

# SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY

Division of Student Affairs

Office of Student Leadership & Development



Walter Bernard Hill Hall

## Career Services Handbook

Mr. Shaunce Riley, Coordinator of Career Services

Career Services  
Handbook

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*“You Can Get Anywhere From Here”*

# Savannah State University Career Services Handbook

## Division of Student Affairs Office of Career Services

### Greetings from the Coordinator



Welcome to the University by the Sea, The Office of Career Services provides students and alumni with assistance in career development and the job search process. Our services and programs are an essential part of the educational process, from the first day on campus to graduation. Whether you need help with choosing a major, finding part-time or full-time employment, or information on topics such as resume writing and interview skills, we are the place for you! We invite you to take advantage of these opportunities available through Career Services to expand and explore your career path.

Sincerely,

Shaunce R. Riley, M.Ed  
Coordinator of Career Services

## SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY Office of Career Services

Career Services is a unit in the Division of Student Affairs, a department in the Office of Student Leadership and Development. We are located in the King Frazier Student Center, Suite 233; operating hours are 9:00am-6:00pm Monday thru Friday.

The Career Services' mission is to assist students and alumni in developing, evaluating, and implementing career plans. Students will learn through appropriate programs and activities how to become active participants in their own continuing development.

### **Career Planning Services**

Career Planning is an ongoing process of matching your values, abilities, skills, and interests with appropriate work opportunities. Your success in both college and the work force depends largely on selecting a major/job that closely relates to who you are and what you want your life to be molded into. Effective career planning starts in your freshman year and continues on throughout your career with constant reassessing of your dreams and abilities. Particularly in the current competitive job market, college graduates need to have a clear understanding of their goals and the talents they bring to the workplace. In addition, students must have work experiences that complement their academic study and demonstrate to the employer their potential.

### **Career Planning Process**

The Career Planning Process is a guide designed to help students make effective use of the Office of Career Services at Savannah State University. The guide outlines a year-by-year plan of action and steps a student should take in order to (1) develop a strategic career plan (2) prepare themselves for the ever-changing job market and (3) prepare for graduate and professional school. By following the simple steps outlined and with the assistance of the office staff, students should matriculate not only with a college degree, but also with a sense of purpose and defined goals.

## Services Available

**Career Counseling:** SSU students may seek help with selecting and planning a major or career, developing effective job search strategies, and other career related issues.

**Workshops/Presentations:** Each semester the office offers a number of programs on topics including resume writing, interview skills, job searching, experiential learning and admission to graduate/professional school.

**Career Development Fairs:** Career Development fairs are held annually to assist students and alumni. The Coastal Georgia Universities Career Fair is held in the Fall for individuals seeking employment opportunities. Graduate School Day is held in the Fall to obtain information and meet with representatives. Experiential Learning and Volunteer Fair and a Spring Career Fair are held during Spring Semester.

**Career Resource Library:** Located inside the office users will find information about occupations, career choices for different academic majors, job search strategies; recruiting literature and videos, organizations hiring in specific fields, graduate and professional school catalogs.

**Job Listings:** The office features employment bulletin boards for part-time and full-time positions; internship, cooperative education and volunteer and seasonal opportunities.

**Graduate School Information:** Graduate catalogs are available in the Career Library.

Representatives visit the campus to discuss the various scholarships and fellowships available at their institutions.

**Career Connections:** Career Connections is a computerized program utilized to register students with the Career Services, produce sharp, typeset-quality, professional resumes and store information for databases.

**Georgia Hire:** A job listing database and resume referral system that allows students and alumni to search job openings and enter their resumes via the Internet.

**Resume Referrals:** The office may forward resumes of registered students and alumni to appropriate prospective employer for employment opportunities.

**Georgia Career Information System (GCIS):** computerized career software that allows students to explore different occupations, and graduate schools.

**Resume Consultation:** Individual guidance on resume or cover letter content and design is available to all students by appointment with a staff member. Resume preparation software is also available.

**Mock Interviews:** Students may schedule an appointment with a staff member who will ask sample interview questions and make suggestions for improvements. Videotaped mock interviews are also available.

**On-Campus Interviews:** Students and alumni may register with the office to participate in the on-campus interviews with employers.

**Surf the Net:** Computers are available which will allow students to surf the net to obtain career information and employment opportunities.

**Self-Evaluation Inventories:** Staff is able to help students assess their interests and learn about careers or majors that they may like. Please call for an appointment.

## The Career Planning Time Table

### Freshmen Year- Self & Career Awareness

- Attend Freshmen Year Experience Class
- Visit Career Services to set up a student file and consistently visit throughout the year
- Use a computer-based career planning program to explore self (interests, values, experiences, abilities and career options) in the Office of Career Services
- Talk to Academic Advisors and Career Counselor to explore realistic major/career choices
- Develop a four or five year plan of action in order to make the most of collegiate years
- Attend the Annual Career Fairs and Graduate and Professional Schools' Day
- Explore the career related summer employment opportunities
- Participate in Community Service Activities and Academic Professional Organizations
- Create Resume

### Sophomore Year- Assessment and Exploration

- Participate in the Annual Career Fairs and Graduate and Professional Schools' Day
- Undecided majors should utilize the computer-based career-planning program
- Update and revise your file and resume with the Office of Career Services
- Participate in mock interview workshops, job search technique workshops
- Explore part-time, internships, Co-Op opportunities that relate to your major area of study
- Participate in Community Service Activities and Academic Professional Organizations

### Junior Year- Evaluation of Career Options

- Participate in Internship/Cooperative Education Program
- Update and revise file and resume at the Office of Career Services
- Attend as many career related workshops as possible
- Start targeting potential employers through networking at various events
- Attend Annual Career Fairs and Graduate and Professional Schools' Day
- Conduct informational interviews with academic advisors, alumni, representatives from corporate private and governmental agencies to gather information regarding career interest
- Begin your search for the appropriate graduate/professional school in your area of interest
- Begin preparing for graduate/professional school placement tests
- Seek membership in professional organizations.
- Participate in Community Services Activities and Academic Professional Organizations

### Senior Year- Making Decisions

- Complete Internship/Cooperative Education Program
- Update and revise file and resume at the Office of Career Services
- Attend Annual Career Fairs
- Attend workshops related to your major and Employer Information Sessions.
- Obtain Letters of Recommendations from relevant reference (Advisors, Faculty, Employers, etc).
- Schedule and complete interviews at the Office of Career Services
- Research organizations, companies, potential employers
- Practice interviewing techniques
- Apply to Graduate /Professional school(s) during Fall semester
- Ensure all is in place for graduation

## Designing Your Resume

### Purpose

A resume is a self-marketing tool, designed with the goal of obtaining a job interview. Resume information is targeted succinctly to a career field and addresses the needs of a specific employer. Your resume should market your relevant skills, knowledge, and accomplishments.

### Preparation

It will be difficult to begin the process of writing your resume unless you identify the career field and types of employers that will be the focus of your job search. When you know how you will use the resume, then you will be able to write an effective, targeted resume that gets results. You will likely spend a considerable amount of time developing your resume, choosing the right words and phrases to describe your marketable skills and experiences. It is not uncommon to write several revisions before arriving at the final version.

One-page resumes are preferred for most entry-level positions. Two-page resumes are acceptable if the information on both pages demonstrates the skills and/or experience relevant to your profession. Resumes should highlight skills and accomplishments that meet employer qualifications, excluding irrelevant information and experiences. Well-designed resumes will be visually appealing and free from any spelling, typographical, punctuation, or grammatical errors. All resumes should be written concisely in an organized format that presents the most important information first.

Employers who read individual resumes spend very little time on each resume—in most cases, only twenty to thirty seconds. Many large employers are now using optical scanning machines and various software programs to assist them with this initial review.

### Types of Resumes

Information related to skills and experiences can be presented in a chronological format, a functional format, or a combination of the two. Each format has its advantages and disadvantages. To select the type that best supports your strategy, review the following descriptive information and resume samples.

#### Chronological-Resume

In the chronological resume, job history is organized chronologically with the most recent job listed first. Job titles and employers are emphasized and duties and accomplishments are described in detail. A chronological resume is easy to read, and can highlight career growth. It is suited to those whose career goals are clearly defined and whose job objectives are aligned with their work history.

A chronological resume is beneficial when:

- your recent employers and/or job titles are impressive;
- you are staying in the same career field;
- your job history shows progress;
- you are working in a field where traditional job search methods are utilized

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A chronological resume is not beneficial when:

- you are changing career fields;
- you have changed employers frequently;
- you want to de-emphasize age;
- you have been recently absent from the job market or have gaps in employment.

## Functional-Resume

In a functional resume, skills and accomplishments developed through work, academic, and community experiences are highlighted. Your skills and potential can be stressed and lack of experience or possible gaps in work history de-emphasized.

The functional resume is beneficial when:

- you want to emphasize skills not used in recent work experience;
- you want to focus on skills and accomplishments rather than a lengthy employment history;
- you are changing careers/re-entering the job market;
- you want to market skills and experience gained through coursework and/or volunteer experience;
- your career growth in the past has not been continuous and progressive;
- you have a variety of unrelated work experiences;
- your work has been free-lance, consulting, or temporary in nature.

The functional resume is not beneficial when:

- you have little work experience or leadership experience;
- you want to emphasize promotions and career growth;
- you are working in highly traditional fields, such as teaching, accounting, and politics, where employers should be highlighted.

