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The mission of the Office of Career Services is to provide students and alumni with the best possible assistance in developing and achieving their professional objectives as they work toward the goal of lifelong career satisfaction.
Your path
TO CAREER SUCCESS

Career Process

Self Assessment
- Begin to clarify your career interests through classes, student organizations, and community service (visit the Learn and Serve Office)
- Choose your initial major and/or concentration and learn about your potential career paths
- Talk to individuals already employed about careers related to your interests
- Visit the Career Services Office to discuss ideas for the future, internships and summer employment opportunities
- Obtain a part-time and/or summer job to develop interpersonal skills, help finance your education and build responsible work habits

Explore Options
- Meet with a Career Services professional to begin compiling interests, strengths, skills, abilities and values using self-assessment inventories available such as the Strong Interest Inventory, Self-Directed Search, and Myers Briggs Type Indicator
- Research careers related to your major choice
- Conduct informational interviews with alumni, relatives, family friends
- Obtain information about participating in an internship, which enables you to receive real-world work experience and earn academic credit
- Utilize work experience to further develop work-related skills and improve self-confidence

Define your post-graduation goals and implement your plan
- Meet with Career Services to discuss graduate school and/or job search strategies
- Understand what employers and graduate/professional schools are looking for in candidates and be able to discuss how your knowledge, skills, and abilities will be an asset to their organization
  - Attend career fairs to network with job recruiters
  - Continue to update your résumés and cover letters
  - Research your options, be open to different opportunities, use your resources to help you Get Hired!
- Create a résumé and have it critiqued by Career Services
- Participate in a practice interview to begin articulating what you have learned from your academic and experiential learning opportunities
- Explore and apply for internship opportunities
- Seek leadership opportunities in campus organizations related to your major
- Network and join professional organizations and community groups
- Investigate the role of graduate school in your chosen career field by visiting petersons.com and gradschools.com as well as discussing with your academic advisor

Implement Your Plan
Information for
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students who want to work in the United States must first contact the Principle Designated School Official or PDSO to determine their eligibility.

PDSO: Student Support Center, Butler Building
716.286.8726

According to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services regulations, international students with an F1 Visa can work in the United States under specific circumstances and on a limited basis. All full-time F1 students living in the United States while studying may not work on campus for more than 20 hours per week without permission from the PDSO. Other employment options for full-time F1 Visa students are restricted to either Curricular Practical Training or Optional Practical Training. For either of these categories, all work must be related to your field of study and requires preapproval by the PDSO.

Curricular Practical Training
CPT is work experience in your field of study that is an integral part of an established curriculum. This includes work-study, internship, cooperative education, thesis research or other types of practicum offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the university. This can be a paid or unpaid position. You can be authorized whatever amount of time is required to complete the training, but if you complete more than 364 consecutive days of CPT, you will be ineligible for OPT.

CPT Eligibility and Requirements
CPT eligibility and application requirements are very specific and subject to change. For the best and most current guidance, please contact the PDSO in the Student Support Center. All CPT positions must award academic credit and be approved by your academic department chair. To initiate this approval and register for credit, contact the Office of Career Services, in the lower level of Seton Hall, at 716.286.8530.

Optional Practical Training
OPT allows you to work in the United States on your F1 Visa for up to 12 months within the 14-month period directly following your degree completion. You can apply for OPT up to 90 days prior to degree completion or no more than 60 days after the completion of your degree requirements. The processing time for government approval may take two to three months, so plan accordingly.

OPT Eligibility and Requirements
OPT eligibility and application requirements are very specific and subject to change. For the best and most current guidance, please contact the PDSO in the Student Support Center.

To be eligible, you must have a valid F1 Visa and be enrolled full time for the two consecutive semesters immediately prior to completing your degree. Once approved for OPT you will receive an Employment Authorization Document. This along with your I-20, I-94 and passport are required to document your approved status.

Finding Employment
To acquire practical training in the United States, you must be able to demonstrate that your qualifications are superior to your American competitor. Extra care must be taken with your résumé, as American résumés may be very different from those commonly used in your own country. Also, cultural nuances impact the interview process. The Office of Career Services in the lower level of Seton Hall can provide assistance with employer contacts and job search planning and preparation. We will help you create an American-style résumé and prepare you for the interview process.
Employers look for candidates who already have relevant career experience. Participating in an internship is your chance to gain that competitive edge.

Internships are known by a variety of names, including cooperative education (co-op), field experience, service learning, or practicum. Regardless of the name, they allow you to receive academic credit for working with businesses, community groups, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and government agencies.

If you are interested in an internship, talk to your faculty advisor to discuss how internships fit with your curriculum and career goals. Then meet with an adviser in the Office of Career Services in the lower level of Seton Hall for help in identifying and competing for internship opportunities.

Eligibility
Eligibility to participate in an internship varies from major to major. In general, you should:
- Be a junior, senior, or graduate student in the College of Arts and Sciences or Business Administration.
- Have advised electives in your major available.
- Maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA (some departments and employers have higher requirements).
- Be approved to participate by your academic department chair.

Finding Opportunities
- Ask your faculty advisor for contacts in employment fields related to your major.
- Visit the Office of Career Services for help with preparing an effective résumé, developing job-search strategies, and forwarding your résumé to employers who are seeking interns.
- Check the Jobs Bulletin on the Career Services website regularly.
- Join professional associations (Society for Human Resource Management or the Accounting Society, for example) related to your major or career goals.
- Find out if your regular employment may qualify for an internship. Based on the job description, your academic department chair can determine whether or not your employment qualifies for academic credit.

Registration
To receive academic credit for an internship, you need to register and pay tuition. Whether you register through your faculty advisor or through the Career Services Office depends on your major and the type of experience. Tuition for the internship is included in your semester bill.

