Tips, techniques and strategies to

GET HIRED

Hospitality and Tourism

Revised 2007-2008

Office of Career Development

Focus your future

Niagara University
Lower Level – Seton Hall
P.O. Box 2041
Niagara University, N.Y. 14109-2041
www.niagara.edu/career
Tel: 716-286-8500 • Fax 716-286-8533

The Office of Career Development is committed to providing access to its services, programs, and activities for individuals with disabilities. To request assistance, contact the OCD at 716-286-8500/V, 716-286-8533 (FAX), or e-mail at careers@niagara.edu.
Want a graduate degree that will make a difference in your career? Niagara University has everything you need - outstanding academic programs, small classes, a convenient location, and the hands-on, practical knowledge you need to succeed.

**Master of Education**
The area’s only private university that’s both NCATE accredited and recognized by the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Niagara offers a three semester accelerated program combining a master’s degree and New York State certification, with advanced programs in Foundations in Teaching, Educational Leadership, School Counseling, School Psychology, Mental Health Counseling, Special Education and Literacy.

**Master of Business Administration**
With a nationally acclaimed faculty, practice-oriented curriculum and AACSB accreditation, Niagara lets you complete your MBA in as little as sixteen months with convenient weekday evening or Saturday classes.

**Master of Criminal Justice**
A traditional master’s program and the area’s only five-year BS/MS program in Criminal Justice Administration lets Niagara meet the needs of both incoming freshmen and working professionals.

**Master of Arts-Interdisciplinary Studies**
An innovative curriculum that crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries allows each student to design his or her own degree. If you’ve always wanted to pursue a Master’s degree but have been unable to find the right program, we can help you meet your goals.
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MISSION STATEMENT

As part of the educational process at Niagara University, the Office of Career Development (OCD) provides individualized services to assist students and alumni in developing and fulfilling their career objectives, with the goal of obtaining lifelong career satisfaction.

2007-08 EVENTS CALENDAR

Dates subject to change - check with the Office of Career Development (OCD) or visit www.niagara.edu/career

Welcome Back Tent Party/Part-time Job Fair – learn about career development services, enjoy music and a picnic lunch, and meet employers with part-time job opportunities (Aug. 30, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.)

Meet the Accountants Night – accounting majors meet with representatives of accounting firms to discuss employment opportunities (Sept. 18, 6 p.m.)

Greater Western New York Law School Fair – meet with recruiters from law schools (Oct. 1, 1-3 p.m.)

Graduate and Professional Schools Fair – meet with recruiters from graduate and professional schools (Oct. 17, 12-2 p.m.)

Job Quest – job fair for students of all majors to meet with local and national employers to discuss available opportunities (Nov. 1/time/location: TBA)

Dining for Success Etiquette Dinner – learn dining and business etiquette tips for mealtime interviews and social occasions (Nov. 14, 5-7 p.m.)

Canadian Teacher Career Fair – Canadian students in education programs meet with representatives of Ontario school boards (Dec. 4, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)

Jobsapalooza – annual job fair for students of all majors to meet with recruiters from the Western New York area to discuss employment opportunities (TBA)

Hospitality and Tourism Career Fair – hospitality and tourism management majors meet with representatives of hospitality and tourism employers to discuss employment opportunities (Feb. 11, 1-3 p.m.)

Student Employee of the Year Award Ceremony – student employees are honored for outstanding work performance (Feb. 29, 3:30 p.m.)

Dress for Success Fashion Show – students and faculty model professional dress for the workplace (March 3, noon-1 p.m.)

Human Services Career Fair – meet with representatives from local human services agencies to discuss employment opportunities (March 4, 5:30-7 p.m.)

Guest Speaker – career and job search advice from an expert in the field (March 6, TBA)

Career Expo 2008 – job fair for students of all majors to meet with recruiters to discuss employment opportunities in various fields (March 12, noon-2 p.m.)

Dining for Success Etiquette Dinner – learn dining and business etiquette tips for mealtime interviews and social occasions (March 13, 5-7 p.m.)

Teacher Recruitment Days – interview with representatives of school districts from across the United States (April 10-11)
SERVICES

Career Counseling – assists students in exploring careers related to their interests, experiences, abilities, and values

Cooperative Education Program – provides students with an opportunity to earn academic credit for paid work experience

Job Location Program – assists currently enrolled students in finding part-time, temporary and summer employment

On-Campus Interview Program – employers visit campus throughout the academic year to interview students for full-time, part-time and co-op employment opportunities

Get Hired Workshops – in-class workshops which provide students with the latest information on resumes, interviewing, and the job search

Practice Interviews – offers students an opportunity to practice their interviewing skills

Resume and Cover Letter Critiquing – job search correspondence reviewed by Office of Career Development professionals

Credentials Files – establish files containing letters of recommendation for mail or electronic submission to prospective employers upon request of the job candidates (used primarily by education majors)

OCD STAFF

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Step 1

Self-assessment – identify your:

• skills and abilities
• interests
• lifestyle values
• temperament
• motivations
• experience
• accomplishments
• strengths and weaknesses

Self-assessment helps you determine the most important criteria to use in analyzing your potential career options. It can also assist you in communicating, both on your resume and in person, how you could fulfill the personnel needs of a particular employer. Career Development staff can assist you with your self-assessment through instruments such as the DISCOVER program, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and the Self-Directed Search. Call 286-8500 for an appointment.

Think of yourself as a product that you will be marketing. To sell yourself effectively, you need to know everything there is to know about your product; including its best features, its weaknesses, and its worth in the marketplace. The knowledge you receive from self-assessment exercises will provide the foundation on which to base your resume writing, your interview preparation, and ultimately the direction you take in your career choice.

Step 2

Explore career options:

• Research careers to determine the nature of the work, training required, etc.
• Conduct informational interviews
• Participate in related volunteer work
• Obtain career-related experience through related employment and volunteer work
• Have your resume and sample cover letters critiqued
• Participate in a videotaped mock interview
• Join professional organizations and community groups

Step 3

Develop and conduct your job search campaign:

• Network with family, friends, professors, past employers, etc.
• Research companies and organizations
• Read the newspaper classifieds and utilize the Internet
• Send a cover letter and resume to target employers
• Attend job fairs
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| • Begin to clarify your career interests through classes, student organizations, and community service  
• Make initial choice of major  
• Begin to consider career fields in relation to your tentative academic major  
• Explore careers using Discover, a user-friendly computer-based guidance system, available in the career development office  
• Take part in career programs offered through the residence halls or sponsored by student groups  
• Talk to individuals already employed about careers related to your interests  
• Visit the career development office and pick up a Get Hired Handbook to begin preparing a resume  
• Obtain part-time and summer jobs to develop interpersonal skills, help finance your education, and build responsible work habits | • Begin self-assessment by compiling interests, strengths, skills, abilities and values, using the Discover program and other inventories, available by contacting the Office of Career Development  
• Make an appointment with the career counselor in the OCD to discuss career plans  
• Explore preliminary major/career choices  
• Maintain a good GPA  
• Research specific occupations, collect information on training needed, demand for jobs, alternatives, etc.  
• Gain exposure to the world-of-work through employment or volunteer experience  
• Get information about participating in a cooperative education work experience, which enables you to receive valuable on-the-job training in your major, while earning money and academic credit  
• Utilize work experience to further develop work-related skills and improve self-confidence |
| JUNIOR YEAR | SENIOR YEAR |
| • Test your interest and qualifications to work in specific career field(s) by applying for a cooperative education experience, internship, part-time job, or volunteer position  
• Join campus organizations related to your field  
• Investigate the role of graduate school in your chosen career field by attending the Annual Graduate and Professional Schools Fair and/or the Greater Western New York Law School Fair  
• Make an appointment to meet with a graduate school advisor (health professions, law, or general)  
• Pick up application materials for graduate school examination (GRE, LSAT, GMAT, and MAT) in the Career Library  
• Submit a resume for critique to the OCD for on-campus recruiting in your senior year  
• Attend annual spring Job Fair to find co-op, part-time, summer employment and to meet and network with job recruiters | • Continue plans for graduate school  
• Visit the career development office and pick up a Career Information Packet, containing valuable job search information and strategies  
• Submit copies of critiqued resume for on-campus interviews with visiting job recruiters  
• Make an appointment for a practice interview, with the option of videotaping, to critique interviewing skills  
• Set up a credentials file, containing letters of reference, copy of transcript, and other credentials (primarily for education majors)  
• Attend Get Hired month events to sharpen professional skills  
• Attend senior transition seminar to prepare you for “Life After Niagara”  
• Attend career and job fairs to network with job recruiters and get hired! |
GUIdELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS

1. Check the on-campus interview postings throughout the academic year at www.niagara.edu/career or in the Office of Career Development (OCD) for an updated schedule of companies conducting on-campus interviews.

