

Table of Contents

Career Services Overview.....	2
Key Online Resources.....	4
Choosing a Major.....	5
Creating a Four year Plan.....	6
Resume Writing	7
Curriculum Vitae.....	18
Cover Letter Writing	20
Job and Internship Search Strategies.....	24
Professional Dress.....	28
Networking and Professional Etiquette...	30
Successful Interviewing.....	35
Salary Negotiation.....	42
Graduate School Decisions.....	43

Office Hours Monday-
Friday
8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.



Drop-Ins
Monday-Thursday
12:00 p.m.- 2:00 p.m.
In-Person And Virtual

Office of Career Services
Division of Student Affairs & Campus Life

Ithaca College
Career Services—101 Muller Center
953 Danby Road
Ithaca, NY 14850

Phone: 607-274-3365
Fax: 607-274-1688
E-mail: careers@ithaca.edu
www.ithaca.edu/career-services

Career Services Overview

A MESSAGE FROM THE STAFF

Welcome to Career Services! Whether establishing a major, developing career direction, exploring future goals, looking for a job or internship or considering graduate studies, we are here to assist you. Career Services has staff members that are dedicated to providing the best resources possible to both help you explore and make the connections you need. We are committed to providing personalized services to help you achieve your goals. Let us help shape your future as you begin your career journey.

CAREER SERVICES MISSION

Career Services provides career related education, experiential learning, professional development, and post-graduate opportunities for students and alumni.

All students are encouraged and welcome to use our services, attend events, and engage with our office beginning during their first semester on campus. We look forward to working with you throughout your time as a student at IC and as needed when you are an alumnus/a.



OUR SERVICES AND RESOURCES

Individualized Career Counseling

Professional career counselors are available for confidential one-on-one appointments to discuss career related topics such as:

- choosing a major
- career exploration and planning
- professional networking
- job and internship searches
- resume and cover letter writing
- interviewing
- graduate school applications

Drop-in hours and career coaching groups are also offered.

Career Assessment Tools

The *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* and the *Strong Interest Inventory* are available to use with the counseling staff. These tools help to identify possible academic majors and career areas that might relate to the student's tendencies, interests, values, and skills.

Career Services Website

A multitude of career-related resources are available on the Career Services website at www.ithaca.edu/career-services. (See p. 4 for more information about our online resources.)

Job & Internship Opportunities

Over 10,000 employers and graduate schools recruit Ithaca College students and alumni. We are always looking to build new relationships in order to make more opportunities available to students and alumni from all disciplines. In 2019-2020 over 68,000 opportunities were posted in Handshake.

Scholarships

Career Services coordinates several scholarships meant to offset costs incurred during summer internships. Information about scholarships can be found on our website in the /learn-more-about/scholarships section.

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Job and Internship Fairs

Career Services sponsors several targeted career fairs over the course of the academic year. These fairs provide opportunities for students to find jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities.

Graduate and Professional School Fair

This fair, held in the fall, allows students to meet with representatives from over 120 graduate school programs.

Network Nights

During winter break in cities such as New York and Boston, meet and mingle with alumni who share valuable insights and career advice.



Majors and Minors Fair

Get information from faculty about all the majors and minors at IC, real time academic and career advising, learn about study abroad and more!

Career and Internship Connection Fair

During winter break in New York City, students can network with prospective employers in the morning and interview for jobs and internships in the afternoon.

Teacher Recruitment Days

Held in Cortland, NY in the spring, students meet and interview with recruiters from school districts from across the country.

On Campus Recruiting

During the course of the academic year, recruiters from a variety of companies, organizations and government agencies will visit campus to conduct information sessions and interview days. These visits are in addition to visits to campus for fairs and panel presentations. Some recruiters will conduct information sessions only, while others will also interview candidates for jobs and internships.

Workshops

Career Services offers a variety of workshops to help you build vital career development skills, all of which will be offered in the Career Services Resource Center in Muller 101.

Get updates on our upcoming workshops and events by following us on social media. We have accounts on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest.



Key Online Resources

For a complete list of Career Services online resources visit our website www.ithaca.edu/career-services. Here is a highlight of our keyonline resources.

Handshake is your source for thousands of job and internship opportunities all over the United States and the world. You can utilize it to search for and follow companies, and register for workshops, info sessions, on-campus interviews, and other career events. Sign in using your Netpass information.

CareerShift is an online career management tool that helps you identify job and internship opportunities, networking connections, potential companies of interest, and work with the data in an integrated manner. All you need to create your account and get started is a valid ithaca.edu or alumni.ithaca.edu e-mail address!

LinkedIn Alumni is an amazing tool for seeing what IC alumni are doing. This powerful LinkedIn tool allows you to search by geographic area, company, major, skills, or search terms that you set. Access it by logging into LinkedIn, searching for "Ithaca College," clicking on IC's LinkedIn page, and clicking the "Alumni" tab.

Alumni Directory is a database of 50,000+ IC alumni nationwide and around the world. Network with alumni, learn about different career options, and get advice from experienced professionals. **NOTE:** Seniors, grad students and alumni automatically have accounts, and can login using their Netpass information. Underclassmen need to visit Career Services in order to activate their Netpass information for the system. Once logged in, click on "Advanced Search" to choose the qualifiers you would like to search by.

Occupational Outlook Handbook is a nationally recognized source of career information including job descriptions, anticipated growth, average salaries, related jobs, and more. The OOH is revised every two years.

O-Net is a valuable source of occupational information including work tasks, tools and technology used in the job, required knowledge and skills, wages, employment trends and more. It is continually updated by surveying a broad range of workers from each occupation.

Additional online resources are available on our website by clicking on the section headers located on the left side of the page at www.ithaca.edu/career-services. Included are:

- **Employment Resources**
- **Internship Resources**
- **Diversity Recruitment Resources**
- **Teaching English Abroad**
- **Volunteering Abroad**
- **Working Abroad**
- **Graduate School Resources**



Choosing a Major

Choosing a major is an important decision and Career Services is the place to come to for help. By utilizing the resources in this section and working with a career counselor, you will be better equipped to decide on a major that works best for your career goals.

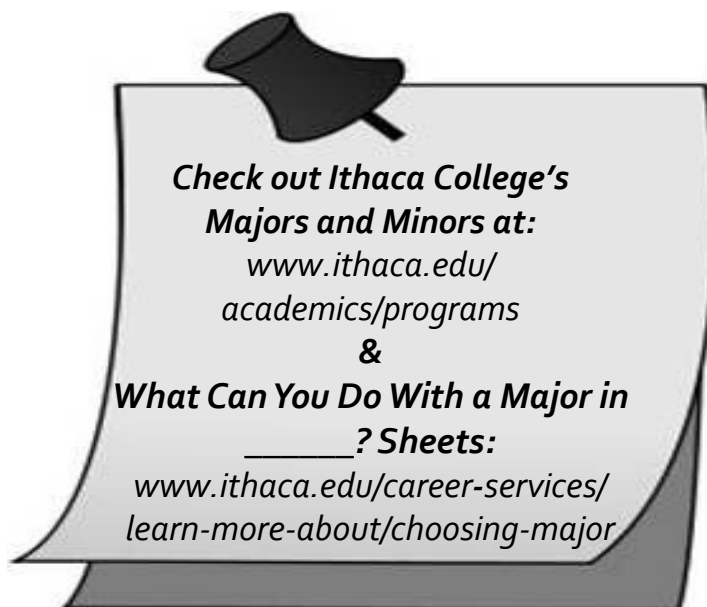
STEPS TO DECIDING ON A MAJOR

1. **Examine your interests, skills, and values**
 - Take a free assessment in Career Services: **Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)**: Get occupational-related information according to your personality and preferences
 - **Strong Interest Inventory (SII)**: Get occupational-related information according to your interests
 - Visit the Occupational Information Network (O*Net) (www.onetonline.org), which provides information about the typical skills, interests, abilities, values and knowledge required for various occupations
2. **Research potential occupations**
 - View the **What Can I Do With A Major In _____? Sheets** (www.ithaca.edu/careers/docs/WCYDWAMI/)
 - Visit the Occupational Outlook Handbook (www.bls.gov/ooh), which provides information for hundreds of jobs on the following: training and education, earnings, what you do on the job, related occupations and more
 - Shadow professionals
 - Conduct informational interviews (see pg. 31 for more information)
 - Use the Career Services Resource Center
3. **Explore**
 - Try out different courses in your chosen Integrated Core Curriculum Themes and Perspectives options
 - Join clubs, organizations and teams on campus
 - Intern and volunteer for experience
 - Work part-time and summer jobs for experience
4. **Meet with a career counselor who can help you explore your interests, skills, values and options through individual appointments, or our Exploratory Career Coaching group**

5. **Meet with an academic advisor to plan out your semesters/coursework for the major(s) in which you're interested, while considering any study abroad, internships, and/or graduation plans you have**

SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Developing your career plans is an ongoing extensive process and it is normal to be unsure of what you want to major in
- Many people change their majors and occupations several times throughout life
- You should choose your major based on *your* interests, abilities, and values - not those of other people
- Your major is only one factor in determining your career
- You can change your major if you discover you don't like it
- Your major does not necessarily determine your career path
- Choosing a second major or a minor expands your knowledge and skill set, and makes you more marketable to employers and graduate programs
- For certain majors, it's better to declare early if you want to finish your degree in the typical 4 year timeframe



Creating a Four Year Plan

First Year: Self-Assessment & Career Planning

- Meet with a Career Services staff member to learn how to develop and implement a personalized four year career plan.
- Assess your personal values, preferences and interests through career self-assessment tools such as the Strong Interest Inventory and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.
- Visit Career Services to research various career fields and experiential learning opportunities such as summer jobs and internships.
- Get involved on and off campus. Join a student organization, volunteer, and/or get an on-campus job.
- Get a summer job that will provide you with an opportunity to learn about a career field that interests you.
- Do your best work academically.
- Attend Career Services workshops, fairs and networking events.

Sophomore Year: Career Exploration & Leadership Development

- Meet with a Career Services staff member to discuss your career plans and evaluate your four year career plan.
- Actively research career fields that interest you.
- Conduct informational interviews with alumni and other professionals to learn about particular career fields.
- Take an active role in a student organization to develop your communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills.
- Develop a resume and have it reviewed in Career Services.
- Complete a mock interview for practice.
- Secure an internship or summer employment related to your career goals.
- Attend career related workshops to learn about the process of choosing a major or career path.
- Attend Career Services workshops, fairs and networking events.

Junior Year: Career Goal Setting, Gaining Experience & Graduate School Planning

- Meet with a Career Services staff member to formulate your job or graduate school search timeline and plans.
- Join professional organizations to gain career information and to start networking.
- Research graduate/professional schools, their application procedures and deadlines.
- Register and prepare for graduate school admission tests and get information about GRE, GMAT, LSAT or MCAT exams in Career Services.
- Participate in career fairs and career related events.
- Get to know alumni and actively network with professionals in your area of interest.
- Take on leadership roles on- and off-campus.
- Get professional experience through on-campus research, internships, on-campus employment, volunteer work or summer jobs.
- Attend Career Services workshops, fairs and networking events.

Senior year: Implementation & Transition

- Meet with a Career Services staff member to design a job search strategy or finalize your graduate/professional school search timeline and plans.
- Ask faculty and employers for references.
- Research companies/organizations and the career opportunities they offer.
- Prepare for job or graduate school admissions interviews with a mock interview in Career Services.
- Revise and update your resume and create customized cover letters for each job you apply for.
- Engage in an active job search in the Fall semester.
- Participate in career fairs and other related events.
- Complete your personal statements and mail your applications to graduate schools.
- Complete an internship or career-related work experience if you haven't already.
- Formulate an alternate "Plan B" in case you need to make last minute career adjustments.
- Attend Career Services workshops, fairs and networking events.

Resume Writing

The first impression you make on an employer is often the one projected by your resume. The information you choose to include and the way you describe your experience and skills can determine whether you will have the opportunity to interview for a position. If the resume is strongly written and presented attractively, it will often open the door to an interview. A poorly written, unattractive resume will close the door.

GETTING STARTED

To begin, make a list of all of your employment experience and on campus activities. Pay special attention to the skills and abilities you bring to your chosen field. In addition, think of your past accomplishments and the skills you used to achieve success, regardless of the setting. Use the following **Reflection Questions** as a starting point.

GENERAL

- What are your three greatest accomplishments?
- What did you contribute to the organization?
- What does an employer or graduate program most need to know about me?

ACADEMIC REFLECTIONS

- Did you design or create anything lasting?
- Did you achieve a superlative such as highest grade level? Best test score? Strongest essay?
- Did you have expertise in any research areas?
- Did you participate in any academic forums (presentations, conferences, publications, etc.)?

EXPERIENCE REFLECTIONS

- What leadership position(s) did you hold? For each position, what skill(s) did you utilize?
- Have you ever supervised or trained anyone?
- What was your greatest accomplishment in this role?
- Did you choose to take on additional responsibilities?
- What community service projects did you undertake?

- Did you use organizational, managerial or marketing skills in any way?
- What ideas did you come up with to improve your organization?
- Did you handle money or budgets? If yes, in what amounts?
- In what ways did you exhibit interpersonal skills?
- Did you train, teach or orient new members/employees?
- Did you speak in public or write for an audience?
- Did you employ problem-solving, conflict-resolution or mediation skills?
- Were you required to deal with the public?
- How did you demonstrate teamwork or individual drive and determination?

RESUME CONTENT

A resume is a very flexible document. It should be adapted to highlight your particular skills and experiences related to the position to which you are applying. In other words, you need to customize your resume for each type of position. The order in which you present information can vary.

BASIC CATEGORIES

The content categories you choose for your resume will be determined by a number of factors, especially your strongest "selling points" relative to the type of position you are seeking. The following list provides an overview of the types of information normally included in the resume:

Identification Data: Name, current and permanent mailing address (with zip codes), phone number(s) including area code(s), and your e-mail address. (Make sure that your e-mail address is professional in nature; jgannett@ithaca.edu instead of jganetrocks@aol.com.)

Career Objective: This optional statement should be tailored to the position of interest and identify your unique or most relevant characteristics. See more on pg. 9.

Education: Academic experiences should be listed in reverse chronological order, with your most recent degree or experience first. Include institution, location, graduation date, degree type and area(s) of study. Make sure to include any minors or concentrations.

Academic achievement is one of the areas in which employers have an interest, particularly if you do not have extensive work experience or extracurricular involvement. You may choose to list your cumulative grade point average and/or GPA in your major. (GPAs should be carried out two places after the decimal, 3.43 instead of 3.4, and they should NEVER be rounded up or down.) Also see “Honors and Awards.”

You may also include a **Relevant Coursework** within or separate from the Education section, to include upper level courses that relate directly to the job. List the course titles, not the course codes.

Experience: This can include not only full- or part-time positions but internships, volunteer work and extracurricular activities, especially if they are relevant to the position you’re applying for. For each entry, list:

- the organization’s name
- the city and state where it is located (not the full mailing address)
- your job title
- the date range of employment (using months and years)

Briefly describe each experience in a bulleted list using action oriented, concise phrases (see list of Action Verbs on pg. 11). Descriptions should emphasize skills and accomplishments, not just duties. When appropriate, quantify information about the organization and your accomplishments (ex. Serve x # of customers per night in upscale restaurant). These are typically listed in reverse chronological order.