## Combination-Resume

This format combines the elements of the chronological and functional types. It presents patterns of accomplishments and skills in categorical sections or a single section called "Qualifications Summary." It also includes a brief work history and education summary. This format is advantageous for those who wish to change to a job in a related career field or strategically promote their most marketable skills.

## Constructing Your Resume

Categories of information you include on your resume should provide answers to these questions:

Contact section	Who are you and how can you be reached?
Objective statement	What do you want to do?
Experience section	What can you do?
Education section	What have you learned?
Employment section	What have you done?

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Sequence the categories according to what is most important to the employer and your career objective. A recent college graduate with limited experience will usually put the education section first since it is the most significant qualification. Education will also be listed first when it is a qualifying requirement, as in the case of teaching, law, medicine, or engineering. If an applicant wants to emphasize significant work or leadership experience, or apply for jobs in fields such as sales, public relations, or merchandising, it may be useful to present the experience or employment sections first.

## Contact information

- Begin your resume with your name by capitalizing and using bold type.
- Include street address, city, state, and zip code.
- Include phone number(s) where you can be reached weekdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Designate your home phone with an "H," and work number with "W," or a "Messages" number.
- Add an e-mail address if it is checked regularly.

## Career/Job Objective

The purpose of the objective statement is to inform the employer of your career goal and targeted interests. The statement should describe the focus of your job search. If your resume is broader, relay the most relevant objective in an accompanying cover letter. A good objective includes type and/or level of position, type and style of organization, and skills/qualifications.

A career/job objective is advantageous when:

- You want to specify your interests and where you would fit in the organization.
- You want to present the impression of a focused, self-confident person.

A career/job objective is not advantageous when it is:

- Too broad and meaningless, reflecting indecision.
- Too exclusive, eliminating you from jobs for which you might be considered.

## Qualifications or Experience Summary

A summary of qualifications can condense an extensive background by emphasizing experiences and accomplishments in brief keyword phrases. The qualifications summary is accomplishment-oriented and provides an overview of your work experience. It can also serve to summarize relevant academic, volunteer and leadership experience for those who have limited work experience. A summary is most appropriate for someone with substantial experience, for someone who is changing careers and wants to demonstrate transferable skills, or for someone with a varied background. Scannable resumes also rely on accomplishment statements. If you know your resume will be electronically scanned, consider a summary.

- Example:  
Accomplished editor, news reporter and promotional writer. Demonstrated skills in project management and staff development.
- Example:  
'Two years' experience as office administrator; four years' teaching experience living abroad; two and one-half years' high school teaching experience; M.B.A. in International Business and Information Systems; B.A. Mathematics; French language fluency.

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## Education

If your education relates to your objective and is within the past three years, it should be the first section. If not, education should follow the work experience section of your resume.

- Start with your most recent degree or the program in which you are currently enrolled. List other degrees or relevant education in reverse chronological order.
- Highlight your degree by using bold type or capital letters.
- If the degree is relevant to your job objective, begin with degree and emphasis, followed by university, location of university, and date of graduation or anticipated date of graduation.

Example:

M.S., Chemical Engineering, Savannah State University, Savannah, GA, May 2004.

- If degree/program is not directly related to current job objective, begin with the university, followed by the location, degree and emphasis, and graduation date.
- If you are within two semesters of graduation, do not use "expected" or "anticipated" with month/year of graduation.
- If you have a high GPA, include it on your resume. You may want to highlight your GPA on a new line, or in an educational highlights section. Example:  
Savannah State University, Savannah, GA - B.A., Political Science, May 2003. GPA 3.4

## Educational Highlights

This section is most effective when you have experiences from your education that are impressive and/or directly relate to your objective. Adding this section is useful when you have developed skills and specific knowledge through education and related activities rather than work experience. This section can be used to highlight coursework, research, study abroad experience, leadership and student activities that complement your objective.

- Consider listing relevant coursework under the appropriate degree. Example:  
Relevant coursework: Investment and Portfolio Management, Advanced Financial Management, Marketing Research, International Banking
- An alternative to highlighting courses is to list the skills and knowledge acquired through important courses and research. Example:  
Developed model investment portfolio for Fortune 500 Company. Analyzed stock market trends using state-of-the-art computer simulation programs. Invested innovative capital formations strategies at metropolitan Washington area investment firms. Designed promotional campaign for new consumer product in a targeted market.
- You may want to describe research or design projects. Example:  
Design Projects: RF radio control, Laser and Microwave Amplifiers, Transmission Lines.  
Research: "Brazilian Economic Policies Beyond the Coffee Exports". "U.S. Foreign Policy: Transition in Latin America".

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## Employment Experience (Chronological)

- Begin with your current/most recent position and work backward, chronologically. Devote more space to *recent* employment.
- If your job titles relate to your current job objective, start each position description with job titles. If not, begin with the organization.
- Follow job title and organizational information with the organization's city and state.
- Use the first and last month and year to describe dates of employment. Example: Telecommunications Aide, Mass Communications Building, Savannah, GA, September 2000 - January 2003
- Describe the last three to five positions in detail. Summarize earlier positions unless relevant to your objective.
- Do not show every position change with each employer. Only list in detail the most recent job and briefly summarize promotions.
- Do not repeat skills that are common to several positions.
- Within each listed position, stress the major accomplishments and responsibilities that demonstrate your competency. It is not necessary to include all responsibilities, as they will be assumed by employers.
- Tailor your position descriptions to future job/career objectives.

If writing a two-page resume make sure the most marketable information is on the first page.

## Employment Experience (Functional)

- Use two to four sections to summarize each area of functional skill or expertise.
- Develop the functional skill headings based on the skills you want to market to employers and/or that are most related to your targeted objective.
- Describe your skills in short phrases and place under the appropriate functional skill categories.
- Rank the phrases within each category and place the most important skill or accomplishment first. Examples:  
WRITING  
Reported on-the-spot news stories for the Savannah Now: Savannah Morning News on the web.  
Provided in-depth coverage of Chatham County issues, including unemployment compensation and merit pay for teachers.  
Edited and marketed a brochure for a cultural/educational program designed to focus on life in Ghana.  
Resulted in a 20% increase in program attendance.
- Do not identify employers within functional skills sections.
- List a brief history of your actual work experience at the end of the section, giving job title, employer and dates. If you have had no work experience or a very spotty work record, leave out the employment section entirely or summarize the nature of your jobs without providing specific details. If you do this, be prepared to discuss your specific jobs in more detail at the job interview.

Both chronological and functional resumes must be succinct, emphasizing your experience and accomplishments. Resumes are often your first introduction to the employer and dramatically impact the screening process. Invest the time to create an excellent marketing tool - your resume - to increase job opportunities and career advancement.

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## Check List for Resume

The following checklist has been designed to assist you in writing your resume. This checklist reflects the expertise of the Center for Student Development staff developed through critiquing numerous resumes, discussing selection criteria with numerous employers, and gathering input from a wide range of career professionals.

### APPEARANCE

- is inviting and easy to read; not too much information
- uses appropriate font styles and font sizes (10-14 pts.)
- incorporates enough white space between sections to facilitate skimming
- centers text; adequate margins
- creates visual impact using bullets, boldface, underlining, italics, and font sizes to emphasize key words (for scannable resumes, use boldface only)
- printed on high quality (16-25 lb.) bond paper
- print is letter quality

### ORGANIZATION AND FORMAT

- appropriate format includes keyword phrases of profession
- presents strongest qualifications first
- appropriate length: 1 page for every 1 - 4 years of work experience

### WRITING STYLE

- begins sentences or phrases with powerful action verbs
- short paragraphs mostly under five lines; short sentences
- brief, succinct language; no unnecessary words
- absolutely free from grammatical, spelling, punctuation, usage, and typographical errors

### CONTENT

#### Contact Information

- address, current and permanent (if necessary)
- telephone number(s) where you can be reached 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. \*Note: answering machine and/or voice mail should be professional and free from any musical selections

#### Objective

(Optional for chronological resume. Required for functional resume.)

- briefly indicates the sort of position, title, and possible area of specialization sought
- for management or supervisory positions, indicates level of responsibility sought
- language is specific, employer centered not self-centered; avoids broad or vague statements

#### Summary of Skills, Accomplishments, or Expertise

- identifies 3-6 key achievements that support the objective
- summarizes relevant work experience and accomplishments that support the objective

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## Education and Training

- Highest level of attainment is listed first; work from most current degree backward
- degree in progress or most recently completed degree; include type of degree, name of university, location of university, date of graduation or anticipated date
- list of other degrees, relevant higher education coursework, continuing professional education or training courses, and study abroad
- major, minor, or areas of concentration
- omit high school if you have completed more than two years of college unless referencing impressive honors or relevant extracurricular activities
- relevant courses, papers, projects; include paper or project titles
- GPA, honors, awards, scholarships
- percentage of educational expenses earned

## Employment Experience

Include all paid, volunteer, intern, or cooperative education experiences that are relevant to your objective. Start with most recent experience if using chronological format.

