

MASTER'S STUDENT
CAREER
GUIDE

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
2010 – 2011

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

Master's Student

CAREER GUIDE

Not quite sure how to set up an **appointment** at Career Services?
Turn to page 3.

Have a **phone interview** coming up soon?
Turn to page 14.

Need to know what goes in a **cover letter**?
Turn to page 12.

Don't have a **resume**, but need to put one together fast?
Turn to page 4.

Wondering when **employers** are will be visiting campus?
Turn to page 17.

Wish you knew how to talk to important **alumni**?
Turn to page 18.

Thinking about developing your **online presence**?
Turn to page 19.

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Greetings, Master's Students!

I'm delighted to welcome you to the Master's Student Career Guide, developed by Career Services here at Syracuse University. Inside you will find tips and resources for master's students looking for internships and jobs. If you are seeking an academic position, be sure to visit our website at careerservices.syr.edu for resources relating to the academic job search.

Career Services
Suite 235
Schine Student Center
Syracuse University

careerservices.syr.edu
phone (315) 443-3616

I invite you to call Career Services at (315) 443-3616 to set up a strategy consultation on your job search. We can help you

refine your career goals, improve your application materials, expand your network, locate resources and practice interviewing. We look forward to getting to know you!



Best regards,
Rosanne Ecker, Ph.D.
Associate Director
Counseling and Graduate
Student Career Services

**Syracuse University
Career Guide**

Diana Ecker
Editor

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Cover Design

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Over the years, the staff of Career Services has found that many students benefit from exploring these areas as they progress through graduate study and look toward the future.

Learning How to Find a Job

Career Services maintains a wealth of online resources, including OrangeLink, a job, internship and mentor database for SU students. We can advise you on how to use these resources to research careers and explore opportunities. We can also help you prepare for job and internship interviews. We host a large on-campus recruiting program for employers to interview SU students for internships and entry-level career opportunities.

Talking to Alumni

Career Services helps you get in touch with alumni who work in a variety of fields, so that you can get advice and information about what those fields are like. Attending career and internship fairs on campus is also a great way to network with people in different industries.

Exploring Syracuse

Graduate school can be very demanding! Be sure to take some time to unwind and explore the area. Check out great local restaurants, beautiful parks, museums and cultural events.

Joining LinkedIn

Visit LinkedIn.com to set up a professional profile, join groups that match your interests, and reach out to Syracuse University Alumni. Before you write your own profile, browse other profiles to see what approaches you think work the best.

Hands-On Experience

We strongly encourage you to explore internships and other opportunities that will give you hands-on experience in areas that interest you. Not only can you do internships during the summer, but at SU, you can do an internship during the academic year. Employers love to see experience on your resume!

Building Leadership Skills

Consider exploring leadership opportunities and taking advantage of chances to serve on committees, coordinate panels or events, and take on student leadership roles in your field.

Understanding New Cultures

If you are an American student, get to know your classmates from other countries! Check out the wonderful variety of festivals and celebrations on campus highlighting traditions from around the world. If you are an international student, make friends with some American classmates and explore their culture and traditions.

Asking for Help

The staff of Career Services, as well as career development offices in the schools and colleges across campus, are here to help you make the most of your time at SU and beyond. Don't hesitate to come in and meet us - no question is too large or too small to ask.

VISITING CAREER SERVICES

I'M A MASTER'S STUDENT.

WHAT DOES CAREER SERVICES HAVE FOR ME?

Career Services serves graduate students from every school and college at Syracuse University. You can come to Career Services to develop or refine your resume, prepare for an interview, learn how to network with alumni, explore the possibility of additional graduate study, or discuss any questions you have about your future.

HOW CAN I MEET WITH A STAFF MEMBER?

15-Minute Drop-Ins

We hold 15-Minute Drop-In Sessions Monday through Friday. Check our website at careerservices.syr.edu for the exact times, as they are different for each day. For 15-Minute Drop-Ins, you don't need an appointment. Just stop by during the designated time! Sign in on the clipboard at the front desk. Students are then seen in the order in which they signed up. 15-Minute Drop-Ins are ideal for resume reviews, cover letter reviews, an orientation to the services of the office, or any question that can't wait.

Appointments

To schedule an appointment, stop by our office or call the front desk at (315) 443-3616. During the busiest times of the year, keep in mind that it may take one to two weeks before a time that fits your schedule will be available. Appointments generally last about 50 minutes, and are ideal for conversations about focusing on a career path or addressing any type of extended question or concern.

You can also set up a phone appointment during the summer if you are not in the Syracuse area (yes, we stay open during the summer!).

And remember....

When you want feedback on a resume, cover letter, or personal statement, bring two printed copies when you come in: one for you and one for the Career Services staff member.

WHICH OFFICE(S) SHOULD I USE?

Syracuse University has a wealth of career development resources for students.

If you have a career office in your school or college, pay them a visit! Every career office on campus has unique resources and staff that specialize in working with students from that school or college.

Many career offices in SU's schools and colleges also send out regular e-mail messages with advice, events, and tips of special interest to students in that college.

Every month, staff from career offices across campus get together to share ideas and resources, ensuring that we stay in touch with each other.

Students often find that they enjoy being able to draw on the resources of both their school or college's career office and Career Services in the Schine Student Center.

So when students ask us which office they should go to, we say: Both!

WRITING A RESUME

Writing a resume is not easy, and making sure it stands out to an employer is even more challenging. You've got just a few seconds to catch your readers' attention and show them why you're a terrific fit for their organization and the job or internship you're applying for.