To add emphasis and focus to your resume, it’s highly recommended to list related experiences together (ex. **Related Experience** or “Insert Job Field” Experience) and unrelated experiences separately (ex. **Additional Experience** or Other Experience). This shows the reader that you customized your resume for their industry and brings their attention to the most related information first.

ADDITIONAL SECTIONS

You may choose to list other types of information, particularly if it relates to your career objectives and/or it reflects any achievements in which an employer may have an interest. Here are some suggested headings although you are not limited to only these examples.

Certifications: This section is especially important for education majors. List your certifications and their respective dates, anticipated or received.

Honors and Awards: Consider academic, athletic, community and/or campus recognitions.

Athletics or Extracurricular/Community Activities: Your involvement in clubs, athletics and social organizations indicate to an employer your interests, willingness to accept responsibility, and leadership abilities. This can be a significant factor when you are being considered for employment. Be sure to include offices or other positions of leadership you held. Avoid using abbreviations that may be unfamiliar to an employer.

Volunteer Experience: Include any experiences you have had with community service organizations or projects.

Special Skills: Include any expertise you may have in foreign languages, computer operation and programming, TV/R production, technical writing or other areas of specialization.

Professional Affiliations: If you have joined a professional association which is related to the career field in which you are seeking a position, be sure to list this and dates of involvement.

Publications: List by title, any articles, books, stories or poems you have written which have already been published or are selected to be published.

Research: If you have done extensive research on a topic, particularly if it relates to your chosen career field, you may wish to state the title of the paper or thesis and a brief description of your conclusions or findings. This may give the employer or prospective graduate school additional insight into your professional abilities and training.

Additional Training: You should list any significant seminars or other training which has given you background or knowledge which will be helpful in your chosen career field.

Political, Religious, or Social: Activities that indicate affiliation with any of these types of organizations may unfortunately lead to hiring discrimination, albeit illegal. If you are not concerned with the effect of listing such affiliations, leave them on. If you are concerned, you could create a generic description for the activity or remove it all together.

LANGUAGE

- The use of bullets is optional, however, many employers report **bulleted lists** are easier to scan and spot key words and phrases than written paragraphs.
- Use **short phrases** and clauses with **no subject**, rather than full sentences, in your descriptions. A good formula for putting together a bullet is: **Action + Skill + Context.**
- The language of a resume is **action oriented**. Bullets should begin with action verbs. (See pg. 11 for sample action words.)
- Eliminate extraneous words and irrelevant information.
- **Avoid** phrases such as "My duties included..." or "Responsible for..."
- Do **not** use personal pronouns such as "I" or "My".
- While it is important that you take credit for what you have done, be careful not to use words that inflate or exaggerate your responsibilities.
- Check and re-check spelling, grammar, and formatting consistency very carefully. **Even one mistake is too many.**
- Quantify whenever possible. Numbers can speak louder than action statements.

CAREER OBJECTIVE

A good career objective defines for the employer what your career interests and skills are and the setting(s) in which you would like to use your background. Your purpose is to clearly state the type of work you hope to pursue. There are times when your resume may be used or passed on without benefit of a cover letter. In

this case, having an objective on your resume can be valuable. **NOTE:** Objectives are becoming less common, as employers are reporting that they are more interested in the content of the resume (experience, education, etc.). A good general rule is to include an objective if you need to add more text to your resume to fill the entire page; otherwise, it's generally unnecessary.

CAREER OBJECTIVE HINTS

1. With your objective you should be able to answer one of three questions: What type of position am I seeking? What type of organization do I want to work for? What unique skills or experience am I bringing to this position?
2. When constructing your objective, it is wise to describe skills or skill families rather than use job titles, unless you are using the resume to apply for a specific job opening. Job titles vary among organizations and you risk slating yourself for a lower-level position if you use a title that a particular company associates with a certain level.
3. Avoid using trite terms such as "...with a progressive company", "...utilizing my strongest skill" or "...with opportunity for advancement." These terms are considered "canned" and do not indicate the type of work you are seeking or what you have to offer an employer.
4. You may find that starting with a general career field and adding specific areas of interest or special skills will serve you well.
5. Some employers have reported a preference to see very specific objectives targeted toward their company and the particular job opening. Consider this when creating an objective, but be sure to edit it for each job you apply for.

SAMPLE PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Slightly Tailored: To obtain a science teacher position in a public school setting where I can apply proven engagement, assessment, and classroom management strategies to provide students with an enriching educational experience
- Specific: To obtain an occupational therapist position at St. Joseph's Hospital

SKILLS EVALUATION

Skills and knowledge are acquired in the classroom, through jobs (part-time, summer, or full-time), internships and volunteer experiences, clubs, athletics, and even hobbies. **Assess your skills realistically and honestly.** Your goal is to show employers what skills you have to offer and how you might apply these skills to positions in their organizations. Help them understand your abilities by identifying those which are especially relevant to the job or internship you are applying for and working them into your resume through the bulleted experience descriptions. Consider the examples in the categories listed:

Work Content Skills include those skills which relate specifically to being able to do a particular job.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> graphic arts | <input type="checkbox"/> computer programming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> research | <input type="checkbox"/> sales/persuasion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> desktop publishing | <input type="checkbox"/> word processing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> interior design | <input type="checkbox"/> news/magazine writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> human service | <input type="checkbox"/> statistical analysis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> marketing | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation |

Self Management Skills include personal strengths that are related to your personality and temperament.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> make decisions | <input type="checkbox"/> patience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> maintain confidentiality | <input type="checkbox"/> enthusiasm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cooperativeness | <input type="checkbox"/> attention to detail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> work under pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> flexibility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> take initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> sense of humor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dependability | <input type="checkbox"/> orderliness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> persistence | <input type="checkbox"/> high energy level |
| <input type="checkbox"/> self-confidence | <input type="checkbox"/> risk taking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> optimism | <input type="checkbox"/> communication |
| <input type="checkbox"/> assertiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> collaboration |

You should also be able to articulate your skills in a cover letter and during a job interview. Before an interview, prepare examples of how you've developed and used each skill listed in the job or internship posting.

Transferable Skills are general skills which can be applied in a wide variety of work settings and are likely to be especially interesting to prospective employers.

Communication

- ☐ writing
- ☐ group presentation
- ☐ persuasion
- ☐ selling

Work with others

- ☐ supervise
- ☐ instruct/train
- ☐ coach
- ☐ advise

Managerial

- ☐ organization
- ☐ attention to detail
- ☐ planning
- ☐ decision-making
- ☐ time management

Investigative

- ☐ research
- ☐ scientific curiosity
- ☐ define problems
- ☐ solve problems

Manual/Physical

- ☐ mechanical reasoning
- ☐ construction
- ☐ manual dexterity
- ☐ solve problems

Social/Interpersonal

- ☐ at ease socially
- ☐ work well with group
- ☐ deal effectively with public
- ☐ take criticism

Creative

- ☐ artistic
- ☐ imaginative with things
- ☐ imaginative with ideas

Numerical

- ☐ budgeting ability
- ☐ manipulating data
- ☐ problem solving



TOP 10 SKILLS EMPLOYERS SEEK

1. Problem Solving Skills
2. Teamwork
3. Strong Work Ethic
4. Analytical/Quantitative Skills
5. Communication Skills (written)
6. Leadership
7. Communication Skills (verbal)
8. Initiative
9. Detail Oriented
10. Technical Skills

(From NACE 2020 Job Outlook Survey)

ACTION VERBS

Use this sample verb list when writing the bulleted job descriptors on your resume.

accelerated	compared	estimated	innovated	pioneered	served
accomplished	completed	evaluated	inspected	planned	serviced
accounted for	composed	examined	instructed	played	set
achieved	computed	excelled	insured	policed	shaped
acquired	conceived	executed	interpreted	prepared	shipped
adapted	conceptualized	exercised	interviewed	presented	shored up
added	concluded	expanded	introduced	prevailed	showed
addressed	conditioned	expedited	invented	processed	sifted
adjusted	conducted	experimented	investigated	produced	simplified
administered	consolidated	explained	joined	profited	smoothed
advised	constructed	explored	judged	programmed	sold
aided	consulted	expressed	kept	projected	solved
allocated	continued	extracted	labored	promoted	sought
alphabetized	contracted	facilitated	launched	proofed	specified
analyzed	controlled	familiarized	learned	proved	spoke
anticipated	convinced	fashioned	lectured	provided	started
applied	coordinated	figured	led	publicized	stopped
appointed	copied	filed	licensed	purchased	straightened
appraised	corrected	financed	lifted	qualified	streamlined
approved	counseled	fixed	located	quicken	studied
arbitrated	counted	followed	logged	raised	submitted
arranged	crafted	forecast	looked	ran	suggested
assembled	created	foresaw	made	rated	summarized
assessed	critiqued	formulated	maintained	read	supervised
assisted	dealt	forwarded	managed	realized	supplied
assumed	debated	fostered	manipulated	reasoned	supported
assured	decided	found	mapped out	received	surveyed
attained	defined	founded	marketed	recognized	targeted
attended	delegated	gained	maximized	recommended	taught
audited	delivered	gathered	mediated	reconciled	tested
authored	demonstrated	gave	mentored	recorded	tightened
authorized	designed	generated	met	recruited	took
awarded	determined	governed	modeled	redesigned	took over
balanced	developed	graded	modified	reduced	totaled
began	devised	greeted	monitored	referred	toured
boosted	diagnosed	grossed	motivated	related	tracked
bought	digested	guided	moved	renovated	trained
briefed	diminished	handled	negotiated	repaired	transferred
brought	directed	hastened	netted	reported	transformed
budgeted	discovered	headed	observed	represented	translated
built	documented	heightened	obtained	rescued	traveled
calculated	drafted	helped	offered	researched	treated
cataloged	dramatized	hiked	opened	resolved	troubleshoot
caught	drew	housed	operated	resulted in	tutored
caused	drew up	hunted	ordered	restored	typed
chaired	dropped	identified	organized	returned	uncovered
changed	drove	illustrated	originated	revealed	unearthed
checked	earned	implemented	overcame	reviewed	unfurled
chopped	edited	improved	oversaw	revised	unified
chose	elected	improvised	paid	saved	updated
clarified	eliminated	included	painted	saw	upgraded
classified	employed	incorporated	participated	scheduled	used
cleared up	encouraged	increased	perceived	screened	utilized
closed	enforced	indexed	performed	scrutinized	weighed
coached	enlisted	indicated	persevered	secured	welcomed
collected	ensured	influenced	persuaded	selected	won
combined	entered	informed	photographed	sent	worked
communicated	established	initiated	piloted	separated	wrote

Source: Adapted from Career Services and leadership Education, St. Lawrence University, 2002

WHAT NOT TO INCLUDE

Personal information such as marital status, age, Social Security number, birth date, health, children, race, religion, sexual orientation, and country of national origin are not necessary to reveal during the selection process and therefore not necessary to include on your resume.

High School information You eventually want to phase out high school information and replace it with more recent experiences such as college internships, part time work, and co-curricular activities.

Don't use a template While a template can be convenient and efficient, it is often a poor way to market yourself to prospective employers. Templates provide little flexibility in presenting your information. Additionally, they are uniform in appearance and easily identified as a pre-set form and not as the unique marketing statement that it should be.

RESUME CHECKLIST

- ☐ The grammar, punctuation, and spelling are correct. This document is **LETTER PERFECT**.
- ☐ Formatting is consistent regarding font, spacing, layout, bullets, etc.
- ☐ The resume is an **original** document and **NOT a template**.
- ☐ This resume was **reviewed by several people** including someone from Career Services.
- ☐ Someone can scan this resume in **30 seconds** and obtain the essential information. The formatting makes it easy to read.
- ☐ **Contact information:** name, address, city, state, zip code, e-mail address, and telephone number (local and permanent) are at the top of the page.
- ☐ Optional: A **career objective** appears directly under my name and address so the reader's eye is led to it immediately. The statement is as specific as possible.
- ☐ All **meaningful activities** related to my career/ internship goal that assisted in developing my skills, whether or not they were paid experiences, are listed.
- ☐ For **practical experiences** (paid or unpaid), each includes: position title, employing organization, location and date range worked. These are presented with a consistent format.
- ☐ For extracurricular activities such as clubs, organizations, athletics, honors and awards, each includes: organization with which it is affiliated, location and date range of involvement.
- ☐ My resume is **one page**. A two page resume is acceptable for certain majors if you have extensive related experience. Margins may be as small as 1/2 inch. Traditional font is 12, but can be 11 or 10 as long as it is legible.
- ☐ The final resume is an **accurate** representation of my abilities.
- ☐ My resume **does not** include **personal data** such as height, weight, date of birth, social security number, marital and health status, etc.
- ☐ My resume **does not** include any **high school information** unless it will help in obtaining an interview or I am still a first or second year college student.
- ☐ **Abbreviations are used sparingly**, spelling out my degree, the name of the college, and organizations to which I belong.
- ☐ Ample **white space** for readability is included.
- ☐ If seriously considering several career areas, a **different resume is developed for each career area**. Not only are objectives different, but the way work and academic experiences are described and arranged are also changed to reflect the qualifications for the different positions.
- ☐ The resume is printed on **quality resume paper**, using white, cream, ivory, or very light grey. (Avoid pastels or very bright colors.)
- ☐ Use the same paper I used for my resume for cover letters and envelopes.
- ☐ Electronic versions of your resume are in PDF format.

REFERENCES

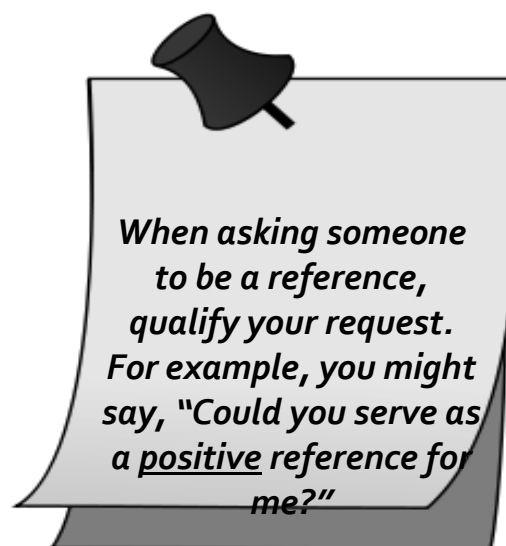
There are several options to providing information about those who have agreed to serve as your references.

- A **list of references** (with the same heading as your resume) should go on a separate page, which can be enclosed with the resume or carried to an interview. In creating a list, include names, titles, full mailing addresses, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers.
- Consider listing a brief explanation at the end of each reference to identify the relationship you have with that person. (ex. Current Supervisor or Undergraduate Advisor). This is not always evident to the prospective employer.
- Another option is to simply state “**References available upon request**” on the bottom of your resume.

Some suggestions related to selecting and working with your references:

- ✓ **Always ask for permission** to use the individual as a reference. Do not assume that the person will be willing to recommend you. This courtesy is appreciated and may avoid later embarrassment or a negative letter of reference. Also, define the quality of letter you are seeking to avoid ending up with a weak letter. For example, “Would you be comfortable giving me a strong recommendation?” opens the subject. Be prepared to hear a “no” or deal with some reservations.

