

# JOB SEARCH SKILLS

*by Emmy Sobieski of the UCSD Economics Leadership Council*

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## RESUMES IN A DIGITAL WORLD

As of 2014, **machines are over 60% of web traffic**, with 60% of those bots being driven by search engines and scrapers. This has a profound impact on the creation of resumes. Your resume **MUST** be optimized for search engines, LinkedIn, and corporate online job application websites.

- (1) **OFFLINE RESUME:** keep your resume clean, concise and on one page. This is your resume you **BRING** to an interview.
- (2) **ONLINE RESUME:** should be **MAXIMUM** two pages long. It should be Search Engine Optimized with the most important information earlier in your resume and plenty of keywords associated with your desired career. Research the latest technologies of resume scrapers and search engines, and then design your resume. If you apply to jobs that are markedly different, you should have resumes for each type of job so that you show up well in a keyword comparison vs. other applicants for that job.
- (3) **LINKED IN PROFILE** (resume #3): Your LinkedIn Profile is your most important resume. Use your online resume as a base to start your LinkedIn Profile. Search engines rank items higher up in a LinkedIn Profile with higher importance. Your title and summary are very important. The summary should be your elevator pitch populated with keywords.
- (4) **ELEVATOR PITCH: your mobile resume!** 75 words or less (30 seconds) what is your name, major, year graduating, career/job goal and pertinent experience. Pitch who you are and where you are going to a stranger in an elevator. You can use parts or all of your elevator pitch in your LinkedIn profile, while networking and in interviews. **RESEARCH** good examples of an elevator pitch.

## OFFLINE RESUME

### **RESUME WRITING: GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- (1) Order of sections for most students:
  - a. Contact Information and **ADD YOUR LINKED IN URL at the top of your resume**
  - b. Education
  - c. Experience
  - d. Interests
- (2) For graduates who have been out of school for more than a year:
  - a. Contact Information and **ADD YOUR LINKED IN URL at the top of your resume**
  - b. Experience
  - c. Education
  - d. Professional memberships, awards, publications, interests
- (3) Describe yourself and highlight your best attributes in terms of what the employer likely needs.
- (4) Convince an employer that you offer relevant experience, knowledge, and enthusiasm.
- (5) Tailor your resume for different industries or types of positions.
- (6) Information on your resume should be where employers expect to find it.
- (7) Your resume should be free of clutter, pleasing to the eye, and follow traditional, conservative formats.
- (8) Font size 11 or 12. Print on quality white or beige paper with laser printer.
- (9) **BE CAREFUL** when including things such as “summary of qualifications and skills”, “career objective” and “relevant course work”. These can make the offline resume appear busy, but they are **very useful for your online resume** where keywords are the focus, not visual simplicity.
- (10) **DO NOT INCLUDE:** references, or the statement “references available upon request” or personal information such as: age, height, weight, sex, hair color, marital status, or a photograph of yourself.
- (11) Describe your job responsibilities by consistently using **ACTIVE PAST TENSE VERBS**.
- (12) **Proof-read** your resume several times, including backwards. Pay particular attention to proper names, employers, cities, acronyms, etc. Carefully examine it to ensure accurate cell phone and email information. Ensure you use consistent date abbreviations, verb tense and visual formatting. Be

accurate and purge distracting typographical, punctuation, spelling or grammatical errors and formatting inconsistencies.

- (13) Have at least two different people review your resume. Use the alumni network.
- (14) Consider feedback carefully. Only adopt suggestions after review and consideration.
- (15) This offline resume will be your **starting point**. Bring this resume to interviews.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

- (1) **The top of your resume should include your contact information.** Provide employers with current contact information. Your email address and cell phone number **MUST** match your online presence.
- (2) Use the name you wish to use at work. If you go by your middle name, list your first initial, middle name, and surname. Use your full legal name for government documents (IRS, social security, etc).
- (3) When saving your resume on your computer, use **only your name and the word “resume” to title the file. Convert your resume to PDF format before emailing it to any prospective employers.**
- (4) Use your current mailing address. If you are targeting employers in your hometown, list your local address as a second address, labeled “permanent address” for those potential employers.
- (5) List a cell phone number where an employer can reach you during business hours. Be sure that your voice mail functions and contains a professional greeting. Use an email address appropriate for business communications. Check your voice messages and email messages daily. Respond promptly and using professional language to any communications in your professional network. Use full sentences and proof read emails before you send them.

