Getting Started on Your Professional Job Search: A Workbook for College Students

# Chapter 1 The Job Search

## Analyze Yourself Worksheet

Spend some time truly analyzing yourself. Questions you may ask yourself include:

1. What are the skills you possess that would be valuable to an employer? List at least five and describe why it is valuable.
2. What are your strengths? How might these be valuable to an employer? List and describe at least five.
3. What are your weaknesses that may hinder you professionally?
4. What are your interests, hobbies, and passions?
5. What is your education level? Are you interested in continuing to develop as a professional?
6. What personal qualities do you need to consider when thinking about how your career will fit into your life?
7. How well do you work with others?
8. What environments do you work in best?
9. What is your preferred work schedule? Consider in-person, hybrid, and remote.
10. What is your work experience both in and out of your field?
11. What is your dream job? What aspects of this dream job make it right for you?
12. What industries are you interested in working in? In what roles?

## Research Your Industry Worksheet

Investigate the following:

1. What are the current trends in your industry?
2. What are the current keywords in your industry? These can include job skills and buzz words.
3. What are the different roles, positions, or jobs in this industry? Which are entry-level and which are for those further along in their career? Where will you start and where would you like to end up?
4. What is the salary range for someone with your level of education and experience in this industry? Is this enough for you to live on?
5. Is this type of work in demand in your current geographical location? Or does your current location limit you? Are you willing to relocate? If so, where is your industry in demand? Which of these locations are a good fit for you?
6. What is the current job market for your industry? Are there a lot of job openings? Is this an industry that is doing a lot of hiring currently? Is your type of work in demand? What does the future look like for this industry?
7. Did you learn anything new about your industry and specific job opportunities in your industry that is important to note? Anything that could affect your choice or make you reexamine your plans?

## Locate two jobs in your industry

1. Select an online job search site and locate a job in your field that fits your current skill level and a job in your field that you hope to have in the future.
2. Identify the skills you need in your field and fill out the list below.

## Skill Assessment

What specific skills are needed in your field? Which skills do you possess, and which skills do you need to develop? Include at least five skills for each.

**Skills I Have**

List at least 5 skills:

**Skills I Need to Develop**

List at least 5 skills:

## Create a skill development plan

Complete the skill development chart below. Include the skill you need to develop, what it will look like when you have developed that skill (goal, what it will look like when you develop this skill), how you will develop the skill, and when you develop this skill.

**Skill Development Chart**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Goal** | **How I Plan to Develop the Skill** | **When I Will Work to Develop the Skill** |
| **EXAMPLE:**  Writing | **EXAMPLE:**  To improve my writing skills.  I will be a competent writer of business communications. | **EXAMPLE:**  I will work on writing assignments at the university writing lab and revise my writing based upon their comments before turning them in to my professors. | **EXAMPLE:**  Fall 2025  Spring 2026  Fall 2026  Spring 2027 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## SWOT Analysis

1. Using all the information from the work you have done in this chapter, conduct a SWOT analysis.
2. Discuss your SWOT analysis with family, friends, and someone from the career center at your university. Can they help broaden your perspective on some of the things you have shared? Do they have suggestions for jobs that will fit you best?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
|  |  |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
|  |  |

## Explore Your Resources

1. Visit your university’s career center. Make an appointment to find out what they offer and start building a relationship with one or more representatives from your career center. Make a commitment to visit and participate on a regular basis to build your skills and to take advantage of what they have to offer.
2. Locate and attend both a university sponsored career fair and local career fair.
3. Explore several job search sites. What does each have to offer you?
4. Begin building a list of personal contacts to create your network. Speak to them about their careers and industries. Let them know your early career plans and ask them for advice.

# Chapter 2 Internships

## Learn More About Internships

1. Research companies with developed internship programs. Here are a few suggestions: Disney, Kohler Company, and Quad Graphics. Would you like to participate in a program like this? Why or why not?
2. Spend some time on Handshake, LinkedIn, and/or Indeed.com searching for internship openings in your field. What qualities and skills are employers looking for? Are you qualified for these positions? If not, what do you need to do to be a strong candidate for these opportunities?
3. Locate a company or organization you would like to intern for. Do they have internship openings? Do they offer a developed internship program?
4. If the company you identified above does not offer internships, create your own internship by making a list of things you can do for them. Develop your list into a professional proposal.
5. Reach out to the company or organization you identified above. Schedule a meeting with an individual in the appropriate department to discuss the possibility of creating an internship; or reach out via email and send them your proposal for creating an internship.
6. If you currently have a job, can you expand your duties to include new tasks that would enable you to list this position as an internship? Make a list of what you can offer your current employer and schedule a meeting with your supervisor to discuss.

