



# LAUNCH YOUR CAREER





# Contents



Welcome .....	2
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## 01 Getting Started

Overview of SDSU Career Services.....	4
Launching Your College Career Planning .....	6

## 02 Preparing for Career Exploration

How to be Career-Ready .....	8
Career Readiness Self-Ranking .....	10
Four-Year Career Plan .....	12
What is an Internship? .....	14
Job and Internship Search Strategies .....	16
Transferable Skills .....	18

## 03 Success with Employers

Resume Preparation .....	20
Resume Writing .....	24
Creating a CV .....	30
Cover Letters .....	32
References & Business Cards .....	34
What Happens in the Job Interview .....	36
Thank You Letters & Letters of Recommendation.....	42

## 04 Protecting Your Brand

Professional Etiquette.....	44
Social Media & LinkedIn.....	46
Career Fairs .....	50
Building Your Network.....	54

## 05 Tools for Your Interview

Informational Interviews.....	56
Net Worth & Self-Wealth .....	60

## 06 Additional Information

Graduate School.....	64
International Experience .....	70
Job Search for International Students.....	74
Salary Negotiation.....	76
Evaluating A Job Offer .....	80

## 07 Life After SDSU

Aztec Mentor Program .....	82
SDSU Alumni Lifetime Membership.....	84

# WELCOME



Dear SDSU students and alumni,

Our goal at the Division of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity is to support your academic, personal and professional success.

This career guide — full of tips and advice for our current economic climate and job market — is one of our resources that we hope you will find useful in your learning and development. It is one of the many tools and strategies that our Career Services team offers to ensure your career-readiness.

We look forward to seeing where your career path leads.

*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Luke Wood". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long horizontal line extending to the right.

*J. Luke Wood, Ph.D.*

*Vice President of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity*

*Chief Diversity Officer*

*Distinguished Professor of Education*

# SDSU Career Services



Dear SDSU students and alumni,

San Diego State University is committed to empowering you as you enter and excel in a range of workplaces, civic spaces and careers. Our new Career Guide provides you with the information, tools and resources to advance your career-readiness and success.

Our center's team created this resource to support your success at SDSU and beyond. Use this resource as a guide. Work with us on planning for your major, securing internships and mentorships, and engaging with the community. We will also work with you on landing a job and advancing your career.

Consult this guide often, as we will update it to address changes that impact your career planning.

Also, join us on Handshake — our online system for information on internships, jobs and employer connections and your access to workshops and events. We also offer a virtual front desk, through which you can have your questions addressed via a Zoom check-in with our center's staff.

As you plan for Fall 2020, be sure to review our workshop and events brochure. Also consult SDSU Flex to see the many ways to connect to our campus community.

Our team is here to support you and looks forward to working with you!

*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James J. Tarbox". The signature is fluid and cursive.

*James J. Tarbox, Ph.D.*

*Executive Director, Career Development and Services  
SDSU Career Services*



# OVERVIEW OF SDSU CAREER SERVICES

Resources for Your Career Success

## HANDSHAKE

SDSU is partnering with Handshake to bring you a new career network! Engage with thousands of companies hiring across the U.S. Search and apply for opportunities based on your interests and career goals. Claim your account at [career.sdsu.edu](https://career.sdsu.edu) and download the Handshake app today!



## AZTEC MENTOR PROGRAM

The SDSU Aztec Mentor Program (AMP) matches eligible juniors, seniors, and graduate students from all majors with alumni and professional mentors in San Diego and globally. AMP empowers students to gain valuable career guidance in areas such as networking, interviewing and resume development. Career Services and SDSU Alumni started AMP in 2013, and over 11,000 matches have been made. AMP helps students move their career forward with a mentor.



## CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT TOOLS

We offer career assessments that you can use in every stage of your professional development - from choosing a major to assessing occupations and graduate programs. Make an appointment to meet with a career counselor to obtain a referral, as well as complete post-assessment interpretation and planning.

## INTERNSHIPS

Internships provide students with the opportunity to bridge classroom learning and career development. Our center provides the resources, connections and guidance to assist students. Each semester, we offer Internship 101, 201, and 301 workshops to address the needs of students as they advance through internships. We also offer current information regarding for-credit internships and work closely with faculty to identify and grow internship sites. SDSU students excel in internship participation. Since 2013, over 21,000 internship placements have been reported.

## ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWING

Each semester, Career Services hosts employers, representing a range of industries, who conduct interviews on campus with students and alumni. In 2017-2018, Career Services hosted over 1,953 on-campus interviews.

## VETERANS

Career Services has an active partnership with the Joan and Art Barron Veterans Center. The two areas collaborate to provide support for students and alumni who are veterans. These initiatives include Veteran Student Assistants who provide support for career development.



## CAREER COUNSELING AND WORKSHOPS

Our career counselors are experts on supporting the career development needs of college students and graduates. Schedule an appointment to assist you with your career planning, job search, resume review, major selection, and career assessment referral. Walk-in sessions are available for quick questions. We also offer workshops on various career-related topics. Visit our website for current walk-in hours and workshop offerings.



## CONTACT CAREER SERVICES

5500 Campanile Drive  
San Diego, CA 92182-8255  
Student Services East (SSE) 1200

### Office Hours:

Monday - Friday  
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### Contact:

Telephone: 619-594-6851  
Email: [careerservices@sdsu.edu](mailto:careerservices@sdsu.edu)

### Virtual Front Desk via Zoom:

- » Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
(Schedule through your Handshake account)

### Appointments\*:

- » 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
(at least 24 hours in advance)
- » Call or come in to schedule\*

### Drop-ins\*:

- » 15 minutes; no appointment needed\*
- » Monday - Thursday: 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
- » Friday: 10 a.m. - Noon

*\*NOTE: please check the Virtual Front Desk for up-to-date information during SDSU Flex learning.*



# LAUNCHING YOUR COLLEGE CAREER PLANNING

Maximize the Benefits of Career Readiness

## GETTING STARTED

Students can experience confusion when it comes to making a career decision. The following are common questions that students ask our career counselors. What type of career is appropriate for me? What major should I select? What can I do with my major? How can I make the right decision? How can I get an internship?

Career planning is an important process that can help answer these questions or even uncover your dream career. The key is to start early and utilize all the resources that Career Services has available. To start early really makes a difference because you have at least four years to know more about yourself, prepare and follow a well-defined career path. We encourage you to follow the suggested timeline to maximize the benefits of career planning.



## PREPARING FOR A SUCCESSFUL JOB SEARCH

### Know Yourself and Explore Options

1	2	3	4
SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE	WORK VALUES	LIFESTYLE & LOCATION	YOUR IDEAL EMPLOYER
<p>Know what talents you want to use at work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Will you be using <b>technical skills or special knowledge</b> gained from a particular major?</li> <li>» Are these <b>skills broad and transferable</b>, such as communications, or planning and coordinating?</li> </ul>	<p>Stick with what is important to you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>What attracts you to a particular job:</b> security, prestige, contributing to society, helping others, making a high salary and career advancement?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Research where you want to live.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Are you willing to relocate?</li> <li>» What activities will you do outside of work?</li> <li>» What about the cost of living and family considerations?</li> </ul>	<p>Know <b>which industry is right for you.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Do you want to work in a <b>nonprofit, profit, or government</b> setting?</li> <li>» What <b>size</b> of organization?</li> <li>» What personality type would your ideal supervisor have?</li> <li>» What would the work environment be like?</li> </ul>
5	6	7	
FINDING THE BEST FIT	STRENGTHS	JOB SEARCH TOOLS	
<p>Identify <b>which fields and positions</b> fit your interest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Getting focused on a <b>type of field and position</b> is essential for a successful job search.</li> <li>» <b>Target your specific skills and experience</b> relevant to a job.</li> <li>» Having a “Plan A” for your desirable career goal is great, but also have a “Plan B” in case “Plan A” does not manifest in a reasonable length of time.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recognize your strengths and weaknesses</b> for a position.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Plan to <b>articulate your strengths and downplay shortcomings</b> in your resume, job search correspondence and contacts to employers.</li> </ul>	<p>Carefully <b>craft your skills</b> for success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» You’ll need a <b>resume and job search correspondence</b> that’s specific to your chosen field.</li> <li>» It’s important to <b>practice interview skills</b>, such that employers see you as a polished interviewee.</li> </ul>	

# PREPARING FOR CAREER EXPLORATION

## HOW TO BE CAREER-READY

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) defines career readiness as, “the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace.”



### PROBLEM SOLVING

- » Exercises sound reasoning
- » Utilizes and interprets, knowledge, facts and data
- » Demonstrates decision-making capability



### PROFESSIONALISM/ WORK ETHIC

- » Demonstrates strong work habits and personal accountability
- » Demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior
- » Able to learn from mistakes



### ORAL/WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

- » Clearly articulates thoughts and ideas
- » Able to express ideas to others
- » Writes effectively and clearly



### DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

- » Leverages existing digital technologies
- » Adapts new and emerging technologies



## Applying NACE's 8 Career-Ready Competencies



### LEADERSHIP

- » Leverages the strength of others to achieve common goals
- » Uses interpersonal skills to coach and develop others
- » Organizes, prioritizes and delegates work



### TEAMWORK / COLLABORATION

- » Builds collaborative relationships with colleagues and clients
- » Able to work within team structure
- » Can negotiate and manage conflict



### INTERCULTURAL FLUENCY

- » Values, respects and learns from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations and religions
- » Demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understands individual differences



### CAREER MANAGEMENT

- » Articulates personal skills, strengths, knowledge and experiences
- » Identifies areas necessary for professional growth
- » Takes the steps necessary to pursue opportunities



Source: Career Readiness Resources; [www.nacweb.org](http://www.nacweb.org)>Career Readiness>Overview & Resources. Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges & Employers

# CAREER READINESS SELF-RANKING

Score Your Preparedness

Rank yourself on a scale of “experienced” (5) to “requires substantial work” (1).  
Use the space to the right to list ways in which you can work toward improvement.

## PROBLEM SOLVING

Rank:

Notes:



## PROFESSIONALISM / WORK ETHIC

Rank:

Notes



## ORAL / WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Rank:

Notes



## DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Rank:

Notes





“Demonstrate strong work habits and personal accountability.”

### LEADERSHIP

Rank:  
Notes



### TEAMWORK / COLLABORATION

Rank:  
Notes



### INTERCULTURAL FLUENCY

Rank:  
Notes



### CAREER MANAGEMENT

Rank:  
Notes



# FOUR-YEAR CAREER PLAN

Begin Planning Your Year

## FRESHMAN

### Self-Assessment

- » Attend **Orientation to Career Services** and learn about how we can help you with career planning.
- » Register with Career Services' **Handshake** at **career.sdsu.edu** to start using our resources.
- » Visit a career counselor. Ask about career assessments that can assist you decide on a career and/or major.
- » Visit Career Services **Virtual Career Resource Library** at **sa.sdsu.edu/career**.
- » Make a **tentative selection of a major** or take a course in a field of interest.
- » Visit the Academic Advising Center to learn about the required courses for General Education and prerequisites for majors.
- » **Start working on your resume** and bring it for review to Career Services.
- » Consider some personal development options through **on-campus clubs and organizations**.

## SOPHOMORE

### Continued Self-Assessment & Exploration

- » Continue **assessment of your interests, skills and values**.
- » Research **careers and prospective employers** at the **Career Services Virtual Career Resource Library** - Resources available on the website (**sa.sdsu.edu/career**) for your immediate review.
- » **Attend employer information sessions** to learn about a particular employer/industry.
- » Make a **tentative career choice or finalize your major selection**.
- » **Pursue internships or volunteer** in areas related to your career interests.
- » **Attend workshops and career fairs** sponsored by Career Services.
- » **Update your resume** and upload it to Handshake at **sa.sdsu.edu/career/handshake**.
- » Explore **part-time, campus and summer job opportunities**.
- » Continue your campus and community involvement to **develop leadership experience**.

“Start working on your resume and bring it for review to Career Services.”

## JUNIOR

### Career Direction Confirmation

- » Gain relevant experience in your field of interest.
- » Attend employer information sessions to learn about a particular employer/industry.
- » Research careers and employers at the Career Services Virtual Career Resource Library - Resources available on the website ([sa.sdsu.edu/career/](https://sa.sdsu.edu/career/)) for your immediate review.
- » If interested in graduate school, start preparing now. Attend our Graduate & Professional School Fair.
- » Keep your resume and profile updated in Handshake.
- » Attend career fairs and job search workshops sponsored by Career Services.
- » Start building your job search network. Tell everyone you know about your career goals.
- » Practice your interviewing skills. Sign up for a mock interview with Career Services.
- » Sign up for on campus job/internship interviews with employers via Handshake at [sa.sdsu.edu/career/handshake](https://sa.sdsu.edu/career/handshake).

## SENIOR

### Job Search

- » Conduct informational interviews with people in your field.
- » Sign up for on campus job/internship interviews with employers via Handshake.
- » Practice your interviewing skills. Sign up for a mock interview with Career Services.
- » Prepare and write targeted cover letters. Career Services has available resources.
- » Attend career fairs and workshops sponsored by Career Services.
- » Keep your resume and profile updated in Handshake.
- » Attend employer information sessions to learn about a particular employer/industry.
- » Obtain employment references from previous employers and professors.
- » Continue to view our job listings but include off-campus job searches.
- » Prepare to evaluate and negotiate potential job offers.

# WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

## From Internship to Dream Job

“A recent study found internships were more important than grades or technical skills in landing jobs ... interns are increasingly well-paid and given challenging assignments as employers try to lure the best students into job commitments before graduation.” (USA Today)

### WHERE TO GET STARTED

It's important to gain clarity around what positions will align with your interests, values or personality. If you're unclear about which positions fit you, we recommend scheduling a career counseling appointment or taking career assessments, such as TypeFocus. More on TypeFocus can be found in your Handshake account.

### WHEN TO APPLY

Learn about when certain industries are hiring for internships or full-time entry-level jobs. (See the “Jobs” tab in [Handshake](#) or contact a career counselor). We recommend that you use the “saved search” feature so you can be alerted about new opportunities. Other helpful sites include: Indeed, [LinkedIn](#) & [Idealist](#).