2. Submit a copy of your resume to the OCD by the date requested for the position(s) you would like to be considered.

3. Schedule a practice interview with Mike Skowronski, Employer Relations Coordinator, at 716-286-8535, or Stephanie Newman, Career Counselor, at 716-286-8539. Only the resumes of students who have scheduled or completed practice interviews will be forwarded to recruiters.

4. Recruiters review the submitted resumes and notify the OCD which students they would like to interview. Once your resume has been accepted for an interview, either the OCD or the recruiter will contact you to schedule an interview.

5. Report to the OCD 15 minutes before the scheduled interview.

6. Wear appropriate business attire for the interview.
   - Men – Dark blue or grey wool blend suit, white long sleeve shirt, tie, polished shoes and avoid jewelry other than a wedding or class ring.
   - Women – Skirts should be no shorter than slightly above the knee, solid color blouses; skin-tone hosiery and navy, black, cordovan or taupe pumps with two-inch heels are recommended; and make-up should be subtle.

7. If you must cancel, contact the OCD at 716-286-8500 at least 24 hours prior to the interview. No-shows and cancellations of an interview without adequate notice are unacceptable.

No-Show and Cancellation Policy

A positive relationship with recruiters is extremely important for the continued success of on-campus-interviews at Niagara University. These relationships are adversely affected when a recruiter is faced with a “no-show” or cancellation. While we understand that it is impossible to predict illnesses or emergencies, we ask that you contact the OCD as soon as possible if you are unable to make your scheduled interview. When you do not show up for an interview or cancel at the last minute, you prevent other students from having the opportunity to interview. Always keep your schedule updated so that you do not forget an interview time or date.

If you do not show for a scheduled interview or do not cancel 24 hours in advance, you will not be permitted to continue participating in On-Campus Interviews until you meet with a member of the OCD staff.

Upon Acceptance of a Job Offer

- Notify the OCD immediately to withdraw from the recruiting program and to allow us to congratulate you!
- Notify other employers with whom you have offers pending.
- Honor your acceptance of the offer as a contractual agreement with the employer. Do not continue to interview after accepting an offer. Reneging on an accepted offer is unacceptable!
### Objective
Optional – used only if you have a specific position or career goal in mind
Must be clear, concise, and fit the advertised position
May be stated directly on resume or included in cover letter

### Education
- **Institution** – City, State
- **Degree** (written out) – major field of study, month/year of graduation date
- **GPA**: (3.2 or better)
- **Dean’s List** (note if more than one semester)

### Experience
- **Organization** – City, State
- **Job Title**
  - Use action verbs to describe duties and accomplishments
  - Trace growth of responsibilities
  - Internships/co-op and volunteer work can be included
  - Use present tense in describing current position, past tense for all others
  - Quantify whenever possible
  - Put your most significant accomplishments first
  - Give more space to items of most relevance

### Skills
Language fluency, computer, or other relevant skills

### Honors/Activities
- **State award**, position/office held, organization, dates involved
- Highlight special achievements
- Clubs, intramural athletics, student organizations (office held)
- A brief description of duties can be included, if it relates to your career objective.
- Membership in professional organizations and offices held

### Special Projects
Select projects that can demonstrate relevant skills or accomplishments

### Community Involvement
Volunteer and philanthropic work (office held)
Mention significant projects if they relate to your career goals

### Research
Should be brief and include unique aspects

### Personal Data
Should not be included on a resume

### Hobbies/Interests
Generally not included but could be used, if related to your job objective or goals

### References
Available upon request (optional)

### STYLE TIPS
- Keep your resume to one page; two pages maximum for students with extensive research or internship experience.
- Arrange category headings to highlight most notable experiences. Employers devote as few as 5 seconds to each resume. Be sure your resume is reader-friendly. Leave lots of white space between resume sections.
- Boldface or italic type, underlining, and the use of some words written entirely in capital letters can highlight important parts of your resume.
- Make good use of spacing.
- Print your resume on good quality white, buff, or gray bond paper.

**DO:**
- Make it error free, attractive to the eye, brief and to the point
- Use action phrases rather than complete sentences or paragraphs
- Familiarize yourself with the skills required for the type of work you are seeking and emphasize these or related skills in your job descriptions
- Stress your advancements and/or increased responsibilities if you have worked for one organization for a long period of time
- Highlight outcomes, results, and achievements
- Develop and maintain a consistent, orderly presentation throughout your resume

**DON’T:**
- Use abbreviations, have any typographical or spelling errors
- List previous salaries, supervisors, or reasons for leaving
- Use personal pronouns such as “I” or “my”
- List names of references on your resume – have a separate reference sheet available
- Use brightly colored paper or include a photograph
- List personal data
The use of action words can bring your resume and cover letter to life by helping to convey the image of a successful “doer.” The following list might be helpful:

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<td>Nominated</td>
<td>Recognized</td>
<td>PRIVILEGED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-7-
BARRY LINCOLN
NULincoln@mail.org

Current Address: P.O. Box 4561
Niagara University, NY 14109
(716) 286-1234

Permanent Address: 4 Johnson Avenue
Rochester, NY 10013
(716) 555-1456

Niagara University – Niagara University, NY
Bachelor of Science – Hospitality and Tourism Management, May 2007
Minor: Computer Information Science
GPA: 3.82/4.3
Dean’s List (three semesters)

Schiller International University – Engelberg, Switzerland
Study Abroad Program, Summer 2005

Monroe County Community College – Rochester, NY
Associate in Science – Computer Science, 2005
Minor: Computer Information Science
GPA: 3.91/4.0
Dean’s List (three semesters)

Food Service Sanitation Certificate
National Restaurant Association, 2006

Manager on Duty/Night Auditor
8/04 – Present
• Control the department keys and bank deposits
• Perform accurate accounting work to balance hotel’s accounts
• Post charges for groups, banquets, and weekend packages
• Print and prepare morning reports for all departments

Night Auditor/Front Desk Clerk
8/04 – Present
• Accepted and adjusted reservations as needed
• Posted credit card, phone, and miscellaneous charges
• Prepared market segment and reports for various departments

Beverage Person and Food Runner
9/03 – 12/03
• Maintained the availability of beverages, cups, glasses, and ice
• Created a friendly and clean environment for student dining

Computer Lab Assistant
9/03 – Present
• Resolve student problems with various software programs
• Create deparmental flyers and brochures

Sales Associate
11/03 – 8/05
• Handled cash and credit transactions of approximately $3,000 daily
• Assisted customers with product selection

Microsoft Word
Microsoft Excel
Microsoft PowerPoint

WordPerfect 6.0
 Lotus 1-2-3

Recipient, Holiday Inn Employee of the Month, February 2003
Member, Niagara University Hospitality and Tourism Association

Available upon request

Hospitality Resume Tips
A resume may not get you the job, but it may be the reason you secure an interview. Think of your resume as your personal advertisement. Draw an employer’s initial attention by preparing a resume that is well organized and error-free. However, work to maintain the employer’s interest by effectively articulating your work-related skills and abilities in your resume.

Know your audience
Investigate career interests and prospective employers. A resume should reflect relevant skills and experience that you offer potential employers. Consider the basic requirements sought by hiring personnel and be certain to highlight those qualifications in your resume and cover letter.

Highlight work-related experiences and skills
Before graduating, hospitality majors often have obtained work experience in the industry. Highlight these related experiences, emphasizing key responsibilities, skills, and accomplishments. Remember to include jargon appropriate to the hospitality industry.
KELLY ANN STEWART  
765 – 21st Street  
Niagara Falls, NY 14303  
(716) 555-1212  
k_stewart@gmail.com

Summary
• Intensive training in customer service; able to interact effectively with the public and provide the highest quality service in a fast-paced environment
• Experienced and responsible in handling large quantities of cash and credit receipts in a variety of currencies
• Efficient and organized administrator; able to process and manage paperwork
• Computer knowledge includes MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

Education
Niagara University – Niagara University, NY  
Bachelor of Science in Tourism and Recreation Management, August 2007  
Dean’s List – 2 semesters  
Niagara University Presidential Scholarship

Schiller International University – Engelberg, Switzerland  
Study Abroad Program, Summer 2005  
Completed courses in French and Marketing

Related Experience
Walt Disney World – Lake Buena Vista, FL  
Intern  
8/06 – 12/06
• Assigned to the Pinocchio Village Haus, a fast-paced quick service restaurant in Magic Kingdom’s Fantasyland
• Learned the highest quality customer service techniques and responded to customer questions and concerns
• Processed, handled, and distributed cash/credit receipts for guests
• Shadowed a restaurant manager and developed creative ideas for restaurant improvements
• Completed courses in human resource management and hospitality management through the Disney College Program

Six Flags Darien Lake – Darien, NY  
Admissions Clerk (Seasonal)  
5/03 – 10/03
• Operated Ticketmaster ticket computer system
• Greeted and assisted customers and responded to their questions
• Processed, handled, and distributed season passes and maintained season pass customer information in a database
• Processed cash receipts for customers in several different currencies

Other Experience
Niagara Arts and Cultural Center – Niagara Falls, NY  
Bookkeeper  
3/04-9/04
• Worked with accounting staff to update accounting computer software
• Organized office files
• Maintained client financial records

Activities
Secretary, Niagara University Hospitality and Tourism Association  
Editor, The Niagaran, Niagara University Yearbook

Athletics
Niagara University NCAA Division I Women’s Softball  
• Captain: 2006-07
• Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference All-American Team: 2004-06
• First-Team All-MAAC: 2005

References
Available upon request
Scannable Resume

MARK WILLIAMS
2117 Meadowbrook Drive
Lewiston, New York 14220
716-668-2787
markw23@niagara.edu

Education
Niagara University – Niagara University, New York
Bachelor of Science in Commerce, May 2007
Concentration: Marketing
GPA: 3.5/4.3

Relevant Courses
Consumer Behavior. International Marketing.
Integrating Marketing Communications.