Starting from scratch? **NOT A PROBLEM!**

Step One: Make a Giant List

Brainstorm about jobs that you've held, volunteering, internships, and extracurricular activities. Worked in a family business? Started your own business? What about big projects for classes? (Yes, they count!) Write down whatever you can remember about what you did in these roles, especially the things that stand out to you. This is the time to gather all of your experiences in one place.

Step Two: Read a Job Description

Employers want candidates who will be a good fit. But how can you figure out what an employer is looking for? Easy! Check the job description. If you don't have a specific job in mind, find a job description you like. Underline or highlight key points. What is the employer asking for? What skills and experience are important to them?

Step Three: Strategize

Ultimately, a resume is designed to highlight the match between your experience and skills and the employer's needs. Once you figure out which of your experiences and skills the employer is looking for, you're halfway there — because you know which experiences and skills you want to highlight in your resume.

Already have a resume? **MAKE IT BETTER!**

Write Better Headings

Make the most of your headings. Don't use a generic heading like "Experience" when you can use a more specific heading ("Communications Experience," "Administrative Experience"), especially one that relates to the job or internship you want.

Prioritize!

Give the most important and relevant information more space, and put it closer to the top of the page, where it will be noticed first.

Double-Check Descriptions

Write detailed descriptions explaining what you did in internships, jobs, and activities. Start each line with a verb (managed, coordinated, collaborated...). Quantify your accomplishments whenever possible.

Fix the Formatting

Make sure you're using bold, italics, font size and spacing to consistently highlight employers, institutions, and job titles in a way that emphasizes your most relevant experience.

Delete Distractions

Consider removing information and experience that doesn't relate to the position.

BASIC RESUME DESIGN TIPS

- Approach Microsoft Word templates with caution. People who see a lot of resumes will recognize them.
- If you need to create some space between lines but are squeezed for room, one trick is to highlight a line space and then just make the font size smaller.
- A good starting place for margins is .7 inches on all sides. If you're using Times New Roman, try 11-point font. You can always adjust as needed.

ADVANCED DESIGN TIPS

- If you know how to use design software (like Adobe InDesign) and are in a creative field, design an eye-catching original resume.
- Be careful with color. Keep in mind that the recipient may have a grayscale printer.
- Whether you use Word or design software, consider saving in PDF format to ensure that your resume looks unchanged when opened.

RESUME STRATEGIES

FOR AMERICAN-STYLE RESUMES

Some elements of resumes that are essential or useful in other countries are not necessary for a resume in the United States. If you are applying for a co-op, job, or internship in the U.S., consider the following:

- Remove **personal information**, including marital status, identification number, your parents' names, and your date of birth.
- Many U.S. employers will not understand **aggregate grades**. Try to find another way to describe your undergraduate academic performance (i.e., "Ranked 5 out of 100 students" or "Graduated with honors").
- You do not need to include **declarations** of any kind on the resume.
- Visible **charts and tables** can be distracting. If you use a table to organize information on your resume, make sure the lines are not visible.
- It is not grammatically correct to use **all capital letters** to draw attention to a word or name. Use capital letters only to begin proper nouns (company names, countries, etc.).
- The way in which **addresses** are written may vary from country to country. For example, the American format does not typically include dashes; see the sample resumes in this guide for examples.
- If you are currently living in the U.S. and applying for jobs or internships here, there is no need to write **U.S. or U.S.A.** For phone numbers, there is no need to include an international calling code prefix.

APPLYING FOR ACADEMIC JOBS?

If you are applying to teach at a college or university, you will find a wealth of helpful resources at the Career Services website: careerservices.syr.edu. In the section for PhD students, you will find tips, links, guidelines and a video library. These resources will help you develop application materials that are uniquely suited for applying for academic positions. You can also contact Career Services to set up an appointment; be sure to specify that you are applying for academic jobs when you call.

STRENGTHEN YOUR RESUME

There are a number of common elements that students often include on graduate students' resumes that are not necessary, or can be improved. These tips will help you strengthen the power of your resume and help an employer focus on your strengths:

- Delete **references** from your resume. References can be sent separately as needed. There is also no need to write "references available on request," because that is assumed.
- It is common to want to include **all of your academic projects**. However, review the list carefully. Projects that do not relate to the job to which you are applying can often be deleted.
- For the projects you decide to include, describe **your contributions and accomplishments** instead of focusing on the project itself.
- If you have a long list of **extra-curricular activities**, choose the ones that will resonate the most with an employer. For the ones that you include, make sure that the descriptions of your role are clear.
- You may want to include a brief and specific **objective**. It should clearly state what type of position you are looking for, such as co-op, internship, or full time. It should also clearly state the area, such as software development or product design. Finally, it should indicate briefly the skills and qualities you would contribute to the organization.

BEFORE

There are a lot of ways this resume could be stronger! This student is applying for a position related to consulting and technology. Read through the comments for ideas on how to improve this resume.

Avery Student
100 Oak Street, Syracuse, NY 13244
(315) 555-1234 astudent@syr.edu

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a challenging position that utilizes my skills and experiences.

FORMATTING
What about bold? Ariel's name should be bold — and bigger! What else could be bold on this resume?

EDUCATION

Syracuse University, The iSchool, Syracuse, NY
M.S., Information Management, GPA: 4.0
Specialization: Project Management and Resource Planning

PRIORITIES
Is this objective contributing any unique value, or is it just stating the obvious?

