



GRINNELL COLLEGE

Career Development Guide

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Table of Contents

Part 1	<i>Introduction to the Career Development Process</i>	5
	Welcome!.....	5
	The Career Development Process	5
	Career Development Office Services	5
	Myths about Liberal Arts Students.....	7
	Qualities and Skills Employers Want.....	9
	Liberal Arts Skills.....	9
Part 2	<i>Self-Assessment and Goal-Setting</i>	13
	What IS Self-Assessment?	13
	The Grinnell College Four-Year Plan.....	14
	Worksheets to Help Get You Started.....	16
	Worksheet #1 - Skills Assessment.....	16
	Worksheet #2 - Educational Background.....	18
	Worksheet #3 - Employment Experience.....	19
	Worksheet #4 - Campus Activities	20
	Worksheet #5 - Volunteer or Internship Experience	21
	Worksheet #6 - What Do I Want From Work?	22
	Worksheet #7 - Prioritizing My Qualifications	23
Part 3	<i>Marketing Tools</i>	25
	The Résumé.....	25
	Content	25
	What Else Should You Know About Developing a Résumé?	29
	Action Words to Describe Your Skills.....	31
	Next Steps for Résumés and Application Letters.....	33
	The Application Letter.....	34
	Suggested Application Letter Content.....	35
	The Reference Page.....	36

Part 4	<i>Researching the Market and Networking</i>	37
	Job Search Resources	37
	Internships	39
	Networking.....	39
	The Informational Interview	42
	Suggested Letter of Introduction for Informational Interview	44
Part 5	<i>Interviewing</i>	51
	Basic Interview Preparation and Questions to Expect	51
	Behavioral-Based Interviewing.....	58
	Other Types of Interviews	59
	Legal and Illegal Questions.....	62
	Negotiating the Job Offer	63
	The Thank-you Letter.....	64
Part 6	<i>A Final Word</i>	67
	How Employers Rate Candidates.....	67
Part 7	<i>Sample Résumés and Application Letters</i>	69
	Suggested Computer Science Major Résumé	70
	Suggested Philosophy Major Résumé.....	71
	Suggested Economics Major Résumé (applying for Credit Analyst position).....	72
	Suggested Art History Major Résumé (applying for Museum Curator position)	73
	Suggested Post-Graduate Résumé.....	74
	Suggested Internship Application Letter	76
	Suggested Application Letter	77
	Suggested Thank-You Letter	78
	Suggested Reference Page.....	79

PART ONE:

Introduction To The Career Development Process

Welcome!

Imagine for a moment that you are at some sort of social event—it may be a friend’s dinner party, a wedding reception, or even a professional conference. You make your way to the refreshments and are suddenly greeted by someone you have never met before. After the semi-awkward exchange of names, the next words coming from the mouth of that person are:

“So, what do you do?”

Most of us automatically respond in terms of our jobs or line of work. While it is obvious to those who attend and work at Grinnell College that people are much more complex than what they do for a living, it is very much the case that the majority of individuals define themselves and their identities partly on their careers. Indeed, a major part of the development of college students is to achieve a sense of identity and purpose (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). In fact, it is during the development of purpose that the individual develops answers not only to the questions “Who am I?” and “Where am I?” but also “Who am I going to be?” and “Where am I going?” Growth requires the development of plans that integrate priorities in recreational and vocational interests, vocational plans, aspirations, and lifestyle choices (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Here, then, is where your career as part of your identity begins to take shape.

The Career Development Process

Your career development is so much more than simply finding a job to earn a living—it should reflect who you are as a person, including your interests, skills, and values. While in today’s society it is less likely that you will stay in the same job for the rest of your life, you will still likely be able to move into positions that, while different on the surface, still align with your personal interests, skills, and values.

The career development process really involves three main components: self-assessment and goal setting, career exploration, and taking action. First, you must truly learn who you are in terms of your interests, skills, and values—including past experiences, work-related or recreational. Then you can begin exploring the world of careers and discovering what types of careers seem like they may not only be interesting, but also appear to be a good fit with who you are. Finally, you can take action by beginning the job search process and networking so you can begin the professional phase of your life.

Searching for a job is something that everyone will do at some point or several points in his or her life. It is the combination of years of education, reaching goals, and individual success. It seems like it should be a very natural process, yet most people spend more time planning their vacations than planning their job searches!

Whether you are looking for your first part-time job or internship or a long-term career position, the concepts are the same. The following sections of the *Career Development Guide* will help you get started down the correct path towards a successful career.

Career Development Office (CDO) Services

What Can We Do for You?

Advising — Our staff can assist you with self-assessment and career exploration in addition to enhancing job and graduate school search techniques. Career counseling can help students define skills, values, and interests, while developing a plan for the future.

Internships — Internships help students gain the practical knowledge and skills that will be marketable upon graduation. Students plan their own internships, shaping them to fit their interests, skills, and academic backgrounds.

On-Campus Recruiting — Organizations, companies, and graduate schools visit the CDO each year to conduct preliminary interviews with prospective candidates.

Pre-Professional Development Experience Program — The program pairs students with alumni willing to share knowledge with students interested in learning more about particular careers.

Workshop Series — Sessions are presented on résumé/application-letter writing, making alumni connections, interview techniques, senior interviewing events, graduate school planning, investment banking and consulting, professional etiquette, and job search strategies, to name a few. Visit www.grinnell.edu/offices/cdo for presentation schedule and descriptions.

Library and Printed Publications — The CDO Library includes titles on résumé writing, interviewing, job searching, internships, and various careers available for checkout. In addition, booklets pertaining to résumé/application-letter writing and networking are available at no charge to students.

Testing — To assist the career advising process, the CDO staff can incorporate a variety of instruments, including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

Mock Interviews — Videotaped practice interviews are available for those entering the job market, seeking internships, and applying to graduate school, fellowships, scholarships, etc.

FOCUS — This is a comprehensive career planning program that provides guidance and information to help students make important career and educational decisions. Research-based assessments of career-relevant interests, abilities, and job values help individuals consider career options that are a good match for them.

Résumé Reviews — Meet one-on-one with a career counselor to have your résumé critiqued, as well as making sure it is ready to go to employers. The CDO staff can assist you with the beginning stages of your résumé, and/or application letter, right up to proofreading the final draft.

The CDO Mission

The mission of the Career Development Office is to provide a set of educational experiences, partnerships, and services that affords students an opportunity to design effective transitions from Grinnell College to careers and postgraduate study. Our programs and services empower all students and alumni to develop successful lifelong career management skills by increasing access to meaningful internships and postgraduate opportunities and by building networks of relational bridges among faculty, staff, employers, alumni, families, and the College community.

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Myths About Liberal Arts Students

If you are a liberal arts student, you may have special needs related to your job search. Although you have a broad educational background and a number of career options, it may seem difficult to get the job-search process started. Whether you are majoring in psychology, history, English, or interdisciplinary studies; whether you are looking for a business career, a career with the government or a nonprofit organization; and whether you are a first-year student, senior, or somewhere in between, you are likely to hear one (or more) of the following myths:

Myth #1: Liberal arts majors can only teach or go into sales.

Fact: The fields of education and marketing are desirable for some liberal arts majors, but not all. The field you choose depends on your individual interests, skills, and experiences. Your liberal arts background has prepared you for a multitude of career fields.

Myth #2: Liberal arts majors cannot compete with business majors because business majors have an edge based on their academic coursework and background.

Fact: If an employer is willing to interview arts & science students, the employer is indicating their acknowledgment that a liberal arts education provides the background they are seeking. The key is to effectively articulate the skills the employer desires. In this instance, a liberal arts major is as equally qualified for the job as the business major, or the employer would not indicate an interest in considering liberal arts students. However, it is up to liberal arts students to sell themselves effectively.

Myth #3: You must go to graduate school rather than begin a career right out of undergraduate school.

Fact: Although a liberal education is a strong background for students seeking professional training in law, medicine, business, or other specialized fields, you should not feel like you do not have a choice. You do have a choice . . . several choices! There are many fields in the world of work that require well-rounded graduates at the entry level. Some examples are writing, editing, communications, advertising, mass media, public relations, retailing, insurance, fundraising, publishing and government work.

Myth #4: Companies do not hire liberal arts graduates. The only graduates they are interested in come from business or technical majors.

Fact: Not necessarily! True, there are some companies and some professional areas that target business and technical graduates. That's because the nature of the position requires specific knowledge and expertise such graduates have learned through their coursework. A company responsible for building construction needs a civil engineer who has studied aspects of building design. An accounting firm requires graduates who understand cost accounting, a concept learned in accounting classes. But there are also companies who look beyond the degree when recruiting candidates. They look for skills, traits, and characteristics in candidates. Through their coursework, liberal arts graduates afford themselves opportunities to develop such skills and characteristics. The key is knowing you have these skills and knowing how to market them on your résumé and during the interview!

Common Negative Stereotypes

You need to understand that there are employers who may have negative stereotypes about liberal arts majors. Some typical criticisms are:

- **Liberal arts majors lack clearly defined career goals and commitment to a chosen field of work.**

Research indicates that employers look favorably upon a prospective employee who has done some thinking about his/her future. The student who says, "I like people," or "I'm looking for something in science," or

“I’d like to work for awhile and then go to graduate school” is a risk for a prospective employer. Putting yourself in the employer’s shoes, would you want to invest time and money in training someone who may leave after they decide what they really want to do?

- **Liberal arts majors have little or no preparation for the world of work.**

Some liberal arts majors tend not to have knowledge of the realities of the fields they pursue. Therefore, not knowing the issues in the field and not speaking the employer’s language, they are not considered serious candidates. Furthermore, often they know little or nothing about the firm or organization to which they are applying.

- **Liberal arts majors rarely see how their skills and training will match the needs of the organization in which they seek employment.**

A job candidate with the attitude that “I can do anything—make something for me” cannot compete with other candidates who have researched the employer and can articulate what they have to offer that employer. It is your responsibility as a job candidate to make the connection between the employer and yourself. Instead of having them make something for you, think in terms of what you have that may be of value to them.

Common Pitfalls To Avoid

In any job search there are certain tendencies one must avoid. The tendencies particular to liberal arts majors in their job searches are listed below.

- **Failure to Show Sincere Interest**

Show employers, through examples of what you have done to be competitive, that you are definitely interested in their field. Actions and experience speak louder than words. Remember, employers are looking for genuine commitment from prospective employees, and they are unlikely to take a chance on a job candidate who seems to just be going through the motions of seeking a position.

- **Being Too Versatile**

The “I’ll take anything” approach is not a virtue in the job search. Have goals and a target for those goals. Know what you want and what you have to offer. Be able to convincingly articulate your career interests and skills to prospective employers.

- **Overselling Inadequate Qualifications**

A single related course, activity or work experience is unlikely, in and of itself, to land you a job. Sell all your qualifications, but do not oversell a single accomplishment. Once again, be realistic.

- **Expecting High Starting Salaries**

Usually, non-technical fields have lower starting salaries than technical fields. Keep in mind the whole package though—benefits, possible educational opportunities, promotions, and the opportunity to gain experience for future career goals.

- **Expecting Too Much from Training Programs**

Many liberal arts majors pride themselves on the fact that they are trainable and emphasize this as a selling point to prospective employers. Well, everyone is trainable. Rather than turning off employers by overemphasizing the obvious, concentrate on special skills and abilities that make you an outstanding candidate to employers. The key to a successful job search is in positively distinguishing yourself from other applicants. Your unique qualifications, coupled with the ability to conduct an effective job-search campaign, will get you job offers—not the fact that you are trainable.

▪ **Overlooking Smaller and Medium-Sized Employers**

Too many new college graduates get caught up in the Fortune 500 game. Although smaller and medium-sized organizations rarely recruit on college campuses, they frequently provide excellent career opportunities for liberal arts graduates who seek them out. Often, these types of organizations allow for a much greater degree of autonomy and creativity than their larger counterparts. Moreover, since small business comprises 95 percent of the American economy, career opportunities with these types of companies should be carefully considered.

Qualities and Skills Employers Want

In an upcoming section of this guide, you will learn about how to do some self-assessment. While it may seem that self-assessment is typically used to help you discover your interests and values, it is also a great way to figure out what skills you have to offer potential employers. This is perhaps one of the true strengths of attending a liberal arts institution such as Grinnell College: you are learning and developing very critical skills that you will be able to use in your professional career—as well as include on your résumé.

Each year, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) surveys its employer members about their hiring plans and other employment-related issues. According to Job Outlook 2009, when employers were asked what qualities they want most from the college students they consider as candidates for employment, the focus was on specific skills. Communication skills, strong work ethic, and teamwork skills are at the top of the list, according to respondents. See below for the full list.

Top Qualities/Skills Employers Seek

1. Communication skills (verbal & written)
2. Strong work ethic
3. Teamwork skills (works well with others)
4. Initiative
5. Analytical skills
6. Computer skills
7. Flexibility/adaptability
8. Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)
9. Problem-solving skills
10. Technical skills

Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Job Outlook 2009—Student Version.
Grinnell College is a current NACE member.

Liberal Arts Skills

So, does a liberal arts education prepare you for a career by developing any of the above skills? The answer is a resounding YES! Below are a number of skill areas which are cultivated through your education at Grinnell College, as well as some tips and strategies on how to make employers aware of your abilities. Keep in mind these are only a FEW of the skills you will develop. Compare the skills of a liberal arts major to the skills that employers want listed above—notice any similarities?

What are the skills you possess as a result of a liberal arts education background?

Just a FEW are:

Information management skills

- The ability to synthesize facts, concepts and principles.
- The ability to evaluate information against standards.

Design and planning skills

- The ability to identify alternative courses of action.
- The ability to predict future trends and patterns.

Research and investigation skills

- The ability to identify problems and needs.
- The ability to identify information sources for special needs or problems.

Communication skills

- The ability to speak effectively to individuals and groups.
- The ability to use various forms and styles of written communication.

Human relations and interpersonal skills

- The ability to generate and maintain group cooperation and support.
- The ability to interact effectively with peers, superiors, and subordinates.

Critical thinking skills

- The ability to identify quickly and accurately the critical issues when making a decision or solving a problem.
- The ability to analyze the interrelationships of events and ideas from several perspectives.

Management and administration skills

- The ability to motivate and lead people.
- The ability to organize people and tasks to achieve specific goals.

Valuing skills

- The ability to identify one's own values.
- The ability to appreciate the contributions of art, literature, science, and technology to contemporary society.

Personal/career development and learning skills

- The ability to identify one's strengths and weaknesses.
- The ability to accept and learn from criticism.

(Taken in part from *76 Career-Related Liberal Arts Skills* by Paul Breen, American Association for Higher Education.)

For more liberal arts skills, visit the CDO website at:

www.grinnell.edu/offices/cdo/students/includes/Liberal%20Arts%20Skills.pdf

So having identified these skills, how can you effectively market them to potential employers? You must be able to articulate those skills and abilities as they relate to the position you are seeking. To articulate your skills and abilities effectively, you must have an understanding about the job. This is where your research about the job and doing your homework about the organization are essential.

Tips

Prepare a Good Presentation

A good presentation comes from knowing yourself well. Well-written résumés, application letters, and strong interviewing skills will help prove your strengths to prospective employers. It is not enough to say, “I have good leadership skills.” It is much more effective to say, “My leadership abilities are evident in several positions I have held; for example, as chair of the X group, I was able to A, B, and C. I learned the importance of communicating closely with people and motivating them to do their best work.” Keep in mind that your résumés and correspondence must be professional in content and appearance and that you must be able to interview comfortably. Knowing how to get a job is as important as being qualified for one.

Show You Have a Working Knowledge of the Field and Organization

Read articles in the popular press, trade and professional journals, and books and literature about skills required for certain types of work. Learn about current issues and future trends in your chosen field of work. Learn as much as possible about a specific organization before contacting it. Know its products, services, and competition. This information can be obtained by reading employer literature, much of which is now available on the Internet. With this knowledge, you are better prepared to communicate to the company why you are interested in it and how you can meet its needs.

