

COLLEGE TO CAREER:

A STUDENT'S TOOLKIT FOR THE WORKFORCE



**LEAD A STRATEGIC
JOB SEARCH**



**CREATE AN UNFORGETTABLE
RESUME AND COVER LETTER**



**CONDUCT A
MEMORABLE INTERVIEW**



SIERRA COLLEGE CAREER AND TRANSFER CONNECTIONS
[SIERRACOLLEGE.EDU/CTC](https://sierracollege.edu/ctc), 916.660.7481, CTC@SIERRACOLLEGE.EDU

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HOW EMPLOYERS HIRE

Recruiting and hiring new employees requires a substantial investment of time and money. To maximize efficiency, hiring managers typically follow a structured process that includes multiple intentional steps aimed at finding candidates with the right skills and personality.

Hiring Process Overview

Position Description Review

The hiring manager begins by reviewing and updating the position description, also known as the job description. This document outlines the role's functions, essential duties, and minimum qualifications. It serves as a guide for creating the job posting, reviewing resumes, and screening candidates during interviews.

Announcement of the Opening

Hiring managers prioritize referrals and often promote job openings to current employees and their networks first. Many positions exist in the "hidden job market," which are not publicly advertised. To reach a broader audience, hiring managers post openings on the company website, utilize job boards like [College Central Network](#) or [Indeed](#), and participate in job fairs or other hiring events.

Application Review

Hiring managers or a hiring committee review applications, including cover letters and resumes. Due to the volume of applications, each submission typically receives only a brief, ten-second review to identify candidates who meet the minimum and preferred qualifications.

Candidate Screening Calls

Selected applicants are contacted for screening calls to discuss their interest in the position and answer any preliminary questions. This step helps assess the candidates' personality and professionalism, determining whether they should advance to the interview stage.

Interviews

In-person or virtual interviews provide hiring managers and committees with a comprehensive understanding of candidates' skills, experience, and personalities. While candidates often possess the technical skills required for the role, this stage also evaluates their soft skills and cultural fit within the organization.

Reference Checks

Once final candidates are selected, references are contacted to verify employment and gather insights about the candidates' previous performance. Some hiring managers may also review candidates' social media profiles, such as LinkedIn or Facebook, to gather additional context.

Job Offer

Finally, the job offer is extended, discussing salary, benefits, start date, and other relevant details. Depending on company policy, there may be room for negotiation regarding salary and benefits.



CREATING A JOB SEARCH PLAN

Have you heard the phrase, “Failing to plan is planning to fail”? A well-thought-out plan that aligns with your career goals is essential when searching for jobs, internships, or other career experiences. Maximize your valuable time by creating a strategic plan and taking deliberate steps toward achieving your goals.

Clarify Your Career Goals - Reflect on your aspirations and where you see yourself after graduation. Identify experiences that will help you develop the knowledge and skills necessary for your desired career.

Research Occupations - Explore occupations related to your interests or field of study. Review employment projections and salary information to assess the viability of careers in those areas. Utilize tools like [Career Coach](#) and complete the [Career Coach Worksheet](#) for guided research.

Brainstorm Relevant Experiences - Identify jobs and opportunities that align with your career goals. For example, if you're interested in marketing, consider entry-level roles in marketing firms or positions in marketing departments within unrelated industries, such as healthcare.

Pursue Professional Development - Determine areas for skill enhancement, such as public speaking. Seek opportunities to volunteer for presentations or other speaking engagements to build your confidence.

Define Your Target Occupation and Industry - Specify your target roles and industries, including preferred geographic locations and specific companies of interest.

Stay Organized - Keep all collected information in digital folders, physical folders, or organizational tools to maintain clarity and efficiency throughout your search.

Dedicate Time for Your Job Search - Allocate regular, consistent time for your job search—daily or weekly—and hold yourself accountable to this schedule.

Network Actively - Build and nurture relationships with industry professionals. Inform friends and family of your interests, and leverage social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram for networking opportunities.

Search for Openings - Utilize your job search plan to identify job openings and target companies. Submit applications with tailored resumes and cover letters for each position.

Stay Positive and Flexible - Maintain a positive outlook, and be prepared to adjust your goals and strategies as needed. Focus on your objectives while remaining adaptable to new opportunities.



CAREER COACH WORKSHEET

GO TO: **HTTPS://SIERRACOLLEGE.EMSICC.COM** (NO WWW!)

You do not need to log into this site, but that also means your results and searches **WILL NOT** be saved--you should plan to do this entire assignment in one sitting (**approx. 30 min.**)

SELECT THE **TAKE THE ASSESSMENT** BUTTON

Select the **60 Question** option (on the right)

Don't take the questions too literally--ex: the first one asks about building kitchen cabinets...if there's anything about kitchen cabinets, building things, working with your hands, etc. that you like, indicate that--don't be specific to just KITCHEN cabinets or not cabinets but other things...)

WHAT ARE YOUR **TOP THREE TRAITS**?

Find and write down some details from the **trait descriptions** that sound like you:

Write down your **top 3 Career Matches** and what the **percentage match** is:

1. _____ %
2. _____ %
3. _____ %

CLICK ON THE **MOST INTERESTING** OF YOUR TOP MATCHES

Scroll down to see your **top two** scoring Career matches and their percentage match - and write them here:

1. _____ %
2. _____ %

CLICK ON **ONE** OF THOSE OPTIONS TO SEE RELATED CAREER TITLES

Change the **Filter Careers** sort (box on the right) to % **match**. Which **career title** comes out on top?

_____ %

CLICK ON THE NAME OF THAT CAREER

If that one doesn't sound good, scroll down until you find one that does - or one that you don't really know about.

What is the **median** salary? _____ What is the **starting** wage? _____

What is the **top** wage? _____ How many **job openings** annually? _____

NOW SELECT THE **ABOUT** TAB

Look at the **Daily Tasks** – do they match what you can/would like to do on a daily basis? (mark one)

Not at all

Not really

Kinda

Pretty much

Totally!

How much education do most people in the field have? _____

Look at the **top 10 skills** that employers are asking for in hiring someone for this position. Do they match what you can/would like to do on a daily basis? (mark one)

Not at all

Not really

Kinda

Pretty much

Totally!

UNDER THE **EMPLOYMENT** TAB, SCROLL DOWN TO **COMPANIES POSTING JOBS**

Who are the top three in hiring over the past six months?

Which is true about the **employment projection** graph at the bottom? (mark one)

This job outlook is **declining**

This job outlook is **stagnant**

This job outlook is **growing**

SYNTHESIS:

What is the **best** thing you learned about the career?

What is the **worst** part about the career?

What **concerns** would you have about this career?

Now that you know all of this about this career, **is it one you would consider pursuing?** (mark one)

Not at all

Not really

Kinda

Pretty much

Totally!

What else would you want/need to know before making a decision?

IF THIS JOB IS STAYING ON YOUR LIST, THEN GO BACK TO **OVERVIEW** AND SCROLL DOWN THROUGH THE POTENTIAL PROGRAMS THAT COULD HELP PREPARE YOU

Does **Sierra** offer an available program? Yes _____ No _____

◦ If **YES:**

- **List the program** that seems to be the best fit for you: _____
- You may want to meet with a counselor to confirm or change your major and get support in making other educational decisions to help you explore/pursue this career.

◦ If **NO**, see a counselor to talk about which program here may help you work toward this career and/or if there is another college close that does specifically teach this program.

IF YOU AREN'T INTERESTED IN THIS CAREER, THEN CLICK ON THE **ASSESSMENT** TAB OR **CAREERS** TAB TO EXPLORE MORE OPTIONS

If you still want to work toward making a decision or need some more help, consider making an appointment with a counselor.

Moving ahead in college with a career goal in mind is the primary route to success - along with learning as much about your career as possible by taking the right classes, talking with people in the field and completing an internship. Sierra College offers all this and MORE!