University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
College of Social & Behavioral Sciences
B.A., Economics, Major GPA: 3.45

HEADING
How could this heading be more focused?

EXPERIENCE

Lifeguard (Summer 200x)
Dewitt Country Club, Dewitt, NY
Supervised children and adults
Maintained pool safety

PRIORITIES
The lifeguarding experience isn't relevant here. And starting off with it says it's more important than the internships!

iConsult, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY
IT Consultant, October 20xx to present
Met with clients to understand their needs
Generated solutions and communicated them to clients

DESCRIPTIONS
These bullet points in this resume are a good start — but more details would help.

Center for Health and Behavior, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY
Assistant Computer Consultant, August 20xx to present
Answered computer questions
Performed upgrades and other technical services as needed

FORMATTING
The space between sections should not be the same as the spaces between items within a section.

SUNY Empire State College, Syracuse, NY
Assistant Recruitment Specialist, September 20xx to September 20xx
Worked at headquarters
Focused on managing student data
Innovated creative solutions

ACTIVITIES AND AWARDS

Project Management Institute
iSchool Graduate Organization
iSchool Upstate IT Scholarship

DESCRIPTIONS
What about the details of the extracurricular experience?

AFTER

What a difference! More descriptive bullet points, better use of bold and spacing. We also have a new, more powerful heading, and have eliminated some elements that weren't contributing much.

Avery Student

100 Oak Street, Syracuse, NY 13244
(315) 555-1234 astudent@syr.edu

OBJECTIVE

To contribute my technical and consulting experience as a summer intern focusing on strategic planning, analysis, and implementation of information system solutions.

EDUCATION

Syracuse University, The iSchool, Syracuse, NY

M.S., Information Management, GPA: 4.0

Specialization: Project Management and Resource Planning

University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA

College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

B.A., Economics, Major GPA: 3.45

CONSULTING AND TECHNICAL EXPERIENCE

iConsult, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

IT Consultant, October 20xx to present

- Provide IT and business process consulting services to local small businesses and startups
- Collaborate with clients to identify opportunities for business development
- Research and compile cost benefit and business risk analyses for recommendations
- Develop and deliver consulting recommendations to meet clients' goals and objectives

Center for Health and Behavior, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

Assistant Computer Consultant, August 20xx to present

- Troubleshoot and implement information technology solutions for faculty use
- Assist with server, website, and backup data storage maintenance and updates
- Perform system configurations and hardware and software upgrades for 175 computers
- Provide faculty and staff with desktop support on Windows, Mac, and Linux platforms

SUNY Empire State College, Syracuse, NY

Assistant Recruitment Specialist, September 20xx to September 20xx

- Managed recruitment efforts for regional center and six satellite locations
- Implemented new recruitment protocols and communication plans for managing student data
- Increased application 49% for Syracuse location and 24% regionally from previous year
- Developed Executive Support System dashboards and reporting tools in CRM system

AWARDS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Project Management Institute, Syracuse Chapter, Member: 20xx to present

- Enhanced understanding of best practices for project management

iSchool Graduate Organization, Committee for Finance, Chair: 20xx to present

- Manage a budget of \$10,000 to sponsor programs to engage iSchool students
- Lead meetings and communicate with committee members

iSchool Upstate IT Scholarship, Recipient: May 20xx

- Awarded to individuals living in Central New York seeking to contribute to the information technology workforce

FORMATTING

Now the name is the biggest element on the page. Also: organization names are bolded throughout.

PRIORITIES

The objective is now much more specific, and includes relevant keywords. "To contribute" is a nice way to start.

HEADING

This heading is now more focused and relevant.

PRIORITIES

The lifeguarding experience has been cut. In this case, it is more strategic to use that space for the details of relevant work experience.

DESCRIPTIONS

The bullet point descriptions are much more detailed and vivid now: they focus on highlights and accomplishments.

FORMATTING

The spacing has been changed — it is now easier to see where sections begin and end.

DESCRIPTIONS

The details of the extra-curricular experience strengthen the resume.

SAMPLE RESUMES

Anjali Student

100 Oak Street, Syracuse, NY 13244
(315) 555-1234 astudent@syr.edu

EDUCATION

Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

L.C. Smith College of Engineering and Computer Science

M.S., Computer Engineering, May 20xx

GPA: 3.85

University of Mumbai, Mumbai, India

Bachelor of Engineering, May 200xx (ranked 3rd out of 100)

RELATED COURSEWORK

Graduate: Software Modeling & Analysis, Advanced Computer Architecture, Object Oriented Design, Design of Operating Systems, Data Structures & Algorithms, Principles of Network Security

Undergraduate: Computer Programming, Micro-Computer and Embedded System Design

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming Languages: C, C++, C#

Operating Systems: Win 98/NT/2000/XP, Linux, Unix

Application Software: Visual Studio .NET, Microsoft Office, Visio, SQL Server

Other: MS Access, XML, UML, HTML, SQL

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Motorola, Inc., City, State

Intern, May 20xx to August 20xx

- Updated a DOCSIS simulator written in C and designed to work on Linux/Unix
- Acquired working knowledge of the cable system headend with a concentration on the DAC6000

PROJECTS

Requirements Database Manager

- Created a database manager utility that maintains the mapping between the customer requirements and developer requirements. The development environment was Visual Studio 2005 and the database server was SQL Server 2005.
- *Deliverable:* SRS, Source Code (Visual C#) and Design Document

Directory Synchronizer

- Designed and implemented a GUI based directory synchronizer that works across a network using sockets.
- *Deliverable:* Source code developed in Visual C++ 8.0 with XML messaging.