- title held, organization name, city, state, or country location (if not U.S.A.)
- dates position held; if several positions for one employer, list employer once
- responsibilities listed in order of each item's relative value to the future employer; indicate transferable skills and adaptive abilities used on the job
- accomplishments on your job; what problems did you face? What solutions did you find?
- contributions to the organization, i.e., ways your work helped increase profit, membership publicity, funding, motivation, efficiency, productivity, quality; saved time or money; improved programs, management, communication, information flow etc.
- quantitative or qualitative indicators that describe the results of your contributions or accomplishments, i.e., "increased sales by \$10,000"; "reduced staff turnover by 15%"; "significantly improved staff ability to access data"
- learning that took place on the job that is relevant to your job objective (optional)
- describe accomplishments in jargon of the field

## Skills

- computer skills: software applications, languages, hardware, operating systems
- language skills: specific level of fluency and ability to read and write as "basic," "intermediate," or "advanced"
- other

## Extracurricular Activities, Community Service, Professional Associations

- list of significant positions of responsibility; include title, name of organization or team, dates
- leadership roles, achievements, and transferable skills that are relevant
- include hobbies and personal interests only if they are relevant

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## Action Words and Phrases

Following is a list of effective words and phrases to use in your resume. These words are action-oriented and represent skill areas you have that would be beneficial to the prospective employer. Use these action words to begin good resume phrases.

accelerated	eliminated	negotiated
accomplished	enlarged	observed
achieved	entertained	obtained
activated	established	operated
adapted	estimated	organized
administered	evaluated	originated
analyzed	examined	participated
appraised	exhibited	performed
arranged	expanded	persuaded
assembled	expedited	pioneered
assisted	explained	planned
bargained	explored	predicted
budgeted	facilitated	prescribed
built	formulated	presented
calculated	fostered	presided
charted	founded	processed
classified	generated	produced
coached	governed	proficient at
collected	handled	promoted
completed	improved	proposed
composed	increased	received
conceived	indexed	recommended
conducted	initiated	recruited
conserved	inspected	reduced
consolidated	installed	reinforced
constructed	instituted	reorganized
consulted	instructed	repaired
controlled	interpreted	researched
coordinated	intervened	responsible for
counseled	interviewed	reviewed
created	invented	revised
delegated	judged	scheduled
delivered	launched	simplified
demonstrated	lectured	solved
designed	listened	spoke
diagnosed	logged	strengthened
directed	maintained	taught
discovered	managed	tested
dispensed	mastered	trained
displayed	measured	translated
distributed	mediated	updated
dramatized	moderated	wrote

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## WORDS AND PHRASES (Continued)

Examples of short, already written phrases using action words:

- Reorganized the entire workflow of the office, increasing output significantly.
- Maintaining all department sales records and performance targets.
- Handled finances, organized meetings, and directed activities of 50 men and women.
- Designed and implemented innovative inventory system.
- Created a new product image and sold this concept to the marketing committee.
- Wrote four publications in the field.
- Developed new procedures to.....
- Oversaw maintenance of \$3 million worth of equipment.
- Cut production time by 20 percent.
- Prepared bibliography on environmental hazards.
- Taught two undergraduate courses while completing Ph.D. work.

## SELF DESCRIPTIVE WORDS

These words can be used throughout the resume to describe yourself.

<b>active</b>	<b>independent</b>
<b>adaptable</b>	<b>logical</b>
<b>alert</b>	<b>loyal</b>
<b>ambitious</b>	<b>mature</b>
<b>analytical</b>	<b>methodical</b>
<b>assertive</b>	<b>objective</b>
<b>attentive</b>	<b>optimistic</b>
<b>broad-minded</b>	<b>perceptive</b>
<b>conscientious</b>	<b>personable</b>
<b>consistent</b>	<b>pleasant</b>
<b>constructive</b>	<b>positive</b>
<b>creative</b>	<b>practical</b>
<b>dependable</b>	<b>productive</b>
<b>determined</b>	<b>proficient</b>
<b>diplomatic</b>	<b>realistic</b>
<b>disciplined</b>	<b>reliable</b>
<b>discrete</b>	<b>resourceful</b>
<b>economical</b>	<b>self-reliant</b>
<b>efficient</b>	<b>sense of humor</b>
<b>energetic</b>	<b>sincere</b>
<b>enterprising</b>	<b>sophisticated</b>
<b>enthusiastic</b>	<b>systematic</b>
<b>extroverted</b>	<b>talented</b>
<b>fair</b>	<b>will relocate</b>
<b>forceful</b>	<b>will travel</b>
<b>imaginative</b>	

## Conducting an Effective Job Search

How prepared are you for planning and conducting an effective job search? Successful job seekers must have both good information and well-developed job-hunting skills. Three important factors for a successful job search are an awareness of your goals and skills, an understanding of the labor market, and a well planned job search campaign.

Experts recommend that you begin an active job search six to nine months in advance of your target employment date. You can begin the process by visiting the Career Center early (for students, nine months to a year before graduation).

The following six steps are used to conduct an effective job search.

### STEP 1.      **Begin with Self-Assessment**

The job search process begins with an identification of your values, interests, skills, accomplishments, experience, and goals. How can you seek a position if you don't know what you want from a job and what you have to offer prospective employers? Self-assessment, though a time-consuming process, provides invaluable information to facilitate career decisions and to prepare you to market your background effectively.

#### **Values**

An awareness of what you value (qualities that are important and desirable) in a career will aid you in exploring career goals and attaining greater satisfaction in your work.

Review the following list of values and check those most important to you. Then rank your top five values in order of priority.

- Job security
- Working as part of a team
- Working independently with little supervision
- Making a contribution
- Professional status
- Mental challenge
- Pleasant surroundings
- Challenging, stimulating co-workers
- Different tasks to accomplish daily
- Financial rewards
- Creating something
- Ability to advance

*Adapted from Training For Life, by Fred Hecklinger & Bernadette Curtin, T 1994. Reprinted with permission from of Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.*

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## Interests

Interests (areas that arouse your attention or enthusiasm) are closely related to values and frequently trigger skill development. You can identify interests by looking at enduring themes in your life-activities that persist over time, consistent choices, recurring dreams, or the way you spend your time. Try keeping a time-log or examining your most enjoyable times in-depth. If after doing so, you are still not clear about your interests or cannot rank them, consider meeting with a Career Center consultant or use the vocational guidance and testing services of the University Counseling Center.

## Skills

A skill refers to something you do well, including handling problems or tasks. The key to your successful job search is recognizing these skills and communicating their usefulness verbally and in writing to a prospective employer. Use accomplishment statements to do so. They should:

- Describe your skills in concise, unambiguous terms.
- Refer to actual experiences to demonstrate your skill level.
- Connect your skills concisely to the needs of a prospective employer.

Some of the most marketable skills are those, which are useful in a wide variety of work environments. These are known as transferable skills. For example, the ability to write effectively, communicate verbally, and use word processing or database software are valued skills in the private as well as public sectors.

## STEP 2. Research and Explore Career Options

The next step in the job search process is to explore the "matches" between your identified skills, interests, and values and the demands of career fields and organizations. Resource materials on occupations and employers (available in the Resource Room) and informational interviews are two excellent tools for this search.

Perhaps the best way to explore career options is to try out intended jobs through internships, cooperative education positions, part-time or summer jobs, or volunteer opportunities. To better understand how to pursue these methods of gaining exposure to jobs, read the sections on these topics.

## STEP 3. Choose a Career Field, then Target Employers

After thoroughly researching possible careers/jobs, several field options will emerge as most realistic and attractive. These options should become your career or job search goals. It is probable that no single career will have the potential to utilize all your skills, allow you to develop all your interests, and incorporate a value system completely compatible with yours. Therefore, try to target a career field that will satisfy some of your high-priority needs. Other needs of less importance can perhaps be satisfied in your leisure time activities.

At this point, it is useful to get realistic feedback from experts in the field or career consultants to determine if your assessment is realistic.

A meeting or two with a Career Center consultant is strongly encouraged to discuss your analysis and decisions. During this or any other part of your job search, expect to use the resources of the Career Center frequently.

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Good research on employers will not only give you the competitive edge, but also help you decide which employers you want to reach and which strategies you will use to contact them.

## **STEP 4. Prepare Job Search Materials and Develop Job Search Skills**

Once your job goals have been targeted, resumes and application letters can be tailored to reflect your qualifications as they relate to the interests of prospective employers.

While most job applicants are well aware of the need for well-prepared resumes and cover letters, many do not realize the need to spend an equal amount of time mastering job search skills necessary to be effective in today's market. Learning which job search strategies are productive, how to interview effectively, how to market yourself well, and how to handle salary issues once an offer is made may be the subjects of regularly scheduled workshops offered by your Career Center. See your Career Center for more information.

## **STEP 5. Plan and Conduct Job Search Campaign**

Next, establish a target date for getting a job and decide how much time you can devote to your search. Some individuals believe they cannot afford to take time from their studies or a demanding job. Others procrastinate. Whatever the reasons, the results are the same—your search will languish and you may miss out on industry hiring cycles and job opportunities. So get organized early by setting aside a certain amount of time each week to work on your search. Use a calendar and weekly planner and work backward from your target date.

The greater number of contacts and interviews a job seeker has, the greater the number of job offers. Therefore, it makes sense to use multiple strategies.

### **A. Pursue Advertised Vacancies**

The most commonly used job search technique is to respond to advertised vacancies, both in print and electronically.

Sources of vacancies include:

- JOBTRAK/Career Center Job Listings
- Campus interviews.
- Newsletters from trade or professional associations.
- Newspaper classified ads (most major cities are on-line).
- Employment services and agencies run by government and for-profit businesses
- Personnel department postings and phone lines.

Unfortunately, the most popular method for locating positions, responding to advertised vacancies, is not the most effective. According to an article in the Harvard Business Review, nearly 80% of the openings available at any one time are never advertised.

Job seekers should respond to employment ads, but the main thrust of your efforts should be toward establishing networks and identifying the hidden job market.