Your professor will develop a syllabus that specifies the goals and requirements of the experience, and you will be required to prepare a reflective project to show what you have learned. In addition, because you are representing the university to an employer, as an intern you must:
- Abide by the regulations and policies of both the university and your employer.
- Remain at the assignment for the contract period and meet the required number of contact hours (between 120 – 200) or risk loss of credits and an unsatisfactory grade.
- Not sign a liability, indemnity or hold-harmless agreement with the employer on behalf of the university. Any such agreement must be forwarded to the Career Services Office.
- Immediately notify the university if your work status or contact information changes.
- Show evidence of health and accident insurance.

Please be aware that if you accept a paid position you will have to pay tax on your earnings, and when you complete your internship you cannot collect unemployment insurance.

Evaluation and Grades
As already mentioned, because your experience is considered part of your college education, you will be evaluated by both your employer and your faculty advisor. The evaluation requirements and grading policy will be listed in the syllabus.
Graduate/professional SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS

Admission Requirements
Graduate school admission committees are seeking the best candidates to admit to their program. According to a survey of admissions representatives, the top traits they are looking for are: persistence, motivation, strong communications skills (written and oral), and professionalism. Most committees consider the following factors when reviewing applications, but each may rank them differently in terms of importance.

- A bachelor's degree with a solid GPA. Not all programs require the undergraduate degree to be from the same academic discipline. Transcripts of all college-level course work will be required.
- Positive letters of recommendation written by faculty and employers who can assess your potential for graduate school.
- Related experience in a field that pertains to the graduate program. Related experience can include part-time employment, internships, and volunteer work. Admissions committees would like to see that you have a vested interest in the field.
- Standardized test scores such as the LSAT, MCAT, GMAT, or GRE. Most programs require at least one test for admission into a graduate program. As always, check your individual program's requirements.
- Leadership skills as demonstrated through various activities. Consider your involvement in campus clubs and organizations or your volunteer experience. Many graduate programs require a fair amount of group work, so demonstrated leadership skills are a positive asset.
- Good written communication skills as demonstrated by a well-written application.
- Statement of purpose/personal statement.

Pay attention to deadlines! Begin your planning process early and keep copies of everything you submit. Everyone has heard the expression “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.” This is especially true when applying to graduate programs. Consider applying to schools that might be a “reach” based on admission requirements, as well as to programs you may be accepted to and those that you are probably going to be accepted to. Career Services has some useful resources to help you with your program choices.

Financing Graduate School
Funding graduate school is a major concern for most applicants. There are five basic forms of financial assistance:

- Fellowships and scholarships are grants generally awarded on the basis of academic merit and intended to attract the most qualified candidates. They may be offered by a university, department, organization, or agency.
- Research/teaching/graduate assistantships are usually supported by stipends to conduct research, teach, or perform administrative functions. Many assistantships also provide a full or partial tuition waiver. Check with the institution's financial aid office or individual program to find out what opportunities might be available.
- Loans and grants may come from the university, state or federal government, organizations, or lending institutions. Loans usually need to be paid back, while grants do not.
- Employer contributions are benefits provided by your employer to help you enhance your skills and education needed on the job.
- Savings are your personal contribution to your continued education.

Test Prep
If you are planning to attend graduate/professional school, chances are you will be required to take an admissions test. Whether it be the GRE (Graduate School), LSAT (Law School), MCAT (Medical School), GMAT (Business School), DAT (Dental School), PCAT (Pharmacy), or OAT (Optometry), it pays to be prepared. Each semester practice tests are held on campus for some of these exams. Check your email for dates and times. Kaplan Test Prep and Princeton Review also offer prep courses for graduate admissions tests. You can find out more information by visiting www.kaplan.com or www.princetonreview.com.
Planning ahead is key to the graduate/professional school application process. Generally speaking, you should begin planning at least one year before you wish to begin a program. Every school will have their own deadlines, but the following timetable can be used as a guide for the planning process.

One Year Before
Begin defining your career goals and interests to determine if graduate school is your best option and what program might be the best fit.

August/September
• Talk to people who have careers/experience in your area of interest. Faculty and alumni are great resources. Keep your options open and don’t restrict yourself to your current major.
• Determine the best time for you to take your standardized test. Prepare early! Practice exams are a great start.
• Develop your own personalized timeline for applying.

October
• Create your list of schools. Check each school for their deadlines and factor this into your planning process.
• Draft your personal statement. Think about your academic as well as your personal achievements, as these could be inspiration for your statement. Work with a faculty advisor and have someone from Career Services proofread your statement.
• Begin asking for letters of recommendation. Provide your reference writers with the list of schools you are applying to, a copy of your résumé, and an addressed/stamped envelope for mailing or the website link to your application.
• Take your standardized test early. Remember that if you don’t like your scores the first time around, you may have opportunity to retake the test.
• Identify funding sources and their deadlines.
• Gather all copies needed for admission.

November
• Make the final touches to your personal statement.
• Follow up with your reference writers to check the status of your letters of recommendation.
• Complete and mail applications to funding sources.

December/January
• Mail applications or submit online. It is always a good idea to submit your application early.

February
• Contact prospective programs regarding on-campus visits.
• Follow up with the individual programs to make sure application documents have been received.

April
• Apply for financial aid opportunities. A copy of your tax return may be necessary.

May/June
• Decide which program you will attend.
• Congratulate yourself! Contact your program advisor to register for fall courses.

The Personal STATEMENT
The personal statement, sometimes referred to as a statement of intent or purpose, is one of the most important parts of the application process. The personal statement is your opportunity to describe your abilities, attributes, and accomplishments as evidence for pursuing a graduate degree. Because most graduate programs are writing intensive, the personal statement also provides the admissions committee with a writing sample. Most personal statements should be no longer than two or three pages.