# Chapter 3 Locating Job and Internship Openings

## Research your field

1. Conduct a Google search to find the specific job titles for entry level positions in your field.
2. Conduct a google search to find keywords and common skills in your industry.
3. Using a job search site, locate job openings in your field.
4. Select a specific job opening and mark all the keywords and important qualifications they are looking for. Do they match the keywords and skills you found through your Google search?
5. Do you have the skills you need for an entry level position in your field? If not, what skills should you work to develop?
6. Begin thinking about your long-term career path. What jobs are available that require more experience in your field that you would like to hold eventually? What skills will you need to build to make yourself an attractive candidate for higher level positions in the future?

## Activity: Using Generative AI: Identify keywords on the job posting

Copy and paste the job description into generative AI and ask it to identify key words and phrases.

## Visit Your Career Center and Create a Handshake Account

1. If you haven’t already done so, stop by your college career center. Get to know the representatives and take advantage of their offerings.
2. Create a Handshake account. Handshake is typically available to college students through their universities. Stop by your career center for more information.

## Explore Company Websites

Make a list of local companies you would like to work for. Familiarize yourself with their open positions and how to apply.

## Research the Company

1. What is the company’s mission statement?
2. What values are expressed on the company’s website?
3. Do you know anyone who works here? Can you conduct an informational interview with them to learn more about the company and/or the position?
4. If you have LinkedIn, double check if anyone you know is employed at this company. Many times we are connected with people but are not up to date on their current employer.
5. Are there current initiatives included on the company website? What are they? Do you have any experience or connection to these initiatives? If so, how?
6. Consider your research. How can you include items on your resume that align with this company’s goals and needs specifically?

## Create a Job/Internship Spreadsheet

Create your own job search spreadsheet so that it will be easy to keep a record of the jobs you will search for.

# Chapter 4 Resumes

## Review Sample Resumes

1. Look at the example resumes included in the appendix of this book. What do you like? What advice would you give these candidates to improve their resume? What do you notice about the format and word choice? What aspects of these resumes would you like to incorporate into your own resume?
2. Conduct a Google search to locate resumes created by individuals in your field. How do these resumes compare to the examples in this book? What is similar and what is different? What aspects of these resumes would you like to incorporate into your own resume?

## Compile Information Needed for Your Resume

Complete the following resume preparation worksheet.

**Resume Preparation Worksheet**

**Personal Information**

Professional email address

URL for your LinkedIn profile

A working phone number with voicemail that you check regularly

**Education History**

School #1

Name of Higher Education Institution or Trade School #1. Start with the most recent school you attended.

City and state

Month and year you started attending and when you stopped attending or anticipated graduation date

Name of degree obtained

Focus areas of education, including majors, minors, certificates, etc.

Honors and awards you earned

Descriptions of 1-3 presentations or large projects you completed at school

School #2

Name of Higher Education Institution or Trade School #2

City and state

Month and year you started attending and when you stopped attending or anticipated graduation date

Name of degree obtained

Focus areas of education, including majors, minors, certificates, etc.

Honors and awards you earned

Descriptions of 1-3 presentations or large projects you completed at school

\*Don’t forget to include all higher education and trade schools you have attended. Remember, high school experiences do not belong on a professional resume.

**Work and Internship History**

Employer #1: Name of most recent employer

Job titles you held

Month and year of start and end date

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

Employer #2: Name of most recent employer

Job titles you held

Month and year of start and end date

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

Employer #3: Name of most recent employer

Job titles you held

Month and year of start and end date

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

**Certifications**

Certification #1 name

Name of agency that awarded the certification

Date you were awarded certification

Description of certification

**Certification #2 name**

Name of agency that awarded the certification

Date you were awarded certification

Description of certification

**Certification #3 name**

Name of agency that awarded the certification

Date you were awarded certification

Description of certification

**Skills**

List and describe 5-10 professional skills that set you apart with descriptions of how you learned/displayed these skills at work, in school, or in life. Include quantified data when possible.