Show the Organization Why It Should Hire You Over Those Who May Appear Better Qualified

Know your competition. Be familiar with the training other applicants might have had. Know what it is about liberal arts that enhances your assets. Be prepared for the inevitable questions, “Why did you major in (political science) instead of ... ?” Also, emphasize any and all skills and experiences related to the position you are seeking. Show that you have made an effort to commit yourself to the profession or career field you have chosen. Although it may not seem apparent, most employers are much more interested in whether you can do a job successfully than they are in what your major was. Skills, interests, and experience count for a great deal more in most cases than one’s academic background.

How can you make yourself more competitive?

If you are a first-, second-, or third-year student, you can greatly enhance your marketability by making yourself competitive in the ways listed below. If you are a senior and are looking for strengths to sell to an employer, capitalize on the following strategies that fit your current status.

Take Career-Related Coursework

Consider two psychology majors applying for a research position. Both have solid backgrounds in psychology. But one has also taken courses in research, statistics, principles of research and development, and has completed an independent study in research. The other has not. Who is the stronger candidate? The moral of the story: taking courses specific to your field of interest or perhaps minoring in that field enables you to learn the field’s buzzwords and what they mean. Pursuing such a concentration allows you to explore the concerns and issues in the field, demonstrates your level of interest and commitment to employers, and helps you to distinguish yourself positively from other candidates.

Get Practical Experience

Summer employment, internships, independent study, and/or volunteer work in an area related to your career choice shows interest in the field, helps to bridge the gap between theory and practice, and provides you with a working knowledge of the field. Also, these experiences can help you decide if a particular field or type of work is for you, thus solidifying your career objectives or permitting you to explore other career options.

Develop Your Skills through Extracurricular Activities

The majority of employers look very favorably upon extracurricular and civic involvement. These activities can help you develop and enhance your skills and interests and turn them into strengths. Especially beneficial are those activities involving development of leadership potential, interpersonal relations, competition/cooperation, and responsibility and decision-making, all of which are potential transferable work skills.

Join Career-Related Organizations

A good career exploration idea is to join career-related student organizations and attend presentations of visiting speakers. Better yet, help arrange some of those programs and events—you will learn a great deal and make some excellent contacts. Most organizations are open to students of any major, even though their names may suggest otherwise. Remember, the more you know about the career you have chosen, the more tension will be alleviated in the entire job-search process, and the more confidence you will have in yourself.

Develop a Support Network

Family, friends, and professors can be invaluable sources of job leads and contacts. You have heard the expression, “two heads are better than one.” The more people who can help you put out feelers for job leads and provide moral support, the better for your job search.

PART TWO:

Self-Assessment and Goal Setting

What IS Self-Assessment?

Self-assessment is the process of exploring who you really are in terms of your interests, values, skills, and abilities. Self-assessment and goal-setting are very important to the job search. They keep you focused, but most importantly, help you to be ready to grab an opportunity when it arises. Once you recognize your personal qualities, you can then begin to develop your short-term and long-term goals. By using the self-assessment exercises at the end of this section, you can better identify your skills, strengths, and interests. Keep in mind these are just quick exercises to get you started—you can use more elaborate assessments through Career Development Office tools, such as FOCUS and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

Targeting and Focusing Your Goals

After you define what you have to offer, it is time to think about how to apply it. WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? and WHY? are questions you will need to be able to respond to.

- **WHO?**

For whom do you want to work? Government ... advertising agency ... social services ... retail ... market research ... public relations ... sales ... ? The advantage of a liberal arts education is that it provides options to you. Therefore, it is all right to be considering various options. However, it is equally important to develop some focus among your options.

- **WHAT?**

What skills do you want to use in your job? Organizing skills ... research skills ... writing skills ... analytical skills ... managing skills ... computer skills ... ?

- **WHERE?**

Where do you want to be geographically? Ohio ... Midwest ... South ... East Coast ... ? Realize that the Career Development Office has many employers who recruit on campus who are looking for candidates to locate throughout the United States. Also, there are resources and directories in our office that identify employers in various geographic areas in which you may want to work.

- **WHEN?**

When will you be available for employment? January ... May ... August ... ?

- **WHY?**

Why are you interested in a particular job or organization? This is a very important question to which you must be prepared to respond in an interview.

If you have no difficulty responding to the WHO? WHAT? WHERE? WHEN? and WHY? questions, you probably have good career focus. On the other hand, if you do have difficulty responding to these questions, it is important for you to take the time to talk with one of our career counselors to help you define your career objectives and goals.

The Grinnell College Four-Year Plan

Regardless if you are a senior getting ready to graduate and looking for that first professional position, a third-year student looking to land an awesome internship, or even a first-year just getting ready to apply for a part-time summer job, we can help! It is NEVER too early to begin thinking about your career path. While we would not expect first-year students to have a concrete idea of what they would like to do with their lives, it is true that the earlier you begin to think about potential careers, the more likely you will be able to discover something that truly fits with your personality.

Likewise, if graduating students wait until the last minute to begin their career planning, it is quite likely that they will have a less-than-satisfactory job search, as they will not have adequately prepared their résumés OR practiced for the big interview. Start your career path RIGHT AWAY! Use the plan below as a guide:

Career Development Plan

First-years

- Visit the CDO to learn about our services.
- Start your résumé; the CDO can help!
- Assess your interests, abilities, personality, and values.
- Identify possible majors and career fields and professional associations.
- Meet individually with a career counselor to learn how to find out more about careers, make decisions, and set goals, as well as exploring careers.
- Utilize the CDO lending library to aid in your career research.
- Consider the Pre-Professional Development Experience Program program. This pairs students with alumni willing to share knowledge with students interested in learning more about particular careers.
- Take a variety of classes in areas that interest you to explore majors.
- Identify and join student organizations or volunteer activities that will provide leadership opportunities, and enable you to explore interests and build skills.
- Obtain relevant work experiences through internships, volunteering, part-time jobs and summer jobs.
- Develop good time management, goal-setting, and study habits; establish a strong GPA.
- Attend the GRINNELLINK reception each semester to meet alumni in various fields .

Second-years

- Continue first-year activities.
- Develop relationships with contacts in your field of study.
- Attend CDO presentations to learn more about résumé writing, interviewing, and internships.
- Conduct research and solicit information from professionals and upper-class students to finalize decision on your major.
- Meet individually with a career counselor to develop short- and long-term goals; learn where recent graduates are working.
- Use the CDO lending library to aid in your career research.
- Develop and enhance your skills through student organizations, volunteer opportunities, part-time employment, and internships.
- Consider the Pre-Professional Development Experience Program program. This pairs students with alumni willing to share knowledge with students interested in learning more about particular careers.
- Build skills in areas of importance to employers, including oral and written communication, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, and computer skills.
- Update and revise your résumé.

- Explore study abroad, Grinnell-in-Washington, and Grinnell-in-London programs.
- Maintain a strong GPA.

Third-years

- Continue second-year activities.
- Investigate scholarships or fellowships.
- Seek an internship to gain experience in your field.
- Learn about credential files through the CDO.
- Utilize alumni and CDO resources to thoroughly research the employers you are considering.
- Obtain information on graduate programs and admission requirements. Prepare for and take required exams for graduate school.
- Continue building your network of faculty and professional contacts.
- Hold a leadership position in a campus organization and serve on committees.
- Polish your résumé, application letter, and interview skills.
- Explore community service activities and leadership.
- Consider studying abroad.

Seniors

- Continue third-year activities.
- Attend job search presentations.
- Evaluate lifestyle interests and values to determine post-graduate plans.
- Buy an interview suit and leather padfolio.
- Apply for jobs through the Selective Liberal Arts Consortium (SLAC) and the Iowa College Recruiting Network (ICoRN).
- Participate in on-campus recruiting.
- Attend job-search workshops.
- Meet individually with a career counselor to help you identify skills you have to offer employers and plan for your job search.
- Investigate and apply for fellowships and scholarships.
- Meet with a career counselor on a regular basis to assess your job search strategies and to have your résumé and application letter critiqued.
- Participate in mock interviews through the CDO.
- Write letters of inquiry to alumni and prospective employers, send follow-up letters, and make phone calls.
- Use college breaks to conduct prospective company visits.
- Invest a little time each day in your job search. A productive job search may take as much time as a 3-credit-hour course.

Worksheets to Help Get You Started

The following pages are exercises to help you begin taking a look at your interests, values, and skills you have to offer an employer. You can use these assessments to not only help you begin exploring careers that may align with your interests, values, and skills, but you can also use this information when you begin putting together your résumé.

Worksheet #1: Skills Assessment

Let's begin by assessing your skills and abilities. As you read through this worksheet, check all your different skills. The checklist will help you work toward completing your résumé.

I. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SKILLS:

- I am able to ... sort data and objects.
 organize, compile, and rank information effectively.
 apply information creatively to specific problems or tasks.
 synthesize facts, concepts, and principles.
 evaluate information against appropriate standards.

II. DESIGN AND PLANNING SKILLS:

- I am able to ... assess needs.
 set realistic goals.
 set priorities in accomplishing projects.
 manage time effectively in order to accomplish goals.
 set up a timeline to keep projects on track.
 identify alternative courses of action when necessary.
 accommodate multiple demands for commitment of time, energy and resources.
 predict future trends and patterns before they happen.
 follow through with a plan or decision.

III. RESEARCH AND INVESTIGATION SKILLS:

- I am able to ... use a variety of sources of information.
 apply a variety of methods to test the validity of data.
 identify problems and needs.
 design an experiment, plan or model that systematically defines a problem.
 identify information sources appropriate to special needs or problems.
 formulate questions relevant to clarifying a particular problem, topic or issue.

IV. COMMUNICATION SKILLS:

- I am able to ... listen with objectivity and paraphrase the content of a message.
 use various forms and styles of written communication.
 speak effectively to individuals and groups.
 use media formats to present ideas imaginatively.
 express my needs, wants, opinions and preferences without offending others.
 identify and communicate value judgments effectively.
 describe objects or events with a minimum of factual errors.
 convey a positive self image to others.

V. HUMAN RELATIONS AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:

- I am able to ... keep a group on track and moving toward the achievement of a common goal.
- delegate tasks and responsibilities when necessary and also make commitments and take responsibility.
- express my feelings appropriately and understand the feelings of others.
- use argumentation techniques to persuade others.
- teach a skill, concept or principle to others.
- demonstrate effective social behavior in a variety of settings and under different circumstances.

VI. CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS:

- I am able to ... identify quickly and accurately the critical issues when making a decision or solving a problem.
- identify a general principle that explains related experiences or factual data.
- define the parameters of a problem.
- identify reasonable criteria for assessing the value or inappropriateness of an action or behavior.
- adapt my concepts and behavior to changing conventions and norms.
- apply appropriate criteria to strategies and action plans.
- take given premises and reasons to their conclusion.
- create innovative solutions to complex problems.
- analyze the relationship of events and ideas from several perspectives.

VII. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION SKILLS:

- I am able to ... analyze tasks.
- identify the people who contribute to the solution of a problem or task.
- identify resource materials useful in the solution of a problem.
- delegate responsibility for completion of tasks.
- motivate and lead people to give their best and show pride in a project.
- organize people and tasks to achieve specific goals.

VIII. VALUING SKILLS:

- I am able to ... assess a course of action in terms of its long range effects on the general human welfare.
- make decisions that will maximize both individual and collective good.
- appreciate the contributions of art, literature, science, and technology to contemporary society.
- identify my own values.
- assess my values in relation to important life decisions.

IX. PERSONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT SKILLS:

- I am able to ... analyze my life experiences.
- relate the skills developed in one environment (e.g., school) to the requirements of another environment (e.g., work).
- match knowledge about my own characteristics and abilities to information about job or career opportunities.
- identify, describe, and assess the relative importance of my needs, values, interests, strengths and weaknesses.
- develop personal growth goals that are motivating.
- identify and describe skills acquired through formal education and general life experience.
- accept and learn from negative criticism.
- accept the consequences of my actions.

Worksheet #2: Educational Background

List all of your education and/or training. Include study abroad programs and coursework taken on other campuses. Double-check the dates. Begin with the most recent first, dating back no more than five years. If possible, list the starting and ending month. Use asterisks (*) to label clusters of relevant coursework or class work that are important.

DEGREES/CERTIFICATES **INSTITUTION** **COURSE OF STUDY** **DATE**

Worksheet #3: Employment Experience

List any job that you have ever had for which you were paid by anyone. Your final list should read most recent first, but it may be easier to initially list experiences as they come to mind. Double-check the dates. Think broadly about skills developed, but list each skill specifically.

<u>YOUR JOB TITLE</u>	<u>EMPLOYER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>SKILLS GAINED / DESCRIPTIONS</u>
------------------------------	------------------------	------------------------	--------------------	--

Worksheet #4: Campus Activities

List the campus activities in which you have been involved: writing experiences (S & B, major research papers), student organizations, student government, athletics, music, committee work, SEPCs, admission work, etc.

YOUR TITLE ORGANIZATION DATE DESCRIPTION SKILLS GAINED

Worksheet #5: Volunteer or Internship Experience

Think of all the activities in which you have been involved: community involvement, club/service work, planning committees, student staff, volunteer service projects, church work, coaching. Don't be afraid to include everything you can think of—this is a rough draft and will be edited.

YOUR TITLE	ORGANIZATION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	SKILLS GAINED
-------------------	---------------------	-------------	--------------------	----------------------

Worksheet #6: What Do I Want From Work?

Before you put the facts you have gathered about yourself in a résumé format, ask yourself, “What do I want from work?” This worksheet can help you decide what type(s) of industry, employer and jobs you are interested in. If you are not sure what industry, employer and job may match your interest, visit the Career Development Office and talk with a career counselor.

Skills I want to develop:

Skills I want to improve:

Type of environment I want to work in:

Type of people I want to work with:

Other things I am looking for:

Worksheet #7: Prioritizing My Qualifications

Objective of this résumé:

Most important related experience, skill or qualification that supports this job/career search:

Second most important:

Third most important:

Fourth most important:

PART THREE:

*Marketing Tools***The Résumé**

One of the most helpful instruments in seeking a job to your satisfaction can be your own personal résumé. A well-written résumé is an individual, unique summary of personal, educational, and experiential qualifications for employment. Your résumé must be able to compete with possibly hundreds of other résumés the employer will receive. Your goal should be to make your résumé better than average. The résumé says, “I think I’m qualified for this job. Please talk to me.” Nothing more, nothing less.

Before preparing your résumé, take some time to evaluate your skills and think about those skills you will want to highlight.

How to Prepare Your Résumé

It is critical to your job search that you understand the basic objective of a résumé. A good résumé is your ticket to a personal interview. People today rarely hire individuals sight-unseen regardless of how closely they match the employer’s job requirements. Therefore, you must develop a document that will move the employer to contact YOU for the personal interview. It would be foolish to deny yourself this opportunity because of a poorly prepared résumé.

Getting Started

You have had many experiences throughout your college career. You won’t want to include all of these, but for the time being, write down everything you can remember. This is a rough draft. You can edit later. There is NO one “right” way to construct a résumé. No matter how you do it, there is bound to be someone who would suggest doing parts differently.

We encourage you to use these general guidelines, but please tailor them to your needs and create a résumé which represents you in the best possible way.

Content**Contact Information**

- Your name as you want to be referred to professionally (Jon Baker, Jonathon Edward Baker, Jon E. Baker)
- Current address and phone number with area code (where you can be reached now!)
- Permanent address and phone number with area code (If you will be in different locations during your search, an address of someone who will always know how to reach you. This could be your parent’s address.)
- Include your e-mail address, and if you don’t have one, get one!

EXAMPLES:

(1)

Crystal Gayle

101 Plum Street • Grinnell, IA 50112 • 507-555-0712 • Crystal.Gayle@gmail.com

(2)

Jesse L. Cooper

1234 Anyname St.
Grinnell, IA 50112
(507) 555-1234

jesse.cooper@grinnell.edu

Objective

A clear objective is critical to résumé development because it helps focus and select information. Although you may wish to make your objective broad, do not make it so broad that it says nothing. If you are pursuing employment in different fields, simply create different objectives for each field.

Your career objective should answer this question, “What do I want to do?” Is it for graduate school, a part-time job, an internship, a professional position after graduation, or a scholarship? Make sure your objective makes this crystal clear and is specific to the position that you are applying for.