PRACTICAL JOB SEARCH TIPS

- **Inform your network.** Share the details of your interests.
- **Build your network.** Create new professional relationships. Join a [student club](#) or [volunteer](#). Connections and recommendations often lead to job leads.
- **Use a professional greeting for your voicemail.** This exudes professionalism and reassures hiring managers they contacted the correct person. Also, check and delete messages regularly to avoid a full mailbox.
- **Use a professional email address.** If you don't have one, [Gmail](#) is a free email provider. Use a signature with your full contact information when sending an email to an employer.
- **Brush up on your interviewing skills.** Learn about various types of interviews being used, such as Zoom for virtual interviews, and how to best prepare.
- **Confirm your references.** Let them know you are searching for jobs and they may be contacted. Provide an updated copy of your resume.
- **Assemble your interview outfit.** Try it on to make sure it fits. Take it to the dry cleaners if needed. Make sure you have shoes and any other attire ready. Don't wait until you are invited for an interview to do this. You will need that time to prepare.
- **Clean up digital dirt.** If you Google yourself, what do you find? Is it positive or negative? Be sure content on your social media sites exudes professionalism.
- **Use College Central Network.** Search for positions exclusively for Sierra College students and alumni. Learn about upcoming community hiring events and get advice.
- **Follow the application directions exactly as provided by the employer.** It shows you are detail oriented and ensures you do not miss a step.
- **Research the position and company.** Learn what you can to make sure it is a good fit and help prepare for the interview.
- **Update and tailor your resume for each position.** Always submit a cover letter even if it is not required.
- **Stay organized.** Bundle a copy of the posting and application including your resume and cover letter and save in a file. You can use this to prepare for your interview. Also, note when you applied, who you sent it to, and any other details to help with follow-up.
- **Keep a calendar and note important dates.** This can include application deadlines, recruitment events, follow-up emails or calls.
- **Only answer calls from unknown numbers if you are prepared to have a phone interview.** If you are not ready, let it go to voicemail and return within 24 hours when you are able to have a professional conversation.
- **Schedule regular time in your calendar for your job search** as you would for schoolwork or studying. Set daily or weekly goals for the number of connections you will make or jobs you will apply to.
- **Celebrate achieving your goals**, no matter how small or big. Did you make a new connection in your field of interest? Did you meet your goal of submitting two applications by the end of the week? Great, celebrate those successes!



COLLEGE CENTRAL NETWORK

Students and alumni can search hundreds of jobs, internships, and other positions posted exclusively for Sierra College, view upcoming community hiring events, find career advice, and more. College Central is free and mobile friendly.

Sign Up

1. Go to www.collegecentral.com/sierracollege
2. Find the Sign In box near the top of the page and click the blue Sign Up text
3. Enter Student as User Type, provide email address, and click blue Sign Up box
4. Enter Student ID as the User ID and create a password
5. Complete the registration form and click the blue Submit Information button

Alumni can obtain their USER ID by contacting Career and Transfer Connections at ctc@sierracollege.edu or by calling 916.660.7481

Tips

- **Use the search areas**
 - My School's Jobs are positions posted exclusively for students and alumni.
 - Jobs Central and Intern Central are positions in any state.
- **Find jobs on campus**
 - Go to My School's Jobs, and open the Advanced Search. Under Job Location, select On Campus from the menu and click Begin Search.
- **Narrow your search**
 - Use key words and other options to filter your search. Make several searches using different or fewer criteria to avoid excluding opportunities in your area.
- **Create or upload a resume**
 - Check out the Resume Builder in the My Resume section.
- **Sign up for Job Agent emails**
 - In your account's Email Authorization section, sign up for "Job Agent" emails with job opportunities that match your profile.
- **Explore your dashboard**
 - Check out the Podcasts and Media Library for quick professional how-to's.
 - Preparing to apply? Start with the Job Search Kit.
 - See notifications for upcoming community job fairs, workshops and career events.
- **Get tips and tricks**
 - Listen to Career Podcasts to learn about job search tips, which professional development skills to sharpen, and pitfalls to avoid.
- **Connect with professionals**
 - Career Mentoring Network is a great tool to connect with professionals for information interviews, job shadows, and more.
- **Check with Career and Transfer Connections**
 - We're happy to help any step of the way.



CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMMUNITY RESOURCES

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS THAT OFFER CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES IN PLACER COUNTY

Please refer to the organization's website for more information about programs and services.

Placer School for Adults (PSA)

placeronline.org

The goal of PSA is to provide the surrounding communities with rich resources that will help individuals build the needed skills to transition to college and/or build a successful career. PSA is open to the general public serving adults 18 and over providing free employability workshops, services, and career counseling through the Career Center. Services include:

- Resume and Cover Letter Assistance
- Portfolio Development
- Interview Strategies and Mock Interviews
- Typing Test and Basic Computer Skills
- Networking 101
- Job Fair Preparation
- New World of Work 21st Century Skills
- Job Search Assistance and First 30 Days on the Job Preparation
- High School Diploma Classes and GED Prep Classes

PSA is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and offers several career pathways courses including Clinical Medical Assistant Program, Computer Courses, Culinary, Interior Design, and Blacksmithing.

Job Connections

<https://www.placer.ca.gov/5645/Resources-for-Job-Seekers>

Operated by Placer County's Business Advantage Network, Job Connections connects job seekers with employers by offering free monthly events where job seekers can meet company representatives face-to-face, learn about current job openings and the hiring process.

Golden Sierra

goldensierra.com

Local workforce development board that offers programs for youth, adults, veterans, job seekers with disabilities, and more. Programs include paid work experience, on-the-job training, vocational training, and no-cost employment services through the Connections Center. The Connections Center helps individuals in transition by offering assistance with selecting a new career, finding a job, and locating suitable education or training. They offer free workshops on resume writing and career exploration. Check their event calendar for upcoming workshops.

California Employment Development Department (EDD)

edd.ca.gov

State agency that provides a comprehensive range of employment and training services including job search tools through CalJOBS which is an online job board for state employment. EDD also offers job fairs and workshops, occupational guides and training resources.

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NETWORKING

THE KEY TO JOB SEARCH SUCCESS

Building and maintaining professional relationships is a crucial job search strategy. Remember, relationships are reciprocal. While you may seek assistance—like asking someone to be a reference—be ready to offer support in return.

Your network can include people from various areas of your life: family, friends, instructors, counselors, peers, and members of community groups or clubs. You likely already have a valuable network in place.

Tips

- **Introduce Yourself:** Craft a brief elevator pitch to effectively summarize your experience and skills. Use the Elevator Pitch Worksheet to refine your pitch.
- **Join Student Organizations:** Engage in clubs related to your field of interest. This helps you meet like-minded individuals.
- **Build Relationships with Professors:** Faculty can provide valuable insights and connections. Don't hesitate to seek advice or discuss career goals.
- **Leverage Social Media:** Connect with professionals, learn about companies, and share industry insights on platforms like LinkedIn. Use the LinkedIn Profile Checklist to optimize your profile.
- **Schedule Informational Interviews:** These 30-minute to one-hour meetings are an excellent way to build connections and gain industry insights. Refer to our Career Mentoring Network Handout for suggested questions.
- **Join Relevant Groups:** Participate in student clubs or professional associations related to your career interests. Search for "Networking groups for [your major]" to find relevant organizations.
- **Attend Networking Events:** Meet professionals, explore job opportunities, and gain market insights by attending industry events. Check the list of organizations hosting events at the back of this handout.
- **Stay Positive:** Approach interactions with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn.
- **Be Bold:** Step out of your comfort zone by starting conversations at networking events.
- **Follow-up:** Send a message or email after meeting someone to reinforce the connection.
- **Stay Connected:** Regularly check in with your contacts to maintain relationships and offer updates.

A networking group is a collection of individuals who come together to build professional relationships, share information, and support each other's career or business goals. These groups can be industry-specific, regional, or based on shared interests or goals.