- ✓ **Give the person a copy of your current resume.** In many cases, a person may know you in only one context (the classroom, a member of a professional organization or on the job). The reference may be stronger if the person has fuller knowledge of your other accomplishments so they have context.
- ✓ **Discuss the type of position that you will be seeking** and your career goals so they have context.
- ✓ **Share with your references the descriptions of specific positions for which you are being considered** just in case they are contacted by telephone.
- ✓ If there are **skills or information that you hope he or she would include** in a written reference, you can politely ask them.
- ✓ **Don’t wait until the last minute.** Give each reference at least a couple of weeks to write a letter or to prepare for a reference check via phone. Remember that they are asked by many students to write letters of recommendation.



Sample Resume

Karen Smith

123 Somewhere Rd.
Somewhere, NY 12345
(555) 555-5555
ksmith@gmail.com

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a Health and/or Physical Education Teaching position in which I can best implement challenging, interesting, and diversified lesson plans while motivating and meeting the individual needs of my students

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Health Education and Physical Education, dual major May 2015
Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY
GPA: 3.5

CERTIFICATIONS

NYS Initial Teacher Certification, Health Education K-12 June 2015
NYS Initial Teacher Certification, Physical Education K-12 June 2015
First Aid/CPR April 2011 - Present
Water Safety Instructor April 2011 - Present

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Student Teacher- Horseheads High School, Horseheads, NY September – December 2014

- Created and taught health lessons for students in grade 11
- Evaluated learning via formal and informal assessments
- Created quizzes and homework assignments
- Attended faculty meetings and open houses

Student Teacher- George Washington Elementary School, Elmira, NY February – May 2015

- Created and taught P.E. lessons for grades 4-6
- Utilized music and fitness equipment to create a fun learning environment
- Incorporated information about muscle groups into all lessons
- Created a positive, supportive, and encouraging learning environment
- Maintained classroom organization and managed behavior

Student Trainer- Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY September 2011 – May 2014

- Provided athletic training support for the women's volleyball and softball teams
- Attended practices and home and away games

Summer Program Instructor- Town of Gates Recreation, Rochester, NY June – August 2012

- Instructed students aged 6-12 in gymnastics
- Encouraged and supported students to create a positive environment

INVOLVEMENT & ORGANIZATIONS

• National Athletic Trainers' Association September 2013 - Present
• New York State Athletic Trainers' Association September 2013 - Present
• Ithaca College Athletic Training Students' Association September 2013 - Present

SKILLS

- **Language:** Fluent in American Sign Language
- **Technology:** Smart Board, i>clickers, and Kid Pix

Sample Resume

Anna P. Holmes

Current Address: 1234 Wire Rd., Apt. 11 • Ithaca, NY 14850 • (555) 555-5555 • aholmes@ithaca.edu

Permanent Address: 123 Chester Chase • Fayetteville, GA 30215 • (555) 555-5555

EDUCATION

Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY • *Bachelor of Arts in Journalism*; Anticipated May 2018

- Minors: Writing and Spanish
- GPA: 3.67
- Dean's List: Fall 2014-Spring 2015

JOURNALISM EXPERIENCE

The Ithacan (College Newspaper), Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY • *Assistant Campus Editor*; March 2015 – Present

- Lead 35-50 student staff members to create a weekly paper distributed to college community of 6000+
- Create story ideas, report-on, design and paginate paper
- Solicit ads from on- and off-campus clients

The Fayette Daily News, Fayetteville, GA • *Reporter/Intern*; May 2014 - August 2014

- Conducted research, interviews and on-the-spot reporting for a daily newspaper in community of 25,000+
- Wrote several articles per day on local news and events
- Submitted articles on time, working under tight deadlines
- Attended bi-weekly City Council Meetings

The Auburn Loafer, Auburn, AL • *Contributing Writer/Fashion Editor*; October 2010 - March 2014

- Promoted to Fashion Editor in January 2014
- Wrote a weekly column and feature articles for the Auburn-area entertainment magazine
- Interviewed local retail business owners and fashion designers

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Gold-n-Gemstones Jewelers, Fayetteville, GA • *Sales Person*; June 2009 - January 2012

- Sold merchandise, monitored inventories, and ordered supplies
- Provided excellent customer service
- Assumed managerial duties in the absence of the store owner

Outback Steakhouse, Peachtree City, GA • *Server*; May 2011 - August 2012

- Took orders and served meals seven days a week in a fast-paced environment
- Provided excellent customer service

COMPUTER SKILLS

Quark XPress, Dreamweaver MX, Adobe Photoshop and InDesign, PC and Mac OS

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Ithaca College Writing for Production Association, Ithaca, NY; January 2015 - Present

Ithaca College Student Activities Board, Ithaca, NY; January 2015 - Present

Annual AIDS Ride for Life, Ithaca, NY; 2014, 2015

Lee County Humane Society Volunteer, Ithaca, NY; September – December 2014

Sample References Page

Joe Shmoe
123 Park Place, Ithaca, NY 14850
jshmoe@ithaca.edu
(607) 555-5555

REFERENCES

Mr. Bruce McCutcheon
Sales Team Supervisor
Mitchell's Home Goods
456 State Street
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 555-1234
bmccutcheon@gmail.com
*Current supervisor

Ms. Davisa Coutier
Owner and Manager
Savannah Hotel
789 Besemer Street
Atlanta, GA 12345
(555) 555-9876
dcout@hotmail.com
*Summer job supervisor

Dr. Janet Rogers
Writing Professor
Ithaca College
953 Danby Road
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 274-5555
jrogers@ithaca.edu
*Academic advisor and current professor

Curriculum Vitae

In certain instances, you will need a curriculum vitae instead of a resume. A curriculum vitae (CV) is a summary of your academic and professional background. Its purpose is to outline your credentials for academic, education, scientific, or research positions, as well as fellowships or grants. Many other countries use CVs instead of resumes (check Going Global for preferences by country). Its length generally ranges from 2-4 pages. Please keep in mind each field has a different standard. Ask the faculty in your department for feedback on your CV.

A main difference between a resume and CV is length, as the recommended resume length is one page. Also, job descriptions are typically longer in a CV as opposed to short, concise bulleted descriptions on a resume. A more subtle but equally important distinction is that whereas the goal of a resume is to construct a professional identity, the goal of a CV is specifically to construct a scholarly identity. Thus, your CV will need to reflect your abilities as a teacher, researcher, and publishing scholar within your discipline.

What to include on your CV:

- Applicant Information
- Education
- Dissertation Title and Advisor
- Awards/Honors/Patents
- Grants/Fellowships
- Research Experience
- Teaching Experience
- Publications and Presentations
- Related Professional Experience
- Languages
- Other- Memberships, Associations, Conferences References

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Your name should appear on the top of each page. On the first page include your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. Page numbers

should appear on all pages except for the first. When including your e-mail address make sure it is professional. It is advised to avoid "nick names" or "cute" automatic responses. This also applies for phone messages.

EDUCATION

In reverse chronological order list all of your degrees from college on, with the name of the institution and date they were awarded. List the date you expect to receive the degree for the program you are currently in. It is standard to list the name of your advisor and your thesis title.

From this point on you have more latitude in shaping the organization of your CV. You should be guided by your strengths, requirements for the job, and conventions of your discipline.

HONORS AND AWARDS (GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS AND PATENTS, ETC.)

Place Honors/Awards near the top of the CV (unless you have few, then put later or omit). This is a good place to list research-related and dissertation-supported grants, fellowships, awards and patents. Scientists may create a separate section for "Research Grants", which would probably come later in the CV.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Scientists will briefly describe their postdoctoral, doctoral, and possibly undergraduate research. You should include both substance and techniques employed if relevant. List names of the institution, professor, project, and dates. Along with descriptions note any contribution you made (Some scientists append a "Statement of Research Interests").

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Where you place this section depends on the target institution (i.e. small teaching college) as well as your strengths as a candidate. The basic information should include: Where, What, When you have taught and your titles i.e. teaching fellow or lecturer.

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Where you place this section depends on the strength of your publication record. If substantial, it may come first. If too lengthy or short it can come at the end of the CV or have an additional page. Some candidates will subdivide this category into:

- Publications (if have you enough, you can separate this into Books, Abstracts, Reviews, Other Publications, etc...). Use standard bibliographic form for publications.
- Papers and Presentations. Include dates/locations with titles of your presentations.

Avoid listing published abstracts in with papers. List abstracts as a separate section. Otherwise, it gives the impression of "padding."

RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Use this category for any experience that is related to teaching, research, and administration, i.e. conference organizing, tutoring, and committee work.

LANGUAGES

Accurately assess your knowledge level of a language: native, fluent, proficient or working knowledge.

OPTIONAL SECTIONS

- Memberships or Professional Organizations
- Scholarly Associations
- Travel or Study Abroad

REFERENCES

Most academics tend to operate within small informal networks, the names of references will convey significant information to most readers. Most applicants will list their references at the end of their CV. Include:

- Full name
- Title
- Institutional address
- Telephone address/e-mail/fax

Three references are expected, but you may add more if their evaluations would add significant information.

**** Make sure your references know they are listed and have a copy of your CV**.**

One of the most important things to remember when working on your curriculum vitae is that there is not one standard format. There are different emphases in each discipline, and a good CV is one that emphasizes the points that are considered to be most important in your discipline and conforms to standard conventions within your field.

Sources:

<http://graduate.dartmouth.edu/careers/services/vita.html> and <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/641/01/>



Cover Letter Writing

The resume never travels alone. Each time you submit your resume to an employer you should enclose a cover letter which explains why you are submitting the resume. Keep in mind that cover letters are not generic and should be written specifically for each job you apply for. It is the key to creating interest in your candidacy.

The cover letter is your opportunity to summarize your qualifications and highlight your most appropriate skills or background in relation to a particular position without simply reiterating the information on your resume. There are two types of cover letters:

1. **Application Letter** - This letter is written when you want to apply for a specific position. Its purpose is to get your enclosed resume read and generate an interview. ***Your strategy is to demonstrate that your qualifications fit the requirements of the position.*** Study the position description carefully and link each of the described job dimensions with your skills and experience. Structure your application letter with three sections:

The opening (1 paragraph): Tell why you are writing, the name of the position or field, how you heard about the opening (company website, newspaper ad, referral, etc.), and why you are interested in this particular company, location, or type of work. Indicate any knowledge you may have of the organization that demonstrates you have done research and are familiar with their operation. This paragraph should also include a statement emphasizing your enthusiasm and fit for the position.

The body (usually 1-2 paragraphs): Outline two or three of your strongest qualifications that match the position requirements. Provide evidence of your related experience and accomplishments by spelling out specific examples. Make referrals to your enclosed resume, but do not repeat everything on your resume. Convince the employer that you have the personal qualities and motivation to perform.

The closing (1 paragraph): Close by showing interest in further discussing your qualifications (an interview), providing your phone number and e-mail address, and showing appreciation for being considered.

2. **Inquiry Letter** - This letter is written when you are asking an employer for information about possible job or internship openings. Its purpose is also to get your resume read and generate interviews. Structure this letter similarly to the application letter, but instead of using position information, focus on broader occupational and/or organizational dimensions to show how your qualifications match the work environment.

COVER LETTER GUIDELINES

- ✓ **Print on good quality resume paper.** Use the same type of paper that your resume is printed on. If submitted electronically, save as a PDF document.
- ✓ **Address to a specific name and title.** If you are uncertain whom to address, try using LinkedIn, look at reference materials in the Career Services Resource Center or check a company database such as CareerShift or eRecruiting. You can also call the organization's human resource department to ask for information.
- ✓ **Writing style should be direct, powerful and error free.** Edit to eliminate extraneous words and to check grammar, spelling and punctuation. In addition to stating your purpose, the letter tells the reader how well you communicate.
- ✓ **The cover letter should be no more than one page.** Keep the letter concise and no longer than one page.
- ✓ **Use appropriate language.** Repeat terms that the employer uses. Avoid jargon and the passive voice. Use action verbs and the active voice. Do not try to be cute or too aggressive. Be employer focused - tell the employer what you have to offer, not what you hope to gain from them or the position.
- ✓ **Always be positive** by stressing your base accomplishments and skills as well as your future value.
- ✓ **Be sure to keep copies of all correspondence.** It is possible that you will need to refer to it in the future.
- ✓ If you need to e-mail your cover letter, **attach it as a PDF document**, do not write it in the body of the e-mail.

Cover Letter Review Checklist

Format/Setup:

- ☐ Standard business letter formatting is used (everything left-justified, no indentations, 1 space between each “section” except after “Sincerely,” where 4 spaces should be used).
- ☐ Content is in this order: your address block, the date, the company’s address block, salutation, paragraphs, closing (“Sincerely”), your signed name, your typed name.
- ☐ The company information is correct and includes contact name, job title, company name, and company address.
- ☐ The letter is addressed as follows: Dear Mr./Ms. <insert last name>:
- ☐ The cover letter contains 3-4 paragraphs, each at least 3 sentences long.
- ☐ The entire letter fits on 1 page.
- ☐ Font is 10 or 12 points and easy to read.

OVERALL CONTENT:

- ☐ The letter is addressed to an individual, if possible.
- ☐ Letter is focused, concise, clear, and well organized.
- ☐ Writer comes across as confident, not too arrogant, passive, or desperate.
- ☐ Letter does not simply restate your resume.
- ☐ Letter is convincing, engaging, and interesting.
- ☐ Letter is written for the employer, not what the employer can do for you.
- ☐ There are no spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors.
- ☐ Cover letter is targeted to the position you are applying for (not generic).
- ☐ Avoids phrases like “I believe” and “I feel” which lessen the impact of the statement.
- ☐ Avoids starting every sentence with “I” (change it up with “My experience...” or “Interning at...”).
- ☐ If you have a gap in your employment history you have explained it in your cover letter.
- ☐ Letter is signed if you are mailing it. No signature required if sending via e-mail.

FIRST PARAGRAPH:

- ☐ Mentions the position you are applying for and where it was listed.
- ☐ Any referrals or company contacts are mentioned (if approved with that person ahead of time).
- ☐ Includes a statement about your interest and/or fit for the position.
- ☐ Includes your degree and major (or this can go in the second paragraph as appropriate).
- ☐ Optional: A statement about your knowledge of the company or how your values align with those of the company.
- ☐ If applicable: Mention if you will be relocating, when you are available to begin work, and/or if you already have experience with that company.

PARAGRAPH 2 (3rd paragraph optional):

- ☐ Gives examples of how your skills and experiences match up with the job/internship description.
- ☐ Focuses on real life experiences (jobs, internships, involvement, etc.), not just academics.
- ☐ Provides examples and quantifies professional accomplishments that demonstrate a relevant competency.
- ☐ Highlights transferable skill examples, especially if applicant has no directly related experience.

LAST PARAGRAPH:

- ☐ Restates your interest and/or fit for the position.
- ☐ Includes how you can be contacted (phone and e-mail address).
- ☐ Thanks the employer for their time and consideration.
- ☐ Optional: Mentions that you will follow up via phone or e-mail. Caution: Some employers may see this as too forward. If you wish to follow up, you don’t need to mention it in the cover letter; you can follow up (preference is via e-mail) in 1.5-2 weeks.

SUBMITTING A COVER LETTER:

- ☐ If e-mailing the cover letter, save it as a PDF first and attach it to the e-mail. Then write a “mini-cover letter” in the body of the e-mail, referring to the attachments.
- ☐ If using snail mail, resume and letter are mailed flat in a business envelope (ideally) or neatly folded into thirds.
- ☐ Cover letter is printed on good quality resume paper that matches your resume. Don’t forget to sign it!