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To increase the odds of your success in responding to advertised vacancies, by telephone or letter, keep these tips in mind:

- Do not waste time responding to long shots.
- Use your cover letter to answer every requirement in the advertisement.
- Personalize your response as much as possible. Direct your materials to specific individuals, not "To Whom It May Concern," or "Dear Sir/Madam," unless the advertisements are blind newspaper ads (name of organization withheld). A quick phone call can provide appropriate names. In a blind ad, address your letter to a specific position title, (e.g., Dear "Marketing Manager").
- Try to contact or write to the manager who will make the final hiring decision as well as the personnel representative named in the advertisements. For more information, see the section on Cover Letters and Related Job Search Correspondence.

## **B. Develop a Contact Network**

Once you have targeted a career or specific position, you should acquaint yourself with professionals in that field or organization. These professionals offer you an insider's view and can constitute your contact network, which can open doors that might otherwise remain closed. Your network can also consist of family members, friends, classmates, professors, and electronic discussion groups.

## **C. Contact Employers Directly**

There are several methods and combinations of methods that can be utilized to contact employers directly.

- Send a letter of application and your resume to the Human Resources department or specific managers. This direct contact method is most successful for candidates in high-demand fields (e.g., engineering and computer science). The success of this method is greatly increased when letters are followed up by phone calls, which may result in an invitation to visit the employer.
- Contact managers in organizations by phone or letter to request an appointment to discuss the information you have obtained by reading annual reports, trade literature, etc. For example: "I understand XYZ is planning to expand its foreign market. I am completing an international business degree and am very interested in this expansion. It seems a very progressive move. May I have 20 minutes of your time to discuss it?" Indicate your desire to meet with them even if they have no positions currently available in their department. Some job seekers find it useful to state that they will be looking for jobs in the near future, but are now just gathering information about organizations. Do not expect to be interviewed for a job at this juncture (Review Explore Careers Through Informational Interviewing.).
- During your appointments with department managers, emphasize your knowledge and interest in their organizations.
- Always follow up all interviews with thank-you letters, phone calls, and, when appropriate, resumes that have been revised based on information and suggestions provided by managers.

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- Even if managers have no positions available, once they have had a personal interaction with you, they may think of you the next time they have, or hear of, an appropriate opening. It is critical to stay in touch with these managers, at least on a bi-monthly basis.
- Many job seekers have used informational interviewing to create new positions by identifying organizational needs (through the interview, research, etc.) and proposing these needs be filled with their own skills.

### **D. Follow-Up and Record Keeping**

No matter what job search strategies you choose, follow-up and record keeping are important for success. Maintain a careful record of all interviews, thank-you notes sent, referrals made and follow-up actions. Job seekers who fail to maintain this information often lose valuable contacts as well as credibility with prospective employers. There are models for keeping such records in the various job search manuals in the Resource Room.

### **E. Be Persistent**

Job searching is hard work and there are times when you will get discouraged. But if you keep up with it, you can avoid feeling anxious and will actually have more energy. If your search is not producing the results that you would like, avoid blaming yourself and try a new strategy. Do not be reluctant to submit your credentials on more than one occasion to an organization for which you would like to work. This attitude demonstrates your enthusiasm and interest.

### **STEP 6. Obtain Offer and Continue to Develop Your Career Action Plan**

Congratulations! Your job search campaign has been successful. You have been offered a position you wish to accept. Send a note to all the people who helped you relaying the good news.

## **Salary Negotiations**

### **Effectively Negotiating Salary Packages**

Part of the job search process can include salary negotiation. With a basic knowledge of negotiation, your anxiety will be reduced and your success rate for negotiating will increase. There are several ways to make the process of salary negotiating effective. Start by taking a good look at your own salary requirements as well as developing an understanding of what your skills are worth in the current employment market.

- Research salary ranges before you begin the interviewing process. Contact the professional association, which represents your career field for salary information. Look at your monthly cash requirements. Keep in mind that your paycheck after taxes is approximately 28% less than your gross monthly salary. Factor fringe benefits into your calculations.
- Include savings and contingencies in your budget planning. (You do not need to tell anyone your salary requirement: it only provides you a foundation on which to make decisions.)

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- Enter the salary negotiation portion of your interview with a firm understanding of your skills and what they are worth to different segments of the economy and in a variety of industry settings. Salary range information is available from several sources, including the Center for Student Development's Resource Library, the state labor office, professional journals, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (See the bottom of this page for more information.)
- The first inquiry about salary may come in the form of an application. When completing application forms, be sure to use "open," "negotiable" or "competitive." Avoid stating a specific figure.
- Factor the organization's entire compensation package (i.e., tuition benefits, investment options, health plan, and any perks) along with salary into your negotiation discussion. Compute the dollar worth of these benefits and add this figure to the salary for a more realistic picture of how the organization compensates. If it is important to you, you may decide to negotiate benefits rather than an actual dollar increase.
- When an interviewer asks for salary history or salary range, he/she is interested in establishing a starting point for negotiation. The important thing is to avoid basing your desired salary on your current salary. Do not lie about your past salary because reference checks can easily provide this information. Provide information about why your salary may have been lower, if appropriate.
- When stating a salary range, it is acceptable to extend the range to approximately \$5,000. This shows that you are within the employer's price range but interested in somewhat more compensation.
- Determine opportunities for promotion. Job progression is an important factor in making salary decisions. Ask how promotions and salary reviews are handled.

By taking a good look at your own salary needs, understanding the current market, and approaching salary as something that you and the employer will agree on as mutually beneficial, your chances of successfully negotiating a salary are greatly enhanced.

### Sources of Salary Range Data

- National Association of College Employers: Salary Survey
- American Almanac of Jobs and Salaries
- Trade and professional association surveys
- Center for Student Development's Full-time Job Listings
- Executive search and consulting firms' job vacancy announcements
- Professionals in related career fields

## Successful Interviewing

### How to Interview Effectively

The job interview is a strategic conversation with a purpose. Your goal is to persuade the employer that you have the skills, background, and ability to do the job and that you can comfortably fit into his/her organization. At the same interview, you should also be gathering information about the job, future career opportunities and the organization to determine if the position and work environment are right for you.

You can strongly influence the interview outcome if you realize that an interview is not an objective process in which the employer offers the job to the best candidate based on merit alone. But rather, an interview is a highly subjective encounter in which the interviewer offers the job to the qualified person whom he/she likes best. Personality, confidence, enthusiasm, a positive outlook and excellent interpersonal and communication skills count heavily.

One key to success is to use every means at your disposal to develop effective interviewing skills: selective presentation of your background, thoughtful answers to interview questions, well researched questions about the organization, and an effective strategy to market yourself. There is no magic to interviewing: it is a skill that can be learned and improved upon with practice. The Career Center offers the regularly scheduled workshop, Effective Interviewing, and individual videotaped mock interviews for skill practice, which can be scheduled with career consultants by appointment. The Resource Room also has excellent books and videotapes on interviewing.

A second key to success is careful research about the job and the organization, agency, or company with whom you are having the interview. You can request printed materials such as annual reports from the employer in advance or use library resources. You should also talk with your contacts in the organization or use your personal network to discover the names of current employees you might call prior to the interview. Knowing about the job will help you prepare a list of your qualifications so that you can show, point by point, why you are the best candidate. Knowing about the employer will help you prepare an interview strategy and appropriate questions and points to emphasize. To further assist you, the Career Center offers workshops on techniques for researching organizations.

### The Interview Structure

Before receiving a job offer, you will typically have a series of interviews with an employer. The first interview is a screening interview that could be conducted over the phone or at the place of employment. On-campus interviews are also considered screening interviews. Screening interviews are rather brief, usually lasting 30-60 minutes. During that time, the employer will want you to elaborate on experiences outlined in your resume or application, and will describe the organization and available position. If the employer is impressed with your performance in this interview, you will be invited to a second (and perhaps third or fourth) interview.

The second interview process is longer, lasting anywhere from two hours to a whole day. It could include testing, lunch or dinner, a facility tour, as well as a series of interviews with various employees.

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You should come away from the second interview with a thorough understanding of the work environment and job responsibilities and have enough information to decide on a job offer should one be extended.

## **The "Warm-up"**

Each interview follows a rather predictable communication pattern of "warm-up," "information exchange," and "wrap-up" conversations. During the first few minutes of the interview (the "warm-up"), an employer will be formulating a first, and perhaps lasting, impression of you. How you greet the employer, the firmness of your handshake, the way you are groomed and dressed, will all be a part of this initial impression. To help you feel at ease, a practiced interviewer might ask "common-ground" questions about shared interests or acquaintances, or your travel to the interview. Some interviewers might start by saying, "Tell me about yourself," an opening for you to concisely describe your background, skills, and interest in the position.

## **The "Information exchange"**

The information exchange will be the primary part of the interview. It is when you will be asked the most questions and learn the most about the employer. In screening interviews, many employers will spend more time describing their opportunities than asking you specific questions. The reverse will be true in second interviews. Interview questions may range from "Why did you choose to pursue a degree in...?" and "Describe the job you had last summer" to "What are your strengths/weaknesses?" and "What are your long-range career goals?" If you are prepared for the interview, you will be able to promote your qualifications effectively as you respond to questions. With practice, you will gain confidence and become more polished in your presentation.