EXAMPLES:

- Management trainee position with a financial institution
- Editorial or research assistant in a public affairs organization
- Internship position to explore career options in the health field
- Acceptance to social work graduate program
- Position teaching biology at the secondary school level
- Research position in biochemical laboratory
- To obtain a summer internship in the _____ industry with Acme Corp.

Educational Background

For many new graduates, the bulk of their experience comes from their educational backgrounds. When completing your education section, **list your most current institution first**, followed by other schools you have attended. If you did not complete at least 2 semesters at a different school prior to Grinnell College, you can choose if you would like to include information about your former institution. The following information should be included regarding your educational experiences:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ▪ Institution | ▪ Teaching Licensure |
| ▪ City, State | ▪ Concentration |
| ▪ Dates attended or graduation date | ▪ Minor/emphasis area |
| ▪ Degree or certification obtained | ▪ Relevant coursework |
| ▪ Major | ▪ Specialized instruction |
| ▪ GPA (if proud of it) | |

EXAMPLES:

- | | | |
|-----|---|-------------------------|
| (1) | Bachelor of Arts Degree, English
Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA | June 2004
G.P.A. 3.3 |
| (2) | Bachelor of Arts, History
Grinnell College—Grinnell, IA May 2008
GPA 4.0 | |

Related Coursework (optional)

As mentioned earlier, education is a major source of experience for most new graduates. More specifically, the particular classes you completed throughout your education are very important. This may be especially true for job seekers who are entering occupations that have strict requirements regarding employees’ skill sets and experiences. For example, graduates with a technical background may want to detail the courses they completed. An applicant may also want to do this when the classes taken were of a specialty nature. For example, if the coursework was groundbreaking, exclusive, innovative, or the first of its kind, it may be worth mentioning to generate interest on the part of the employer. This may also be very effective for candidates who are applying for jobs that are not an exact fit with their majors (i.e., an English major who is seeking a career in sales may have taken a number of communication courses to prepare for this field, but an employer reviewing this candidate’s résumé would not know this based on the education section). Be selective and choose to include only those courses which are related to your career goals.

EXAMPLES:

- | | | | |
|-----|---|--|--|
| (1) | Related Coursework | Principles of Accounting I, II
Business Writing
Introduction to Business Computing
Calculus for Business Applications | Microeconomics
Macroeconomics
Introduction to Management
Linear Mathematics |
| (2) | Related Coursework | | |
| | Promotional Strategies
Media Writing II
Editorial Process | | Consumer Behavior
Mass Communication
Law Product and Pricing Strategy |

Experience

This part of your résumé may include several sections such as work experience, volunteer experience (internships, community service, student teaching), campus leadership, and any other you create in which you may have significant experience, such as publications/presentations or computer skills. Some sample headings could include:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Student Teaching</p> <p>Practicum Experience</p> <p>Current Research Interests</p> <p>Teaching Experience</p> <p>Coaching Experience</p> <p>Professional Background</p> <p>Employment</p> | <p>Other Work Experience</p> <p>Additional Experience</p> <p>Volunteer Activities</p> <p>Related Activities</p> <p>Professional/Community Activities</p> <p>Extracurricular Activities</p> <p>Related Experience</p> |
|---|---|

- Briefly describe for each position:
 - Job title, organization name, location, dates (month/year to month/year).
 - Responsibilities/Accomplishments/Job Duties.
- Use a variety of action words which describe situations and achievements (see Action Words to Describe Your Skills section, pages 31–33).
- Unless necessary, avoid little words in description such as a, an, the.
- Include scope of responsibility, such as: Supervised eight student workers.
- Concretely outline any outstanding results, such as: Developed new computerized customer listing using Filemaker Pro software.
- Be aware of tense. If position has ended, use past tense; and remember not to mix tenses.

EXAMPLES:

(1)

Related Experience**Career Peer Advisor**

August 2006-May 2008

Career Development Office, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA

- Maintained 48-hour résumé service
- Presented during study breaks and other outreach presentations in residence halls
- Served as Ambassador/Host for recruiters and alumni
- Attended and conducted career development workshops
- Attended and wrote summaries for Recruiter Info Workshops and Career Hours
- Greeted and assisted students with office resources in library and technology center
- Updated PowerPoint presentations

Independent Researcher

February 2003-March 2004

Mentored Advanced Project, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA

- Completed 20-page paper examining connection of liberal arts majors with various careers
- Compiled 10-page annotated bibliography, covering 24 articles and books
- Presented findings in PowerPoint format at public forum to an audience of 40 people including Psychology faculty, college staff, and members of the community
- Assisted in creation and distribution of publication materials to present data to public

(2)

EXPERIENCE:**Credit Analyst Intern, Wells Fargo—Des Moines, Iowa**

1/08-5/08

- Analyzed Fortune 500 companies and produced detailed reports covering industry structure and financial positions used by target companies in decision-making; gained a basic knowledge of credit facility structure and treasury management products used by corporations

Intern, Think-Tank—Berlin, Germany

1/06-5/06

- Participated in the research and evaluation of European Union on a team; researched and published papers under supervision on the International Monetary Fund (all work done in German)

Honors/Activities/Leadership/Special Skills

Front load these with those most important or most pertinent to your objective (career goal). You may want to use specific headings such as **Professional Organizations**, **Computer Skills**, or **Leadership Positions**. Include any honors, scholarships, or recognition awards that you've received. If you were actively involved in any clubs, teams, and/or committees while in college, those may be included also. The key to this section is keep it brief. If you feel you need more detail, use the guidelines for **Experience** and make it a complete section.

EXAMPLES:

(1)

COMPUTER SKILLS	Microsoft Office XP, 98, 95	Word Perfect	Internet
	Claris Works	SPSS	SABRE Travel Network
	Adobe Pagemaker	Type Styler	Microsoft Mail
	Photo Shop	Lotus 1-2-3	Apollo Travel Network

(2)

SKILLS

- Sales: Retail, household appliance, and Internet sales experience
- Customer Service: Provided effective customer service to a range of ages and needs
- Leadership: Coaching, motivating, and training
- Computer: Strong experience with all components of Microsoft Office, some Web design
- Communication: Public speaking, interpersonal, excellent writing skills
- Management: Supervised, evaluated and trained personnel

LANGUAGE SKILLS

- French—fluent, Spanish—conversational

Summary of Qualifications (optional)

As you move forward and gain experience in your career (or education if you attend graduate school), you may eventually decide to put a “Summary of Qualifications” after (or in place of) your “Objective” on your résumé. In fact, some employers may even prefer to see this section on your résumé, though it is not always necessary. However, by including this section, you are able to quickly highlight and draw attention to a few specific areas where you may have a wealth of experience but do not want to try to put too much information in the body of your résumé. Likewise, perhaps you have some excellent experience that would make you an ideal candidate for a position—but that experience is far in your past and may not show up early on your résumé. A “Summary of Qualifications” allows you to bring those items to the top of your résumé where an employer can see them right away.

*EXAMPLE:***Summary of Qualifications:**

- Over 10 years experience working with diverse populations
- Basic knowledge of Spanish, both verbal and written
- Proficient with computers including both Mac and PC
- Excellent communication skills, both interpersonal and presentation
- Active team player with proven leadership skills

What Else Should You Know About Developing a Résumé?

The most commonly used format for new graduates is the **reverse chronological** résumé format. **Information is listed in reverse chronological order (most recent first and then work backwards by date within each section).** Each position should include the name of the organization, city and state, your job title, dates of employment, the tasks performed and the skills used.

Starting the Résumé Process

Your résumé needs to be concise and catchy, as the average time spent on a résumé by a future employer is less than 1 minute! The typical résumé is one or two pages long.

Be prepared to write more than one draft and to tailor your résumé to the specific job you are applying for. It takes a lot of effort, but this is effort well spent as your résumé is **your most important job-hunting tool.**

Career Counselor Appointments (Call: 641-269-4940)

After having your résumé reviewed at a Quick Stop or through the Résumé Drop, you are encouraged to make changes and meet with a career counselor for an appointment. The career counselor will help you critique your own résumé for content, style, format, and final details before you send it out. In addition, you will learn how to tailor your résumé for specific jobs, internships, fellowships, scholarships, etc.

Should you use a résumé template?

Many students choose to use a résumé template for their first résumés. Résumé templates come standard in many word-processing programs and can also be purchased separately. There are several drawbacks to résumé templates. First, recruiters have seen these templates many times and they do not stand out from other résumés. Also, résumé templates can be very difficult to work with. If your experiences are unique or if you want to highlight something in a particular way, you might not be able to do so. Many templates have settings for font size, spacing, margins, and categories which cannot be changed. You want your résumé to reflect your experiences, not be something that is preset. The staff in the Grinnell College Career Development Office recommend that you start your résumé on your own in a basic word-processing document. We do not encourage the use of templates.

Basic Hints

- Be positive. Be honest. Stick to the facts.
- Avoid abbreviations.
- Appearance is important. Do not clutter your page. Generally, 1-inch margins are used. You can decrease your margins slightly if you need more room. Use bold print and capital letters to emphasize important items.
- Is your résumé limited to one page? Most employers expect this of someone just graduating. (Some recruiters will immediately toss any entry-level résumé of more than one page.)
- If you are having difficulty with length, consider taking the header, footer, and margins down to a lower size; play around with smaller font sizes.
- Follow the journalist style of résumé formatting. That is, the most relevant information is presented first. When describing work or internship experiences, do not put filing and answering phones as the first bullet under the job title. Instead, note the system you overhauled, the research you performed, etc. Try to illustrate examples of your initiative, problem-solving, and creativity on the job.
- Don't forget your name, address, phone and e-mail address. Be sure your e-mail address is professional sounding (i.e. george.costanza@grinnell.edu, not cutiepie@hotmail.com).
- Personal information such as age, marital status, height, weight should NOT be included on your résumé.
- Include hobbies, travel experience or awards in a separate section or under experience or education ONLY if they are related to your goal.
- Do not include reference names, addresses, or phone numbers on your résumé. List these on a separate sheet.
- Beware of printing your final copy résumé on an ink jet printer! Your résumé should be either laser printed or copied at a professional copier from a laser-printed copy.

Prepare Your Final Résumé

Ask your friends and family, or faculty and professionals in your field of interest to review your résumé. Then check, check and check again for grammatical, typographical and spelling errors. **Your résumé has to be perfect, with no mistakes! Remember, a résumé is a work in progress. Every day you are adding to your experience, so be sure to update as needed!**

Duplication of your résumé can be done inexpensively by **quality photocopying on quality bond paper**, in a neutral shade. It is a good idea to buy matching stationery and envelopes for mailing résumés and application letters.

See the résumé samples in the back of this guide, beginning on page 70.

Action Words to Describe Your Skills

accelerate	collect	disseminate	guide	measure
accentuate	combine	distribute		mediate
accomplish	command	document	halve	mentor
achieve	commission	double	handle	merit
act	communicate	draft	harmonize	minimize
acquire	compile		head	mobilize
activate	complete	earn	help	model
adapt	compose	edit	hire	moderate
address	conceive	effect		modernize
adhere to	conclude	eliminate	identify	modify
administer	condense	emphasize	implement	monitor
adopt	conduct	employ	improve	motivate
advance	confront	empower	improvise	
advise	consolidate	encourage	incorporate	negotiate
advocate	construct	enforce	increase	nurture
allocate	consult	engineer	index	
analyze	continue	enlarge	indicate	observe
anticipate	contract	establish	influence	obtain
apply	contribute	estimate	inform	operate
appoint	control	evaluate	initiate	order
appraise	convert	examine	innovate	organize
apprehend	convey	exceed	inspect	orient
approve	cooperate	excel	inspire	originate
arrange	coordinate	execute	install	outline
assess	correct	exercise	instigate	overcome
assimilate	correlate	exert	institute	overhaul
assist	correspond	exhibit	instruct	oversee
assume	counsel	expand	integrate	
attain	create	expedite	interpret	participate
audit	cultivate	experience	interview	perform
augment		extend	introduce	persist
authorize	decentralize	extract	invent	persuade
avert	decide		invest	pinpoint
avoid	decrease	facilitate	investigate	pioneer
	define	familiarize		plan
broaden	delegate	feature	justify	point out
budget	deliver	finance		pool
build	demonstrate	focus	launch	practice
	derive	forecast	lead	predict
calculate	designate	formalize	lecture	prepare
carry out	design	form	lighten	present
catalog	detail	formulate	link	preside
cause	determine	foster	liquidate	prevail
centralize	develop	found	locate	prevent
change	devise	frame		print
chart	diagnose	fulfill		process
check	direct		maintain	procure
circulate	disapprove	gain	make	produce
clarify	discharge	gather	manage	program
classify	discover	generate	map	progress
coach	dispatch	govern	market	project
collaborate	display	group	master	promote
			match	

propose	sell	triple	author	maintain
prove	serve		collaborate	operate
provide	set up	uncover	convince	overhaul
publish	settle	understand	correspond	program
purchase	share	undertake	develop	remodel
pursue	show	unify	direct	repair
	simplify	update	draft	retrieve
qualify	sketch	upgrade	edit	solve
question	solicit	use	enlist	upgrade
	solve	utilize	formulate	
re-establish	sort		influence	Teaching Skills
raise	speak	venture	interpret	adapt
realize	specialize	verify	lecture	advise
receive	specify	vitalize	mediate	clarify
recognize	sponsor	volunteer	moderate	coach
recommend	staff		negotiate	communicate
reconcile	standardize	widen	persuade	coordinate
record	start	win	promote	demystify
recruit	stimulate	withstand	publicize	develop
rectify	straighten	work	reconcile	enable
redesign	streamline	write	recruit	encourage
reduce	strengthen		spoke	evaluate
regulate	stress	Management Skills	translate	facilitate
refer	stretch	administer		guide
refine	structure	analyze	Research Skills	inform
reinforce	study	assign	clarify	instruct
reject	submit	attain	collect	persuade
relate	succeed	chair	critique	stimulate
remain	summarize	consolidate	diagnose	train
renegotiate	supervise	contract	evaluate	
reorganize	supplement	coordinate	examine	Detail-Oriented Skills
report	supply	delegate	extract	approve
represent	support	develop	identify	arrange
research	surpass	direct	inspect	catalogue
reshape	survey	evaluate	interpret	classify
resolve	sustain	execute	interview	collect
respond	synchronize	improve	investigate	compile
restore	synthesize	increase	organize	execute
restructure		organize	review	generate
resume	tailor	oversee	summarize	implement
revamp	talk	plan	survey	inspect
reveal	target	prioritize	systematize	monitor
revise	teach	produce		operate
review	terminate	recommend	Technical Skills	organize
revise	test	review	assemble	prepare
revitalize	testify	schedule	build	process
revive	tighten	strengthen	calculate	purchase
route	trade	supervise	compute	record
	train		configure	retrieve
save	transact	Communication Skills	design	screen
schedule	transfer	address	devise	specify
secure	transform	arbitrate	engineer	systematize
seize	translate	arrange	fabricate	tabulate
select	trim		install	

validate	demonstrate	rehabilitate	develop	integrate
	diagnose	represent	direct	introduce
Helping Skills	educate		establish	invent
assess	expedite	Creative Skills	fashion	originate
assist	facilitate	conceptualize	found	perform
clarify	guide	create	illustrate	plan
coach	motivate	customize	initiate	revitalize
counsel	refer	design	institute	shape

Next Steps for Résumés and Application Letters

The Career Development Office has a variety of programs and events to assist you as you prepare your résumé for applications, internships, jobs, off-campus study, scholarships, fellowships, etc. Follow three basic steps to completing a résumé:

STEP #1: Write a draft of your résumé and/or application letter

A Guide to Résumés & Cover Letters

The CDO publishes this booklet for students to take with them and consult as they create their own résumés and cover letters. Many sample résumés and cover letters are included.

Writing Résumés & Application Letters Workshops

First year through senior students will find this presentation helpful if they are ready to learn how to put their skills, education, work, volunteer, and other experiences on paper in a résumé format. Dates and times of résumé sessions will be listed on the CDO web page, in the CDO newsletter, and in the Campus Memo.