### HOW TO INCREASE YOUR CHANCES

Establish a strong virtual brand by [creating a LinkedIn account](#), and update other platforms by [removing all unprofessional content](#). In addition, be sure to [network with recruiters and potential employers](#) so that you may receive referrals.

### WHY NETWORKING IS THE FOUNDATION

The phrase “it’s not what you know, but who you know” is most definitely true. More than 80% of career opportunities are filled through networking. We highly recommend that you attend the following Career Services recruiting events: career fairs, career counseling and workshops, and on-campus interviews. In addition, be sure to create a LinkedIn or Handshake account.



## Transitioning from Internship to a Full-time Job

Getting your foot in the door by landing an internship is only half of the challenge to turn your career dreams into a reality. The more vital half is to build a reputation during this career experience that will culminate in receiving a full-time job offer. These suggestions will help you build a respectable reputation.

### TIPS

**Demonstrate a Can-Do Attitude** – Make sure that your attitude is one of your greatest assets. Take on any task assigned — no matter how small — with enthusiasm. Take the initiative to acquire new skills. Accept criticism graciously and maintain a sense of humor.

**Learn the Unwritten Rules** – Get to know your co-workers early in your internship. They will help you figure out quickly the culture in which you will be working. Watch closely how things get done. Ask questions and pay attention to how people interact with each other.

**Take Your Assignments Seriously** – Build a reputation for being dependable. Be diligent and accurate in your work. Seek direction when in doubt and do whatever it takes to get the job done. Learn from your errors and move on to your next task. From there, your responsibilities and the expectations of others are likely to grow.

**Meet Deadlines** – Always assume the responsibility to ask when an assignment is due. This will help you to understand your supervisor's priorities and to manage your time accordingly. Alert your boss in advance if you will be unable to meet expectations. This will show respect and professional maturity.

**Set Realistic Goals and Expectations** – Invest in a learning agenda, which you set up with your supervisor at the beginning of the assignment. This agenda should target specific skills and competencies that you wish to acquire and demonstrate. Maintain a journal of your activities and accomplishments in order to monitor your progress. Seek regular reviews from your supervisor to assess your performance and reinforce the fact that you mean business.

**Communicate Respectfully** – Don't be afraid to present useful ideas that may save time, money or solve problems. Make sure, however, that your style does not come across as cocky. Employers value assertiveness but not aggressiveness. Find out the proper way to address individuals and maintain a pleasant and respectful demeanor with every person, regardless of his or her rank, gender or ethnicity.

**Be Flexible** – Accept a wide variety of tasks, even those that may not relate directly to your assignments or those that may seem like grunt work. Your willingness to go the extra mile, especially during "crunch time," will help you carve the way to assuming greater responsibilities.

**Be a Team Player** – Learn how your assignment fits into the grand scheme of things and keep a keen eye on getting the job done. In today's work environment, success is often defined along the lines of your ability to get along with and interact with others. You're a winner only if your team wins.

**Get a Mentor** – Identify at least one individual to serve as your mentor. This person should be willing to take a personal interest in your career development and success. If you are a junior, senior or graduate student you can easily get connected to a mentor through the Aztec Mentor Program: [amp.sdsu.edu](http://amp.sdsu.edu).

**Have Fun!** – Finally, enjoy learning, sharpening your skills and developing professionally and personally. Participate in work-related social functions and become an active member in your work community. Make your Internship work for you. It can be the first link in the chain of your long career.



Taken prior to 2020.

# JOB AND INTERNSHIP SEARCH STRATEGIES

Use Effective Strategies to Pinpoint Career Opportunities

## BUILD AN ACTION PLAN

Develop **S.M.A.R.T** (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic and Time-bound) goals to track your search progress. For example: "Complete two interview practice sessions with a career counselor before entering your senior year." Below are additional recommendations you can adopt for your action plan:

- » **Create a specific list of companies to contact.**
- » Set S.M.A.R.T. goals to **successfully complete job applications and correspondence** with contacts.
- » Identify self-care activities, such as exercise, additional rest or time with family.
- » Review the effectiveness of strategies and update as needed. Remember, our career counselors are available to support you at any time in your process, whether you are just starting to consider career options or are already deep into an application!

## SUGGESTIONS FOR AN EFFICIENT SEARCH

- » Each job and internship search takes courage, patience and time. Most successful job searches involve resilience and determination, but that still does not mean you won't hear "no."
- » Double-check and make sure all your documents are polished. Complicated formatting or simple grammar errors can exclude you from reaching an interview.
- » Customize each document to speak to the targeted company. Using the same generic resume or curriculum vitae (CV) for every position may result in a missed opportunity. Identify the required experience for each position, and use your resume/CV to pull the best examples of your skills sets when put into action. A customized resume/CV will always be more successful than a generalized resume/CV.
- » More than 80% of jobs are found by way of networking and not simply submitting resumes online. Become proactive in attending networking events, information sessions and industry panels. Strive to meet as many key professionals as possible and inform as many relevant people you know that you're job searching. Reach out to SDSU alumni and use electronic resources like Handshake and LinkedIn to make connections.
- » Refine your interview skills by practicing prior to accepting real interviews. Unfortunately, too many students scramble to prepare after securing an interview slot. Practice with a career counselor or a seasoned professional.

## SMART GOAL PRACTICE

Identify a goal you would like to hold yourself accountable to achieve.

- S.** Specific - I will do...
- M.** Measurable - I will track my progress using...
- A.** Actionable - I expect to see...
- R.** Realistic - The results should be...
- T.** Time-bound - My deadline is...

# TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

## From Classroom to Workplace

### TRUST YOUR EXPERIENCES

If you're wondering what skills you have that would interest a potential employer, you are not alone. Many college seniors feel that four (or more) years of college does not sufficiently prepare them to begin work after graduation. Take a step back, breathe and remember that you've been acquiring skills since childhood. Whether learning the value of teamwork through playing sports, conducting rare experiments in the lab or developing editing skills by working on your school's newspaper, each of your experiences has laid the groundwork for building additional skills.

#### 1. What are Transferable Skills?

A transferable skill is a “portable skill” that can be utilized in different career experiences. Such skills can be acquired through:

- » **Classrooms** (e.g., an English major who is taught technical writing).
- » **Co-Curricular Experiences** (e.g., a student government representative who develops strong organizational leadership skills).

#### 2. How to Identify Transferable Skills?

While very closely related (and with some overlap), transferable skills can be divided into three subsets:

- » **Working with people** (e.g., selling, advising, teaching, supervising and entertaining to name a few).
- » **Working with things** (e.g., operating machinery, constructing, designing, repairing, drafting and surveying).
- » **Working with information and data** (e.g., researching, analyzing, accounting, budgeting, computing).



### 3. Easy Steps to Identify Your Transferable Skills

**Step 1** – Make a list of every job title you’ve held, including volunteer, sports and other affiliations since being in college. Be sure to record officer positions and other leadership roles.

**Step 2** – Using your transcript, list the classes in your major field of study that are related to your employment interests.

**Step 3** – For each job title and class listed, write a sentence that highlights the underlying action taken to be successful. Avoid simply stating that you’ve learned or gained experience. Employers prefer to see what direct actions were applied.

- » **Strong example** – “As a member of Black Students Association, I developed and coordinated the marketing of club events.”
- » **Weak example** – “While working for Adams Engineering, I gained experience in 3D modeling and drafting.”

**Step 4** – Make a list of skills and experiences you’ve identified for future reference during the job search.

### 4. Using Transferable Skills in the Job Search

Finding the right opportunity depends on your ability to showcase your talents and skills for the position and demonstrating how you can apply such skills at an employer’s place of business. Consult our staff at Career Services to help you further identify relevant transferable skills and incorporate them on your resume and during the interviews.

Take a step back, breathe and remember that you’ve been acquiring skills since childhood.

## SUCCESS WITH EMPLOYERS

# RESUME PREPARATION

### Building an Excellent Resume

After you have identified the type(s) of jobs you will seek, preparing a resume and other written materials for your job search is the next step. Get started by attending a resume writing workshop at Career Services. Counselors are available by appointment to review a rough draft of your resume (or cover letter) and to answer questions about your job search.

#### Purpose:

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- » Market your skills and experiences to potential employers, with the goal of securing an interview.
- » Amplify your qualifications for a specific position.
- » Can serve as an “outline” during your interview and help to “guide” the discussion regarding your skill sets.

#### Basic Content:

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- » Name, address, email and telephone number(s), include both your personal and work number (with the area code).
- » State your career objective, by identifying the kind of position you are seeking as specifically as possible.
- » A targeted summary of your education, work experience, qualifications and accomplishments.
- » Any additional information on your activities, interests or background that illustrates your suitability for the job.

## Important Guidelines:

- » **Make It Concise.** Resumes for recent college graduates without a lot of related work experience should be **one page in length**. Longer resumes are acceptable for experienced professionals and are more common in education/research fields, where teaching or published works are included on a resume or curriculum vitae.
- » **Important Material Goes First.** Decide which section (education or experience) is the best “selling point” for your stated career objective and put it first. When describing job duties, activities or listing relevant coursework, put the **most relevant items first**. In **chronological resumes**, **jobs should be listed in reverse chronological order**, listing the most recent first.
- » **Easy-to-Scan Format.** Use a format that makes education, main work experience and important skills visually prominent. Experiment with different layouts and margins until you develop a **balanced, easy-to-scan resume** that is neither too small nor too large. **Use underlining or bold-faced type and capital letters to denote main section headings and job titles**. Your **margins should be equal** on each side and at the top and bottom.
- » **Format for Electronic Scanning Systems.** Many employers use resume scanning systems. When electronic searches are done to compare “job requirements” against “resume qualifications” in the database, **keywords are used to make matches; therefore, your resume should contain words that are very descriptive and specific about your background and skills**. Also, make sure to follow specific formatting guidelines provided by employers.
- » **Verbs and Buzz Words.** **Use action verbs**, such as “managed,” “coordinated” and “developed” to begin short phrases that describe your job duties. **Read job descriptions related to your field and decide which skills, experience or “buzz words” to emphasize**. A sales resume, for example, might emphasize sales and marketing experience, verbal skills, initiative and the ability to convince and persuade.
- » **Maximize and Quantify Relevant Experience.** Experience related to your stated career objective can include both unpaid and paid internships, courses, special seminars, club activities, etc. Think broadly about all of your achievements and describe them in terms relevant to your objective. **Quantify when numbers give scope or add credibility** (e.g., “managed a \$20,000 annual club budget” or “directed a camp crafts program serving 150 teenagers per day”).





Taken prior to 2020.

### Amplify Your Skill Sets:

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- » Research the prospective job thoroughly. Know what type of skills are generally preferred by employers and what specific employee traits are valued in a particular work environment.
- » Thoroughly analyze your own background. Review every job, volunteer work, class, research project, student activity, community work, hobby or interest you've ever pursued. Write down each activity within these experiences, whether or not you think it's related to perform the job for which you're applying. Use a strong verb to describe each item, if possible.
- » Review the list generated and assign each entry to a "skills category," keeping in mind the skills most valued by your potential employer. Some possible skill titles (categories):
  - » Analytical
  - » Communications
  - » Quantitative
  - » Marketing/Sales
  - » Research
  - » Financial
  - » Management
  - » Teaching/Training
  - » Leadership
  - » Technical

## Quick Tips:

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- » Use short phrases beginning with action verbs (see the verb list in this guide).
- » Avoid slang, unnecessary abbreviations and acronyms unfamiliar to employers.
- » Withhold personal information, such as age, marital status, height, weight and health condition.
- » Activities or affiliations that may identify your ethnicity, religion or political views should not be included unless “neutralized.” For example, “directed church camp for teenagers” focuses on the skill without identifying which religion or church.
- » Information such as past salaries, reference names, employers’ addresses and reasons for leaving past jobs should not be included. If the employer requires such details, they will be requested within the application form.
- » Prepare a “targeted” resume. It’s more appealing and effective to employers than vague, general resumes and more likely to get desired results.
- » Proofread your resume repeatedly and have others review it also. It should be a perfect letter. A strong resume can be rejected for small mistakes, such as typographical or spelling errors.

## Printing Your Resume:

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Choose an easy-to-read type style such as Times New Roman or Arial; avoid italicized or unusual fonts. Use bold-faced words sparingly for best results. Your resume paper should be slightly heavier than normal paper. Choose white or a conservative near-white color such as cream, buff or light gray. Avoid pink, green, purple, neons or any dark colors which may not print cleanly.

## Your End Product:

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Your final resume should be a professional, attractive marketing tool that will help you get the job offers you want. Plan to take your time preparing and refining it, using the suggestions given here. This time investment will pay off, literally.

# RESUME WRITING

## Avoid Common Mistakes

Sometimes employers simply overlook resumes, cover letters and job applications due to careless mistakes. Don't fall victim to this trap. Stay organized, professional and get to the point. Below are suggestions for avoiding common errors when developing your resume.

### REASONS AN EMPLOYER MAY DISCARD A RESUME

#### 1. Too Long

Recent graduates should restrict their resumes to one page. For help condensing, make an appointment with a career counselor via Handshake. They will happily assist you.

#### 2. Grammatical or Spelling Errors

Such errors suggest carelessness, poor education or lack of preparation. Make sure to have at least two reliable people proofread your resume before submitting.

#### 3. Too Hard to Read

Use a plain typeface, no smaller than a 12-point font. Strive to make the document easier to read, not more fancy. For further information, contact a career counselor via Handshake.

#### 4. Be Mindful of Verbiage

Say as much as possible with as few words as possible. Be very selective to get right to the point. No need for long sentences and paragraphs. An employer only wants to scan your resume, not read it. Avoid jargon and slang.

#### 5. Too General

In attempting to condense your resume, be sure to provide excellent detail about work experience, skills, accomplishments, activities, interests and professional memberships that speaks to you being the right fit for a specific position.





## Research the prospective job thoroughly.

### 6. Irrelevant Information

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Examples of things not to include: marital status, age, sex, number of children, height, weight, health, church location, etc.

