history, future initiatives. This information can be found on the company/organization web site and additional online research.

**What can you bring to this position that would “set you apart” from other applicants?**

This question presents an opportunity for you to highlight what you have to offer as it relates to the position and the company. Also prepare for this question by carefully listening to the interviewer describe the position, the company, and the qualifications sought, which will likely occur during the interview.

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**APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO ASK DURING THE INTERVIEW**

Refrain from asking questions until the interviewer asks if you have questions (usually done at the conclusion of the interview). However, if you do not understand a question you are asked during the interview, you may ask the interviewer to explain. DO ASK QUESTIONS to show interest and initiative!

- What qualifications do you think are necessary to be successful in this job?
- Can you describe the training period/program? How would I be supervised/my performance evaluated?
- Could you describe a typical day? Week? The organizational culture?
- What are the opportunities for advancement? (if you can’t determine from research)
- Does the company encourage participation in professional organizations? Continuing education?
- When can I expect to hear from you regarding your hiring decision?

**INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO ASK DURING THE INTERVIEW**

- DO NOT initiate discussion of salary, vacation, or benefits during the first interview. However, be prepared to voice a range you’re looking for if they ask – SIGI 3, O\*Net, and OOH provide salary information on 100’s of careers.
- DO NOT push for an early decision by mentioning the other opportunities you have awaiting you.
- DO NOT ask for feedback on your interview performance.

**BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING**

Expect to encounter this interview technique commonly utilized by employers. “Behavioral” questions are designed to probe applicants’ past behavior in work situations, on the premise that the best predictor of future performance is past performance. Think in terms of three or four challenging or problem situations, how you **assessed** the situation (perspectives you considered), **actions** you took to resolve or improve it, and the positive results that came from your efforts. Be specific when presenting this information to the employer.

**Three types of behavioral questions:**

- **Skill-specific:** “Give me an example of how you successfully applied your communication skills.”
- **General-situation:** “Describe a difficult situation and how you successfully handled it.”
- **Hypothetical:** “How would you react if you encountered an angry customer in your job?”

To help you understand and respond to behavioral interview questions, make a list of your "three greatest strengths" and provide an example of how you successfully applied each strength

## EMPLOYER EXPECTATIONS

### WHAT DO THEY REALLY EXPECT?

Employers are people too, and when selecting a job candidate, they ask themselves the following questions: "How can this person contribute to the organization?" "Can they represent the organization in a professional manner?" "Are they showing genuine interest in the position through their preparation for this interview?"

Their decision to hire one person over another often hinges on these answers. Even though you may not be sure of their particular expectations, in general, most employers are looking for the same basic characteristics in an employee.

Now, place yourself in the employer's shoes. Think about what you as the employer would want from an employee. Remember that this person will be working with you eight hours a day and will represent you/your company to the public, and to other businesses/organizations. So, what kind of an employee would you want?

### CHARACTERISTICS ALL EMPLOYERS WILL VALUE

#### Appearance

- Does your appearance convey pride in yourself and your ability to do the job?
- Are you professionally dressed and do you present a professional image?
- Is your behavior/attitude courteous, respectful, mature, and confident?

#### Interpersonal/Communication Skills

- Can you interact effectively with others?
- Do you have strong verbal and written communication skills?
- Are you a team player?
- Are you enthusiastic about the job?

#### Dependability

- Can you be counted on to do the job? Are you accountable? Will you take initiative?
- Will you be at work regularly and report to work on time?
- Will you complete duties in a timely and accurate manner with minimal supervision?
- Will you accept responsibility, recognize what needs to be done, and are you willing to do it?

#### Self-knowledge

- Can you realistically assess your own abilities?
- Can you see yourself as others see you?
- Can you clearly recognize your own strengths and weaknesses?
- Do you set personal and professional goals, and work to achieve them?

#### Skills

- Do you possess the knowledge and skills to learn and perform the job?
- Are you willing to learn new skills? Are you coachable? The elements of coachability are intelligence, discipline, creativity and initiative. An ideal candidate should be able to think for themselves, but also be able to take and follow instructions. Remember the old adage: "Give someone a fish and they will survive today, but teach someone how to fish and they will survive forever."
- Do you have experience or related experience in this field?