Your address

Date

Their name, title, company name, & address

COVER LETTER CONTENT & STRUCTURE

Dear Ms./Mr. <last name>:

Here's what I'm applying for
Here's how I found out about it
Here's my college, degree, and major
Some awesome, pay-attention-to-me summarizing statement about how my experiences, skills, and education fit what YOU (the employer) need
*Bonus Optional Statement: common values or other researched information about them that you admire
Show enthusiasm in this paragraph!

Here are direct examples of my experiences and skills RELATED TO THE JOB DESCRIPTION.
This paragraph needs to flow, and not be choppy, resume-repeating sentences. It also needs to show REFLECTION/LEARNING from your experiences. Incorporate soft skills. Do not use bulleted lists.
Option 1: 1-2 experiences, all the related skills gained
Option 2: Skill, example, skill, example, skill, example
Option 3: 1-2 skills, several examples for each

Optional 3rd Paragraph: If you need to elaborate more on your experiences
Here are MORE direct examples of my experiences RELATED TO THE JOB DESCRIPTION.
Stick with the same format as previous paragraph if possible

Thank you, final statement of why I 'fit', contact info, looking forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Sign and/or type your name

Sample Cover Letter

1234 West 45 St.
Rochester, NY 32165

April 1, 2015

Dr. Susan Rogers
Principal
Horseheads High School
987 South St.
Horseheads, NY 12345

Dear Dr. Rogers:

I am writing to express my interest in the recently posted position of High School Social Studies Teacher that I found on the Horseheads Central School District website. I will graduate in May of this year from Ithaca College with a Bachelor of Arts in Social Studies Education and be certified to teach in grades seven through twelve. My diverse classroom experiences, coupled with my passion for teaching such an interesting subject, have prepared me to engage, support, and challenge the young minds at HCSD.

As you can see in the enclosed resume, my classroom experiences include working with students of various abilities from different grade levels and academic settings. While student teaching at Thompson Middle School, I brought energy to my lessons, incorporating read-alouds, games, and group work, along with some one-on-one instruction, to keep everyone engaged. This experience helped further develop my classroom management skills along with the ability to differentiate my instruction. I strived to create an inclusive, participatory atmosphere that appealed to all learning and personality types, and was rewarded with high test scores, positive student and parent feedback, and invaluable connections with students.

Additionally, for the last two years I have volunteered as a tutor for the Ithaca Youth Bureau's after school program, working with groups and individuals with varying learning styles and abilities. Depending on the needs of each student, I use a mixture of study methods and learning assessments including note cards, practice quizzes, homework review, and discussion. I pride myself on getting to know each student, adapting instruction methods as needed, and providing positive reinforcement for hard work.

I am excited about the opportunity to bring my skills, experiences, and education to this position, and would greatly appreciate the chance to further discuss my candidacy. I can be reached at (555) 555-5555 or randerson@ithaca.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Anderson

Job and Internship Search Strategies

PREPARATION

SELF-ASSESSMENT

One of the most important aspects of preparing for a job or internship search is first knowing yourself. Not only do you need to know what skills and characteristics you have to offer an employer, you should know what type of job or internship will suit your interests and values. **Use the checklists below to select your career-related interests, skills, and values. Also, Be prepared to articulate your skills in a cover letter and during a job interview.**

Interests:

- ☐ Arts & entertainment
- ☐ Athletics
- ☐ Cinema & photography
- ☐ Computers/technology
- ☐ Designing
- ☐ Editing
- ☐ Environment
- ☐ Healthcare
- ☐ Helping others
- ☐ Law/politics
- ☐ Managing others
- ☐ Organizing
- ☐ Public speaking
- ☐ Researching
- ☐ Sciences
- ☐ Selling products or services
- ☐ Teaching/training others
- ☐ TV & Radio
- ☐ Working with numbers
- ☐ Working with people
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Others: _____

Skills: (see pg. 10 for more skills)

- ☐ Active listening
- ☐ Adaptability/flexibility
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Creativity
- ☐ Critical thinking
- ☐ Decision making
- ☐ Detail-oriented
- ☐ Information gathering
- ☐ Initiative
- ☐ Instructing

Skills continued:

- ☐ Interpersonal
- ☐ Management
- ☐ Organizing
- ☐ Persuasion
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Problem solving
- ☐ Public speaking
- ☐ Teamwork
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Time management
- ☐ Work ethic
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Others: _____

Values and Preferences:

- ☐ Challenge
- ☐ High salary
- ☐ Independence
- ☐ Job security
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Make a difference
- ☐ Opportunity to advance
- ☐ Prestige
- ☐ Physical work
- ☐ Room for creativity
- ☐ Routine
- ☐ Rural work setting
- ☐ Supportive boss
- ☐ Traditional work hours
- ☐ Urban work setting
- ☐ Variety
- ☐ Work alone
- ☐ Work/life balance
- ☐ Work with others
- ☐ Others: _____

ONLINE PROFILES

Make sure your social networking sites (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) have appropriate content as some employers pre-screen candidates via online searches. You should ask your friends to delete any questionable photos or comments about you. You can also set your profile to private or temporarily delete your profiles all together. Creating a LinkedIn.com profile is a great way to create a professional online presence.

RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

Before you begin applying for jobs and networking, make sure your resume is ready to be sent to employers. You can bring your resume and cover letter, written for a specific opportunity, into Career Services to be reviewed.

INTRODUCING YOURSELF

The opportunity to network can happen anywhere from a job fair to the grocery store so be prepared with a 30 to 60 second speech (often referred to as an elevator pitch) that may include your educational background, experience or skill highlights, career goals, and interest in your field. For example, “Hi, my name is Dana Young and I will be graduating this May with a dual degree in Accounting and Math. I’ve really enjoyed my internships at KPMG and a small local accounting firm, Thomas and Jones, LLP. I’m very interested in your organization and would love the chance to talk with you more about it.”

To avoid sounding canned or phony, you might introduce the different aspects of your elevator speech throughout a conversation as appropriate.

RESEARCH

Researching specific companies and positions is vital to your search for the most appropriate job and workplace. Here are some resources for finding information about occupations, organizations, etc.

CareerShift

(www.careershift.com/Default.aspx?sc=Ithaca)
CareerShift is an online career management tool that helps you identify job and internship opportunities, networking connections, potential companies of interest, and work with the data in an integrated manner. All that you need to create your account and get started is a valid ithaca.edu or alumni.ithaca.edu e-mail address

Occupational Outlook Handbook

(www.bls.gov/oco)

Provides career information on most job titles, including required training and education, earnings, job outlook, job description, and working conditions.

O*NET (<http://online.onetcenter.org/find>)

Review occupational information, jobs related to your skills, work requirements, and occupations related to those in which you have an interest.

Other Resources

Also be sure to review specific company’s websites, trade journal articles, press releases, and other publicly available materials.

What to research:

(from www.distinctiveweb.com/research.htm)

- What is the age of the company/organization?
- What is their location? How long have they been established there?
- How many locations are there?
- What are the services and/or products they sell?
- What is the size of the company/organization?
- How many employees do they have?
- What are their sales? Assets? Earnings?
- What has their growth pattern been like?
- What are the various divisions and subsidiaries?
- Who are their competitors?
- What are the names of key executives?
- What is the general reputation of the company/organization?
- Is the company publicly or privately owned?
- Is the company foreign owned?
- How successful is the company? What have been their major achievements?
- Have there been any major issues or events in the recent history of the company?
- What are the objectives and philosophy of the company/organization?
- What is their forecast of anticipated growth?

***Need help assessing your interests,
skills and values?***

***Figuring out your career plans?
Come into Career Services– we can help
students from any major!***

FINDING JOBS & INTERNSHIPS

Now that you have completed all of the preparation work, it is time to find the positions for which you would like to apply. Keep in mind that the search process requires a considerable amount of work and can take months. By using a multifaceted approach, your chances of securing a position considerably increase, so take a look at techniques for finding opportunities in the open and hidden markets:

Open Job Market

The open job market refers to advertised positions. Here are ways to search for jobs in the open market:

- Search online job and internship databases; see general and industry-specific websites here: www.ithaca.edu/careers/resources
- Attend recruiting events (ex. Job & Internship Fairs at IC); check out upcoming events at: www.ithaca.edu/careers/events1
- Search specific company websites
- Look through classified ads in newspapers
- Go to a temp agency

Hidden Job Market

While the most popular method is to search the open market, many positions are NOT advertised; they are in the hidden job market. Finding these jobs involves networking. Simply stated, ***networking is using your current contacts and generating new ones in order to locate opportunities***. You network all the time and probably don't even know it. You are networking when you:

- Attend professional or trade association meetings
- Talk with your professors and alumni
- Volunteer for a local non-profit
- Visit with other members of your social clubs or religious groups
- Talk with your friends and classmates
- Talk to your neighbors
- Strike up a conversation with someone else waiting at the doctor's office
- Post messages on list serves or message boards

Keep in mind that you never know the connections someone might have, so networking is extremely important to discover opportunities.

For more ideas on networking, including setting up information interviews, see "Networking and Professional Etiquette" starting on **page 30**.

International Job Searching

Finding work outside the United States can be a long and complicated process. Make sure you do plenty of research before applying for jobs abroad so you know each country's requirements. Paperwork, documentation, and citizenship requirements vary depending on individual country politics and labor laws. In most cases, you will need a special type of visa known as a work permit. Be aware there are fees associated with acquiring work permits, passports, and visas. Specific country information can be found using Going Global (accessed through your ICHired account).

While you can use the same job search techniques as you would in the U.S., many people use placement programs to find work abroad. In addition to helping you find opportunities, placement programs and international organizations will often assist you with the application process for visas and work permits. Some resources to begin with include:

- Going Global (accessed in Handshake)
- International Research and Exchanges Board (www.irex.org)
- Interexchange (www.interexchange.org)
- BUNAC (www.bunac.org)
- Find more resources at www.ithaca.edu/icareers

Also, pay close attention to the job qualifications and application requirements. Resumes are not always used abroad, so make sure you also have a curriculum vitae (CV) prepared in case the employer asks for one. See pg. 18-19 for information on creating a CV.

For more information and resources on working and living abroad, visit our website: ithaca.edu/icareers

APPLYING FOR POSITIONS

Before applying for a job or internship, be sure you know and can communicate your knowledge, skills, and experience that are relevant to the position you are applying for. Here are some other helpful hints when applying for jobs:

- **Proofread!** Be sure that there are absolutely no spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors on any application documents. It is a good idea to have at least two other people look over your materials. We have seen instances where employers have not interviewed an otherwise qualified candidate because of proofing errors in their resume and/or cover letter!
- **Follow directions.** Send all documents mentioned in the application instructions. Leaving anything out reflects lack of attention to detail.

- **Cover letters are not optional.** A cover letter should always accompany your resume, even if the application instructions do not request a cover letter. It demonstrates business etiquette while portraying to the employer the purpose of your resume.
- **Use PDF, not DOCX.** When sending documents to an employer or recruiter, save them in PDF form so that no formatting issues (i.e., different default margins, unaccepted fonts, etc.) occur.
- **Use professional etiquette.** Correspondence with employers should always be professional. Do not use internet slang or smiley faces, and use proper spelling and grammar. Address people in all correspondences as Mr. or Ms. “Insert Last Name”.
- **E-mail signature.** At the end of each e-mail, include a professional signature that includes your first and last name and contact information. You can also include positions held (ex. Ithaca College Class of 2015 President) and your LinkedIn.com URL.
- **Use a professional subject line.** Be sure to include the job title or job code if you are applying for a specific job via e-mail. If you are inquiring about the possibility of openings, state this in the subject line. You must have relevant information in the subject line to avoid it getting thrown out as junk mail.
- **Appropriate voicemail and e-mail.** Once you begin networking and/or applying for positions, make sure your voicemail message is professional and avoid ringback tones. Also make sure your e-mail address is appropriate, such as your college e-mail address or “your_name”@yahoo.com.
- **Keep records.** As with networking, keep track of all correspondences, applications, dates applied, etc. involved in your job or internship search.
- **Follow up!** Following up with contacts, recruiters, employers, etc. is vital. It demonstrates a sense of professionalism, courtesy, and perseverance. You can follow up with hiring personnel within two weeks of sending in application materials and should mail a thank you note within 24 hours of an interview. Thank you letters can be typed, handwritten, or e-mailed. Hard copy letters are

the most formal and are always appropriate after an interview. Handwritten letters are more personal, and can be appropriate for brief notes to people you met during an interview or who may have helped you in other ways (many employers have expressed that they prefer handwritten notes). E-mail is appropriate when that has been your method of contact with the person you want to thank, if your contact has expressed a preference for e-mail, or if you want to send a quick thank you to be followed up by hard copy. Thank you letters, phone calls, or some type of correspondence should take place after:

1. A job interview
 2. An informational interview
 3. A contact has helped you/provided you with information
 4. Someone was extremely helpful to you at a career fair
 5. You visit a contact at their work site
 6. Anyone you wish to express thanks to and/or develop a relationship with
- **Interview preparation.** Practice responding to typical interview questions, do a mock interview at Career Services, and get interview attire appropriate for the field to which you are applying.
 - **Be persistent.** The process of finding and securing jobs and internships can be frustrating and you may have to deal with rejections. Know that this is typical, and that with hard work and persistence you will eventually get something.



Tips For Getting Experience & Expanding Your Network

- ***Volunteer***
- ***Intern***
- ***Get a part-time job***
- ***Join clubs/organizations***
- ***Attend conferences***

Professional Dress

There are different levels of professional dress that you should consider when attending events such as: job fairs, networking events, your job or internship, and job interviews. Remember that your appearance creates a first and lasting impression, so you want your image to convey credibility, integrity, and professionalism.

LEVELS OF DRESS

PROFESSIONAL		
	Women	Men
Business casual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khaki pants, dress pants, or knee-length (or longer) skirt • Collared shirt or twin set shirts • Closed-toe shoes (open-toed shoes may be acceptable-check with company first) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khaki pants or slacks • Collared shirt (button or polo) tucked in • Dress shoes
General professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress pants or knee-length (or longer) skirt • Collared, button up shirt or jacket/blazer • Closed-toe shoes • Pantyhose/stockings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress slacks • Long sleeved, collared, button up shirt with tie • Dress shoes with dark socks • Belt
Business professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pant or skirt suit (skirts must be knee-length or longer) • Closed-toe heels less than 2-3" or flats (professional looking flats, not ballet flats) • Pantyhose/stockings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pant suit • Long sleeved, collared, button up shirt with tie • Dress shoes with dark socks • Belt
NOT PROFESSIONAL		
Casual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeans or shorts • T-shirts or sleeveless tops • Tight or revealing tops or bottoms • Open-toed shoes, flip flops, sneakers, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeans or shorts • T-shirts or sleeveless tops • Open-toed shoes, flip flops, sneakers, etc.

CHOOSING THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF DRESS

Now that you know the different levels of dress, here's the breakdown of what to wear in various professional settings.

Job/Internship Fairs: Business professional! This is your chance to make a good first impression with employers. Showing up in khakis or jeans shows that you may not know how to be professional or take your work seriously.

Internship: The level of dress you wear to your internship will depend on the organization; check with your supervisor to determine whether you should wear business casual, general professional, or business professional. You will also get an idea of what current employees wear during your interview for the internship; try to dress as professional as, or more so than them. It's very important, especially as an intern, to prove your credibility and that can partially be through your attire.