## EDUCATION SECTION

This section should include a concise summary of your educational experience. Begin with your most recent education, and list, in the following order:

- (1) Your degree and the date (or expected date) conferred (i.e. list as “expected June, 2016”) **right justify**.
- (2) Grade point average – list your **overall G.P.A. as well as your major G.P.A. only if it is higher than your overall G.P.A.** Each G.P.A. appears on a separate line, is clearly labeled and **right justified**.
- (3) Academic honors, scholarships, teaching assistantships, and other awards or recognitions (more likely to be read in the education section).
- (4) Do not list your high school education unless you attended a particularly competitive, prestigious, or specialized high school program, or your interests going forward are further education (i.e. PhD candidate and had very high GPA, National Merit Scholar, high SAT, etc).

## EXPERIENCE SECTION

- (1) Clean format: Company (Bold), City..... Right Justify dates worked; month format consistent
  - a. Job Title (Italic Bold)
  - b. Job Description (Normal font)
- (2) **Allot more space to recent positions.**
- (3) **Think about the employer’s ideal candidate’s characteristics as you describe your experience and qualifications. How could your skills and knowledge benefit the company?** This may differ between employers.
- (4) You may benefit from creating more than one resume, tailored to different job types.
- (5) Select words that convey the most information possible about what you did. Active verbs are most effective in describing the specific tasks you completed.
- (6) Quantify your experience when possible: how many clients you served, the size of the budget you prepared, how quickly you were promoted, or the percentage of sales you increased.
- (7) Use an active voice: “performed research,” “drafted memoranda,” “prepared financial reports.” Avoid using “responsibilities included: . . . .” Highlight how your experience evidences initiative, independence, attention to detail, ability to follow direction, and other desirable traits.
- (8) Describe not only paid employment, but also internships, including volunteer work. Do not neglect these valuable positions. If you have a future experience lined up, add it to the top of your experience

section, and include a short general description of what you expect to do at the internship. Describe expected experiences with the word “**Anticipate.**”

Be descriptive and specific: performed research, compiled statistics, analyzed and solved problem, made oral presentations to whom, drafted a proposal, dealt with clients, delivered results under pressure and within deadlines, founded an organization? Use industry specific business terms. If you were an office manager who ordered supplies and worked with vendors, consider saying “managed supply chain” instead of ordered supplies, as long as it is still true.

### **AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS**

List scholarships and awards by exact name and indicate when or how often the honor was received, if not obvious from the title. If the purpose, accomplishment recognized by, or source of the award is not obvious, provide a brief description. **If these awards/scholarships/grants are impressive, put them in the Education section for a cleaner resume.**

### **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, MEMBERSHIPS & ACTIVITIES**

List only the names of organizations of which you are or have been an active member. Be prepared to discuss your contributions to the organization in an interview. This is a great section to boost your resume if your experience section is thin on content.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE & VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES SECTION**

Highlighting your involvement in charitable and community activities serves several purposes: demonstrating an interest in and dedication to helping others; bolstering a resume that lacks significant work experience; and, providing an unexpected connection to the person reviewing your resume. It showcases the same skills as those of paid positions, such as leadership, initiative, organization, responsibility, and business savvy. List volunteer activities in which you are or were actively involved following the guidelines above regarding “experience.”

### **LANGUAGES & SPECIAL SKILLS SECTION**

List the languages you speak in addition to English and accurately **indicate your level of proficiency**. If your native language is something other than English, it is useful to list fluency in English. List other skills in specific computer programs if they are unique or industry specific (i.e. do not say you are proficient in “Office” or “Word.” However, you can say advanced in “Excel” or “STATA” if that is the case).

### **INTERESTS SECTION**

Having an interest or hobby in common with an interviewer can draw a fuller picture of you as an individual. Be prepared to discuss what you list in an interview. You can highlight certain interests based on the employers you are targeting, and the impressions they will form of you based on your listed interests. **For particularly competitive careers such as investment banking, competitive success in sport and/or experience in the Military are sought after in potential employees.** Examples of interests: distance running, Italian architecture, sailing, jazz piano, Russian literature, Greek mythology, Opera, etc.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

**Before you send out a single resume, Google yourself.**

- (1) Consider the image you convey. Employers will do an Internet search prior to scheduling an interview or before extending an offer. Review your posts and **pictures** on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, etc. Make sure what you find reflects the same professionalism as your resume.
- (2) Managed correctly, an active online presence can improve your chances of getting job offers.