**Volunteer Experience**

Organization name #1

Month and year you began volunteering and stopped volunteering

City, state where you volunteered

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

Organization name #2

Month and year you began volunteering and stopped volunteering

City, state where you volunteered

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

Organization name #3

Month and year you began volunteering and stopped volunteering

City, state where you volunteered

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

**Leadership Experience**

Name of organization #1

Month and year you began and ended this experience

City, state of the experience

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

Name of organization #2

Month and year you began and ended this experience

City, state of the experience

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

Name of organization #3

Month and year you began and ended this experience

City, state of the experience

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

**Honors and Awards**

Name of organization that gave honor or award #1

Specific name of honor or award

Month and year you received the honor or award

City, state where you received the honor or award

Summary of the honor or award

Description of why you received the honor or award

Name of organization that gave honor or award #2

Specific name of honor or award

Month and year you received the honor or award

City, state where you received the honor or award

Summary of the honor or award

Description of why you received the honor or award

Name of organization that gave honor or award #3

Specific name of honor or award

Month and year you received the honor or award

City, state where you received the honor or award

Summary of the honor or award

Description of why you received the honor or award

**Professional Presentations**

Name of organization that provided the opportunity #1

Name of organization you presented to

Topic or title of presentation

Month and year of presentation

City, state where you presented

Name of organization that provided the opportunity #2

Name of organization you presented to

Topic or title of presentation

Month and year of presentation

City, state where you presented

Name of organization that provided the opportunity #3

Name of organization you presented to

Topic or title of presentation

Month and year of presentation

City, state where you presented

**Professional Memberships**

Organization #1 name

Month and year you began volunteering and ended membership

Name of positions you held

City, state of organization

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

Organization #2 name

Month and year you began and ended membership

City, state of organization

Name of positions you held

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

Organization #3 name

Month and year you began and ended membership

City, state of organization

Name of positions you held

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

**Additional Professional Accomplishments**

Include externships, study abroad experiences, languages you speak, etc.

Accomplishment #1 Title

Month and year you began and ended or date of experience

City, state of organization

Name of positions you held

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

Accomplishment #2 Title

Month and year you began and ended or date of experience

City, state of organization

Name of positions you held

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

Accomplishment #3 Title

Month and year you began and ended or date of experience

City, state of organization

Name of positions you held

List and description of responsibilities, tasks, projects, skills used, and accomplishments

Quantified data that demonstrates accomplishments

## Create a job search spreadsheet

* Name of employer
* Position title
* Original job posting
* Where job posting was located
* Date you applied
* Contact information
* Was I contacted for an interview? Y/N
* Follow-up details

Using the suggestions above, create a job search spreadsheet that you will use later when you begin your job search.

## Identify a specific opening and keywords on the posting.

Select a specific job opening and mark all the keywords and important qualifications they are looking for.

## Using Generative AI: Identify keywords on the job posting.

Copy and paste the job description into generative AI and ask it to identify key words and phrases.

## Activity: Research the company.

1. What is the company’s mission statement?
2. What values are expressed on the company’s website?
3. Do you know anyone who works here? Can you conduct an informational interview with them to learn more about the company and/or the position?
4. If you have LinkedIn, double check if anyone you know is employed at this company. Many times we are connected with people but are not up to date on their current employer.
5. Are there current initiatives included on the company website? What are they? Do you have any experience or connection to these initiatives? If so, how?
6. Consider your research. How can you include items on your resume that align with this company’s goals and needs specifically?

## Review Example Resumes

Before you start filling in your details, look at the resume examples I have included in the appendix. Keep in mind that there is no perfect resume, the examples I have included are students’ best efforts at creating a resume for specific job postings.

1. Review the examples and note what you like and what you don’t like about each one. Notice what is similar about all the resumes and what is different. You will work to incorporate the things you like into your own resume. This could include heading names, organization of headings, specific words and phrases, and much more.
2. What makes a particular resume stand out?
3. Would you hire this person? Why or why not?

## Get Started on Your Resume

Start by creating your own template for your resume. Set your margins and create your headings.

## Create the letterhead for your resume.

Review the resume examples, again. Focus on the contact information sections (letterheads), note strengths and weaknesses, and create your resume letterhead to reflect the best parts of the examples provided.

## Write the work experience section of your resume.

1. Review the resume examples, again. Focus on the work experience sections, note strengths and weaknesses, and write your work experience section to reflect the best parts of the examples provided.
2. When possible, include at least one accomplishment with data. If you don’t know the data offhand, do what you can to collect. If you don’t have any measurable accomplishments, now is the time to start collecting your own data and start thinking about opportunities to measure your contributions.

## Activity: Write the education section of your resume.

Review the resume examples, again. Focus on the education sections, note strengths and weaknesses, and write your education section to reflect the best parts of the examples provided.

## Determine if your resume needs a skills section. If so, write the skills section of your resume.

1. Review the resume examples, again. Focus on the skills sections, note strengths and weaknesses. Do you need a skills section? Are your skills already included in your work experience section? Are there specific technical skills this employer is looking for?
2. Write your skills section, if needed.

## Write the bonus sections of your resume

1. Review the resume examples, again. Focus on the different bonus sections students have included. Note the strengths and weaknesses of each. Which bonus sections would work for your resume? Do you need to create your own unique bonus section?
2. Create one or two bonus sections for your resume. The choice to create one or two will depend on how much room you have available on your one-page resume.

## Evaluate the organization of the sections on your resume

Do you have your sections organized the best way to showcase your skills, abilities, and experiences?