Job: Similar to internship attire, the level of dress you wear to work will depend on your employer. You can check with your supervisor about the dress code, or wear clothes similar or more professional than your co-workers.

Interviews: Business professional is highly recommended for job interviews, even with employers for which you would not have to wear suits for everyday work. See pages 35-36 for more information on interview attire.

Networking Events: These types of events typically call for general professional or business professional attire. You can check with the organization coordinating the event for appropriate dress guidelines, but you're probably safe with general professional. For Ithaca College's Network Nights, general professional is recommended.

Professional Development Conferences: The attire worn at conferences varies depending on the organization. Conference announcements often reveal the dress code, or you can contact the organization coordinating the conference. If you are slated to present you should wear general professional to business professional attire. Otherwise, you would probably be safe bringing several levels of dress for the different parts of a conference.

PROFESSIONAL DRESS TIPS

- **Invest in at least one high quality, well-fitted suit.** Between job interviews, job fairs, networking events, etc., you are going to need it. If buying multiple suits isn't an option, consider wearing different colored shirts (and ties for men) with the suit to change its appearance.
- **Good grooming is essential.** Your personal hygiene and appearance contribute highly to first impressions. Things like bad breath, body odor, wrinkled clothing, dirty nails, unruly hair, etc., may translate to others that you are sloppy in general, and maybe in work and attitude as well.
- **Better safe than sorry.** It's better to dress more professionally than required, than to under-dress. Remember you are dressing for your audience so be cautious of trends or looks that are too casual.
- **Get a professional bag or briefcase.** This isn't required for all professions of course, but it will affect your appearance if you carry a formal-looking black bag or briefcase as opposed to a floral patterned tote.
- **If you think your clothes might be too tight or revealing, they probably are.** Tight clothing is not professional and should always be avoided.
- **Wear comfortable shoes.** If you have to stand for two hours at a networking event or walk around a job fair for an hour, you'll want to make sure your feet aren't aching after 10 minutes.
- **Use perfume/cologne sparingly in a work setting.**
- **Loud colors and styles of clothing can be distracting.**
- **Women: avoid too much makeup, jewelry, and accessories.**
- **Women: for most industries, avoid really high heels (more than 2-3").**
- **Women: beware of gaping button-up shirts (wear camisoles underneath them).**
- **Women: avoid deep V-neck (or otherwise revealing) tops and skirts with hemlines above the knees.**
- **Men: facial hair should be neat and trimmed.**
- **Men: don't wear ties or pants that are too short.**
- **Men: wear dark colored socks that reach mid-calf with dress shoes.**

Networking and Professional Etiquette

WHAT IS NETWORKING?

Networking is the process of developing mutually beneficial professional relationships. These relationships allow you to get to know people who can help you with your career needs, while you offer to do the same in return. This is a strategy that takes time and effort, but the results are worth the investment.

Why should I do it?

Because it is the most effective job search method! Studies show that as many as 85% of jobs are found through some form of networking (2013 NACE Job Outlook Survey).

- Networking gets you outside of your present circle and in touch with people who may be able to help you tap into new opportunities.
- People who make contacts through networking have a better success rate because employers are more likely to hire them through personal referral rather than a blind contact.
- Note: Even though someone may not be employed in the field that you are specifically interested in, they may know someone who is. Or they may have some valuable life experience to share with you as well.

Why would anyone want to network with me?

People like to help people, especially by talking about themselves, their jobs and contacts. And you may be able to help them in some way – if not now, perhaps in the future. Just remember, **you are asking for information when you network, not a job.** Keep in mind that networking often eventually leads to job opportunities.

REASONS TO NETWORK

- To explore career options
- To get information about a career field, industry, or organization
- To discover job opportunities
- To get to know people in your chosen field or industry

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Before you contact anyone, think about why you are contacting them and what you want to say. Are you looking for information about different careers so you can choose your career path? Or, are you looking for people working in a specific company or career field to find job opportunities?

When you have a clear idea of your purpose, you will be able to develop an effective message about who you are and what you want to accomplish. Make sure you clearly tell everyone you speak with what information you are looking for and how they can help you (but be careful not to imply that they should get you a job– you still need to do that work yourself!).

WHO CAN I CONTACT?

Anyone you know or want to know! Potential networking contacts include:

- Alumni in the Online Directory
- Classmates
- Club or organization advisors
- Current and past employers
- Faculty and staff at Ithaca College
- Family
- Friends and neighbors
- Internship supervisors
- Members of professional associations

Keep in mind that some of these contacts may be able to help you directly, while others may be able to refer you to someone else who can help. As you talk to more people, you will discover more opportunities.

To find people you wish to contact, ask your current connections (friends, family, professors, etc.) for people they know and would recommend that you contact, or even if they would help facilitate introductions for you. Having shared connections often makes people you don't know more willing to talk to you. You can also find people using LinkedIn (see pg. 33) and CareerShift (see pg. 4).

WHAT DO I SAY?

When sending your first introductory e-mail, introduce yourself in a clear and concise way and then quickly let the person know why you are contacting him or her. If someone referred you, use that individual's name in your introduction. In an introductory e-mail DO NOT ask if they have jobs/internships, and DO NOT attach your resume. If you want maximum impact, you must first establish a relationship with this person.

Ideally, you want to arrange a time to meet with the person directly (or by phone or e-mail, depending on the circumstances) so you can ask them detailed questions and gain useful information.

Example Introduction:

"Mr. Kiselow, my name is Patricia Flood and I am a classmate of your son Lou. He suggested that I contact you. I am considering public relations as a career and I'm trying to learn more about the field and the type of opportunities that are available. Lou told me that you work for the public relations firm of Zambelli and Woodhead and have a great deal of experience in PR. I'd like to sit down with you and talk at your convenience to get your advice. Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you."

Note: Be prepared to ask your questions once this message is sent; they may want to talk right away.

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

A specific networking technique called informational interviewing gives you the chance to find out about career paths and job opportunities while developing contacts with key people and learning to sell your skills in a non-threatening environment.

Steps to a successful informational interview:

- Always schedule an informational interview in advance, don't just call someone and start asking questions
- Dress professionally and take copies of your resume, your list of questions, and any other materials you may want to present
- Turn off your cell phone before the interview
- Maintain good posture and eye contact
- Take notes during the meeting and end on time
- Be attentive and enthusiastic
- Ask for other contacts they can recommend
- Thank the contact for his/her time and information
- Follow up with a thank you note within 24 hours

WHAT DO I ASK?

Here are some sample questions you may consider:

Personal Background:

- Before graduation, what did you think your career was going to be?
- How did you get into this type of work?
- Could you describe the progression of your career thus far?

Preparation:

- What credentials, education, licenses, etc. are required for entry into this kind of work?
- What kind of prior experiences are absolutely essential?
- How did you prepare yourself for this work?

Present Job:

- What is a typical day/week like for you?
- What skills or talents are essential for effectiveness in this job?
- What are the toughest problems/decisions you must deal with?
- What do you find most rewarding about the work itself?
- What do you like least about it?

Career Future:

- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- What other kinds of work do you feel that you could do?
- What sorts of changes are occurring in your field?

Hiring Decisions:

- If you were to hire someone to work with you today, what factors would be most important in your hiring decisions and why?
- If I became an applicant for this type of work, who should I contact in your organization or in another firm?

Supply and Demand:

- How do people find out about jobs in your agency (company, division, etc.)?
- What types of employers hire people in your line of work? Where are they located?
- Is turnover high? Do people normally move to other companies, or do they move up within the company?

Life-Style:

- How do you balance work/life demands?
- What obligation does your work place upon you outside of the ordinary work week?
- How many hours do you work in the average week?
- How much flexibility do you have in terms of dress, hours of work, vacation, schedule, etc.?

Professional Development:

- Where are the best programs of advanced study? Formal degree programs, corporate training programs, continued education?
- What are the professional journals in your field? Which ones do you recommend?
- What forms of professional development are offered through your company?

Advice to Job Seekers:

- What kinds of experience, paid employment and otherwise would you most strongly recommend?
- If you had to do it all over again, what would you do differently?
- Where would you recommend I look for work in this field?
- What would be your advice to individuals preparing for this type of work?
- Can you suggest anyone else whom I could contact for additional information? May I have permission to use your name when I call or contact them?

INTENTIONAL NETWORKING

Here are some other ways to start building your network:

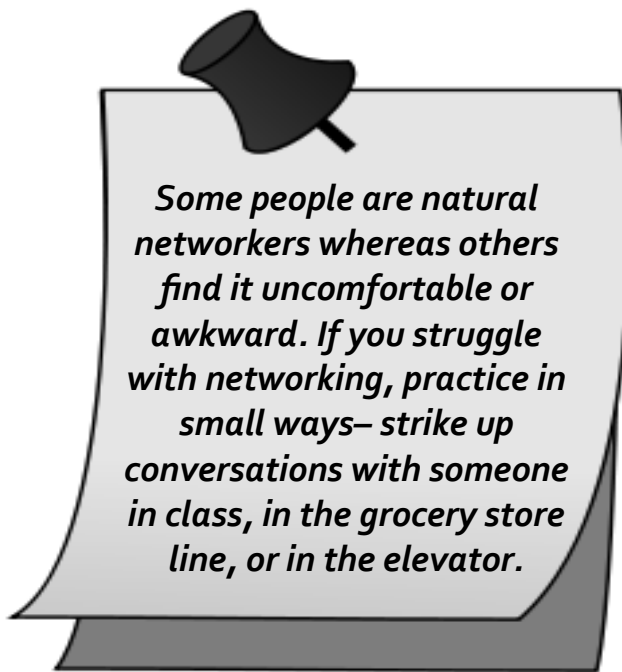
- **Attend career events.** What better place to make connections with employers than a job fair? Check with Career Services to find upcoming events like the Job & Internship Fair, Network Nights, Communications Consortium, alumni panels, and many more.
- **Get involved.** The more clubs and organizations you belong to, the more contacts you have.
- **Contact IC alumni.** Use the Alumni Online Directory (www.icalumni.net) to locate

alumni who work in your field. You can search by industry, location, major, job title, and much more (see pg. 4 for more info). You can also find alumni on LinkedIn (pg. 33) and CareerShift (pg. 4).

- **Join professional organizations.** These groups often provide networking opportunities, ideas for best practices, relevant resources, and job postings.

HELPFUL HINTS ON NETWORKING

- Begin networking early. Don't wait until spring of your senior year to begin networking.
- Remember, you will be meeting primarily to gather up-to-date information about an area of interest. You are **not** asking the person for a job.
- Always make an appointment. This puts your conversation on a business-like basis and helps to eliminate interruptions.
- Be prepared to take the lead in the conversation. Remember you are the interviewer. Prepare in advance by learning everything you can about the person, the organization and the field. Have questions in mind that show you have done your homework.
- Respect the person's time. Plan a manageable agenda. A half hour is reasonable.
- Make it a point to remember the names of your new contacts.
- Always reciprocate. When you ask others for help, be prepared to return the favor. Keep supporters informed about your progress and successes.
- Be sure to send a thank you letter following an informational interview.
- Make sure you follow through with any commitments you made during the meeting (or after).
- Use caution when name dropping. Don't name drop with employers unless you really know the person and have permission to use their name as a referral source.
- Keep in touch with your contacts. Inform them of job interviews and offers.



USING LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is a professional social media platform that has an extensive directory of people, organizations, and professional groups/associations. Individuals and companies use LinkedIn for networking, job searching, hiring, company research and connecting with fellow professionals in their fields. Here are some helpful tips for using LinkedIn to network:

- Create a profile complete with biographical information, a summary of your professional philosophy and career goals, list your recent and relevant work experience, active involvement in clubs, organizations, or sports teams, and your academic background.
- Join groups and participate in their conversations. Get your name out there!
- Make connections! Use the search functions to look for professionals at specific organizations, IC alumni, family and friends, classmates, faculty, supervisors, recruiters from job/internship fairs, LinkedIn group members, etc.
- Compose personalized messages when sending link requests, especially when reaching out to people you don't know firsthand and with whom you want to make a good impression.
- Communicate with your connections once you are linked with them. They won't always reach out to you first!
- Don't pester people. Sending messages too often may make you seem over eager.

- Don't ask for jobs/internships when you start making connections. Networking is about establishing a relationship first and asking for favors later.
- Update your status with industry-related information (not personal updates like Facebook). Post articles or resources related to your field.
- A great way to keep connected to a contact is to send a note of congratulations when you see they've been promoted or got a new job (this shows up in status updates).
- Use LinkedIn to find a person to address a cover letter to. You can also use it to research people before going into an interview with them.
- Follow organization profile pages (similar to Facebook fan pages) to receive updates. Some companies and organizations may post job and/or internship opportunities for their followers to see.

PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE

Communicating with others - peers, faculty and staff at college, supervisors and colleagues at internships or jobs, or the general public - is something you do every day. Understanding communication etiquette can help you become a more professional member of Ithaca College and society.

First Impressions

- Appropriate attire and good grooming are essential and can leave a lasting impression. (See **pages 28-29 for more tips on attire**)
- Some people may be offended by piercings and tattoos.

Handshakes

- Always have a firm handshake; a floppy handshake portrays lack of confidence and too firm a grip can be perceived as aggressive.
- Maintain eye contact and smile while shaking hands; it reinforces your confidence and friendliness.
- Introduce yourself and say, "it's nice to meet you."

Mind Your Manners

- Remember the basics: say please and thank you, use Mr. and Ms. when addressing people, open doors for others, etc.

Social Etiquette

- Be sociable but avoid gossip and controversial issues such as religion, politics, etc.
- Be prepared to talk about current events or issues, especially if you are at a networking event.
- Do not show up late to appointments or be a no show.
- Ask questions and show sincere interest
- Excuse yourself if you must leave a conversation.

Social Networking

- Keep in mind that some employers screen candidates using social media sites so make sure your online profiles are appropriate.
- Some job seekers set their social networking profiles to private or temporarily inactivate them until they've secured employment.

E-mail Etiquette

- Use an appropriate e-mail address such as your college e-mail.
- Use proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Use professional tone and language in the body of the e-mail AND the subject line.
- Address superiors and those you might not know as Mr., Ms., Dr., or Professor unless they have made it obvious that it is acceptable to address them by their first name.
- Do not use emoticons, slang, or abbreviated words.
- Proofread all e-mails before sending them out.
- Avoid sending e-mail from your mobile device, it increases the chances of typos.

Cell Phone Etiquette

- Do NOT text or talk on your cell while in the middle of a meeting, appointment, professional event, or meal (this is rude and sends the message that whoever is on your phone is more important than who is in the meeting with you).
- Turn your ringer off when in class, at a job interview, in a meeting, etc.
- Make sure your voicemail message is professional and avoid ring back tones.
- Avoid answering your phone in a noisy location like the dining hall. Step out into a quiet area to answer the call.

Phone Etiquette

- Know who you want to talk to and what you want to say before placing a call.
- Identify yourself and why you are calling when you place a call.
- Use a welcoming tone; it also sometimes helps to smile while you are talking.
- Be polite; how you treat the caller will determine their impression of you.
- If you receive a phone message, return the call within 24 hours.
- Do not chew gum while talking on the phone.
- Excuse yourself for a minute if you have to sneeze, cough, or blow your nose.