Library and Online Resources

The CDO has an extensive lending library covering a wide variety of topics including books on résumé writing. The CDO web page, www.grinnell.edu/offices/cdo/, also contains information on preparing résumés, sample résumés, and links to multiple résumé writing help sites.

STEP #2: Review the draft of your résumé

Résumé Drop

Students who would like a draft of their résumé or application letter reviewed should email it to [career] (subject line: Résumé Drop) or stop by the CDO with hard copies. One of our career counselors will review your résumé draft for style and format, write comments on it, and return it via email or campus mail.

Quick Stops

Students may “drop-in” for a 15-minute quick question sessions with a career counselor to get their résumé, application letter, and graduate/professional school questions answered quickly—no appointment necessary. Contact the CDO at 641-269-4940 or check the CDO website to find out the days and times for the current semester.

STEP #3: Polish your résumé before sending it out

Career Counselor Appointments (Call: 641-269-4940)

After having your résumé reviewed at a Quick Stop or through the Résumé Drop, you are encouraged to make changes and meet with a career counselor for an appointment. The career counselor will help you critique your own résumé for content, style, format, and final details before you send it out. In addition, you will learn how to tailor your résumé for specific jobs, internships, fellowships, scholarships, etc.

The Application Letter

The key to a successful job or graduate school search is to communicate with the person who has the ability to hire or admit. Therefore, your application letter is extremely important. Effective application letters convey a sense of purpose, project enthusiasm for the position or program, and demonstrate your knowledge of the employer or graduate program's goals and needs.

Many times, individuals will spend hours writing a "perfect" résumé and very little time writing a quality application letter. Remember, your application letter not only ALWAYS accompanies your résumé (whether it is mailed, e-mailed, or faxed), it is usually on top of your résumé when the envelope is opened. A positive first impression requires that your application letter be neat, contain no errors in spelling or grammar, and be concise. Each application letter should be customized to fit the position for which you are applying.

Reasons for sending an application letter may be:

- A result of a direct search
- In response to an advertisement
- To follow up on a contact made through networking

Tips for Writing Effective Application Letters

- Research the organization and use what you learn to address why you want to work with this employer.
- If you have a job opening with required or preferred qualifications or a job description, use your application letter to show how you meet the requirements for a job.
- Use concrete skills and examples. Instead of "I'm a people person and I like technology," say "During my internship in the Career Development Office, I developed and used strong counseling and customer service skills. At the Grinnell Used Record Store, I utilized my strong technology skills to revamp the inventory system and I also redesigned their website."
- Don't start every sentence with "I". Use some variety in your sentence structure.
- Employers use application letters as evidence of your written communication skills. Errors in spelling and grammar are not acceptable.
- Keep your letter short and simple. Your letter should not be more than one page.
- Be sure to sign your letter!

See the samples in the back of this guide, beginning on page 70.

Suggested Application Letter Content

Your address
City, State Zip
Your phone number
Date of writing



Contact Information
(should look like your résumé contact information)

Name of person you are writing to
Title
Organization or company name
Street address
City, State Zip

Dear Mr./Ms. Blank: (Address your letter to a specific person, whenever possible.)

Opening Paragraph—Tell why you are writing. Name the position, field, or general area about which you are inquiring. Tell how you learned of the opening or organization.

Middle Paragraph(s)—Refer to your major, Grinnell College and graduation date. Using the job posting as a guide, mention one or two of your qualifications that you think would be of interest to the employer, slanting your remarks to his/her point of view. Tell why you are interested in the organization, location, or type of work. If you have had related experience, or specialized training, be sure to point it out. If possible, show the employer how your skills match those in the job announcement or advertisement. This is the place to sell your skills and abilities to the potential employer. Document your claims with statements that show evidence of your skills. Describe how your skills/experience fit the position description. Match your previous duties/accomplishments with those listed in the job description you are applying to. **SHOW**, rather than tell!

Closing Paragraph—Refer the reader to the enclosed application or résumé. Indicate that references and/or credentials are available upon request. Request an application form or an interview. List a phone number or e-mail address where you can be reached. Make sure your closing ends on a positive note. Let the employer know that you look forward to hearing from him/her soon.

Sincerely,

Your handwritten signature in blue or black ink

Type your name

Enclosure:

The Reference Page

Carefully choose your references. Don't just ask anyone who knows you or your work habits to be a reference. Find someone with whom you've made a connection, someone who can write an accurate and positive recommendation for you. Try to select references who know you from different perspectives. A good mix might include: a professor, who can attest to your knowledge base and study habits; a supervisor, who knows your work habits, level of responsibility, and your ability to work with people; and someone who knows you well, such as a mentor who understands your values and integrity. When you ask these people to be your references, be sure to let them know your career goals. Give them a copy of your résumé so that they know your accomplishments. Also, throughout your job search, be sure to keep informed about which positions you're applying for. They may know someone in that company, field, or graduate program who could help you out. Plus, they'll be better informed when a potential employer or program chair calls for a reference check. These extra steps can only help them write or speak more specifically about what a great employee or student you would be.

A reference page consists of the following information for each person:

- Full professional name of individual
- Title
- Organization
- Work address
- City, State Zip
- Telephone number (include area code)
- E-mail (if available)
- Association to you (i.e. colleague, supervisor, etc.)

Be sure to title your reference page and include your name in case the page is separated from your résumé. You can either center all of the information on the reference page or align it on the left. Whatever you end up doing, make sure all the information is easy to read. Also, be sure that your contact information at the top is formatted exactly like the contact information on your résumé and application letter!

See the samples in the back of the guide, beginning on page 70.

PART FOUR:

Researching the Market and Networking

You are now ready for the job search! Before you begin, let's cover some general information about the job market. On average, there are 1 million job openings each month. Jobs do exist. The challenge is finding the one that is right for you. Many available jobs are not advertised. This is what is known as the hidden job market. The key to tapping into the hidden job market is **networking** – utilizing and developing contacts.

Once you have developed a network of contact people, then what? Let those people know what you are looking for! What if you don't know what you are looking for? Ask for referrals of people who work in the career area(s) you are interested in. Conduct informational interviews. Investigate different job search resources. See what jobs/ internships are available. Identify positions you are interested in. Apply for jobs. The time to start is now!

Keep in mind that the job search of a liberal arts student may be very different than that of a student who has been studying in a program that is targeted toward a specific career (i.e., an accounting major looking for accounting positions, a nursing major applying for a registered nurse position, etc.).

Your degree makes your job search different, but only you make it harder. The key is knowing your career interests and utilizing multiple resources. Your roommate's primary job-hunting resource may likely be on-campus recruiting. Yours may not. Recognize this in the beginning, and prepare for it. Access other resources geared toward your career interests.

Only YOU can make it a successful job search—**YOU** need to take the initiative. The jobs will not come to you as you are sitting in your apartment, residence hall, or class. Understanding this fact is crucial to a successful job search. You will need to assess your skills, interests, and what is important to you. You need to examine what you have learned outside the classroom—what you've done in the community, campus activities, part-time jobs. Such experiences complete the package. Networking will be a key component of your job search. You will most likely utilize this resource the most. If the idea of networking makes you uncomfortable or fearful, talk to a career counselor about alleviating your concerns.

Job Search Resources

On Campus

- **PioneerLink** online system: Registration is free for Grinnell College students and alumni and provides job listings (part-time/seasonal, internship, and entry-level), secure résumé referral to employers, employer information and websites, listing of events, and the ability to apply for selected jobs online.
- Career Development Office library: Numerous career exploration and job search books are available for checkout from the CDO. Stop in any time during office hours to browse.
- CDO website (www.grinnell.edu/offices/cdo): The CDO web site is a comprehensive tool that students can use to access a wealth of career planning and job-search information including:
 - Detailed information on all of our services, including a section to keep you updated on Career Development Office and recruiting events, internship opportunities, as well as links to Vault, ICoRN (Iowa College Recruiting Network), and SLAC (Selective Liberal Arts Consortium).
 - Access to and information on our comprehensive online system, **PioneerLink**.
 - A number of links which connect students to career exploration and job search information, employers, events, etc., etc.! Many links are even organized according to majors at Grinnell College.
 - Access to our CDO and INTERN Connection newsletters.

Want Ads (Newspapers and Professional Journals)

Listings are often broken down into specific categories. Help-wanted ads usually contain basic information: title, qualifications, where and how to apply. In addition, many newspaper want ads are now available via the Internet. Employers may list openings in one of three ways:

1. **Open** ads provide the name and address of the company/organization and position description.
2. **Blind** ads provide less information and applicants are usually advised to apply to a P.O. Box number.
3. **Catcher** ads provide information to capture your interest and are designed to create a pool of applicants.

Telephone Directories

The yellow pages in telephone directories (hard copy or Internet) provide names of employers, along with other valuable information. Use this information to generate contact listings to target employers within a specific job field and send copies of your application letter and résumé.

Iowa Workforce Center

This free service is provided to both employers and job seekers. It offers a large variety of local and nationwide job openings that are updated daily and can be searched via the Internet by location and type of job at www.iowaworkforce.org.

Internet Job Searching

The Internet is a must on any job seeker's list of tools! It allows you to gather information on employers in your field, many of whom post job vacancies on their websites. You can also find information on job market trends, occupations, and even places to post your résumé. As a starting point, visit the CDO home page (www.grinnell.edu/offices/cdo) for links to employers, job listings, and useful field-specific websites.

Chambers of Commerce

Local chambers of commerce have excellent contact with community employers and can prove useful in generating lists of prospective employers. Many of these agencies also offer some type of no-cost regional Internet job listing for job seekers.

Governmental Agencies

Federal, state, county, and city civil service departments offer a wide variety of professional, technical, clerical, and other occupational opportunities. Posting and application methods vary by type.

Library Resources

Librarians can help you locate professional journals, employer directories and various telephone directories, along with other resource materials to help you identify appropriate information on employers.

Employment Agencies

Some employment agencies are field-specific and can be a good "foot in the door" for certain job seekers; always be certain the agency you work with is reputable and you are aware of and agree to the fee structure (employer- or applicant-paid).

Job Fairs and other Special Events

The CDO sponsors various career and job fairs each academic year on campus. These events bring a large number of employers to campus, spanning a wide variety of fields. The CDO also works with other state and regional institutions on events to help connect students with employers. Check the CDO website for events and dates!

Internships

Internships are work experience opportunities that allow students to explore their career fields of choice. Internships may be paid or nonpaid and could be applied toward academic credit.

Why should I complete an internship?

Internships allow college students to apply theoretical concepts studied in class to the workplace. The experience and practical skills gained from on-the-job training cannot be found in a classroom situation. Experience is the key word. Employers EXPECT new graduates to have experience in their career field!

Contact the CDO at 641-269-4940 to learn more about internship opportunities at Grinnell College!

Networking

What Is Networking?

The old adage “It’s not what you know but who you know” that gets you a job is almost true. It is actually “how many” you know that makes the biggest difference in your search for career information and job or internship opportunities. Networking is one of the best ways to gain knowledge about a particular career field, job type, or graduate school, and provides an opportunity to gather valuable information in a low-stress situation while allowing you to make contacts in your field of interest. Asking someone outright for an internship or job is not networking!

Initiating a connection is much easier and less nerve-racking when you have an organized approach and the right tools. Use this guide to think broadly about how you gather information. More importantly, use it to solidify your networking skills.

Why Is Building Ties Important?

The process of obtaining information through networks will be useful throughout your professional life. It is appropriate when searching for **career information, internship sites, summer opportunities, graduate programs, and employment**. Every contact can lead to more information and, ultimately, to your desired goal.

The skill of expanding a personal referral network is connecting with people so that you reach the largest possible group in any given field. Many of the individuals you come in contact with will want to help new recruits and get great satisfaction from these interviews.

Getting Started

Making, nurturing, and maintaining contacts is the central challenge of lifelong career development. You can’t expect to be an expert at the process initially, but your networking skills will begin to build with little effort.

Now that you have a sense of the purpose and benefits of developing contacts, you can follow these eight steps to get started:

1. **Self-Assessment.** Know what skills you have to offer, what your interests are, and possible career fields you would like to pursue.
2. **Preparation.** Have your résumé updated and have appropriate clothing to wear to an interview.
3. **Developing Sources.** Brainstorm possible people with whom you might network.
4. **Introduction.** Introduce yourself to your contacts in writing.
5. **Arranging an Informational Interview.** Pre-arrange an interview time by phone.
6. **Preparing for the Informational Interview.** Determine questions to ask your contact.
7. **Conducting the Informational Interview.** What to expect.
8. **Thank-You Letter.** Thanking your contact in writing is always the professional thing to do.

Self-Assessment

You should consider a few questions before you get started: What are you looking for? What are your personal and work values? What skills do you bring to a position? This is discovery time ... to reflect on where you are going; to extend your plan.

1. **What skills do you want to use?** You have many skills—some you care about and others you don't. For example, perhaps you know how to drive a semi truck, but maybe that's not a skill you want to use in your work.
2. **What issues excite you?** What do you really care about? What do you spend time thinking about? What interests you so much that if we met on an airplane you'd become so animated speaking about it that you'd knock over my beverage?
3. **What kind of people do you want to spend time with?** This includes both the people you will work with (your colleagues) and the people (your clients) you will serve. Who will benefit from your time and labor?
4. **Which environmental factors give you energy?** This includes macro environments, such as living near the ocean versus on the open prairie versus in a big city. It also includes the micro work environments, such as a quiet cubicle in an office where you can be left to do your work versus a fast-paced workplace where energy abounds.

Elevator Message

Consider these four questions (above) and come up with a 10-20 second statement about yourself. This is an elevator message, a short scripted declaration to describe yourself to a stranger in the short space of an elevator ride.

Speak succinctly about your talents, skills, and goals. This makes a strong impression on your contacts, and lets them know you're serious about your future.

Preparation

It is essential to assemble the tools for your job search, such as a professional résumé and references to send or take with you. Keeping an up-to-date résumé will make it easy to give people access to your information.

Additionally, schedule a mock interview to practice self-presentation and to see if your questions are well-crafted and on target. This is also a good opportunity to practice your delivery.

If you meet someone who says, "Send me your résumé," do it the next day, and first thing in the morning. That makes you appear enthusiastic and on top of your game.

Developing Sources

As college students you've had networks created for you, from the classroom to the residence hall; therefore, the task of making contacts beyond school may seem daunting. Talking to people and learning from their experiences doesn't have to be a formal process or one you practice only when job hunting. There are numerous resources available enabling you to pinpoint the people you'd like to contact.

An informational interview secured through a referral will probably mean a warmer reception. On the other hand, the direct route is by far the shorter one. The direct approach also takes some assertiveness, which will build your interviewing confidence.

"Where do I search for contacts?"

Family and Friends. Don't underestimate the potential of existing ties. Besides, what family member would turn down a request for information?

Professors. Even though many liberal arts professors have spent their entire working lives in an educational environment, they can still be a wealth of information about specific disciplines they have encountered through their research or outside interests. Faculty are also often a good resource for students considering graduate school. It's your responsibility, however, to tell them you are interested in a specific field because they can't read your mind. Faculty also might know the names of former students who pursued a field or degree of interest to you.

Guest Speakers. Among the best sources of networking contacts for college students are guest lecturers or speakers. By volunteering to speak in class, they've already expressed interest in students. These professionals are a vastly untapped resource.

Supervisors. These individuals have a sense of your skills and can offer specific insight into paths that might be well-suited for you. They are also a great source for referrals.

Alumni. These individuals are often helpful contacts and you are guaranteed to have at least one thing in common: Grinnell College. A career counselor from the CDO can help you access alumni.

Professionals Within the Field. Although you might not know them personally, they have the experience and specific information you are seeking. Clip or copy items pertaining to any area of interest (e.g., articles in newspapers, magazines, journals, etc.), especially articles describing people in the fields or in organizations that appeal to you.

Trade Groups. Join the dominant trade or industry group in your area. Consider volunteering on one of the group's committees to meet members.

Encyclopedia of Associations. This resource can be found in the CDO library and offers a collection of hundreds of professional organizations.