Rishi Student

100 Oak Street, Syracuse, NY 13244

(315) 555-1234

rstudent@syr.edu

EDUCATION

M.S. in Information Management (December 20xx)

Syracuse University, School of Information Studies, Syracuse, NY.

GPA: 3.58/4.00

Relevant Coursework: Project Management, Advanced Database Management Systems, E-Commerce Technologies, CCNA, Applied Information Security, Strategic Management of Information Resources

Bachelor in Engineering – Instrumentation (May 200x)

Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Technology, University of Mumbai, India

CONSULTING EXPERIENCE

Business Technology Analyst, January 20xx to present

Whitman School of Management, Syracuse, NY

- Interact with clients to gather business and system requirements
- Analyze the business functionality and document the business process based on the clients' requirements
- Perform business modeling, resource gathering and allocation

ACADEMIC PROJECTS

Database Management System (August 20xx to December 20xx)

- Designed and implemented a complete working database to manage manufacturing chain
- Documented working database to facilitate its maintenance
- Designed database using Oracle 10g and SQL plus

E-Commerce Website (August 20xx to December 20xx)

- Developed a database-driven website using ASP.Net with functionalities such as a login page and e-mail page, protected page, product catalog, administration page and shopping cart

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Languages: C++, C, JAVA, Visual Basic.net, SQL, PL/SQL, HTML, XHTML, CSS, RSS, ASP.NET

Software: Microsoft Office Suite, MS Project, MS Access, MS Visio, MS Visual Studio, MS SQL, Oracle 10g, Adobe Photoshop, Macromedia Dreamweaver 8

Operating Systems: Windows 95, NT, 98, 2000, XP, Vista, Ubuntu

Information Security: Concepts and Best Practices

ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

- Worked with a team to coordinate large-scale college cultural festival; contributed to logistics, marketing, and troubleshooting
- Volunteered with local public health initiative in rural communities for three consecutive years

- **Project descriptions** focus on what the student accomplished, with active verbs and deliverables
- Instead of aggregate grades, this student indicated **class rank**, which will be easily understood
- Technical skills are listed in **order of importance** to the employer; for another position, the student might re-order the list

- Heavy on **keywords** that an employer might use when searching a database of candidates' resumes
- Includes coursework and school projects that **relate** to the work this applicant wants to do
- Original list of activities and interests has been shortened to feature the student's **favorite activities**, and descriptions are written in a way that will be clear to an employer

SAMPLE RESUMES

DEVON STUDENT

100 Oak Street • Syracuse, NY 13244
(315) 555-1234 • dstudent@syr.edu

EDUCATION

Master of Science in Engineering Management (May 20xx)
Syracuse University, L.C. Smith College of Engineering and Computer Science, Syracuse, NY
GPA: 3.9

Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering (May 200x)
Syracuse University, L.C. Smith College of Engineering and Computer Science, Syracuse, NY

MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

Department of Energy Industrial Assessment Center

Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

Lead Engineer (May 200x to Present), Engineer (200x to 200x)

- Initiate and oversee projects under the aegis of the director of the Department of Energy Industrial Assessment Center, Syracuse University and private companies
- Conduct in-depth facility-wide industrial assessments and report authorship, in a rapid 60 day cycle, resulting in over \$1 million of personally recommended savings from energy reduction, waste stream reduction and productivity optimization
- Manage a six-member team of graduate and undergraduate engineers including project delegation, technical advising, training and overseeing Department of Energy Industrial Assessment Center compliance
- Guide the purchase and use of data acquisition equipment, including thermal imaging, combustion analysis and data logging

COMPUTER SKILLS

- *Engineering:* Autodesk AutoCAD, PTC Pro-Engineer, MathCad, Maple, MatLab, eQuest, RetScreen
- *Administrative:* Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Visio, Outlook, Front Page, MathType, Photosho
- *Other:* Secure Shell and WinSock (WS) File Transfer Protocol, Website Development

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Syracuse University School Press Institute, Syracuse, NY

Resident Advisor (Summer 200x and Summer 200x)

- Oversaw the registration, safety and guidance for the duration of a week long summer workshop
- Coordinated 50+ room assignments for workshop schedule

INTERESTS

- *Travel:* U.S. and Israeli Citizenships, knowledge of Hebrew, trips to Africa, the Middle East and Europe
- *Dance:* Compete in ballroom dance competitions (200x to Present)
- *Aviation:* Piloted single-engine aircraft

Adrian Student

111 Syracuse Ave., Syracuse, NY 13210
(315) 555-1234 astudent@syr.edu

Education

Syracuse University, School of Education, Syracuse, NY
M.S., Community Counseling, May 20xx
GPA: 4.0

Regional University, City, State

B.S., Public Relations, May 200x
GPA: 3.9; Dean's list all semesters

Counseling Experience

Syracuse VA Medical Center, Syracuse, NY

Community Care Center Staff Member (January 200x to December 200x)

- Provided supportive intensive case management services on a daily basis, which included strengths-oriented and supportive counseling, psychosocial rehabilitation and assistance with community reintegration
- Co-facilitated or facilitated at least three groups per week and community groups
- Covered a caseload of four veterans as primary intensive case manager