## Review your Heading Names

Are your section headings specific, clear, and thoughtful? Do they help showcase your skills, abilities, and experiences?

## Review your resume using the resume checklist.

**The Resume Checklist**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Item** | **Completed** |
| **Contact Information** |  |  |
|  | Includes name |  |
|  | Includes email |  |
|  | Includes LinkedIn |  |
|  | Includes phone |  |
|  | Includes city, state |  |
|  | Section formatted correctly |  |
|  | Section organized correctly |  |
| **Skills Section** |  |  |
|  | Includes appropriate heading |  |
|  | Includes five skills |  |
|  | Develops five skills with specific examples/details |  |
|  | Includes keywords from job posting |  |
|  | Includes quantitative data to demonstrate accomplishments |  |
|  | Section formatted correctly and consistently |  |
|  | Section organized correctly |  |
| **Education Section** |  |  |
|  | Includes appropriate heading |  |
|  | Includes all 4-year colleges and post high school education |  |
|  | Reverse chronological order |  |
|  | Includes location city, state |  |
|  | Includes dates attended and/or expected graduation date |  |
|  | Includes major/minor |  |
|  | Section formatted correctly and consistently |  |
|  | Section organized correctly |  |
| **Work History Section** |  |  |
|  | Includes appropriate heading |  |
|  | Includes appropriate number of jobs/internships |  |
|  | Includes job titles |  |
|  | Includes employment dates |  |
|  | Reverse chronological order |  |
|  | Includes transferrable skills |  |
|  | Includes keywords from job posting |  |
|  | Includes description of transferrable skills |  |
|  | Includes specific duties applicable to new position |  |
|  | Includes description of specific duties applicable to new position |  |
|  | Includes quantitative data to demonstrate accomplishments |  |
|  | Utilizes power verbs |  |
|  | Only relevant information included in this section |  |
|  | Section formatted correctly and consistently |  |
|  | Section organized correctly |  |
| **Bottom Section(s)** |  |  |
|  | Includes appropriate heading(s) |  |
|  | Includes appropriate experiences |  |
|  | Describes experiences |  |
|  | Section formatted correctly and consistently |  |
|  | Section organized correctly |  |
| **Audience/Context** |  |  |
|  | Conservative and professional approach |  |
|  | Includes keywords for industry/from job opening description |  |
| **Format/Design** |  |  |
|  | Appropriate format for a professional resume |  |
|  | Attractive format |  |
|  | Consistent format throughout |  |
|  | Attractive, appropriate use of white space |  |
|  | Consistent spacing |  |
|  | Consistent capitalization |  |
|  | Consistent font choices |  |
|  | Consistent font size |  |
|  | Appropriate margins |  |
|  | Consistent emphasis (bold, italic, etc.) |  |
|  | Easy to skim |  |
|  | Consistent/correct alignment |  |
|  | One page in length |  |
| **Organization** |  |  |
|  | Resume sections organized appropriately |  |
|  | Resume sections chosen and organized to highlight strengths |  |
| **Language** |  |  |
|  | Effective word choices |  |
|  | Concisely written |  |
|  | Well-written (syntax) |  |
|  | Verb tense consistent throughout |  |
| **Mechanics** |  |  |
|  | Error-free |  |
|  | Grammatically correct |  |

Make changes to your resume based on the areas of the checklist.

1. Did the resume checklist help you notice anything that is missing or needs to be changed on your resume? If so, make these improvements to your resume.
2. Compare your resume to the job posting. Did you include all the key words?
3. Review your resume. What makes it unique? Why would this potential employer want to bring you in for an interview?

## Have others review your resume.

Locate at least three qualified individuals to review your resume. Consider their feedback and make changes as you see fit.

## Using Generative AI: Have AI review your resume.

1. Copy and paste your resume into generative AI asking it for recommendations for improvement.
2. Copy and paste your resume and the job opening into generative AI and ask how you can improve your resume to respond to this listing.

## Create an AI ATS Resume

Edit your resume using a template that is free from columns and special formatting like graphics, tables, or information in the footer or header. Be sure not to edit in Google Docs or with Pages, as your file may become corrupted and automatically rejected by an AI ATS. Never open the template with Pages. Do not copy and paste from one document to another. Retype.

# Chapter 5 Cover Letters

## Locate a job posting

Find an opening you would like to apply for and highlight the keywords and phrases or use the same job posting you used for your resume and review the keywords and phrases.

## Research the company

1. What specifics about the company can you include in your cover letter?
2. Examine the LinkedIn profiles of individuals who work for this company. Did you notice any commonalities among them?