Dining Etiquette

- When you're at an interview that includes a meal, the interview is still the most important thing to focus on—NOT the food. You may want to eat a snack before the meal so you don't go with an empty stomach and over eat.
- If you arrive first, wait in the lobby for the whole party to arrive.
- Wait until your host begins eating to start eating.
- When passing a dish or condiment, always offer it to the person on your left first, then serve yourself, and pass to the right.
- When there are multiple forks, spoons or knives at the place setting, start on the outside and work your way in with each course that is served.
- Chew with your mouth closed and do not talk with food in your mouth.
- Avoid ordering an alcoholic drink (especially if you are under 21 years old). Limit yourself to one glass if you do choose to drink alcohol.
- If you must leave the table, politely excuse yourself and place your napkin on your chair.
- When your interview includes a meal, the host or employer is expected to pay. Always thank your host at the end of the meal.
- For more dining etiquette tips, visit: www.diningetiquette.org.

Successful Interviewing

The interview is your opportunity to match your individual talents and interests to the needs of the employer. Your goal in the interview is not merely to convince the employer you are the person for the job. You should also use the interview to acquire insights and information which will assist you in evaluating whether this is the position for you. Throughout the exchange of information that takes place, the interviewer is looking for an answer to the question, "Why should I hire you?" It is important that your responses to his or her questions focus on answering that question.

Preparing for the interview is almost as important as the interview itself. The key to successful interviewing is **knowing who you are** and **knowing the organization** with which you are interviewing. To prepare for any interview, you should:

1. Do a self-evaluation
2. Research the organization
3. Prepare responses to questions you might be asked as well as questions you can ask the interviewer.

SELF-EVALUATION

In order to articulate your qualifications for the job, you must have a clear understanding of what you have to offer an employer and what you are seeking in a position.

To begin your self-evaluation, assess your **skills, interests, and values**. Define these in relation to your career interests by prioritizing them according to their importance to you. Your list should include, but not be limited to: what you like to do in your spare time, work experiences you have enjoyed, successes you have had in school or in jobs you have held, the types of people with whom you enjoy working, the work environment you prefer, and how much value you place on monetary rewards.

Once you have gathered this information, apply it to what you know about the career field you plan to enter. Are there any obvious discrepancies between what you do well, what you like to do, and what is important to you and the expectations for the positions you are seeking? If so, **before** the interview is the time to deal with these differences. If you have not

already done so, **carefully prepare a statement of your short-range career objective**. Be prepared to discuss this objective as it relates to what you know about yourself, to the job for which you are interviewing, and to your future career goals.

As you proceed through your interviews, you will find many of the questions you are asked relate to how well you can assess yourself - skills, interests, strengths, weaknesses, and experiences you have had. Spending a little time at the beginning of your job search to evaluate these factors will pay off later.

RESEARCH

It is important to research the company, industry, organization, or school prior to the interview. You should acquire as much information as possible about the prospective employer. Such research should be aimed at understanding the organization and position for which you are applying. This will enable you to ask intelligent questions and to emphasize your assets during the actual interview. The Career Resource Center maintains descriptive materials about career fields and employers. The following resources will also help you in your search:

- The company's/organization's website
- Company brochures (annual reports and recruiting brochures)
- Standard and Poor's Register (www.standardandpoors.com)
- Hoover's Handbook of American Companies
- Business magazines that profile small and large companies *e.g.* Forbes, Fast Company, Business Week
- CareerShift-online database of companies and organizations nationwide (www.ithaca.edu/careers/resources)
- Company profile websites such as www.manta.com

In addition to the Career Resource Center and online resources, you may write to the organization itself for information and/or talk with current or former employees. If news about the organization has appeared in recent business publications, it will be helpful for you to be informed of this prior to the interview.

JOB INTERVIEWING TIPS

- ☐ Visit the location of the interview ahead of time if possible so you can plan your travel needs accordingly.
- ☐ If the interview includes a meal, research the restaurant to identify any special dietary needs or restrictions you may have.
- ☐ Arrive at an interview **10 minutes early**.
- ☐ If for some reason you are running late for an interview, call the organization.
- ☐ Do not smoke before an interview.
- ☐ **Don't chew gum.** (Mints are ok!)
- ☐ **Turn off your cell phone** or do not bring it into the interview at all.
- ☐ **Be friendly** with everyone you meet at the organization.
- ☐ Greet your interviewers formally (ex. Mr. Jones).
- ☐ Ask someone ahead of time if you are unsure about how to pronounce an interviewer's name.
- ☐ Offer a **firm handshake**.
- ☐ Maintain **good posture** and **eye contact**.
- ☐ Be sure to **smile**.
- ☐ Demonstrate **self-confidence and positive energy**, but do not be overly confident.
- ☐ Speak loud enough for everyone to hear you and enunciate your words.
- ☐ **Avoid slang and pause words** such as "um" and "like".
- ☐ Do not bring up controversial issues or personal/family problems, or tell jokes.
- ☐ Do not give simple yes or no answers; elaborate and **give examples** whenever possible.
- ☐ Do not lie or exaggerate your abilities or experiences.
- ☐ Do not speak negatively about past employers or colleagues.
- ☐ Show appropriate interest- do not appear desperate for the job.
- ☐ Feel free to **take notes** during and after the interview so you remember details.
- ☐ At the end, show your appreciation for being interviewed and **ask what the next steps are**.

THINGS TO TAKE TO AN INTERVIEW

- ☐ Directions to the interview, parking instructions and the phone number
- ☐ Portfolio/padfolio, paper and pen
- ☐ Extra resumes
- ☐ Sample work or professional portfolio
- ☐ List of questions for the interviewer
- ☐ List of references
- ☐ Mints
- ☐ Bottled water
- ☐ Professional bag, tote or briefcase
- ☐ Positive attitude and a smile!
- ☐ Snack (such as a granola bar)

INTERVIEW ATTIRE

Your first impression during a job interview is largely based on your overall appearance. Choose clothes that project an image appropriate to the position you want. Do some research to learn the company's standards; then dress as though you were representing them. Neatness counts. Make sure you check for missing buttons, tiny rips in your clothing, or run down heels. People equate how neatly you dress with how neatly you work.

In the traditional business world, conservative suits in neutral colors (black, gray, navy, etc.) are the unofficial uniform. In a creative field, more casual and colorful clothing may be acceptable. Be aware of how people in your chosen field typically dress and choose accordingly. When in doubt, dress on the conservative side. See p. 26-27 for more information on attire and professional dress.

WOMEN'S ATTIRE

- Neutral colors are best; black, blues, grays and beiges. Pastels do not look professional.
- Skirts should be knee length or below. Most skirts will "ride" up, so you want to make sure that a skirt that looks presentable while you are standing, doesn't suddenly shrink when you are asked to have a seat.
- Avoid clothes that are too tight or revealing. Make sure your button-down shirt doesn't gap between buttons when you sit down.
- Avoid blouses, shirts, etc. that have excessive ruffles and bows.

- Always wear stockings, even on a scorching summer day. Bare legs are not acceptable. It's a good idea to bring a spare pair in case you get a run.
- Stockings should match your skin color. Brightly colored, textured or patterned hose detract from a professional appearance.
- Hairstyles should be clean, neat and not distracting. There is no one appropriate length, however, if your hair is long make sure to wear it in such a way that you do not have to constantly pull it away from your face.
- Professional shoes are a must. Closed toe and low heels are suggested; boots should be avoided altogether, even in winter or inclement weather.
- Nails should be clean and neat. Light-colored polish may be acceptable, but clear polish is preferred.
- Do not wear excessive jewelry or anything that dangles or clinks. Only wear two earrings to the interview, and stick with the classics - simple gold, silver or pearl.
- Use makeup that enhances your features but does not overpower them. Avoid very dark or very bright colors and heavy eye makeup.
- Do not use strong perfumes that will overpower your interviewer; stick to a light scent or none at all.

MEN'S ATTIRE

- Solid-colored suits are best: medium to dark blue, black and gray; and subtle pinstripes work well.
- Wear a good quality necktie with a conservative pattern.
- Clean, polished dark dress shoes (brown or black) and dark socks are a must; no boots.
- Hair should be clean, neat and relatively short. Be prepared to get your hair cut at least a week in advance so it will be at the "just right" length the day of your interview.
- Beards and mustaches are acceptable only if they are fully grown-in and neatly groomed.
- Make sure your hands and nails are clean.
- Men should not wear earrings to an interview. Limit jewelry to a watch and/or wedding band.
- Your clothes should fit well and be pressed.
- Do not wear a strong-scented cologne or aftershave.



COMMONLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

There are a number of questions commonly asked by interviewers during an initial employment interview. By being aware of some of these questions and by considering your responses, you will be better prepared to offer well thought-out and concise replies. This will also help you and the interviewer feel more at ease and will facilitate the interviewing process.


To assist you in preparing for your interview, we have listed some common interview questions. It is best to think in terms of why the recruiter is asking the following questions:

- **Tell me about yourself.** The employer will want enough information about you as a person to enable him/her to make a comparison of profiles of successful company employees. She/he also wants to know what motivates you, how you will work with others, your enthusiasm, drive, and other JOB-RELATED traits. Be sure to stress the positive attributes, and confine your answer to career-related information.
- **What are your career plans?** The interviewer really wants to know how your future plans relate to those of the organization. This question also allows the interviewer to assess whether this job fits your short range goals and your future career goal. Try to emphasize how you will contribute to the company as part of your plan.

- **Why are you interested in our organization?** In asking this question, the employer is hoping to determine how much research you have done about the organization. You must be able to articulate career plans which are compatible with the organization with which you are interviewing. Discuss what you have learned in researching the organization. Prove your interest.
- **How did you choose your major and/or your college?** This question gives the employer a chance to assess your decision making process. You should stress the thought and research that went into making your decision. The employer is interested in how you conducted this research as well as the end result.
- **What are your greatest strengths?** This question enables the employer to determine what your self image is. Concentrate on strengths related to the work environment. Here is your opportunity to prove that you have the most important strength required for the position. Point out all the strengths you have acquired through your past jobs and campus/community activities. You need to be able to relate these strengths to the employer's needs, so give this careful consideration.
- **What are your main weaknesses?** Briefly mention a weakness which you have overcome or are in the process of overcoming. Do not dwell on negatives and avoid mention of a weakness which might be debilitating in the position for which you are being considered. An example of an appropriate response would be, "Being organized hasn't always been my strongest trait, but I have implemented a calendar and folder system that really helps. Using these techniques, I've been able to stay on top of all of my responsibilities and deadlines."
- **Behavior-based questions.** The employer is looking for you to tell a story and provide examples when a behavior-based question is asked. This type of question typically begins with "Tell me about a time when..." An easy way to craft your answer is to use the STAR Method: describe the **S**ituation, the **T**ask or goal, what **A**ction you took, and the **R**esult. Be careful your answers aren't too long; keep them to about a couple minutes.

MORE COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are your long range career goals, when and why did you establish these goals, and how are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
2. What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, have you established for yourself for the next ten years?
3. Why are you interested in working for our organization?
4. What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
5. How would you describe yourself?
6. How would a friend describe you? A supervisor?
7. How did your college experience prepare you for a career?
8. What books, magazines, newspapers, or journals do you read?
9. Why should I hire you?
10. What qualifications do you have that make you think you will be successful?
11. Why do you think you would like this particular job?
12. In what ways do you think that you can make a contribution to our company?
13. What do you think determines a person's progress in an organization?
14. Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor and subordinates?
15. What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction and why?
16. Do you feel that you have the best scholastic record of which you are capable?
17. Why did you choose your field of study?
18. If you could do so, how would you plan your academic study differently? Why?
19. Describe your most rewarding (college) experience?
20. Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?
21. What have you learned from participation in extracurricular activities?
22. In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable?
23. May we contact your previous employers for reference information?

-
- 
24. What characteristics do you think are necessary for success in this field?
 25. What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
 26. Describe what you consider to be the ideal job.
 27. Do you prefer working by yourself or with others?
 28. What have you done that shows initiative or willingness to work?
 29. What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work?
 30. What kind of supervisor do you prefer? What kind of colleagues do you prefer to work with?
 31. Do you have a geographic preference? What is it? Why?
 32. What salary expectations do you have for this position?
 33. Tell me about a time when you worked successfully in a team.
 34. Tell me about a time when you faced challenges while working on a team and how you handled it.
 35. How do you deal with conflict at work? Can you give an example?
 36. What do you know about our company?
 37. How do you feel about travel?
 38. What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?
 39. What type of person do you find most difficult to deal with?
 40. What have you learned from your mistakes?
 41. What have you learned from other jobs that you have held?
 42. What has been your most creative project?
 43. What was the most embarrassing thing that has ever happened to you?
 44. What is your greatest weakness?
 45. What accomplishment are you most proud of?
 46. How would you describe your interpersonal skills?
 47. Can you describe a time when you exhibited leadership skills?
 48. How would you describe your organizational skills? Attention to detail? Task prioritization skills?

Search online for additional sample interview questions. One site on which you can search for interview questions by company and job title is www.glassdoor.com.

Please Note: It is not always easy to accentuate the positive without appearing boastful. By focusing on factual answers in a sincere manner, you can avoid the appearance of conceit. Also, provide examples when you can to elaborate on your answer.

This list is not comprehensive. Many other types of questions can and will be asked. Your knowledge of yourself, the company, your preparation and your verbal abilities will help you to respond more effectively.

HANDLING INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS

It is not appropriate for the interviewer to ask personal questions unrelated to the qualifications of the job for which you are interviewing. Such inappropriate (illegal) questions could include: "What does your spouse do?", "Will being married or having children interfere with your ability to travel and relocate?", "Are you planning on getting married (having children) soon?". There are many more examples of discriminatory questions. Every candidate needs to make a personal decision on how to respond to these inquiries. There are three ways to answer an illegal question:

1. Alert the interviewer to an illegal question, just be aware you could be perceived as being uncooperative.
2. Simply answer the illegal question knowing you are giving information unrelated to the job or your qualifications.
3. Determine the underlying concern and address it in your answer. For example, consider the question: "Are you planning on having (or do you already have) children?" The underlying concern could be your ability to perform certain aspects of the position, such as traveling. Your response should address this concern. "I understand there is a significant amount of travel required for this position and my personal life will not interfere with my ability to perform all aspects of this position effectively." With this response you are avoiding directly answering the illegal question, but you are addressing the underlying issue.

Regardless of the method you choose, this situation should be handled tactfully and politely. However, if you feel that there was discrimination and you were turned down for a job based upon your response to an illegal question, the necessary legal steps can be taken after the interview. It will then be up to the interviewer to prove that discrimination did not take place.

QUESTIONS TO ASK AT AN INTERVIEW

At some point in the interview, the interviewer will ask if you have any questions. You should have some prepared in advance so that you will not be taken by surprise. Avoid asking questions to which you would know the answer if you had read the company's materials or questions that are very technical in nature.

The interview is a two-way exchange of information. Questions that you might ask the interviewer are as equally important in this encounter as those you answer. You need to learn as much as you can about the position and the organization for which you might work.

It is best to avoid asking about salary or benefits during the first interview. If you absolutely must know the salary, ask in terms of a range you might expect. Most employers view excessive interest in financial matters to be inappropriate in the first contact.