Health Services, Regional University, City, State

Peer Educator (January 200x to May 200x)

- Delivered presentations on topics related to students and personal health for groups of up to 50 students
- Developed university-wide newsletter for the office
- Helped recruit, select and train new peer educators

Research Experience

Syracuse VA Medical Center, Syracuse, NY

Research Assistant (August 200x to present)

- Run participants for health behaviors study
- Input data into Excel spreadsheets from health behavior and demographic questionnaires
- Research health behaviors topics, including smoking cessation, diet, and exercise
- Develop poster project on reactivity, coping and aggression in substance-dependent population

Professional Memberships

American Psychological Association, Member (200x to present) **American Counseling Association**, Member (200x to present)

Chi Sigma Iota (January 200x to present)

- The Management Experience **heading** was chosen carefully; this student is applying to management positions
- Bullet points quantify accomplishments and scope whenever possible (\$1 million, 50+)
- An **Interests** section is optional; in this case, the student chose to feature unique interests. Travel (listed first) is also relevant to the position.

- The **order of the sections** is deliberate: this resume is being used to apply for a counseling position. For a research position, that section would come first.
- The decision of which groups to list under Professional Memberships is also a **strategic choice**: the student omitted groups that do not relate to the field.
- A **master's degree is required** for the position, so Education is at the top of the page. Consider carefully where your Education section should go.



U.S. Department of
Homeland Security
**United States
Secret Service**

JOIN OUR TEAM

UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE

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or apply on line at:
www.secretservice.gov/join

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VERBS FOR RESUMES

Remember the Rule:

Every bullet point in a resume starts with a verb. Here are some of our favorites to get you started, organized around key themes. Use these for inspiration, and then brainstorm more of your own!

ANALYTICAL

analyzed
assessed
adapted
cataloged
coded
compiled
consolidated
critiqued
defined
diagnosed
diversified
evaluated
examined
identified
investigated
judged
researched
sorted
strategized

COMMUNICATION

answered
authored
clarified
communicated
composed
conveyed
drafted
edited
emphasized
illustrated
informed
instructed
marketed
persuaded
presented
promoted
publicized
reported
responded
summarized
translated
verbalized
wrote

CREATIVITY

conceived
conceptualized
innovated
invented
pioneered
proposed

EFFECTIVENESS

accomplished
completed
created
developed
devised
engineered
established
exceeded
generated
influenced
instituted
launched
reached
resolved
solidified
solved
structured
strengthened
succeeded

HANDS-ON

assembled
built
constructed
delivered
designed
distributed
fixed
operated
rebuilt

IMPROVEMENT

enhanced
expanded
expedited
improved
increased
perfected

recommended
redesigned
reorganized
repositioned
restored
restructured
revised
revitalized
simplified
transformed
updated
upgraded

INTERPERSONAL

acted
advocated
collaborated
connected
consulted
counseled
demonstrated
educated
energized
engaged
enlisted
facilitated
greeted
interviewed
mediated
motivated
negotiated
partnered
reconciled
recruited
rehabilitated
represented
taught
trained
tutored
unified
united
welcomed

ORGANIZATIONAL

filed
organized
planned

prepared
processed
recorded
scheduled
standardized
systematized

LEADERSHIP

administered
advised
challenged
coached
coordinated
delegated
directed
eliminated
encouraged
founded
guided
headed
hired
hosted
initiated
inspired
led
managed
mentored
navigated
officiated
orchestrated
oversaw
presided
ran
supervised

SAVINGS

eliminated
reduced
saved
streamlined

SUPPORT

assisted
contributed
participated
served
supported

TECHNICAL

calculated
entered
formulated
measured
patented
programmed
tested

VERSATILE VERBS

ensured
explored
formalized
gathered
implemented
improvised
incorporated
integrated
introduced
leveraged
maintained
marshaled
modified
monitored
observed
obtained
performed
piloted
qualified
realigned
received
recognized
regulated
retrieved
reviewed
secured
selected
surveyed
targeted
utilized
verified
worked

COVER LETTER BASICS

Q. What's the purpose of a cover letter?

A. To get an interview. Your letter is a customized, persuasive document that should make the reader want to take a closer look at your resume. Show your sense of purpose, confidence, and enthusiasm, explaining how you can help the employer meet their needs and goals. Tailor your letter to address the specifics of the position and the employer.

Q. So I'll have to write a new cover letter for each job?

A. Maybe. For similar positions, you can likely use similar letters. However, each letter should be customized specifically for the position and the organization.

Q. How do I know what to write about?

A. First, read the job or internship description very carefully. If it's online, consider printing out a copy and highlighting or underlining what the employer is looking for. Next, think about the skills you've utilized in past jobs, internships, volunteer work, extracurricular activities, and class projects. It's especially helpful to be able to illustrate the outcomes and results of your efforts with specific examples.

Q. Can I repeat things from my resume?

A. Yes! It's important that you share your experiences. Think of the letter as a way to elaborate on the highlights of your resume, not just to copy and paste. You can go in-depth or tell a story or give an example that illustrates something on your resume — it's okay, even necessary, to “repeat.”

Q. How long should it be?

A. Keep the letter to one page. If a paragraph looks like too much text for someone to read comfortably, look for ways to divide it into two or more paragraphs.

Q. Who will read it?

A. Probably someone with a giant stack of other letters to read. So more than likely, they will skim it quickly to see if you're a good fit for the position. If they like what they see, they may go back and read it more carefully. Be clear and relevant! Make it easy for the reader to see immediately why you're qualified.