## **The "Wrap-up"**

Eventually the employer will probably say, "Do you have any questions?" This is the cue that the interview is moving to the "wrap-up" stage. Always ask questions because this demonstrates your prior research and interest in the job. Your questions might be direct, logistical questions such as, "When can I expect to hear from you?" (if that has not been discussed); a question to clarify information the employer has presented; a question regarding the employer's use of new technology or practices related to the career field; or a question to assess the culture and direction of the organization such as "Where is this organization headed in the next five years?" or "Why do you like working for this organization?" Do not ask specific questions about salary or benefits unless the employer broaches the subject first. The employer may also ask you if you have anything else you would like to add or say. Again, it's best to have a response. You can use this opportunity to thank the employer for the interview, summarize your qualifications and reiterate your interest in the position. If you want to add information or emphasize a point made earlier, you can do that, too. This last impression is almost as important as the first impression and will add to the substance discussed during the information exchange.

## Communicating Effectively

Because a job interview is a communication process, your skills will become more polished over time. It is helpful to remember the following:

- Speak clearly and enthusiastically about your experiences and skills. Be professional, but don't be afraid to let your personality shine through. Be yourself.
- Listen carefully. You will want to remember what you learn about the job, and you will certainly want to answer the question that was asked.
- Be positive. Employers do not want to hear a litany of excuses or bad feelings about a negative experience. If you are asked about a low grade, a sudden job change, or a weakness in your background, doesn't be defensive. Focus instead on the facts (briefly) and what you learned from the experience.
- Pay attention to your nonverbal behavior. Look the interviewer in the eye, sit up straight with both feet on the floor, control nervous habits (cracking knuckles, drumming fingers, etc.), and smile as you are greeted.
- Don't be afraid of short pauses. You may need a few seconds to formulate an answer. The interviewer may need time to formulate an appropriate question. It is not necessary to fill up every second with conversation.

## Interview Tips

- Be prepared to market your skills and experiences as they relate to the job described. Work at positioning yourself in the mind of the employer as a person with a particular set of skills and attributes. Employers have problems that need to be solved by employees with particular skills; work to describe your qualifications appropriately.
- Plan to arrive for your interview 10-15 minutes prior to the appointed time. Arriving too early confuses the employer and creates an awkward situation. By the same token, arriving late creates a bad first impression. Ask for directions when making arrangements for the interview.
- Carry a portfolio notepad or at the very least a manila file folder labeled with the employer's name. Bring extra resumes and a list of questions you need answered. You may refer to your list of questions to be sure you've gathered the information you need to make a decision. Do not be preoccupied with taking notes during the interview.
- In many career fields, the lunch or dinner included during the interview day is not only employer hospitality, but also a significant part of the interview process. Brush up on your etiquette and carry your share of the conversation during the meal. Often social skills are part of the hiring decision.
- After the interview, take time to write down the names and titles (check spelling) of all your interviewers, your impressions, remaining questions and information learned. If you are interviewing regularly, this will help you keep employers and circumstances clearly defined.
- Follow up the interview with a thank-you letter. Employers regard this as evidence of your attention to detail, as well as an indication of your final interest in the position.

## **Cooperative Education**

Cooperative Education is a unique component of education that benefits students, employers and the university. It provides opportunities for students to supplement classroom learning with work experience so that they will be better prepared for meaningful careers. The combination of academics and career-related work strengthens the students' collegiate experience and enhance their values as permanent employers upon graduation.

### **History of Cooperative Education**

Cooperative Education was founded in 1906 at the University of Cincinnati by engineering faculty member Herman Schneider. It was called "Cooperative Plan of Education" because it reacquainted the cooperation of both educators and employers. Dr. Schneider made two basic observations about education from which co-op evolved:

*'Classroom education can never hope to teach all the elements of knowledge required for a successful career in any profession. Since the high cost of education is a problem in the country, most students must work part time while attending classes in order to earn a portion of the cost of their education. So why shouldn't these part-time work experiences be quality experience? Due to combined efforts of the National Commission of Cooperative Education and the pressures of society co-op programs have boomed. One reason for this dramatic increase was congressional legislation enacted in 1968 to support the development of Cooperation Education program'.*

### **Schedules and Work Plans**

Savannah State University operates on a semester system and offers three work periods during the year:

**Fall - late August through mid-December**  
**Spring - early January through late April**  
**Summer - mid-May through mid-August**

### **Cooperative Education Work Plans**

Alternate Plan allows a student to rotate full-time work with full-time academic semesters. Parallel Plan allows a student to attend classes part of the day and work the remainder of the day. A minimum of 20 hours is allowed and the student must be enrolled at SSU. These jobs are within the Savannah/Chatham County region.

### **Prerequisites for Cooperative Education Participation**

- ✓ Must be enrolled full-time at SSU.
- ✓ Must have completed 30 semester hours.
- ✓ Must declare a major and have an overall GPA of 2.5.
- ✓ Must be willing to co-op at least two work semester rotations.
- ✓ Some employers require a higher GPA and up to four work semesters.

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## Enrollment in Cooperative Education

Complete an application for the Cooperative Education Program.

Schedule an appointment with the Coordinator.

Prepare a resume to place on file with Cooperation Education.

## Internships

How Cooperative Education Differs From Internships Most Intern positions, as opposed to Cooperative Education positions, provide a one time (usually one semester) opportunity for students to utilize their academic training in a work setting.

### Internships possibilities:

- Salaried, volunteer, or stipend-paid
- Academic credit or non-credit
- Located anywhere - business, industry, state or federal government non-profit institutions, etc.
- Co-op positions generally require 2 or more work semesters and are always salaried.

## How To Start A Cooperative Education Program

Contact the Cooperative Education office at Savannah State University to receive credentials (resume and transcripts) on qualified students in the majors you wish to consider.

## Employer Guidelines

The work of the Cooperative Education student should be career related and expose the students to practical experience in the areas related to their major and or field of interest.

## Internships

Most internship positions, as opposed to Cooperative Education positions, provide a one time (usually one semester) opportunity for students to utilize their academic training in a work setting.

Internships may be:

- **Salaried, volunteer, or paid stipend**
- **Academic credit or non-credit**
- **Located anywhere - business, industry, state or federal government or non-profit institutions, etc.**

(NOTE: Co-op positions generally require 2 or more semesters of work and are always salaried.)

To be eligible for an Internship, students should be enrolled full-time at the institution, registered with the Career Center, and have minimum GPA of 2.0. Opportunities are available for students in all majors as well as all levels of education-freshmen through seniors.

## Guidelines for Writing Business Letters

1. Type each letter individually. Use the same quality paper as your resume. Matching paper and envelopes make the best business impression and are well worth the financial investment.
2. Address the company/agency official by name and title. Verify your information. Be sure to double-check your spelling. If you are not able to secure the correct name for a letter of inquiry, address your letter to "Dear Prospective Employer."
3. Capture the employer's attention by opening your letter with a strong statement. Since an employer receives hundreds of letters each month, you want to make yours stand out.
4. Keep your letters short; no more than one page. Brevity will hold the employer's interest.
5. Use the middle of your letter to stir the reader's curiosity by stating brief facts about your experience and accomplishments, which relates to the employer's needs. Do not repeat the job description from your resume.
6. Include a challenging thought, if possible, which will help the employer believe that meeting you would be a worthwhile investment, even if there is no present job opening.
7. Be direct in requesting an interview, or state that you will call at a certain time to arrange a meeting.
8. If you receive a letter stating that there are no openings at the present time, write a brief letter asking that your resume be kept in an active file for review when similar positions become available.

## Declining a Job Offer

If you are offered a position, which you choose not to accept, decline the offer in writing. Be tactful. You may want to consider employment with this organization in the future.

In a short letter you should advise the person who made the offer to you of your decision. Sometimes, you may wish to include the reason you are declining the offer. Always express your sincere appreciation for their consideration and the position offered.

## Guidelines for Constructing a Reference Page

Your Reference Page is a part of your resume package that you will forward to recruiters during your employment search. Therefore the reference page should be typed and submitted to the recruiter on the same matching resume quality paper that your resume is printed on. The following guidelines should be **adhered to in the constructing of your reference page**:

1. The heading for your Reference Page should be the same heading as your resume – remember you are striving for consistency throughout your resume package. However the only difference will be that you will type REFERENCES FOR above your name.
2. **Identify and ask** four to five (4-5) individuals to be your references – these individuals should be people that you believe will provide you with strong letters of recommendation. These individuals should be: a) an **Advisor** and/or **Professor** within your collegiate academic discipline – who will vouch for your academic strengths; b) a recent or past **Employer** – who can attest to your work ethics, leadership, team spirit, punctuality and

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dependability. Remember – never burn your bridges when leaving an employment opportunity; c) a **Community Service Representative** – who can share your level of commitment and involvement with community oriented work; d) a **Neighbor, Church or Social Organization Member**– who can account for your moral integrity and overall development as a person.

3. Information that you will need to gather from your references are: a) complete name; b) professional title; c) business title, including department name; d) mailing address, including suite number if applicable; e) city, state and zip code; f) area code and telephone number and g) email address.
4. As you submit your resume package **and interview – please keep your list of references abreast of the corporations and positions that you are interviewing for. Therefore, when an interviewer calls your reference – the reference will be better prepared and knowledgeable of whom the caller will be.**



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## COVER LETTER FORMAT

NAME  
Address  
City, State Zip Code  
(AC) Phone #,  
email: [name@cau.edu](mailto:name@cau.edu)

Date of Writing

Mr. Employment  
Job Title  
Company Mailing  
Address City, State Zip Code

Dear Mrs. Job:

**1<sup>st</sup> paragraph:** Tell the purpose for your writing; name of position, or field, or general vocational area in which you are applying; tell how you heard of the position or organization.