## Cover Letter Preparation Worksheet

1. Select one of your two job postings to use to create your cover letter.
   1. Company Name
   2. Job Title (include capitalization, number, etc.)
   3. Job ID Number
   4. Opening/Closing/Posting Date
   5. Date you printed the posting
   6. Where you found the opening
2. List 5 specific reasons you want to work here. Review the website for ideas. Suggestions include: their products, history, performance, reputation, accomplishments, etc.
3. List 3 essential requirements for this position.
4. List 10 keywords/phrases from the job posting. Include skills, duties, personal traits, etc.
5. Write the company’s mission statement.
6. How do your goals/values align with the mission statement?
7. List any current company projects or initiatives you found in your research. How do these align with your goals, interests, and experiences?
8. List any local organizations the company is involved with. Describe the relationship. How do these relationships align with your values and interests?
9. What are the current trends in your industry? How can you help this company address these trends? What does this company need? What specific education, training, and/or experience do you have?

## Review Cover Letters

* Examine the cover letters in this book. Pay attention to the format of the letter. What do you notice?
* Now examine the specific language and word choices of the author. Which letters create a picture in the readers mind? Which letters resonate with you and why?
* In general, note what you like and areas you think could be improved for each letter.
* Put yourself in the shoes of the hiring employer. Which cover letters make you want to learn more about the applicant? Why?
* Conduct a Google search for cover letters used for jobs in your field. What do they include that is not included in letters where applicants are pursing employment in other fields? Are there specific skills and experiences applicants in your field chose to highlight?
* How can you incorporate the positive elements you observed in the letters into your own cover letter?

## Review the Traditional Letter Format

1. Conduct a Google search and review the rules of traditional letter formatting.
2. Conduct a Google search and examine traditional letters. Pay special attention to the formatting. What do you notice?

## Begin Writing Your Cover Letter

1. Review the letterhead, receiver address, and greeting sections of the cover letter examples. Pay special attention to the formatting.
2. Copy and paste the letterhead from your resume into your cover letter document.
3. Spend time trying to locate the name of the person who will be reviewing your resume for this specific job opening. Use the company website and LinkedIn to start your search. If you can’t find the name, call the company and ask.
4. Draft your receiver address and greeting sections of your cover letter.

## Write Your Introductory Paragraph

1. Review the example introductory paragraphs in this book. Note what you like about each one. Pay attention to how they are all similar and notice how they each uniquely demonstrate that they are qualified and interested in the position.
2. Draft your introductory paragraph.

## Write the Body of Your Cover Letter

1. Review the cover letter examples focusing on the body of the letters. Note what you like about each. What advice would you give these writers to improve the body of their letters?
2. Note how the body paragraphs are organized in the examples. Consider the following options for organizing this area of your cover letter: experience/education/skills organizational pattern, time order, and responding to the three key qualities they are looking for. Which organizational pattern will be most effective for you? Do you think any of the example cover letters would have benefitted from a different organizational pattern?
3. Consult the worksheet you completed to prepare for writing your cover letter. Which details do you think are the most important to include in your cover letter?
4. Examine the specific language and word choice used in the cover letter examples. What words and phrases stand out to you? How can you include vivid, descriptive, and persuasive language in your cover letter?
5. Draft the body of your cover letter.

## Write the Concluding Paragraph

1. Review the examples’ concluding paragraphs. Note what you like. How would you suggest students improve their concluding paragraphs?
2. Write your concluding paragraph.

## Collaborate with Generative AI on Your Cover Letter

1. Ask generative AI to list important things to include in a cover letter in your profession.
2. Copy and paste your resume along with the job posting into generative AI and ask it to draft a cover letter for you. Review what it has written. What do you like about it? What could be improved?
3. Compare the draft of the cover letter you wrote with the one generative AI wrote for you. How are they similar? How are they different?
4. Once you have a solid draft you like of your cover letter ask generative AI to review it and offer suggestions for improvement.
5. Ask generative AI to review your cover letter for each of 5 C’s of communication. Is your cover letter clear, complete, concise, concrete, and correct?

## Collaborate with Generative AI on Your Cover Letter

1. Ask generative AI to list important things to include in a cover letter in your profession.
2. Copy and paste your resume along with the job posting into generative AI and ask it to draft a cover letter for you. Review what it has written. What do you like about it? What could be improved?
3. Compare the draft of the cover letter you wrote with the one generative AI wrote for you. How are they similar? How are they different?
4. Once you have a solid draft you like of your cover letter ask generative AI to review it and offer suggestions for improvement.
5. Ask generative AI to review your cover letter for each of 5 C’s of communication. Is your cover letter clear, complete, concise, concrete, and correct?

# Chapter 6 References

## Brainstorm whom to include on your references page

1. Brainstorm a list of current and former supervisors, teachers, and others who are familiar with your work.
2. Check your LinkedIn to see if you can add anyone to your list.
3. Which three people from your list are most qualified to say positive things about your work?