Q. Who can help me work on my cover letters?

A. The staff of both Career Services and the Writing Center (<http://wc.syr.edu>) are happy to help. When you come in, bring two hard copies of your letter and a printout of the job or internship description.

*This section was developed in collaboration with
Emily Dressing of SU's Writing Center.*

HOW TO STRUCTURE A LETTER

BETTER LETTERS

When someone comes to Career Services and says, "I want to work on my cover letter," we always ask, "Which cover letter?" Because no one should have just one.

It is essential to customize a cover letter for a particular position and organization. Most of the time, this means more than just changing the job title and company, while keeping the rest the same.

In fact, when you're applying for a job you *really* want, you may want to sit down and write a unique letter, completely from scratch.

To write a powerful cover letter nearly always requires multiple drafts. Get something down on paper, take a break, come back to it later.

Whether you normally love writing or don't enjoy it at all, writing a cover letter can be a challenge. Be patient with yourself, and focus on writing down all of your thoughts and ideas.

Then, go back and put yourself in the employer's shoes. Did you include what they need to know about you in order to see why you'd be a good fit?

SAMPLE LETTER FORMAT

100 Campus Road ← Your address
Syracuse, NY 13244
July 1, 2011 ← Today's date

Ms. Firstname Lastname ← Employer's name and title (if available),
Hiring Manager followed by the company's name and
Future Enterprises, Inc. address
355 Success Blvd.
New York, NY 10012

If you don't know the employer's name, use
To Whom It May Concern or

Dear Ms. Employer: ← *Dear Sir or Madam* or
Dear Hiring Manager

1st Paragraph: Get the reader's attention. Establish credibility!

Why are you writing? What should the employer know about you immediately? Include the position you are applying for and the employer. Consider adding why this employer appeals to you (you may want to refer to their mission, products, etc.). You may also give a hint of what's to follow, perhaps briefly mentioning the experiences and skills you would hope to contribute.

2nd Paragraph: Persuade the reader and include specifics.

Sell yourself — describe highlights from your background that would be of interest to the employer. Focus on skills, activities, and experiences that you can contribute. Be specific, with strong concrete examples. This is so important it needs to be repeated: **strong, concrete examples**. Expand on what you included on your resume, and tell a story rather than just listing your skills. This second paragraph can be divided into two or more paragraphs if necessary.

3rd Paragraph: Reiterate your message and offer thanks.

Remind the employer why you are a good match for the position. You may want to express willingness to provide additional information. Ask for the opportunity to interview or discuss the position in more detail, and include your e-mail and phone number. And, of course, thank the recipient for his or her time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Your Name

BEFORE AN INTERVIEW

Study the Job Description

Read and re-read the job description – you have to know what you’re aiming for. A surprising number of candidates arrive at job interviews without a clear understanding of the position - you can be the exception!

Your interests, skills, traits, work style, experiences and knowledge are all areas you should be comfortable discussing by the day of the interview. In fact, you should be able to articulate your strengths and explain exactly how you fit the needs and qualifications listed in the job description.

Research the Company

An employer will know you are serious when you can speak knowledgeably about their organization. They need to see that you understand their culture and are familiar with their products or services and mission.

Do research on the position, network with professionals in that field if possible – whatever will help you understand the employer’s needs and preferences and how they intend to utilize the person who occupies this position.

It is also very helpful to research the field in general. The Career Services website can point you in the direction of excellent databases and other resources to conduct this research.

Refresh Your Memory

In most job interviews, you will be asked to give examples from your experience. These questions often start out with, “Tell me about a time when...” Walk into every interview prepared to answer these questions.

The key is to review your own resume, sometimes over the course of several days, and recall specific stories and details from work, academic, or extracurricular experiences. Jot down notes to help you remember them. When these are fresh in your mind, you’ll have a real advantage in an interview.

Practice Out Loud

It is essential to get practice answering interview questions out loud. At first there may be some stumbles and it may be hard to put your thoughts into words - this is natural. Take your time and be patient.

Remember that many interviews are actually conversations. Beginning interviewees have a tendency to give very long answers in very formal language. With practice, you can sound more like yourself.

Consider setting up a mock interview at Career Services. This way, you can practice your interviewing skills in a simulation, using an actual job description that you send to us in advance.

PHONE INTERVIEWS

1. Make sure you arrange to speak in a very quiet place. Lock your roommate out, if you must!
2. If you are using a cell phone, arrange to be somewhere that you know has good reception.
3. Stay away from the computer during a phone interview. The sound of typing carries over the phone, and the person you are speaking to can tell if you seem distracted.
4. Get dressed up. Unless you’re on Skype, they can’t see - but get dressed up anyway. When you are dressed professionally, you are more likely to think and speak professionally.
5. Stand up. Pace around a bit if it helps. When you stand, your breathing changes and you can project your voice more fully.
6. Gather all of the materials you may need in advance: your resume, any notes, something to jot down a word here or there.
7. Avoid making speeches. Without the visual cues, you can’t see if the interviewer is losing interest.
8. Accept that you might interrupt each other or try to speak at the same time. That’s okay! Just treat the situation with grace and flexibility.
9. Prepare questions to ask the interviewer.
10. Let your genuine enthusiasm for the position shine through!