**2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph:** Mention one or two qualifications you think would be of greatest interest to the employer; tell why you are particularly interested in this company, location, or type of work; be sure to indicate any related experience, educational background, or specialized training that might increase your employability.

**3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph:** Refer the reader to the enclosed resume. Make a positive statement about your skills and abilities; if applicable, indicate willingness to relocate. Also indicate institution where your transcripts, credentials, or references may be obtained.

**4<sup>th</sup> paragraph:** Close by making a specific request for an interview; give an approximate time period in which you will re-contact the company to further discuss employment opportunities.

Sincerely,

(your handwritten signature in black ink)

Type your name

### \*\*\*Note\*\*\*

A cover letter should always be typed and accompany your resume, **if you are not hand delivering the resume. The cover letter serves as an introduction of you and provides the recruiter with a purpose of your submission.** The cover letter should be coordinated with the resume, having the same heading and on the same quality paper. It should be forwarded in the matching stationary envelope.

## COVER LETTER EXAMPLE

Larry Work  
1906 Career Drive  
Savannah, Georgia 31404  
(912) 123-4567  
Email: [larrywork@career.com](mailto:larrywork@career.com)

June 25, 20xx

Mr. Joe Williams  
District Manager  
Anheuser Beer Companies  
125 Beer Road  
Atlanta, Georgia 30211

Dear Mr. Williams:

This letter is in reference to the position available on the Programming Staff of your Eagle Snack Foods Division. I believe with my educational background and experience I will prove to be an asset to your organization.

Currently, I am a senior, majoring in Information System at Savannah State University. My experience as a Computer Programmer has provided me with an excellent background in many areas of programming. During my tenure at the institution, I have worked three cooperative education rotations with Walker Oil, Inc. and received excellent evaluations on my programming projects. The work was completed in an IBM environment very similar to that of the Eagle Snack Foods Division. In addition, the work experiences have developed my communication and management skills. My goal is to continue learning and growing while making significant contributions to the company as part of the computer programming team.

Enclosed is my resume and application, which provide full details of my qualifications. An interview at your earliest convenience would be greatly appreciated. I may be reached at the aforementioned listings.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely

Larry Work  
Enclosure

## REFERENCES EXAMPLE

NEED A. JOB  
123 Employee Lane, Jobsville, Georgia 30314  
(404) 880-9999 email: need\_a\_job@cau.edu

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## REFERENCES

Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms. First Last Name  
Professional Job Title  
Name of the Company  
Street Address  
Suite #  
City, State Zip Code  
(AC) Phone Number  
Email:

## The Tough Questions and Some Possible Answers

### **Tell me about yourself.**

\*\*\* Cover your education (why you chose your major, scholarship, etc.), work experience, extracurricular activities, volunteer history and what's been going on recently. Keep your answer to not more than 2 or 3 minutes - don't ramble or elaborate.

### **What can you offer us?**

\*\*\* Be sure you know something about the position before you answer this (research the company prior to the interview). Then you can relate some of your past experiences in which you have succeeded in solving problems similar to those you may encounter.

### **What are your strengths?**

\*\*\* Respond with a strength, which if over-done, can get in your way and become a weakness. "My desire to get the job done sometimes causes me to press a little too hard on my organization. I am aware of this problem and believe that I have it under control."

\*\*\* Deal with your need for further training in some area relating to the job.

### **How much are you worth?**

\*\*\* Try to delay answering this until you have learned a lot about the job and explore beforehand the typical ranges they are accustomed to paying.

You may ask what is the typical range for similar jobs in their company. However, through researching the company this information should have also been gathered. If salaries are not provided in the literature, you may also go on Salary.com and give the range that you had in mind, but qualify it by saying you hope to learn more about the job responsibilities and scope.

### **What are your ambitions for the future?**

\*\*\* Indicate your desire to concentrate on doing the immediate job well -- and your confidence that the future will then take care of itself.

### **What do you know about our company?**

\*\*\* If you are prepared, you can honestly state that you have studied the information that is publicly available and are aware of quite a bit of the published facts. However, you might also state that you would like to know more -- and then be ready to ask some intelligent questions. Don't relate all the things you have learned, but merely let your knowledge show through the informed way you handle the interview.

### **Why do you want to work for us?**

\*\*\* Indicate that from your study of the company, many of the activities and problems are the sort that would give you a clear chance to contribute to the company through your past experience, education and skills. If you can honestly say so, explain your admiration for the company and what it is that appeals to you.

### **Please give your definition of a ..... (the position for which you are being interviewed).**

\*\*\* Keep your answer brief and task-oriented.

Deal with responsibilities and accountabilities.

### **How long would it take you to make a meaningful contribution?**

\*\*\* Be realistic and speak in terms of six months to a year.

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## **Why do you feel you have the potential to be a good manager?**

\*\*\* Orient your answer toward your past achievements and the task to be done. Explain how you go about getting work done -- either by yourself or through your organization.

## **What important trends do you see coming in our industry?**

\*\*\* Pick out two or three things that you see coming down the road. This is your chance to show that you have thought about the future, the economics, the markets and the technology of your industry -- and that you have kept informed through journals, newspapers and magazines.

## **Describe what you believe would be an ideal working environment.**

\*\*\* This is a place where you can bring in some of the “satisfiers” and “Ideal job preferences” - but don’t make it sound too sublime or impractical.

## **How do you think your subordinates perceive you?**

\*\*\* Be as positive as you can, but remembering to be honest, too.

## **What did you like most, and least in your last position?**

\*\*\* Be careful on this one. Emphasize the positive and don’t carry on at length about the negatives.

## **Describe a situation in which your work was criticized.**

\*\*\* Be specific and brief: avoid getting emotional or defensive.

## **Are you a leader?**

\*\*\* Yes. Give examples.

## **What Qualities Do Employers Seek?**

The College Placement Council, in a booklet entitled, “So You’re Looking for a Job?” describes the following sixteen traits employers frequently seek in candidates:

- 1. Ability to Communicate.** Do you have the ability to organize your thoughts and ideas effectively? Can you express them clearly when speaking or writing? Can you present your ideas to others persuasively?
- 2. Intelligence.** Do you have the ability to understand the job assignment? Learn the details of operation? Contribute original ideas to your growth?
- 3. Self-Confidence.** Do you demonstrate a sense of maturity that enables you to deal positively and effectively with situations and people?
- 4. Willingness To Accept Responsibility.** Are you someone who recognizes what needs to be done and is willing to do it?
- 5. Initiative.** Do you have the ability to identify the purpose for work and to take action?

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- 6. Leadership.** Can you guide and direct others to attain the recognized objectives?
- 7. Energy Level.** Do you demonstrate a forcefulness and capacity to make things move ahead? Can you maintain your work effort at an above-average rate?
- 8. Imagination.** Can you confront and deal with problems that may not have standard solutions?
- 9. Flexibility.** Are you capable of changing and being receptive to new situations and ideas?
- 10. Interpersonal Skills.** Can you bring out the best effort of individuals so they become effective, enthusiastic members of a team?
- 11. Self-Knowledge.** Can you realistically assess your own capabilities? See yourself as others see you? Clearly recognize your strengths and weaknesses?
- 12. Ability to Handle Conflict.** Can you successfully contend with stressful situations and antagonism?
- 13. Competitiveness.** Do you have the capacity to compete with others and the willingness to be measured by your performance in relation to that of others?
- 14. Goal Achievement.** Do you have the ability to identify and work toward specific goals? Do such goals challenge your abilities?
- 15. Vocational Skills.** Do you possess the positive combination of education and skills required for the position you are seeking?
- 16. Direction.** Have you defined your basic personal needs? Have you determined what type of positions will satisfy your knowledge and goals?

### Behavioral Interviews

Recruiters have indicated that past behavior and reactions to various situations is a better indicator to determine your future reactions. Therefore, more companies are now using the Behavioral Based Interview to assess your abilities to fit into their corporate environment. To effectively perform in a Behavioral Based Interview you may want to develop the following style of answering these questions using the STAR method.

- S** - Situation, provide an example of the situation at hand.
- T** - Provide the task that relates to the situation of what is to be accomplished.
- A** - What action plan did you implement to accomplish the overall goal of the situation?
- R** - What were your overall results of your action plan that you implemented to resolve the situation?

The following questions may be asked of you during your behavioral style interview in efforts to determine the following characteristics – Business Acumen, Selling/Influence, Technical/Scientific, Interpersonal/Impact and Motivation/Job Fit:

- What is most important to you in conducting business with others?

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- Tell me about a time when you successfully defended your position despite strong opposition from your peers/professors/boss.
- Give me an example of a time when you made a mistake or inadvertently gave inaccurate information to another person. How did you respond to the situation?
- How would you describe your approach to structure in your school/work life?
- Why did you choose to pursue this academic discipline or type of work?
- Give me an example of you setting your goals. If you did not succeed in meeting your goal what was your response or next plan of action?
- What are your favorite or least favorite courses in college? Provide your rationale for each.
- Give me an example of a situation in which you had to rely on team members to accomplish something for which you were ultimately accountable. How did you motivate the team to get accomplished what you needed?
- Tell me about a time when you effectively resolved an issue with an irate customer.
- What are your core values? Give specific examples that demonstrate those values.
- Which courses in college were your best/worst? Why?
- What do you know about our company and/or industry?
- Tell me what you have to offer that positions you above the other candidates.