Local Networking Organizations

- Golden Sierra
- Rocklin Chamber of Commerce
- Roseville Chamber of Commerce
- Placer County Business Advantage Network
- Sacramento Works
- Sacramento Black Chamber of Commerce
- Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Sacramento Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce
- Sacramento Rainbow Chamber of Commerce

State/National Networking Organizations

- California Indian Manpower Consortium
- Women Business Collaborative
- Neurotalent Works
- ToastMasters

HELPFUL TIPS:

- **Connect with Professionals:** Meet hiring managers, job seekers, and mentors to build a diverse professional network.
- **Explore Opportunities:** Learn about current job openings and industry trends.
- **Set Goals:** Define specific objectives for each event, such as meeting a certain number of people or gathering information about particular companies.
- **Enhance Skills:** Take advantage of professional development opportunities, such as mock interviews, resume reviews, and training sessions.
- **Understand the Market:** Gain insights into the job market and strategies to stand out among other candidates.
- **Volunteer:** Get involved in organizing or volunteering at events to expand your connections and demonstrate your commitment.



CAREER NETWORK

BUILD AND MAINTAIN A NETWORK OF PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS

Our network includes friends, family, classmates, instructors, and coworkers, all of whom can help us explore careers and find opportunities. Building a professional network is crucial in today's job market, as the best insights come from those already in the field.

Ways to grow your network include connecting with professors and classmates, joining relevant organizations, doing internships, and participating in informational interviews or job shadowing.

Informational Interviews and Job Shadows

An informational interview is an informal 30-minute conversation with a professional in a field of interest. While ideally conducted on-site to observe the work environment, it can also be done by phone or video. These interviews provide firsthand insights into a career, offering valuable tips and industry knowledge.

A job shadow involves observing a professional at work for a few hours or days. Both are great for researching careers and expanding your network, but neither is intended to find job openings or serve as a job interview.

Find Industry Professionals

- Reach out to your network—friends, family, instructors, and classmates—to see if they know someone in your field.
- Use the Career Mentoring Network in College Central:
www.collegecentral.com/sierracollege.
- Explore LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com to connect with professionals, including Sierra College alumni.
- Use Google to find local business organizations and professionals in your field. Send them a friendly email—tip: use our sample contact script.

Sample Contact Script

"Hello, my name is _____. I'm a student at Sierra College, and I'm reaching out regarding the _____ opportunity. I have an interest in _____. Would you be available to arrange a meeting?"

If yes: Proceed with scheduling the meeting and ask about appropriate dress, directions, and parking.

If no: Ask, "When would be a good time to follow up?"

Via email: You can suggest a few days/times or ask them to propose their availability.

Sample Questions

1. How did you get started in this job?
2. What training or education did you have before starting this role?
3. What skills, education, and experience are essential for entering this field today?
4. Where is the best place to receive training in this field?
5. Are there any new trends or directions emerging in this industry?
6. What is the job outlook for this field in the next five years?
7. How has your role changed since you first started?
8. What are your primary responsibilities?
9. Can you describe a typical day in your job?
10. What is the earning potential in this field? (Avoid asking personal salary details.)
11. What do you enjoy most about your job?
12. What is the most challenging part of your job?
13. What advice would you give to someone looking to pursue this career?
14. As a student, what can I do now to prepare for this career?
15. Is there anyone else in this field you would recommend I reach out to?

Write down two of your own questions before your interview!

Question #1: _____

Question #2: _____

HELPFUL TIPS:

- **Be prepared and dress professionally for in-person meetings.**
- **Respect their time by arriving on time and sticking to the agreed-upon meeting duration.**
- **Come with prepared questions.**
- **Ask if you can reach out again in the future for additional questions or recommendations for others to speak with.**
- **Always send a thank-you note—time is one of the most valuable things people can share.**



ELEVATOR PITCH WORKSHEET

An elevator pitch is a brief introduction that highlights our skills and experience. Key elements include who we are, what we do, our skills and achievements, as well as our interests and goals. It can be challenging to identify our own strengths and accomplishments, so it might help to ask a trusted friend or family member for their perspective.

Hi, my name is _____ and I am a (year in school) _____
studying _____ at Sierra College. I have experience in (employment, internships, volunteer, or related extra-curricular activities) _____

_____.

My strongest skills are _____

_____.

Some of the accomplishments I am most proud of are _____

_____.

The career field I am interested in is _____

_____.

I am interested in learning more about _____

_____.

Example

"Hi, my name is Paige Turner, and I'm a second-year student studying Administration of Justice: Law Enforcement at Sierra College. I've gained hands-on experience as an intern with the Rocklin Police Department, where I became familiar with police terms, codes, and radio communication with units and dispatchers. I also have a strong understanding of police security techniques. My internship has helped me enhance my communication, problem-solving, and service skills. I'm interested in a Community Service Officer position with local law enforcement and would love the opportunity to learn more about your department."

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LinkedIn Profile Checklist

☐ **PHOTO:** It doesn't have to be fancy - just use your cellphone camera in front of a plain background. Wear a nice shirt and don't forget to smile!

☐ **HEADLINE:** Tell people what you're excited about now and the cool things you want to do in the future.

☐ **SUMMARY:** Describe what motivates you, what you're skilled at, and what's next.

☐ **EXPERIENCE:** List the jobs you held, even if they were part-time, along with what you accomplished at each. Even include photos and videos from your work.

☐ **ORGANIZATIONS:** Have you joined any clubs at school or outside? Be sure to describe what you did with each organization.

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn profile for David Xiao. The header includes the LinkedIn logo, a search bar, and the text "Search for people, jobs, companies, and more...". The profile picture is a headshot of David Xiao. The headline reads "David Xiao" followed by "Econ Major and Aspiring Financial Analyst" and "San Francisco Bay Area | Financial Services". The "Previous" section lists "Berkeley Ventures" and the "Education" section lists "University of California, Berkeley". There are buttons for "Improve your profile" and "Edit Profile", and a "153 connections" badge. Below the header is a "Background" section with a "Summary" subsection. The summary text reads: "I'm a senior at Berkeley, starting to look for roles in the financial industry. As an economics major, I'm fascinated by the invisible forces that shape our world. Why does one company succeed and another fail? Is it possible to predict which idea will be the next big thing? As such, I've taken lots of microeconomics coursework and have interned with a local venture capital firm. And now I'd like to put that experience to good use, analyzing tomorrow's up-and-coming companies." Below the summary is an "Experience" section with a subsection for "Venture Capital Internship" at "Berkeley Ventures" from "May 2013 - September 2013 (5 months) | Berkeley, CA". The description reads: "Conducted research on 20 startup companies and presented my findings to the fund's board, leading to a new \$1.5 million investment." Below the experience section is a "Media" section with a video thumbnail titled "INTRODUCTION TO VENTURE CAPITAL" by David Xiao. The description reads: "A presentation I gave to my classmates, based on what I learned at Berkeley Ventures". Below the media section is an "Organizations" section with a subsection for "Berkeley A Capella" where David Xiao is a "Lead Singer" from "March 2012 - Present". The description reads: "Schedule and perform at events for one of Berkeley's oldest a cappella groups, including last year's Cal-Stanford game."

Continued >>

☐ **EDUCATION:** Starting with college, list all the educational experiences you've had - including summer programs.

☐ **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE & CAUSES:** Even if you weren't paid for a job, be sure to list it. Admissions officers and employers often see volunteer experience as just as valuable as paid work.

☐ **SKILLS & EXPERTISE:** Add at least 5 key skills - and then your connections can endorse you for the things you're best at.

☐ **HONORS & AWARDS:** If you earned a prize in or out of school, don't be shy. Let the world know about it!

☐ **COURSES:** List the classes that show off the skills and interests you're most excited about.

☐ **PROJECTS:** Whether you led a team assignment in school or built an app on your own, talk about what you did and how you did it.

☐ **RECOMMENDATIONS:** Ask managers, professors, or classmates who've worked with you closely to write a recommendation. This gives extra credibility to your strengths and skills.