## Send your potential references an email

1. What three skills will you highlight in your message? How did you demonstrate them?
2. Compose emails to send to your potential references.

## Complete the References Preparation Worksheet

**References Preparation Worksheet**

**Reference One**

First and last name of the reference

Title of Position they hold

Employer or organization name

Employer or organization address

Employer or organization phone number where your reference can be reached

Employer or organization email where your reference can be reached

A one to two sentence description of how your relationship with your reference

**Reference Two**

First and last name of the reference

Title of Position they hold

Employer or organization name

Employer or organization address

Employer or organization phone number where your reference can be reached

Employer or organization email where your reference can be reached

A one to two sentence description of how your relationship with your reference

**Reference Three**

First and last name of the reference

Title of Position they hold

Employer or organization name

Employer or organization address

Employer or organization phone number where your reference can be reached

Employer or organization email where your reference can be reached

A one to two sentence description of how your relationship with your reference

## Create Your References Page

# Chapter 7 Build Your Network

## Practice Small Talk

1. Practice engaging in small talk with those you know. Ask them for feedback after the conversations. What areas are you strong in? In which areas do you struggle?
2. Extend your circle of influence and begin to engage in small talk with those you wouldn’t usually approach. Take note of how each interaction goes and areas you can work to improve upon.

## Build Your Network

1. Make a list of your existing connections.
2. Expand your network by attending an activity or event that you haven’t attended before. For example, attend a career fair and challenge yourself to speak with the representative at each booth.
3. Did you create connections at the event you attended? Analyze whom did you connected with and why. Brainstorm ways you can improve your chances of building connections with more individuals next time you attend an event.

# Chapter 8 Elevator Pitches

## Examine the Elevator Pitch Examples

1. Circle the keywords and phrases in the example elevator pitches. Why are these words/phrases important?
2. What makes these elevator pitches memorable?
3. Do you have suggestions that would improve these elevator pitches?
4. Look online for additional example elevator pitches. Which do you like? Why do you like them? What can you take from these examples and incorporate into your own elevator pitch?

## Elevator Pitch Preparation Worksheet

Complete the worksheet below to prepare to write your own elevator pitch.

1. What are your career goals?
2. Why are you passionate about your chosen field?
3. List industry keywords you think are important.
4. Do you have a story that demonstrates your passion?
5. What powerful and vivid words and phrases can you include that help your listener envision your story?

## Write Your Elevator Pitch

Using your brainstorming and notes, craft your own unique elevator pitch.

## Use Generative AI To Help Write Your Elevator Pitch

1. Copy and paste your resume and cover letter in generative AI. Prompt with the following: “Please write an elevator pitch based on the above information.” While generative AI will not provide you with a final elevator pitch, it will give you a nice rough draft. Continue editing and revising until you are comfortable with your pitch.
2. Copy and paste your elevator pitch draft into generative AI. Prompt with the following: “This is my elevator pitch. What five suggestions do you recommend to improve it?” Consider the recommendations and incorporate them as appropriate.
3. Once you have a pitch you are comfortable with ask generative AI to help you incorporate your keywords into it. Prompt with the following: “Here are some keywords I would like to include in my elevator pitch: x, y, z. Please write a new pitch that includes these words.

## Practice Your Elevator Pitch

1. Practice delivering your elevator pitch to family and friends, practice it in front of the mirror, and practice saying it silently to yourself on a regular basis. Share your pitch with your career center representative. Do they have any constructive feedback for you or suggestions for how you can improve your pitch?
2. Next practice modifying your pitch by responding to the following scenarios:
   * You are at a family gathering and are asked what you are studying in school and what you plan to do with your major. How do you respond?
   * You are at a formal interview for a career position. The interviewer asks you, “Tell me about yourself.” How do you respond?
   * You run into the parent of an old friend at the grocery store. She asks you how you have been and what you are up to. How do you respond?
   * At a career fair you introduce yourself to a representative from a company you would like to work for.
   * A friend of the family introduces you to a higher-level executive at a company you don’t know much about. What do you tell them about yourself?
   * You call a company you would like to work for asking for an informational interview. During this call you explain who you are and why you are interested in this interview. What do you say?
   * A classmate asks you, “What is your major? Why did you choose that major?”

## Reflect on Your Elevator Pitch

How can you continue to improve your delivery of your elevator pitch?

# Chapter 9 LinkedIn

## Create Your LinkedIn Account

1. Create a LinkedIn Account if you don’t already have one. After you create your account LinkedIn will guide you through the steps to create your profile. Start by putting in minimal information so you have access to look at the LinkedIn profiles of others. I will walk you through creating a complete profile in the coming sections of this book.
2. Browse the profiles of LinkedIn members. Take note of how they look, what you like about each one, and ways you believe profiles could be improved.