### 7. Don't Beg for a Job

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Many resumes reflect a desperate call to fill any job available! Avoid this mistake. Craft your resume to let the employer know why you're the right candidate for a particular position within their unique company.

### 8. Don't Be Too Fancy

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Avoid exotic font types, colored paper, photographs, graphics, underlining and italics unless you are sure it is relevant and pertinent for your career industry.

### 9. Don't Be Boring

---

Craft a dynamic, yet easy-to-read resume. Use action verbs to spark the employer's interest about impactful contributions you made in previous positions. Use rich vocabulary, and avoid the redundancy of using the same words. An employer will go brain dead from too much repetition.

### 10. Avoid Being Too Modest

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Put your best foot forward without arrogance, misrepresentation or falsification. Let your phenomenal qualifications showcase themselves.

# RESEARCH RESEARCH RESEARCH

**Research the Company:** Go online and learn about the mission, purpose and vision of the company. That way you understand where the business seeks to go. Make sure to gather additional information such as: executive bios, past annual reports, awards and accomplishments, and community partnerships just to name a few.

**Research the Position:** The more you know about a position, the better-prepared you will be to articulate why you are the right candidate. Plus, being thoroughly researched will significantly enhance your confidence during the interview. Find someone in a similar position and conduct an informational interview, in which you ask meaningful questions regarding their day-to-day experience, such as whether there is on-the-job training, opportunities for promotions, community service with colleagues and more. Finally, be sure to ask about challenges and things they think should be improved.

**Research Yourself:** Don't just get a job, but secure a position that you really enjoy. After doing your research on the company and position, ask yourself whether it is the place you really want to be. Keep in mind, this position is not a lifelong commitment but will be a "stepping stone" along your lifetime career path. Strive to satisfy the employer's expectations, because this will lead to positive recommendations, which can be used to leverage-up to a better position.

Finally, review the version of your resume that you submitted to the employer, and remember, a clean resume can only get you to the interview, but a strong interview will get you the job.

# Action Verbs

Accelerated	Computed	Enumerated	Involved	Prescribed	Satisfied
Accommodated	Conceived	Envisioned	Issued	Presented	Scheduled
Accomplished	Conducted	Established		Printed	Screened
Achieved	Conserved	Estimated	Judged	Prioritized	Scrutinized
Acquired	Consolidated	Evaluated		Processed	Secured
Acted	Constructed	Executed	Kept	Procured	Selected
Activated	Consulted	Exercised		Produced	Set
Adapted	Contracted	Exhibited	Launched	Programmed	Settled
Added	Contributed	Expanded	Learned	Projected	Set up
Addressed	Controlled	Expedited	Lectured	Promoted	Shared
Adjusted	Converted	Experimented	Led	Proofread	Showed
Administered	Convinced	Explained	Licensed	Protected	Simplified
Admitted	Cooperated	Extracted	Linked	Provided	Sketched
Advanced	Coordinated		Listened	Publicized	Sold
Advised	Correlated	Facilitated	Logged	Purchased	Solicited
Aided	Corresponded	Familiarized			Solved
Alleviated	Counseled	Filed	Made	Queried	Sorted
Allocated	Created	Finalized	Maintained	Questioned	Sought
Allowed		Financed	Managed		Spearheaded
Amended	Debugged	Fixed	Marketed	Raised	Specified
Analyzed	Decided	Followed	Measured	Rated	Spoke
Anticipated	Deciphered	Forecasted	Mediated	Read	Stimulated
Appointed	Defined	Formulated	Memorized	Realized	Streamlined
Appraised	Delegated	Founded	Mentored	Received	Strengthened
Approved	Deliberated		Met	Recommended	Studied
Approximated	Delivered	Gathered	Minimized	Reconciled	Submitted
Arbitrated	Demonstrated	Gave	Moderated	Recorded	Succeeded
Arranged	Designed	Generated	Modernized	Recruited	Suggested
Assembled	Detected	Grew	Modified	Rectified	Summarized
Assessed	Determined	Grouped	Monitored	Reduced	Supervised
Assisted	Developed	Guided	Motivated	Referred	Supplemented
Attained	Devised		Moved	Refined	Supplied
Audited	Diagnosed	Handled	Multiplied	Reformed	Supported
Augmented	Directed	Headed		Regulated	Surveyed
Authored	Disbursed	Helped	Navigated	Rehabilitated	Synthesized
Authorized	Dispatched	Hired	Negotiated	Reinforced	
	Displayed			Related	
Balanced	Dissected	Identified	Observed	Relieved	Tabulated
Boosted	Distributed	Illustrated	Obtained	Remedied	Taught
Budgeted	Doubled	Implemented	Offered	Remembered	Tested
Built	Drafted	Improved	Officiated	Remodeled	Traced
	Dramatized	Improvised	Operated	Rendered	Trained
Calculated	Drove	Increased	Orchestrated	Reorganized	Transacted
Catalogued		Indexed	Ordered	Repaired	Transcribed
Centralized	Earned	Influenced	Organized	Reported	Transformed
Certified	Edited	Informed	Originated	Represented	Translated
Chaired	Educated	Initiated	Overhauled	Researched	Transmitted
Charted	Elevated	Innovated	Oversaw	Reserved	Treated
Checked	Elicited	Inspected		Reshaped	Typed
Clarified	Eliminated	Inspired	Perceived	Resolved	
Classified	Empathized	Installed	Performed	Responded	Unified
Coached	Employed	Instituted	Persuaded	Restored	Updated
Collaborated	Empowered	Instructed	Photographed	Retrieved	Upgraded
Collected	Enabled	Integrated	Piloted	Revamped	Utilized
Commissioned	Encouraged	Interceded	Pioneered	Reversed	
Communicated	Enforced	Interpreted	Planned	Reviewed	Validated
Compared	Engineered	Interviewed	Played	Revised	Valued
Compiled	Enhanced	Invented	Polished	Revitalized	Verified
Completed	Enlarged	Inventoried	Predicted		
Composed	Enriched	Investigated	Prepared	Sanctioned	Wrote

# Sample Resumes

## SANDRA S. TEACHER

1200 Career Lane, San Diego, CA 92109  
(858) 270-1234 sstudent@rohan.sdsu.edu

**OBJECTIVE:** A teaching position in an elementary school

### EDUCATION:

**California Multiple Subject, CLAD Credential**  
Supplementary Authorization in Science  
San Diego State University, San Diego, CA May 2009  
GPA 4.0

**Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, Cultural Anthropology**  
Minor in Biology  
California State University, Long Beach May 2007  
GPA 3.7

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

**Student Teacher, Jackson Elementary, San Diego, CA** Spring 2009

- Designed and taught lessons in all subject areas
- Created and implemented a four-part Science unit for sixth graders
- Developed technology lessons utilizing the Internet
- Implemented thematic units integrating Language Arts, Science, Math, and Social Studies

**Student Teacher, Washington Elementary, San Diego, CA** Fall 2008

- Conducted assessments to determine students' needs
- Developed Math unit which included a student-created bulletin board, essays, word puzzles, library research and artwork
- Designed lessons to include group work, hands-on activities, and research projects
- Maintained classroom discipline
- Assisted with after-school functions

### OTHER EXPERIENCE:

**Classroom Observer, Bernardo Heights School, San Diego, CA** Fall 2008

- Observed and tutored ESL students in English, History and Science

**Day Camp Counselor, Camp Del Mar, San Diego, CA** Summer 2007

- Planned and directed daily activities for 25 children, aged 6-12
- Coordinated instruction in team sports, crafts and dance
- Supervised 3 bus drivers and the daily transportation of children

**Volunteer, The Science & Literacy Project, Long Beach, CA** Spring 2007

- Conducted outreach activities to inform community about services
- Tutored teenagers and adults in writing, math and science
- Served as mentor for high school students planning to attend college

**Supervisor, King of Ice Cream, Long Beach, CA** Mar-Dec 2006

- Supervised daily shop operations in manager's absence
- Trained new employees and coordinated schedules

### HONORS/ACTIVITIES

Student California Teachers Association 2006-Present  
Association of Future Educators, **Treasurer** 2005-2007  
Jones Scholarship for Future Teachers 2005  
Golden Key Honor Society 2004

## JIM H. EXPERIENCED

1969 Woodstock Drive, La Mesa, CA, 92021  
(619) 125-8051 Areyouexperienced?@gmail.com

**OBJECTIVE:** To obtain a project management position with Applied Robotics Inc

### QUALIFICATIONS:

- PMP Certification, Project Management Institute
- Professional experience in the engineering Design-Bid-Build process
- Excellent track record in managing multi-department design and development teams
- Proficient in the areas of scheduling, cost control/analysis, forecasting and test planning
- Substantial experience in vendor negotiation and materials procurement
- Pro/ENGINEER, CATIA, Solid Works, AutoCAD 3D and Process Control Charts (SPC)

### EXPERIENCE:

**Project Leader, Robot Express Corporation, San Diego, CA** 2004-Present

- Oversee design and manufacturing of products
- Design and present prototypes of new products to senior management team
- Review manufacturing procedures which have achieved a 40% cost reduction
- Participate in the selection and development of contracts with consultants
- Generate and coordinate maintenance of project documents and manuals
- Recruit, train and supervise engineering and design team members
- Locate and negotiate with suppliers to obtain high quality equipment and materials

**Mechanical Design Engineer, Robot Express Corporation, San Diego, CA** 2002-2004

- Designed, built and analyzed equipment using robotic manipulators
- Developed new robotics system which resulted in \$3M profits
- Performed mechanical design using CAD-CAM systems/Solid Works
- Implemented procedures that allowed the department achieve ISO 9001 certification
- Created procedural flow charts and delegated project assignments
- Trained and supervised engineering and design technicians

**Assistant Mechanical Engineer, Design Systems Inc, Boston, MA** 2000-2002

- Assisted with the development of processes and systems for different industries
- Participated in projects in several areas including Thermodynamics and Robotics & Controls
- Designed a variety of systems utilizing AutoCAD
- Developed design documentation and wrote reports
- Tested materials and systems' performance

### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Board Member  
American Management Association  
Association for Operations Management

### EDUCATION:

**Master of Business Administration, Operations Management** May 2009  
San Diego State University

**Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering** May 2000  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)  
(Dates over 10 yrs. old are optional)

# Sample Chronological Resumes

## Carina Career

ccareer@sdsu.edu  
5500 Campanile Drive • San Diego, CA 92182 • (619) 594-6851

### OBJECTIVE

To obtain a refugee services coordinator position with a non-profit organization

### EDUCATION

San Diego State University:

**Master of Arts in Sociology**

*Thesis: Social Class Perception and Job Satisfaction in Immigrant Populations*

December 2009

**Bachelor of Arts in Sociology**

Minor in Women's Studies

▪ Recipient of Presidential Scholarship 2000-2004

▪ Dean's List

May 2007

GPA: 3.7

### EXPERIENCE

**San Diego Youth and Community Services Coastal Community Center**

Volunteer Intern: Emergency Assistance Provider San Diego, CA

Fall 2006 – present

- Provide emergency assistance to the diverse homeless population.
- Listen to and assess each individual's needs.
- Increase service partners' knowledge and use of social service system.
- Refer service partners to various San Diego social service agencies.

### Aztec Adventures

Customer Service Senior Staff

San Diego, CA

Fall 2006 – present

- Manage daily operations of Aztecs Adventures office.
- Provide services to SDSU population.
- Design and create advertisements.
- Maintain daily operational procedures.

### Broadway Twin Theater

Assistant Manager and Projectionist

Yreka, CA

Winter & Summer 2006

- Promoted after working for two seasons as box office and concession staff.
- Trained and supervised staff.
- Managed lobby, theater and projection booth.
- Developed a new supply ordering system and created Excel spreadsheet.
- Compiled box office and concession reports and prepared daily bank transactions.

### LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Walk of Faith Retreat, **Leader**

InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, **Leader**

South East San Diego Tutoring Project

SDSU Summer Orientations, **Team Leader**

Migrant Outreach

Juvenile Hall Literacy Outreach

Fall 2007

Fall 2006 – Spring 2007

Fall 2005 – Spring 2006

Summer 2005

Spring 2005

Spring 2005

### SKILLS

Fluent in Spanish and Tagalog

Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, SPSS and Internet research

Certificate in Microsoft Office; training included PowerPoint and Access

## Joseph Career

jcareer@sdsu.edu • 5500 Campanile Drive • San Diego, CA 92182 • 619.594.6851

### EDUCATION

**Bachelor of Arts in Communication** – Professional Communications Emphasis May 2009

San Diego State University, San Diego, CA

Minor in Business Administration

Relevant Courses: Public Speaking, Marketing, Public Relations, Media Writing

Major GPA: 3.11 Second Honors for Spring Semester 2008

### EXPERIENCE

**Target Marketing/Group Sales Intern**

San Diego Sports Arena

- Research new targeted groups for upcoming shows

- Help create and administer a target marketing campaign for each event

- Update group sales page on website using Macromedia DreamWeaver

- Write group event letter and proposals

1/07 - present

### Information Desk Representative

Aztec Center, San Diego State University

- Answered the telephone in a polite and professional manner

- Directed visitors and students to specific locations and events on campus

- Provided answers pertaining to special events held on campus and general questions about SDSU

1/07 - 5/07

### Executive Vice President

Associated Students (Student Government), San Diego State University

- Managed a given budget of \$35,620 for the entire fiscal year

- Coordinated the Undergraduate Homecoming Dinner & Dance for 600 people

- Designed the layout of the marketing banners and tickets

- Arranged the itinerary of the event with a coordinator from the Hotel Del Coronado

9/06 - 5/07

### Media Relations Coordinator

Cross-Cultural Center, San Diego State University

- Wrote articles pertaining to multicultural issues and events

- Edited articles written in the monthly newsletter

- Published and distributed the monthly newsletter at SDSU

- Coordinated and managed tours of the center

- Planned student organization meetings and educational events

1/05 - 5/06

### SKILLS

Proficient with Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Front Page, Adobe Photoshop 7.0,

Dreamweaver, Quark Express, Blue Hornet, Windows and Mac OS

### ACTIVITIES

**Associated Students Marketing Board:** Cross-Cultural Center Representative

**Cross-Cultural Center:** Vice-chair



Taken prior to 2020.