Internship
Blake Advertising – Niagara Falls, New York
Research Assistant 10/06-12/06
Utilized internet and NEXIS to gather demographic information on current
and potential clients
Assisted with distribution of direct mail materials

The Gallup Organization, Inc. – Lincoln, New Jersey
Marketing Intern 5/06-8/06
Selected from more than 1,000 applicants to serve as one of ten interns
Designed and researched a study on group dynamics in the workplace
Surveyed general public for marketing research studies
Attended advertising seminar and created ad for local telephone company

Related Experience
Niagara University – Niagara University, New York
Student Assistant – College of Business 9/04-Present
Conduct literature searches in university library on assigned topics
Supervise department computer lab and assist students using Microsoft Office

Barnes and Noble Bookstore – Niagara University, New York
Retail Merchandise Associate 8/04-Present
Assist patrons with selection of required course materials
Design promotional materials for display in student center and campus
newspaper
Train new employees on store policies and procedures

Computer Skills
Microsoft Word WordPerfect 6.0
PageMaker Microsoft PowerPoint
PressWriter Netscape 3.0
Microsoft Explorer Microsoft Excel

Language Skills
Basic understanding of spoken Spanish

Honors/Activities
Recipient, Niagara University Presidential Scholarship; Secretary, Niagara
University Marketing Association; Volunteer, Niagara University Community
Action Program (Community Service); Staff, Niagaran (University Yearbook)

What is Scanning?
Resume scanning is becoming a common practice for large businesses. Companies
that receive a large number of resumes scan the text into a giant computer database.
Once a resume has been scanned into the system, employers can identify potential
candidates for a position by searching the database using keywords. The candidates
whose resumes most closely match the keywords specifications will appear as
potential matches.

Heading
• Place your name at the top of the page on
its own line.
• Use standard address format below name.
• List each phone number on its own line.

Content
• Use key words to define skills, experience,
and education.
• Describe experience with concrete words
rather than vague descriptions.
• Increase list of key words by including
specifics, for example, list the names of
software you use.
• Use common categories such as: Objective,
Experience, Skills, Education, Licenses,
Certifications, Honors, References, etc.

Layout
• Use standard typefaces such as Helvetica,
Optima, Universal, Times, and Courier.
• Use a font size of 10 to 14 points (avoid
Times 10 point).
• Don’t condense spacing between letters.
• Use all capital letters for section headings.
• Avoid fancy treatments such as italics,
underline, shadows, and reverses.
• Avoid two-column format or resumes that
look like newspapers or newsletters.
• Avoid vertical and horizontal lines,
graphics, and boxes.
• Use more than one page, if necessary.
Computer scanning allows you to provide
more information than you would for a
human reader.

Printing
• Use white or light-colored 8” X 11” paper,
printed on one side only.
• Provide a laser printer original, if possible.
A typewritten original or a high-quality
photocopy is also acceptable.
• Avoid dot matrix printouts and low
quality copies.
• Do not fold or staple.
Prospective employers verify and access a candidate’s past job performance and achievement through evaluations provided by faculty and previous supervisors. Many employers in business prefer to have a list of references they can contact. Some employers, particularly in education, use written references or letters of recommendation to gather additional information about a candidate. Employers ask for letters of recommendation and/or references at different stages of the hiring process.

**Whom to ask for a reference**

It is important to carefully choose individuals to serve as a reference. Typically, these are individuals who can attest to your abilities to perform the skills required for a position. Employers, supervisors, or faculty members who have evaluated your performance are best. In general, be prepared to have a minimum of three letters of recommendation or references.

**How to request a reference**

Before using a person’s name on your reference list, you must always request their permission. You might not have to ask them each time, if you have recently cited their name. Remember, it is important to keep your references up-to-date concerning your job search.

**Speak with your reference first**

Before you ask individuals to serve as a reference or to write a letter of recommendation, you should meet with them first. Ask them about their opinion of your strengths and weaknesses, and about what information they would provide as a reference. Give your references a copy of your resume. If you request a letter of recommendation, be sure to indicate the date by which you need your letter. In addition, include a stamped, addressed envelope if it needs to be mailed. Remember to give your references plenty of time. As your deadline approaches, check to make sure your letter was written. Use the forms provided by the Office of Career Development if possible.

**Listing your references**

Some employers may prefer a list of references rather than a letter of recommendation. On a separate sheet of paper, format your reference list to look compatible with your resume. For each reference, include: name, title, organization, address, and daytime phone number. If your reference prefers to be contacted at his/her home, indicate in parenthesis that it is a home telephone. Remember to have your list ready for the interview.

**Following-up with a thank you**

Share the description of the specific position for which you are being considered with your reference. Remember to express your appreciation to those who have agreed to serve as references.

### Sample Reference Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARK WILLIAMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>123 Sesame Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niagara University, NY 14109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>716-286-1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:mwilliams@niagara.edu">mwilliams@niagara.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References

- **Dr. Paul Smith**
  - Professor – College of Hospitality & Tourism Management
  - Niagara University
  - Niagara University, New York 14109
  - (716) 286-8888

- **Dr. Sandy Jones**
  - Professor – College of Hospitality & Tourism Management
  - Niagara University
  - Niagara University, New York 14109
  - (716) 286-8888

- **Ms. Carol Nicholas**
  - Catering Director
  - Marriott Hotels
  - 1234 Pine Avenue
  - Niagara Falls, New York 14305
  - (716) 284-1235
• Design letters to be work-centered and employer-centered, not self-centered. Your letters should address the needs of employers.

• Address letters to a specific individual with his/her correct title. Call the company to obtain this information. If the name is not available, use the position title, such as “Dear Director:"

• Use high-quality stationery and envelopes.

• Keep the letter to one page. Eliminate extraneous words.

• Produce an error-free, clean copy. Make your letters easy to read and attractive.

• Tailor your letters for each situation. Generic letters are unprofessional.

• Include the company name in the body of the letter.

**Application (Cover) Letters** — *should always accompany a resume*

• to get your enclosed resume read and to generate interviews

• used in response to specific job advertisements/vacancy announcements

• to demonstrate that your qualifications fit the requirements of the position

**Prospecting Letters**

• to prospect for possible vacancies, get your resume read, and generate interviews

• used extensively for long distance searches

• focus on broader occupational and/or organizational dimensions to describe how your qualifications match the work environment

**Networking Letters**

• to generate informational interviews – not job interviews

**Thank-You Letters**

• to establish goodwill, express appreciation, strengthen your candidacy

• to follow-up on employment interviews, should be sent within 24 hours

• note any strengths you may not have mentioned in the interview

• reiterate your interest in the position

• send to each person who granted you an interview or informational interview

**Acceptance Letters**

• to accept a job offer, confirm the terms of employment (salary, starting date, etc.) and reinforce the employer’s decision to hire you

**Withdrawal Letters**

• to withdraw your employment application from consideration, usually after your acceptance of another position

• express appreciation for the employer’s consideration and courtesy

• may state that your decision was based on having better person-job fit

**Rejection Letters**

• to decline an employment offer, thank the employer for considering your application and indicate that you have decided not to accept

• if you receive a rejection letter, thank the employer for considering your application and ask that your name be kept on file

*Adapted from “Job Choices: 2002”*
GUIDELINES FOR A COVER LETTER

Your present address
City, State, zip code
Your telephone number
Date of letter

Individual’s name
Title
Name of business
Street address
City, State, zip code

Dear ___________: 

The Opening (first paragraph): This paragraph should arouse the interest of a potential employer. State why you are writing, how you heard of the opening, and why you are interested in the organization.

The Body (second paragraph): This paragraph should create a desire to read further. Refer the reader to the enclosed resume and give additional information concerning your background and interests. Demonstrate how your interests, education and experience fit the job requirements. Describe one or two qualifications you think would be of greatest interest to the employer, keeping in mind the employer’s point of view. If you have related experience or specialized training, be sure to point it out. Don’t make the common mistake of saying, “I’d like a position so I can gain experience in my field,” show the employer what you will be able to do for the organization.