### **Questions you may want ask the interviewer**

- 1) What is the most pressing challenge facing the new person for this position? What are the obstacles you see in getting the desired results?
- 2) Beyond technical skills, what personal qualities do you think are critical for success in this job or company?
- 3) What else do you need to know about me to make a hiring decision?
- 4) Then, ask for the job (in your own words).
- 5) How do the community, its suppliers and employees view this company?
- 6) Why did you choose to work here? What do you like most and least about this corporation?
- 7) How will performance be measured (evaluated) at the company and/or for this position?

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- 8) What do you see as the greatest external challenge for this company?
- 9) What are some examples of career paths top management have taken?
- 10) Does this organization sponsor extra-curricular activities or have recreational facilities available to employees?
- 11) Is this a new position that is being created or did the individual holding this position get promoted? What is the retention rate of people in this position?
- 12) What is the company's promotion record among minorities and females (gender is optional)?
- 13) What was the growth pattern of the company over the last five years?
- 14) What are the company's expectations for new recruits?
- 15) Why do you enjoy working for your firm?
- 16) Describe the typical first-year assignments.
- 17) What type of training is required? How long is the training and where is the training?
- 18) What makes your firm different from its competitors?



## **Ten Common Pitfalls that can Ruin an Interview**

Regardless of your business wardrobe, attaché case or how brilliant or dedicated you sell yourself to be, blow the interview and you are out of the competition for the job. It is easier to fail an interview than it is to pass one.

### **1. Knowing little or nothing about the company**

This is the number one eliminator. When an interviewee walks into an interview not knowing anything about the company, interviewers consider this a sign of disinterest, apathy. They may assume that you are only there to get a steady paycheck and a place to hang out for a couple of years until something better comes along.

### **2. Negative Attitude**

Interviewers pick up on negative attitude immediately. Companies are not interested in a person that is constantly complaining, whining, angry, miserable and pessimistic. If you have a grievance regarding your present/past employer, an interview is not the time to vent your displeasure. Companies are interested in team players that are interested in the betterment of the organization. They are interested in persons who will work tirelessly to get the job done and who have creative ideas and suggestions for improvements.

### **3. Poor Communication Skills**

Companies are interested in persons who can mix chitchat with intelligent conversation, who can mix and mingle with top corporate executives and not feel intimidated. Interviewers are interested in candidates that can sell their products, talk informatively about the company and get their point across. Interviewers are very mindful of proper grammar and diction while the interviewee is speaking. Do not use slang words, clichés or jargon to get your point across.

Do not underestimate the value of small talk regarding the weather, sports, your travel to the interview, current events, etc. This gives an interviewer insight into your extra-curricular activities and knowledge of current events. Everything discussed in an interview is relevant and could help determine your passing or failing an interview.

### **4. Rambling Disconnected Answers**

Before you start to answer questions, restate the questions. Gather your thoughts before you give your answer. When you give your answers, give complete sentences and get straight to the point. Elaborate on key points.

### **5. Inappropriate Behavior**

The interview is no time to relax and become too comfortable with the interviewer, as if you have known him for years. Be on your best interviewing behavior. This is not the place for chewing gum, smoking, fidgeting or fumbling. Arrogance, cockiness, and egotism are very offensive also.

### **6. Failure to make Eye Contact**

Eye contact with your interviewer is very important. You do not have to stare at the interviewer for the entire 60 minutes, but look at the person most of the time, especially when speaking. Avoid gazing out of the window, into the ceiling (your answers to the difficult questions are not in the ceiling) and around the office.

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## **7. Failure to ask Questions**

After the interviewer has quizzed you with a barrage of questions, then it is your time to show the recruiter how interested you are by asking intelligent questions about promotions, corporate culture, advancement opportunities, etc. This is not the appropriate time to inquire about salary, perks and benefit packages.

## **8. Improper Dress**

It is not necessary that you dress as though you just came from an Ebony Fashion Fair Extravaganza, but you ought to look “corporate”. That means conservative in business suits and dresses. Men and women should have a conservative haircut and styles, (the trendy styles are inappropriate for the corporate world). Women should select a pair of classy, conservative earrings (posts are preferable) - none for the men!

## **9. No Career Direction and not knowing self**

Do not come across in the interview as if you are unsure of yourself, unresponsive, or passive. Be assertive and aggressive without coming across as being arrogant and cocky.

Assess your goals and objectives prior to the interview. Tact, diplomacy and timing pay off. Exhibit a strong sense of your professional self.

## **10. Cancelling or showing up late**

Unless you are on death's door DO NOT CANCEL YOUR SCHEDULED INTERVIEW. Although your explanation for canceling is legitimate, it can be a bad reflection on you. If you absolutely have to cancel, give the interviewer as much notice as possible (at least 48 hours) in order to give him/her a chance to reschedule you. The ultimate pitfall is not showing up at all; this cancels all hopes of ever getting another interview with this company—much less a position.

Another “no-no” is showing up late to a scheduled interview. Prior to your interview you should have routed your means of travel to the interview location, laid out your interview attire (including the basic essentials), made copies of your resume, checked the car for ample gas, air in the tires, etc. Making all of these advance preparations will eliminate having last minute crises that could cause you to be late to your VERY IMPORTANT DATE.

## **Follow-up site Interviews**

After the initial interview (usually on the college campus), students who have won the initial impression of the human resources recruiter will be invited to visit the facility of the potential employer. You will usually get a letter from the recruiter stating the company's interest in following up further with you. DONOT GET TOO HAPPY and start counting your dollars - you have only accomplished the first step of the job process.

Upon receiving that letter, you should notify the Career Services and Co-Op office, so that you may immediately start physical and mental preparation for the interview. This interview will probably be more intense and in-depth than the campus interview. You should expect to interview with more than one person. Your initial contact may be with the recruiter you interviewed with on campus. The recruiter may then introduce you to managers with hiring authority within the area in which you are interviewing.

The interviews may be on a one-on-one basis or a committee interview. In a committee interview, do not feel intimidated by the number of interviewers.

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Take a deep breath, take your time and answer the questions as if only one person was in the interview. Maintain eye contact with the person asking the question; you may make eye contact with the other interviewers, but end your statement with eye contact to the initial interviewer. You may expect a follow-up/site interview to last anywhere from two hours to eight hours. In this type of interview, you will be touring the facility and meeting potential co-workers (who will also be evaluating you).

The interviewer, along with the potential supervisors, will probably treat you to lunch. The conversation during lunch will probably be a discussion of social activities of the organization, current events community concerns and possibly a few light questions regarding your activities. Remember, you are still being evaluated -- your grammar, diction, knowledge of current issues, and table etiquette, etc. REVIEW TABLE ETIQUETTE.

## **Building your Professional Wardrobe**

First impressions are usually lasting and the outcome of your interview may even be determined by your outward appearance. The average college student has a very limited budget with which to build and maintain a professional wardrobe. It is with this approach in mind that we offer the following suggestions.

### **Women**

#### **Suits**

Select a well-tailored dark colored skirt suit -- navy, grey, taupe, or black. As your budget increases you can expand on this.

#### **Blouses**

Select solid colors - white or beige. Cotton and silk are your best fabrics but most synthetic fibers (wool blends, rayon, etc.) will do just fine. A scarf may be worn appropriately to accent your choice of blouse and suit.

#### **Dresses**

Dresses follow the same rules as suits -- conservative, basic styles and solid colors. Floral and other printed materials tend to be perceived as un-business like and you may not be “taken seriously”.

#### **Shoes**

Invest in shoes that are closed heel and closed toe, all leather and with heels about 3 inches in height.

Again, choose dark colors for that conservative and professional appearance. Open toe sandals, sling backs and mules are unacceptable for an interview or corporate receptions.

#### **Jewelry and Accessories**

Keep jewelry and accessories to a minimum -- a simple watch, small gold or silver earrings, a bracelet, and one ring per hand. Jewelry, like make-up should enhance your appearance not draw attention to it. Earrings should be of the stud or small loop type. Earrings in the nose, tongue and eyebrow are unacceptable during the interviewing process and there should only be one earring per ear. Another don't is the use of telephones or pagers in the interview - turn them off.

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## **Handbags and Portfolios**

Purchase a long lasting leather handbag or portfolio. Besides looking good for an interview, they will last many years on the job. Black is the color of choice, as it will work well with just about any clothing scheme you wear. If you can afford it, other colors may be bought later.

## **Hair**

Keep your hair well groomed and in business looking styles. Stay away from trendy and controversial styles. Remember, the styles and bold colors that are popular on campus may not be appropriate in a professional environment.

## **Nails, Make-up & Perfume**

People will tend to notice your hands, so keep nails clean and at a moderate length. Avoid vibrant nail polish and artwork on your nails. Make-up should be natural looking and should enhance your features.

Check with the cosmetics consultant at your local retailer when buying make-up and emphasize that you are seeking a daytime makeover appearance. Perfume should be very light and airy – do not apply too much.

## **Men**

### **Suits**

All college men should start out their wardrobe with the standard single-breasted dark suit(s) – black, gray and/or navy. Very subtle striped are acceptable. Choose suits of wool or wool-blends that are wrinkle-proof and can be worn year round.

### **Shirts**

Stay with the traditional long-sleeved white shirt, it works well with any color suit or tie. Striped shirts may be worn if the stripes are small, the colors subdued, and it goes well with the suit and tie. Shirts should always be well ironed and have a crisp look.

### **Belts/Shoes**

Leather belts and shoes always. Black, burgundy or brown wing-tip shoes give that very professional image. Belt color should be the same color as shoes. Shoes should be polished at all times.

### **Ties**

Ties tend to be determined by trends but should be professional in nature. Remember, your tie should just touch the top of your belt buckle. Braces or suspenders may also be worn, but never with a belt.