Here are some sample questions you may want to ask in addition to any specific questions you have about the job description:

1. How would you describe the work environment?
2. What are the characteristics of a successful person in your organization?
3. How would you describe the organization's personality and management style?
4. What are your expectations for new hires?
5. What are the typical first year assignments?
6. What is the overall structure of the department where the position is located?
7. What are the company's strengths and weaknesses?
8. What do you like most about the organization for which you work? What do you like least?
9. Would you describe your training program for me? ...OR... What type of training will I receive? (If you are applying for a management trainee position, you should have covered this in your research and need not ask unless you want more detailed information.)
10. How would you describe the differences between your organization and others similar to it?
11. What are your organization's promotion policies?
12. How is an employee evaluated and promoted?
13. If I were to accept this position, what would be my opportunity for advancement or personal growth?
14. What is the retention rate of people in the position for which I am interviewing?
15. What are your policies or expectations regarding continuing education for your employees?
16. What are the challenging facets of the job?
17. What are the toughest problems/decisions that the person in this position will have to deal with?
18. What are the organization's plans for future growth?
19. What industry trends will affect this company?
20. What are the next steps in the hiring process?

INTERVIEW FOLLOW UP

Immediately following an interview you should send a thank you letter or e-mail to each person who interviewed you (within 24 hours is best). Thank you letters are considered a professional courtesy; use them to show your appreciation as well as make additional positive impressions on the interviewers. Letters may be sent via e-mail or by U.S. mail. Be aware that employers can receive many emails a day so a neatly handwritten note can demonstrate extra effort and help you to stand out.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- ☐ The opening remark should show your appreciation for being interviewed. Include the position for which you interviewed and the date of the interview.
- ☐ Mention something specific that person brought up in the interview; making individualized connections shows that you were paying attention and are interested in what that person says.
- ☐ Restate your interest in the position and confidence in your ability to do the job. Mention specific skills or experiences that are a good fit.
- ☐ Include any information that was requested at the interview and offer to provide additional information if needed.

SAMPLE FOLLOW UP LETTER

45 Franklin St.
Watkins Glen, NY 14891

May 26, 2015

Ms. Jane Doe
Director of Personnel
XYZ Company
123 Seneca St.
Ithaca, NY 14850



Dear Ms. Doe:

Thank you for taking the time to interview me yesterday for the Project Coordinator position. Our conversations confirmed to me that this job is exactly the type of quality experience in which I am interested.

I was especially impressed to learn that the Project Coordinator plays a significant role in working with outside constituents. As I mentioned in our interview, I have extensive experience in communicating with various departments and community members. My interpersonal skills would be of benefit to you in creating and developing relationships with clients outside of the organization.

I would like to express my sincere interest in working for XYZ Company. If there is any further information you would find helpful in making a decision regarding my employment, please feel free to contact me at (607) 123-4567. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Your Signature Here

Suzie Sample

VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

A growing number of employers are using virtual platforms like Skype to interview candidates, especially for distance and screening interviews. Here are some tips and tricks:

- Create a free account with an appropriate username and a professional photo (picture is optional).
- Make sure you have a working video camera and microphone, and test your internet connection before your scheduled interview.
- Turn off any screen savers, applications with pop-ups, or sound alerts before your interview.
- Make sure that your background is simple/uncluttered, there are no distracting items (posters, etc.), and the space around you is clean.
- Have sufficient lighting but try to avoid any glare.
- Place your camera at eye level so you are looking

into the lens instead of at your computer screen.

- Turn your cell phone OFF and eliminate any other daily noises that could be disruptive.
- Interview attire rules apply. Also, dress in business professional attire **from head to toe!**
- Avoid sitting too close to the camera and minimize movements and fidgeting.
- Practice with a friend and make sure you are speaking at the right volume and speed.
- If you lose video connection be aware of your language (they may still be able to hear you) and try reconnecting with them after a few seconds.
- Basic interviewing rules still apply- research, practice answering common questions, use examples, smile, have questions prepared to ask at the end, and send a follow up thank you note.

Salary Negotiation

Salary negotiation is the process in which you tactfully and professionally discuss your pay during the final stages of the application/hiring process. It can be a tricky process to navigate, so read these tips before approaching an employer with particular salary or benefit requests:

AVOID SALARY TALK UNTIL YOU'VE BEEN OFFERED THE POSITION.

You have more bargaining power if you are the final candidate. If salary comes up earlier in the interviewing process, try to avoid giving specific numbers. For example, you could say something like, "I'm open to conversations about salary, but in general I was hoping for a competitive salary based on the experience I will be bringing to the position, as well as on the job title and average salaries for this area."

RESEARCH!

Before you do anything else, research average salaries for particular job titles and geographic locations. A couple salary research sites include www.salary.com and www.payscale.com.

USE YOUR EXPERIENCE.

The more experience you have, the more bargaining power you have. During salary negotiations, be ready to emphasize your related employment, internship, volunteer, and extracurricular experiences. Also consider transferable skills that you've gained in unrelated experience (ex. leadership, interpersonal, budgeting, or technology skills).

BE REALISTIC.

Approach negotiations with a realistic salary expectation, not your ultimate salary goal. Also, if you are an entry level candidate, you cannot expect to start out with the same salary as someone who has been in the field for 10+ years.

LEAVE PERSONAL REASONS OUT.

When determining suitable salaries, employers do not take into consideration that you have student loans to pay off, a car payment, five kids to feed, a mortgage... you get the picture. Stick to professional, positive reasons why you are worth the negotiated salary.

PREPARE YOUR PITCH.

It is vital to be prepared for a salary negotiation conversation. You've got to sell yourself, be realistic, and show that you've done your research. For example, you might be prepared with something like, "I've researched average salaries for entry level marketing assistants in this region and discovered that they fall between \$36,000 and \$39,000. Based on my employment and internship experiences that we've discussed, in addition to my motivation and creativity, I was hoping for a salary in that range."

BE PREPARED WITH A MINIMUM EXPECTED SALARY.

Go into salary negotiations with a minimum acceptable salary. And while this is a wise strategy to begin with, consider being flexible with the offered salary if additional benefits make the overall package worth it (see below). The alternative is being prepared to walk away from a job offer.

CONSIDER ALL BENEFITS.

A benefits package not only includes your salary, but your time off, medical insurance, retirement options, and work/life balance (employer flexibility). Salary negotiation can involve some of these other kinds of benefits such as relocation assistance, vacation days, bonuses, and performance raises. Also consider potential professional development opportunities, trainings, education assistance, etc.

BE PREPARED TO HEAR "NO."

It's possible that your request for increased salary or other benefits gets rejected. Many companies have strict salary policies or salary caps, so there truly might not be any flexibility with your salary.

GET IT IN WRITING.

After you've been offered a position, especially if you were able to negotiate a higher salary, ask the employer for an acceptance letter.

TAKE THE CHANCE!

You'll never know if you don't ask! Many people are excited to have a job offer and eager to accept, but you should take the time to ask if there is any room for negotiation regarding the salary.

Graduate School Decisions

SHOULD I GO TO GRADUATE SCHOOL?

Should I go to graduate school right away or get more experience and then apply? How do I decide which school is best for me?

These are probably two of the most frequently asked questions people present to us. The answer is a personal one for each of you. Graduate education can increase earning potential as well as provide the specialized training required to enter numerous professional areas, but it is not for everyone. Before deciding on a graduate program, self-assessment is essential. Clear goals and objectives are imperative. Consider these factors when deciding whether or when to attend graduate school:

GOALS: What are your personal and professional goals? Is grad school necessary to help you achieve those goals?

EXPERIENCE: Do you have any "hands-on" experience? Have you completed an internship or worked in your chosen field? Related work is recommended prior to graduate school to enable you to gain experience and understanding of your field.

EMPLOYABILITY: What is the probability of finding employment in the field with and without an advanced degree? Have you talked with people in your field to explore what you might be doing after graduate school? Is the additional schooling essential to your entry into the field?

OPPORTUNITY: Do you truly understand what you will gain by pursuing an advanced degree? Have you compared your expectations of what graduate school will do for you with what it has done for alumni of the graduate program?

HOMEWORK: Are you excited by the idea of studying the particular field you have in mind? Do you like intensive study?

MOTIVATION: Are you simply looking for a way to put off career decisions, the job search and adult responsibilities? Are you dedicated to continuing your education?



PREPARATION: You generally need a solid grade point average (B or 3.00) or a series of prerequisite classes before entering graduate school. Are you prepared? What graduate entrance exams are needed? Are your scores competitive?

COST: Calculate the academic and personal expenses of another degree. Can you afford this? Have you identified ways to finance such a decision? Also, consider the cost of deferred income for this period. How much potential income will you lose now and in the future by delaying your entry to the workforce?

Adapted from The Bagley Center, Plymouth State College www.plymouth.edu/career/gradindex.html

CHOOSING A SPECIALIZATION AND RESEARCHING PROGRAMS

Will the graduate program have what you are looking for? Does a particular program provide you the professional development opportunities you want? How will a specific program enhance your future career possibilities? Use this list of questions to assist you in that evaluation process.

PROGRAM FEATURES

- How flexible is the program? Are there opportunities to take elective courses?
- Can you minor in an area of key importance to you?
- Does the program offer opportunities for practical experience?
- What is the emphasis of the program? Is it on practice or research?

PROGRAM FEATURES - CONTINUED

- Is the program in a geographic area you like (urban/ rural/ size/ etc.)?
- What is the average time to complete the (1) class work, (2) research, and (3) dissertation?

FACULTY

- What is the student-faculty ratio?
- What is the background/reputation of the faculty who teach in the program?
- Are there faculty members with research areas similar to your interests?
- How accessible and available are the faculty to students?
- How are advisors assigned?
- What is the faculty turnover rate?

FINANCIAL AID

- What are the criteria and process for selecting Teaching Assistants (TAs), Graduate Assistants (GAs), Graduate Resident Assistants or Graduate Residence Directors, Research Assistants (REs), and Fellows?
- How reliable is your financial support from year to year?
- Are there scholarships available?
- Are there any work study positions available for grad students?
- Is this process coordinated by the program or the graduate admissions office?

STUDENTS

- Will you have a good sized cohort?
- Is the student body diverse geographically, socially, economically?
- What is the ratio of full-time and part-time students in the program?
- Is the retention rate good? Do most students who begin the program finish completely?
- Are there organizations for students and opportunities to socialize outside of class?
- May I meet some currently enrolled students (either in person or via e-mail)?

FACILITIES

- How comprehensive are the labs and other learning facilities?
- How current, diverse, and expansive are library holdings in your program and research area?
- Are there specialized research facilities available for graduate student use?

PLACEMENT

- What types of positions do graduates of the program secure after graduation?
- Where are these positions typically geographically?
- What is the placement rate for new graduates within the first year after graduation?
- How helpful is the program in helping you to secure employment? What services are available?

Adapted from Career Services and Leadership Education Office, St. Lawrence University, 2003.

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR RESEARCHING GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND ADMISSIONS PROCESSES (more at www.ithaca.edu/career-services)

GENERAL RESEARCH

All About Grad School

[www.allaboutgradschool.com] - Provides a comprehensive geographic directory of graduate schools in the United States along with test preparation information & recommended books.

College Source Online [www.collegesource.org] - This website will give you access to complete graduate catalogs for institutions across the country. Very useful to search for programs by topic.

Eurograduate [www.eurograduate.com] - This is a site for identifying graduate program opportunities across Europe.

GradSchools [www.gradschools.com] - The most comprehensive online source of graduate school information.

Grad Profiles [www.gradprofiles.com] - Features in-depth graduate and professional school profiles with information about programs of study, degree requirements, facilities, expenses, financial aid, faculty research and much more.

Petersons Guide [www.petersons.com] - Just like

their *Guide to Four Year Colleges*, this site will let you search for graduate programs in nearly every discipline imaginable. Hard copy companions can be found in the Career Resource Center.

US News & World Reports [www.usnews.com/edu/grad/rankings/rankindex_brief.php] - Provides career outlook information, admission tips, and graduate test information; also provides information on graduate programs in business, law, medicine, engineering, education, health, library science, Ph.D.'s, the arts, and public affairs. Contact Career Services for special login information to gain access to ranking reports.

LAW SCHOOL RESOURCES

Law School Admissions Council [www.lsac.org] - You must register with this site if you'll be applying to law school (there are fees involved). In addition to uploading application materials and letters of recommendation, you'll find valuable information about the LSAT, selecting a school, the law school admissions process, and much more.

LawSchool.com [www.lawschool.com] - A site jam packed with news and events in law school today. Definitely check this site out to see what's happening at the schools to which you are thinking about applying. You will also find law school rankings on this site.

Boston College Online Law School Locator [www.bc.edu/offices/careers/gradschool/law/lawlocator.html] - The Locator can help you identify schools where your scores and grades are most competitive for admission and help you gauge your chances of admission at a particular school.

Princeton Review Law School Information [www.princetonreview.com/law] - Get the latest information on selecting and applying to law school, the LSATs, financial aid, making a successful transition to law school and other related resources.

BUSINESS SCHOOL RESOURCES

MBA.com [www.mba.com] - The site to visit if you are considering business school; valuable information on the GMAT exam, selecting MBA programs, and financing your graduate studies. From the Graduate Management Admissions Council.

Princeton Review Business School Information [www.princetonreview.com/business] - Get the latest information on selecting and applying to business

school, the GMATs, financial aid, making a successful transition to law school and other related resources.

MEDICAL SCHOOL RESOURCES

Association of American Medical Colleges [www.aamc.org] - The site to visit if you are considering medical school; valuable information on the MCAT, applying to and financing med school, application timelines, and more. You must register with American Medical College Application Service (AAMCAS) in order to apply to medical schools.

Princeton Review Medical School Information [www.princetonreview.com/medical] - Get the latest information on selecting and applying to medical school, the MCATs, financial aid, making a successful transition to medical school and other related resources.

GRAD SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION FORMS AND INFORMATION

- Many applications are now available online or through a simple email request.
- Confirm application deadlines; pay particular attention to rolling or modified-rolling admissions.
- Follow instructions carefully and accurately while completing all requested information.
- Tailor your communications to the specific aspects of the graduate program.
- Complete forms online, or if it must be handwritten, use a pen, keeping in mind that a neat and attractive appearance is important.
- Include **all** requested documents and materials: resume, fees, personal statement, writing sample, etc.

SPECIAL NOTE: Certain graduate programs require registration through a centralized application website (ex. LSAC.org and AMCAS.org). Talk with faculty and research your area of interest to see if you will be required to register with such a service.

APPLICATION FORMS AND INFORMATION CONT.

- Always make copies for your records before sending.
- Contact the graduate admissions office to confirm that all of your application materials have been received.

MEETING APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Requirements vary from one field to another and from one institution to another. Read each program's requirements carefully; the importance of this cannot be overemphasized!

TRANSCRIPTS

In regard to academics, grade point averages are important but are not examined in isolation; the rigor of the courses you have taken, your course load, and the reputation of the undergraduate institution you have attended are also considered. To obtain an official copy of your transcript, contact the Registrar's Office at (607) 274-3127 or visit www.ithaca.edu/registrar. Allow the Registrar's Office several working days to process your transcripts for graduate school referral. If you are a transfer student, be sure to check with each graduate program to determine if you must also obtain transcripts directly from your previous institution(s) of study.

RESUMES

A resume is an important summary of the experiences and education that have prepared you for graduate school. It is also a statement of your professional interests and commitments to date. Be sure to include this with your application materials. If you need assistance developing your resume, be sure to visit Career Services. Also see pages 7-19 for resources on resume and CV writing.

GRADUATE ENTRANCE EXAMS

GRADUATE RECORD EXAM (GRE) is the most common entrance exam and provides admissions committees with a common evaluation criteria for all applicants. As a computer-adaptive test, the GRE is offered at designated test centers across the country.