The Closing (third paragraph): Suggest an action plan. Be assertive about requesting an interview. State your availability. Give a phone number and time when you can be reached or state that you will call. Express appreciation to the reader for his or her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your signature
Type your name

Enclosure
(This indicates that a resume or application is enclosed)
September 15, 2007

Mr. Charles Lender
General Manager
Adam’s Mark Hotel
120 Church Street
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Mr. Lender:

As a recent graduate of Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, I am excited to learn about the available position for Front Office Manager, as advertised in the Buffalo News this week. This position fits very well with my education, experience, and career goals, and the Adam’s Mark Hotels’ reputation for strong customer service and quality facilities makes this a particularly attractive opportunity.

Your position requires various skills in the front office area. My academic program in hotel management has prepared me in such areas as front desk, housekeeping, human resources, accounting, and other hotel departments. In addition, I have extensive experience in hotel information systems as I have had courses on the subject and worked with several different systems at previous employment. My ability to work with the public in a professional manner has been recognized by past employers through recognitions as Employee of the Month. My enclosed resume provides more details on my qualifications.

In addition to my educational background and professional training, I had the opportunity to develop my leadership skills through my position as a Resident Assistant and through playing Division I softball. As a Resident Assistant, I responded to emergency situations and mediated interpersonal conflicts in the residence halls. I was successful in this demanding position while also serving as Captain of the softball team, which advanced to the Metro-Atlantic Athletic Conference tournament finals. You will find me to be a positive leader who encourages a team-oriented attitude among staff members.

Please consider my request for a personal interview to discuss further my qualifications and to learn more about this opportunity. I will call you next week to see if a meeting can be arranged. Should you need to reach me, please feel free to contact me at 716-555-1212. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Smith
Cover Letter Sample

David Grange
159 River Road
Central Square, NY 13036
(315) 555-1212
dg100@yahoo.com

December 27, 2007

Infinity Broadcasting Corporation
14 Lafayette Square
Suite 1200
Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing in response to the Event Sales Executive position that was advertised on the Niagara University Career Development Web site. My experience as a student at Niagara University and participant in the 12 Days of Christmas campaign with 92.9 WBUF as a Holiday Inn Marketing Associate have sparked my interest in your company and in living and working in Western New York. I am well prepared to succeed as an Event Sales Executive.

In January I will receive a Bachelor of Science in Tourism and Recreation Management with a concentration in Tourism Marketing from Niagara University, and I currently have a 3.74 grade point average. As you can see from my attached resume, in addition to my course work in marketing, I have been very active during my college career. I recently completed an internship with Holiday Inn. As a Marketing Associate, I was responsible for researching, selecting, and implementing an advertising campaign to help promote Holiday Inn and utilize co-op advertising. Working closely with the Controller of my company and Kelly Brand of Infinity Broadcasting, Holiday Inn participated in the 12 Days of Christmas campaign. This has helped me become familiar with some of the duties of an Account Executive.

Additionally, I have had the opportunity to plan and promote on-campus events like concerts, volunteer activities, and fundraising events as a member of Student Government and as a Resident Assistant. Through these experiences as well as studying abroad in London, England, completing an internship at the Holiday Inn, and working in the Student Activities office, I have learned the value of leadership, teamwork, and communication.

I am seriously interested in a career as an Event Sales Executive with Infinity Broadcasting Corporation. I am available for an interview at your convenience and can be reached at (315) 555-1212. I believe I can make a great contribution to the Infinity Broadcasting Corporation, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

David Grange

Cover Letter Tips

- Address your letter to a specific individual when possible. If the name of the individual is not published, use a position title.

- Include your GPA if the job announcement requests it. Some employers evaluate work ethic based on GPA and other positions may use a GPA as a job requirement.

- Include other work experience if the skills developed are transferable to the job you are applying for. Consider skills such as communication, customer service, leadership, teamwork, and computer skills developed through other experience. Most job descriptions discuss necessary skills, reflect on those mentioned in the description.

- Mention the name of the company to reiterate your interest in the company. This personalizes your letter and shows interest.

- Thank the reader for their time and let them know that you are available for an interview.
THANK-YOU LETTER SAMPLE

Street Address
City, State Zip
Date of writing

Name
Title
Company
Street Address
City, State Zip

Dear Mr./Ms:

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to interview for the Management Trainee position. It was a pleasure to meet you and learn about your organization and its needs. I am very interested in this position, and I hope that you will agree that I am a good fit for your organization.

As we discussed during the interview, I match up well with the position. In particular, my internship at Holiday Inn in Buffalo, NY has given me valuable experience in management and customer service. You might also be interested to know that I have served as treasurer for the Niagara University Hospitality and Tourism Association for three years, and so my experience goes beyond what was reflected in my resume and interview.

Thank you once again for meeting with me. If you need any further information, please contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your name typed

Interview Follow-up

Thank-you letter: This letter is used after every interview. It should be short and mailed within 24 to 48 hours of the interview.
- Thank the employer for the interview
- Reaffirm your interest in the position
- Remind the employer of one or two of your key qualifications, or mention pertinent information you forgot to discuss

Because many individuals fail to send thank you letters, it should help distinguish you as a special candidate.

How many letters do I send?

Often your interview will involve multiple interviewers, and in such cases you may wish to send a thank you letter to each of them. If more than three people participate in your interview, you can send a single letter to the person who coordinated your visit and ask them to extend your gratitude to the others on the search committee.
Mass Mailings
- Sometimes called the “scattergun” approach
- Includes mailing a cover letter and resume to hundreds of organizations without a lot of research
- Depends on numbers to be effective: follow-up is crucial

Focused Mailings
- Sometimes called the “rifle” approach
- Involves sending a personally tailored cover letter and resume to a few seriously selected and researched organizations. Matches your background and skills to the employer’s organizational needs
- Follow-up is crucial

“Pounding the Pavement”
- Make regular, personal visits to organizations of interest to you
- Focus on preferred organizations
- Commonly used in artistic occupations

Informational Interviews
- Use interviews with professionals in the field as a major research source. The purpose is to learn firsthand what the field is about.
- Assists applicant in focusing on career direction and specific types of organizations
- Creates personal contacts

Networking
- Discuss your career interests with people you know
- The group is not necessarily people with hiring power, it’s people who can provide you with valuable inside information on vacancies and other job leads.

Advertisements
- Responding to announced vacancies include: campus recruiting schedule, newspapers, professional journals, bulletin boards, newsletters and periodicals, listings with agencies, in-house publications, department of labor, Internet resources.
- When taking this approach, keep in mind that 75-80 percent of all jobs are never advertised where you might see them. Refer to the “Networking”, “Informational Interviewing” and “Pounding the Pavement” sections to discover how to get access to hidden job information.

Third Party Agencies
- Using counseling, job search training, and vacancy listings from private and state employment agencies
- Be careful to note the costs of working with an agency. Some will require a portion of your salary as payment when you do find a position. Others will require a fee up front.

The Internet
- Start with the links on the Internet Job Search sheet from the Office of Career Development
- Do a search for geographic/career preference
- Consider electronic and scannable resumes
- Utilize the Internet to research employers

Source: Transitions! By Ithaca College Career Planning & Placement
The following Job Search Preparation Checklist has been compiled to help you track the “steps” of a successful job search. Completing every task on this list won’t guarantee you a job, but it will make sure that you are well prepared for many circumstances.

Necessities
1. I have prepared a resume and reviewed it with a staff member from the Office of Career Development.
2. I have chosen references and secured permission for their use.
3. I have set up or updated my credentials file with the Office of Career Development.

Establishing Career Goals
1. I have assessed my personal strengths and weaknesses.
2. I have defined my lifestyle and values.
3. I know what I want to do and where I want to do it.
4. I know what I want from work in terms of salary, social change, recognition, prestige and achievement.
5. I know the skills I have, enjoy using and want to use in a job.
6. I know my professional strengths and weaknesses.
7. I know the skills I want to develop.
8. I know what kind of position I am seeking.

Image Management
1. I have prepared and duplicated a professional looking resume.
2. I wrote a strong cover letter to accompany my resume.
3. I planned and obtained my interview wardrobe.

Developing and Using Research Skills
1. I have established weekly job search objectives, followed through, and evaluated my progress.
2. I know the resources available to me for my job search.
3. I have developed and used networking contacts.
4. I have learned the history, structure and purpose of the organization with whom I am interviewing.
5. I can prove my qualifications and skills are compatible with the prospective employer’s expectations.
6. I have researched organizations through financial reports, promotional material, annual reports, articles in publications, etc.
7. I have identified someone within the organization, and have contacted them to discover information, including: What is the organization looking for? What can I offer the organization? Who else is involved in the hiring process? Do I know anyone who can put in a good word for me?