ORGANIZING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT
Introduction: Begin with something that will grab the reader’s attention — a personal experience that relates to your career path or a quote that summarizes your commitment. Be genuine and be professional, but don’t be too edgy or humorous.

Body: If the program requires that you address a specific question or topic, do so in the body of your statement. If not, describe your experiences, goals, and motivation for attending graduate school. Be specific and provide detail about your experiences or research. Most admissions committees comprise faculty from the program who will have knowledge of specific vocabulary from the field, but do not assume that they will be familiar with your particular experience or research. Demonstrate that you have a thorough understanding of your field of study and explain why you are a good fit for their program.

Conclusion: This is your last opportunity to make an impression on the reader. Reaffirm your dedication to your field of study and graduate school. Explain your future goals and how pursuing the degree will help you attain them.

TIPS
• Customize your personal statement for each individual school or program you are applying to.
• Note any length restrictions they provide.
• Be honest, positive, and professional.
• Proofread for spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors.
• Allow at least two other people to proofread your essay and provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Writing your personal statement is a lengthy process. Begin the process early and continue to revise until you have a well-written, error-proof document. Career Services and the Writing Center, located in the Office of Academic Support, can assist with the proofreading process.
First, you need an idea of what you would like to do, where you would like to do it, and for whom you are going to do it. Then, the most important point to remember about the job search is that it is a process, not an event. Or as some people say, “Getting a full-time job IS a full-time job.” To look for shortcuts or treat the job search as a sideline is to guarantee failure.

The second thing to remember is that employers hire people to do things for them that they can’t or don’t want to do themselves. Period. To succeed, you must know what an employer needs, and then show that what you have to offer meets their needs.

There is no single best way to find a job, so your search plan should include multiple strategies. At a minimum, make sure you do the following:

**Use the Office of Career Services**
The Career Services staff can help you identify what employers are looking for and match that with what you have to offer.

**Networking**
If you are serious about getting a job, you need to enlist the support of just about everyone you know and actively seek to meet new people who can help you. You are either networking or you are not working.

**Informational Interviews**
This is one of the best, yet least used, networking techniques. Meet with professionals in your field or with a company you are interested in to find out from them how to succeed.

**Job Fairs**
There is no better place to meet employers and find out what they are looking for. Even if they don’t have an opening that you are interested in, ask if you can schedule an informational interview. Ask the representatives what they like about their companies and what they feel is the most important trait a job seeker should possess.

**The Internet**
An Internet job search doesn’t start and end with Monster.com. Use the Internet to find out what employers are looking for. Almost every employer has a website and most have a “Careers” page. Read the job descriptions.

Perfect your ability to apply online. Use search engines like www.indeed.com or www.simplyhired.com to find specific opportunities that interest you. These websites scan other sites like Monster and careerbuilder and pick out the jobs that fit your criteria.

**Social Networks**
Employers use sites like Facebook and LinkedIn to advertise their hiring needs AND to research you! Use your social media page as a marketing tool for what you have to offer an employer. Include industry-specific key words in your profiles that make you searchable by an employer.

**Always Have a Backup Plan**
- Use a search agency like Robert Half or Appleone; the list is endless.
- Cast a wide net, and be prepared to relocate or acquire new skills
- Take any job with a good company. A lot of successful people started at the bottom.

---

**Skills Employers Want:**
- Communication
- Strong Work Ethic
- Teamwork Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Initiative
- Problem-solving Skills
Researching an employer is VITAL to your job-search success 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.

What Information is Important to Know?
Key people in the organization
Organizational structure
Type of training program
Relocation policies
History of the organization/mission
Major products or services
Size in terms of sales and employees
Other locations
Major competitors
Latest news reports or local/national news that affect the company
View of the company by clients, suppliers and competition

Where Can This Information Be Found?
• Contact the company directly
• Visit the company’s website or other Internet websites (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
Networking: more than just an online presence

Networking is critical to your career. Everyone has heard the saying, “It’s not what you know, but who you know.” What’s even more important is, who knows you. Develop your network before you actually need it. The key to networking is to not ask “What can you do for me?” but rather to show “What I can do for you.” Below are some tips for how to get started.

1. Get an easy to remember email address. Networking is partly about name recognition. Be sure your email address includes your first and last name.

2. Memorize and practice an elevator pitch. In 30 seconds, you should be able to describe who you are, what your interests are and why you are interested in speaking to that person. Practice until it feels natural.

3. Build a professional Web presence. It is no secret that more and more employers are using the Web to search for job seekers. LinkedIn and Facebook are powerful tools to show off your accomplishments, successes, and elevator pitch. Use them!

4. Carry business cards. A business card should include all your contact information to give to potential contacts. Use the back of the business card to display a mini résumé or list of accomplishments.

5. Follow industry blogs and employer Twitter pages. Subscribe and comment when possible. You want bloggers to interact with you and begin to recognize who you are.

6. Become a member of a professional association. Most occupations have a professional network that sets standards for the industry, provides professional development, and allows you access to many people already working in the field. You can usually join as a student for a reduced fee. Be active in the organization so people recognize you.

7. Attend local networking events. Bring lots of business cards and a polished elevator pitch with you.

8. Conduct informational interviews. This is a great way to get your foot in the door and it sometimes can lead to an internship or employment opportunity.

9. Email friends and family. Ask them to put you in contact with anyone who can help you.

10. Join the NU Alumni Association. Niagara University graduates like to help one another. Use the alumni network to meet people in the field.

11. Keep track of your contacts’ needs. Be proactive within your network. If you see a way to help your network, do it! The more active you are, the more you will get out of it.

12. Always follow up. Find a reason to follow up with your contacts within 48 hours of meeting someone new. Keep your older contacts aware of what is going on with your job search.

13. Send a thank you. Whether via email or snail mail, a thank you is always appreciated. See the correspondence section of this book for a sample.
Informational INTERVIEWING

What Is an Informational Interview?
• 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 résumé (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, because 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?