Acquaintances. If you see everyone as a potential contact, you can network during any mundane daily activity, from waiting in line for a latte to flying home for the holidays. Most people enjoy talking about the work they do. Some of these conversations will be fleeting, while other times, the people you meet will become part of your circle. Curiosity, and taking advantage of an opportunity, can open a lot of doors.

Make a list of the organizations from which you seek information and find out the name of the most appropriate person in each organization to interview. This can be accomplished by calling the company directly. You'll probably have more names than you need by the time you're finished. Be sure in compiling your list that you develop a group of contacts that is representative of the types of situations in which you are interested. Other kinds of organizations should be included also for exploratory purposes.

Don't hesitate to ask a career counselor for help if you can't find what you are looking for. Write to organizations for brochures and pamphlets or visit their websites. Ask yourself what it is you want to know and then figure out who has vested interest in this knowledge.

Being open to, and staying in touch with, those who cross your path is how you can help direct your own path. At some point, you'll learn about something that can benefit you professionally before the rest of the world finds out.

Remember, this is a process that will unfold gradually and there is no set number of contacts that will ensure success. It has been estimated that an average adult knows 500 to 1,000 contacts. If each of these contacts gave you one contact, that would give you 1,000 to 2,000 contacts, and on and on. The potential is there if you are willing to expend the effort.

The Informational Interview

An informational interview is a brief (20-45 minutes) interview (although not an actual job interview) with an individual in your particular field of interest. It may be an individual in the specific type of job you are looking for, or someone involved with the hiring and supervision of the position you are interested in. Informational interviews are designed:

- To explore careers and clarify your career goals.
- To discover employment opportunities that are not advertised.
- To expand your professional network.
- To build confidence for your job interviews.
- To access the most up-to-date career information.
- To identify your professional strengths and weaknesses.

Be sure that the employer knows from the start that you are looking to gather information, not ask for a job!

Preparing and Mailing a Letter of Introduction

A letter or e-mail is not required before an informational interview, but is recommended for your initial visit with your contact to give him or her a chance to get to know you and what you're seeking. The main purpose of this letter is to obtain an interview. Do not send the same letter to each contact; each letter should be a signed original.

Open each letter with a warm personal statement about why you are writing to this particular person. When appropriate, state who suggested you talk to him/her (if the referral was made by someone whose name the person would recognize). Clearly explain that you would like advice and information. Continue the letter with an explanation of your current situation and what you're attempting to do. Inform your contact where you are in the process. For example, if you are writing to an alumnus in France to gather information about international internships, inform him that you are fluent in French. Mention that you've enclosed a résumé if you have done so. Explain that you would like to set up an interview to get his reaction to your résumé and discuss your plans for marketing yourself, your presentation, and his area of business or professional interest. Please note, all business correspondence should be directed to the organization or company.

Remember you will be talking to professionals with busy schedules; request a brief meeting and be flexible.

Proofread all of your correspondence (bring sample letters to Quick Stops for a CDO counselor review) and save copies. Consider uploading a copy to PioneerLink.

CDO TIPS

- Incorporate Grinnell College into the e-mail subject line when contacting alumni.
- Standard mail may be a good way to get attention, thus skipping gatekeepers and spam filters.
- Use the words advise, counsel, guide or mentor to avoid any confusion.

Suggested Letter of Introduction for Informational Interview

Box 0000
Grinnell College
Grinnell, IA 50112
641-269-0000
pioneer@grinnell.edu



Contact Information
(should look like your résumé contact information)

March 4, 2008

Ms. Kayla Meyers
Planned Parenthood
1488 Wild Oak Drive
Seattle, WA 92301

Dear Ms. Meyers:

In the course of my job search, the director of the Career Development Office suggested I access the names of alumni in order to begin seeking out opportunities in Seattle. This May I will graduate from Grinnell and am hoping to find a human service position working to help women in need. Because of your work with Planned Parenthood, I thought you may have some valuable counsel and advice to share with me.

A great deal of my college career has been spent doing volunteer work. I have volunteered at the local food pantry, the Lutheran Church soup kitchen and have tutored children who live in subsidized housing three days a week. To complement my concentration in Gender and Women's Studies, I did a semester internship with the local shelter for battered women. Through my internship I gained insights into the administrative aspects of operating a shelter as well as the emotional, physical and spiritual needs of our clients.

What I want to do now is to take what I have learned academically and experientially and work to provide direct services to women. I also would like very much to relocate to the Seattle area. I would greatly appreciate hearing any ideas or suggestions you may have which would help me to make this transition. I will contact you in a week to follow up on this letter.

Sincerely,

Your handwritten signature in blue or black ink

Sara Pioneer
(Type your name)

How to Arrange an Informational Interview

Now it is time to arrange the informational interview by telephone or by e-mail, if that is how you have been corresponding. If you call, avoid Monday morning and Friday afternoon. Time your call so the contact has had time to receive your letter and organize information applicable to you, but not enough time to forget it or you. Speak directly to the person and explain the reason you would like to get together or have a phone interview. Make sure when setting up a time that you figure in possible time zone differences.

Remember, people want to help. You should not be intimidated by the thought of calling someone for help. If they are human, and they are, then we can predict three things that are in your favor:

1. They love to talk about themselves.
2. They are proud of their work and love to talk about it.
3. They feel good when they help other people.

Your job is simply to allow them to do these three things. Here is how you make your call ...

Hi, this is Sara Pioneer and I'm calling to follow up on a letter I sent to Ms. Meyers. Is she available?

Please hold while I check her schedule. Yes, Ms. Pioneer, I'm putting you through to Ms. Meyers.

Hi, Ms. Meyers, this is Sara Pioneer calling to follow up on my letter. Is this a good time for you to talk for a few minutes or may I call you back?

This is fine. What can I do for you?

As I wrote in my letter, I'm calling to see if I can arrange a time to speak with you about your career path, your current work, and any advice you might have for me about finding a job or internship. Is this something that you would be willing to do?

Yes, I would enjoy speaking with you.

Thank you! Is there a time that works well for you?

I have a half-hour open next Friday at 10:00 a.m. Will that work?

Yes, that is perfect. Is this the best number to call you next Friday on March 25th?

Let me give you my direct number. It's (641) 555-1010.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to speaking with you next Friday.

Preparation for the Informational Interview

You should always remember that while this meeting is for informational purposes, you are still on display. You will be scrutinized; therefore, you are in a position to make an important and positive impression. You may wish to apply to that same company later as a serious job applicant. Informational interviews are an opportunity to leave a very positive impression without the heavy pressure of an actual interview.

Informational interviews can be very relaxed affairs, and can be used to find out about certain industries and organizations, the future of certain types of business, degrees or training required to do various kinds of work, and how comfortable you feel in certain environments—in short, almost anything you wish to learn. Of course, you need to know what information you are searching for, and you must be brief.

Ask questions that can be easily understood, using open-ended sentences, i.e., “Please describe . . .” “Please tell me about . . .” “How would you . . .” Be specific in what you are asking. “Please tell me about your industry” is too vague. “Please tell me what you like most about your industry” is more specific.

Do not ask for a job! It may force the other person to say no to you. Instead of asking if there is a job available, ask if they can see your skills and abilities fitting in anywhere in the organization. Engaging someone with this question allows you to identify jobs that never get advertised, learn more about the career field, maintain your relationship with this link, and allows them to help you.

The following are the kinds of questions you might ask in the interview. Brainstorm others appropriate to your field of interest and prepare ahead of time.

Occupational Environment

1. How would you outline or describe a typical day at work?
2. How much flexibility are you allowed on your job in terms of dress, hours, vacation, etc.?
3. What portion of your job involves interacting with others, such as co-workers or the public?
4. What do you like or dislike about your job and the industry in general?
5. Is it possible to work full-time and go to graduate school?
6. How has your job affected your lifestyle?
7. From your perspective, what are the problems you see working in this field?

Occupational Requirements and Experience

1. What courses (requirements, electives) were most helpful to you in your college career?
2. How can I get experience in this field while I’m still in college?
3. What do I need to explain to an employer about coming from a liberal arts college?
4. What graduate school connections are important before and after having a job like yours?
5. What are some specific skills I should be trying to obtain to succeed in this field?
6. Is special certification, licensing, or an advanced degree required for your job?

Personal Background/Experience

1. What was your undergraduate major field of study? Have you always been interested in this area of study?
2. What educational program is recommended as preparation? (Distinguish between courses that are desirable and those that are indispensable.)
3. Are any co-curricular activities recommended?
4. Did you have any practical experience or training, other than college, prior to your current job?
5. What is the highest degree you’ve attained?
6. How did you get your current job? If you had to do it over again, would you take the same route?
7. How is your company different from others in the field?
8. If you could change one thing about your job, what would it be?

Outlook

1. What are the opportunities for advancement in this field?
2. What sorts of changes are occurring in your occupation?
3. What is the current and future demand for people in this occupation?
4. Is it easier to do a nationwide search or a regional search for this field?
5. What are possible salary ranges and benefits for someone in your occupation?

Advice

1. Are there any professional groups that I, as an undergraduate, can join that would be beneficial to me?
2. Do you know where I can write for further information, such as pamphlets or books, about this profession?
3. Do you know of any other people in this field who might be willing to talk with me about their experience?
4. How can I get experience in this field while I'm still in college?
5. Do you know of specific websites, publications, or other sources that would post internships or entry-level positions in this field?
6. What is a good starting point for this career path? Is any specific entry point more advantageous?
7. What are the important keywords or buzzwords to include in a résumé or application letter when job hunting in the field?

Geographic Areas

1. Is mass transportation available in your city?
2. What is the best way to find apartments to rent?
3. What are the costs of living in your city?

The Informational Interview

You should approach an informational interview dressed as you would for a regular job interview. That is, dress appropriately. Find out as much about the company as possible beforehand, just as you would for a regular interview. Know what you're going to ask. If you wish, carry notes with you and feel comfortable about taking notes during an informational interview.

Goals for an Informational Interview:

1. Establish rapport with the interviewer. Let him/her know who you are.
2. Be genuine and interested in the interviewer. Get to know him/her.
3. Get advice on your job search. Ask about improving both your approach and your presentation. Be prepared for honest, blunt advice. Don't argue if you disagree on a point; make a mental note to research the tip more later.
4. Obtain information about the job market of interest to you. Ask about latest developments in the field, articles and publications you should read, professional associations you should be familiar with, or websites you might investigate.
5. Get referrals of other people. If you have not received any names by the end of the interview, it's appropriate to ask for other people with whom you might speak.
6. Be remembered favorably by the interviewer. Just before you leave, tell the interviewer that you'll be on a very active job-search campaign and would appreciate being kept in mind in case he/she hears of anything.
7. Ask yourself if you have any specific questions not mentioned above.
8. ALWAYS thank the interviewer and follow up with an e-mail or handwritten thank-you note!!!

Track What You've Learned

Immediately after the informational interview, record all your impressions and any facts acquired during the interview. Go back over your notes to make sure the information is clear. Also, make note of any impressions you have from the conversation. Ask yourself:

- What did I learn from this interview (both positive and negative impressions)?
- How does what I learned fit with my own interests, abilities, goals, values, etc.?
- What more would be helpful to know?
- What plan of action can I make?

GRINNELLINK Reception and Other Networking Events

Grinnell College provides various networking opportunities for students. One of the best ways for Grinnell students to take advantage of alumni expertise in a particular field is through GRINNELLINK, a program designed to help Grinnell College students meet accomplished alumni.

GRINNELLINK receptions are held once a semester at Grinnell College. Traditionally, the sessions are coordinated with the Alumni Council's fall and spring visits to campus and include one-on-one and small group meetings with alumni. Each alumnus's career field and other interests are advertised so students can consider in advance with whom to speak. The reception is an informal social event to better accommodate the larger number of alumni participating.

The sessions provide one-on-one and small group opportunities for students to ask alumni questions about careers, graduate school, and geographical living advice. Some conversations are very in-depth and job-specific while others are more broad-based and exploratory. The GRINNELLINK reception is a casual and very successful way for alumni and students to interact and connect with each other.

All situations or events that allow interaction with others provide the potential for building a network. It is what you do with the contacts you make at these events that will lead you closer to your desired outcome.

It is important to prepare what you will say and to know what your objective is when you attend an event. Come prepared with questions.

Additional Tips

1. Go alone. When attending networking functions, go by yourself or at least communicate to your friends that you should all fan out. Moving about a networking event solo encourages people to approach you and makes it easy to mingle and initiate conversations. It may be more comfortable to have a friend right there with you, but remember that you are there to grow your network, not talk with the people already in your network.
2. Stand near the registration table. After you've registered and put on your nametag, take advantage of the many opportunities to make small talk with new arrivals after they have signed in. These are the couple of minutes when most people stand alone and are interested in someone new to communicate with. "Looks like a good turnout ... " is probably good enough to get a friendly conversation started.
3. Circle and scan. Before diving into an event, try circling the room and checking out the nametags for people or companies you definitely want to make contact with while there.
4. Look for people standing alone. These contacts may be nervous, and your initiative will often endear you to them.

5. Sit beside people you do not know well. If the event is a sit-down affair, do not sit by a friend. You already know that person. You might be sitting there a while, so make sure you are going to be sitting by someone you can form a new relationship with. Plan who you want to sit by, but wait until the last minute to actually sit down so you can keep making new contacts.
6. Stand near the food table. People tend to be more easily accessible around food. As people check out the buffet table, small talk comes more easily. “That looks like a good bagel ...” is as good an opener as any. Once they have their hands full, people often look for a flat surface where they can place their plate and beverage. Take a spot next to them start a conversation. Endorphin levels are higher when you are close to food, which boosts your memory and the chance that you will remember and be remembered.
7. Do not go to functions hungry. Eat before you go so you can focus on the person, not the food.
8. Follow up. An initial meeting or contact with someone does not establish a connection unless there is follow-up of some kind. The follow-up must suggest a genuine interest in developing a mutually supportive relationship. After you meet with new people and gotten their contact information, follow up by making a call or sending an e-mail telling them how much you enjoyed your meeting. This will keep you at the front of their minds.

Always strive to make yourself memorable and distinguish yourself in a positive light. When reconnecting, reference part of your conversation such as a funny anecdote you shared or a personal facet of that person’s life; for example, recommend a book for an upcoming trip, or inquire about the outcome of a child’s soccer game.

Pre-Professional Development Experience Program

In addition to the GRINNELLINK receptions, the Pre-Professional Development Experience Program pairs students with alumni willing to share their experiences with students interested in learning more about particular careers.

Pre-Professional Development Experience Program opportunities are made available during academic breaks, allowing students to connect with alumni in varied locations, such as your hometown or break destination. Students have the chance to spend an entire day shadowing alumni sponsors in their workplaces. Alumni share their experiences since graduating, describing how they got where they are, what has worked for them and what has not, what they enjoy, and what tries their patience. Students have an opportunity to experience “a day in the life” in their chosen fields of interest and to begin setting learning goals to help in the career exploration process. Pre-Professional Development Experience Program opportunities also offer an excellent opportunity to network not only with alumni, but also within the alumni’s organizations.

Some Final Thoughts ...

Finding people who share your interest in work and service is a rewarding experience. These contacts may remain with you throughout your life and provide continued support and guidance when you ask. But you have to ask for their help!

Don’t get discouraged if you’re not immediately satisfied by your results. Not everyone will reciprocate and respond. For whatever reason, they may not see the value in fostering a relationship. Instead, concentrate on new ways and places to network. Grinnellians are intuitive and analytical. Use that skill. What is working? What isn’t?

Someday you will return the favor by providing help to them or another person who seeks to gather information about your career. It is a rich and rewarding circle of people that starts with one phone call. Let us help you make that call!

Remember, we know three things about people: They love to talk about themselves; they are proud of their work; and they enjoy helping other people. Your job in networking is simply to allow each person you meet to do these three things! Have the courage to let someone help you.

PART FIVE:

*Interviewing***Basic Interview Preparation and Questions to Expect****The Interview***Interviews allow you to:*

- State your qualifications.
- Display your strong communication skills.
- Indicate your knowledge of the organization.
- Match your skills to the employer's needs.
- End your job search with an excellent offer.