Education

University of California, Berkeley
Economics, B.A.
2010 – 2014 (expected)



Volunteer Experience & Causes

Big Buddy

Skyline High School

September 2012 – May 2013 (9 months) | Education

Mentored an Oakland high school student through the college application process, helping him get into his dream school.



Skills & Expertise

Most endorsed for...

12	Economics	
11	Start-ups	
10	Due Diligence	
10	Venture Capital	
10	Management	



Honors & Awards

The Achievement Award Program

UC Berkeley

Four-year scholarship awarded to community-minded students with a proven track record of academic success.



Courses

University of California, Berkeley

- Microeconomic Theory (Econ 101A)
- International Monetary Economics (182)
- Public Economics (230A)



Projects

Venture Capital Financing in India

May 2013

For our international Monetary Economics course, Paul and I decided to study the emerging venture capital industry in India. By looking at data from the World Bank, we were able to understand the challenges and opportunities facing this nascent sector. And we developed a series of recommendations for overcoming these challenges, which we delivered to our professor in a final term paper.

5 team members



David Xiao

Econ Major and Aspiring Financial Anal...



Paul Smith

Student at UC Berkeley

Recommendations

Received (2) ▾

Venture Capital Internship

Berkeley Ventures



Tim Lee

Partner

“David spent the summer with us at Berkeley Ventures and made an immediate impact. He showed us a brand new technique for firm analysis that he had just learned in school and came through with recommendations that opened our eyes to a unique set of opportunities.

We don't normally hire undergrads as interns but after working with David, we will again!

November 13, 2013, Tim managed



JOB SEARCH MISCONCEPTIONS DEBUNKED

We all have strengths and areas for growth. During our job search, we have the opportunity to show employers how common misconceptions can actually be strengths, thanks to our unique talents and experiences. Below are some common misconceptions and how we can reframe them in a positive light.

No Formal Leadership Role Yet

Leadership is a mindset, and many of us show leadership daily. Whether taking the initiative to solve problems or leading group projects, we demonstrate leadership informally. Being a good follower also shows our ability to accept guidance and complete tasks.

Age

Young people bring energy, fresh ideas, and tech-savviness to the workplace. Older generations offer seasoned experience, strong work ethics, and reliability. Both have valuable strengths to contribute.

Inexperience

Everyone starts somewhere. Newcomers are often flexible, open-minded, and eager to learn. Skills from school or extracurricular activities, such as communication and teamwork, are transferable to most jobs.

Termination

While it's best to avoid focusing on being fired, if it comes up, highlight what you learned from the experience and how it makes you a better employee. Avoid blaming your former employer.

Children

Raising children involves managing multiple tasks, meeting deadlines, and making backup plans—skills that are highly transferable to the workplace.

Disability

We are capable of performing job duties with reasonable accommodations. We're eager to contribute and bring diverse perspectives that benefit companies.

Shy

Shy individuals are often great listeners, follow directions well, and produce thoughtful, high-quality work.

Poor Grades

Grades are just one part of the picture. Experience gained through extracurriculars, work, or volunteer roles can better showcase skills and predict success in a job.



JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES DURING A RECESSION

Job hunting during a recession can be challenging, requiring extra strategies and more time. With fewer opportunities and increased competition, it's important to be proactive, expand your network, and stay flexible to improve your chances of success.

Tips

- **Research hiring industries and companies.** Recessions affect industries differently, so focus on sectors that remain stable or are in demand despite economic challenges. Look for companies still hiring and align your search with these opportunities.
- **Leverage your network.** Reach out to family, friends, instructors, counselors, and coaches to ask about job openings. Most job opportunities are found through networking and the hidden job market.
- **Expand your network.** Build relationships with professionals by conducting informational interviews and using platforms like [LinkedIn](#) to connect with industry leaders and peers.
- **Treat your job search like a job.** Set aside dedicated time each day to search and apply for positions. Stay organized and create a system to track your progress.
- **Stay updated on job search strategies.** Research trends in networking, job applications, resume writing, and interview preparation. Use innovative approaches when applicable to stand out.
- **Use job search websites.** Sites like [College Central Network](#), [Indeed](#), and [LinkedIn](#) are great resources. Set up job alerts to receive notifications when relevant positions are posted.
- **Maintain a professional online presence.** Ensure your social media reflects a professional image. Stay active by sharing relevant content and engaging with others in your field.
- **Tailor your resume and cover letter.** Customize your resume and cover letter for each job by incorporating keywords from the job description. Always include a cover letter, even if it's optional.
- **Be patient and practice self-care.** The hiring process may take longer during a recession, so apply to more jobs and stay patient. Celebrate small victories and prioritize self-care throughout the process.



WRITING A RESUME AND COVER LETTER

Resumes and cover letters are usually required as part of most job applications, helping hiring managers assess candidates' skills and experience. Hiring managers typically spend just 10 seconds reviewing resumes, so it's crucial to make an impact quickly.

In fact, 86% of executives say cover letters play a key role in evaluating candidates. Those who make it past the initial resume review are invited to the next step: the interview.

- **Resume:** Provides an overview of your skills, experience, education, and training.
- **Cover Letter:** Highlights knowledge, skills, and abilities tailored to the position, company, and industry. It should accompany the resume.
- **Format:** Choose a resume style that showcases your strengths and relevant experience.
- **Purpose:** Both documents allow you to introduce yourself and express interest in the role and company.
- **Customization:** Tailor both your resume and cover letter for each application. Include keywords from the job description.
- **Accomplishments:** Focus on achievements and quantify results with numbers (e.g., percentages, amounts).
- **Resume Writing:** Avoid "I" statements. Use action verbs (e.g., "Developed..."). Use bullet points for clarity and avoid unnecessary words like "a" or "the."
- **Length:** Keep the resume to one page, no more than two.
- **Formatting:** Set page margins to one inch (can decrease to 0.5 inches). Bold or capitalize section headers for emphasis. Use simple, readable fonts—avoid fancy styles.
- **Spacing:** Use single spacing within sections and double space between sections.
- **Proofreading:** Double-check for spelling and factual errors.
- **Paper & Presentation:** Use standard 8.5" by 11" white paper. If submitting in person, present in a large envelope. Do not fold or staple. For online submissions, send as a PDF.



RESUME BASICS

RESUME SECTIONS

Heading

Place your contact information at the top, including a professional email address. Your name should be the first line, in a larger font or bolded for emphasis. Optionally, include social media handles, such as LinkedIn, if used for professional purposes.

Summary

Provide a brief 3-5 sentence summary highlighting key skills, experience, and accomplishments relevant to the position. This section can be formatted as either bullet points or a paragraph.

Education and Training

List your highest degree first, followed by others in reverse chronological order. Include relevant scholarships, GPA, honors, coursework, and any additional training or seminars that are pertinent to the job.

Experience

Include both paid and unpaid experience that demonstrates transferable skills or directly relates to the position. For each role, list the job title, organization, location, dates, and accomplishment statements that showcase your responsibilities and achievements. A work history spanning 5-10 years is typically sufficient.

Accomplishment Statements

Start each bullet point with a strong action verb or skill. Whenever possible, quantify your achievements using numbers, percentages, or other measurable outcomes to highlight your impact.

RESUME FORMATS

Chronological Resume

Overview: The most traditional and widely used resume format, emphasizes work experience, listing positions in reverse chronological order (most recent job first). It focuses on job titles, employers, and dates, which are typically used as headers, with key accomplishments listed under each role.

Best for:

- Continuous work experience with minimal gaps.
- Experience directly related to the desired position or industry.
- Professionals with a strong career progression in one field.
- Clear career trajectory, showcasing consistent growth and advancement.
- Emphasizing positions and employers in a way that demonstrates a depth of experience.

Combination Resume

Overview: This format blends both the chronological and functional styles by emphasizing skills and qualifications at the top, followed by a list of positions in reverse chronological order. The emphasis is on relevant skills rather than job titles and dates.