Practicing Communication Skills
1. I have planned the questions that I want to ask the interviewer and have written notes about them.
2. I have anticipated my responses to standard and difficult questions the interviewer might ask.
3. I have rehearsed how to handle both a structured and an unstructured interview.
4. I have planned what to say at the beginning and the end of the interview.

Interview Follow-Up
1. I have evaluated my interview performance.
2. I sent thank-you letters to everyone who interviewed me.
3. I sent thank-you letters to any contact who helped me in my job search.
4. I have accepted or rejected any job offers.
5. I have corresponded in writing for acceptances or rejections.

Adapted from: Transitions! by Ithaca College Career Planning & Placement
INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

What is an informational interview?
• The process of talking to people who have jobs that interest you

Why conduct informational interviews?
• Build your confidence for job interviews and meet new people and potential employers
• Expand your job market information and discover the titles of your ideal jobs
• Find out about jobs/career paths that you did not know existed
• Learn what it is like doing a specific kind of work in a particular organization

Who to contact?
• Friends, friends of friends, classmates, teachers, relatives, alumni
• People who are doing work that interests you, who are in an organization that you would like to know more about, or who know other people in a field, organization, or community

CONDUCTING AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Before
• Learn as much as you can about the organization
• Write down the questions that you wish to ask
• If possible, learn something about the person with whom you will be interviewing
• Dress professionally and bring copies of your resume (distribute only upon request)

During
• Arrive 10-15 minutes before your appointment
• Restate your purpose and why you are talking with this particular person
• Be prepared to initiate the conversation, since you are the interviewer
• Adhere to the original time request of 20 - 30 minutes
• Ask for referrals to other appropriate individuals in the field or in related organizations
• Remember, this is an information and advice-seeking interview, not a job interview
• Let the individual you are interviewing bring up the discussion of specific job vacancies

After
• Send a thank-you note and keep the person you have interviewed posted on your progress
• Keep the door open to future contacts with this person
• Evaluate your style of interviewing. What could you have done better?
• Evaluate the information you receive. How does it relate to your plans?

What to Ask
• What is a typical workday like? A typical week?
• What are the most difficult problems/challenges/decisions you must face?
• What is the employment outlook for this field?
• What personality characteristics make it easier to do this work well?
• What is a typical starting salary? (Don’t ask how much money someone makes.)
• Do you have an area of specialization?
• What are the greatest rewards of your job?
• How would you advise me to better prepare for this work?
• How do people find out about jobs in your line of work?
• Can you recommend other people I might talk to?
The Internet is a valuable resource in job search preparation:
• Access career-related information that is both current and free
• Find job listings using keywords and geographic preferences
• Research potential employers before interviewing
• Expand the geographic areas of a job search, nationally and internationally

The following list of sites will help you start your job search.

**OCD’s Home page**
www.niagara.edu/career
www.niagara.edu/jobs
Visit the Office of Career Development’s page for valuable resources. The Jobs Bulletin provides students and graduates with a list of employment opportunities, updated on a daily basis. The OCD Web page also has a list of career-related links to assist students and job seekers with career planning and job hunting. You may register for myNU Career to have jobs sent to you by e-mail, and for NACElink, a powerful job search service brought to you by the OCD and by the National Association of Colleges and Employers.

**MonsterTrak**
www.monstertrak.com
This site includes targeted job listings for Niagara University students and alumni. MONSTERTRAK is one of the largest and most popular employment sites for college students and recent graduates on the internet, and is affiliated with Monster.com (see below). The password for Niagara University is monteagle.

**CareerPath**
www.careerpath.com
Powered by the nation’s leading newspapers and employers, CareerPath.com offers job seekers the greatest number of the most current jobs available. Listings come from two sources: they’re pulled from the Help Wanted ads of the nation’s leading newspapers and from the Web sites of leading employers.

**The Riley Guide**
www.rileyguide.com
One of the first career-oriented Web sites, The Riley Guide will not only link you to great job search sites in your field, it also offers a brief description of the site and tells whether you will have to pay for services.

These excellent sites are designed specifically for college seniors and graduates. They feature job listings, career advice, employer links, and free resume posting service.

**JobWeb**
http://www.jobweb.org
Owned and operated by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, JobWeb provides job-seekers with career-related links, job postings, and employer information.

**Monster.com**
http://www.monster.com
Monster.com is a lifelong career network job seekers can use to expand their careers, providing continuous access to the most progressive companies, as well as interactive, personalized tools to make the process effective and convenient. Services include an easy-to-use job search tool, resume posting, and excellent resources.

**Craigslist.org**
http://www.craigslist.org
Craigslist.org is a local community classified and forums Web page. This site allows job seekers to search for jobs, housing, goods and services, and social activities for free and in a relatively non-commercial environment. Great for job seekers looking to relocate to a new city.
INTERNET LINKS

HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

The Web sites listed below are an excellent start to your job search, but there is much more information on the Internet! Visit the OCD Web site for additional sites of interest, including relocation and salary information, career exploration, and co-op and internship positions. In particular, business students should check out the “Top Rated Sites” listed on our Career Links page. Students unsure of occupation titles in their chosen field should visit “What Can I Do With This Major/Degree” at www.niagara.edu/career/majors/default.html.

Hospitality Net
www.hospitalitynet.org/index.html

Hospitality 1st
www.hospitality-1st.com/

Hospitality Careers Online
www.hcareers.com

Hospitality Jobs Online
www.hospitalityonline.com/

Hotel and Restaurant Jobs
www.hotelrestaurantjobs.com

NationJob Network
www.nationjob.com/hotel

Traveljobs.com

Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International
www.hsmai.org

Lodging Magazine
www.lodgingmagazine.com

Tourism Cares for Tomorrow
www.tourismcares.org

International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education
www.chrie.org

Global Hotel Network®
www.globalhotelnetwork.com

Hospitality Campus.com
www.hospitalitycampus.com

National Hotel Executive
www.hotelexecutive.com

North American Society for Sport Management
www.nassm.org

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)
www2.ncaa.org

Street & Smith’s Sports Business Journal
www.sportsbusinessjournal.com

Cool Works
www.coolworks.com

Online Sports Career Center
www.onlinesports.com/pages/CareerCenter.html
Cooperative education lets you explore the world of work first-hand by providing a unique opportunity for you to earn while you learn.

Students from the colleges of arts and sciences, business, or hospitality and tourism are eligible to participate in the co-op program in their junior and senior year, enabling them to gain both paid work experience, and academic credit in their major. The cooperative education program increases career choices for students, and often times opens the door to full-time employment after graduation.

You are encouraged to consider co-op program opportunities early in the planning of your curriculum. To be eligible you must:

- Be a junior, senior, or graduate student enrolled in a degree program in the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Business Administration, or the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management.
- Have 15 NU credits in declared academic major.
- Have advised elective credits available.
- Maintain minimum 2.0 QPA – 3.0 for graduate students.
- Be approved for co-op by your department chairperson or advisor.
- Complete an application and submit a resumé.

Niagara University's Cooperative Education Program has proven to be an effective means of exploring and evaluating career interests, as well as a solid preparation for professional life.

For more information, visit the Cooperative Education Office located in the lower level of Seton Hall or contact Robert Swanson at rps@niagara.edu or 716-286-8538.

Co-op and Internship Links

Niagara University Jobs Bulletin  www.niagara.edu/jobs/
SnagAJob.com  www.snagajob.com
Internship Programs  www.internshipprograms.com/
Idealist.org  www.idealist.org
Monstertrak  www.monstertrak.com
Networking can best be described as the systematic development and cultivation of informal interpersonal contacts and relationships for three purposes:

• to compile information
• to gain exposure to the job market
• to gather more names and referrals to expand your network

70% of jobs are found through people you already know. That implies that the more people you know, the greater your chances to find a job.

10 NETWORKING TIPS

1. **Know exactly what you want from others.**
   Prepare questions in advance. Be succinct, courteous, and appreciative.

2. **Have a positive attitude when you network.**

3. **Talk to strangers** and mingle with people you do not already know.
   Introduce yourself.

4. **Share information**, ideas, resources, and contacts with others.
   Networking is a two-way process.

5. **Keep questions to a minimum.**
   Limit the amount of assistance or information you seek from one person.

6. **Be sure to follow-up on leads** you have been given.
   You don’t want to embarrass those who have made connections for you.

7. **Respect other people’s confidentiality.**
   Trust is a vital part of networking.

8. **Value other people’s time when networking.**
   Keep your conversation brief and make arrangements to call or meet at another time if you discover areas of mutual interest.

9. **Continue networking even after you’ve found a job.**
   There will always be ways an active network can help.