Interviews result from:

- Excellent letters addressed to persons capable of hiring you, highlighting your skills and achievements and directing the readers to your résumé
- Perfect résumés which create strong interest in you as a candidate and the wish to talk with you about the position.

Before the Interview*Research the organization; know:*

- The function and size of the organization.
- The duties and responsibilities of the position for which you are applying.
- The products or services provided.
- Typical entry-level positions.
- Typical salary ranges for your desired position.
- Geographical locations.
- The latest news on growth or strategic direction.
- Stability of the financial condition or backing.
- Career advancement possibilities.
- Opportunities for training or further education.
- The competing organizations.

Analyze the type of positions for which you're applying:

- What skills are required by employers?

Analyze your own background:

- What skills do you have that relate to your job objective?
- Identify examples from your past experience where you demonstrated those skills.
- Can you tell a story about your use of particular skills or knowledge?
- Concentrate on developing complete answers and remember that a good story has a beginning, middle, and an end.
- Wherever possible, quantify your results. Numbers illustrate your level of responsibility.
- Be prepared to provide examples of when results didn't turn out as you planned. What did you do then?
- Before starting the interview process, identify two or three of your top selling points and determine how you will convey these points during the interview.
- Once employed, keep a personal achievement diary to help document demonstrated performance.

Gain strong and polished interviewing skills:

- Interviews demand communication skills.
- Practice! (Schedule a “mock interview” in the Career Development Office.)
- Include experience and education in your answers.
- Prepare questions you will ask the interviewer.

Attend to details:

- Learn correct name, manner of address (i.e.: Sir, Madam, Ms., Mrs., etc.) of interviewer.
- Plan transportation to arrive early—10 to 15 minutes before scheduled interview time.

Note: Even though many of today’s work environments are “business-casual,” you should still dress formally for an interview. For both men and women, a dark suit (black or navy) is the preferred attire for interviews. Men: If you do not have a matching suit, wear a jacket, nice slacks, and a collared shirt and tie. Women: You should always wear a skirted suit with hose, or a pant suit with socks or hose. Stay away from open-toed shoes or sandals. If in doubt about something, stay on the side of conservatism.

During the Interview

First few minutes:

- Create a strong first impression, be polite and assured.
- Display positive body language.
- Listen to all that the interviewer is, and is not, saying.
- RELAX, smile; enjoy the opportunity to meet and talk with someone in your field of interest.

Main portion of the interview:

- Listen to interviewer’s description of position; match your presentation of skills to interviewer’s needs.
- Prepare to state carefully throughout the interview your career goals and plans.
- Answer questions with complete answers that demonstrate your skills.
- Relate answers to information you researched on the organization.
- Avoid questions on salary and benefits; discuss these issues **after** you are offered the position.
- Contribute information that is important about your experiences.
- Show enthusiasm and interest for the position.

Closing:

- Listen for an indication that the interview is over.
- Ask when the decision is to be made.
- Thank the interviewer for the courtesy and time.
- Ask the interviewer for a business card.

Questions Appropriate for You to Ask:

- Tell me about your opportunities for additional training.
- Are new services or programs planned?
- How are performance reviews given?
- What is the career path for this position?
- What is a typical day like for this job?
- With promotion, are transfer (overseas) opportunities available?

Follow-Up to the Interview:

- Write a thank-you to all those with whom you interviewed; restate your interest in the position and your appreciation for them taking the time to meet with you.
- Call the interviewer just before the decision time and ask if additional information is desired.
- Make sure to have the correct spellings of names and address of those with whom you interviewed, and their titles in the organization.
- THINK POSITIVELY!

How to Answer the Frequently Asked Questions

Interviews are one of the most nerve-racking experiences you will have to go through in your job search. The secret to interviewing is to practice. The more you practice, the easier interviewing will become.

While all jobs and all interviewers are not the same, there are certain questions that are usually asked of candidates during an interview. These questions fall into two categories: the “getting to know you” questions and the “Why do you want this job?” questions. Also, even though companies are looking for different things, most employers look for candidates with the following characteristics:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| ▪ Ability to assume responsibility | ▪ Need for advancement |
| ▪ Excellent written and oral communication | ▪ Academic major |
| ▪ Initiative/drive/resourcefulness | ▪ Defined career goals |
| ▪ Motivation | ▪ GPA |
| ▪ Ability to handle stress | ▪ Leadership |
| ▪ Self-discipline | ▪ Professional appearance |
| ▪ Confidence/self-reliance | ▪ Organizational/planning skill |
| ▪ Interpersonal skills | ▪ Creativity |
| ▪ Flexibility | ▪ Willingness to work hard |
| ▪ Personality | ▪ Job-related experience |
| ▪ Interest in the job | ▪ Entrepreneurial spirit |

There are some questions that employers typically ask. Listed below are 10 of them and some hints on how to answer them.

“Tell me about yourself.”

Answer in about two minutes. Avoid details, don’t ramble. Touch on these areas:

- Education/activities
- Work experiences
- Career interests

“Can you work under pressure?”

Don’t just give a yes or no answer, elaborate. Explain why. Give explicit examples.

“What college did you attend and why?”

This question tries to examine your reasoning processes. The way to tackle this question is to focus on the practical.

“What is your greatest strength?”

Isolate high points in your background. Always back your answer with an example.

“What is your greatest weakness?”

There are three ways to approach this question:

1. If there is a minor part of the job that you lack knowledge, but will gain it quickly, use that. Talk about products, services, history, and people, especially any friends that work there. “But I would love to know more, particularly from your point of view. Do we have time to cover that now?”
2. Put the weakness in the past. You had it once, but you came up with a way to overcome or improve this deficit.
3. Design the answer so that your weakness is ultimately a positive. (Be careful using this one, as it may sound insincere.)

“Where do you want to be in 5 years?”

Employers want to see that you are thinking about the future. A good way to answer is to identify yourself with the profession you want to get into.

“What do you know about our company?”

You cannot answer this without researching the company. If you do your research, just tell them what you have read about their company and mission.

“Why do you want to work here?”

This is another research question. A way to answer this one is to reply with the company’s attributes as you see them. You can also add the advantages of working with them rather than a competitor.

“What qualifications do you have that will make you successful?”

Academics will not do it all. You also have to add relevant experiences that illustrate your strong points as they apply to the company.

“Why should I hire you?”

This is where you should really sell yourself. Highlight areas from your background that relate to the company’s needs. Recap the interviewer’s description of the job, matching it with your skills.

The Career Development Office has a great deal of information on interviewing. Workshops are scheduled during the academic semesters, and you may schedule a “mock interview.”

Employers Ask These Questions*

Traditional Employment Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your short- and long-term goals and objectives?
- What do you see yourself doing five years from now? Ten years from now?
- What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, have you established for yourself for the next ten years?
- When and why did you establish these goals?
- How are you preparing yourself to achieve your goals?
- What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
- What do you expect to be earning in five years?
- Which is more important to you, the money or the type of job?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- Why should I hire you?

- Why did you choose the career for which you are preparing?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?
- What do you consider to be your greatest weakness?
- What do you really want to do in life?
- What do you enjoy doing?
- How would you describe yourself?
- How do you think a friend or professor who knows you well would describe you?
- How have your college experiences prepared you for a career?
- What qualifications do you have that make you think you will be successful?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in an organization like ours?
- In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization?
- What qualities should a successful manager possess?
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- What led you to choose your major field of study?
- Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic capabilities?
- What have you learned from participation in extracurricular activities?
- Describe your most rewarding college experience.
- If you were hiring a graduate for this position, what qualities would you look for?
- Why did you select your college or university?
- What college subject did you like best? Why?
- What college subject did you like least? Why?
- If you could do so, how would you plan your study differently? Why?
- What changes would you make in your college or university? Why?
- Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?
- In what kind of a work environment are you most comfortable?
- How do you work under pressure?
- In what part-time jobs (summer) have you been most interested? Why?
- What do you want to know about our organization?
- What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
- What criteria will you use to evaluate the organization for which you hope to work?
- Why did you seek a position with this organization?
- What do you know about our organization?
- Will you relocate? Does location bother you?
- Are you willing to travel?
- Are you willing to spend at least six months as a trainee?
- Why do you think you might like to live in the community where our organization is located?
- What major problems have you encountered and how did you resolve them?
- What have you learned from your mistakes?

*Source: Quintessential Career: Traditional Employment Interview Questions
(www.quintcareers.com)

Additional Types of Questions

Role-Play Questions

Some interviewers like to ask you to role-play, posing a question such as “Imagine that you were the Director of Marketing and the CEO presented the following problem to you, how would you handle it?” The variations are endless. Remember to think for a moment or two before you begin to answer.

Industry-Specific Questions

Even for entry-level positions, some interviewers will want to get a sense of how much you know about the industry. For example, they might ask a question like, “Can you explain the difference between an investment bank and a commercial bank?”

Current Events Questions

Sometimes in an effort to be conversational or to actually gain information about your political views, an interviewer will ask for your opinion on an upcoming election or a current event of particular interest. Be wary of expressing strong political opinions when you don’t know about the political culture of the organization or the orientation of the person interviewing you. It is best to be brief and to say something nonpartisan. Of course, if you are interviewing for a political position, for example with the Democratic or Republican National Committees, they will certainly want to confirm that your views are in line with those of their party. In that case, you may well have an in-depth discussion.

Case Questions

Generally asked by consulting companies. It is important to remember that the interviewer often doesn’t know the answers to case questions. They are more interested in the way your mind works and how logically you approach the problem.

When an interviewer asks you a case question, you are encouraged to ask your own questions. This accomplishes several objectives. First, it allows you to obtain more information that will make answering the case question much easier. Second, even if you don’t receive additional information, you have shown the interviewer that you are not shy about asking questions under difficult situations. Third, it helps turn the question into a conversation. The best interviews are conversations, not Q&A sessions.

There are three types of case questions: “Guess the Number,” “Brain Teaser,” and “Business Problems.” The two most common are the “Guess the Number” and “Brain Teaser,” with an example such as: “You and I are sitting in an empty room with no telephone, reference books or computers. Can you tell me how many disposable diapers were sold in the United States last year?”

Interviewing Tips

- Interviews are tests of communications. Master communication skills!
- Always look your best! (Remember, the interviewer may assume that this may be the best you’ll ever look!)
- Relax, be polite, and smile.
- Think of the qualities you have; do they fit the employer?
- Research the organization!!
- Be honest.
- You have to sell yourself; no one else will.

Clothing Overview for Women and Men

- Wear a solid-color conservative suit with a coordinated shirt or blouse.
- Apparel should be clean and ironed.
- Wear clean, polished shoes.
- Make sure your hair is clean, well groomed and neat.
- Don't overdo the perfume, makeup, or aftershave.
- Remove facial and body piercings for interview.
- Visible tattoos should be covered.
- Limit your jewelry.
- Make sure to try on your outfit BEFORE the day of the interview.
- Your clothes are your image; check the mirror and see what others see.
- It is better to be overdressed than underdressed.
- If it's too tight or too loose, too long or too short, don't wear it!

Basic Interview Etiquette

<i>DO</i>	<i>DON'T</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be fully prepared. Research the organization thoroughly. Practice interview questions verbally and in writing. ▪ Dress appropriately. ▪ Be on time or slightly early. ▪ Bring extra copies of your résumé and references. ▪ Be ready to fill out application forms. Prepare a list with names, addresses, positions and dates of former employment. ▪ Greet the interviewer with a warm smile. Take the cues from the interviewer. Wait until you are invited to sit down. ▪ Be ready for "Tell me about yourself." Prepare your self-presentation in an orderly, organized manner starting with your educational/experiential background and ending with your goals. Keep it professional! No personal information. ▪ Be prepared for behavior-based interviews with specific examples of your skills. ▪ Let the interviewer lead the interview. Think before you speak and answer the questions specifically. ▪ Ask appropriate questions which reflect that you have prepared for the interview. ▪ Remember to turn off cell phones before going in to an interview. ▪ Sell yourself. Convey maturity, poise, and a positive attitude. Express a defined interest in the position. ▪ Send a thank-you note. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talk too much or prolong the interview. ▪ Tell "hard luck" stories. ▪ Inquire about salary/benefits/vacations until an offer has been made. ▪ Accept an offer on the spot, unless you are very certain. A response in 24 to 48 hours is appropriate. NACE expects employers to provide students with a reasonable amount of time to make a decision about accepting an employment offer.

Travel Expenses

If your interview requires that you incur travel expenses, the interviewer may reimburse you for them. You must discuss this with the interviewer **prior** to the interview. Reimbursement policies vary but may include:

- Hotel accommodations and/or meals
- Transportation and/or parking fees

Be sure to keep all your receipts to verify your costs.

Behavioral-Based Interviewing

Behavior-based interviewing is a style of interviewing that many organizations are using in their hiring process. The basic premise behind behavioral-based interviewing is this: The most accurate predictor of future performance is past performance in a similar situation. It provides a more objective set of facts to make employment decisions than other interviewing methods. Traditional interview questions ask general questions such as “Tell me about yourself.” The process of behavioral-based interviewing is much more probing and works very differently.

Important Points about Behavior-Based Interviewing

Employers predetermine the skills that are necessary for the job for which they are hiring and then ask very pointed questions to determine if the candidate possesses those skills (read the job description). In the interview, your responses need to be specific and detailed. Tell the interviewer about a particular situation that relates to the question, not a general one.

Think about being a **STAR** when you answer questions. Tell stories that demonstrate what you did, rather than simply speaking about what you would do in the future. For example, if you are asked if you have good organizational skills, you should respond by giving concrete, specific examples of what you have done in the past. One way to frame your experience is:

S ... What **SITUATION** have you been in that required you to use your organizational skills?

T ... What specific **TASK** did you address that required your organizational skills in the situation cited above?

A ... What specific **ACTION** did you take to implement your organizational skills in the action cited above?

R ... What was the **RESULT** of your action?

This model is a much more complete and informative answer for an employer—one that provides them with enough information to make a good decision about the level of your specific skills and provides you the opportunity to determine if you’ll be a good fit within the organization.

Always listen carefully to each question, ask for clarification if necessary, and make sure you answer the question completely. Your résumé will serve as a guide when answering questions. Refresh your memory regarding your achievements in the past couple of years.

Sample Behavior-Based Interview Questions:

1. Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
2. Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to extricate yourself from a difficult situation.
3. Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
4. By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments.
5. Describe a time on any job that you held in which you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
6. Give an example of a time, when you had to use your communication skills in order to get an important point across.
7. Give me an example of an important goal, which you had set in the past, and tell me about your success in reaching it.
8. Describe the most significant or creative presentation, which you have had to complete.
9. Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
10. Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).

Other Types of Interviews

Telephone Interviews

What is a Telephone Interview?

Employers use telephone interviews as a method of identifying and recruiting candidates for employment. Telephone interviews are often used to screen candidates in order to narrow the pool of applicants who will be invited for site visit interviews. They are also used as a way to minimize the expenses involved in interviewing out-of-town candidates. While you are actively job searching, it is important to be prepared for a telephone interview on a moment's notice. You never know when a recruiter or a networking contact might call and ask if you have a few minutes to talk. It's also a good idea to keep an Interview Log. This way if you are contacted by a recruiter, you have an idea of which job they are calling about. Do not ask the interviewer what job they are calling about because this will make you look disorganized.

Voice Mail Outgoing Message

Because employers may be contacting you by phone, be sure to have a professional voice mail message on your phone. For example:

"Hi, this is Your Name. Please leave your message at the tone and I will return your call as soon as possible. Thanks."

Scheduling the Telephone Interview

When You Are There to Take the Call

The phone rings and you are there to answer! The recruiter may ask if it is a good time to talk. Some recruiters are calling to ask only a few preliminary questions and others are calling to schedule the full telephone interview. In either situation, respond by saying that you are in the middle of a class (or meeting) and then schedule a convenient time for them to call you or for you to call them. Ask for their name and phone number. The reason for this is so that you can do your research on the employer, feel composed, settled, and have a quiet place to talk and think.