Did You Know ...
Informational interviewing is one of the best, but least used, ways to network.
Tips for JOB FAIRS

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 a white shirt is usually safe for both genders.

5. Take the right things with you.
   - Bring a supply of résumés 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 afterward 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 priority and “maybe” lists.

7. Give yourself some breathing space.
   - Most job fair interviews last from five 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.
Public sector jobs may be for you if you are looking to support a cause, help those in need, and give back to the community. This type of job may not pay a lot of money, but a life of service may outweigh the financial aspect.

What Are Public Sector Jobs?
Public sector jobs are careers that contribute directly to the public good. A career in public service addresses the challenging issues that define the public agenda and call for talented individuals to devote their efforts to finding solutions. Some public sector careers also provide vital daily services to the public in cities, counties, states and nations around the world.

Where Are Employment Opportunities Within the Public Sector?
Federal Government — Launching a federal career can be challenging and rewarding. To locate full-time federal employment opportunities visit www.usajobs.gov. Student positions are also available and can be found at www.studentjobs.gov. For more information regarding demand areas for federal employment visit www.calltoser.org or www.makingthedifference.org.

Nonprofit Organizations — These organizations do not distribute their surplus funds to shareholders or stakeholders, but instead use them to help pursue their goals. Some examples include Make A Wish Foundation, and the American Cancer Society. For additional information regarding NPO careers visit www.idealist.org.

Nongovernmental Organizations — These are nonprofit, voluntary citizens’ groups that are organized on a local, national or international level. NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to governments, advocate and monitor policies, and encourage political participation through provision of information. Some are organized around specific issues such as human rights, environment or health. Some examples include Amnesty International and Doctors Without Borders. For additional information visit www.publicservicecareers.org.

Why Should I Work in the Public Sector?
- To make a positive difference in people’s lives
- Some organizations may help pay for school or qualify for student loan forgiveness
- There are opportunities for every interest and major, and opportunities around the country and around the world
- To develop a unique skill set
Résumés 101

A résumé is a document that describes your education, experience, and skills. It must be error free, grammatically correct, and visually pleasing to the eye. Employers typically spend 15 seconds looking at a résumé. Make sure that their first impression of you is a good one!

Résumé Content
Each résumé is unique, but there are some basic rules to follow when constructing yours.

Contact Information
Include your name, address, phone number and email at the top of the résumé. If you have a current address and a permanent address, you may decide to include both. Voice-mail messages and email addresses need to be professional.

Education
Begin with your most recent educational experience first. Include only the institutions from which you will or did receive a degree. After your sophomore year, remove your high school information. List the name of the degree you are receiving, not just the major. Minors and GPA (if above a 3.2) should also be listed in this section. For example:
Niagara University — Niagara University, NY
Bachelor of Arts — Psychology, May 20xx
Minor: Sociology
GPA: 3.4

Experience
Experience is a section heading that incorporates anything from paid work experience to internships, volunteer experience, campus leadership, class projects, and military experience. Deciding what experiences to include in this section depends upon the position you are applying for and how relevant those experiences are. Include the name of the employer/organization, location, position title, and dates. Use bullet statements that begin with action words to describe your skills, responsibilities, and accomplishments for the position. Many employers scan résumés for industry-specific buzz words from the job description. Tailor your résumé for the specific position you are applying for.

The experience section can be divided into multiple sections that fit each position you are applying for. For example, if your internship is the most related experience you have, then you will want to include an Internship section. If you were heavily involved with campus organizations or as a resident assistant, you might have a Leadership Experience section. Choose a section heading that best conveys what you want the employer to know.

Additional Sections
- Computer Skills
- Language Skills
- Honors/ Awards
- Activities/ Volunteer
- Professional Development
- Study Abroad
- Certifications
- Licenses
- Athletics
- Work History
- Employment
- Experience
- Summary of Skills
- Relevant Coursework
- Teaching Experience
- Publications
- References
- Research

Résumé Format
There are several different formats for a résumé. The next few pages have some format samples. Important points to remember:
• Make good use of the space on the page; all margins should be between .5” and 1”, and font size should be between 10 and 12 point.
• Don’t use a résumé template; format your résumé yourself to demonstrate your computer skills.
• If printing the résumé, use quality water-marked résumé paper.
• Send your résumé electronically to an employer as a pdf file using your last name as the document name.
• In most industries a one page résumé is sufficient; experienced candidates and education majors can have a two page résumé with your name and page two on the top of the second page.
The use of action words can bring your résumé and cover letter to life by helping to convey the image of a successful “doer.” The following list might be helpful:

Abstracted  Changed  Decided  Estimated  Installed  Notified  Reconciled  Sold
Accelerated  Charged  Decreased  Evaluated  Instituted  Recorded  Sorted  Specified
Accompanied  Charted  Defined  Examined  Instructed  Recruited  Rectified  Spoke
Accomplished  Checked  Delegated  Exceeded  Integrated  Redesigned  Staffed  Spoke
Accumulated  Cited  Delivered  Exchanged  Interviewed  Rolled  Reevaluated  Staged
Achieved  Clarified  Demonstrated  Executed  Introduced  Reviewed  Reevaluated  Standardized
Acquired  Classified  Designed  Experienced  Invoiced  Reviewed  Separated  Started
Acted  Cleared  Developed  Exercised  Invited  Reviewed  Simplified  Stimulated
Adapted  Coached  Delivered  Exposed  Investigated  Stocked  Suggested  Structured
Addressed  Coached  Designed  Exploited  Involving  Supported  Structured  Succeed
Adjusted  Coded  Detailed  Explained  Involved  Supplied  Supported  Surpassed
Administrated  Collaborated  Detected  Explained  Issued  Survived  Systematized  Systemized
Admitted  Collated  Determined  Exploded  Justified  Tackled  Tabulated  Tackled
Adopted  Collected  Developed  Explored  Kept  Taillied  Tailored  Tagged
Advanced  Combined  Devised  Extended  Launched  Taught  Terminated  Tested
Advertised  Commanded  Diagnosed  Extracted  Learnt  Targeted  Terminated  Tested
Advised  Commanded  Directed  Fabricated  Leased  Taught  Terminated  Tested
Advised  Commissioned  Disapproved  Facilitated  Labeled  Taught  Terminated  Tested
Advised  Commited  Discharged  Familiarized  Financed  Localised  Terminated  Tested
Advised  Communicated  Disbursed  Financed  Managed  Managed  Managed
Advised  Compared  Discovered  Financed  Maintained  Managed  Managed
Advised  Compiled  Discussed  Finished  Managed  Managed  Managed
Advised  Composed  Dismissed  Focused  Managed  Managed  Managed
Anticipated  Compounded  Dispatched  Followed  Managed  Managed  Managed
Applied  Compiled  Dispensed  Formulated  Managed  Managed  Managed
Appointed  Conceived  Displayed  Founded  Managed  Managed  Managed
Appraised  Concluded  Disposed  Freelance  Managed  Managed  Managed
Approved  Condensed  Disposed  Funded  Managed  Managed  Managed
Arbitrated  Conducted  Dissolved  Gained  Managed  Managed  Managed
Arranged  Confereed  Distributed  Gathered  Manufacturing  Managed  Managed
Assembled  Conserved  Diversified  Generated  Manufacturing  Managed  Managed
Assessed  Considered  Documented  Governed  Manufacturing  Managed  Managed
Assigned  Consolidated  Doubled  Gathered  Manufacturing  Managed  Managed
Assisted  Constructed  Drafted  Gathered  Managed  Managed  Managed
Assumed  Consulted  Drew  Granted  Managed  Managed  Managed
Assured  Contacted  Earned  Grapped  Managed  Managed  Managed
Attained  Continued  Edited  Grouped  Managed  Managed  Managed
Attended  Contracted  Educated  Headed  Managed  Managed  Managed
Audited  Contributed  Effected  Hired  Merchandised  Managed  Managed
Author  Controlled  Electd  Hosted  Met  Managed  Managed
Authorized  Converted  Eliminated  Identified  Mobilised  Managed  Managed
Awarded  Convinced  Employed  Illustrated  Modeled  Managed  Managed
Balanced  Cooperated  Enabled  Indexed  Modified  Managed  Managed
Bargained  Coordinated  Encouraged  Improved  Modified  Managed  Managed
Billed  Copied  Endorsed  Incorporated  Molded  Managed  Managed
Bought  Corrected  Enforced  Increased  Monitored  Managed  Managed
Briefed  Correlated  Engaged  Increased  Motivated  Managed  Managed
Budgeted  Corresponded  Enlarged  Indicated  Movd  Managed  Managed
Built  Couselled  Enlisted  Influenced  Named  Managed  Managed
Calculated  Created  Enquired  Influenced  Navigated  Managed  Managed
Canced  Critiqued  Ensured  Informed  Nominated  Managed  Managed
Catalogued  Critiqued  Entered  Initiated  Negotiated  Managed  Managed
Chaired  Debated  Established  Inspected  Negotiated  Managed  Managed

Excerpted from The Action Words Guidebook by Brett Anthony. Used with permission.
### 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 résumé or included in cover letter

### Education
**Institution** — City, State
Degree (written out) – major field of study, month/year of grad
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 résumé

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

### References
Available upon request (optional)
SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ TWO

Name
Number and Street Name
City, State, Zip Code
(Area code) Telephone
Email Address

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS
• Use the requirements of the job description as a guide to determine what qualifications to include.
• Include “x” number of years experience in a related field.
• Focus on individual skill sets; e.g., excellent written and oral communication skills.
• If a position requires specific computer skills, include them in the summary section.

EDUCATION
Institution
Name of degree
Graduation month, year
City, State
Major: Minor: GPA: if above a 3.2

INTERNSHIP
Name of Employer
Position Title
Dates
City, State
• Begin bullet statements with an action word.
• Be specific about quantifiable accomplishments. Prospective employers are interested in how well you performed at your internship, not just the tasks you completed.
• Use the active voice instead of the passive voice. Avoid beginning statements with “responsible for.”

EXPERIENCE
Name of Employer
Position Title
City, State
Dates
• List all experience in reverse chronological order.
• Include both paid and unpaid experiences if relevant to the position you are applying for.
• Never use first-person pronouns.
• Emphasize the specific aspects of your experience that match the needs of the employer.
• Employer recognitions can be included; e.g., Awarded “Top Sales” recognition for May.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE
Name of Organization
Position Title
City, State
Dates
• Provide a brief description of the mission of the organization.
• Include any outcomes of your leadership; e.g., Increased fundraising by 25% from previous year.
• Describe skills gained from this experience.

HONORS AND AWARDS
List academic, athletic, community, and club recognition.
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 references. 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 reference.

**Ask Permission**
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. Before using someone’s name on your reference list, you must always request permission. If you have recently cited his/her name, you may not have to ask for permission again. Remember, it is important to keep your references up-to-date concerning your job search. Give your references a copy of your résumé. 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.

**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 résumé. 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.

**Follow 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.
What Is a Cover Letter?
A cover letter, also referred to as a letter of application, is a written correspondence that is sent with your résumé when applying for an employment opportunity. A cover letter can be sent as a hard copy, an email, or attached to an employment application. The cover letter is important because it provides the reader with a sample of your written communication skills and answers the question “Why should I hire YOU?”