10. **Incorporate networking into your everyday life.**

Adapted from: “Planning Job Choices: 1994” by Dee Helgott, M.P.A.
Job fairs are a great place to:

- obtain information about potential employers
- conduct informational interviews
- make an in-person contact with organizations already of interest to you
- apply to other companies you may discover at the fair

Tips for Success at Job Fairs

1. Learn who’s coming ahead of time
   - Narrow the list to companies of interest.
   - Research their products/services and employment needs.

2. Know what you are going to ask
   - Try to have one or two questions in mind for each employer.
   - Questions should reflect your research on the employer and your interest.

3. Prepare a 45-second summary of your qualifications
   - Prepare and rehearse an interesting verbal summary describing who you are, what kind of work you are looking for, and what your qualifications are to do the work.
   - If possible, read through the company’s printed materials and talk to the recruiter informally before you arrange for a more personal interview.

4. Dress for success to make a good first impression
   - Many employers will conduct initial screening interviews. When in doubt about attire, always err on the side of conservatism – a subdued suit with white shirt is usually safe for both genders.

5. Take the right things with you
   - Bring a supply of resumes to circulate, an attractive pen, note pad, etc.
   - Bring a list of references. If you give out names of references at the fair, be sure to contact those people immediately afterwards to notify them they might hear from XYZ company.

6. Arrive early and plan to stay late
   - Scout out the room before you begin and plan time effectively.
   - Determine which employer you want most to meet. Make a priority and “maybe” list.

7. Give yourself some breathing space
   - Most job fair interviews last from 5 to 15 minutes.
   - After each interview, take a moment to reflect on what you learned and how you performed. Write the recruiter’s name and a few notes to jog your memory later on.

8. Collect any handouts or printed materials
   - If you do not have enough time left to interview, collect materials furnished by companies and follow-up later on.

9. When you get home
   - Organize the information you received.
   - If there is any follow-up work necessary, in the form of thank-you letters, reference letters, or other materials to be sent, be sure to follow through on your discussion.
RESEARCH THE ORGANIZATION

Researching an employer is VITAL to your job search success. It is critical because it enables you to:

• ask intelligent questions during the interview
• demonstrate that you have taken the time to do some research
• make a good impression on the interviewer

GATHER THE FACTS

• Key people in the organization
• Size in terms of sales and employees
• Major competitors
• Latest news reports or local/national news that affect the company
• Major products or services
• Other locations
• Organization of the company
• View of the company by clients, suppliers, and competition

WAYS TO FIND INFORMATION

• Contact the company directly for information
• Visit the company's Web site or other internet Web sites (e.g. Hoover's)
• Use the reference materials and databases available at the campus or public library
• Read local newspapers and journals, which are often available on the Internet

The following list is a sample of the sources to use in your search:

Websites:
Hoover's Online
www.hoovers.com/

WetFeet.com
www.wetfeet.com

JobWeb
www.jobweb.org

Niagara University Library Online Resources
www.niagara.edu/library/elect.html

ReferenceUSA.com
Reference USA is an internet-based reference service that can be accessed on campus to assist students in conducting research for 13 million United States and Canadian businesses. Businesses can be searched by name, city, state, phone number, and industry. The information that can be found about these businesses include: contact information, number of employees, location, annual revenue, parent companies or subsidiaries, other businesses within a specified radius and much more. Reference USA is an excellent research database to access when conducting research on future employers. Access it today through the Office of Career Development Web site at www.niagara.edu/career/.

Library resources:
• Company annual reports
• Business Periodicals Index
• Directory of Corporate Affiliations
• Dun & Bradstreet Business Rankings
• Dun & Bradstreet Regional Business Directory
• Moody's Industrial Manual and Moody's International Manual
• Standard and Poor's Register of Corporation, Directors, and Executives
• U.S. Industrial Outlook
• America’s Corporate Families
• Business Index, (Infotrac CD-ROM system)
• Directory of Foreign Manufacturers in the U.S.
• Dun & Bradstreet Million Dollar Directory
• Macmillan Directory of Leading Private Companies
• Standard and Poor’s Industry Surveys
• Thomas Register of American Manufacturers
• Ward’s Business Directory
CAREER AND INTERVIEW PORTFOLIOS

A portfolio is an organized collection of materials that documents your professional growth and gives evidence of your knowledge and skills. Portfolios can be used during job interviews to enhance your effort to sell yourself and to assist the employer in his/her effort to get to know you.

Your Career Portfolio
Start to assemble your career portfolio early in your college experience. At the end of each semester, select your most significant evidence of learning, skills, and abilities to be included in your career portfolio.

Your Interview Portfolio
Unlike your career portfolio, which may be quite extensive, your interview portfolio should not exceed 25 pages. The items to be included in this portfolio should be chosen with the targeted position in mind. Employers will be impressed by a crisp, concise presentation with relevant items of interest.

Items should be presented in a professional-quality binder with plastic sheet protectors.

Possible interview portfolio contents:
- A copy of your resume, college transcript, licenses, or certifications
- Recommendations from faculty members, evaluations from internship, co-op, summer job, or service learning project supervisors.
- Proof of computer skills, including desktop publishing documents, samples from Internet surfing, or examples of word processing expertise
- Samples of your writing ability
- Samples of academic excellence, including graded papers or projects
- Evidence of academic recognition, honors, scholarships, Dean’s List
- Results from standardized tests such as GRE, NYSTCE, GMAT, MCAT, NTE
- Evidence of community service or involvement
- Brochures describing training or seminars; include certificate of completion
- Job descriptions
- Evidence of public speaking, presentation, leadership, or research skills

The following resources can provide additional information on developing an interview portfolio:
JOB CHOICES ONLINE
(found on the Internet)
- Portrait of a Portfolio by Barbara Mulligan
  www.jobweb.com/Resources/Library/Portrait_of_a_64_01.htm
- Portfolio Preparation Tips
  www.jobweb.com/Resources/Library/Portfolio_65_01.htm
A professional image is vital to landing and keeping a job. It is important to know what is considered appropriate attire in your career field. The following are general guidelines. Remember, dress for the job you want, not for the job you have!

- Before purchasing a suit, give it the scrunch test. Gently squeeze the material between your hands. When you let go, does it wrinkle? If so, think twice before purchasing it.

- Brighter colors add fashion and flair, but be aware of what is acceptable in your career field. Wool blends and silks are good choices but avoid linen, it wrinkles easily. Be sure that your suit is clean, pressed and fits well.

**Straight From the Recruiters: What Distinguishes the Best-Dressed Candidates**

**Men and Women**

- Two-piece business suit (navy or other dark color)
- Consistent look; avoid wearing a business suit with sandals or sneakers
- Well-groomed hairstyle; avoid unusual styles or colors
- Minimal cologne or perfume
- No visible body piercing, including multiple earrings in one ear
- No more than one ring on each hand; wedding/engagement ring acceptable
- No visible body art; cover tattoos with clothing if possible
- Breath mints; use one before greeting recruiter (don’t chew gum!)

**Women**

- White, off-white, or neutral-colored blouse with a conservative neckline
- Suit with a skirt or pants, whichever you are most comfortable in
- Avoid ill-fitting (short, tight, clingy, or slit) skirts; no higher than one to two inches above the knee when standing
- Closed-toe leather pumps with low to medium heels; avoid open-toe strappy high heels, sandals, or shoes with decorations
- Hosiery that is not darker than your hemline
- Briefcase or portfolio in place of a handbag or purse
- Conservative nail polish; avoid unusual colors, e.g. green, blue, lavender
- Understated makeup
- Understated classic accessories; follow the “Rule 13” — wear no more than 13 accessories that includes buttons, bracelets, rings, earrings, and wristwatch.
- Small stud earrings instead of dangling or oversized earrings
- Long hair pulled back in a neat, simple style; no “big hair” or elaborate styles

**Men**

- Long-sleeved oxford cloth shirt in white or light blue
- Conservative necktie in color and pattern; avoid cartoon characters, less-than-serious graphics, or theme ties
- High-fitting dark socks; avoid light colored socks with a dark suit
- Business-style leather shoes
- Match shoe and belt color; don’t mix black and brown
- Briefcase or portfolio, no backpack

Reference: Johansen, Karol A.D. and Steele, M. “Keeping up Appearances: How practitioners can help students make positive impressions (and avoid fashion faux pas) during interviews.” *Journal of Career Planning and Employment*, Summer 1999
A job interview is an important part of the hiring process. Preparing for a variety of interview situations and knowing what to expect is essential to success.

**Traditional Interviews**

**Screening Interview:**
- Interviewer attempts to narrow candidate pool
- Convey skills and qualifications by citing relevant examples
- Motivation and presentation should be clear and concise
- Gather information related to the position and company

**Selection Interview:**
- Conducted by individual(s) responsible for hiring decision
- Focus on what you can contribute in addition to basic skills and qualifications

**Confirmation Interview:**
- Introduced to hiring person’s supervisor before a final offer
- Be on your best behavior – keep opinions to yourself

**Other Types of Interviews**

**Phone Interview:**
- Used to screen job candidates while reducing expenses.
- Goal is to land an in-person interview.
- Prepare by having resume, list of questions, pen, paper, calendar, company information near the phone.
- Smile and sound energetic. Use correct grammar.
- Speak clearly and in complete sentences.