Best for:

- Gaps in employment or those with less than two months of work experience.
- Individuals looking to transition careers and need to highlight transferable skills.
- Those with diverse short-term jobs or varied experiences in different industries.
- Applicants with a wide range of skills but whose work experience may not fully support the desired position.
- Changing industries, where the specific experience might not directly apply but the skills do.

Functional Resume

Overview: Focuses primarily on skills and experience rather than job history. The resume is structured around key competencies or areas of expertise. This style de-emphasizes employment history and places more importance on what the individual can do.

Best for:

- Career changers who want to highlight transferable skills.
- Those with frequent job changes or career gaps.
- Applicants with limited work experience or relevant experience that may not be well represented by job titles.
- Those with a lot of skills in specific areas (e.g., technical skills, project management, creative work).

Targeted Resume

Overview: This resume is tailored specifically for one job position. It is customized to highlight the skills, experience, and achievements that directly relate to the job description. It often requires significant edits and adjustments to focus on the employer's specific needs.

Best for:

- Applicants applying for one specific job.
- Those who want to show exactly how their skills align with the job posting.
- Highly competitive fields where personalized resumes stand out.



COVER LETTER BASICS

Your Name

Address | Phone Number | LinkedIn | Email Address

Date

Contact Name

Title

Organization Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. [Last Name],

I am writing to apply for the [position title] at [company name], which I learned about [mention how you heard about the job]. I believe my experience in [relevant field] and skills in [key skills] make me a strong candidate for this role.

During my [education/previous role], I gained experience in [specific examples related to the position], and I have developed leadership skills through [mention relevant projects or activities]. I am drawn to [company name] because of [specific reason related to the company's values or mission].

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to discussing how I can contribute to your team. I can be reached at [phone number] or [email address].

Sincerely,

[Your Signature in Black Ink]

[Your Typed Name]

Enclosures: Resume, [other documents]

PAIGE TURNER

(916) 555-0145 | paigeturner@example.com | Roseville, CA | LinkedIn.com/paigeturner

SUMMARY

- Over five years of experience designing and producing marketing pieces and products
- Goal-oriented—pursuing an Associates Degree in Applied Art and Design
- Supported corporate branding in designing advertisements, presentations and newsletters
- Excellent teamwork and collaboration skills
- Adaptable; enjoy the challenge of learning and applying new skills and information

WORK EXPERIENCE

Sierra College Career and Transfer Connections | Rocklin, CA, Office Assistant Jan 2022 - Present

- Completed projects promptly including business cards, brochures, and posters.
- Provided excellent customer service by setting appointments and answering questions.
- Established and updated the Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn profiles.
- Proficient with Mac and PC platforms, as well as Android and IOS mobile operating systems.
- Comprehended and familiarized myself with new applications and software quickly.

Sierra College Marketing Department | Rocklin, CA, Intern Aug 2021 - Dec 2021

- Completed designs of pieces by coordinating with photographers and copywriters.
- Estimated the time required to complete designs and sent out quotes accordingly.
- Attended client meetings to understand brand and promotion requirements.
- Collaborated with colleagues during brainstorming sessions to develop concepts and ideas.
- Designed visually appealing fliers and posters for seven Sierra College events.

Entercom Radio | Roseville, CA, Promotions Assistant Intern Sept 2020 - July 2021

- Resolved a range of customer questions and issues by going above and beyond to assist them.
- Handled multiple demands and responsibilities to ensure tasks were done promptly.
- Communicated effectively with a variety of people from diverse backgrounds and cultures.
- Captured photographs for a local music event.
- Promoted 10 on-site events for local businesses.

EDUCATION

Sierra College | Rocklin, CA | AA in Applied Art and Design Graphic Design Concentration May 2023
Major GPA 3.78

SKILLS

Communication
Team Management
Problem-solving

Social Media
Email Marketing
Copywriting

Marketing Strategy
Stress Management
Adaptability

Time Management
Critical Thinking
Decision-making

PAIGE TURNER

(916) 555-0145 | paigeturner@example.com | Roseville, CA | LinkedIn.com/paigeturner

SUMMARY

- Four years of successful experience providing excellent customer service
 - Friendly and outgoing with a well-established work ethic
 - Excellent teamwork and collaboration skills
 - Adaptable; enjoy the challenge of learning new skills and meeting new people
-

RELATED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Customer Service

- Provided a professional and friendly environment for customers with a wide variety of interests and needs.
- Resolved customer questions and issues by going above and beyond to assist them.
- Scheduled appointments and followed up with customers to obtain any needed information.
- Communicated effectively with a variety of people from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Social Media and Graphic Design

- Established and updated Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram profiles and feeds for Sierra College's Career and Transfer Connections Office and personal profiles.
- Designed visually appealing fliers and posters for eight Sierra College events.
- Captured photographs for a local music documentary.

Computers and Technology

- Proficient with Mac and PC platforms, as well as Android and IOS mobile operating systems.
- Comprehend and familiarize myself with new applications and software quickly.
- Knowledge of InDesign, Photoshop, and Publisher.

Leadership

- Handled multiple demands and responsibilities to ensure tasks were done efficiently and promptly.
 - Assisted in training three new employees in office duties and procedures.
 - Helped plan and put on a musical benefit event for Sierra College's Music Department.
-

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Career and Transfer Connections Office Assistant, Sierra College, Rocklin, CA

Jan 2021 - Present

EDUCATION

Associates of Arts, Applied Art and Design
Sierra College Rocklin, CA

May 2023
Major GPA 3.78

HONORS / AWARDS

President's Honor Roll. Spring 2021
Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, inducted Spring 2021

PAIGE TURNER

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SUMMARY

- Over five years of experience designing and producing marketing pieces and products
 - Supported corporate branding in designing advertisements, presentations and newsletters
 - Excellent teamwork and collaboration skills
 - Adaptable; enjoy the challenge of learning and applying new skills and information
-

SKILLS & EXPERTISE

- **Customer Service:** Excelled in resolving client conflicts, enhancing customer satisfaction
 - **Creativity:** Expertise in growing social media presence and creating flyers and engaging visual content
 - **Computer Technology:** Proficient in designing software, MS Office, and troubleshooting hardware/software issues
-

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Customer Service

- Provided a professional and friendly environment for customers with a wide variety of interests and needs.
- Resolved customer questions and issues by going above and beyond to assist them.
- Scheduled appointments and followed up with customers to obtain any needed information.
- Communicated effectively with a variety of people from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Creativity

- Established and updated Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram profiles and feeds for Sierra College's Career and Transfer Connections Office and personal profiles.
- Directed a team in the design and creation of visually appealing flyers and posters for eight Sierra College events.
- Captured photographs for a local music documentary.

Computers and Technology

- Proficient with Mac and PC platforms, as well as Android and IOS mobile operating systems.
 - Comprehend and familiarize myself with new applications and software quickly.
 - Knowledge of InDesign, Photoshop, and Publisher.
 - Performed software troubleshooting for operating service errors and application crashes to improve company operations and increase productivity.
-

EDUCATION

Sierra College | Rocklin, CA | AA in Applied Art and
Design Graphic Design Concentration

May 2023
Major GPA 3.78

CERTIFICATIONS

Sierra College | Rocklin, CA | Computer Science

December 2024

PAIGE TURNER

(916) 555-0145 | paigeturner@example.com | Roseville, CA | LinkedIn.com/paigeturner

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position with (company's name) as a graphic designer, applying my creativity, proficiency in design software, and strong communication skills to deliver visually appealing designs.

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

Sierra College Career and Transfer Connections | Rocklin, CA, Office Assistant Jan 2022 - Present

- Designed brochures, flyers, and posters for department promotion and events.
- Assisted in the development of visually appealing presentations that provided information to students.
- Designed graphics for social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
- Proficient with Mac and PC platforms, as well as Android and IOS mobile operating systems.
- Comprehended and familiarized myself with new applications and software quickly.