Writing Tips
• Address the letter to a specific individual. Make sure the name and title are accurate. If you are unsure, check the company website or contact the company directly. If the name is not available, use the position title.
• Writing should be clear, concise, and error-free. Keep your statements positive and highlight work-related accomplishments and skills. Check grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Always have someone else proofread your letter.
• Tailor your letters for each position and employer. Avoid using generic letters. Focus on the employer’s needs — state what you have to offer, not what you hope to gain from the company or the position. Don’t simply restate your résumé. Expand on something from your résumé or highlight something new.
• Refer to the position description when writing the body paragraph. Be sure to match your qualifications with the position description. The body of your cover letter may be written in narration form or you may highlight your qualifications using bullet points.
• No more than one page. Do not overwhelm the reader with a lengthy letter or excessive repetition of the résumé content.
• Keep copies of all correspondences. You never know when you might need to look back at the letters you’ve sent.

Additional Tips for Submitting the Cover Letter Electronically
• Use the letter as the body of your email and attach your résumé.
• Include the position you are seeking in the subject line of your email.
• Keep it brief and to the point. No need to include employer mailing addresses or your own home address at the top of the email.
• Separate paragraphs by line spaces.
• Include your contact information under your signature.
• If attaching your cover letter to an online application, convert it to a PDF and upload the letter.
Guidelines for your 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 résumé 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 résumé or application is enclosed)
**Sample**

**THANK YOU LETTER**

JENNIFER SMITH  
1122 Stonecut Drive  
585-555-1212  
jsmith@yahoo.com

Date sending letter

Mr. Robert W. Ewalt  
Director, Human Resources  
Colgate Research & Development Corporation  
1234 Hamilton Road  
Albany, NY 09123

Dear Mr. Ewalt:

Thank you for providing the opportunity to interview for the position of Research Cell Biologist. It was a pleasure to have met you and the information you shared about Colgate Research and Development was invaluable. I am extremely interested in this position and firmly believe that I am a sound fit for your organization.

As we discussed, my academic background, internship with The Johnson Center for Cancer Research and career interests are highly compatible with the qualities you seek in your employees. You may also be interested to know that I was recently selected as the intern of the year by The Johnson Center and will be honored at the organizations internship appreciation night. I am confident that I can bring this solid work ethic to your company.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. Please contact me at the above phone number or e-mail address for any additional information you may desire. Your continued interest in my candidacy will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Smith

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**Thank You Letter Tips**

Thank you letters should be used each time you meet with a potential employer. It is imperative that you send one after each interview. They should be short and sent within 24 to 48 hours after the interview.

- Email is appropriate, but handwritten notes often make a big impression since many people do not take the time to hand write these days.
- Send a thank you to everyone you interview with; if more than three people on the interview panel it is acceptable to send the thank you to the individual that arranged the interview and ask him or her to thank everyone else on your behalf.
- Thank the employer for the interview and 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.

Employers expect a thank you. Distinguish yourself as a candidate by taking the time to send one.
An interview is often times the final step in securing employment. Cover letters, applications, résumés, and references are all key documents to help you secure an interview. It is important to remember that the best candidate does not always get the job — many times the person who best prepares for the interview is hired.

Practice Interviewing
Make an appointment with Career Services to participate in a practice interview. Learn the types of questions you may be asked and develop your best answers. Going through a practice interview can help to identify areas of weakness and learn strategies for improvement.

Research the Organization
One of the most widely asked interview questions is, “What do you know about our organization?” Research is key to appropriately answering this question. Look at websites and written materials to familiarize yourself with the organization. Incorporate facts from your research into your interview. Use social media to research the people and organizations you will be meeting during the interview, such as LinkedIn profiles, Twitter feeds, and blogs.

Express Qualifications
Know three good reasons why you are an outstanding candidate and subtly work them into your responses.

Listen to the Interviewer
Adjust to the interviewer’s style and think about why particular questions are being asked. Respond completely to all aspects of the question.

Don’t Monopolize the Conversation
While interviewers usually want more than a simple “Yes” or “No” answer, avoid long responses. Make your answers accurate, brief, and as interesting as possible.

Be Positive
This is not the place to criticize your school, past employers, or professors. An optimist is more useful in an organization than a pessimist. If you can be enthusiastic about past experiences, you are likely to be positive about future employers.

People Hire, Not Organizations
Remember, people make hiring decisions. Your goal is to make effective contact with the interviewer. Hopefully, he or she will end up liking/respecting you.
Ask Questions
Reflect your continued interest in the organization and the job by asking well-thought-out questions that demonstrate you have researched the organization.

Point Out Why You Like the Organization
Are there factors which led you to single out the organization? If so, citing those factors can help build a link between you and the employer.

Express Interest
Assuming the job/organization interests you, take time near the end of the interview to express that interest. Unless you say you like the job/organization, the employer has no way of knowing this.

Learn What Happens Next
Is your file complete? Is additional information needed? Are your references complete? What are the next stages in the employment process and when might they occur?

Express Thanks
Thank the interviewer for his or her time and interest in you. If appropriate, thank the receptionist and anyone else who has helped you.

Source: Career Opportunities News, Garrett Park Press, Garrett Park, MD
Interviewing
TYPES AND TIPS

Employers use a variety of interview techniques and settings to determine the hireability of candidates. Knowing what type of interviewing you will have helps you to respond accordingly. The following are common interview types and suggestions on how to be successful in each situation.

Screening Interview
May be conducted in person, over the phone, or via video to help employers determine if you meet the minimum qualifications of the job. These interviews are often handled by someone in the HR department.

Tip: Emphasize how you possess the desired qualifications/skills for the position. For phone interviews, keep your résumés, cover letter, and portfolio close for easy reference. If scheduled for a video interview, rehearse ahead of time with a Career Services professional.

