

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:

- » 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:

- » 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:

- » 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:

- » 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:

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:

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

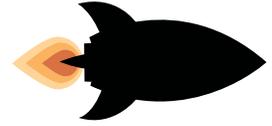
Use a plain typeface, no smaller than a 12-point font. Strive to make the document easier to read, not more fancy. For further information, contact a career counselor via Handshake.

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

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

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

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

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	Improvvised	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 May 2009
Supplementary Authorization in Science
San Diego State University, San Diego, CA GPA 4.0
Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, May 2007
Cultural Anthropology
Minor in Biology GPA 3.7
California State University, Long Beach

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 Areyouexperienced7@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)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Academic, research and medical » Sometimes many pages long » Intentionally standard » Highlights education » Very little change in format between academic fields » Should use no bullet points

vs.

Resume
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Non-academic » No more than two pages » Customized to fit a specific position » Highlights experience & achievements » Variety of changes in format between industries » Use bullet points to showcase your experience for a position

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

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)

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:

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) 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.

Dress for Success!

A GUIDE ON HOW TO DRESS FOR YOUR JOB INTERVIEW

It's All About The First Impression

JOB INTERVIEWING ATTIRE

CLOTHES SHOULD BE...

- Solid, dark or neutral colors
- Light colors can be worn underneath

SHOES SHOULD BE...

- Closed-toe heel or dress shoes

KEEP CLOTHES...

- Tailored
- In good condition
- Wrinkle, stain & lint free

SKIRTS AND DRESSES...

- Should be knee length

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS...

- Well groomed and clean
- No perfumes or colognes
- Minimum jewelry
- Accessories to consider: Padfolio, pen, resume

REMEMBER TO RESEARCH THE COMPANY CULTURE, VALUES AND STANDARDS

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
Career Services
Division of Student Affairs

These guidelines are for anyone regardless of gender identity and gender expression.

#SDSUCareers

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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.



Taken prior to 2020.

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