ANSWERING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS STRATEGICALLY

QUESTION	What NOT to say	Because they're REALLY asking	YOUR strategy
<p>Tell me about yourself.</p>	<p>“My name is _____, I’m a _____ major, and I’m from _____.”</p>	<p>Tell me what you want me to know about you – and why you’re a great fit for this position.</p>	<p>Talk about your passion for the field or key experiences. Be sure to practice this in advance, and to tailor your answer specifically for each employer.</p>
<p>Tell me about a time when you worked with a team.</p>	<p>“Well, I work on teams a lot.”</p>	<p>Tell me a great story with a beginning, a middle, and end from your work, an internship, a class or extracurricular experience. It should address an element (in this case, teamwork) of the job or our environment.</p>	<p>Try the CCAR formula. Think of a specific example, and then explain the Context, as well as the Challenge you faced. Talk about the Actions you took, and then share the Results — how did it all work out?</p>
<p>Why do you want to work for us?</p>	<p>“Because you’re prestigious,” or “Because I like this field.”</p>	<p>What do you and our company have in common? Where do your values and the company’s culture overlap?</p>	<p>Talk about the company’s culture, work, or approach. Be specific!</p>
<p>If you were a fruit, what kind of fruit would you be, and why?</p>	<p>“What does that have to do with anything?”</p>	<p>Are you flexible and imaginative? Do you have a sense of humor? Can you use this question to tell me about a quality that makes you a good fit for this position?</p>	<p>Take a minute to think if you need it. Then connect the question to something relevant: “I’d be an orange. Thick skinned, so I can take a lot of constructive criticism. And naturally organized, like the segments of an orange.”</p>
<p>Do you have any questions for me?</p>	<p>“Nope.”</p>	<p>Are you interested in this position and curious to learn more?</p>	<p>Write down questions before the interview. If they’ve all been answered, ask for more information about an interesting topic that came up during the interview — and don’t be afraid to jot down notes.</p>

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES CORPORATE SPONSORS

Thank you to our 2010-2011 Corporate Sponsors!

Our generous corporate sponsors provide financial and personnel resources for an entire academic year. With this support we are able to put on programs and events that allow all students to explore a wide range of careers.

This year we would like to give a very special thanks to the following companies (listed in alphabetical order):

PLATINUM SPONSORS:



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CAREERS AFTER COLLEGE

ORANGELINK

Thousands of employers are looking for Syracuse University and ESF students, and you can find all of them on the Syracuse University Career Services Database: Orangelink. Visit careerservices.syr.edu to access it right from our home page.

Use OrangeLink to...

- Browse full-time jobs, internships, fellowships, scholarships, summer jobs, and experienced positions
- Upload your resume and cover letters to apply for opportunities
- Find an SU alumni mentor using Mentor@SU
- Register an internship for credit
- Register for career events and workshops
- View the list of employers attending SU's Career Fairs
- Publish your resume in online resume books viewable by employers

Making the Most of OrangeLink

Having trouble logging in? Make sure you're using your complete email address including the @syr.edu (or the second half of whatever e-mail address you used when you registered).

To keep your account secure, remember to change your password; you can do this under the Privacy Tab in your profile.

Attend an OrangeLink Orientation. Dates, times and locations are on the Career Services website.

Complete your entire profile, including the personal, academic and privacy tabs, so that OrangeLink will allow you to search for jobs, internships and mentors. Don't forget to update your profile every year!

Can't turn up the job or internship you're looking for? Try a variety of different searches.

Log in often to check out upcoming events and important deadlines.

Questions? Contact the Recruiting Help Desk at (315) 443-9093.

Get an Account Today!

If you don't have one yet, visit the Career Services Recruiting Help Desk, in Suite 235 of the Schine Student Center, give us a call at (315) 443-9093, or e-mail careers@syr.edu.

NETWORKING

TEN FACTS ABOUT NETWORKING YOU NEED TO KNOW

1. You do not need to be outgoing to be an effective networker. **You can be shy.** This is fine.
2. Most people find their jobs through networking. This means that learning how to network is as important as, say, learning how to write a great cover letter.
3. Networking does not necessarily mean collecting business cards or “working the room.”
4. Networking does mean **taking responsibility for initiating conversations** with interesting people in fields that interest you in person, online, and on the phone.
5. Don't have connections? You may have more than you think. You can start networking with people you already know: family members, neighbors, family friends, acquaintances you run into at the supermarket when you're home on break.
6. There are **over 200,000 Syracuse University alumni**. They are also a wonderful resource for networking.
7. Networking does NOT involve asking people for jobs or internships. It may mean asking them for tips, advice, or suggestions.
8. If someone takes the time to chat with you about their experience or to share advice, let them know you appreciated it with a personalized e-mail or **handwritten thank-you note**. Many recipients truly value these notes and keep them for years.
9. People enjoy being asked for their opinion or to share their advice. It's very rewarding to share what you know with a student.
10. Networking can be **fun, stressful, confusing, enjoyable, and challenging**. Career Services is here to help with all of it, from reaching out to alumni to figuring out what to write in your next thank-you note to making the most of online networking tools such as LinkedIn and Twitter. To schedule an appointment, call (315) 443-3616.