Phone Interview
Used to screen candidates and also reduce expenses especially if the position is out of town. The goal of a phone interview is to land an in-person interview.

Tip: Because the interviewer cannot see you, it is important to speak clearly and sound energetic in order to compensate for the fact they cannot see your facial expressions.

One-on-One Interview
This is the most common interview format and is usually conducted on site by the hiring supervisor. The interviewer focuses on questions to assess your skills, knowledge, and abilities as they relate to the job.

Tip: In addition to selling your key strengths, ask questions that relate to the information you researched about the organization.

Panel Interview
This group interview is usually conducted by three or more people who generally ask you questions that correspond to their areas of interest/expertise.

Tip: Remember to direct your answers to the person who asks the question, but maintain eye contact with the other members of the group as well. Following the interview, be sure to send a thank-you note to each of the participants.

Peer Group Interview
This type of group interview will introduce you to your potential co-workers. They probably will not have the ultimate authority as to whether or not to hire you. Rather, they will be evaluating you and making recommendations as to whether or not you will “fit in.”

Tip: Focus on being agreeable and approachable rather than someone with all the answers.

Luncheon Interview
The purpose of the lunch interview is to assess how well you can handle yourself in social situations. You will probably be dining with your potential boss and co-workers, as well as HR professionals.

Tip: Make your meal selection carefully. Select light, healthy, and things that are easy to eat. Steer clear of spaghetti and other potentially messy foods that are not easy to eat gracefully. Do not order alcohol even if others do.
Second Interview
Second interviews are similar to first interviews except they are usually longer, involve more people, and are often held at company headquarters. You may have a combination of individual, panel, and peer group interviews throughout the process. The focus of the second interview is to ensure you have the necessary skills and that you will blend well with the organization’s culture.

Tip: Switch your focus from emphasizing your specific strengths to selling yourself as a well-balanced package. Listen carefully to the interviewers to determine any underlying concerns and attempt to dispel them. Prove that you’ve researched the company, and emphasize that you will work as a dedicated member of the organization.

Video Interview
Video interviews allow the candidate and the recruiter to interact with one another while saving travel costs. Traditionally, video interviews have been set up at a specific location, but many are now conducted via the candidate’s home computer.

Tip: Be prepared for a slight delay in receiving sound and image. Hesitate slightly before speaking to ensure the transmission has been fully completed.

Source: Job Choice for Business & Liberal Arts Students: 2011

Relationship builder.
Information absorber.
Overachiever.
Future Alliance Advisory Group Agent.

OPPORTUNITIES

There’s a certain kind of person who comes to Alliance Advisory Group, Inc. The “I Won’t Settle for Less than the Best” kind of person. And we’ll happily supply you with everything you need. Learning opportunities that are comprehensive and cutting edge. Education that is on-line, on-site and at your convenience. Seasoned pros to help you avoid pitfalls and gain insights. Products and services to build lifelong client relationships. And the opportunity to take your ambition as far as it can go.

Alliance Advisory Group

For further information, please email careers@allianceadvisorygroup.com, or visit our website at www.allianceadvisorygroup.com

The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America (Guardian), New York, NY.
1. **Check the on-campus interview postings** throughout the academic year at www.niagara.edu/career or in the Office of Career Services for an updated schedule of companies conducting on-campus interviews.

2. **Submit a copy of your résumé to career services by the date requested** for the position(s) for which you would like to be considered.

3. **Schedule a practice interview** by contacting Career Services at 716.286.8500. Only the résumés of students who have scheduled or completed practice interviews will be forwarded to recruiters.

4. **Recruiters review the submitted résumés and tell career services which students they would like to interview.** Once your résumé has been accepted for an interview, either career services or the recruiter will contact you to schedule an interview.

5. **Report to career services 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, and polished shoes. Avoid jewelry other than a wedding or class ring.
   - Women – Skirts no shorter than slightly above the knee; solid color blouses; navy, black, or taupe pumps with two-inch heels are recommended; and make-up should be subtle.

7. **If you must cancel, contact career services 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 career services 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 career services staff.**

**Upon Acceptance of a Job Offer**
- Notify career services 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!
Improve YOUR IMAGE

How you dress for an interview is just as important as how you answer the questions. Conservative appropriate attire is the best choice. Below are some guidelines to follow:

Tips For Everyone

- **Practice Good Grooming**: Shower, brush your teeth, get regular haircuts, and make sure your nails are cleaned and trimmed.
- **Check the Details**: Look for loose buttons. Remove tags. Use a lint brush if necessary.
- **Lose the Backpack**: Leave the backpack in your room. Carry a portfolio containing copies of your résumé, a pen, and a note pad. Women may carry a small purse.
- **Use Cologne/Perfume Sparingly or Not at All**: Too much can be annoying, and your interviewer could be allergic.

Employers are not concerned only with the image you portray at the interview, but they also look at your online image. Check your social media image and make sure it also portrays a sense of professionalism. What do people find when they Google you? If the results aren’t professional, it is time to take those pics down. Set up a profile on LinkedIn, which is a 100 percent professional network.

**Professional Attire for Men**

- **Suit**: Wear a dark or gray suit (solid or very subtle pinstripes)
- **Shirt**: Dress shirts should be solid, preferably white. Be sure your shirt and suit are clean and pressed.
- **Tie**: Choose muted colors in solids, stripes, or small patterns.
- **Shoes and Socks**: Leather, lace-up, or slip-on business shoes in a dark color should be worn with dark-colored socks that are mid-calf in height. Make sure your shoes are polished. Your shoe color should match your belt color.
- **Hair and Facial Hair**: All hair should be neatly groomed.
- **Jewelry**: A watch and wedding or school ring are appropriate. Some employers will not view earrings positively.