**Mealtime Interview:**
- Social habits are evaluated and considered clues to job performance.
- Setting can make it easier for interviewer to ask inappropriate questions. Try to focus on business.
- Review business and dining etiquette – this meeting could be a test of confidence and protocol.

**Behavioral Interview:**
- Based on premise that past behavior predicts future performance (See section on Behavioral Interviewing).
- Before the interview, think of specific experiences you can use to support and illustrate knowledge, skills, and abilities.

**Informational Interview:**
- Interview may be conducted either by a recruiter or by a candidate (See section on informational interviewing).
- Serves as an exchange of information and opportunity to develop contacts for the future.
INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES

DURING THE INTERVIEW

• Arrive 15 minutes early. Do not take anyone with you.
• Be professional and courteous with everyone you meet.
• Read company literature while you wait.
• Greet the interviewer by name; shake hands firmly.
• Sit down only after offered a chair.
• Try to avoid having a desk between you.
• Do not touch, or put anything on, the interviewer’s desk.
• Decline anything to drink.
• Do not smoke, even if the interviewer smokes.
• Do not chew gum.
• Use body language to show interest. Lean forward slightly in your chair, relax, and don’t fidget.
• Maintain good eye contact, formal yet comfortable posture, and a confident tone-of-voice.
• If you do not have a job description, ask for one early in the interview.

ANSWERING QUESTIONS

• Listen carefully. Be sure you understand the question. If it isn’t clear, ask for clarification.
• Think before you answer.
• Respond only to the question posed. Be comprehensive in your answers, complete, and responsive; but don’t volunteer anything that is not directly related to the issue at hand.
• Emphasize your strengths by focusing on your skills, experience, and accomplishments that would make you an asset to the employer. Offer examples when possible. Use illustrations, descriptions, statistics, and testimonials to support your claims.
• Don’t criticize previous employers, teachers, co-workers, etc.
• Speak clearly. Use complete sentences, avoid one-word answers. Don’t use the words “think,” “guess,” or “feel” which sound indecisive.
• Be enthusiastic, positive, and optimistic. Be excited about your career and confident about your ability to do the job. Avoid humor.
• When asked about your weaknesses, admit harmless personal flaws, including your plan/progress toward overcoming them.
• Don’t ask about salary and benefits during a first interview. It is better to let the interviewer disclose the salary range for the position.
• Demonstrate your knowledge of the company by asking meaningful questions.
• Ask about the next step in the process, when the decision will be made. Ask if you can call to check the status of the position.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

• Identify your interests, abilities, values, and experiences.
• Assemble your interview attire.
• Research the company or organization.
• Prepare questions for the employer.
• Assemble your portfolio with extra copies of your resume, your list of questions to ask the employer, information for an application form, letters of recommendation, and samples of your work, if appropriate.
• Locate the interview site, including parking, traffic problems, etc.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Evaluate your performance and presentation during the interview:

• What errors did you make?
• Which questions gave you the most difficulty?
• Send the interviewer a thank-you note within 24 hours. Restate your interest in the job, summarize key points and add further information to help your case. Keep the thank-you letter brief and to the point.
• Follow-up with a phone call if you haven’t heard from the employer within the time indicated during the interview.
Behavioral interviewing is:
- based on the premise that the best predictor of future performance is past performance.
- a style of interviewing more companies and organizations are using in their hiring process.

Important points
- Before the interview, prepare a list of stories that actually show you solving problems, managing or leading, handling conflict/diversity, working as a team member, and other situations that show your ability to meet day-to-day work-related challenges.
- In the interview, your response needs to be specific and detailed.
- Cite a particular situation that relates to the question, not a general one.
- Briefly state the situation, what you did specifically, and the positive result or outcome.
- Frame it in a four-step process:
  1. situation  
  2. action  
  3. result/outcome  
  4. lesson learned
- Always listen carefully to the question, ask for clarification if necessary, and answer the question completely.
- Demonstration of the desired behaviors may be proven in many ways. Use examples from past internships, classes, activities, team involvement, community service and work experience.

Behavioral Interview Questions
- Describe a situation in which you were able to help out a peer or co-worker.
- Have you ever had any difficulty getting along with co-workers? How did you handle the situation?
- How have you determined what constitutes a top priority in your schedule? Give an example.
- Has your time schedule ever been upset by unforeseen circumstances? What did you do then? Give me an example.
- Give me an example of a time you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Tell me about a time in which you had to use your written communication skills to get an important point across.
- Describe a time on any job in which you were faced with problems that tested your coping skills.
- Give me a specific occasion in which you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
- Describe the most significant or creative presentation which you have had to complete.
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
1. Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?
2. What are your long- and short-range goals and objectives? When and why did you choose these goals, and how are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
3. What can you tell me about yourself?
4. How would you describe yourself?
5. What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
6. What extra-curricular offices have you held?
7. What have you learned from participation in extra-curricular activities?
8. How do you think a friend or professor who knows you well would describe you?
9. Are you willing to spend at least six months as a trainee?
10. How has your college experience prepared you for your career?
11. Why should I hire you?
12. What do you know about our company?
13. Why did you decide to seek a position with this company? Why do you want this job?
14. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our company?
15. What qualifications do you have that make you think you will be successful?
16. In what type(s) of positions are you most interested?
17. What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
18. How do you work better, independently or with others?
19. Do you have a geographical preference? Why? Will you relocate?
20. If you were hiring a graduate for this position, what qualities would you look for?
21. Why did you leave your last job?
22. What are your ideas on salary?
23. What do you expect to be earning in five years?
24. Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor and subordinates.
25. Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision, but didn’t have all the information you needed.
26. What is the biggest mistake you’ve made?
27. What were your best subjects in school?
28. What is the most significant contribution you made to the company during your internship/co-op?
29. Tell me about one of your most important accomplishments.
FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

1. What are your long-range and short-range goals and objectives, when and why did you establish these goals, and how are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
2. What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, have you established for yourself for the next 10 years?
3. What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
4. What are your long-range career objectives?
5. What are the most important rewards you expect in your hospitality/tourism career?
6. What do you expect to be earning in five years?
7. Why did you choose the career for which you are applying?
8. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
9. How would you describe yourself?
10. How would a friend who knows you well describe you?
11. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
12. How has your college experience prepared you for a hospitality career?
13. Why should I hire you?
14. What qualifications do you have that make you think that you will be successful in tourism/hospitality?
15. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our company?
16. What qualities should a successful manager possess?
17. Describe the relationship that should exist between a supervisor and subordinates.
18. What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction?
19. Describe your most rewarding college experience.
20. If you were hiring a person for this position, what qualities would you look for?
21. Do you think that your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?
22. What have you learned from participation in extracurricular activities?
23. In what kind of a work environment are you most comfortable?
24. How do you work under pressure?
25. How would you describe the ideal job for you following graduation?
26. Why did you decide to seek a position with this company?
27. What do you know about our company?
28. What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
29. What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work?
30. Will you relocate? Does relocation bother you?
31. Are you willing to travel?
32. What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?
33. What have you learned from your mistakes?
Research the employer before the interview. A good question demonstrates your knowledge and/or research, and gives you a chance to show how you fit the position. Preface the question with information about the employer, which you learned from your research.

For example: “According to your annual report, the company is planning to expand in March of this year. Can you tell me how this department will be affected by the expansion?”

1. What are the job specifications for this position?
2. Is there a clear statement of the extent of authority?
3. How long has this position been in existence? Open?
4. Is this one of a number of similar positions or is there only one?
5. What have previous people in this position gone on to do?
6. In what department and with whom would I be working? How many people are there? My immediate supervisor? Associates in related departments?
7. Could you describe the atmosphere (feeling, tone) of the department? How do the people there relate to one another?
8. Do you have suggestions about becoming integrated into the department?
9. Do you have any long-range plans for this department?
10. How long has this department existed?
11. Who makes the final decision on hiring for this position?
12. Is there a training program or orientation program for new employees? How formal is it?
13. Are employees encouraged to take courses or graduate study?
15. Do you have periodic employee performance reviews?
16. What is the next step in the selection process?
17. When will I hear from you?
18. What is something about this company that I may not find out otherwise?

Do Not Ask (until you’re offered the job)
Questions relating to salary and benefits, those that are answered in company literature or Web sites, or those that are phrased to show you’re “worried” about an issue (for instance, excessive travel or a dress code) should not be asked at the initial interview. The phrasing of questions can be as important as the questions themselves. For instance, “Does this position require much professional development?” sounds like the candidate doesn’t want to participate in learning opportunities, while “Does this position offer opportunities to travel?” is more positive and still allows the candidate to get the needed information.