When You Miss the Call

If the recruiter leaves a message for you, **RETURN THE CALL AS SOON AS YOU CAN!** As you are returning the call, keep in mind that the recruiter may have called 10 other people that day about the same job. When you return the call, give your full name and indicate that you are returning the recruiter's call for XXXXX position. If the message was left for you during business hours, but you did not get the message until you returned home at 7:30 pm, then call and leave a voice message that same evening. Make sure to speak slowly and clearly. Leave your full name, the position you are interested in, and **CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE NEXT BUSINESS DAY.**

Preparing for the Telephone Interview

Prepare for the telephone interview as you would any other interview. Read the job description, research the company, review your resume, and practice your response to typical interview questions. Consider dressing as you would for a face-to-face interview. It may help you to project yourself more professionally and confidently if you dress the part. While you are talking on the phone, make sure that your phone battery is charged and not about to run out. Make sure that your roommate is not going to run the vacuum or cause any other distraction. It may help to have your notes, the job description, and your resume in front of you for quick reference. Make certain you have a pen and paper ready if you need to take notes. If the entire hiring committee is on the other end of the conference call, you may want to write down each person's name so you can refer to it later.

Here are other helpful tips:

- Don't smoke, chew gum, or eat.
- Do keep a glass of water handy, in case you need to wet your mouth.
- Smile. Smiling will project a positive image to the listener and will change the tone of your voice.
- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly. Your voice is all you have to form an impression, at this point!
- Use the person's title (Mr. or Ms. and their last name.) Only use a first name if they ask you to.
- Don't interrupt the interviewer.
- Take your time - it's perfectly acceptable to take a moment or two to collect your thoughts.
- Give complete yet concise answers.
- Remember your **goal for this phone interview** is to have a successful interview (convince them that you are a good fit for the position and the company) so that the recruiter will want to then setup a face-to-face interview.

After the Telephone Interview

At the end of the interview, thank the interviewers for their time. **PROMPTLY**, follow-up with a thank-you letter or email. Take some time immediately after the interview to assess your responses, which will help you to prepare for your next interview

Technical Interviews**What is a Technical Interview?**

A technical interview consists of a series of questions designed to test your quantitative knowledge in your major such as programming, algorithms, data structures, circuits, operating systems, etc. and your ability to solve problems.

Types of Technical Interviews

There are two types of technical interviews:

- The first type of technical interview is to determine how well you know advanced technology, software processing, special algorithms, etc. and looks at your broad set of technical skills.
- The second type of interview addresses your problem solving skills. The interviewer is looking at your approach to the problem and how you think through to find a solution (not necessarily the most optimal solution).

Goal of the Technical Interview

To demonstrate to the recruiter what you have learned and how you solve technical problems in your field.

Should Students Expect a Technical Interview?

Students in engineering and technical majors, applying for technical positions, should expect to have technical interviews. A combination of behavioral and technical questions are more common during campus interviews while more technical interview questions are definitely part of second interviews or site interviews.

How Should You Prepare for a Technical Interview?

- Review the job description to know what kind of position you are interviewing for (software, hardware, testing, operating systems, circuits, etc.)
- Review old notes from classes relating to the position you are interviewing for. You do not have to be an expert, just be familiar with it enough to answer questions and show that this is something you know about. For example, if you are interviewing for a C programming position, know C backward and forward.
- Study and practice answering (out loud), the standard interview questions and as many variations of them as possible.
- Be very familiar with your projects, prior technical experiences and coursework.
- Prepare questions to ask at the end of the interview.
- Preparing in advance will increase your confidence during the interview.

What Can You Expect During a Technical Interview?

- The first technical interview can be tough as you may not know what to expect and have not experienced anything like it before.
- Each interview will increase your knowledge and confidence for future interviews so you will continue to improve your interviewing skills.
- You may be asked to remember things from classes that you taken a while ago.
- You may need to come up with solutions to problems on the spot. For instance, one company asks harder and harder questions until you cannot answer the question and then moves on. Some of the questions are ones that the company has not yet solved!

Advice for Technical Interview Success

- Prepare and practice for a variety of questions as most recruiters will ask a combination of behavioral type questions and technical questions.
- Know the basics since many questions will not be specific in domain knowledge but will look at larger principles.
- Prepare your responses to standard behavioral questions in advance as many companies will either ask the same or similar questions. This will be a huge advantage and will allow you to remain confident, respond quickly, and will keep the interview moving onto the next question. This eliminates stopping and taking valuable time thinking through your answers to typical questions that could have been prepared in advance.
- Describe any projects that you have worked on. It's not enough to say that you have done the project but you have to be able to share the details of the project. Enthusiasm and mastery of the project are very critical.
- Show the interviewer that you know how to think through the problem or question by talking through the problem. Do not be afraid to pull out paper and draw diagrams and pictures of what you mean. If there is a white board, use it.
- Recruiters really like to see how you communicate your ideas. Even if you do not know the answer to a problem, try to work through it. It is much better to try to solve a problem than just give up. Ask the recruiter for some help and then try to figure it out on your own from there. Then, ask the recruiter how to solve the problem before moving on.
- Be honest if you do not know how to solve a problem. Be confident but let the interviewer know you are stuck, because they will be able to tell if you are making things up.
- Let the recruiter know what you know and be able to express it fluently.
- Demonstrate the ability to think systematically (step by step). First, find the easiest solution, then gradually improve upon your solution.
- Show enthusiasm and interest in the company and the job you are applying to.
- Do not forget the usual interview requirements of dressing professionally, polishing your shoes, cleaning your fingernails, etc.

What Companies Have Technical Interviews?

Yahoo, Expedia, Amazon, Green Hills Software, Hewlett-Packard, Nvidia, IBM, Harris, Argon ST, AMD (extremely technical), Investment Banks, Microsoft

Legal and Illegal Questions

What's Legal and What You Don't Have to Answer

<i>Legal</i>	<i>You Don't Have to Answer...</i>
Where have you worked before?	With whom do you live?
What duties have you performed on past jobs?	If married, are you expecting to have children soon?
Why are you interested in this organization?	What does your spouse do?
Tell me about yourself.	Were your parents born in this country?
What education have you completed? (If a certain level is required for the job.)	How old are you? (May ask if you are legally old enough to work)
How did you learn about this job?	Have you ever filed for bankruptcy?
Who are people prepared to write or to give reference for you?	Where do you bank?
What is your Social Security number?	Have you ever been arrested? (You may be asked to provide information on criminal convictions)
What is your address and phone number?	How tall are you?
What special qualifications do you have for this job?	How much do you weigh? (But may be asked about height and weight if they are necessary for the performance of the job)
May I answer any questions about the job or organization?	How many children do you have?
What are your greatest strengths and greatest weaknesses?	If you have children, what kinds of daycare arrangements have you made?
Why does this job interest you?	What memberships do you hold in social, religious, and community groups?
Why did you select this particular career?	What is your military service status?
Are you willing to travel, or relocate?	If a veteran, what kind of discharge did you receive?
	Are you physically handicapped?
<i>(Note that questions of this type focus on the job, your specific qualifications for it, and your career goals.)</i>	<i>(Note that these questions delve into your personal life and are not legitimate occupational qualifications.)</i>

Need assistance on how to respond to these scenarios?
Schedule an appointment with a CDO career counselor!
 Call 641-269-4940

Negotiating the Job Offer

Handling the Salary Issue

The topic of salary will probably come up in your selection interviews. Do not bring up the issue of salary and benefits unless the interviewer has already talked to you about the subject or if you are in the negotiating phase.

It is a good idea to have a salary range in mind based on your research prior to the interview. Current salaries for a variety of occupations can be found in:

Occupational Outlook Handbook, U.S. Department of Labor
www.bls.gov/oco/pdf/oco2003.pdf

Accepting the Offer

- Make certain you understand in detail all the terms of the offer and subsequent employment.
- Do not accept an offer knowing that you have no intention of taking the position.
- Notify the Career Development Center of your acceptance.
- Get any final questions answered that might make a difference in your decision.

Postponing the Acceptance or Rejection of an Offer

- The purpose of the postponement is to give you more time to examine the opportunities with other employers.
- If you have other interviews that were scheduled prior to receiving the offer, it is appropriate to keep those appointments regardless of your decision to accept or reject the offer you already have.
- Most employers place time limits on their offers but usually grant extra time for you to make your decision.
- An employer may withdraw an offer any time prior to your acceptance.

Rejecting an Offer

- You do not have to accept an offer, but do not reject one before carefully considering the assignment, growth potential, and salary.
- If you have decided not to accept the offer, notify the employer immediately of your decision to reject the offer.
- Try to be constructive in stating your reasons for dealing the offer.

Why You Didn't Get the Job

We hope to assure you that many factors can prevent you from getting a job. Some of them you have control over, while others you don't. By controlling those you can, and thinking reasonably about those you can't, your chances of taking a healthy perspective toward this whole job-search issue are better. Rejections are part of the process; however, by keeping your self-esteem and not rejecting yourself, your opportunity for success in the next interview is that much greater. Remember, the employer is making a business decision. If you were prepared properly it probably has nothing to do with you personally.

Why do you as an applicant sometimes only receive a thundering silence from prospective employers after your interview has been completed? A Northwestern University survey of 405 well-known firms found these reasons:

- Lack of preparation for the interview—failure to get information about the company and therefore unable to ask intelligent questions.
- Poor personality and manner, lack of poise, poor presentation of self, lack of self-confidence, timidity, hesitant approach, arrogance, and conceit.

- Lack of goals and ambition, does not show interest, uncertain and indecisive about the job in question.
- Lack of enthusiasm and interest, no evidence of initiative.
- Poor personal appearance and careless dress.
- Poor scholastic record without responsible explanation for low grades.
- Inability to express yourself well, poor speech habits.
- Lack of maturity, no leadership potential.
- Lack of interest in the company and type of job offered.
- Lack of extracurricular activities without good reason.
- Attitude of what can you do for me, and so forth.
- Objection to travel, unwilling to relocate to branch offices or plants.

The Thank-You Letter

The thank-you letter is key to effective interview follow-up! Typically sent within 24 hours of the interview, this letter is used to express your appreciation as well as to strengthen your candidacy for the position.

If it is not feasible to send a thank you to everyone you met during the interview process, then send a thank you to your interview 'host' or to the highest ranking manager you met with, and include a request to extend your thanks to the entire group. Your letters can be handwritten (neatly and on professional appearing stationary) or computer-generated. Also, don't forget to send a thank-you to those with whom you have had informational interviews as well as those individuals who serve as your references. Following is a suggested format for thank-you/follow-up letters, and a sample letter can be found in the back of the guide.

Suggested Thank-You Letter/Follow-Up Letter Format

Your street address
City, State Zip
Date



Contact Information
(should look like your résumé contact information)

Name of person you are writing to
Title
Organization or company name
Street address
City, State Zip

Dear Mr./Ms. Blank:

First Paragraph—Express appreciation for being granted the interview and for the courtesies extended to you by the interviewer. Indicate the job for which you were interviewed, where the interview was conducted, and the date. Perhaps you will want to recall some pleasant incident that took place during the interview.

Second Paragraph—Reaffirm your interest in the job or position for which you were interviewed. Briefly cover your reasons for wanting this type of work. Indicate that you are available for further interviewing at their convenience.

Sincerely,

Your handwritten signature—blue or black ink

Type your name

PART SIX:

A Final Word

Congratulations! You are now well on the way to starting and enjoying a successful career. As you progress through the various stages, keep in mind that you may very well encounter obstacles from time-to-time. Things will not always be easy, but with the combination of your Grinnell College education AND the career development tools you will develop through this guide and visiting the Career Development Office, you will have what it takes to overcome anything that comes your way. Just remember that the journey itself is a large part of career development—it truly is a life-long process. Below are a few statistics for you to consider as you begin planning you own career path. Good luck!

How Employers Rate Candidates

Employers rate the importance of these candidate qualities:

Communication Skills	4.6
Strong work ethic	4.5
Teamwork skills (works well with others)	4.5
Initiative	4.4
Analytical skills	4.3
Computer skills	4.3
Flexibility/adaptability	4.3
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	4.3
Problem-solving skills	4.3
Technical skills	4.2
Detail-oriented	4.1
Organizational skills	4.0
Self-confidence	4.0
Leadership skills	3.9
Tactfulness	3.8
Friendly/outgoing personality	3.7
Creativity	3.6
Strategic planning skills	3.4
Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker	3.2
Sense of humor	3.0

(5-point scale, where 1=not important, 2=not very important; 3=somewhat important; 4=very important, and 5=extremely important)

Employer hiring preferences relative to experience, by percent of respondents:

I prefer to hire candidates with relevant work experience	76.3%
I prefer to hire candidates with any type of work experience (doesn't matter if it is relevant or not, just some type of experience)	18.9%
Work experience doesn't typically factor into my decision when hiring a new college graduate	2.6%
Other	2.2%

Employers rate the influence of attributes of equal candidates:

Major	4.1
Has held leadership position	4.0
GPA (3.0 or higher)	3.7
Has been involved in extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, student government, etc.)	3.6
School attended	3.1
Has done volunteer work	3.0

(5-point scale, where 1=no influence at all, 2=not much influence, 3=somewhat of an influence, 4=very much influence, 5=extreme influence)

NACE Research: Job Outlook 2009
National Association of Colleges and Employers

Congratulations!
 You are now ready to begin your journey towards an eventful and fulfilling career. Remember ... this is only the beginning.
Good luck!

Acknowledgements

The Job Search Handbook of Minnesota State University, Mankato
 through the kind permission of Pamela Weller-Dengel,
 Director, Career Development Center

The Liberal Arts Career Guide from the University of Pittsburgh
 through the kind permission of Marvin Roth,
 Director, Career Development

A Career Guide for Liberal Arts Students from Miami (OH) University
 through the kind permission of Jennifer L. McLaughlin,
 Assistant Director, Office of Career Services

PART SEVEN:

Sample Résumés and Application Letters

Computer Science Major Résumé	70
Philosophy Major Résumé.....	71
Economics Major Résumé (applying for Credit Analyst position)	72
Art History Major Résumé (applying for Museum Curator position).....	73
Post-Graduate School Résumé	74
Sample Internship Application Letter.....	76
Sample Employment Application Letter	77
Sample Thank-You Letter.....	78
Sample Reference Page	79

Suggested Computer Science Major Résumé

Loretta Lynn

101 Plum Street • Grinnell, IA 50112 • 507-555-0712 • loretta.lynn@gmail.com

OBJECTIVE	Full-time position using Computer Science and customer service experience	
EDUCATION	Bachelor of Arts, Computer Science Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA Concentration: Technological Studies Grinnell Trustees Scholarship Mount Vernon Community Trust Scholarship	May 2008 G.P.A.: 3.56 2004-2008 2004-2008
RELEVANT COURSEWORK	Fundamentals of Computer Science, Computer Organization and Architecture, Software Design, E-Commerce, Linear Algebra, Combinatorics, Electronics	
RELATED EXPERIENCE	Teaching Assistant and Tutor Grinnell College, Computer Science Dept, Grinnell, IA • Grade laboratory work and programming assignments • Provide help for students in introductory computer science courses	2002
	Researcher and Computer Programmer Kenyon College, Economics Dept, Gambier, OH • Researched funeral markets, including Anti-trust issues • Conceived, designed, and wrote programs in ArcView • Assisted in writing tutorial for class on ArcView • Attended ArcView summer workshop at Denison University	1998-2001
	Customer Hosting Equipment Specialist SBC Communications, Inc., San Antonio, TX • Maintained database, created queries and reports, configured servers, and compiled quotes for hosting equipment, including hardware and services from Compaq, Cisco, HP, and IBM • Maintained data in billing system • Researched and implemented process to backup quoting database • Processed Compaq pricing rebates via the web	2001
	Technical Assistant Kenyon College, Psychology Dept, Gambier, OH • Prepared laboratory for sensory research • Equipped Scantron and wrote tutorial for use of Scantron equipment	2000
TECHNICAL SKILLS	Platforms: Linux/Unix, mM/PC, Apple/Mac Languages: Java, C, C++, Pascal, HTML, Scheme, Assembly, and the Unified Modeling Language Applications: Microsoft Access Database, ArcView, Maple, Microsoft Office, ScanBook, JD Edwards, Emacs	
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE	Tutor Mount Vernon Alternative Center, Mount Vernon, OH • Tutored emotionally disturbed children, ages 9-14, helping with reading, writing and science	2002
	Tutor Grinnell Activities Tutoring and Enrichment Service, Grinnell, IA	2000