## ONLINE RESUME

- (1) Start with your completed **offline resume**
- (2) **ADD YOUR LINKED IN URL to your contact info at the top of your resume, BUT BE CAREFUL because sometimes this URL trips up the machines, bots, etc. because it is not a typical field in contact information.** Track if this causes you problems and you may decide to remove the URL from your online resume but leave it in your offline resume.
- (3) **Remove special formatting.** LinkedIn, Google, and HR products for companies all use resume scrapers. These take your resume and auto-populate their internal fields. If you have special formatting in your resume, your information may not be accurate or complete when it reaches potential employers.
- (4) **Research** the formatting that employer you are targeting use. For instance your resume must be in Word format to be accepted into Qualcomm's system, NOT PDF. Attempt to submit a resume to a corporation online and then CHECK how it populates their fields. See if the order (i.e. contact info, education, experience, interests) will be downloaded correctly. If not change the order. If you notice you are changing the order to a set format most of the time, then re-order your resume.
- (5) Add back: "summary of qualifications and skills", "career objective" and "relevant course work". Many search engines and even employer sites will rank keywords found higher up in your resume higher. Therefore, your career objective section should be at the top of your resume and full of relevant keywords for the job you seek.

## LINKEDIN PROFILE

- (1) **MAKE YOUR PROFILE PUBLIC.**
- (2) If you already have a LinkedIn presence, be sure it is CONSISTENT with your ONLINE RESUME.
- (3) **BEGIN YOUR SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION AKA KEYWORD EXTRAVAGANZA!** LinkedIn has boxes in each section with a maximum number of characters allowed in each box. Especially for the boxes higher up in the LinkedIn profile, fill these with relevant keywords.
- (4) **Your ONLINE RESUME is an outline of your LinkedIn Profile.**
  - a. Upload your ONLINE RESUME. Reorganize the data to fit more into education and experience.
  - b. **PUT STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, VOLUNTEER WORK, ETC. IN EXPERIENCE SECTION.**  
You can also put them in the section called Organizations, but the bots and scrapers do not pull from this section, so you need to move as much as possible to Experience.
- (5) **MAKE A LIST OF KEYWORDS** that are often associated with the companies, careers and jobs you are interested in. These can be job titles like financial analyst but can also be company names like Goldman Sachs and tickers like QCOM. It will take time on search engines to make your list robust.
- (6) **KEYWORDS: The higher up (earlier) on your profile a word is, the more importance it is given by search engines.** These search engines are bots that go out on the Internet and on LinkedIn searching for candidates using basic search engine techniques. The people who receive the results of these searches are Human Resources managers at nearly all firms, small and large, who are hiring.
- (7) Edit your LinkedIn Profile so your name is in the **URL**: [www.linkedin.com/in/name](http://www.linkedin.com/in/name)
- (8) **HEADLINE**: what you do, for whom, where. Headline can include your email if you want people to find your email without needing to go onto LinkedIn. Your choice. Brand LinkedIn Profile with most desired job position (LinkedIn defaults to last job or "student UCSD"). Customize your **HEADLINE** and **PERSONAL TAG LINE** with keywords that best link to the careers and jobs you are most interested in.
- (9) **SUMMARY BOX: Start with your Elevator Pitch (see Page 6)** and then you populate your elevator pitch with relevant **KEYWORDS** for the industries and companies you are targeting. **SUMMARY BOX IS HIGH UP SO ALL KEYWORDS WILL RECEIVE HIGH RANKS AND IMPORTANCE.**
- (10) **SPECIALTIES**: add keywords (here they can look like a list)

- (11) ALL LINKEDIN TEXT FIELDS ARE OPPORTUNITIES, FILL THEM WITH KEYWORDS TO OPTIMIZE FOR SEARCH
- (12) Author a **Blog** on a professional topic and display a link to your blog on LinkedIn
- (13) **ENDORSEMENTS**: for specific skills required in the jobs you seek. **This is LESS about the skills you have and more about getting endorsements for the skills employers are seeking where there may be overlap.** Ask teachers, employers, and co-workers to endorse you. Those endorsing you must realistically be able to know your work skills (ie not your mother). Endorse others.
- (14) **RECOMMENDATIONS** are mini-testimonials. Ask teachers and employers and coworkers to recommend you and to do testimonials
- (15) **JOIN GROUPS**: Search for groups that are relevant to your desired career and join/participate in group discussions. This will allow you to build your network. Employers look at the size and relevance of your network.
- (16) **START DISCUSSIONS WITHIN GROUPS**; link them to your wall via an update post. Only start a discussion if you think it will generate comments. Starting a discussion that generates no comments is a negative for your LinkedIn profile and score with bots. Use KEYWORDS in your discussions.
- (17) **COMMENT**: write comments in GROUP DISCUSSIONS to showcase your expertise and USE KEYWORDS in your comments.
- (18) **LINKS**: Customize links: 3 website links (former employers and your blog), and **CUSTOMIZE** the title of each link so it is not a URL but a nice title. USE KEYWORDS in each Title.
- (19) **STATUS UPDATES**: you must have regular status updates, either new blog entries, updated courses completed, comments, discussions, groups joined, networking meetings attended, new recommendations, new endorsements, and even better job triumphs that you are allowed to share. Be sure to review your company's social media policies before sharing job wins. **STAY ACTIVE!**
- (20) **BUILD YOUR NETWORK**: your network size and relevance is important, but **BE CAREFUL!** If you receive too many DK (don't know this person) this can hurt your profile. Consider in your message in asking someone to add you to their network to ask them to merely not answer if they do not want to add you to their network.