# CREATING A CV

## Different Than a Resume

CV's (curriculum vitae) are often thought to be a long version of a resume, but the two documents have specific differences. A CV is used in academia, research and the medical field, whereas a resume can be used within a general application for nonacademic jobs and internships. Feel free to contact a career counselor through Handshake for more information.

CV (Curriculum Vitae)		Resume
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Academic, research and medical</li> <li>» Sometimes many pages long</li> <li>» Intentionally standard</li> <li>» Highlights education</li> <li>» Very little change in format between academic fields</li> <li>» Should use no bullet points</li> </ul>	vs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Non-academic</li> <li>» No more than two pages</li> <li>» Customized to fit a specific position</li> <li>» Highlights experience &amp; achievements</li> <li>» Variety of changes in format between industries</li> <li>» Use bullet points to showcase your experience for a position</li> </ul>



## GETTING YOUR CV STARTED

**Remember:** Your CV is a collection of your best academic accomplishments, in particular those related to research, instruction and service to your field.

**Obtain a Copy of a Professor's CV Whose Work You Admire.** Simply use another CV for formatting; don't be intimidated by the years of experience to secure their achievements.

**Refresh Your CV Often.** That way you don't leave out important accomplishments. Stay ready, and you won't feel rushed when it's time to include your CV with an application.

**Take Note of International Differences.** Many countries suggest that applicants include personal information in their CV. This is not the case in the United States. Therefore, do your research and adjust your CV accordingly before submitting.

## Sample Cover Letters

### GENERIC SAMPLE LETTER

**YOUR NAME** (*this heading should match your resume's style*)

Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Phone Number  
E-mail Address

Date

**Recruiter's Name** (*ensure that name is spelled correctly / title is accurate*)

Title  
Company Name  
Address  
City, State, Zip

**Dear Ms./Mr. Name:** (*avoid using 'To Whom It May Concern'*)

**OPENING PARAGRAPH:** State that you are applying for a specific position and how you learned of the position, using a contact name when possible. Personalize the letter by saying why you want to work for this organization.

**MIDDLE PARAGRAPH(S):** Succinctly outline the qualifications that make you a strong candidate. Relate your qualifications to the needs of the current job opening. Specific examples can demonstrate your skills and experiences.

**CLOSING PARAGRAPH:** Discuss your next action step. Repeat your interest in the position and indicate when you will contact the employer to follow up. Thank the employer for reviewing your resume.

Sincerely,

*Your Signature*

Your Name Typed

### JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

**JOB TITLE:** Retail Management Trainee - Merchandising

**REQUIREMENTS:** Bachelor's degree required. Responsible for merchandise presentation, supervision of sales personnel, customer service, inventory control and other retail functions for hardware and building supplies chain. Requires good business skills, analytical ability, creative thinking, effective written and verbal communication and the ability to motivate and train staff.

### COVER LETTER IN RESPONSE TO ANNOUNCEMENT

Woody Woods  
1234 Montezuma Hall  
San Diego, CA 92182

Gus McGoo  
General Manager  
Gooie Enterprises  
12345 Camino del Rio South  
San Diego, CA 92128

Dear Mr. McGoo:

I am applying for the Retail Management Trainee position listed in Career Services' Aztec Career Connection. I am very interested in your firm not only because of your reputation as the leader in the building supplies field, but due to my background and interest in construction and familiarity with your product line. As a college graduate with the experience and skills you are seeking, I consider myself a strong candidate.

In May, I will receive my bachelor degree in Business Administration with a major in Management. This coursework complemented my experience, focusing on developing business knowledge, analytical ability and strong communication skills. My work experience includes a year as assistant manager in a hardware store where I was responsible for merchandise presentation, inventory, customer service and staff training. In addition, my student activities have included leadership for the XYZ student association, where I planned and supervised several construction projects.

The recent success of your new solar equipment center for home improvement illustrates a progressive merchandising philosophy that would require a high-level of creativity. In my previous job, I had the opportunity to use my creativity to merchandise a new line of building products resulting in a 25% sales increase.

After you have had an opportunity to review my resume, I will contact you to discuss my qualifications and a possible interview. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Woody Woods  
Woody Woods

# COVER LETTERS

## Setting the Right Tone

### AN EFFECTIVE COVER LETTER CONTAINS THREE MAIN POINTS

#### Introduction

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Attract positive attention with your opening sentence. State why you are writing and name the position or type of work for which you are applying. Where applicable, indicate how you became aware of the job vacancy and mention the mutual acquaintance or referring party by name.

#### Middle Paragraph(s)

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Sell yourself. State reasons for wanting to work for this particular organization. (Researching potential employers thoroughly will help in writing this section.) Summarize what you have to offer by stating qualifications you know would interest this specific employer. Don't merely restate information already on your resume, but highlight or specify elements of your background matched to the job. Emphasize your interest and enthusiasm.

#### Closing

---

Close by informing the reader of your next action. You may request an interview appointment or tell the reader that you will recontact them for an interview after they have had the opportunity to review your resume. (If applying from a great distance, a request for a telephone interview or a referral to a local representative is appropriate.) Taking the initiative will be appreciated. Be sure to express appreciation for them considering your application.

## DON'T SUBMIT YOUR COVER LETTER BEFORE COMPLETING THE FOLLOWING

- » A personalized cover letter for each employer and position.
- » State in the first sentence why you are writing and why you are interested.
- » Show that your career goals are aligned with both the position and the company.
- » Make your points briefly; every point should support your preparedness to contribute.
- » Proofread for typos and the employer's accurate contact information. Have a reliable person or professional review as well.
- » Run a spell check before sending your final copy, but remember that it may not catch everything.
- » Follow up with the employer if you do not hear back after two to three weeks. Inquire if any further information is needed and restate your interest.

## EXTRA TIPS FOR WRITING A GREAT COVER LETTER

### MAKE IT PRECISE

Tailor your cover letter by emphasizing relevant experience, skills or personal attributes that make you a capable candidate. Show that you understand the requirements and day-to-day operations of the position.

### MAKE IT STAND OUT

Showcase your personality. Maintain professionalism at all times, but use the cover letter to show how you can fit into the company's culture. Employers scan hundreds of applications; use yours as a unique introduction to you.

### MAKE IT PERSONAL

Do good research, and direct your cover letter to a specific person or hiring committee. This simple act will not only demonstrate your professionalism but show that you will go above and beyond the daily tasks.



# REFERENCES & BUSINESS CARDS

## Prepared Professional

When applying for jobs, be sure to choose references who will speak about your strong work ethic. Ask professionals who know you well and can provide an excellent reference. Select current or former employers, trusted faculty members (particularly for graduate school) and staff to student organizations.

**A typical reference list asks for two to three people and the following:**

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1. Name
2. Title
3. Company
4. Address
5. Telephone Number
6. Email Address
7. How do you know the reference and for how long?

**Using the space below, begin to think about helpful references and jot them down.**

NAME	RELATIONSHIP	CONTACT INFORMATION



## FORMAT YOUR BUSINESS CARDS

### SAMPLE BUSINESS CARD (FRONT)

- » Your Name
- » Youremail@sdsu.edu
- » 619-555-5555
- » B.A. Marketing, May 20XX
- » 3.6 GPA
- » See Resume at:
- » <http://linkedinmyprofile1118/ASP>

### SAMPLE BUSINESS CARD (BACK)

Seeking opportunities in communications companies within the East County SD region.

- » Spanish/English Bilingual
- » Event Organizer
- » Quantitative Research
- » Budget Officer
- » 3 Years mentoring Latina Youth
- » Program Management
- » Volunteer Coordinator
- » Videographer

When applying for jobs, be sure to choose references who will speak about your strong work ethic.

# WHAT HAPPENS IN THE JOB INTERVIEW

## Be Well-Prepared

The objective of the interview (from the recruiter's perspective) is to screen candidates who upon initial review appear to possess the skills, experience, attitude and personality that can fit well within the company or department that the employer represents. Candidates who are well-prepared and successfully negotiate the interview will then go on to the next stage of the recruitment process: the job offer.

### 3 PARTS OF AN INTERVIEW

1. **The Greeting** - The candidate should arrive 15 minutes early. When greeting the recruiter, smile and use a firm handshake while looking the recruiter in the eye to convey a sense of confidence. Initial impressions matter! If done poorly, the candidate may begin the interview process having to overcome a negative opinion. An employer is looking for candidates who will fit into their company using knowledge and expertise, but also using soft skills such as teamwork and good communication to promote company culture.
2. **The Questioning** - The core of the interview consists of a dialogue between the recruiter and the candidate. Note that this is often expected to be an interactive discussion between both you and the employer. So have your responses and questions ready. The recruiters' questions will most likely seek to achieve the following:
  - » Confirmation of previous information, verification of your previously provided information.
  - » Test of field specific knowledge, questions pertaining to your knowledge related to the job.
  - » Understanding your behavioral choices, the candidate is given several scenarios and asked how he/she would respond.
  - » Conduct self-assessment, candidate is asked to speak of strengths, weaknesses, areas of improvement, and/or overcoming challenges.
  - » Checking for alignment, candidates are asked why they want to work for the company and grow their career within the industry, etc.
  - » Soft skills test - you will be asked about leadership, communication, teamwork, working with difficult people, etc.





3. **The Closing** - The closing is the end of the interview. It occurs after the questioning and is the time where the candidate should ensure that he/she is clear on the next steps and the timing of the next steps. You should obtain the business card of the recruiter(s) in order to follow up within a week or two.

## WAYS TO PREPARE FOR THE INTERVIEW

Career Services offers a number of workshops and services available through Handshake to help build your confidence in practicing your interview skills.

- » **Effective Interviewing Workshops** - An overview of “career” interviewing, including articulating goals, appropriate dress and other valuable tips.
- » **Mock Interview Sessions** - An opportunity to practice interviewing and receive feedback.
- » **Career Counseling** - Available by appointment through Handshake for your individual questions or concerns.
- » **Career Services Virtual Career Resource Library** - Resources available on the website ([sa.sdsu.edu/career](https://sa.sdsu.edu/career)) for your immediate review.

## TYPES OF INTERVIEW FORMATS

There are several different types of interviews which you may encounter while seeking employment. These are:

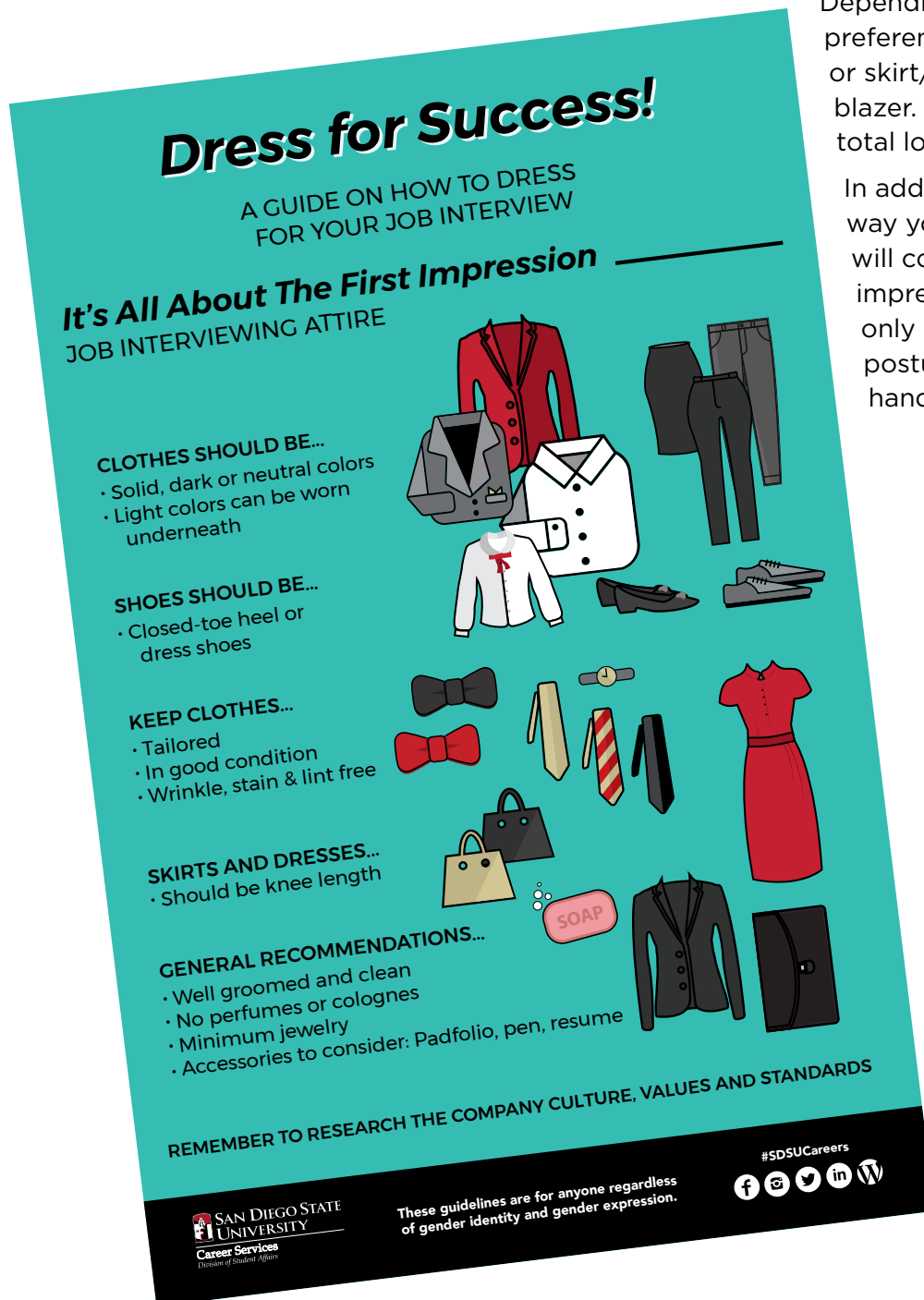
- » **One-to-One:** One person interviews an applicant.
- » **Panel:** Several representatives interview an applicant.
- » **Group:** Multiple applicants interviewed at one time.
- » **Follow-up or Second Interview:** A more in-depth interview, often conducted at the job site or company headquarters. May be as short as one hour or may last an entire day, with tours, lunch, information sessions and other activities.