**Professional Attire for Women**

- **Suit**: Wear a suit in a dark color (black, navy, or gray). Your skirt should be at least knee-length so that it does not expose your thighs when you sit. A pant suit is also considered professional.
- **Shirt**: Choose a white, ivory, or pastel-colored blouse.
- **Cosmetics**: Be conservative and understated with makeup. Avoid extra-long nails or attention-drawing colors of polish.
- **Shoes and Hosiery**: Wear closed-toe pumps with medium or low heels in a dark color. Shoes should be polished. Heels should not look worn. Wear sheer hosiery.
- **Jewelry**: Keep jewelry simple and to a minimum. A watch, single ring, and small earrings are a good choice.

Source: Job Choices for Business & Liberal Arts Students: 2011
Behavioral Interviewing Techniques

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.

1. 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.

2. In the interview, your response needs to be specific and detailed.

3. Cite a particular situation that relates to the question, not a general one.

4. Briefly state the situation, what you did specifically, and the positive result or outcome.

5. Frame it in a four-step process:
   1. situation               2. action              3. result/outcome              4. lesson learned

6. Always listen carefully to the question, ask for clarification if necessary, and answer the question completely.

7. 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.

For Example
Q. Have you ever had to ask somebody to do something that you knew they did not want to do?

A. I have, let me give you an example: As the secretary treasurer of Beta Alpha Psi, I had a deadline for the club’s financial report and I needed statements from the club committee chairs. I knew that none had done their statements yet. But I explained to them that if we filed our report in a timely fashion, it would enable us to get funding for other things we wanted to do. Then, they followed through on their responsibilities. What I learned from this was if you explain to people what they can gain by following through with a task, then they are more willing to do it.

Behavioral Interview Questions
1. Describe a situation in which you were able to help out a peer or co-worker.
2. Have you ever had any difficulty getting along with co-workers? How did you handle the situation?
3. How have you determined what constitutes a top priority in your schedule? Give an example.
4. Has your time schedule ever been upset by unforeseen circumstances? What did you do then? Give me an example.
5. Give me an example of a time you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
6. Tell me about a time when you had to use your written communication skills to get an important point across.
7. Describe a time on any job when you were faced with problems that tested your coping skills.
8. Give me a specific occasion when you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
9. Describe the most significant or creative presentation that you have had to complete.
10. Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
Tell me a bit about yourself.
Focus on attributes of yourself that the interviewer does not already know by reading your résumé. This is an open-ended question generally used to help “break the ice.”

Why are you interested in working for this organization?
The key here is to let the employer know that you have done your homework. Be specific and state how what you have learned about the organization through your research relates to your career goals.

Why have you chosen this particular field?
Give specific reasons as to why you chose this area.

Describe your best/worst boss?
Be positive when describing both examples. Be careful not to “roast” your past employer. Focus on what you learned from the experience.

What are your major strengths/weaknesses?
Always provide a concrete example as to why something is your strength. As for a weakness, be sure it is something that enables you to explain how you have been working to improve it.

Give me an example of a problem you encountered either in school or at work, and explain how you solved it.
Be logical. Explain the situation, what actions you took to resolve the situation, and what the outcome was.

Where do you see yourself in three years?
Tell the interviewer that you hope to be with the company in a capacity that you can make the greatest contribution, based on skills and experiences you have gained.

Describe an experience in which you worked as a part of a team.
Working as part of a team and leading a team are very desirable attributes. Provide specific positive examples of both situations.

What was the last book you read?
The purpose of this question is to see if you remain current in your field or read for self-improvement.

Do you have any questions for me?
The worst answer to this question is “No.” Always ask questions that relate to your research.
Illegal QUESTIONS

During the application and interview process, laws require employers to ask only job-related questions of potential employees.

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 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 U.S. citizen?” You’ve been asked an illegal question. You can respond, however, with “I am authorized to work in the United States.”

Illegal Questions
1. Are you a U.S. citizen?
2. Where were you/your parents born?
3. What is your “native tongue”?
4. How old are you?
5. When did you graduate from high school?
6. What’s your birth date?
7. What’s your marital status?
8. How many kids do you have?
9. What are your child care arrangements?
10. 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.)
11. Do you have any disabilities?
12. Have you ever been arrested?
13. If you’ve been in the military, were you honorably discharged?
14. Do you have good credit history to qualify for a credit card?

Legal Questions
1. Are you authorized to work in the United States?
2. What language do you read/speak/write fluently? (Only if relevant to the job.)
3. Are you over the age of 18?
4. Would you be willing to relocate if necessary?
5. Would you be willing to work overtime or weekends if necessary?
6. Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as that is part of this job?
7. Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job?
8. Have you ever been convicted of a ______ ? (The crime should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)
9. What type of training or education did you receive in the military?
10. 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?
Evaluating your JOB OFFER

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**: Consider the entire compensation — salary, bonus, insurance, stock options, retirement — not just your pay check. Use NACELink as a guide to review salaries.
- **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**: Is it 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**: Will I be responsible for a variety?
- **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?
- **Relocation**: Deciding to relocate is a difficult decision. Refer to sites such as homefair.com for a relocation calculator.

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 about your qualifications and academic or employment history on your résumé 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.
Your first year
ON THE JOB

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 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 getting 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 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.
Earn a degree that will make you more marketable in today’s workforce.

**Master of Education**
Niagara’s NCATE accredited program offers master’s degrees in Teacher Education, Educational Leadership, School Counseling, School Psychology, Mental Health Counseling, Special Education and Literacy.

**Master of Business Administration**
Niagara’s practice-oriented curriculum lets you complete your MBA in as little as 16 months with convenient weekday evening or Saturday classes.

**Master of Criminal Justice**
A traditional master’s program that not only meets the needs of practicing criminal justice professionals but also of those wanting to enter the field.

**Master of Arts-Interdisciplinary Studies**
This innovative curriculum crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries and gives each student the ability to design their own graduate degree program.

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