## ELEVATOR PITCH

- (1) **Your elevator pitch is your mobile resume.**
- (2) Your elevator pitch should be 75 words or less (30 seconds), although it can be up to two minutes long. If 75 words seems too brief, then aim for less than 150 words.
- (3) Include: your name, major, year graduating, career/job goal and pertinent experience.
- (4) Pitch who you are and where you are going to a stranger in an elevator.
- (5) This prepares you for all sorts of networking opportunities.
- (6) If the short conversation is interesting, the conversation might continue, end in exchange of business card, or result in a scheduled meeting.
- (7) You can use parts or all of your elevator pitch in your LinkedIn profile, while networking and in interviews.
- (8) RESEARCH good examples of an elevator pitch.
- (9) KEYWORDS are good to keep in mind when forming an elevator pitch. KEYWORDS provide strong subliminal cues to your audience regarding your strengths.

## JOB INTERVIEWS

JOB INTERVIEWS ARE DESIGNED TO ASSESS:

- (1) Your professionalism (courteous, honest, no exaggerations or half-truths)
- (2) Your fit for the job (applicable skills/personality fit into the firm's culture)
- (3) Your interest in the job

THINK FROM AN EMPLOYER'S PERSPECTIVE:

- (1) Employers want: Clear, concise, smart, efficient, and effective employees.
- (2) ALL communication reflects your understanding of their needs, i.e. why you are a fit for their company
- (3) PREPARE for an interview, internship or job so you immediately impress

## RESEARCH: WHAT IS THE EMPLOYER LOOKING FOR IN AN EMPLOYEE?

### (1) **Research the company where you will interview**

- a. Research the company and what it does, its industry, competition (how it competes and whom it competes with), new products, product direction, etc. which are SPECIFIC and RELEVANT to the company. Understand how your desired job fits into this landscape.
- b. Write down the company's mission, vision, core values, and relevant business practices.
- c. YOU ARE NOT ALONE! Do any professors, business contacts, friends or family know anything about this company, the industry the company is in?
- d. You will use this research in answering typical interview questions such as: Tell me about yourself? Why should we hire you? Do you have any questions for us/me?

### (2) **Research the role for which you are interviewing**

- a. Determine the company's goals for the position
- b. Match your skill set with the job duties and articulate shared values

### (3) **Research the backgrounds and roles of people interviewing you, if you can obtain a list in advance. Form a few questions unique to each individual interviewer's position.**

### (4) Consider mock interviews on the alumni network

### (5) Brainstorm on what questions might be asked and **structure and outline the best answers.**

- a. Don't forget to THINK OUTSIDE the BOX (see additional resources section).
- b. Companies like Google are known to throw out some head scratchers.

## PREPARE FOR DIFFICULT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### (1) **Tell me about yourself**

- a. MOST IMPORTANT: keep your answers to vague questions CLEAR and CONCISE!
- b. This is a great time to use your ELEVATOR PITCH.
- c. Open with one sentence that says where you're from, as you never know how that might connect with the interviewer. Highlight anything extremely unique (and relevant) about you (i.e. I was raised in Korea, am the oldest of 9 children and started working fixing PCs at age 10.)
- d. Start with an overview of your best qualifications, which match the company's needs
- e. Run through jobs/internships/relevant volunteer work; follow your resume's structure
- f. Give examples of achievements or skills you have gained that are relevant to the companies needs

### (2) **Why did you leave your last job?**

- a. Focus on Positives: finished mission; needed to further career
- b. Do not bad-mouth previous jobs or employers

### (3) **What are your weaknesses?**

- a. NEVER: "I TRY/WORK TOO HARD" or "I DON'T HAVE ANY" (dishonest and arrogant)