## DRESS APPROPRIATELY

Appearance is an important factor in the interview process. Studies indicate that employers evaluate you within the first few minutes, and their first impression is usually their final impression. Plan your wardrobe well in advance. Be sure your image is polished, professional and fits into the recruiter's company culture.

Depending on the candidate's preference, either select a suit or skirt/dress with a businesslike blazer. Pay attention to your total look, including accessories.

In addition to dress, the way you walk in the door will contribute to the first impression. Appearance is not only clothing, but also your posture, your smile and your handshake.



## QUESTIONS AN EMPLOYER MAY ASK

### Goals:

---

1. What are your long-term and short-term career goals?
2. How important is upward mobility to you?
3. What type of lifestyle do you desire for yourself?
4. Why did you choose this career?
5. What are three things that are most important to you in a job?

### Skills and Qualifications:

---

1. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
2. How has SDSU prepared you for this career?
3. Why should I hire you?
4. What qualifications do you have that make you the best candidate?
5. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization?

### Personal Qualities:

---

1. How would you describe yourself?
2. How do you think a friend, professor or mentor who knows you well would describe you?
3. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
4. How do you determine or evaluate success?
5. What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK AN EMPLOYER

You should have a list of questions prepared in advance for this important part of the interview. Every question you ask should demonstrate your interest in the position and confirm your knowledge of the organization. Some recruiters refuse to hire people who don't ask intelligent questions. Don't ask questions just for the sake of asking, make sure it is information that you need. Be strategic.

### QUESTIONS YOU **SHOULD** ASK

- » Ask specific questions about the position. You need to know what duties will be required of the person in the position to see if there is a fit between your interests and qualifications and the job you seek.
- » Try to find out as much as possible about qualities and skills the recruiter is looking for in job candidates. Once you determine the necessary qualities, you can then explain to the recruiter how your background and capabilities relate to those qualities.
- » Ask questions about upward mobility and available pathways to promotion. Every company is different and most advancement policies are unique. Try to find out what the possible promotion path is to see if it fits your career goals. You may also want to ask about periodic performance evaluations.
- » It is appropriate to ask specific questions about the company's training programs if this information is not covered on the website or in company literature.
- » Ask questions about location and travel required. If you have limitations, this is the time to find out what is expected in the position.

### QUESTIONS **NOT** TO ASK

- » Avoid asking questions that are answered on the company's website or in their marketing materials. Recruiters are familiar enough with their own information to recognize when you haven't done your homework. If some information on their site isn't clear to you, by all means ask for clarification.
- » Don't bring up salary or benefits in the initial interview. The majority of companies recruiting are very competitive and will offer approximately similar salaries and benefits. The recruiter may choose to bring up the information, but you should not initiate the topic.
- » Avoid asking any personal questions or questions that will put the recruiter on the defensive. This includes questions such as the interviewer's educational background, marital status, past work experience and so on. However, it is appropriate to ask how the interviewer began his/her career with the company.
- » Don't ask questions that have already been answered during the interview. If you have prepared a list of questions and some of them have been addressed during the interview, do not repeat them unless you need clarification.



## EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK

The key to a successful interview is good communication and establishing excellent rapport with the recruiter. One of the fastest ways to damage this kind of relationship is by exhibiting ignorance about the company and asking inappropriate questions. See examples of questions you might ask below:

- » How much travel is expected with this position?
- » Can I progress at my own pace or is it pre-structured?
- » How much contact and exposure to management is there?
- » How many new employees go through your training program each year?
- » How often are performance or self-evaluations given?
- » How much decision-making authority is given after one year?
- » How much input does the new person have to determine their geographical location?
- » What is the average age of top management?
- » What is the average time it takes to get to management or executive levels in this career path?

*Credit: Questions You Might Ask - C. Randall Powell, Career Planning Today.*

Try to find out as much as possible about qualities and skills the recruiter is looking for in job candidates.



# THANK-YOU LETTERS & LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

## THANK-YOU LETTERS

- » Important part of an effective job search.
- » Appropriate when using as a follow-up to:
  - » An interview
  - » Site visit or second interview
  - » Informational interview
  - » Meet and greet events
- » Provides another opportunity to restate strong interest in position.
- » Should be brief and uses a standard business letter format.

## THANK-YOU EMAILS

- » Great way to express your appreciation.
- » Send a day or two after an interview.
- » Only needs to be three to five sentences.
- » Remember, you're simply saying thank you for being considered.



## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- » **Identify professionals who have known you for a minimum of six months.** The longer they have known you the better, but they must have had regular contact with you to observe your growth and development.
- » **Never choose someone on status alone.** Continue to select professionals based on how well they know you and how much they want to assist you in your job search.
- » **Make an appointment** with the potential professional to discuss your career goals and purpose for the letter of recommendation. Determine if the person still wants the responsibility of serving as your reference, which involves not only writing a letter supporting your skills, but also handling any phone inquiries or responding to email questions which may be posed by a selection committee.
- » **Make the process easy and simple** by providing the professional the following materials:
  - » A one-page summary describing your achievements or skills necessary for the desired job (or graduate program).
  - » A copy of your current resume, transcripts, job descriptions for the type of employment you desire or other detailed information related to the purpose of the letter.
  - » A statement of future goals, outlining what you want to accomplish in the next few years.
- » **After an employer interviews you they will then contact your references** to determine consistency in your answers. You should not inflate what you are able to do or what you may have completed in work or school assignments.
- » **A reference is looked upon as someone who can confirm your skill and ability level.** Any inconsistencies between what you said in your interview and a reference's response could eliminate you from further consideration.
- » **The key is to keep your references informed** of what you are going to be discussing with employers so there is a clear understanding of what is valued by the employer.
- » **Encourage your reference to use strong descriptive words** that provide the evidence of your teamwork skills, organization, leadership, adaptability, problem-solving, computer proficiency, decision-making, judgment, oral and written communication skills, and grasp of technical knowledge related to the job.
- » **Give your reference writer a minimum of three weeks** to provide a strong draft. This means it is your responsibility to provide all the materials so the writer has ample time and is not rushing to meet your deadline.
- » **Maintain a reliable list of references.** This is part of any professional's success. Continue to nurture valuable relationships with people who will want to do everything they can to support in your success.

*Credit: Rosanne P. Bensley, Placement and Career Services, New Mexico State University*

# PROTECTING YOUR BRAND

# PROFESSIONAL

# ETIQUETTE

## First Impressions Are Key

Do you have the social skills needed to be successful in a professional workplace long-term? Let's review some basic strategies to help strengthen your confidence in this area. Social (or soft) skills can make or break your career.

### Meet & Greets:

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- » A firm shake.
- » Make eye contact while shaking hands.
- » Rise when introducing or being introduced to someone.
- » Unless given permission, always address someone by his or her title and last name (e.g. Dr. Phillips or Mrs. Banks).
- » Provide information in making introductions - you are responsible for keeping the conversation going.
- » Be prepared to share your pronouns, as it is always a great idea to invite an inclusive space.



### Dining:

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- » Arrive 15 minutes early.
- » Place a napkin in your lap before eating or drinking anything.
- » Keep in mind that this is a talking business lunch. So order something easy to eat, such as a hearty salad, boneless chicken or fish. That way you stay clean and have more time to communicate your strong interest in a position.
- » Practice proper posture; sit up straight with your arms close to your body.
- » Bring food to your mouth - not your head to the plate, and try to eat at the same pace as everyone else.

“Be prepared to share your pronouns, as it is always a great idea to support an inclusive space.” — Antoine Stevens-Phillips, M.Ed.



- » Take responsibility for keeping up the conversation.
- » Place your napkin beside the plate at the end of each meal.
- » Push your chair under the table when excusing yourself.

### Eating:

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- » Begin eating with the utensils that are farthest away from your plate.
- » You may have two spoons and two forks. The spoon farthest away from your plate is a soup spoon.
- » The fork farthest away is a salad fork unless you have three forks, one being much smaller, which would be a seafood fork for an appetizer.
- » Remember to work from the outside in.
- » Dip soup away from you; sip from the side of the spoon.
- » While you are speaking during a meal, utensils should be resting on the plate (fork and knife crossed on the plate with tines down).
- » Don't chew with your mouth open or blow too hard on your food.
- » The employer will usually take care of the bill and the tip. Be prepared if this doesn't happen. Never make an issue over the check.

*Credit: Jennie Hunter, a professor at Western Carolina University.*



Taken prior to 2020.

# SOCIAL MEDIA & LINKEDIN

## Employers Will Check Your Posts

Employment recruiters are known to use social media sites to research background data on potential candidates. Don't miss an opportunity because of negative information on your social media page. Avoid this by cleaning up your online presence, as this is key to landing a job.

## MONITOR YOUR ONLINE IDENTITY

Employers can find out more information about a candidate by spending five minutes on their Facebook page than they can by talking to a former employer.

- » **Google Yourself** - Take note of all the sites that contain positive and negative information about you. The majority of negative information can be eliminated, so it's best to start now.

<b>What I Discovered:</b>	<b>What I Didn't Like:</b>
<b>What I Liked:</b>	<b>Action to Take:</b>

- » **Use Privacy Settings** - Make sure you are utilizing the privacy settings when posting nonprofessional content. This is suggested for popular social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and etc. The rule of thumb is not to post anything you don't want your potential employer to see.
- » **Podcast, YouTube Channels & Blogs** - Everyone has an opinion and a right under the First Amendment to say what they please, but remember ... what you write or post can negatively impact your professional career for years to come. If necessary, use these platforms, but keep your identity anonymous!
- » **Criminal Records and Court Cases** - Getting arrested, not paying your traffic tickets or driving under the influence (DUI) may end up online depending on which state holds the public records. Remember to uphold the value of your professional brand by using sound judgment on and off the clock.

## IMPROVING YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

The goal of a positive image is to impress recruiters and increase your marketability. You may use the following suggestions to establish or improve your reputation.

- » **Create Your Own Website** - Many professionals and students have their own website to showcase their portfolio of work, awards, articles, resume, and areas of specialization or talent. Purchasing your own domain name is a great way to occupy one of the top 10 Google listings for your name (e.g. see [GoDaddy.com](https://GoDaddy.com)).
- » **Archive Your Content** - Start an archive by using a YouTube channel, podcast or blog to document your career interest and lifestyle passions like traveling, cooking, sports or volunteer work. For example, If you are interested in a career in equity and inclusion, consider producing content about industry trends, news and related topics. Recruiters like to see that candidates have interests outside of work.
- » **Post (Respectful) Comments** - Using your full name, post intelligent comments on LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter and other open forums. The more popular the forum topic, the better chance it will surface when employers conduct a search on your name. Always include a link to your website whenever you leave a comment. It's free marketing!
- » **Write an Article** - Author articles through the Daily Aztec, local publications (e.g. The San Diego Union-Tribune), professional organizations, or an SDSU club or organization. If you do this, your name may be placed at the top of their search engine.

## MAXIMIZING LINKEDIN

With over 500 million registered members, this premium site provides you the opportunity to establish a professional online presence, engage in dialogue about relevant topics, and make connections with professionals across your industry or career path. Maximize this tool, research employers and connect with people of similar career interest, especially alumni. LinkedIn can even be used to search and apply for jobs.

## 5 TIPS FOR LEVERAGING LINKEDIN:

1. **A Professional Head-to-Shoulders Photo is a Big Deal.** In fact, these profiles are more than 10 times as likely to be viewed.
2. **Craft a Compelling Headline (or Summary).** Profiles with an effective summary are also more likely to be seen by users. This space should be used as a brief introduction to professional interest and to summarize your experience and achievements. Use keywords you want to be identified with. This will make your profile more eye-catching in search engine outcomes.
3. **Complete Your Whole Profile!** Use LinkedIn like an extended resume. Include the specifics about projects you have worked on, lab work you have completed and goals you have reached. Take advantage of publishing videos, documents, websites and other media. Strive to keep your profile page lively, while showcasing your skills.
4. **Grow Your Professional Network.** Connect with other SDSU alumni, interest groups and colleagues. These connections will build your professional network, and may help you secure the next job opportunity, client and etc.
5. **Publish Your Work.** After completing your profile, upload examples of your achievements, completed projects and knowledge of the field. Remember to trademark and copyright any original content before sharing with the public.

## BUILD YOUR NETWORK THROUGH LINKEDIN: SENDING THE FIRST EMAIL

- » **Include A Photo.** A smiling and professional headshot is more effective than words. In our fast-paced world, people desire to see potential colleagues who carry positive synergy.
- » **Keep it Short.** Sending a brief, personalized message is more likely to garner a response.
- » **Refresh Their Memory.** Re-cap the first meeting between you and the correspondent. Sometimes professionals are approached by several customers, clients or potential employees. Stand out by refreshing their memory of the conversation that sparked an interest for exchanging contact information.
- » **Explain Why You Desire to Connect.** Don't ask for a job outright – you may scare off your contact, who may not be associated with the hiring committee. Instead, ask about the company's vision, goals of a department, the industry itself or your contact's career path to their current position. This approach comes off as simply requesting a conversation, versus a job interview.
- » **Follow-up.** This invites your contact to get back to you in an efficient timeframe. State that you understand they have a busy schedule and you are willing to follow up within a week or two; this creates the opportunity to contact them again.



# CAREER FAIRS

## Getting the Most Out of Them

Employers use career fairs – both on and off campus – to promote their opportunities and to prescreen applicants. Most career fairs consist of booths managed by recruiters and other representatives from a variety of organizations. Use this time to identify key companies, then proceed to inquiry about jobs of your interest.