AN A+ NETWORKING TOOL: THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

An informational interview is a one-on-one meeting you set up with someone you want to talk to. Unlike a job interview, where you have to be specially selected to come in and talk with someone, an informational interview is something you request. Here are the keys to a successful informational interview:

- Ask for around 20 minutes of someone's time on the phone or in person. Alternatively, you might offer to take them out for lunch or coffee. Use words like *explore*, *learn*, and *brainstorm* in your request for a phone or in-person meeting.
- Do your homework! Before you contact people whose work or perspective you find exciting, research them and their organizations thoroughly.
- Make a list of at least 10 questions in advance. It's fine if you don't end up using them all.
- Always, always send a customized thank-you note. And NEVER ask for a job or an internship.
- At the end, ask if there is anyone else they think you should talk to. If you do talk to their contact, remember to send two thank-you notes: one to the contact, and another one to them.

CONNECTING ONLINE

Why It's Exciting

You have more power than ever before! Thanks to social networking tools, you have an extraordinary capacity to shape how a future employer perceives you, long before they meet you in person. You can reach out to Syracuse University alumni anywhere in the world. You can get valuable guidance that could shape your career path. You can build relationships with people in fields you want to explore. It's amazing!

Starting Strategically

With all of this power comes a great deal of responsibility. You may want to start slow. Run some online searches for your name and see what comes up. Join LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) and read through other members' profiles. Work your way through a tutorial on LinkedIn geared to students. Join Twitter, figure out how it works, and read other people's tweets to get a sense of the jargon. It's easier to join a conversation after you know the basics.

Put Yourself in Their Shoes

If you were an employer looking for interns, what would you want to see in a student? What kind of language or behavior would you consider professional or unprofessional? It is essentially impossible to "erase" something from the internet once it has been posted, even if you delete the content from the site where you posted it. It's never too early to start thinking mindfully about the impression you are making online.

Okay, Now What?

A question we hear in Career Services all the time is: "I set up my account on LinkedIn. What do I do now?" Look for people you know - including SU staff - to connect with (much like "friending" someone on Facebook). Join groups, like the Syracuse University Alumni group and ones related to your professional interests or hobbies. You will then be linked to many new people, directly and indirectly. Use LinkedIn's powerful and versatile searches to figure out who your connections are connected to.

Meeting New People

If you find someone on LinkedIn that you want to talk to, use the same polite standards that you would use to meet a new person in a work or academic setting. Introduce yourself in a friendly and professional way, explain how you are connected to them (maybe they also went to SU), and express your interest in seeking their advice. Never ask for a job or send a out mass message to many people at once.

Should You Have a Website?

Maybe. SU students from fashion design, health and wellness, illustration, education and information management - just to name a few - have developed terrific personal websites. Some designed their own, while others used online services or templates. These sites are a resource to share with future employers, alumni, and potential clients. Remember to think carefully about what to include and what you would hope to accomplish with the site. Look at other sites to see what styles and approaches you like best.

Real-World Considerations

Although the learning curve for sites like LinkedIn and Twitter can be steep, it is not unusual for students to figure out very quickly how to use them and how to access them via a cell phone or mobile device. It can even become lots of fun! Just remember: when you are talking with people in real life, put down your phone and focus on them.

Additional Resources

You can meet with Career Services staff to talk about your online presence, fine-tune your LinkedIn profile, or figure out what to say in a first e-mail to an SU alum. You can also visit Brand Yourself (<http://brand-yourself.com>), a company started by Syracuse University alumni to help proactively keep track of your online reputation.

TO DO LISTS

EASY

Ten Minutes or Less

- **Visit Orangelink.** See which employers are coming to campus and browse through internships, jobs, and potential mentors.
- **Skim this guide.** That way, you will be familiar with the basics.
- **Stop by 15-Minute Drop-ins at Career Services,** held every weekday. Get some questions answered or get a second opinion on your resume.
- **Start a Future File.** This could be a folder, a cardboard box, or a Word document on your computer. This way you'll have a place to keep all of the ideas and tips you come across.
- **Visit LinkedIn.com** and take a look around. Explore the features on the site. Notice which profiles seem the most compelling to you, and see if you can figure out why.
- **Browse through job postings** on Orangelink or a site like Indeed.com. Make note of anything that jumps out at you or looks appealing. See what themes emerge.

MEDIUM

Take Time and Effort

- **Give your resume a makeover.** Do you like the way it looks? Study the resume section of this guide to really understand the strategy behind your choices.
- **Make a list of what you love.** Not what you're good at - but what you enjoy doing, learning about, and being around.
- **Get to know your professors.** Stop by during office hours with questions or just to chat.
- **Set up your own LinkedIn Profile.** Remember to join the SU Alumni Group! Create a summary that explains what you're all about, focusing on what you want your next employer to know about you.
- **Consider joining a new club or organization,** running for a leadership position, or starting your own group.
- **Contact alumni from your graduate program** for advice and professional networking.

HARD

But Worth It!

- **Work on understanding who you are.** Chat with Career Services staff, reflect on your own, talk to friends and family.
- **Find a job or internship you want to apply for.** Write a brand-new, personalized cover letter and customize your resume to fit that exact position. Write and revise multiple drafts.
- **Learn everything you can** about an organization you might like to work for someday. Sign up for a Twitter account and start following the organization on Twitter.
- **Schedule a mock interview** at Career Services. Before you come in, research the company thoroughly and prepare for every question you can think of.
- **Increase your competitive edge.** Is there a certification or a skill set that would make you more marketable?
- **Tune in to yourself.** Do you like what you're studying? Did you enjoy your internship last summer? Notice what you enjoy most.

Syracuse University Career Services

Suite 235, Schine Student Center

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fax (315) 443-2805

<http://careerservices.syr.edu>