- b. Avoid personality flaws (they are hard to change)
  - c. Be honest, pick something you have already improved on and discuss steps you have taken to improve it and how it has improved.
  - d. EXAMPLE: I do not have much experience in team management, although I have managed small teams before, so I am excited by the opportunity to manage larger teams in this role.
  - e. EXAMPLE: Although I have managed my personal portfolio for X years, and am very passionate about researching stocks, I know there is much more to managing money professionally, including reporting and daily pricing, and I look forward to gaining that experience.
- (4) **Why do you want the job? Why should we hire you?**
- a. Research the company, its mission and values and business practices
  - b. Articulate shared values
  - c. Match your skill sets with job duties
  - d. Communicate (verbally and non-verbally) motivation and interest
  - e. THIS IS ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP THE COMPANY ACHIEVE ITS GOALS, **NOT** HOW THE COMPANY CAN HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOURS!
- (5) **What is your salary expectation?**
- a. AVOID saying a specific number
  - b. The role, responsibilities and being part of a team matter most to me, and I am sure my salary will be commensurate with the role and my skills.
  - c. Because my past positions were internships/part-time while I was still seeking my undergraduate degree, my past salary history is not relevant to what I am seeking now.
  - d. Understand that you do not want to eliminate yourself from the running by giving the employer the view that you are unattainable, or give an impression that you think that you should be paid more than they can pay, etc. Competition is always high for the best jobs. Be careful with your message!
  - e. If really pushed, you can mention a past salary number, if its relevant to this current role. Try not to do this. Smile. Keep repeating varying versions of (b) above.
- (6) **Where do you see yourself in 5 years?**
- a. Connect with the current role, the company's mission and values, and fast-forward 5 years (i.e. Senior Manager running a team, generating revenues/performance for the company, managing a portfolio, etc.).
  - b. Do NOT say you want to leave the company and start your own company. Why hire you if you are already planning to leave? Do NOT say you want your boss' job, because that answer is too risky.
- (7) **Do you have any questions (about us, the company)?**
- a. **The answer is NOT "No, I don't have any questions."**
  - b. Do not ask the interviewer personal questions (his/her salary)
  - c. Questions should be positive, NOT how much travel, how many hours
  - d. Your research will have led you to some questions that demonstrate your interest in the company and the fact that you spent time researching their business.



## **PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION**

- (1) **Prepare your resume**
  - a. Bring your OFFLINE resume (see resume section), formatted on nice paper
  - b. KNOW YOUR RESUME: dates, qualifications, experiences, and achievements. Practice out loud walking someone through your resume: the sequence of jobs/internships with relevant dates.
  - c. Bring several copies of your resume and a notepad IN A LEATHER FOLIO to the interview
- (2) **Prepare your REFERENCES**
  - a. DO NOT write “references available upon request”. Everyone knows they can ask for references.
  - b. DO call your references and ask their permission to use them as a reference and discuss the position you are seeking.
  - c. If a reference seems hesitant, thank them but do not use them as a reference because the potential employer will also pick up on this hesitance.
  - d. RECONFIRM their preferred method of contact (office or cell), and their phone number, address, and email address. They will need to speak to your potential employer, so it needs to be a phone number.
  - e. If you need a LETTER OF REFERENCE, offer to write a draft for your reference. Although they may prefer to write their own letter, this could remove some of the burden of work from them.
- (3) **Dress for success**
  - a. **Plan an outfit** (AND backup outfit) ONE WEEK PRIOR, so you have time to sew buttons or take clothes to the dry cleaner. Have a back-up outfit in your car in case the unexpected spill happens.
  - b. Dress in a suit even if the dress code is business casual
  - c. Wear professional accessories, not big jewelry or showy clothes
  - d. Focus on hygiene: clean nails, neat hair, shower, not too much perfume/cologne, deodorant, and
  - e. Women: wear makeup that is appropriate (women: foundation and light matching powder unless you have flawless skin, eyeliner and mascara, neutral tones of blush and lipstick, no eyeshadow to be safe).
  - e. ALWAYS brush your teeth and use a MINT just before an interview. No one ever thinks “your breath is too minty”, but bad breath is a real problem.
- (4) **Punctuality**
  - a. Be 5-10 minutes early (park 15 minutes before so you have time to go up the elevator, etc.)
  - b. Timeliness for the interview is a predictor of timeliness for the job
  - c. Plan the route to the interview and insure timeliness
    - **Look at directions**, map the route to the office online, and plan your departure so you can arrive 10 minutes early.
    - **If it’s at a time or place where traffic can be hard to predict, plan to arrive at a nearby coffee shop an hour before and re-read your notes you prepared for the interview.**
  - d. Stand up and greet the interviewer when you first meet (in the lobby)