### QUICK TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- » **In most cases, “business casual” is the norm**, but it wouldn’t hurt to be on the overdressed side – you’ll make a better impression if you appear professional.
- » **Remember to bring:**
  - ☐ Copies of your resume tailored for each career choice.
  - ☐ Your smartphone or a pen and notepad to take notes.
  - ☐ Portfolio of your best work, relevant to the job opportunity.
  - ☐ A list of companies and the recruiter’s name and position who connected well with you.
  - ☐ Don’t bring your backpack! You’re presenting yourself as a strong candidate, not a student.
- » **Keep your eyes and ears open** – there’s nothing wrong with subtly eavesdropping on the questions asked and answers received by your fellow career fair attendees.
- » **Don’t just stroll around**, collecting business flyers and loading up on the freebies. You won’t accomplish anything worthwhile professionally. It is essential to chat with company recruiters and ask meaningful questions.
- » **Have a game plan**. If you’re interested in a particular career field, ask generalized questions about working within the industry. If you’re seeking career opportunities with a specific employer, focus your questions on the application and interview process, and ask for specific information about that employer.



Taken prior to 2020.

## ADVICE ABOUT CAREER FAIR ETIQUETTE

1. **Don't interrupt the employer recruiters or your fellow job-seekers.** If someone else is spending an unreasonable amount of the recruiter's time, try to make eye contact with the rep to let him, her or them (e.g. inclusive pronouns) know that you're interested in speaking. If all else fails, move to the next booth and come back later.
2. **Sincerity always wins.** Be researched, a great listener and well-spoken. Virtually all employers are looking for candidates with good communication skills.
3. **Don't just drop your resume on an employer's table.** Try to get it into a representative's hands, then share a few words about your strong interest in the position.
4. **Get the recruiter's business card** and send a follow-up email with a virtual copy of your resume attached.
5. **Research, research, research!** If you know ahead of time that one of your "dream businesses" will be a career fair participant, do some prior research on the company's vision, goals, job opportunities, department culture and community service involvement. A little advance preparation goes a long way and can make you stand out among the masses of other attendees.



# Job Search Strategies

The job search process involves many strategies. Consider using a combination of strategies to maximize results. Take advantage of SDSU Career Services' free resources to support a successful job search. To help you select a productive approach review the following strategies.

<b>Type</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<i>Published Ads</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow stated application guidelines</li> <li>Customize your application materials</li> <li>Submit quality materials</li> <li>Use listings as reference material to apply for future/related openings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct access to job listings and requirements</li> <li>Targeting an open position</li> <li>An opportunity to individualize resume and cover letter to specific requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highly competitive due to large number of applicants</li> <li>May require substantial number of applications to get responses</li> <li>Small percentage of jobs are advertised</li> <li>Low placement rate</li> </ul>
<i>Internet</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that postings are current</li> <li>Review websites constantly</li> <li>Adhere to submission guidelines</li> <li>Customize your resume</li> <li>Use links to research related jobs and organizations</li> <li>Verify website reputation before sharing information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economical and time efficient</li> <li>Easy access to many jobs/organizations</li> <li>An opportunity to research related jobs and customize approach to meet criteria</li> <li>Ability to search in distant locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millions of applicants have "easy" access</li> <li>Some postings are not updated frequently</li> <li>Many companies don't post online</li> <li>May be difficult to check status</li> <li>Information confidentiality concerns</li> </ul>
<i>SDSU On-Campus Interviewing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend employer information sessions</li> <li>Have your resume reviewed by a career counselor</li> <li>Upload your resume(s) to Aztec Career Connection</li> <li>Login frequently to learn about new listings and schedule on-campus interviews</li> <li>Research the employer database to prepare for potential interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No-cost/efficient way to contact employers</li> <li>Many companies hire exclusively college graduates for specific jobs</li> <li>Less competition/higher success rate than traditional methods</li> <li>Ability to research employers in depth through SDSU Career Services' free resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not all industries recruit on campus</li> <li>Recruiting is active during academic calendar and slows down in summer</li> <li>Jobs may be available after graduation</li> </ul>
<i>SDSU Career Fairs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research employers in advance and create a list to target your top choices at the fair</li> <li>View recent fair additions at (<a href="http://career.sdsu.edu">http://career.sdsu.edu</a>)</li> <li>Attend a "Networking a Career Fair" workshop and pick up a flyer in Career Services</li> <li>Dress professionally and bring resumes</li> <li>Ask questions to learn more about your field</li> <li>Obtain business cards and stay in contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to many employers in a brief period of time and a single location</li> <li>Very personal approach to learn about companies, careers and requirements</li> <li>Opportunity to network with recruiters</li> <li>Many positions target students and recent graduates and may not require experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many disciplines may not be represented</li> <li>Small companies and non-profit sector representation may be limited</li> <li>Hiring may not be immediate</li> </ul>

## Job Search Strategies (continued)

Type	Strategies	Advantages	Challenges
<i>Staffing Agencies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research agencies to find about the services offered and their reputation</li> <li>▪ Locate agencies that specialize in your field</li> <li>▪ Be cautious if you are required to pay a fee</li> <li>▪ Highlight relevant experience and transferable skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service is normally free to job seekers</li> <li>▪ Agencies conduct pre-screening before referral</li> <li>▪ A temporary assignment may be the only way to obtain a permanent job with some firms</li> <li>▪ An opportunity to survey employers and acquire experience through job assignments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assignments can be short-term</li> <li>▪ The variety of jobs can be limited</li> <li>▪ It can be difficult to obtain positions for recent graduates with limited experience</li> <li>▪ May start at a lower salary than comparable permanent positions</li> <li>▪ Agencies' primary commitment is with the paying recruiting firm, not the job seeker</li> </ul>
<i>Unsolicited Mail/Email</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research companies to learn about specific needs</li> <li>▪ Customize your prospecting letter to address each company uniquely</li> <li>▪ Obtain the name of the hiring manager and address this person</li> <li>▪ Follow up by phone whenever possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ability to target employers in a specific field</li> <li>▪ May access unadvertised positions</li> <li>▪ Employer may be impressed with a well tailored mailing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Time consuming</li> <li>▪ Requires significant research and high-degree of individualization</li> <li>▪ Response rates are low</li> </ul>
<i>Direct Contact (Cold Calls/Visits)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use business/phone directories to locate employers</li> <li>▪ Learn about company before calling/visiting</li> <li>▪ Develop meaningful questions to ask</li> <li>▪ Have a resume/cover letter ready</li> <li>▪ Schedule an informational interview</li> <li>▪ Ask about future openings/contacts in absence of jobs</li> <li>▪ Stay in touch once you have established a contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal contact with hiring authority</li> <li>▪ Resume/Application can be submitted directly to hiring manager</li> <li>▪ May become aware about unadvertised current and future vacancies</li> <li>▪ Access to jobs that are never posted</li> <li>▪ An opportunity to obtain new contacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Takes time to research companies and contact information</li> <li>▪ It is difficult to access hiring managers</li> <li>▪ Requires being assertive and willing to take risks</li> <li>▪ Success rate is low (1 in 20 average)</li> </ul>
<i>Networking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inform people that you are searching for a job</li> <li>▪ Provide details about the desired job</li> <li>▪ Ask contacts if they know someone who can help</li> <li>▪ Update and distribute your resume</li> <li>▪ Contact new leads and expand network</li> <li>▪ Stay in touch with all contacts</li> <li>▪ Join professional organizations/clubs</li> <li>▪ Attend events/conferences and network</li> <li>▪ Volunteer for boards and organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Effective way to find jobs</li> <li>▪ May learn tips about company and hiring trends from "inside" sources</li> <li>▪ Ability to access the "hidden" job market and find jobs that will not be advertised</li> <li>▪ Less competition than traditional search</li> <li>▪ May be referred to a company that only hires through employee/contact referrals</li> <li>▪ An opportunity to expand network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires significant time and effort</li> <li>▪ Willingness to talk to any potential contact</li> <li>▪ May require talking to numerous contacts before obtaining results</li> <li>▪ Requires tenacity to follow up</li> <li>▪ Contacts need to be maintained over time</li> </ul>



# BUILDING YOUR NETWORK

## Initiate the Conversation

A network is a committed group of supporters who serve as resources for your job search and ultimately for your career. Some of your great contacts might include people you've met at a company luncheon and other social meetings where you received mentorship, career information and advice.

### EIGHT KEYS TO NETWORKING

1. **Be Prepared** - Your purpose in networking is to get to know people who can provide information regarding careers and leads. Some benefits of networking include increased visibility within your field, propelling your professional development, finding suitable mentors, increasing your chances of promotion and perhaps finding your next job.
2. **Be Targeted** - Identify your network. Start by listing everyone you know who are potential prospects: family members, friends, faculty, neighbors, classmates, alumni, bosses, co-workers and community leaders. You never know who might help you to land your next job.
3. **Be Professional** - Ask your contacts for advice – not a job. This is also called free consultation. In the real world, professionals charge a fee to share their knowledge and expertise. So be grateful for the time and wisdom of your established contact, mentor or life coach. Otherwise, it might cost you.
4. **Be Patient** - Networking is like gardening. You can't plant a seed, then quickly get a harvest. Networking requires time to develop and evolve in order for the connection to pay off.
5. **Quality, Not Quantity** - In large group settings, move around and meet people, but don't try to talk to everyone, it's better to have a few meaningful conversations than 100 hasty introductions. Also don't cling to people you already know; you're unlikely to build new connections that way. If you are at a reception, be sure to wear a nametag and collect or exchange business cards so you can later contact the people you meet.
6. **Be Referral-Centered** - Exchange information and then expand your network by obtaining additional referrals each time you meet someone new. Be sure to mention the person who referred you.
7. **Be Proactive** - Stay organized and keep a list of your contacts. Update your personal directory frequently with the names of any leads given to you. Always send thank-you emails when appropriate. Work to arrange a follow-up conversation via Zoom, a phone call or in person (Per COVID-19 guidelines: stay six feet away for social distancing and wearing a mask).
8. **Be Dedicated** - You will want to stay in touch with contacts over the long haul – not just when you need something. Make networking part of your long-term career plan.

## Questions to Ask During a Networking Meeting

- » What do you like most (or least) about your work?
- » Can you describe a typical workday or week?
- » What type of education and experience do you need to remain successful in this field?
- » What are the future career opportunities in this field?
- » What are the challenges in balancing work and personal life?
- » Why might people enter/leave this field or company?
- » Which companies have the best track record for promoting minorities?
- » What advice would you give to someone trying to break into this field?
- » With whom would you recommend I speak? When I call, may I use your name?

*Written by Thomas J. Denham, director of the Siena College Career Center in Loudonville, N.Y.*

### SPECIFIC PLACES TO NETWORK - ANYWHERE!

Networking is a very effective way to secure a job that's a perfect fit for you – so start networking immediately. Connect with classmates or engage fellow alumni and professors. Review your network of friends and acquaintances, as they can help you identify career opportunities and prepare you for your job search.

- » Career Fairs, Panels, Networking Events
- » Social Networking Sites, LinkedIn
- » In Class, Conferences, Seminars
- » Work, Volunteer Meetings, Social Gatherings
- » Professional Associations
- » Every interaction can create the opportunity to engage with new people.

### PRACTICE NETWORKING - ELEVATOR PITCH

Introduce yourself: \_\_\_\_\_

Share your educational background: \_\_\_\_\_

State your purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Identify relevant skills: \_\_\_\_\_

Share how can you help the contact: \_\_\_\_\_

## TOOLS FOR YOUR INTERVIEW

# INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

### A Great Tool

An informational interview is a conversation that you can have with someone who's working in a company or industry that interests you. The goal is not to ask for a job – but to better understand about career paths and opportunities. Don't be shy about reaching out to professionals you don't know, informational interviews are a common part of the employment process. Luckily, most people enjoy sharing about their path to success and providing advice to new professionals interested in their career field.

#### WRITE DOWN YOUR APPROACH:

Think about family members, friends, faculty, and/or mentors who could answer career questions and share knowledge.

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For your interview, draft a short introduction of yourself and career goals.

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#### TIP #1

Create a list of open-ended questions that (with the right advice) can help you move your career plans forward. Sometimes asking two to three different professionals the same informational interview questions can help you to compare and contrast their advice.





Chose two questions below AND Create two questions you want to ask:

- » How did you choose this career?
- » What does a typical day or week look like in your position?
- » What credentials are needed to move up in your industry? What are the pros and cons in this career?
- » What advice would you give a new professional in this career field?

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## TIP #2

Conduct the interview either: in person, over the phone, or by video chat. Make sure to be professional, lead the conversation, and always be on time.

For your interview, draft a short introduction of yourself and career goals.

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## POST-INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Did you think the information was helpful or not?

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Did their career interest match your values and career goals?

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What would you like to ask in the next interview?

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## ORGANIZE YOUR CONTACTS

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-Up: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-Up: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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Don't be shy about reaching out to professionals you don't know, informational interviews are a common part of the employment process.

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-Up: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-Up: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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# NET WORTH & SELF-WEALTH

You are the CEO of YOU

Too often our society correlates value (or worth) with: GDP metrics, race and skin color, real estate and financial assets, or inheritance over raw materials and resources. The information below suggests another perspective of value which emphasizes self-wealth.

## WHAT IS FINANCIAL LITERACY?

It provides the ability to use knowledge and skills to manage financial resources effectively for a lifetime of financial well-being.

**Goal:** to generate wealth and value (e.g. net worth).

**Real:** to generate the right mindset that yields financial prosperity.

### 4 Basic Financial Terms

Capital	Equity
Investment	Credit

**Capital** - Wealth in the form of assets owned by a person or organization that is available or contributed for a particular purpose.

- » **Assets:** any item of economic value owned by an individual or corporation.
- » **Capital is more durable than money** and is used to generate wealth through investment.
- » **Money vs. Capital;** which one is more beneficial to you?

**Equity** - Value of shares (or stocks) a person owns.

- » Stakeholder/ Ownership
- » Own vs. Owe (both are forms of equity but very different)
  - » **Owe:** you have to return monetary assets to fulfill an agreed upon obligation.
  - » **Own:** it is yours and belongs to you.
- » Use Your Capital to grow Equity.