The closest testing centers to Ithaca are located in Syracuse, Binghamton, Rochester, and Buffalo, NY.

Each test includes the following: (1) Verbal Reasoning sections – two 30 minute sections; includes

text completion, sentence equivalence, and reading comprehension; (2) Quantitative sections – two 35 minute sections; includes basic math skills and concepts such as algebra and geometry, word problems, and numeric entry questions; (3) Analytical Writing section – one 45 minute “present your perspective” essay and one 30 minute “analyze and argument” essay.

Some graduate programs may also request that you complete a Subject Test of the GRE. Topics may include: Biochemistry, Cell Biology, Molecular Biology and Genetics, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Literature in English, Mathematics, Physics, Psychology. Subject tests are given on designated Saturdays at colleges across the country.

If you are hoping to enroll in graduate school the fall after you graduate, you should take the GRE before the end of November of your senior year.

To register: Visit www.ets.org/gre/ or call 1-800-GRE-CALL to schedule a test date; be sure to take the test well in advance of any application deadlines. August is not too early to schedule a November test!

GRADUATE MANAGEMENT ADMISSIONS TEST (GMAT) is the entrance exam required by most business schools across the country. Also a computer adaptive test, the GMAT is offered at test centers across the country.

To register: Students should visit www.mba.com/mba/thegmat or call 1-800-GMAT-NOW to schedule a test date; be sure to take the test well in advance of any application deadlines.

The three sections of the GMAT include:

- (1) Verbal – 75 minutes; includes reading comprehension, sentence correction and critical reasoning;
- (2) Quantitative – 75 minutes; includes data sufficiency and problem solving;
- (3) Analytical Writing – 60 minutes; “Analysis of an Argument” essay – 30 minutes and “Analysis of an Issue” essay – 30 minutes.

LAW SCHOOL ADMISSIONS TEST (LSAT) is the entrance exam required by every law school across the country. Candidates are evaluated in four areas: Logic Games, Logical Reasoning, Reading Comprehension, and an Analytical Writing Sample. The exam is scored on a scale of 120 – 180. The

multiple-choice sections may be given in any order, but the writing sample is always administered last. While applicants may take the exam in June, October, December or February of each year, it is recommended that you take the LSAT by December of your senior year.

To register: Register online at www.lsac.org.

MEDICAL COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TEST (MCAT) is required by nearly all US medical schools. This computer-based exam is offered multiple times a year and it is recommended that you take the exam in April of your junior year if you plan to attend medical school immediately following your Ithaca graduation. Applicants will be tested in four areas: (1) Physical Sciences – 100 minutes; (2) Verbal Reasoning – 85 minutes; (3) Writing Sample – 30 minutes; (4) Biological Sciences – 100 minutes. Scores for each section range from 1 – 15 with the exception of the Writing Sample which is given a letter score.

To register: Register online at www.aamc.org.

In addition to fee-based test prep classes, books, etc. there are some free online resources:

- *MajorTests.com*
- *Test-Guide.com*
- *Petersons.com*
- *Kaptest.com*
- *PrincetonReview.com*

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Choosing people to write recommendations can be difficult, and most graduate schools require two or three letters. To begin the process of choosing references, identify likely candidates from among those you know through your classes, extracurricular activities, jobs, internships and research experiences. Once identified, ask them if they can serve as a positive and/or strong reference.

A good reference will meet several of the following criteria: he/she has a high opinion of you, knows institutions to which you are applying as well as the

kind of study you are pursuing, has taught or worked with a large number of students and can make a favorable comparison of you with peers, is known by the admissions committee and is regarded as someone whose judgment should be given weight, and has strong written communication skills.

A note about confidential vs. non-confidential letters: Whether a letter is confidential or not is a decision made by **you**, the student. Confidential means you have waived your right to review what is written in that letter. Even if a prospective reference has a preference for the kind of letter s/he will write, this is ultimately your decision. Note: Many schools require the confidential format as these letters tend to carry more “weight.”

Career Services offers a Credential File service for housing letters of recommendation. See pg. 50 for more information.

GIVE THE WRITER:

- ✓ A statement of your career goals, why you are interested in them, and how this graduate program will help you attain these goals.
- ✓ A list of activities that have supported this career/program choice (e.g. summer experience, research experience).
- ✓ Academic credentials-approximate grade point average, GRE scores, relevant course work and grades.
- ✓ Refresh the writer's memory about your experience with him/her (courses, etc.).
- ✓ Mention any facts that may support your case (you had mono when you got a "D" in Organic).
- ✓ A copy of your personal statement for graduate study.
- ✓ Extracurricular activities not directly relevant to your application.
- ✓ An envelope stamped and addressed for each program if appropriate. If a recommendation form is provided, enclose it in the envelope.
- ✓ A list of all programs to which she/he is to write, AND THE DEADLINES FOR EACH. Plan ahead and ask for your recommendations well before the deadlines. In addition, you may need to follow up to ensure that your recommendation letters have been sent.
- ✓ A copy of your transcript.

APPLICATION ESSAYS/PERSONAL STATEMENTS

An essay for an application, often referred to as a personal statement or statement of purpose, should essentially contain your interests and goals in relation to that particular program. Some institutions will pose specific questions, while others may instruct you to simply submit a personal statement. Usually it includes a certain amount of personal history, but, unless an institution specifically requests autobiographical information, you do not have to supply any. Your aim should be a clear, succinct statement showing that you have a definite sense of what you want to do and enthusiasm for the field of study you have chosen. The Career Services staff can assist you by critiquing your essay. Additionally, you should consider having your essays critiqued at the Ithaca College Writing Center (Smiddy 107).

Don't underestimate the time needed to prepare an effective statement! Before writing anything, stop and consider what your reader might be looking for; the general directions or other parts of the application may give you an indication of this. Admissions committees may be trying to evaluate a number of things from your statement, including the following:

- Motivation and commitment to a field of study
- Expectations with regard to the program and career opportunities
- Writing ability
- Major areas of interest
- Research and/or work experience
- Educational background
- Immediate and long term goals
- Reasons for deciding to pursue graduate education in a particular field and at a particular institution
- Maturity
- Personal uniqueness-what you would add to the diversity of the entering class

If you are not given specific questions to answer, there are two main approaches to organizing an essay. You can outline the points you want to cover and then expand on them, or you can put your ideas down on paper as they come to you, going over them, eliminating certain sentences, and moving others

around until you achieve a logical sequence. Use the approach you feel most comfortable with. Either way, you want your essay to be clear, specific, and detailed, yet concise.

Think of your responses in terms of how your background, skills, abilities, goals, etc. match the characteristics and opportunities of the graduate program. Additionally, recognize that this statement is an opportunity to demonstrate your written communication skills, motivation, energy level, creativity, commitment, and depth of response to the application questions. Most important, take the time to have others review your statement. The Career Services staff and Ithaca College faculty are more than willing to assist in this critical review process.

PERSONAL STATEMENT RESOURCES

All About the Graduate Admissions Essay [<http://gradschool.about.com/msubessay.htm>]: An excellent and comprehensive list of web sites related to developing an effective essay for graduate admissions in a variety of fields.

Admissions Essays [www.admissionsessays.com/]: The premier personal statement development service on the Web. It provides all the necessary guidance to help clients produce memorable, striking, and effective personal statements and admissions essays to help them get into the schools of their choice. View sample essays from various academic disciplines.

University of Wisconsin – Madison: Tips on Writing Application Essays [www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/apessay.html]: Let these tips help you get started writing this all important aspect of your graduate school application.

FINANCING YOUR GRADUATE EDUCATION

Most graduate students find it is necessary to draw upon several sources of financial assistance during their studies. There are three basic types: grants and fellowships, work programs, and loans. Funding sources to explore are: the federal government, state governments, educational institutions, foundations, corporations, etc. Unlike financial assistance awarded to undergraduate students, graduate students face a more selective and competitive scholarship process. The more common awards include the following:

1. **Fellowships, Grants and Scholarships:** This is the most desirable type of financial assistance and

therefore, the most competitive. Fellowships may be supported by the federal government, special interest groups, or within a given school. Check the graduate catalog for a complete listing of these programs. There are also a number of directories that can assist you with this search process, such as www.finaid.org/otheraid/grad.phtml.

2. **Research Assistantship:** Typically these are coordinated directly by the graduate program and are extremely competitive; there is often a separate application process. In exchange for your work on someone's research project, you may be awarded tuition assistance or a living stipend. There is also potential that this work may count toward or help complete your thesis.
3. **Teaching Assistantship:** Also coordinated by the graduate program, this assistantship requires that you must teach something, usually a laboratory or first-year level course, in exchange for tuition assistance, living stipend or other award. Work expectations vary among departments, but 15 hours per week is usually required.
4. **Administrative/Professional Assistantships:** Similar to research and teaching assistantships, you work for the college in exchange for room, board, tuition assistance, and/or a stipend. There is typically a separate application process for these types of assistantships.
5. **Resident Assistantship:** If you have experience as a Resident Assistant, then this may be a viable strategy for you. Institutions may hire you as a resident assistant or residence director and in exchange for your service to the department, you are typically compensated with room, board, a stipend, and/or tuition assistance.
6. **Odd jobs around the department:** Sometimes you can get hourly work, but this, of course, does not include tuition assistance as do more traditional assistantships.
7. **Work Study:** Just as undergraduate students can be awarded funding for an on-campus job, this program is also sometimes available to graduate students.
8. **Loans:** Borrowing money for further study is always an important decision. Make sure you have checked with your undergraduate financial aid office to determine what your borrowing eligibility may be.

If money is not available when you first enroll, it may

be available later. Also, don't enroll in a program that you are not interested in simply because it gives you more money than a program that will more closely align with your personal and professional goals.

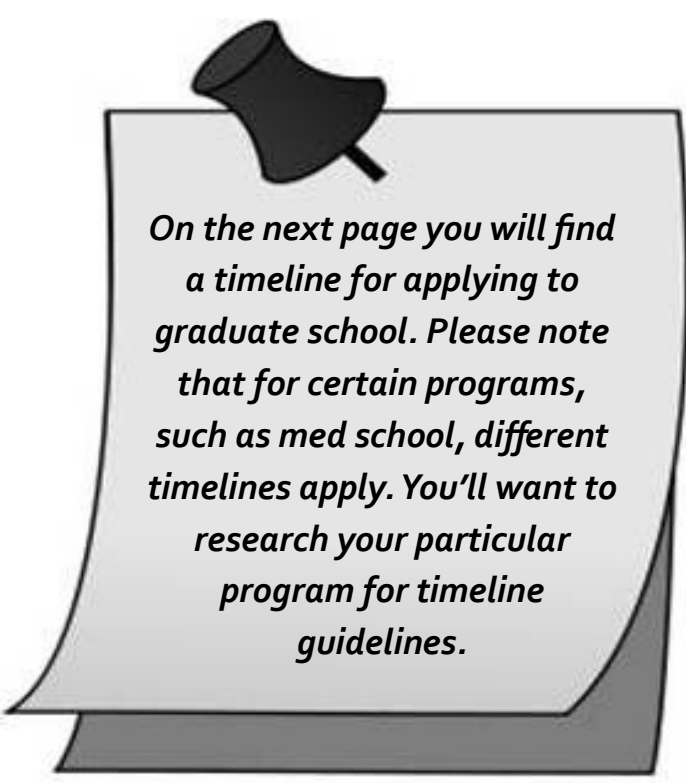
Adapted from Peterson's Guide to Graduate and Professional Programs

FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES

FastWeb [www.fastweb.com] - FastWeb lets students create a personalized profile that can be matched against expansive databases of colleges and scholarships. As the oldest and most popular free online scholarship matching service, this database has over 600,000 scholarships totaling more than \$1 billion. FastWeb also notifies students when new scholarships are added and application deadlines are approaching.

FinAid: The Smart Guide to Financial Aid [www.finaid.org] - This award-winning site has grown into the most comprehensive annotated collection of information about student financial aid on the web.

Student Loan [www.estudentloan.com] - eStudentLoan provides a comparison marketplace where students can match their specific needs with lender programs.



On the next page you will find a timeline for applying to graduate school. Please note that for certain programs, such as med school, different timelines apply. You'll want to research your particular program for timeline guidelines.

GENERAL TIMELINE FOR APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

Junior Year, Fall and Spring:

- ☐ Try to define your career goals and determine if grad school is required or beneficial in helping to meet those goals.
- ☐ Research interest areas, institutions, and degree programs.
- ☐ Get to know your professors and advisor. They are a great source of career-related information. You may need to ask them for a letter of recommendation later.
- ☐ Register and prepare for appropriate graduate admission test. You may choose to take your exam during the spring of your junior year through the fall of your senior year. Note that some exams are only offered certain times each year.
- ☐ Investigate scholarships, assistantships, fellowships, and grants.
- ☐ Speak with alumni, faculty, parents, and friends about their graduate experiences.

Summer before Senior Year:

- ☐ Request applications and financial aid materials.
- ☐ Visit institutions of interest if possible.
- ☐ Narrow your list of schools.
- ☐ Check application deadlines and rolling admission policies.
- ☐ Study sample test questions for the appropriate entrance exam, enroll in a test prep course if needed.
- ☐ Register for a summer or fall graduate admission test.
- ☐ Begin writing your application essay (personal statement).
- ☐ For medical, dental, osteopathy, podiatry, or law school, you may need to register for the national application, or data assembly service most programs use.

Senior Year, Fall:

- ☐ Obtain letters of recommendation.
- ☐ Take graduate admission test (*if you have not already done so*).
- ☐ Send in completed application(s).
- ☐ Have transcripts and letters of recommendation mailed.
- ☐ Confirm that graduate programs have received all application materials.
- ☐ Apply for assistantships, fellowships, grants, etc.
- ☐ Register for Graduate and Professional School Financial Aid Service (GPSFAS) if required.
- ☐ Consider visiting select institutions during winter break.

Senior Year, Spring:

- ☐ Check with all institutions before the deadline to make sure your file is complete.
- ☐ Keep track of acceptances, waiting list placements, and rejections.
- ☐ Visit institutions that accept you (if you haven't already).
- ☐ Evaluate all offers of admission and financial aid before making final decision.
- ☐ Send deposit to institution of your choice.
- ☐ Notify other institutions that accepted you of your decision so that they may admit students on their waiting list.
- ☐ Send thank-you notes to people who wrote your recommendation letters, informing them of your success.
- ☐ Upon graduation, forward an updated transcript to the institution you will attend in the fall.

GRADUATE SCHOOL APPLICATION RECORD

	PROGRAM 1:	PROGRAM 2:	PROGRAM 3:	PROGRAM 4:
CONTACT PERSON, PHONE, & E-MAIL				
APPLICATION DEADLINE				
APPLICATION FEES				
FINANCIAL AID, SCHOLARSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, GA, ETC. AVAILABLE				
PERSONAL STATEMENT (LENGTH & GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS)				
RESUME REQUIRED				
RECOMMENDATION 1: _____				
RECOMMENDATION 2: _____				
RECOMMENDATION 3: _____				
DATE TRANSCRIPTS REQUESTED				
DATE APPLICATION MATERIALS SUBMITTED/ MAILED				
TRANSCRIPTS RECEIVED BY SCHOOL				
TEST SCORES RECEIVED BY SCHOOL				
OTHER/NOTES				