## DURING THE INTERVIEW

- (1) **Start with a Good Handshake**
  - a. Firm, not limp, not bone-crushing, and definitely DRY handshake (bring towel if you sweat)
  - b. Ask for the interviewers BUSINESS CARD and provide one of yours.
  - c. Ask for permission to take notes.
- (2) If not provided in advance, **ask the first person interviewing you to provide an outline of your day, including the schedule and who will be interviewing you. This could help you interview well with some people on the schedule. Take notes. But, DON'T ask for advice; just let this person answer your question.**
- (3) **Keep Good Eye Contact:** Eye Contact reflects Honesty, Interest, and Focus
- (4) **Project Positive Professional Body Language**
  - a. 80% of communication is non-verbal
  - b. In order to connect with interviewer, smile when appropriate
  - c. TURN OFF YOUR PHONE OR LEAVE IT IN YOUR CAR. If your cell phone rings, apologize and turn it off without looking at who is calling
- (5) **Sell Yourself:** CONFIDENT but HUMBLE
- (6) **Concise and clear answers:** NO nervous rambling – preparation, practice and research
- (7) **SOFT SKILLS: Listen to the Interviewer and NEVER interrupt**
  - a. Always listen, concentrate on what the interviewer is saying so you can give the answers that speak to their questions
  - b. When answering a question that you do not understand, ask questions if necessary, but too many questions looks like you are avoiding answering their question.
  - c. **When the interviewer asks if you have any questions, this is your opportunity to gain a significant edge.**
    - Organize specific questions targeted to each person who is interviewing you based on your research into their roles and responsibilities (assuming such a list has been provided in advance)
    - **WHAT WILL YOU ASK TO GET THE INTERVIEWER TALKING?**
      - ❖ Using your previous research the industry and competitors and products, ask the interviewer talking about the competition, new products, product direction, etc., that are SPECIFIC AND RELEVANT to the company.
      - ❖ DO NOT just ask “how do you compete?” Do enough research that you know what to ask, and ask good questions that get the interviewer talking.
      - ❖ Also ask follow-up questions without interrupting.
    - **NEVER INTERRUPT.**
      - ❖ Because the interviewer is talking and because you asked such good questions, **it will give the interviewer the impression that you know a bit more than you do and set you apart from the competition.**
      - ❖ **People enjoy talking about themselves, so they will reflect that you had a “great” interview if they did a lot of the talking.**
  - d. **NO DEAD SPACE:** Not all interviewers are good communicators, so be ready to pick up the slack and ask another question if the interview seems to stall out. **The impression of the interview and the energy of the interview will reflect on YOU no matter whose fault it was.**

**\*\*END WITH A SMILE, HANDSHAKE, AND ASK WHAT IS NEXT IN THE PROCESS\*\***

Ask when is a good time to follow up and with whom.

Send a thank you letter in the MAIL.

## INTERVIEW VIDEOS

12 Top Tips for Successful Interviews

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvuZY3DWtIY>

Top 10 Interview Tips (Part 1 of 3)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YPXE4RqdqM>

Top 10 Interview Tips (Part 2 of 3)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eR6qrTyqLNk&feature=related>

Top 10 Interview Tips (Part 3 of 3)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mGxETcWsILY&feature=related>

Interviews Do's and Don'ts

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1ucmfPOBV8>

5 Mistakes to Avoid in Job Interviews

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opYjNr\\_4A5k&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opYjNr_4A5k&feature=related)

Off the Wall Actual Interview Questions asked at Google to help you think creatively

<http://www.businessinsider.com/15-google-interview-questions-that-will-make-you-feel-stupid-2009-11#how-many-golf-balls-can-fit-in-a-school-bus-1>

Illegal Job Questions, Alternative questions and how to answer them:

[www.jobinterviewquestions.org](http://www.jobinterviewquestions.org)

**The Vault: Career Intelligence (also has great interview prep for Investment Banking)**

<http://www.vault.com/>

## RECOMMENDED READING:

How to Win Friends and Influence People, *by Dale Carnegie*

How to Ace the Brainteaser Interview *by John Kador*

101 Great Answers to the Toughest Interview Questions *by Ron Fry*

A Practical Guide To Quantitative Finance Interviews *by Xinfeng Zhou*

Time Management from the Inside Out, Second Edition: The Foolproof System for Taking Control of Your Schedule... *by Julie Morgenstern*

## ALUMNI NETWORKING:

Go online to get career advice, mentoring, informational interviews, and mock interviews from UCSD Alumni

<http://career.ucsd.edu/undergraduates/aan.html>

## **SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS: LETTERS AND REFERENCES**

### **COVER LETTERS**

The purpose of a cover letter is to encourage an employer to interview you. As with all written material that you send to an employer, a cover letter should be persuasive and present you in a positive light. A cover letter also functions as a writing sample, so it is important that it is engaging, convincing, professional in appearance, grammatically correct, and free of typos.