Sierra College Marketing Department | Rocklin, CA, Intern Aug 2021 - Dec 2021

- Completed designs of pieces by coordinating with photographers and copywriters.
- Estimated the time required to complete designs and sent out quotes accordingly.
- Attended client meetings to understand brand and promotion requirements.
- Collaborated with colleagues during brainstorming sessions to develop concepts and ideas.
- Designed visually appealing fliers and posters for seven Sierra College events.

Entercom Radio | Roseville, CA, Promotions Assistant Intern Sept 2020 - July 2021

- Resolved a range of customer questions and issues by going above and beyond to assist them.
- Handled multiple demands and responsibilities to ensure tasks were done promptly.
- Assisted in creating and implementing marketing campaigns that catered to diverse demographic groups, ensuring inclusiveness in messaging and visuals.
- Captured photographs for a local music event.
- Promoted 10 on-site events for local businesses.

EDUCATION

Sierra College | Rocklin, CA | AA in Applied Art and Design May 2023
Graphic Design Concentration Major GPA 3.78

Related Coursework: Visual Communication, Publication Design, Digital Design, Digital Animation

RELATED SKILLS

Adobe	Social Media	Marketing Strategy	Time Management
Team Management MS	Email Marketing	Illustrator	Publisher Decision-
Office	PhotoShop	Adaptability	making

Cover Letter Example

PAIGE TURNER

(916) 555-0145 | paigeturner@example.com | Roseville, CA | LinkedIn.com/paigeturner

October 24, 2024

Judy Johnson
Manager, Human Resources Department
XYZ Company
4444 NE Street
Roseville, CA, 95678

Dear Ms. Johnson,

I recently came across your advertisement for a Customer Service position on the company's Instagram account and am excited to submit my resume for your consideration. With a solid educational background, hands-on work experience, and a passion for community involvement, I believe I would be a strong fit for this role.

My education, previous employment, and two internships have provided me with valuable experience using software like Microsoft Office, PageMaker, and InDesign. As an experienced customer service professional, I am eager to bring my skills to your Roseville store. I'm excited about the opportunity to use my existing knowledge while acquiring new skills to better serve customers. My ability to connect with others and my passion for helping people make me confident that I would thrive in this role. Additionally, I actively use social media platforms like Instagram and Snapchat to market services and events in my current position.

For the past three years, I've worked as an Office Assistant in Sierra College's Career and Transfer Connections office, where I supported a diverse group of students. My duties ranged from answering inquiries and explaining services to resolving conflicts as needed. I believe my friendly, outgoing nature, ability to collaborate with others, and positive attitude would make me an asset to your team. I'm also eager to take on challenges and continue learning.

Having grown up in a family that volunteered with organizations such as Awana, Operation Christmas Child, and the Salvation Army, helping others has become second nature to me. My volunteer experiences have also allowed me to engage with people from various backgrounds.

Thank you for considering my application for the Customer Service position. My resume is attached for your review, and I will follow up in one week to ensure you have everything you need to proceed. If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact me at (916) 555-0146 or paigeturner@example.com.

Best Regards,

Paige Turner



TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

SKILLS ALL HIRING MANAGERS VALUE

Transferable skills are abilities that can be applied across various roles and industries. Gained through experiences like work, school, internships, hobbies, and volunteering, they differ from hard skills, as they are not specific to one field. These versatile skills are valued by most employers. Below are key transferable skills and ways to showcase them.

LEADERSHIP

- Demonstrate self-motivation and maintain a positive attitude.
- Inspire individuals and teams to perform at their best.
- Foster effective teamwork and collaboration.
- Design and execute actionable plans.
- Set clear goals and ensure follow-through.
- Assess and evaluate situations with sound judgment.
- Manage time effectively by prioritizing tasks and scheduling.
- Balance multiple demands on time, energy, and resources.
- Quickly identify critical issues and respond decisively.
- Address both organizational goals and employee needs.
- Organize and plan projects or events efficiently.
- Make decisions with integrity and transparency.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- Interpret and apply rules and regulations effectively.
- Analyze data and information to make informed decisions.
- Communicate ideas clearly, both orally and in writing.
- Develop creative solutions to complex challenges.
- Ensure timely completion of tasks and projects.
- Prioritize daily tasks to manage workload efficiently.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- Research, analyze, and compile relevant information.
- Synthesize facts, concepts, and principles into clear insights.
- Organize and interpret data effectively.
- Integrate diverse resources into cohesive final reports.
- Formulate questions and develop methods to gather and clarify answers.
- Communicate facts and ideas clearly, both orally and in writing.
- Learn and apply various computer programs and information technologies.
- Access and leverage specialized knowledge to enhance decision-making.
- Manage budgets and maintain accurate financial records.

CREATIVITY

- Solve problems using creative, logical, and practical approaches.
- Develop innovative processes or products through science, math, and imagination.
- Write clear, engaging articles, reports, and other content.
- Design activities that capture participants' interest.
- Market and showcase products to appeal to target audiences.
- Create visually compelling designs, displays, or artwork.
- Deliver persuasive public speaking or acting performances.
- Design and develop engaging web pages.

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

- Collaborate effectively to achieve group goals.
- Adapt to and work within the group's culture.
- Listen actively and attentively to others.
- Delegate tasks and responsibilities efficiently.
- Recognize and interpret behavioral and emotional patterns in individuals and groups.
- Teach, supervise, and train others using clear, simple concepts.
- Show understanding and respect for people from diverse backgrounds.
- Conduct thorough, insightful interviews.
- Communicate ideas clearly, based on facts.
- Resolve conflicts with tact and diplomacy.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Analyze life experiences for growth or change
Identify, describe and assess needs, values, interests, strengths, and weaknesses of individuals
- Instill self-confidence and self-esteem in others
- Develop personal moral code
- Demonstrate flexibility and commitment to change and learning
- Learn value of hard work and persistence
- Devise means of dealing with stress
- Build from an historical perspective

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Create documents, charts, graphs, and spreadsheets using Microsoft Word and Excel.
- Navigate the internet for communication (email) and research (search engines).
- Design and update websites with knowledge of HTML, Flash, and FTP procedures.
- Learn and adapt to new software and platforms, including Mac, PC, and Linux.
- Stay current with new versions of technology.
- Manage document control and organization efficiently.
- Develop databases, manage data, and create queries using Microsoft Access.
- Create presentation materials with PowerPoint, including handouts and marketing materials.
- Design and produce visually appealing content using Microsoft Publisher.



REFERENCES

WHAT THEY ARE AND WHY THEY'RE IMPORTANT

Hiring managers often conduct reference checks as part of the hiring process. They contact previous employers, educational institutions, or other sources to verify a candidate's employment history, education, and qualifications. The primary purpose of a reference check is to confirm that the candidate possesses the necessary qualifications for the position.

Overview of the Typical Hiring Process for Managers

1. Position description is reviewed and updated
2. Opening is announced
3. Applications, resumes, and cover letters are reviewed
4. Phone calls are made to screen candidates
5. Interviews are conducted
6. References are checked
7. Job is offered

Tips for Successfully Handling Reference Checks

- References may include a current supervisor, provided they are aware you're seeking a new job.
- Good references can be former supervisors, coworkers, customers, teachers, coaches, or respected professionals such as an attorney or doctor.
- Choose references who can provide a positive recommendation and speak to your qualifications, experience, and education.
- Always ask permission before listing someone as a reference.
- Provide your references with the job description and a copy of your resume to help them tailor their recommendation.
- List references on a separate page, using the same format as your resume and cover letter, including: name, job title, employer, address, work phone number, and email address.
- References may be requested either as part of the application or later in the hiring process.
- Be sure to thank your references and inform them of the outcome.

Why References are Important

- They validate your qualifications and work ethic.
- They provide insights into your work habits and interpersonal skills.
- They enhance employer confidence in your candidacy.
- They demonstrate professionalism and strong relationships.