## Get Your Professional Photo Taken

1. Choose an appropriate outfit for your professional photo.
2. Check with your university to see when they will be taking professional photos and be sure to attend.

## Use AI to Create a Professional Photo

Conduct a Google search to find the best, most recent platform for creating a professional photo with the assistance of AI. Typically you can upload a high quality, appropriate selfie and AI will generate may professional photo options you can choose from.

## Upload Your Professional Photo to LinkedIn

## Choose a Banner Photo

Choose your banner photo and upload it to LinkedIn.

## Create Your Headline

1. Evaluate the headlines of other LinkedIn members. Which do you like? Why?
2. Create your LinkedIn headline.

## Explore and Create Your About Section

1. Explore the About section of LinkedIn members’ profiles. What do you like about them? How could they be improved?
2. Modify and expand upon your elevator pitch to create your About section for LinkedIn.

## Explore and Create Your Experience Section.

1. Explore the Experience section of LinkedIn members’ profiles. What do you like about them? How could they be improved?
2. Review your resume worksheet and build your Experience section for LinkedIn.

## Explore and Create Your Education Section

1. Explore the Education section of LinkedIn members’ profiles. What do you like about them? How could they be improved?
2. Create your Education section for LinkedIn.

## Explore and Create Your Licenses and Certifications Section

1. Explore the Licenses and certifications section of LinkedIn members’ profiles. What do you like about them? How could they be improved?
2. Create your Licenses and certifications section for LinkedIn.

## Explore and Create Your Skills Section

1. Explore the Skills section of LinkedIn members’ profiles. What do you like about them? How could they be improved?
2. Create your Skills section for LinkedIn.

## Explore and Create Your Recommendations Section

1. Explore the Recommendations section of LinkedIn members’ profiles. What do you like about them? How could they be improved?
2. Create your Recommendations section for LinkedIn.

## Explore and Create Your Interests Section

1. Explore the Interests section of LinkedIn members’ profiles. What do you like about them? How could they be improved?
2. Create your Interests section for LinkedIn.

## Explore and Create Additional Sections

1. Explore the Volunteering, Honors and Awards, Course Work, and Projects sections of LinkedIn members’ profiles. What do you like about them? How could they be improved?
2. What additional sections are available on LinkedIn?
3. Choose to create additional sections that will showcase your skills and experiences to potential employers.

## Review Your Completed LinkedIn Profile

Once you are confident in your LinkedIn profile, review the following list to ensure that you have covered the most important areas.

* Do you have a headline?
* Do you have a professional, recent headshot?
* Do you have a relevant, professional banner?
* Is your location displayed?
* Does your About section include your qualifications, goals and background?
* Is your work experience included?
* Do you provide concrete details to support your work experience?
* Do you include quantified achievements?
* Do you include relevant skills?
* Do you include a fully developed Education section?
* Do you include an appropriately professional Interests section?
* Do you have at least three professional recommendations?
* Are you following a strong number of professional groups/employers?

## Link With Those You Know

1. Consult the list you made of your connections when you began to build your network. Search and add these individuals to your LinkedIn network.
2. Look through the connections of your new connections. Can you add any of these people to your network?
3. Pay attention to those whom LinkedIn suggests you connect with. Connect with those you would like to add to your network.

## Post on LinkedIn

1. Examine and evaluate the posts created by those in your network.
2. Create a post for LinkedIn.
3. Create a calendar reminder so that you remember to post on LinkedIn on a regular basis.

## Comment on LinkedIn

1. Examine and evaluate the comments on posts of those in your network.
2. Spend time liking and commenting on the posts of your connections on LinkedIn.
3. Create a calendar reminder so that you remember to check in on your LinkedIn contacts on a regular basis and to comment on your connections’ posts.

## Repost a Post

When you come across a post one of your connections has posted that you like and is relevant to your career field, repost it.

## Explore Additional Ways to Use LinkedIn

1. Click on the Jobs tab and explore the top job picks for you. Do these match your career aspirations?
2. Connect with potential employers.
3. Find professional events in your area to attend.
4. Create your own LinkedIn group.
5. Use LinkedIn to house your professional portfolio.
6. Try messaging one of your connections.
7. Use LinkedIn as a job prospecting tool. Connect with potential employers and repost their posts. Conduct a search to see if any of your connections work at your dream companies.