Narrowly tailor your cover letter to each job for which you apply. Mass mailings using generic language are ineffective. Tailoring each cover letter will require researching both the job and the employer. Your cover letter can illustrate that you understand the position's required qualifications, duties and responsibilities. Once you have a clear understanding of the position, use your cover letter to explain how your experience and education will **benefit the employer**.

Your cover letter should **highlight** the strengths and abilities listed on your resume. Most employers who are reading resumes have their regular jobs to perform. Your cover letter should highlight the one or two items you hope they will see on your resume in the short time they have to glance at it. If your resume is particularly thin, you may use a specific example to illustrate a skill, but always be selective and concise. Anything mentioned should relate to the desired position.

Always include a cover letter when you send a resume to an employer about a posted position. Below are guidelines to assist you in drafting a targeted, convincing cover letter. Use the mail unless email is requested. Avoid communicating via texting.

### **BASIC COVER LETTER REQUIREMENTS**

A cover letter should follow traditional, conservative formatting for business correspondence: select the same resume-quality, white, off-white, or beige paper for all submissions, including your resume and envelopes. Be especially careful if you use a local and permanent address on your letterhead or resume for some applications and not others. Hard copies of your resume and cover letter should be printed using a laser printer.

Mail your letter with any requested enclosures in a standard, 4"X10" business envelope with the mailing and return addresses laser-printed directly on the envelope. If your mailing is too thick for a standard envelope, use a 9"x12" envelope with the mailing and return addresses laser printed on labels. Check that there are no typographical, punctuation, capitalization, or grammatical errors. Ensure you have indicated an enclosure or enclosures after your signature. Hand edit your cover letter to ensure that it is absolutely accurate and honest. If submitting material electronically, convert each document into a PDF file. The file name should include your name and the contents of the file only ("John Doe –Cover letter" or "John Doe – Resume").

### **COVER LETTER CONTENT**

A cover letter should be concise. A **one-page**, single-sided letter consisting of three short paragraphs is ideal. YOUR COVER LETTER SHOULD BE **AS SHORT AS POSSIBLE BUT AS LONG AS NECESSARY TO COVER THESE THREE POINTS: (1) WHO I AM, (WHY I STAND OUT), (2) HOW I CAN ADD VALUE, (3) HOW YOU CAN REACH ME.** Be brief. Potential employers will spend seconds on your resume and even less time on your cover letter. A lengthy letter increases the likelihood the potential employer will not read the letter at all. Do not waste their time with a lengthy cover letter.

Your opening paragraph introduces you to the employer, including who you are (e.g., a senior at UC San Diego, a recent graduate, high rank in classes or school, high GPA) and the position you seek. If someone has referred you to the employer, mention his or her name. Also be sure to use the correct term for the target employer (if you are

applying to a firm, use the term “firm,” and if you are applying to a company, use the term “company,” etc.). This should include detailed reference to the position, including the correct job title and company name.

In your second paragraph, relate your experience to the position for which you seek an interview. Show how you can add value for the employer in your desired position, drawing connections between your experience, skills, interests, and the job requirements. Give the employer strong reasons to want to interview you, while not overwhelming them with information so they do not feel there is anything left to learn about you. If you are applying for your first job, or for an area in which you have no experience, demonstrate through examples that you are a motivated self-starter. Volunteer experience is still experience. You can include specific facts about yourself and your coursework to illustrate these attributes. Rather than stating: “I have a strong work ethic,” you can discuss a situation that provides a concrete example of that attribute: “While working at X, My supervisor often complimented me on my timeliness, quality work product, and positive attitude.” Do this concisely.

In your final paragraph, request an interview, state if and how you will follow up, and thank the employer for his or her consideration.

### **WHEN TO SEND A FORMAL COVER LETTER VS. AN INTRODUCTORY EMAIL**

You should submit a formal cover letter when applying for a position that has been advertised. Follow the instructions listed in the job posting or on the employer’s website regarding the preferred method of submitting your application materials. If the instructions request applications sent via email, attach your cover letter, resume, and any other requested application materials to a brief email in which you introduce yourself, express your interest in the position, and quickly highlight your most relevant skills and experiences. When crafting the email, use the same care and candor put forth in your formal documents. Attach the documents to the email first; you do not want to risk having to send a second email because you failed to attach the appropriate documentation (or worse yet, never realize you failed to include the attachments and forgo the job opportunity). Draft the email in Word and check it carefully for spelling and grammatical errors. The email should consist of no more than 2-3 sentences. If an employee at the firm referred you to the position, state that in the email.