**Investment** - The purchase or spending of goods that are not consumed today but are used in the future to create and grow wealth.

- » **Quick Return vs. Long Game** (money vs. capital), which is most important to you?
- » **Good investors ask the right questions** and seek to understand the trajectory of a business lifecycle. Remember that investing comes with risks. Yes, there is a possibility that you could lose your money. Doing thorough research beforehand can help you to make sound investments which can yield enormous benefits.

**Credit** - The ability to borrow money, access goods, or services with the understanding that you will pay later.

- » Preconditions for borrowing:
  - » Must establish credit.
  - » Demonstrate trustworthiness.
  - » Understand how interest works.
- » Check your score for free:
  - » Experian
  - » Credit Karma
  - » At your local credit union (i.e. SDCCU, Mission Federal).



*Taken prior to 2020.*

## WHAT IS SELF-WEALTH LITERACY?

The sense of one's own value, or worth as a person. Serves as a motivational function, by making it more or less likely that people will exhibit a strong desire to take care of themselves, and explore their full potential.

### 4 Basic **Real** Terms

<b>Network Capital</b>	<b>Sweat Equity</b>
<b>Time Investment</b>	<b>Credit Worthiness</b>

**Network Capital** - Also known as social capital, it refers to resources such as information, support, and **social** influence that flows through a network to generate a strong synergy that connects a community of people. Sometimes the connection lasts a lifetime.

- » It's not what you know, but who you know!

**Sweat Equity** - Is the non-monetary investment that owners or employees contribute to a business venture.

- » Increasing value through labor.
  - » For example, try taking on new initiatives at work or school beyond your assigned duties. This will set you apart from co-workers who simply "punch the time," and will demonstrate you are really invested in your area of expertise.
- » Take ownership in developing and accumulating needed resources for team success.

**Time Investment** - Invest your time, instead of spending it.

- » Time investment & ROI (i.e. Return On Investment).
- » When you invest in something you expend resources, but you do so with an expectation of getting a good return on your investment (ROI). Investing your time means that you engage in fulfilling activities which are calculated to bring you meaningful rewards in the future.

**Credit Worthiness** - Based on your work-ethic, how would your employer, colleagues, family members, classmates, or professors rate your ability to follow-through on important, sensitive and urgent tasks?

- » Rate yourself on a scale of 0 - 10+.
- » A strong work-ethic + excellent follow-through = Increased Credit Worthiness.

## CURRENCY YOU DO HAVE

- » **Time.** Everyone has 24 hours in a day and 168 hours in a week.
- » **Access to a wide range of professionals** at San Diego State.
- » Faculty and staff who **want to see you succeed.**
- » The ability to **acquire and apply effective strategies.**
- » **Your determination** to evolve into a better person and professional.

### Questions to Ask Yourself

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- » Are you building a good ROI?
- » Are you setting standards which will help you grow?
- » How often do you self-invest (e.g. health, entertainment, etc.)
- » Are you working harder or working smarter?
- » Are you investing your 24 hours or simply spending your time?
- » Are you asking the right questions about self-wealth and generational wealth?

### Bottom Line

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1. Grow your network capital.
  - » “You’re either networking or not working.” - *Chris Turntine - Associate Director Employer Services & Campus Planning, Career Services.*
2. Don’t be afraid to sweat, and make things happen.
3. Be strategic in how you invest your time.
4. Use credit effectively to elevate your worthiness and reliability.

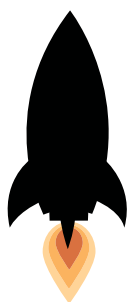
*Credit: This section is adapted from a workshop presentation “Must Have Tools for Men of Color 2020,” by Quincey Penn, M.S., - Assistant Director of Equity & Inclusion, Career Readiness, and by Antoine Stevens-Phillips, M.Ed., - Public Affairs and Communications Specialist. Both contributors work in the department of Career Services at SDSU.*



# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

# GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Next Level



At some point in your college career, you must decide what you would like to do after graduation – and that includes whether or not to attend graduate school. If you’re trying to determine whether graduate school is right for you, below are some pointers to help you make an enlightened decision.

## SHOULD I CONSIDER GOING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL?

### Going to graduate school might be a good idea if you ...

- » Want to be a professor, lawyer, doctor, investment banker or work in any profession that requires a post-secondary education.
- » Wish to develop additional expertise in a particular subject or field to maximize your future earning potential and opportunities for career advancement.
- » Are deeply interested in a particular subject and wish to study it in depth – AND have the time and financial resources to devote to further education.

### Going to graduate school might NOT be a good idea if you ...

- » Are trying to delay your entry into the “real world” with real responsibilities and real bills.
- » Aren’t sure about your career goals.
- » Aren’t prepared to devote the time and hard work needed to succeed.
- » Want to stay in school longer to avoid a poor job market.



## IS IT BETTER TO WORK FIRST OR ATTEND GRADUATE SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY AFTER I COMPLETE MY UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE?

### Work first if ...

- » You would like to get some real-world work experience before investing thousands of dollars in a graduate degree.
- » The graduate school of your choice prefers work experience (most MBA and some Ph.D. programs require this).
- » You cannot afford to go to graduate school now, and you haven't applied for any scholarships, grants, fellowships or assistantships, which could pay for a great deal of your education.

### Go to graduate school now if ...

- » You are absolutely sure you want to be a college professor, doctor, lawyer, etc., and need a graduate degree to pursue your dream job.
- » You have been awarded grants, fellowships, scholarships or assistantships that will help pay for your education.
- » You're concerned that once you start earning real money, you won't be able to return to the lifestyle of a "starving" student.
- » Your study habits and mental abilities are at their peak, and you worry whether you'll have the discipline (or motivation) to write papers and study for exams in a few years.



## I AM BROKE. HOW WILL I PAY FOR TUITION, BOOKS, FEES AND LIVING EXPENSES?

**Family:** You've likely borrowed from them in the past; maybe you're lucky enough for it to still be a viable option.

**Student Loans:** Even if you've taken out loans in the past, another \$50,000 - \$75,000+ may be a sound "investment" in your future.

**Fellowships/Scholarships:** A free education is always the best option. The catch is you need a high GPA, good GRE/GMAT/LSAT/MCAT scores and the commitment to search out every possible source of funding.

**Teaching/Research Assistantships:** Many assistantships include tuition waivers, plus a monthly stipend. It's a great way to get paid for earning an education.

**Employer Sponsorship:** Did you know that some companies actually pay for you to continue your education? The catch is they usually expect you to continue working for them after you complete your degree so they can recoup their investment.



## WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF GOING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL FULL TIME VS. PART TIME?

### Benefits of attending graduate school full time:

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- » You'll be able to complete your degree sooner.
- » You can totally commit your intellectual, physical and emotional energy to your education.
- » Ideal if you want to make a dramatic career change.

### Benefits of attending graduate school part time:

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- » Work income helps pay for your education.
- » You can take a very manageable course load.
- » You can juggle family responsibilities while completing your degree.
- » Allows you to work in the function/industry/career of your choice while continuing your education.
- » Employers will often pay for part (or all) of your graduate degree.



## ASSUMING I WANT TO GO TO GRADUATE SCHOOL IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

- » Identify your true strengths, interests and values to help you discover what is right for YOU, not your friends or parents.
- » Keep your grades up and sign up (and prepare) to take the required standardized tests.
- » Talk to faculty, friends and family who have gone to graduate school to get their perspective about the differences in time commitment between being an undergraduate and a graduate student.
- » Talk to faculty, friends and family who are in your targeted profession to get a realistic sense of the career path and the challenges associated with the work they do.
- » Investigate creative ways to finance your education; by planning ahead you may reduce your debt.
- » Research graduate schools to help you find the best match.
- » Investigate the admissions process and reach out to current graduate students at your targeted schools to evaluate your probability for admission.
- » Have faith and APPLY! Remember, you can't get in unless you apply.

*Credit: Roslyn J. Bradford, Assistant Director of the MBA Career Resource Center at the University of Southern California, Marshall School of Business in Los Angeles.*



## AFTER SUBMITTING YOUR GRADUATE APPLICATION

- » Maintain a strong GPA.
- » Remain involved in meaningful activities and positions.
- » Complete secondary/supplemental applications.
- » Practice and prepare for your graduate interview.
- » Review graduation requirements with your college and major advisers.
- » Accept the graduate offer at your school of choice.
- » Send thank-you notes to faculty and everyone who supported the process. Keep them updated on the admission process.

## WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT & STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Most graduate programs will ask you to submit both a Personal Statement and a Statement of Purpose. Both documents are great opportunities to stand out and convey what makes you unique from other candidates who might have similar grades, scores and co-curricular experiences.

### PERSONAL STATEMENT

- » Describe experiences related to who you are and how it contributed to your interest in the career field.
- » Share Your Story: Draw in the reader, using a writing style that is fun and imaginative. Feel free to use dialogue and detailed examples.
- » Be Strategic: The best stories are dramatic. Find a THEME that will bring together all your paragraphs.
- » Remember, the lead paragraph is most important. Either grab the audience's attention or you will lose them. Use the first paragraph to set the tone and direction. The purpose is for the readers to grasp who you are and what your goals are by the end of the first paragraph.

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- » Discusses your purpose for applying; Share your professional and research goals, and any experience you possess.
- » Demonstrate Your Knowledge: Show what you know and who you are. Show how you seek to impact the career field, or what has drawn you to the field.
- » Share specifics about your research. Explain how your academic and professional experiences have prepared you to pursue research at the next level. Detail important course information, faculty whose work you admire or aligns with your goals and speak to fellowship opportunities or career opportunities provided around the school's location.
- » Explain how and why your research interests should be pursued at this particular institution and in this particular program.



## REQUESTING A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

### Before the Request

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- » Organize all your important documents for the graduate program or college.
- » Create a list of your accomplishments, achievements or personal attributes that you would like faculty and other professionals to address.
- » Make sure to update your resume to reflect specific research and work experiences for the graduate program.

### Timing of the Request

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- » Preferably two months before the deadline, but earlier is better.
- » Share the deadline date with the letter writers during the initial request and precisely where the letter should be sent.
- » Start developing relationships with faculty, staff, mentors and other professionals as early as possible. That way you're not put in an awkward situation of requesting a letter of recommendation from someone who is just getting to know you.

### Follow-Up

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- » Send a friendly reminder two weeks prior to the deadline (email or phone call) about the letter of recommendation, if you have not heard back from the writer.
- » Make sure to send a thank-you email after they have submitted the letter (or as part of your cordial reminder).
- » Remember to remind the writer of the outcome of your application, after completion.





# INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

## A Great Investment

Today's employers are seeking out culturally diverse and experienced employees who can work effectively in an increasingly global workplace. Take advantage of the opportunity to gain international exposure, as it will increase your value in the workplace.

### CAREER ENHANCEMENT

- » Study abroad can enhance your full-time and/or internship prospects since employers are increasingly seeking students with such experience.
- » Employers recognize the fact that those students who have successfully completed a study abroad program are likely to possess the skills needed for the global economy: economic and geographical knowledge, cross-cultural communication skills, advanced analytical skills, flexibility, an understanding of and familiarity with local customs, an ability to adapt to new circumstances, and often a proficiency in a new language.
- » Students who study abroad should highlight these unique set of skills to potential employers to distinguish themselves from the rest.



## RESUME BUILDER

As you share your resume with prospective employers, you will want to highlight the experience that you gained while studying abroad. Many employers are looking for people who are versatile and adaptable, and by listing your study abroad experience on your resume you are demonstrating your ability to succeed in a new environment and your willingness to seek out new experiences. See examples below.

**1. Mention your international experience under QUALIFICATIONS.**

- » Enhanced awareness and sensitivity to cultural differences.
- » Foreign language proficiency.
- » Awareness of global economic, political issues and realities.

**2. List your study abroad separately under EDUCATION.**

- » Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Finance - GPA 4.0
- » San Diego State University May 20XX
- » Study Abroad, Institute ABC, Barcelona, Spain - Summer 20XX
- » Extensive study of the Spanish and Catalan cultures through classroom and host family experience. Learned valuable lessons in time management, foreign exchange rates and cultural aspects of business.

**3. An international internship can be listed under EXPERIENCE.**

**4. If you participated in volunteer work** you can put this under EXPERIENCE or VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE depending on how extensive the volunteer work was during your time abroad.

## COVER LETTER

Be sure to briefly describe the skills and experiences learned from studying abroad and how that learning is transferable to the position for which you are applying. You do not want to repeat your resume to the employer, but this is the opportunity to highlight related accomplishments while overseas that will make the reader want to learn more. Typically, this information is presented in the second or third paragraph of the cover letter.

## INTERVIEWS

During the interview, you may be asked about your study abroad experience, and you should be ready to answer these questions in a way that highlights how the skills attained overseas will “add value” to the employer’s organization and will enhance your job performance. Below are some examples of questions:

1. **“You studied in Barcelona, Spain. Why did you decide to go there? How was your experience the same or different from your expectations?”**

**Answer Strategy:** Think back to why you decided to go. It may help to refer back to the personal statement you wrote with your study abroad application. Think about the things that surprised you while you were overseas. For example, you may have realized that Spain is more diverse than you believed it to be.

2. **“What have you accomplished at school or during your study abroad experience that you are most proud of?”**

**Answer Strategy:** Think about the goals you had for going overseas. Which goals did you meet? Which ones were you most proud of? As you relate this to the interviewer, you might express it by ...

- a. Explaining the goal you had for traveling abroad.
- b. Describe how this goal was accomplished.
- c. Sharing what you learned along the way.

3. **“What did you learn overseas that will help you do this job successfully?”**

**Answer Strategy:** Think about the ways in which you have changed. You might have learned to be more flexible, adaptable, tolerant, open-minded and/or patient. You may have gained specialized skills or knowledge from your classes, an internship or volunteer opportunities. Think about how some of these changes and skills might be useful on the job.