Questions about salary, health coverage, sick leave, vacation time and other benefits can and should be asked after an offer is made but before it’s accepted. That is also the appropriate time to inquire about any other issues of concern.
During the application and interview process, laws require employers to ask questions to potential employees that are only job related.

How to handle illegal interview questions:
Rochelle Kaplan, General Counsel for The National Association of Colleges and Employers, offers the following options in Job Choices 2000:

If asked an illegal question, you have three options:
1. You can answer the question – you’re free to do so, if you wish. However, if you choose to answer to an illegal question, you give information that is not related to the position. Therefore, you “risk” giving the “wrong” answer and not receiving an offer.

2. You can refuse to answer the question, which is well within your rights. Unfortunately, depending on how you word your response, you run the risk of being perceived as uncooperative and confrontational – hardly words an employer would use to describe the “ideal” candidate. Remember, it is important to maintain your professional demeanor.

3. You can examine the question for its intent and respond with an answer as it might apply to the job. For example, the interviewer asks, “Are you a US citizen?” You’ve been asked an illegal question. You can respond, however, with “I am authorized to work in the United States.”

Is the question legal or illegal?

Illegal Questions:
• Are you a US citizen?
• Where were you/your parents born?
• What is your “native tongue”?
• How old are you?
• When did you graduate from high school?
• What’s your birth date?
• What’s your marital status?
• How many kids do you have?
• What are your child care arrangements?
• How tall are you? How much do you weigh? (Questions about height and weight are not acceptable unless minimum standards are essential for the safe performance of the job)
• Do you have any disabilities?
• Have you ever been arrested?
• If you’ve been in the military, were you honorably discharged?
• Do you have good credit history to qualify for a credit card?

Legal Questions:
• Are you authorized to work in the United States
• What language do you read/speak/write fluently? (only if relevant to the job)
• Are you over the age of 18?
• Would you be willing to relocate if necessary?
• Would you be willing to work overtime or weekends if necessary?
• Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of this job?
• Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job?
• Have you ever been convicted of a _____? (The crime should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)
• What type of training or education did you receive in the military?
• Due to its expense reimbursement program, ____ requires certain employees, as a condition of employment, to qualify for and maintain qualifications for a Corporate American Express Card. Do you believe American Express will issue you a credit card?
The ultimate goal of every employment interview is to receive an offer. Many factors will affect a job seeker’s decision to accept or reject an offer. Review the items listed below and rank them in importance as you decide what you want in your next position.

**Is the job right for you?**

- Authority and responsibility: How much control will the company give me to get the job done?
- Compensation package: Salary, bonus, insurance, stock options, car, country club
- Location: What is the commuting time? In what part of the country is the job located?
- Independence: How much will I be supervised?
- Team orientation: A team atmosphere in which people work closely together
- Type of industry: Is the company or organization in a growth industry?
- Professional growth: Does the company offer in-house training programs and compensate continuing education?
- Travel: How much time will I be on the road?
- Work tasks: Variety of tasks or a single task
- Work hours: How many hours per week will I work?
- Supervisor: Can I learn from him or her? What is the management style?
- Work environment: What are the physical facilities like and what is the prevailing attitude of co-workers?
- Personalities: Does my personality fit in with most of the personalities of the people in the department/office/firm?
- Physical labor or mental work: Will I be using my mind or doing things physically?

**Ethical Considerations for Job Seekers**

The following list of recommended practices is intended to provide a job seeker with framework for professional behavior.

- Interview only when you sincerely are interested in a position. Do not interview for practice.
- Provide accurate information on your qualifications and academic or employment history on your resume or any employment application.
- Notify a recruiter well in advance if you must postpone or cancel an interview appointment.
- Request extensions from employers if you need more time to consider an offer.
- Notify an employer that you are accepting or rejecting an offer as soon as you make your decision and no later than the arranged date. Respond to every offer, whether you accept or reject it.
- Honor your acceptance of the offer as a contractual agreement with the employer. Do not continue to interview after you have accepted an offer. Do not accept an offer unless you really want the position. Reneging on an accepted offer is unprofessional.
Making the decision to relocate can cause a myriad of emotions. Preparation and careful decision making often helps to ease the process. Some topics to consider include:

- **Relocation Costs** – costs affiliated with moving such as transportation, housing, and salary
- **Cost of living** – the amount of money needed to maintain a certain standard of living, including housing costs, vehicle expenses, utilities, food etc … These can vary widely across the country and have no resemblance to what you are currently used to.
- **Salary** – this also varies widely with location, industry, and employer.
- **Benefits** – employer paid benefits that may include vacation time, health insurance, retirement plans, tuition remission, signing bonuses, and relocation assistance. In many cases, benefit plans are more important than salary figures.

**The following Web sites can provide additional information about relocation:**

**Cap & Compass (www.capandcompass.com/login.htm)**
The login is purple and the password is *eagles*. This Web site provides information about housing, salaries, and transportation for various cities throughout the United States.

**Homefair.com**
This Web site includes information about cost of living, crime rates, school district demographics, moving costs and other considerations.

**Realtor.com**
Provides information on real estate options for various cities.

**Salary Negotiation and Expectation**

Salary should not be the only factor you weigh when you are considering job offers, but it certainly is important. However, one of the biggest complaints among employers is how unrealistic many new graduates are about starting salaries – an indication of just how few new grads take the time to investigate salaries. You’ll score points with employers (and save yourself a lot of frustration) if you take the time to research salaries to ensure your expectations are in line with reality.

The state of the overall economy is one factor that may affect your salary, of course, but there are many more. For example, supply of and demand for your particular skill sets will affect your salary offer. For example, if you are looking for a job in a field that has lots of qualified candidates, realize that salaries are more likely to be modest when compared to salaries in fields where there are few candidates and lots of opportunities. Plus, regardless of the field, you’ll find that salaries are also affected by industry and type of employer.

Geographic location also plays a big part, with salaries fluctuating among metropolitan, suburban, and rural areas to account for differences in cost-of-living. Be sure to compare cost-of-living when you are considering an offer: a high salary in a metropolitan area could be eaten up by high rent, transportation, and food costs, whereas a lower salary in a suburban area may actually provide you with more disposable income.

Finally, your particular qualities and qualifications will also play a role. In many organizations – especially at entry level – salaries are “set” and there is little, if any, room for negotiation. However, even in these cases, your particular mix of abilities and experiences may be a factor. For example, some organizations will offer a slightly higher starting salary to those who have served internships or co-op assignments with them. In other cases, you may find that having a higher-level degree means a bit more in your paycheck.

Check the OCD Web site, www.niagara.edu/career/salary.htm, for more resources on relocation and salary.

Incorporate time management into your professional life
Your time will not be as flexible or free as it was in college. Learn to develop and adapt to a new routine. As a student you decided how you balanced a busy class schedule, course work and a part-time job. Unlike a typical class schedule, most eight-hour workdays begin by 8 a.m. or 9 a.m and end at 5 p.m., 6 p.m. or later. New grads will quickly realize that their time at work is more structured and demanding. Some simple but effective keys to good time management include prioritizing your work, avoiding procrastination, and using a to-do list.

Avoid participating in office gossip
Participating in office gossip can be dangerous to your career. Critical and negative comments about others can come back to haunt you and are counterproductive to a work environment. Utilize your interpersonal skills to develop a good working relationship with co-workers. Become a good conversationalist by finding common interests and get others to talk about themselves.

Adjust your expectations and maintain a positive attitude
New grads are often frustrated if their jobs fail to meet their expectations. Try keeping your expectations realistic. The odds are that most jobs involve some grunt work. Don’t complain or whine. Chances are your boss will notice your efforts, therefore, it’s important to keep a positive attitude and do a good job.

Never stop learning
Consider every professional experience an opportunity to learn something new. Keep yourself marketable by learning the latest computer software, attending professional seminars or pursuing a graduate or professional degree. Join professional organizations to stay current with trends in your field.

Become a good team player
As the “new kid on-the-block,” your goal is to gain acceptance. Dedication and effort are two things you can demonstrate to your new co-workers and supervisor on your first day. Learn the company’s cultural norms and unwritten rules to avoid making embarrassing or dumb mistakes. Remember, the first year on a new job will lay the foundation for your future career success.

Admit mistakes
Acknowledge your mistakes and accept responsibility. Look at it as a learning experience and don’t make the same mistake again.

Balance your life
Stay healthy, sleep, exercise, and find personal time. Avoid burnout. Physical and mental health are the keys to your longevity.

Why People Get Fired
- Dishonesty
- Worked too slowly
- Would not follow orders
- Unreliable
- Unable to get along with others
- Poor dress or grooming
- Making too many mistakes
- Too many accidents
- Couldn’t do the work
- Abuse of alcohol or drugs

Source: J. Micheal Farr, JIST works, Inc.; 1993

Although this is from 1993, the message is still the same from an employer’s perspective.