If you are following up with a networking lead regarding a prospective opening, you should send a brief email introducing yourself, explaining your relationship to a mutual contact (whenever applicable), expressing your interest in learning more about the employer’s business, and suggesting a brief meeting (i.e., informational interview). You should not include a copy of your cover letter in this instance. Instead, attach a PDF copy of your resume for the individuals “reference.” Ensure the tone of your email is not rude or presumptive.

### **THANK YOU NOTES**

Always send a prompt, sincere thank you note to someone who takes the time to interview you, including at an on-campus interview, informational interview, or mock interview. Send a thank you letter whenever someone extends you the courtesy of reviewing your resume. If you met with several people at a company, compose a unique thank you for each person. Be careful to spell the individual’s name correctly, and do not forget any of the interviewers. A thank you note shows appreciation and consideration for the other individual’s time afforded to you. You never know who might later pass your name along to a prospective employer. If possible, send the thank you note via regular mail, not email. Under no circumstances should you text a thank you note.

**A thank you letter has the most impact when it is sent within twenty-four hours of your meeting.** Do your best to send the thank you letter as soon as possible, but remember that a late thank you is better than no thank you at all. In addition to acknowledging the time and consideration of the person with whom you met, a thank you letter reminds the recipient that you are a candidate and confirms your interest in the position. Use the opportunity to recall a discussion you had, a qualification you possess, or provide additional information that you did not raise in the meeting. However, be concise, do not try to continue the interview or qualify any of your answers. The contents of the note should only serve to reiterate your interest in the position.

## WRITING AFTER A REJECTION LETTER

Receiving news that you are not being offered a position or interview that you were interested in is disappointing. Take heart, “no” is only “no” at one point. Consider sending a follow up letter after receiving notice that you have not been selected for a position or interview. The selected candidate might decline, withdraw acceptance, or leave shortly after starting the position. Other positions could open. By corresponding with an employer that has passed on your candidacy, you are able to state your continued interest in future opportunities. However, do not ask details about why you were not selected. The follow-up should express gratitude for consideration and interest in alternative positions. Keep the note short, open-ended, and positive.

## REFERENCES

Providing references is an opportunity to inform a potential employer about your accomplishments and attributes. **Do not include the phrase “References available upon request” in your cover letter, resume, or email.** Only provide references after the prospective employer requests them.

Unless otherwise requested, select three or four references that will speak glowingly of your professional or academic qualities. If you have multiple references to choose from, choose individuals with the most senior titles or individuals who work in the same industry as the industry of the job you are targeting. List the most senior individual first. Generally, personal references are not helpful to employers. It is best to approach former supervisors or individuals who instructed or mentored you in a formal capacity. You should also include a phrase or two explaining your relationship on a line directly below their contact information. One sentence is sufficient. References lists should be printed on paper and using the same formatting as your cover letter. Most often, you send references later in the process. You should do this with a brief, appreciative cover letter.

**Always contact your potential references and ask whether they are willing to speak positively and enthusiastically on your behalf.** Take the opportunity to update them on your education, accomplishments, and goals and to ask them about themselves. Ask them for their permission to be contacted in the near future by your potential employers. Do not assume each person will be willing to serve as a reference. Not all employers are authorized or comfortable providing feedback on employees. Watch for social cues: if the person seems hesitant to speak on your behalf, do not list them as a reference. Wait for confirmation from the individual before giving out their contact information.

**Asking for a Reference from a professor, employer or colleague is never easy.** You can ask for a reference in person, by phone or by email. Email can be a good way to request a reference, because if the person isn't comfortable recommending you it can be easier to decline by sending an email than by telling you in person.

Similar to your job interview preparation, **think about the other person’s perspective.** The person needs to know your work is consistent and excellent so that he/she can communicate that in a reference. In order to get positive references from professors, start by sitting in the front of the class, going to office hours and impressing the professor with your work. Be sincere. The professor needs to know you and your work. If you have not gotten to know any of your professors and need a reference, go to office hours of a professor where you did well in the class and let them know you would like them to get to know you so they might feel comfortable giving you a reference. Let them know this upfront. Employer and colleague references are somewhat more straightforward in that if you perform well at work, you should be able to ask people familiar with your work for a reference.

Ask "Do you feel comfortable giving me a reference" or "Do you feel you could give me a good reference?" This way, your reference giver has an out if they don't believe they can provide a strong endorsement or if they don't have the time to write a letter or take phone calls from employers on your behalf.

When the person you are asking for a reference replies positively, offer to provide an updated copy of your resume, to share your LinkedIn profile, and to provide information on your skills and experiences so your reference has current and relevant information on your employment history and skills.