### **Accessories**

Accessories should be kept to a minimum. A simple watch (not flashy or with bold colors) and one ring per hand are acceptable. A don't in the interview is a nose, ear, eyebrow and tongue piercing. Another don't is the use of telephones or pagers in the interview – turn them off. Carry only a good quality portfolio, briefcase, wallet and a pen.

## **Hair, Nails & Cologne**

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Nails should be cut and well manicured. Hair, beard and moustache should be neatly combed, cut and trimmed. Stay away from controversial hairstyles. If wearing cologne, wear those that are not overpowering and irritating – you only need a small amount.

**Men and Women** both should invest in a top quality, lined trench coat and a large black umbrella. The fact that it is raining, cold or snowing should not prevent you from arriving at your destination looking your best.

It does not require a lot of money to start a professional wardrobe while in college. It does however require careful planning and sensible shopping. Students should realize that companies are going to choose those candidates that not only interview well and have the required academic qualifications, but also look the part.

Investing in a professional wardrobe might seem expensive at first, but in the long run it will become a very worthwhile investment.

## **Proper Etiquette**

Most of us respectfully address elderly people as Mister, Mrs., Ms. or Misses before their surname, extend a morning greeting to co-workers, and respond with “thank you” as a courtesy. We learned and accepted these so-called manners as suitable conduct at an early age. Such an accepted manner of acting is called etiquette.

Etiquette is not an inherited characteristic. Etiquette is typically learned from your family, friends, and acquaintances. You may teach yourself through the use of books, manuals and periodicals as you take your place in society.

## **Introducing Yourself**

In business situations, it is polite to introduce a younger person to an older person, or a lower ranking level to a high-ranking person. Regardless of the gender of the greeter, both men and women should stand for an introduction. The most courteous way to introduce a person or to be introduced is to smile, repeat the individual’s name and give a firm handshake, while maintaining eye contact. The same manner should be taken in a farewell.

## **Entering A Business Office**

When entering a business office always, introduce yourself and state the purpose of your visit to the receptionist and/or secretary. When entering for an interview always, state your name, who your interview is with and the time of the interview.

*(Example: Good morning, my name is Ms. Julie Jenkins; I have an interview with Mr. Need A. Job at 10:00 o’clock).*

Be certain you arrive at least fifteen minutes prior to your scheduled interview. After introducing yourself, have a seat in the reception area to gather your train of thought or to read over materials pertaining to the company.

If for any reason you need to use the telephone, always secure permission with the receptionist and/or secretary. Utilize the telephone only to make local calls and keep your conversation to a minimum of one to three minutes. Speak in a tone that is conducive to an office environment.

Remember to always Thank the Secretary and/or Receptionist for the Use of the Telephone

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The rule of thumb, upon entering a person's office requires that you always knock to gain entry permission. If the person is on a telephone call, wait in the exterior of the office or return back to the reception area – never enter the office and sit in the person's face during their conversation. Always wait to be invited to have a seat, never assume you may be seated.

Upon leaving the business office, acknowledge the receptionist and/or secretary. A WORD OF ADVICE, the receptionist and/or secretary can help or hinder your overall success with a corporation.

### **Telephone Etiquette**

When answering your telephone, assume that every call is a business call. Answer with a clear, cheerful HELLO, not "Joe's Pool Hall" or some form of slang. If your music is loud, turn it off prior to answering the telephone. ALWAYS, have paper and pen available to take the person's name, title, name of company and telephone number and any other pertinent information.

**CAUTION!** If you have a voice mail service please have a clear introductory message, suitable for business. State clearly your name as provided on your resume, "This is the residence of Wanna Work" (and if you have a roommate indicate both names). If you prefer music in the background, select an instrumental piece, not heavy loud rap that can distort your message. Representatives from Corporate America state that time is of the essence, and they prefer not to waste valuable time with long introductory messages on a voice mail.

When calling a business establishment state your name, the person you wish to speak with and the purpose of your call. Speak clearly and be brief.

Business calls should be to the point. If you have additional information to give to the person whom you are calling, have it with you at the time of the call. **DO NOT LEAVE THE PERSON ON HOLD WHILE YOU ARE RETRIEVING THE INFORMATION. YOU ARE WASTING THEIR VALUABLE TIME.**

- Never eat, smoke or chew when talking on the phone.
- If you go to someone's office and they are on the phone, do not enter unless they beckon you to enter.
- If you are in someone's office and they accept a call while you are there, volunteer to wait outside. If they say it's OK to stay -- divert your attention to avoid staring in their face during the phone conversation.
- NEVER speak to someone else while you are on the phone.
- Always end your conversation on a pleasant note, thanking them for calling you.
- Always apologize when you have dialed the wrong number.

### **Dining Etiquette**

In a professional environment the way you present yourself is a good indication of who you really are. As a professional, the impression your table manners leave on a recruiter or new associate will affect that person's total opinion of your personal worth. To leave a glowing impression of competence and intelligence upon the minds of those sharing a meal with you, your table manners should be sparkling.

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## **Being Seated and Excusing Yourself from the Table**

Take your seat after the host/hostess has asked you to be seated. The host/hostess will inform you of the seating arrangements. If for any reason you need to leave the table, excuse yourself politely between courses – not in the middle of a course. When you excuse yourself, place your napkin on your chair or to the left of your plate.

## **Napkin Use**

The meal begins when the host unfolds his or her napkin. This is your signal to do the same. Place your napkin on your lap, completely unfolded if it is a small luncheon napkin or in half, lengthwise, if it is a large dinner napkin. Typically, you want to put your napkin on your lap soon after sitting down at the table (but follow your host's lead).

The napkin remains on your lap throughout the entire meal and should be used to gently blot your mouth when needed. The host will signal the end of the meal by placing his or her napkin on the table. Once the meal is over, you too should place your napkin neatly on the table to the right of your dinner plate. (Do not refold your napkin, but don't wad it up, either.)

## **Using Your Eating Utensils Properly**

Eating utensils are generally placed in a convenient order for use during the various courses of a meal. Start with the first piece of silverware on the outside of the left side of your plate and work your way course by course towards the plate. Customarily, the silverware is arranged in the following order, from left to right: salad fork, dinner fork, cover plate (a plate indicating the place setting for one person), meat knife, salad knife, fish knife, soup spoon, and cocktail fork or grapefruit spoon. Depending on the number of courses in the meal, all of these utensils may or may not be utilized. It is preferable that if any other utensils are needed that they be placed during the appropriate course. However, the dessert utensil may be placed above the cover plate.

## **The Knife and Fork**

There are two ways of using a knife and fork, the American and the Continental fashion.

**American Style** -- cut your food with the fork in the left hand and the knife in your right hand. Switching your fork to the right hand place the food in your mouth and rest the knife on the side or top of your plate.

**Continental Style** -- your fork remains in the left hand as food is cut and conveyed to the mouth while your knife remains in the right hand.

You should only cut the portion of food that you will place in your mouth at that time. Do not cut the entire portion of the food at one time. Also, in order to get small portions of food from your plate, use your knife in the left hand and fork in the right to place food on the fork (NOT YOUR THUMB).

No matter which eating style you use, when you finish eating, your dirty fork and/or knife should be placed on the plate in such a way that they will not slide off when the plate is removed. Never leave soiled utensils on the table or in a cup.

## **Eating Soup and Bread**

- When eating soup, gather soup by directing the soup spoon away from you rather than toward you.
- This will eliminate the soup from possibly spilling on you.

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- When sipping broth, do so from the side of the spoon, rather than using the front of the spoon. When eating meats or vegetables in a soup, insert the spoon into the mouth forwardly.
- It is appropriate to place oyster crackers in your soup, but never Saltines or Ritz – they should be eaten separately.
- NEVER tip your soup bowl or cup unless it has a handle. NEVER bring your cup to your mouth to drink the broth.
- You may use your fingers to eat your bread when you are dining. It is appropriate to break off a bite size piece, butter it and then enjoy that piece. DO NOT break in half, butter it, and then bite off the piece.

### **Conversation**

Keep your conversation at the dining table light, (current events, sports, discussion of the company, etc). Remember to follow the lead of your host/ hostess; they will dictate the topic of conversation and when to start eating your meal. Avoid controversial topics such as sex and religion.

### **Selection of Items on the Menu**

If you are given the option to choose your dinner items, always be mindful of what your host/hostess is ordering and order items in the same price range. Also, order items that are easy for you to negotiate cutting with your fork and knife (example, do not order baked or fried chicken at a formal dining setting, if you cannot effectively use your fork and knife to consume the meat). Order filet fish or roast beef, something that is easier to negotiate.

Be careful of cherry tomatoes on your garden salad. You may not want to risk cutting them, because they have a tendency to squirt juices.

Again, follow the lead of your host/hostess. If they order dessert, then you have the option of ordering a dessert, should you desire. However, if they do not order dessert, then you should not indulge.

### **When You Have Finished**

Do not push your plate away from you when you have finished eating. Leave your plate where it is in the place setting. The common way to show that you have finished your meal is to lay your fork and knife diagonally across your plate. Place your knife and fork side by side, with the sharp side of the knife blade facing inward and the fork, tines down, to the left of the knife. The knife and fork should be placed as if they are pointing to the numbers 10 and 4 on a clock face. Make sure they are placed in such a way that they do not slide off the plate as it is being removed.

Once you have used a piece of silverware, never place it back on the table. Do not leave a used spoon in a cup, place it on the saucer. You can leave a soup spoon in a soup plate. Any unused silverware is simply left on the table