*Credit: Center for International Studies, Northampton, VA*





# JOB SEARCH FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

## Your Career in the States

Getting a job in the United States can be challenging, even for domestic students. As an international student, you will encounter obstacles during the job search process. The following advice is intended to assist you in overcoming these obstacles and find the perfect job.

### BEGIN YOUR SEARCH EARLY

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, it takes an average of five months to find a good-paying job, so please don't wait until you graduate to start looking for a position. As an international student you should also be aware that it takes 90 days for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to process and approve your Optional Practical Training application.

### NETWORK

Only about 20% of jobs in the United States are advertised on the Internet. The other 80% are not advertised. These non-advertised jobs or "hidden jobs" are usually filled by word of mouth. To find out about these jobs you will need to network. Make an appointment with a career counselor through Handshake for more information on networking.

### SEEK U.S. COMPANIES WITH OFFICES IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY

Multinational companies will have an interest in your cultural background and language skills because of the ties they have in your home country. Many of these companies prefer to place foreign nationals in offices in their home countries for a few years prior to transferring to an office in the U.S.

### BECOME AN EXPERT ON VISAS AND OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

Many companies are hesitant about hiring foreign nationals because they don't understand the process. It is your job to educate the employer on how easy it is to hire an OPT student. If you want to stay in the U.S. longer than the year OPT allows, learn about the H1-B Visa so you can explain the process of hiring to your employer.

## CHOOSE A MAJOR/SPECIALIZATION IN DEMAND

If you want to work in the United States after graduation, choosing a profession in high demand is in your best interest. The top five occupations approved for H1-B Visa status were in the following areas:

- » Systems analysis and programming
- » College and university education
- » Accountants, auditors and related occupations
- » STEM-related occupations
- » Computer science and programming

## STRENGTHEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication skills (verbal and written) are the No. 1 quality desired by employers in job candidates. If your English needs improvement, take ESL, English composition or public speaking classes or contact the SDSU Writing Center for assistance.

## COMPLETE AN INTERNSHIP

If you want a job right after graduation, spend at least a year in your internship. This doesn't necessarily mean working for free, as international students can get a paid internship for up to 20 hours per week if it is part of the curriculum (meaning you must register for an internship class). This is known as CPT (Curricular Practical Training).

## PRACTICE INTERVIEWING

If you are interviewing with a U.S. company, you will be expected to conform to certain cultural norms. Your dress, manner of speaking, and the answers to questions will be expected to match certain norms. Because interviews are different in the U.S., it is important that you practice your interviewing skills. Make an appointment with a career counselor through Handshake to get started sooner rather than later.



# SALARY NEGOTIATION

## Know Your Value

A famous songwriter once shared, “You don’t get what you ask for, you get what you negotiate.” — Jadakiss. Salary negotiation is a process that requires strategy and preparation. It is very difficult to negotiate when you do not have enough information about salaries in your desired field of employment. Do the research, and get every penny you’re worth!

### MEET WITH A CAREER COUNSELOR (VIA HANDSHAKE)

Receive guidance and learn about resources available to you.

### RESEARCH SALARY INFORMATION

- » Use the following websites to calculate an average salary for a specific job in your field:
  - » Salary.com – [salary.com](https://www.salary.com)
  - » Glassdoor – [glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com)
  - » Payscale – [payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com)
  - » Indeed – [indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)
  - » SalaryList – [salarylist.com](https://www.salarylist.com)
  - » Salary Expert – [salaryexpert.com](https://www.salaryexpert.com)
  - » Bureau of Labor Statistics – [bls.gov/ooh](https://www.bls.gov/ooh)

## CALCULATE YOUR LIVING EXPENSES

Calculate your living expenses to determine your income requirements. Keep in mind that the cost of living increases an average of 3% per year. If you are considering relocation, there are internet resources that can assist you in comparing the cost of living by location. For instance, **bestplaces.net** and **payscale.com** have cost of living calculators. Use the worksheet below to start your calculations.

<b>HOUSING:</b> Rent _____ Insurance _____ Taxes _____ Maintenance _____	<b>FINANCIAL:</b> Credit Cards _____ Student Loans _____ Life Insurance _____ Investments _____ Savings _____
<b>UTILITIES:</b> Electricity _____ Water/Trash _____ Cell Phone _____ Internet/Cable _____	<b>FOOD:</b> Organic Foods _____ Restaurants _____
<b>TRANSPORTATION:</b> Car Loan _____ Insurance _____ Gas/Maintenance _____ Public Transportation _____	<b>PERSONAL:</b> Clothing _____ Laundry _____ Grooming _____ Entertainment _____
<b>HEALTH RELATED:</b> Insurance _____ Medicine/Prescriptions _____ Gym Membership _____	<b>MISCELLANEOUS:</b> Travel _____ Memberships _____
	<b>Total:</b> _____



## DEMONSTRATE YOUR WORTH

Make sure that you can demonstrate why you are worth a specific salary. Use accomplishments and internship/work experience to demonstrate how you can benefit the employer. Use concrete and real-life examples to support your request, not theoretical or hypothetical situations.

## SALARY GROWTH POTENTIAL

Know the salary growth potential in the career path you have chosen. Find out what the typical salary growth and advancement timelines are with the prospective employer. Even if the starting salary is not ideal, a strong potential for growth can easily make up for the first couple of years with the company.

## CALCULATE THE BENEFITS

Keep in mind that benefits can add value to your salary offer. You can also negotiate benefits. Some common benefits are: paid vacation, sick leave, health insurance, life insurance, stock options, tuition reimbursement, discounts in products and services and retirement plans.



Taken prior to 2020.

# EVALUATING A JOB OFFER

## Making the Decision

Congratulations! You've successfully managed your first/second interviews and have been offered a job! Perhaps you've even received offers from more than one employer. Whether it's one offer or more, your excitement can quickly get replaced by anxiety about the decisions which lie ahead. Take your time, and make the best strategic decision for your long-term career success.

### 3 IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

#### How closely does the offer match your career goals?

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- » What factors regarding a job, organization and work environment are on your "wish list?" How well does this position fit these factors?
- » You may want to consider the factors on P. 81 in evaluating your offer. Some of these may not be important to you, and there may be other factors not listed which are extremely important to your decision.

#### Do you need additional information about the offer (or anything) in order to make a decision?

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- » It is not unusual to discover that you have additional questions, lack some factual data or simply need a better sense of what the job and organization are like.  
**If this is the case, STOP! Don't go any further in your deliberations until you address these issues.**
- » You may need to call one of your interviewers and ask additional questions or contact an alum who works for the organization. If you need a better understanding of what it would be like during a day on the job, call the employer (if they are local) and ask to spend an afternoon shadowing an entry-level employee in the job you're considering. Most employers will be willing to accommodate you.

#### Are there additional issues you want to negotiate, which would bring the offer closer to your goal?

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- » Perhaps the issues which concern you about the offer can be changed. If the job seems ideal except for location, then you might want to raise the issue with the employer. Some start dates are non-negotiable because training classes must begin together. In some instances, however, the start date can be adjusted.

The more you know about a position, the better prepared you will be to articulate why you are the right candidate.

#### FINAL FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Nature of Work	Level of Responsibility
Organizational Culture	Location
Level of Autonomy	Work Hours
Travel	Benefits
Salary	Variety of Work
Mentoring	Stability of the Industry
Lifestyles of Employees	Advancement Opportunities
Stability of the Organization	Training and Development Opportunities
Quality of Higher Management	Opportunities to Learn and Grow in Job/ Company
Support for Continuing Education/ Advanced Degree	Transferability of Skills/Experience from Job

# LIFE AFTER SDSU AZTEC MENTOR PROGRAM

## Share Your Wisdom

The SDSU Aztec Mentor Program (AMP) was launched in Fall 2013 with the support of the Aztec Parents Fund and the vision of Bobbie J. Gray, M.Ed. Over 10,500 matches have been made to date. AMP is a partnership between SDSU Career Services and SDSU Alumni.

### ABOUT AMP



The program is open to eligible juniors, seniors and graduate students in all majors. Mentors are alumni and professionals who volunteer their time. The program runs during the Fall and Spring semesters.

AMP is collaborating with the Center for Intercultural Relations (CIR) and Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP) to match more first-generation college students with a mentor. As our shared efforts continue, we will expand

access to AMP and empower students who seize this opportunity to move their careers forward.

**For more information, please contact:**

---

**Phone:** 619-594-6851

**Email:** [amp@sdsu.edu](mailto:amp@sdsu.edu)

**AMP Virtual Drop-in Hours:** Monday-Friday from 10-11 a.m. and 1-2 p.m.  
(Schedule via Handshake).

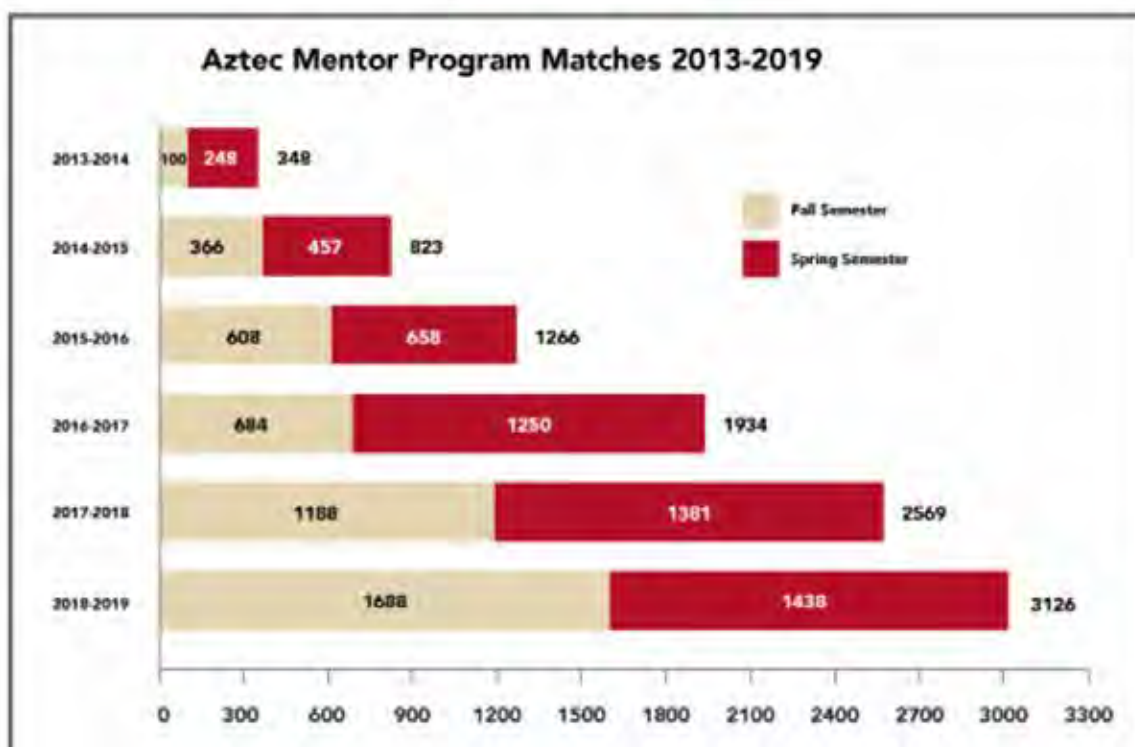


## Aztec Mentor Program (AMP) Matches

*Academic Years 2013 - 2019*

2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
<b>348</b>	<b>823</b>	<b>1,266</b>	<b>1,934</b>	<b>2,569</b>	<b>3,126</b>

Total AMP Matches  
**10,066**



Learn more at [amp.sdsu.edu](http://amp.sdsu.edu)



# SDSU ALUMNI LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

Aztecs for Life!

Lifetime Members are part of a distinguished alumni group who are connected to San Diego State University. Not only are they some of SDSU's most loyal and dedicated alumni, but they also find ways to get involved. A lifetime membership is a great way to remain connected to the university and enjoy many exclusive benefits.

## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

STAY CONNECTED	GET INVOLVED	MEMBERSHIP PLANS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» SDSU is home to top-ranking programs.</li><li>» Build a network of Aztecs for Life.</li><li>» Have volunteer opportunities to connect with fellow alumni.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Support the Lifetime Member Endowment and SDSU Alumni Scholarship program.</li><li>» Participate in exclusive lifetime member and SDSU events.</li><li>» Mentor students.</li><li>» Provide internships to students.</li><li>» Hire Aztecs!</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» A single lifetime membership is a one-time membership fee of \$500 and includes one membership gift.</li><li>» Dual lifetime memberships are a one-time membership fee of \$650 and include two membership gifts. Both members must live at the same address.</li></ul>



## SHAPING FUTURE PROFESSIONALS

Lifetime members play a critical role in shaping the future of San Diego State University. When you become a lifetime member, your membership supports the SDSU Alumni Lifetime Member endowment and SDSU Alumni scholarship program.

The Endowment provides the funding to offer existing alumni programs and create new activities to further benefit our alumni community. For more information on SDSU Alumni programs **check out our home page at [sdsualumni.org](https://sdsualumni.org)**

SDSU Alumni lifetime members have helped ensure that promising students have the resources they need to attain their dreams. **Currently, three \$5,000 annual SDSU Alumni scholarships are awarded:**

- » SDSU Alumni Legacy Scholarship
- » SDSU Alumni Scholarship (for any SDSU student)
- » SDSU Alumni Scholarship for a first-year student

## SHARE THIS GUIDE



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## CONTACT CAREER SERVICES

5500 Campanile Drive  
San Diego, CA 92182-8255  
Student Services East (SSE) 1200

### Office Hours\*:

Monday - Friday  
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### Contact:

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Email: [careerservices@sdsu.edu](mailto:careerservices@sdsu.edu)

### Virtual Front Desk via Zoom:

» Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

### Appointments\*:

- » 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
(at least 24 hours in advance)
- » Call or come in to schedule\*

### Drop-ins\*:

- » 15 minutes; no appointment needed\*.
- » Monday - Thursday: 1 - 3 p.m.
- » Friday: 10 a.m. - Noon

*\*NOTE: Please check the Virtual Front Desk for up-to-date information during SDSU Flex learning.*