PAIGE TURNER

(916) 555-0145 | paigeturner@example.com | Roseville, CA | LinkedIn.com/paigeturner

REFERENCES

Sarah Jones

Position | Company
T: 000-222-3333
E: name@company.com

Name Here

Position | Company
T: 000-222-3333
E: name@company.com

Ethan Summers

Position | Company
T: 000-222-3333
E: name@company.com

Name Here

Position | Company
T: 000-222-3333
E: name@company.com

Name Here

Position | Company
T: 000-222-3333
E: name@company.com

Name Here

Position | Company
T: 000-222-3333
E: name@company.com



HOW HIRING MANAGERS USE INTERVIEWS

Hiring managers use interviews to assess a candidate's qualifications, skills, and cultural fit for a role. Through the interview, they evaluate the candidate's experience, technical abilities, communication skills, and problem-solving capabilities. Interviews also allow hiring managers to clarify resume details, ask behavioral or situational questions, and gauge how well a candidate aligns with the company's values.

Ultimately, the interview helps hiring managers determine if the candidate is a good match for both the position and the team.

Understanding the Hiring Process and Purpose of Interviews:

- **Position Description is Reviewed and Updated:** The job requirements are clarified and adjusted as needed to ensure alignment with the company's needs.
- **Opening is Announced:** The job opening is publicly advertised to attract potential candidates.
- **Applications and Resumes are Reviewed:** Applications and resumes are screened to shortlist candidates who meet the qualifications.
- **Phone Calls are Made to Screen Candidates:** Initial phone screenings help assess a candidate's suitability before scheduling interviews.
- **Interviews are Conducted:** Interviews serve to assess a candidate's qualifications, communication skills, cultural fit, and problem-solving abilities.
- **References are Checked:** References are contacted to verify the candidate's background, work experience, and character.
- **Job Offer is Extended:** A job offer is made to the selected candidate, pending successful reference checks and any final evaluations.

This process allows hiring managers to thoroughly assess candidates, ensuring they select the best fit for both the role and the company.



PRACTICAL INTERVIEW TIPS

Preparation Tips

1. **Be Prepared for Phone Interviews:** Only answer calls from unknown numbers if you're ready for an immediate phone interview. If not, let it go to voicemail and return the call when you're available.
2. **Plan Your Route:** Map the interview location in advance and allow extra time for unexpected delays (e.g., traffic). Arrive at least 10 minutes early.
3. **Prepare Your Attire:** Choose and prepare professional attire ahead of time. Ensure it is clean, wrinkle-free, and in good condition.
4. **Organize Your Materials:** Bring copies of your resume, references, and any questions for the interviewer. Include a notepad and pen for notes.
5. **Have Funds Ready:** Ensure you have money for gas, tolls, parking, or public transportation, depending on your mode of travel.
6. **Take Care of Personal Hygiene:** Get plenty of rest the night before the interview, shower, brush your teeth, and use deodorant.

During the Interview

1. **Silence Your Devices:** Turn off your cell phone and any other technology that could interrupt the interview.
2. **Exhibit Professionalism:** Smile and remain professional even in the waiting area, as the hiring manager may pass by.
3. **Positive Body Language:** Maintain confident posture—sit and walk upright, and offer a firm handshake when appropriate.
4. **Pay Attention to Introductions:** If there are introductions, note titles, as they may indicate the interviewer's role or specific interests related to the position.
5. **Use Your "One-Minute Commercial":** When asked to "tell me about yourself," use a concise, focused answer highlighting your strengths and experience.
6. **Reference Your Resume:** Bring up relevant experiences or skills from your resume and don't assume the hiring manager remembers every detail.
7. **Use the STAR Method:** When answering behavioral questions, structure responses with the **STAR method—Situation, Task, Action, Result, Takeaway.**
8. **Keep Responses Concise:** Aim for answers that are clear and concise, typically lasting about one minute.
9. **Ask for Clarification:** If you're unsure of a question, don't hesitate to ask for clarification to ensure your response is on target.
10. **Request a Moment to Think:** It's okay to ask for a few seconds to gather your thoughts before answering a challenging question.
11. **Ask Thoughtful Questions:** At the end of the interview, ask one or two insightful questions about the role or company. Avoid asking about salary, vacation, or benefits.

Post-Interview Follow-Up: Thank the interviewer for their time, reiterate your interest in the role, and send a thank-you note or email within 24 hours to express gratitude and enthusiasm for the position.

CREATIVITY

- Solve problems using creative, logical, and practical approaches.
- Develop innovative processes or products through science, math, and imagination.
- Write clear, engaging articles, reports, and other content.
- Design activities that capture participants' interest.
- Market and showcase products to appeal to target audiences.
- Create visually compelling designs, displays, or artwork.
- Deliver persuasive public speaking or acting performances.
- Design and develop engaging web pages.

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- Demonstrate flexibility and commitment to change and learning
- Learn value of hard work and persistence
- Devise means of dealing with stress
- Build from an historical perspective

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Create documents, charts, graphs, and spreadsheets using Microsoft Word and Excel.
- Navigate the internet for communication (email) and research (search engines).
- Design and update websites with knowledge of HTML, Flash, and FTP procedures.
- Learn and adapt to new software and platforms, including Mac, PC, and Linux.
- Stay current with new versions of technology.
- Manage document control and organization efficiently.
- Develop databases, manage data, and create queries using Microsoft Access.
- Create presentation materials with PowerPoint, including handouts and marketing materials.
- Design and produce visually appealing content using Microsoft Publisher.



TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews begin as soon as we make contact with a company. Hiring managers use various interview formats for different purposes, but regardless of the type, preparation is essential.

Phone

This interview is usually a screening call, either scheduled or spontaneous.

- Choose a quiet, distraction-free location with good cell reception.
- Ensure your phone is fully charged.
- Have the job description, your resume, notes, and references ready.
- Sit up straight, smile, and speak clearly to convey a positive, confident tone.

Virtual

Virtual interviews, often conducted via video conferencing tools like Zoom, are increasingly common. While similar to in-person interviews, they require specific preparations:

- Test technology and ensure your attire is professional.
- Choose a quiet location with a clean, distraction-free backdrop.
- Use positive body language, smile, and maintain eye contact by looking at the camera.

Panel

In a panel interview, multiple interviewers, usually from the hiring committee, interview the candidate.

- Acknowledge each panel member at the start.
- Maintain eye contact with all interviewers throughout the interview.

One-to-One

The traditional format involves one interviewer and one candidate. In larger organizations, multiple individual interviews with different interviewers may occur on the same day.

Dining

This type of interview takes place in a social setting, such as a restaurant, and includes additional considerations:

- Choose a mid-priced, easy-to-eat menu item.
- Take small bites and eat slowly.
- Have a light snack beforehand to stay focused.
- Avoid alcohol, even if others are drinking.

Group

A group interview involves multiple candidates answering questions together, assessing interaction, assertiveness, and teamwork:

- Aim to speak early if possible, in case another opportunity doesn't arise.
- If someone answers your point, show agreement and add a specific detail, example, or application.



HOW TO ANSWER COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview questions help hiring managers assess a candidate's fit, skills, and strengths across seven key areas: personality, motivation, diversity, technical skills, problem-solving, interpersonal skills, and teamwork. The best approach is to prepare answers with specific examples that align with the position. Below are common interview questions and strategies for responding.

Tell me about yourself.

The interviewer wants to understand why you're a good fit for the position.

- Briefly summarize your experience, skills, and accomplishments from your resume and cover letter.
- Highlight your key professional strengths relevant to the role.
- Keep your response concise, aiming for a maximum of two minutes.

Why should we hire you?

The interviewer wants to assess your qualifications and suitability for the role.

- Highlight strengths and accomplishments that align with the position requirements.
- Demonstrate how you can add value and support the company's mission.

What is your greatest strength?

This question aims to assess how well-qualified you are for the position.

- Select a strength that directly relates to the role and its requirements.
- Provide a concrete example or story that demonstrates how you've successfully applied this strength in a relevant situation.
- Focus on the impact your strength had on the outcome, showing your ability to deliver results.

What is your greatest weakness?