Suggested Philosophy Major Résumé

Juanita Pioneer

Grinnell College • P.O. Box 0000 Grinnell, IA 50112 • Phone: 888.888.8888 • Cell: 999.999.9999 • pioneer@grinnell.edu

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, expected 2008

- **Relevant Coursework:** Mentored Advanced Project on Film Directing, Film Criticism and Culture, The Making of a Documentary, Dramatic Literature I and II, Lighting and Stage Craft

Summer Film Course: Cinematography Workshop, Tisch School of the Arts, New York, NY, Summer 2006

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Film Maker, Mentored Advanced Project, Grinnell Theatre Department, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, Fall 2006

- Proposed and secured funding for a 12-week, four-credit project of filming Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot*
- Researched the film history of the play
- Collaborated with a faculty mentor on casting and directing a 75-minute, 16-mm film
- Presented the project and the film to over 200 Grinnell community members

Production Intern, *The Maze* project, Red Hour Films, Los Angeles, CA, Summer 2006

- Executed script distribution plans among a cast and crew of 50 members
- Recorded changes in production schedule and updated relevant staff
- Regulated incoming correspondence regarding the production

Award-Winning Director, Titular Head Short Film Festival, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, Spring 2006

- Wrote, filmed, and edited *Master Geist III: Hegel vs. Bagel*, a 15-minute video film
- Won Best Film and Best Music Awards of the Year

LEADERSHIP AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Active Member, Grinnell Film Committee, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, 2004 – present

- Assisted hosting annual Grinnell Independent Film Festival
- Coordinated Academy Awards Night and Special Dinner with the Stars Night
- Promote weekly screening schedule with posters and announcements

Fundraiser, La Vista Social Awareness Group, Austin, TX, 2004 – present

- Appealed and presented workshops on refugee rights to an audience of over 50 people
- Directed *Chan Chan*, a fun and informative documentary film
- Appeal to potential sponsors via on-going airmails and e-mails

Guitar Player, Mad Muffin rock band, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, 2005 – present

- Practice and perform original songs weekly with five band members at Bob's Underground Café
- Design posters and record performances

Editor, The Grinnell Underground Magazine (GUM), Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, 2004 – 2005

- Participated in designing yearly publishing plan
- Coordinated schedules and meetings with members of the editorial staff
- Wrote and edited eight published articles

SKILLS

Camera: Video, 16 mm, 35 mm, and Super 35 mm

Editing: Adobe Premiere Elements, Roxio Video Wave Professional

Post Production Processes: Automatic Dialogue Replacement, Soundtracking, Image Touching

Languages: Spanish (advanced)

Suggested Economics Major Résumé applying for Credit Analyst position

Linus Van Pelt

P.O. Box 0000 Grinnell College • Grinnell, Iowa 50112 • (641) 269-0000 • vanpelt@grinnell.edu

OBJECTIVE:

Credit Analyst position with utilizing skills in quantitative analysis, research, and mathematics

EDUCATION:

Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Concentration in German May 2008
Grinnell College—Grinnell, Iowa

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION:

Study Abroad in Berlin, Germany Spring 2006
▪ 14-week courses in literature, music and history completed entirely in German

PUBLICATION:

“Analysis of Cotton Market in Western Europe from 1960’s to Present”
Independent Research Project—Grinnell College, Fall Semester 2001
<http://www.europecotton.com/publications.htm#easteuropecotton>

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE:

Credit Analyst Intern, *Wells Fargo*—Des Moines, Iowa 1/08–5/08
▪ Analyzed Fortune 500 companies and produced detailed reports covering industry structure and financial positions used by target companies in decision making; gained a basic knowledge of credit facility structure and treasury management products used by corporations

Intern, *Think-Tank*—Berlin, Germany 1/06–5/06
▪ Participated in the research and evaluation of European Union on a team; researched and published papers under supervision on the International Monetary Fund (All work done in German)

RELATED EXPERIENCE:

Treasurer, *Grinnell Entrepreneurs*—Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa 9/04–12/05
▪ Managed budget and planned expenses for all activities of the organization; worked closely with other members of the cabinet and successfully recruited new members

OTHER EXPERIENCE:

Buddy, *Community Services Center*—Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA 9/04–12/05
▪ Acted as mentor for and spent three hours every week with three 9-year-old children from the community; aided children with disabilities in the local community to improve reading skills

Independent Web Designer, Grinnell, Iowa 6/04–12/05
▪ Attracted clients through personal network, discussed with clients their needs and created websites that helped achieve clients’ business goals

ACTIVITIES:

Tap Dancer, *Dance Troupe*—Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa 9/04–present
Team Member, *Men’s Tennis Team*—Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa 9/04–present
▪ Undefeated at number 2 singles position
▪ Midwest Conference team champions 1999–2001

SKILLS:

Computer: DreamWeaver, PageMaker, Adobe, Photoshop, Visual Basic, Windows XP/Vista, Minitab, SPSS for Windows, C++
Languages: German, Russian, and English

Suggested Art History Major Résumé applying for Museum Curator position

Nicole Pioneer

P.O. Box 0000, Grinnell St.
Grinnell, IA 50112

(641) 269-0000
pioneer@grinnell.edu

Objective

To obtain a position as Museum Curator

Education

Bachelor of Arts, Art History

May 2008

Cumulative GPA: 3.3; Major GPA: 3.6

Grinnell College

Grinnell, IA

Study Abroad, *London and Florence—Arts in Context*

England and Italy

Spring 2006

- Spent eight weeks in each city studying art, architecture, literature, and theater
- Participated in two field trips to Rome and Siena, visiting galleries, museums, and churches
- Stayed with an Italian family and learned intensive Italian for eight weeks
- Organized a group of six students to travel to five major European cities for ten days

Related Coursework

Roman Art and Archeology, Italian Renaissance, Northern Renaissance, Romanticism and Realism, Impressionism and Post Impressionism, Modern Art Since 1900, Art Since 1945, Physiological Psychology

Related Experience

Intern

Falconer Gallery, Grinnell College

Fall 2006

Grinnell, IA

- Researched, compiled, and edited a 10-page brochure on Goya's prints titled Disasters of War
- Composed a 30-page scholarly paper on Goya's prints and presented paper to Art Department
- Maintained a daily journal and met regularly with faculty sponsor

Student Researcher

Art Department, Grinnell College

Spring 2005

Grinnell, IA

- Systematically explored materials and methods of primary art historical research and museum practice by engaging in student-run art exhibition titled *The Rural Life of Johnny Depp*
- Collaborated with two researchers in designing exhibition space, brochures, and catalogs using art objects from the Grinnell College Art Collection and Iowa State University Art Collection
- Presented project to over 300 Grinnell community members

Leadership and Community Service

Founder and Organizer

Grinnell Art Therapy (G.A.T)

2004 – present

Grinnell, IA

- Host biweekly campus-wide study breaks in which students are encouraged to explore various media (painting, sculpting, ceramic, graphic)
- Coordinate and consult with art and psychology professors in topics and resources
- Organize bimonthly exhibitions of student artworks to raise awareness and funds

Camp Counselor

Arts for the Speech Challenged Group

2005 – 2006

Boston, MA

- Assisted with three two-week summer camps for youth with speech impairments
- Mentored and corresponded with one ten-year-old girl in her art education for two summers

Skills

Languages: American Sign Language (fluent), French (proficient), Italian (conversational)

Computer: Microsoft Office, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop

Studio Art: Painting, drawing, sketching, photography

Suggested Post-Graduate Résumé

Bruce C. Campbell

1234 James Street, St. Paul, MN 56789 (651) 555-8907 bruce.campbell@gmail.com

Summary of Qualifications

- Experience providing student affairs services to student populations
- Graduate education in counseling and college student affairs
- Extensive research experience in an academic setting
- Strong oral and written communication skills
- Presentation skills including development and delivery
- Confident in independent and team-oriented tasks

Education

Master of Arts Degree, Counseling & Student Personnel Minnesota State University, Mankato – Mankato, MN Thesis – Factors in Retention of First-Year College Students	May 2010 G.P.A. 3.8
Bachelor of Arts Degree, Psychology Grinnell College – Grinnell, IA	May 2008 G.P.A. 3.3

Related Experience

Academic Advisor (Intern) September 2009-May 2010
Advising Center, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN

- Conducted individual and small group academic advising sessions with students from various majors
- Handled “walk-in” advising issues and college-related problems
- Assisted with planning and implementation of New Student Orientation programs

Graduate Assistant September 2008-May 2010
Career Development Center, Minnesota State University, Mankato, Mankato, MN

- Conducted behavioral stress management sessions under the supervision of a psychologist in the topics of deep breathing, muscle relaxation, visualization, and time management
- Guided students in resume development, job search strategies, interviewing skills and career exploration
- Developed and conducted monthly workshops on career-related topics
- Designed and gave presentations on various academic and career topics requested by instructors for individual classes
- Assisted with event planning and marketing; developed newspaper ads, posters, and online marketing to promote on- and off-campus events

Career Peer Advisor August 2006-May 2008
Career Development Office, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA

- Presented during study breaks and other outreach presentations in the residence halls
- Served as Ambassador/Host for recruiters and alumni
- Attended and conducted career development sessions
- Attended and wrote summaries for Recruiter Info Sessions and Career Hours
- Greeted and assisted students with office resources in library and technology center
- Updated PowerPoint presentations

Bruce C. Campbell

(page 2)

Research Activities

Research Team Member September 2009-May 2010

Department of Counseling & Student Personnel, Mankato, MN

- Participated in discussion regarding research development and implementation
- Independently developed an original research idea and methodology
- Served as a mentor for undergraduate and graduate students in the pursuit of research

Workforce Assistant/Intern Summer 2008

Iowa Workforce Development Center, Newton, IA

- Assisted clients with claims for unemployment insurance
- Registered applicants for job search assistance
- Conducted job seeking classes through the re-employment services program and for other community agencies
- Assisted with gathering unemployment data for the local area

Independent Researcher February 2003-March 2004

Mentored Advanced Project, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA

- Completed 20-page paper examining connection of liberal arts majors with various careers
- Compiled 10-page annotated bibliography, covering 24 articles and books
- Presented findings in PowerPoint format at public forum to an audience of 40 people including psychology faculty, college staff, and members of the community
- Assisted in creation and distribution of publication materials to present data to public

Other Experience

Assistant Manager/Server/Server Assistant August 2004-present

Grinnell Coffee Company, Grinnell, IA

- Maintained superior restaurant functioning; managed finances
- Provided quality service and hospitality to restaurant clientele

Graduate Assistant August 2008-May 2009

Learning Center, Minnesota State University, Mankato, MN

- Developed and conducted study skills workshops in time management, note-taking, text reading, and test anxiety
- Completed a master's-level national tutor training program and mentored undergraduate tutors in tutoring skills
- Provided tutoring in Statistics, Psychology, Biology, and English

Additional Skills

- Fluent in Spanish
- Proficient in both Windows and Macintosh computer platforms
- Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Knowledge of audio and video editing software

Sample Internship Application Letter

Juanita Pioneer

Grinnell College • P.O. Box 0000 Grinnell, IA 50112 • Phone: 888.888.8888 • Cell: 999.999.9999 • pioneer@grinnell.edu

January 9, 2007

Mr. Andy Wachowski
The STARS Program Administrator
Winnie Bros. Entertainment
Time Winnie, Inc.
New York, NY 10019-8016

Dear Mr. Wachowski,

An ardent movie fan myself, I immensely enjoy all Winnie Bros. productions. Through a Grinnell alumnus I learned that the corporation also has excellent internship programs, such as the Students Taking a Right Step (STARS) program. Confident with my experience and my enthusiasm, I would like to apply for a STARS internship position to be a part of this community for the summer of 2007.

As you see from my resume, I have been acquainting myself with many of the film-making processes through academic courses as well as hands-on experience. I have explored what Grinnell College and its liberal arts curriculum has to offer, such as theater classes on dramatic literature and stage design. Through the Mentored Advanced Project, which allows students to design a new class that best suits their interest, I also took the initiative in creating a film-making course, combining my knowledge in the theater and film disciplines. A summer course at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts further exposed me to the more technical aspects of cinematography. I am excited to incorporate these skills in the STARS program.

My educational preparation, combined with a passion for filmmaking, earned me a competitive internship position in Ben Stella's production company Red Hour Films during the summer of 2006. I worked as part of the traffic regulation team on *The Maze*, a coming-of-age romantic thriller about two mad Web cryptographers trying to take over the world's e-communication during Christmas (released in winter 2006 by Paramount Pictures in association with VH7). Through this professional experience with a seasoned director/producer, I gained substantial insights into various aspects of real life film production while assisting with hands-on tasks. In addition, I acquired the skills vital to surviving in high stress, highly interdependent environments such as crisis management, resource regulation, and providing last minute accommodations. These experiences will help me participate successfully in the STARS program.

I believe with my experiences and the desire to learn from and thrive on challenges, I will make the best out of this prestigious opportunity, as well as contribute significantly to the STARS team. Please do not hesitate to contact me for more information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Juanita Pioneer

Encl: Résumé

Suggested Application Letter

Vincent Vega

444 8th Street
Grinnell, IA 50112
(641) 555.1212
vvega@grinnell.edu

March 21, 2009

Mr. Fred Rogers, Marketing Manager
Creativity Plus Publishing Inc.
555 South Avenue
Burnsville, MN 55337

Dear Mr. Rogers:

This May, I am graduating with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English and am very enthusiastic about entering the marketing field. Creativity Plus Publishing attracted my attention through the article on your company's expansion in the South American and Asian markets in a recent edition of *Publishing Forum*. When I found out about your Public Relations and Marketing Associate position through PioneerLink, I was very excited because I meet or exceed all of your qualifications and would bring a number of additional valuable skills to your organization.

Through my educational background, I've developed strong analytical and presentation skills. During my community and campus involvement experiences with the Grinnell Historical Museum and the Scarlet & Black newspaper, I demonstrated my writing skills by developing marketing materials and press releases. In my internship at Pioneer Publishing, I promoted and marketed a weekly entertainment publication through print ads and promotional events. In addition, my work experience in the Grinnell College Career Development Office has allowed me to enhance my research and interpersonal skills and allowed me to work with people from diverse cultural and social backgrounds. My dedication to school, work and the community are indicative of my commitment to hard work and excellent time management.

I am confident that I could both contribute and learn a great deal about the public relations and marketing fields working with Creativity Plus Publishing. Thank you for your consideration, and I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you about my qualifications at a mutually convenient time.

Sincerely,

Vincent Vega

Enclosure: Résumé

Suggested Thank-You Letter

George Costanza

555 20th Street
Grinnell, IA 50112
(641) 555.1212
george.costanza@grinnell.edu

October 19, 2008

Joan Nagle
Technical Design Group Director
Graphix Design Systems Inc.
81796 Gulick Road
Charlotte, NC 28235

Dear Ms. Nagle:

I want to thank you for interviewing me on October 18, 2008 for the Associate Designer position. I enjoyed meeting you and learning more about your research and design work, as well as our discussion regarding our passion for art.

The interview strengthened my enthusiasm for the position and my interest in working for Graphix. I believe my education and cooperative education experiences fit nicely with the job requirements, and I am certain I could make a significant contribution to your firm.

I would like to reiterate my strong interest in the Associate Designer position and in working with you and your staff. You provide the kind of opportunity I seek. Please call me at the telephone number listed above if I can provide you with any additional information.

Again, thank you for the interview and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

George Costanza

Suggested Reference Page

Terrance C. Dominick

1717 Pleasant View • Grinnell, IA 50112 • (641) 555-9090 • dominick@grinnell.edu

References:

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Sandy Keeling
Program Coordinator
AFL-CIO LETC WIA Dislocated Workers Program
Wisconsin Rapids Job Center
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Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495
(715) 422-4000
keeling@wia.org