## More things to do with LinkedIn

1. Jump on LinkedIn and evaluate the profiles of 3 college students and 2 professionals. Take note of what you like about the profiles, and how a professional’s profile compares to a student profile. How can you use this information to create or enhance your profile?
2. Check the Resources section on LinkedIn and read up to date articles on job searching and maximizing your LinkedIn account.
3. Review your existing LinkedIn profile. Show it to others and see if they have any recommendations for improvement.
4. Review the list above for ideas for updates and enhancements to your LinkedIn profile. Choose your favorites and update your profile.
5. Create a plan to post regularly on LinkedIn. Add reminders to your calendar to remain consistent.

## Use Generative AI to Help You with LinkedIn

1. Generative AI can help you with your writing and help you to generate ideas. If you are stuck completing any section of your profile, ask generative AI for suggestions.
2. One of the most difficult parts of writing a resume or creating a LinkedIn profile can be coming up with the short details to describe your experiences. Ask generative AI for suggestions and/or have generative AI help you improve your phrasing.
3. Copy and paste your most recent resume and cover letter into generative AI and prompt AI to write a summary for you. Compare this to your current About section. Can you use AI’s draft to make improvements to your About section?

# Chapter 10 Job Prospecting

## Prospecting Activities

1. Create a list of local companies you would like to work for.
2. Research the companies thoroughly.
3. Start building connections by following the suggestions in the textbook.

# Chapter 11 Informational Interviews

## Set Your Goals for Your Informational Interview.

At this stage in your career journey, what would you like to accomplish through an informational interview?

## Identify Companies You Would Like to Work For

Conduct a Google search for companies in your field in the city/town you plan to work in.

## Create a List of Potential Interviewees

1. Use LinkedIn, the company website and a Google search to identify those who you would like to interview from the company you are most interested in.
2. Locate email addresses and phone numbers you could use to contact your targets.
3. Can you contact your target via LinkedIn?
4. Locate the general phone number for the company. (You may need this in the next step.)

## Make Contact and Ask for the Interview

1. Make a list of the numerous scenarios that could result from speaking with a general representative from the company by phone.
2. Practice responding to each of the scenarios.
3. Draft an email asking the target for an interview.
4. Send an email or message to your target.

## Research Your Interviewee

1. Review the company website. Is your interviewee featured on the website?
2. Review your interviewee’s LinkedIn and social media. What do you notice? What intrigues you that you would like to learn more about? Do you see things that you have in common that you can utilize for small talk topics?

## Select Your Question Themes

1. Review the goals you set for interview. What question themes will help you achieve your goals?
2. Consult the list above, which themes are you most interested in?
3. Are there additional themes you would like to pursue that are not listed above?
4. Make a list of the themes you plan to address in your informational interview.

## Create Your Interview Questions

Complete the Informational Interview Developing Interview Questions Worksheet

**Informational Interview Developing Interview Questions Worksheet**

1. What are your goals for your informational interview?
2. What have you learned about the person you will interview through your research? What would you like to learn more about?
3. Identify five topics you would like to ask about in your informational interview.
4. Develop 15 questions to ask during your interview.
5. Review your questions. Do they meet the needs of FRAME? Take notes here on your questions and update them to meet the needs of FRAME.
6. Read through your questions aloud. Are you comfortable with them? Are they worded professionally? Take notes here on questions you would like to improve.
7. Copy and paste your questions into generative AI with the following prompt: “I am a student conducting an informational interview with a business professional. Can you provide suggestions for making sure my questions sound professional?” Did generative AI improve your questions? Will you take all their suggestions? Why/why not? Write your updated questions here.
8. Sometimes students reveal that they like the questions AI assisted with, but they don’t feel like they are worded in a way that reflects their personality, or they use language they aren’t comfortable with. Read through your questions aloud. Are you comfortable asking them as they are? If not, make additional updates.
9. Copy and paste your questions into generative AI with the following prompt: “I would like my interview to be well organized, flow smoothly, and lead to organic conversation. Can you reorganize my questions to achieve my goals?” Analyze the new set of questions. How are they different from your previous sets of questions?
10. Review your latest set of questions once again for FRAME. Take notes here on your questions and update them to meet the needs of FRAME.
11. Write your final set of questions.
12. Practice interviewing with your questions. Have your friend pretend to be the business professional. Their answers are not important, instead focus on turning your interview from a question-and-answer session to an organic conversation by asking good clarifying and follow-up questions. What clarifying and follow-up questions did you ask? Did you achieve an organic conversation? What would you like to improve upon and how can you achieve these goals during the real interview?

## Create Your Meeting Agenda

Review the meeting agenda above. Will this meet your needs? Do you need to add anything to the agenda? Are there areas of the agenda that should be more specific?

## Conduct a Mock Informational Interview

1. Ask a friend to practice your informational interview with you.
2. After the interview, ask your friend for feedback.
3. What did you learn from this experience that you will take into your real informational interview? What did you do well and what can you improve upon?

## Conduct Your Informational Interview

## Send a Thank You Note