Another typical question to determine qualifications

- Choose a weakness that is genuine and frames your answer around positive aspects of your skills and abilities
- Focus on how you improved, providing details of how you recognized the weakness and actions taken to grow
- A weakness can be a skill, knowledge or ability that is an area you would like to further develop

Why are you looking to leave your current job, or why did you leave your previous position?

The interviewer wants to understand your career motivations and why you're interested in their company.

- Be clear and direct, focusing on how the role aligns with your career goals and how you see yourself growing with the company.
- Emphasize your enthusiasm for the company's mission, values, and opportunities for advancement.
- Avoid speaking negatively about previous employers or situations; instead, keep the tone positive and forward-looking.

What are your salary expectations?

The interviewer wants to understand your salary expectations.

- Provide a salary range based on reliable sources like [Glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com).
- Justify your range by highlighting your experience, education, and accomplishments.
- Express openness to considering fringe benefits, such as medical insurance or retirement plans, if offered.

Why do you want this job?

The interviewer wants to understand your interest and motivation for the role.

- Demonstrate your knowledge of the position and the company.
- Explain how the role aligns with your experience and career goals.
- Connect the company's mission and values with your own to show a strong fit.

How do you handle stress and pressure?

This question assesses how you handle unexpected situations and challenges, showcasing your critical thinking, communication, and adaptability.

- Acknowledge that workplace stress is a natural part of any job.
- Share strategies you use to manage stress and maintain focus.
- Provide an example of a time when you successfully worked under pressure.

Can you describe a challenging work situation or project and how you handled it?

The interviewer wants to understand your decision-making process.

- Explain the strategies you use to tackle difficult decisions.
- Share an example of a time when you successfully made a challenging decision.

What are your long-term career goals?

This question aims to assess how your professional goals align with the company.

- Identify both short-term (3–5 years) and long-term (10+ years) goals related to the position.
- Show how the role and company support your career aspirations and growth.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

Here are some best practices for preparing questions to ask at the end of an interview:

- **Align with the Role:** Ask about the key priorities for the position or what a typical day looks like.
- **Demonstrate Interest:** Inquire about the qualities or skills that make someone successful in the role.
- **Show Long-Term Vision:** Ask about the goals or accomplishments expected in the first year, or where the role might lead in the next five years.
- **Professional Growth:** Ask about professional development opportunities and career progression.
- **Understand Company Goals:** Inquire about the department's goals or initiatives for the upcoming year.

These questions show that you're thoughtful, engaged, and eager to understand how you can contribute and grow within the company.



ONE-MINUTE COMMERCIAL WORKSHEET

A one-minute commercial is a powerful way to introduce yourself in an interview. In under a minute, briefly highlight your skills, experience, and knowledge of the company, while showing enthusiasm for the role. Relate your background to the company's needs to demonstrate alignment. Practice aloud to refine your delivery, tone, and gestures. This preparation will ensure a smooth and confident response when asked, "Tell me about yourself?"

I have background, education, and experience in (including related education and experience) _____

My experience was with (mention company names) _____

In those positions, I (describe relevant activities and accomplishments) _____

My areas of expertise include (include skills related to the position) _____

I consider myself to be (list strengths and traits) _____

I am excited about the opportunity to work with you because [company name]'s values and mission align with my passion for [specific area of interest], and I am eager to contribute to [specific company goals or projects].



EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWING

THE S.T.A.R.T. METHOD FOR INTERVIEW SUCCESS

When interviewing candidates, past behavior is often the best predictor of future performance. A key technique is to prepare detailed examples in advance that demonstrate how a candidate has successfully handled situations related to the position they're applying for.

How to Prepare:

Before the interview, recall specific situations from past experiences where you exhibited key behaviors, competencies, or achieved results relevant to the role. These could include times you solved a problem, led a team, or innovated a solution.

Use the S.T.A.R.T. Method:

To tell your story in a structured, compelling way, use the **S.T.A.R.T.** method. This method helps you provide a logical and thorough explanation of your experiences. Here's how to apply it:

1. **Situation:** Set the scene by describing the context of the challenge or task.
2. **Task:** Explain your specific responsibility or objective in that situation.
3. **Action:** Share the specific actions you took to address the task or solve the problem.
4. **Results:** Highlight the outcomes of your actions, focusing on measurable results or positive impacts.
5. **Takeaway:** Reflect on what you learned from the experience and how it prepares you for future success in similar roles.

Best Practices:

- Be specific and focus on quantifiable results when possible (e.g., increased sales by 20%, reduced costs by 15%).
- Tailor your examples to align with the key competencies or qualities the hiring manager seeks for the role.
- Keep your responses concise and avoid unnecessary details. Focus on the most relevant aspects of the story.
- Practice storytelling to make your delivery natural and confident, ensuring that each part of the **S.T.A.R.T.** method is addressed clearly.

By preparing these examples using the **S.T.A.R.T.** method, you'll present yourself as a results-driven candidate who can handle the challenges of the role effectively.



HOW TO ANSWER ILLEGAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

To ensure a fair hiring process, the [Equal Employment Opportunity](#) (EEO) law prohibits questions that may lead to discrimination based on protected statuses, such as age, race, gender, religion, or disability. Hiring managers should focus on your qualifications and suitability for the role, not on personal characteristics unrelated to job performance.

To avoid discrimination in the hiring process, you should be aware that employers are prohibited from asking you questions related to the following protected categories:

- Race
- Color
- National origin
- Religion
- Sex (including gender)
- Pregnancy
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Disability
- Genetic information
- Salary history

These areas are protected under Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws, and hiring decisions should be based solely on a candidate's qualifications and ability to perform the job.

Legal Interview Questions: Focusing on Job-Relevant Information

Questions about protected categories are only permissible if directly related to the job. For example, asking "Can you provide proof of eligibility to work in the U.S.?" is legal, while asking "Where were you born?" is not, as it's unrelated to the position. Always focus on job-related qualifications.

ANSWER STRATEGIES

Refuse to Answer: If uncomfortable, choose not to answer. This may signal a poor fit. Decide in advance which topics to avoid and prepare an assertive response.

Answer the Question: You can answer if comfortable, but you're not obligated to share certain information. Consider the company culture.

Answer the Intent: Address the intent of the question. For example, instead of answering about childcare, say, "I can meet the travel and work schedule requirements."

Ask for Clarification: Request clarification if unsure how the question relates to the role. If it's not relevant, you can choose not to answer.



WHAT TO WEAR TO AN INTERVIEW

Right or wrong, people make assumptions based on our dress and demeanor. Dressing for an interview can help you make a good impression. Note that interview attire may vary by industry and personal preference.

What to Wear

- Clean business attire in neutral or darker colors with a matching style and color scheme.
 - Outerwear: suit jacket, blazer, or cardigan
 - Shirt: blouse, button-up, or collared
 - Pants: slacks, skirts, or trousers
 - Footwear: closed-toed loafers, heels, or flats
 - Tie (optional): solid color, geometric, dotted, or paisley pattern
 - Accessories (optional): minimal jewelry, simple watch, small purse or satchel

What to Avoid

- Sleeveless, spaghetti-strap, or low cut shirts
- Shorts, jeans, or athletic attire
- Flip flops, open-toed, or athletic shoes
- Hats
- Uncomfortable, ill-fitting, wrinkled, or damaged garments
- Distracting prints
- Heavy perfume or cologne

Extra Tips

- Research the employer to learn about the company dress code and culture
- Practice good grooming habits; clean nails, hair, and fresh breath
- Don't chew gum, opt for a mint instead
- If using a binder or portfolio, choose a dark or neutral color
- Silence or turn off cell phone

Resources for Interview Clothing

Need help with getting interview clothing? Try these resources! Availability may vary, contact each center to find out more:

- Sierra College Basic Needs Center Clothing Closet
 - basicneeds@sierracollege.edu or (916) 660-7486
- Assistance League of Greater Placer
 - info@algreaterplacer.org or (530) 885-4397